

Gamblin + SavvyPainter

Ask Gamblin - The Color Episode

- Antrese: Robert and Scott, thank you so much for being on the show.
- Robert Gamblin: It's great to be here. Thanks for having us back, Antrese.
- Scott Gellatly: Great to be here. Absolutely.
- Antrese: I'm super excited to have you guys on to answer these questions about color. And our first one is from James, and James has heard that modern oil paints actually have too much pigment as compared to traditional historic pigments. What are your thoughts on this?
- Robert Gamblin: Antrese, I love this question. I'm really glad that James brought it up. It gives us a chance at the beginning of this conversation to sort of put everything into kind of a historical perspective. It's true. The formula of today's colors have more pigment in them than at any time in the history of oil painting. That's true. Now the formula for the colors of today and the colors from historical periods. Both of those reflect what is expected of them. Now 200 years ago, or more, color was made and used in very close proximity. Perhaps it was made and used in the same room. The color was made to the texture that it was going to be used at.
- Robert Gamblin: So there was no need to make that paint any stiffer than the, very smooth painting that was done at that time paints were paintings were generally thinner than they are today. Multiple layers, those layers with very thin. And so the paint was made exactly to how the painter was going was going to use them.
- Robert Gamblin: Today, our paints are used in the same building, which is where my studio is, but also they're used many thousands of miles away. And they must meet a huge spectrum of needs for how that color is going to work. And secondly there may be many

months to years between when a color is made and when it is used up.

Robert Gamblin:

I'm sure that many listeners today have tubes of paint in the paint box that have been in there for 10 years or more. And when you reach for that color you expect that it's that it is perfectly usable.

Robert Gamblin:

So we sort of solve this by making paint no stiffer than is needed. Palette knife painters need paint to be fairly stiff, painters who paint with an impasto need paint to be very stiff.

You can't make paints stiffer very easily at all, but you can certainly make paint looser. And so for everyone who needs paint looser that's what all the mediums are for.

We also like to define it in this way: that there's no need for us to make paint any stiffer than it takes to paint in an impasto on a 90 degree day. You know, the warmer it is, the looser the paint is. 90 degrees and impasto. That's our maximum.

Antrese:

I'm kind of curious, how do you come up with the standard for that? What is your guide for the color making?

Robert Gamblin:

Well, our guide for color imaging is really pretty complex and it's something that we take very seriously. In addition to artistic practice our guides are history, science, and emotion.

All of these factor into our culture making now on our website. There is a whole section called "Experience Color" and it goes into this question in very great detail, into really excellent videos that we have posted there. And on those videos, one of the things that I think is most important, is that we discuss how every culture has an emotional resonance and our formulas striped produce that emotional resonance that maximum color as best that we can. Now, to give an example of that, with one of the most historically important colors, let's take Ultramarine Blue.

Robert Gamblin:

If you add too much pigment to Ultramarine Blue, the color starts to get dull and the texture gets to become leaden. Too little pigment, and you might have a really beautiful glossy color but the texture is destroyed. There's a very fine area between too much and not enough.

Another color, Alizarin Crimson it comes to us as the biggest particle size of anything else that we buy. And so, an important part of our work to produce that really sort of sparkly, glowing,

transparent, beautiful, cool red is to make the particles smaller and smaller and smaller until light comes off in a very smooth smooth sheen rather than in sort of a pebbly surface.

And the last thing I want to mention about is, is the idea of texture. Now there's one very good company in the world making oil paints who believes that there is a perfect texture for oil paint.

Robert Gamblin:

And they strive, they manipulate every one of the colors to try to meet the perfect texture. And we feel totally differently. We feel that the natural texture that comes along with each pigment is something to be retained rather than something to manipulate. So the texture of Cadmium Red Medium, something that the dense but really smooth is very different than the texture of Hansa Yellow medium which is very light in its density of its paste. But it's very sticky as a color. So these things are all part of what goes into the process of trying to make our colors or the philosophy that we have behind paint making.

Antrese:

Can you give an example of what you mean by the emotional content of a color and how that impacts how you make paint?

Robert Gamblin:

Well, we feel that the emotional content of color is its primary communication. So the difference in what Cadmium Red Medium is saying to us compared to what Manganese Blue Hue was saying to us Cadmium Red Medium is very hot, its very intense. It could be expressed as a feeling of rage, it could be expressing the feeling of just intensity of a love that you can hardly handle.

And then there's Manganese Blue Hue, just the coolest dude on the whole planet, you know, who just wants to sort of be there and be just gorgeous looking, and really really deep in space.

And so these to us, are the most important qualities that a color has. You know, we use them for a very different ends, we use them to describe how a building looks.

We use them to describe how, you know, how a person's face looks. But these emotional contents, I think, are there in everything that we do with paint.

Antrese:

Nice. Manganese Blue has become my new best friend recently. So my next question comes from Rachel Jones.

Rachel Jones:

Hi, my name is Rachel Jones, and I have to say that I really appreciated the comments that were made in the last podcast concerning whites, and how we sometimes work against what the whites are made to do. We're really just wasting paint because we're trying to make it behave in a way it really shouldn't. Are there any other paints that maybe we are wasting our time that really have a certain character that we are trying to make it act in a way that it shouldn't?

Scott Gellatly:

It's a great question and ultimately I think it expands upon the notion of the different colors having different personalities that that Robert just talked about. You know it doesn't take long for us as painters to recognize that Phthalo Green behaves very differently than a color such as Viridian and I think the core of this difference is getting to know the difference between mineral and organic pigments such as cobalt, chromium, and cadmiums versus modern organics.

And these differences are highlighted and organized in our Artist's Grade Color Chart in a very clear in a very clear way.

Scott Gellatly:

So those mineral colors which include those compounds of metals such as cadmiums, cobalts, and chromiums are developed at incredibly high heat. These are essentially the colors of Impressionism and they have a very large particle sizes. They naturally are more matte and a bit denser and they're excellent for naturalistic color mixing and replicating those colors of the natural world.

On the modern organic side, those are colors that contain carbon and have more tongue twisting of color names like the Phthalos the dioxazine, the Quinacridones. They have very different personalities. Instead of very dense opaque colors, they are a little softer in their texture. They are more transparent and have incredibly high tinting strengths, they make a very intense tints and mixtures.

This comes back to that difference between a Phthalo green and Viridian. So, when we're dealing with creating a palette that incorporates both mineral and modern colors, I think that it really heightens the experience of painting by getting to know and celebrating these different personalities: of Phthalo Green as opposed to Viridian; Dioxazine Purple as opposed to Cobalt Violet; Quinacridones as opposed to Alizarin. They're excellent for creating color palettes of high chroma and of great intensity.

Essentially these colors tend to have more “cowbell” than the mineral counterpart and they’re excellent for really great passages of color with great intensity.

So to come back to the question, I think it's, you know all of these colors are compatible with each other. They all play well with each other. It's just a matter of getting to know the different personalities of the pigments that we work with as painters.

Antrese: Something that I hear very often among painters especially painters starting out is the like "Oh my god, Phthalo Blue just takes over my palette!" and that sounds like it's part of what you're talking about. It has such a strong ...you know the Phthalos have such intense, strong tinting capabilities that just the slightest bit really impacts the color that you're mixing.

Scott Gellatly: Absolutely. A little bit goes a long way, but they can also be used to great advantage because of their intensity.

Antrese: Yeah usually when I'm using any of the Phthalos, when I pick it up on my knife you can barely even see that I've picked it up on the knife, I use so little. I just start that way as opposed to taking a big chunk, because I know what it's going to do.

Scott Gellatly: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Antrese: Got it, so to answer Rachel’s question you’re saying that understanding the difference between mineral and modern pigments allows you to use colors in ways that work for you and not against you.

Antrese: Awesome. Okay so Scott can you tell me a little bit more about modern pigments and how they're different from the mineral pigments?

Scott Gellatly: Absolutely. And I wanted to expand on this idea of the greater level of transparency of modern organic pigments. Traditionally, oil painting prior to the Industrial Revolution was dominated by indirect painting techniques.

Bob alluded to this earlier, when he mentioned thin applications of paint in multiple layers. We recognise this when we're in the museum and we see the great works of from the 15th through the 18th century, where light gets trapped in these paint layers and is reflected through other areas of the painting. There's a great luminosity of the work of the old

masters when there was this work being created by thin glazed layers and indirect painting techniques.

In the Industrial Revolution, when the palette was expanded with mineral colors such as Cobalts Cadmiums, & Chromiums, this really led to the direct paintings and alla prima techniques of the Impressionists. Those those direct painting techniques really dominated 20th century painting.

Scott Gellatly:

What's exciting to me about the transparency of modern organics, is that we now have this broad palette of intense colors with great transparency. So painters can go revisit what's historically been a very traditional mode of painting through glazing and indirect painting techniques. But with modern organic colors with their greatest transparency we can use those glazing techniques to create contemporary imagery.

Antrese:

So I'm curious, I have two questions to follow up on that. One is: Can you kind of give me an example of that. I mean it may sound like an obvious question, but can you give an example of an indirect painting that's got that luminosity from the old masters? And then the second question: with the direct painting, was part of that ability to do that caused by the new paints -- in how paints are manufactured? Pete mentioned in the last episode and how people just threw metals into the Blast Furnace during the industrial revolution to see what would happen. Is this what created new possibilities in painting?

Scott Gellatly:

Kind of all of the above. So to give you a good example, you look at a Titian painting, or even a Turner. These paintings look like they're being lit from within. There's a great luminosity there. In the first half of the 19th century, it was the first time that oil colors were made on a industrial scale. And these concerns that Robert mentioned about increasing the pigment load for paints to remain stable in a tube.

Scott Gellatly:

And then these colors that came out of the Industrial Revolution like cadmiums, cobalts, and chromiums were more opaque by nature.

There's a great quote around the Impressionists that, you know, Impressionism couldn't have happened without colors like Cobalt Blue and oil colors that came out of a tube.

So, it was both a reflection of the pigments that came out of the Industrial Revolution- colors that were made in a more industrial scale and packed into a tube- that really changed how

paintings were made in the latter part of the 19th century and on through the 20th century.

And now with the modern organics, we are living in such a rich time to be painters in the sense that we have the traditional earth colors, we have these mineral inorganic colors from the 19th century, plus these high intensity transparent modern colors. And we can really personalize our color palettes based on our individual intention.

Antrese:

Yeah it's so interesting. Something I think that I've never really thought about is how technology, for lack of a better term, has changed painting and mark making in general. I mean, we have access to everything right now. Everything that exists. Whereas it was so limited before, so there's almost like too many choices sometimes.

Scott Gellatly:

Right. I mean ever since cave painting artists have worked within the confines of their materials. We just have more available to us now than at any painter throughout history.

Antrese:

Fun!

Scott Gellatly:

It's exciting.

Antrese:

It is! it's really exciting I think we are in our own little laboratories. So the next question comes from Andrea K. and Andrea's asking, she currently uses Rembrandt Naples yellow deep and she wants to know how Gamblin Naples yellow compares to that.

Robert Gamblin:

Yeah. Thank you. I'm going to answer a very simple question with a little bit more depth because what this brings up to me is that we have a very small palette of colors. You know, 96 colors in our palette doesn't seem so small. But when you compare it to other manufacturers of oil colors at 130 or 160 colors in it, our palette of colors is pretty small.

Now, within those 96, we're able to cover all the bases, all the important bases. But you know, we have one Naples Yellow and Rembrandt has four.

Historically, Naples yellow the color, is about 160 years old now since it was first developed. It was made in a number of different shades according to the balance of the materials that are in it, or heat at which it was produced. So from the very beginning it was made in a number of different shades. But in our small palette I decided that we only had time to put one

shade and it was the shade of Naples yellow that I thought was the most beautiful.

Now, comparing our Naples yellow to Rembrandt's Naples Yellow Deep- Rembrandt's Naples Yellow Deep is warmer and darker and ours is a little lighter and a little bit more more yellow. They also make a Naples Yellow light which is lighter and cooler than ours. So ours is about in the middle of where their two primary Naples Yellows are. Both of them are made from three different pigments. The Rembrandt has a Benzimidazolone another pigment that is a mixture of titanium chrome and antimony and then there's white added to that, and ours is made from cadmium yellow yellow ochre and white so they both are a mixture of three different colors.

Antrese:

Andrea also asks about Alizarin Crimson, and she says "I've used both Gamblin Alizarin Crimson and Alizarin Crimson permanent which are both darker. Old Holland Alizarin Crimson, and Winsor Newton Alizarin Crimson- Why are the Gamblin versions so much cooler? Is it permanence or toxicity? Are there any plans to mass produce the Smithsonian version of Alizarin Crimson?"

Robert Gamblin:

We produced Alizarin Crimson for many years before we produced Alizarin Permanent and our intention was not to produce a different shade of Alizarin Crimson when we brought out the permanent version, but to give artists that much more permanent version of Alizarin Crimson. Alizarin Crimson is the least light fast color that is left on our palettes.

It is what's called a "lake" color. A hundred and fifty years ago, there were many lake colors on the artist's palette and this is the last one that's left on our palettes, and it just clearly doesn't have the light fastness of everything else that we use.

If you use Alizarin Crimson on a painting, and you have it in an interior space, yeah the color is going to last pretty good for quite a long time. But if you put that same painting in a sunny window, where the sun is falling directly on it for three or four hours a day, then in a relatively short period of time- maybe five to 10 years, you're going to notice a huge change in Alizarin Crimson.

With Alizarin permanent since it's made from totally light fast colors. You won't have you want to have that issue.

So, again, we were trying to not produce a different color, just giving the artists who loved Alizarin Crimson a more permanent

version. Both of these are very cool reds and they are exactly in the shade of Alizarin Crimson that I fell in love with when I was in art school.

Alizarin Crimson was my first love. But I've seriously dated many colors since then.

Antrese:

Robert, could you tell me a little bit more about Lake colors. What is that. What does that mean for people who don't know?

Robert Gamblin:

The laking process was the system that was developed to be able to turn a dye into a pigment. In an oil painting, we can only use pigments. We can't use dyes because dyes have the ability to move around within within the surface. If you've ever had someone put magic markers on on on a wall and then paint over it and have that marker come up straight through what you just painted, you've experienced the ability dyes to move through paint layers.

Antrese:

My mother never had that problem. Never

Robert Gamblin:

Never. You were perfect.

Robert Gamblin:

So we can't use dyes. So the laking process was a way of turning a dye into a pigment. They would get this big vat of alumina hydrate that was being made, and they would pour the dye stuff into that vat and the dye would get trapped inside the alumina hydrate. When the alumina hydrate was precipitated out, it would have the color of the dye that would be inside it.

The reason it works so well is because alumina hydrate is an extremely transparent pigment. That leads to the qualities of Alizarin Crimson being so beautifully transparent and having such a glowing transparency.

Antrese:

And then the last part of that question from Andrea: "Do you have any plans to mass produce the Smithsonian Version of Alizarin Crimson?"

Robert Gamblin:

No we don't. We don't have any plans for that. I think the color that we are making is very very close with that to what that color was. So there would be no need to do it because it's so close as it is.

Antrese:

And just as a follow up question, Andrea started out asking about the Naples Hue two part question What exactly is a hue. And do you make any other hue colors besides Naples Yellow.

Robert Gamblin:

The convention of naming a color a hue such as Cadmium red hue. This has been with us for - I'm not quite sure 50 or 60 years at least and it's a convention that communicates that whatever it says before that word hue is not actually in the tube. So it says cadmium red hue is there's no cadmium in it.

In the best of circumstances, the company who is making a color this way is doing their best to recreate the properties of the color that is that is you know the cadmium red they're trying to recreate those properties. And this is what we do with three colors.

Our Naples yellow which is on our palette because originally Naples yellow was lead based color and we do no pigments in lead. But the color is really very valuable so we've made our version of it. We have Manganese blue hue because we lost manganese blue as a pigment in about nineteen eighty eight. And it's never been available since then and it's extraordinarily beautiful color so we made a very very successful copy of it which is our manganese blue hue.

And then we also make a Cerulean Blue Hue. That is purely because Cerulean Blue is a beautiful and valuable color. But its cost is so high that we wanted to give painters a lower cost version of it within our Artist's grade line.

Interestingly, in most places that you're going to find the use of the hue convention is in student grade color. And in our student grade color we have no hues.

We just have no need to feel we have no need to use it there.

But essentially that's what's going on is the hue at best is trying to recreate the properties of the color.

Now that doesn't always happen. I mean the worse case of this that I can that I've identified is that there is a manufacturer that has a color named Viridian hue and the pigment in it is Phthalo green.

Antrese:

And you and Scott were just talking about that. You know, how crazy is that!?

Robert Gamblin:

You know they live on two planets! It's like going into a bakery and saying I want a cinnamon roll and they hand you a Parker House roll!! It's like- Are you kidding me!?! These two things are not even remotely alike except for being in the shape of a roll!

Antrese:

I guess I'm not I'm not going to ask you questions about cinnamon rolls and Parker rolls, but I am curious about what makes your student grade paint student grade paint.

You know, it's been a while since I've been in school (we won't talk about how long) but I remember feeling like OK "I'm going to use these as long as I have to. And the second I have enough money, I'm changing to the real stuff." In my head, "I won't touch student grade." And I don't really have a strong reason for that other than just the sense that I don't even know what's in that. It's kind of like when you said "hue" what immediately came to my mind was chocolate flavored or coffee flavored. If I don't know what that means I'm not going to eat it.

Robert Gamblin:

Well the difference between an artist grade and student grade- it is a very good question and I'm glad you asked it because it is not very well understood.

And when you go into the art supply store there's absolutely no information there to help you sort through what I think is a very important issue.

So, making paint at its finest is very expensive. It is expensive for us to do it. It gets to be expensive in the paint aisle. And there is a great need to make color that is not so expensive.

We were all students. We all bought we all bought student grade paint. Many of us are able to move up when we can as as you have.

There also may be a situation where you're in a period of intense experimentation and you're going to make this whole body of work and you have no idea of it's going to be successful and you probably are going to trash it, and so you don't want to spend twenty dollar tube cadmiums on that when you can have a nice hot red for, you know, eight or ten dollars. There are so many many reasons to use your student grade color.

And purely, the difference is this: the most expensive part about making paint- making artist grade color is the pigment. And so if you're going to make paint cheaper, you have to take out some of the pigment. So we defined what makes student color (which is our 1980 brand) as having exactly 50 percent of the pigment load of our of our artists grade color.

And so we take out half the pigment and in its place is put an extender pigment and that extender pigment is a powder. So

the paints are made exactly the same- the same kind of equipment, made in the same way.

The paints end up feeling as they should, in terms of having a nice density that an oil color has.

And there are several extenders that we have access to. We try to match the quality of the extender to the quality of the pigment that it is replacing. Some of them are a little bit more opaque. Some of them are more transparent and some of them are heavier body some of them are very very smooth and creamy. So we try to match that so we have as much of that individual pigment quality that we value so much still left in the color.

So that's essentially the difference.

And that the cheaper the student grade paint, the less pigment you can expect to find in there and then they go to more ways of bodying the oil with stabilizers because you can't add extender forever. Eventually you totally destroy the integrity of the color. So there are other ways to deal with that but we don't get into that here right now.

Scott Gellatly:

If I could just add one thing to what Bob said, in our 1980 line of colors we incorporate both mineral and modern colors. So we have both a Cadmium Red Medium, and say a Naphthol Red on the modern side.

So those differences that we talk about between mineral and modern in the artist's grade line. Those differences are retained in the 1980 colors.

So when beginning painters kind of move from a student grade paint, such as 1980, to the artist grade line, we want that to be a seamless transition in terms of their palettes that they work with and what those colored names are.

With the 1980 colors we really wanted to give beginning painters the same personality of pigments, a really good feel to the paint because these are the things that really ensure a successful entry to the world of oil paint.

Antrese:

Yeah I mean I'm remembering when I was in school I had zero money to spend this stuff so it was kind of like always the question of do I buy food or do I buy paints and of course I bought paint.

It was basically just what was available and what I could afford at that time.

The problem that I very distinctly remember having was not really understanding what the differences between the two paints or not really knowing how they were going to react and not knowing: "Is this because of the paint, or is this because I'm learning and I don't really know what I'm doing yet?" And I'm still discovering the properties of paint, so it became more valuable to me later on, once I sort of got that wheel going and then was able to use them now, like Robert said, for experimentation- when I know this is probably going to be a throwaway so I'm just going at you know kind of have at it with less expensive paints.

Antrese:

Okay so next question comes from Cynthia Yossef and Cynthia wanted to know: "What's the best medium use to prevent dead spots on my painting. I sometimes get spots that are really flat and dead looking within the painting."

Scott Gellatly:

That's a great question. And often painters notice that their oil paintings take on uneven surface quality after the paint has dried.

This is because artist pigments absorb the linseed oil binder at various rates. Some colors dry naturally more matte, some colors naturally dry with a bit more gloss to them.

The phenomenon of oil drying more matte is often referred to as a "sinking in" and painting on absorbent grounds, such as some acrylic gesso grounds, will hold more oil out of the surface layers and contribute to the sinking in.

So we feel that the best way to deal with this is a process of "oiling out" and oiling out can be done when the surface of the painting is dry to the touch.

For this we recommend a 50/50 mixture of Galkin medium and Gamsol and a liberal amount of this medium could be brushed onto the surface of the touch dry painting and then the excess of that wiped off with a rag.

This leaves a small amount of binder on the surface of it. But it's enough to saturate the colors and even out the surface qualities and in the process of a painting session, better to judge the value scheme of the painting.

So you could do this in-between paint layers. You can also do it at the completion of the painting and this is a really great way to unify the surface prior to varnishing.

I personally think that it's best dealt with through this oiling out process rather than trying to deal with it through the use of a medium. Mediums will change the working properties of the paint by increasing the flow and changing the personality which the brush marks take on.

And I think that the painting should dictate how and when painting medium should be used. If it's an issue of just controlling the surface quality I think that's best done through oiling out.

Antrese:

Gotcha. And can you say this is a very selfish question because I take forever and some paintings and sometimes I get really I get frustrated because parts of it do have a higher gloss and it's harder for me to see the color because it's reflecting back at me.

So can you do this oiling out process multiple times within a painting and just keep going on top of it so that you always have that same sort of texture you know same sort of - the same sort of glossiness for lack of a better term?

Scott Gellatly:

Oh absolutely. And the benefit to oiling out a painting more than once throughout the paintings creation is that the more you oil out the painting the less "sinking in" will happen. Because you're continuously reducing the absorbency of the structure.

Antrese:

Gotcha. And so this kind of goes into Astrid's question. Astrid asks about the sinking in. So what you're saying is that the sinking in happens because of the differences in what's on the canvas.

Scott Gellatly:

Correct. So from all the way to the ground layers using an absorbent ground, such as acrylic gesso through using colors that have a bit more absorbency to them. There is a number of things that contribute to sinking in, and oiling out, I think, is really the best way to deal with this.

Antrese:

Next question is from Jamie Luoto and Jamie is saying "You have a paint's called Caucasian flesh tone which you describe as a base color for figure painting: less pink than most flesh tones on the market to create bases for other skin types."

And she goes on to say that "Painting has been dominated by Caucasian men and she's wondering if you have considered creating other base flesh tones to work from. Has there ever been a request for an alternative flesh tone to work from? Do you think having Caucasian flesh tone as the only named paint to mix other skin types from is perpetuating the exclusion of non Caucasian art and artists from fair representation in the art world and in museums?" Big Question!

Robert Gamblin:

Jamie your questions bring up important issues, and we have been discussing these issues in recent months in our internal discussions on how to move forward with color for portrait painting.

Robert Gamblin:

Now, the ground has shifted dramatically from almost 30 years ago when Caucasian flesh tone was first brought out. Then as now, virtually all flesh tones on the market were simply called "flesh."

We thought it was an insult to people of color. So when we brought ours out, we labeled it Caucasian flesh tone. And we got a lot of decent publicity about that, in a very positive way. Artists made paintings, and had shows about the issues of flesh tones and appropriately naming them.

But now times are different, and more complicated. We have formulas for skin tones for all shades of people. And we've made them as custom colors for artists. But the demand was never there to put more than one in our line of only 96 colors.

When we do our next expansion I think we're going to be addressing this and I'm not actually sure what we're going to do. If we'll be bringing out more base Flesh Tone colors or eliminating the one that we have. We'll see. We're still talking about it.

But to answer your last question directly. Now, I don't know how having only one flesh color on our palette affects the art world and museums and people's ability to break into that structure or not.

But what I do worry about, what I am concerned about, is more personal. And that would be: A person of color coming up to our color chart and looking at our colors, finding the Caucasian flesh tone and saying "What about me? Where's my color?"

Now, the base colors for all skin types are already on the palette. I mean, we call them, you know- there's two versions of Sienna, there's two versions of Umber but they're not labelled for portrait painting.

And I think that this is a little bit of an issue. They're there, but they're not identified as such.

And there's one other question that issue that concerns me about Caucasian flesh tone and the problems with its name. And that, I feel, that its name really has limited its use within painters because if you take the name away from it, and you just look at the color, you can see that it's part of this whole series of color that deal with warmth light.

Most of our paintings, most of the paintings that oil painters make, have warm light in them and there's a whole series of colors to help them do that. There's titanium white which is based on linseed oil so it's slightly warm in color. We have our warm white which is very definitely warm in color as a white. We have Naples Yellow Hue that can be used as a white and gives in a very bright yellow light to a painting and then there's Caucasian flesh tone which can be used as a white in a painting to get a red light to a painting. There are a few painters who have adopted Caucasian Flesh Tone for landscape painting.

Bill Davidson is one of them. He uses it in his mountain scenes and for his seascapes, but I think there are a lot of landscape painters would find this color very valuable and just don't touch it because it says: "Hey, it's a Caucasian flesh tone. It's not rock pink."

Antrese:

Exactly. Yeah I mean it's interesting to me because I've never ever bought any type of flesh tone, of any sort. And it's not because I have you know a political problem with it it's just because I don't really get why I need that. To me, it is just what you just said.

It's sort of like putting out a tree green. I don't really know what that means because there's a million types of greens and that depends. I mean, there's a million types of trees and the color I need really depends on the surrounding light and what's around it.

And so for that reason, I've always looked at the flesh tones and just thought: "I don't need that." That seems to be a very specific thing for a very specific color for a very specific thing

and I don't know that I even will come under the circumstances where I have that lighting situation et cetera et cetera. And so, it might be just how I was taught to paint but I prefer to mix my own. Having said that -whenever I can take a shortcut, I will.

Robert Gamblin:

Yeah. Our next question deals with exactly these issues.

Antrese:

Great segue! And our next question (thank you). And our next question comes from Julie Harman Dovan and Julie is very curious about Caucasian Flesh Tone. "Why would somebody use this? I've always been taught to mix everything from the various colors on my palette and this seems like I would be cheating myself out of the experience of mixing flesh tones as I see them. I would love a convincing answer for me to try this product."

Robert Gamblin:

Well I hate to disappoint you Julie, but you're not going to get a convincing answer from me because you know, Caucasian flesh tones, like all mixed colors, are intended as shortcuts. If you are happy mixing all of your colors then do so. I'm not going to try to dissuade you from that. Color mixing is a fabulous activity, but I personally find that there was so much color mixing to do that I'm happy to have some shortcuts. I use radiant blue for warm colored skies. I use permanent green light as a base to get some warm greens going. I use sap green for dark, cool shadows. Mixed colors become not only shortcuts but they also become known quantities that you can count on. They are usually not used purely alone they usually just OK. Here's my radiant blue.

I'm going to add a little bit more cobalt and have a little bit of Prussian to modify that color. And then there I go. But I've saved my site myself a tremendous amount of time from putting a lot of white into Ultramarine Blue in order to produce the same color.

Antrese:

The whole process of it is really interesting because part of the reason that I do what I do is because number one I was taught that way, but number 2 I always want to make sure that I'm not doing things by rote and that I'm not just going like okay skyblue this is the color that I use for that, for example. I'm always trying to really look and go "What is that color?" The problem with that is that I'm constantly reinventing the wheel every single painting. -I've recently started using your radiant colors and - at first I was like "What do I do with this? I didn't even know what to do with that?" And then I started slowly mixing and then I'm like "oh, that's a great short cut!" for exactly the reason that you just said.

Robert Gamblin:

Yeah. And the base color or that mixed color that is the shortcut is not the end of the process. Know that that warm sky that I'm talking about gets even warmer and grayer at the bottom and it's even sort of cooler and more transparent at the top. And so that Radiant Blue has to be modified the whole way down in order to make that sky look convincing.

Antrese:

Very nice. Our next question is from Drew Bailey. And Drew says: "First I want to say I loved the show." Thank you Drew. "I started listening a few months ago. I recently picked up the Gamblin 1980 paint set for when I find the time to start painting. I was very inspired by the last Gamblin Q & A. I was wondering as someone new to oil painting what are some common mistakes to avoid in terms of putting together a set of all around colors to paint with and when to move from the student level paint.

Scott Gellatly:

Well that's a really great question and I certainly hope that you find the time to paint.

I would answer this in a couple different ways. One, is I think that there's a mistake in sticking with a palette that perhaps came in a set, at or was recommended by a teacher for too long. I've talked to many a painter that have stuck with the same kind of impressionist palette that was recommended to them 20 years prior. Because that was what was on a school class list and they hadn't really thought outside of painting with that palette. On the other side of the coin I think painters could get in trouble when they chase too many color recommendations and their palette expands more than what could be a manageable level on their color palette to paint within a painting session. So this brings me to the idea of getting to know yourself as a painter and getting to know your own aesthetics in creating a personalized color palette and the only way to really do this is by painting and getting to know what you like out of painting in general but also out of your painting.

So my recommendation I think would be to. Keep things fairly limited. I personally like color palettes that are between 6 and 9 colors on a palette in any given time, and balancing both the color theory of it essentially where those colors fall around the perimeter of the color wheel.

To access your own kind of color mixing potential with any given color palette and then that with you know what you personally like. What are your aesthetics. I think the only way to really get to know this is through painting. As to when to graduate from

say a student grade color to an artist grade color. Ultimately it depends on how one paints. I know a lot of successful professional painters who use a lot of student grade color because their mode of painting is through you know just applying liberal amounts of color on the canvas. But for painters that want more subtleties in their color mixing potential, more possibilities, then it's time to graduate from a student grade color to an artist for a color. For example, from our 1980 line to our artists grade palette it's twice the color palette going from 48 to 96 colors in our artist's grade line. So you have more possibilities there with color and mix potential with the artist grade palette.

Antrese:

Nice. Our next question comes from Claire Remsburg and I am so excited to hear your answer to this question because last time we talked about the different characteristics of whites- Clare is asking about the different characteristics of blacks.

Scott Gellatly:

Excellent. And yes just like we have different characteristics of our whites, our black oil colors also have different colors or different characteristics.

And for this discussion of blacks I'm going to include both Van Dyke Brown and Payne's Gray as they factor importantly into this discussion. So I'm going to start with the most common black which is Ivory Black. Ivory Black is made from burnt bone.

It's a semi transparent in nature. It has a moderate tinting strength, so it doesn't overwhelm mixtures and Ivory Black, I think, is common because it's a good all around mixing black. Mars Black, on the other hand, which is a synthetic iron oxide, is very opaque unlike other Mars colors. It has a very strong tinting strength so it can be a bit more overwhelming in color mixtures because of its strong tinting strength. But Mars Black is really good when you want to use black, kind of as a color in your paintings because of its strength.

One of the most unique blacks in our line is a black called Black Spinel. it's actually a cobalt based black and it has a very matte appearance almost like slate. Whereas other blacks cool off in their tints Black Spinel is really quite neutral. And then another black that is unique to the Gamblin line is a black called Chromatic Black and one of the things that we found interesting in talking to painters over the years is that for many painters the use of black out of a tube has been discouraged. Maybe by an instructors or by other painters. And as a alternative many painters choose to mix their own blacks and there's a number of really good combinations for this Burnt Sienna and Ultramarine

Blue, Sap Green and Alizarin. Chromatic Black was developed in this spirit of a mixed mixed black. So Chromatic Black is made by two modern organic colors that we've found to be perfect complements which are Phthalo Emerald which is a warm green and Quinacridone red which is a cool red.

So these two colors when mixed together pass right through that middle section of the color wheel to produce a really deep, rich black which is called chromatic black. So no black pigments were harmed in the creation. So it's a really great mixing color when you want to mix it with other colors but not muddy up those colors. Because of its transparency it is the blackest or darkest black on the color palette and it's really great for mixing with other transparent color. It's when you want to create a shade of those transparent colors but not give up their transparency so that's Chromatic Black. Van Dyke Brown is a contemporary permanent version of historical color and it is one that we consider to be the warmest black on the palettes.

Its formula includes some iron oxide in the mix which contributes to its warmth and then we had Payne's Grey which is the coolest black on the palette. So incorporating Van Dyke Brown and Payne's Grey is really important in terms of discussing that the temperature bias that these blacks take on.

Antrese:

So, you mention that Chromatic Black is a transparent black and you may have said it but I didn't catch it. So you mentioned Ivory, Mars, Black Spinel, Chromatic Black, Van Dyke Brown, and Payne's Gray.

You mentioned Chromatic being very transparent, what are the transparency and opacity values of the other ones?

Scott Gellatly:

Okay, so Ivory Black is semi-transparent in nature. Both Mars Black, and Black Spinel are both quite opaque. Van Dyke Brown, and Payne's Gray are both semi transparent in nature.

Antrese:

Gotcha. fun question I'm going to play with my blacks and I'm going to have to do a value scale of all of them.

Scott Gellatly:

Yeah. I learned that way too.

Antrese:

I think that with what people are told it's most likely we've thrown the baby out with the bathwater in the conversations about black because I think the intention of people being told not to use black is to really look at what's in the shadows and look at the colors that are actually there and not just assume

that colors are black. And that gets translated into never used black.

Robert Gamblin:

A conservator friend of mine, Ross Merrill, he and I taught a course in impressionist painting techniques many years ago and we did some pretty in-depth research on impressionist painting. And this is where this don't use black idea came from and we think we've stumbled on the origin of the idea don't use any black and it was a statement from Monet where he said. "Black is the death of shadows." And. But Ross, whose day job was head of conservation at the National Gallery, said that in analyzing Monet's paintings they found black all over the place but they just didn't find any in the shadows.

Antrese:

That's funny I hadn't heard that one.

Our next question is from Julie It's a nice segue from that plein air comment.

Julie:

I'm losing my mind trying to figure out how many colors I need for plein air painting. So in your opinion, what is the absolute minimum paints you need to paint outside and what would those colors be to get the most out of whatever colors you choose?

Scott Gellatly:

Excellent. And again I think this is getting to know the different personalities of the colors that we work with. Let's just, for this discussion, assume that white is on the palette. So I think the best three color palette of primaries would be Hansa Yellow Medium, Quinacridone Red and Phthalo Blue. These modern organic pigments will give you the greatest access to clean mixing secondaries.

But you know this might be the best mixing primary but it might not mean that it's the best best for you. And I find primarily as a plein-air painter, that plein-air painting and the alla- prima style of plein-air painting is really hard to do without some opaque colors in the mix. Especially in the lighter values where you want that light to be reflected off of the painting, back to the viewers eye. So this means that having some opaque colors in the yellows, oranges and reds are incredibly valuable and this is the value of the opacity of cadmium colors. So, I think it's important to balance again the color theory aspect of it with creating a color palette that speaks to one's personal aesthetics and personal intentions. My personal palette for plein-air painting is based on a six color split primary palette. So having a warm and cool for each primary color and incorporates both mineral and modern colors and a six color palette will certainly give painters

more kind of access to mixing within colors space versus just a three color primary palette.

So my main advice here is to spend some time finding your own color palette which can really only come through painting and through experimentation and you know whether it's a 3 color palette a 6 color palette a 9 color palette, finding a color palette that speaks to you as a painter is really one of the best ways to make painting your own.

Antrese:

And I think the value of that six color palette where you've got that the warm and the cool of each primary color is super super valuable for learning how to see and how to mix colors. It can be very frustrating at first, but I think it's well worth the effort to kind of push through that and get to the point where you really can mix just about any red with those primary colors or you can mix in anything that you see out there with those primary colors. To me it was really fun but I'm more geeky. I

Antrese:

think it can be really frustrating and painful at first but I would strongly strongly suggest that you go through that pain because what's on the other side is just total freedom.

Yeah absolutely.

You know I heard a great friend and instructor say, "You know, there's a lot of pain in painting." And you know that's also means it's a lot of fun too, to figure out, and to sometimes struggle with those color mixtures. Because you know that ultimately what makes the mixing process and painting really rewarding.

You know, there's so many greens and characteristics of greens in the natural world.

:

When you've got say two yellows to work with and two blues to work with that means that you've got a cool yellow or a greenish yellow that is closer to a greenish blue. And those are going to create more vibrant intense warm greens for example than say a yellow with more red in it or a blue with more red in it which will create more muted greens. So having that split primary palette is a really great way to kind of get to know, Get to know the color wheel.

Antrese:

Yeah absolutely and I think it also what I've seen happen too, what it also prevents is this idea that I can't do I can't paint today because I'm out of color X you know using those six primary using those the warm cool Primary Colors sort of

teaches you that you don't- again it's a shortcut and you can use it if you need to, but you don't HAVE to have that exact color. You can always look at and ask: it warmer? Is it cooler? What do I need to do to make that color and you're not dependant on something premade.

Scott Gellatly:

Exactly.

Antrese:

This is kind of a follow up on the same sort of topic this question comes from Stuart Hamby and Stewart is asking, "When creating a palette what relationship should I look for between the pigments in the tube paints. For example, should my orange contain the same red pigment as my red paint and my green the same blue as my blue paint? Same for tints used for lighting should my pink contain the same pigment as my red etc. or should my red Alizarin, violet, blue, green etc. all have related pigments and he wants to say that I'm using the word "should" and of course, it does come down to the artist's choice, but I wanted to make an informed choice." So I think what he's kind of asking is you know, if my red contains cadmium, do the other colors need contain cadmium as well - purple for example.

Robert Gamblin:

The short answer is no. When a color is reflecting it's light back at you, it doesn't know what it is.

In other words, it's just we have been talking we talked earlier about Naples yellow and there are many different ways of using a variety of pigments to recreate version of Naples yellow.

So I think it's more important to put together a palette of colors as we've been talking about. That just gets you around the color wheel and then put a few colors in there that you very strongly emotionally respond to and then let color mixing takeover.

Antrese:

Nice an added question from Stewart would be Can you recommend some books on color palettes (historical or modern) that give the characteristics of the actual pigments. For example, light fastness how they interact etc. etc..

Scott Gellatly:

Well I think the first place to start is actually getting to know the Gamblin artist grade color chart. This organization of mineral and organic colors, modern organic colors, talking about how they interact differently from each other is really an important aspect of getting to know pigments. Also on that piece of literature we talk about the chemical composition of all the colors basically which pigment or pigments the color includes as well as transparency and opacity and light fastness ratings.

As an example you know one of the demonstrations I give when I'm out presenting to painters is how cadmium red medium and Naphthol Red relate to each other. Out of the tube they're very similar. They're both a bright middle red, kind of a fire engine red. But when you add white to both of these reds to create tints, the cadmium red being a mineral color grays down in its tint to a very natural looking light red. But then when you add white to the Naphthol red, it's incredibly intense and maintains its intensity in its tinted mixture. Rather than giving you about like mineral colors. This organization of these pigments is something that we've really talked about for years and we think it's an incredibly important first step in getting to know the pigments that we work with.

Robert Gamblin:

There is one book I'd like to recommend that I think is excellent. I believe it's out of print. so you might have to go to the library to try to find an actual copy of it. It's called The History of color in painting. By Faber Birren.

Robert Gamblin:

And it's from 1965. It has hand tipped in plates of color and has just an excellent discussion of how palettes have changed over time. And the specific palettes of famous painters.

Antrese:

Nice I hadn't heard of that but I'm going to go find now.

I was just thinking when we were talking about the limited palette and all that -I'm curious, Scott, because I've seen your paintings on Instagram and they're beautiful. I love them but I'm wondering from your perspective do you have any secret weapon colors that you use?

Scott Gellatly:

First, thank you for that. Yeah I do. And to name a few. I use Portland Cool Grey, Cobalt Teal, Transparent Earth Red especially for underpainting. The color that Robert uses for skies, the Radiant Blue I find useful. To me it's like atmosphere in a tube. It pushes everything back into pictorial space really well.

So yeah there are colors that that visit my core palette and make special appearances every once in a while, and I think it's a great way to freshen up the color mixing experience. Along those lines, we recently added a section to the "Experience Color" area of our website on our Radiant Colors. We featured artists like Lori Putnam and Anna Rose Bain and their use of Radiant Violet, Radiant Turquoise, Radiant Green to produce some really subtle color mixtures in their in their work.

So that's just an example of how other artists use kind of secret weapon colors.

As another example of Wolf Khan used our transparent orange for great effect as a kind of secret weapon in his paintings. So, yes I have my secret weapons I think other painters have their secret weapons and to me it kind of comes back to that issue of finding a color palette that speaks directly to who we are as painters.

Antrese: Perfect. I love it so much, and it's so fun to find those secret weapons. When you discover one, you're just like. Oh my gosh I get to play!

Scott Gellatly: Absolutely

Antrese: So fun!

Nancy Zydler: Hello, my name is Nancy Zydler, I live on board a small sailboat, and I sail nearly every year to the arctic where I paint icebergs. I would like to ask Robert Gamblin to describe his journey to Greenland, and the process he used to produce his beautiful series of large icebergs. Did he glaze the ice with layers of transparent paint? Did he use white paint as a glaze?

Robert Gamblin: Thank you Nancy for asking that question. Nancy also paints icebergs as as you as you heard did her question and she gets to take a boat there and so the boat acts as her studio.

When my wife and I went to Ilulissat, Greenland to visit the icebergs and to draw, we went on a small airplane. So there wasn't a lot of art supplies we could take along with us. So we did drawing and photography and I've been wanting to paint icebergs for several years and so it was really the the answer to a dream to be able to go there. I wanted to paint icebergs but unless you go there and see the icebergs you just end up ripping off somebody else's eye somebody else's work by painting iceberg of someone's photograph. You had to go there and capture the images images for myself.

And for me to be able to have a chance to communicate the power of that iceberg landscape, the paintings had to be big. So there was only the ability to do studies there. I could really do any painting.

So all of my iceberg paintings are studio paintings some of them get to be quite large for me which is 40 by 60. And there was a

really interesting realization being there. You know, I've been painting landscapes for a number of decades now, and you go out there and there's there's the sky there's the land.

Fortunately there's water usually somewhere around so these very different kinds of elements that are going there amongst the icebergs. You're in one element and it was very very powerful.

You know, scientists say that every element has the ability to exist in three different stages. They can either be a solid or a liquid or a gas, and this is the first time I'd been into a landscape that was just one you know one element- the element of water.

And I think water is the only only compound that can exist in in three different stages like this. So you're on the water, and there's the waves and then there's that which is liquid and there's the icebergs which are these massive solids, you know, some of the icebergs were as big as a city block. They are absolutely enormous.

Antrese:

It's insane.

Robert Gamblin:

And then the atmosphere is is filled with mist and you know revealing and concealing the edges of the iceberg was is totally a phenomenal experience.

And so she also wants to know like how did I make the paintings. I literally have pulled every technique out of the basket to be able to paint these things. So there is impasto there are glazes both with whites and without white and then there's there's scumbles.

It is a huge challenge. A Wonderful challenge to try to get the icebergs in paint to emit sort of the glow of the light they have in real life and to have the mist be sort of revealing and concealing it. Just tremendous to be able to paint them.

Nancy has a website where you can see her work which is Zydler. com. If you want to see my iceberg paintings they're on my website, RobertGamblinStudio.com.

Great deal of fun. We have lots of ideas for that I hope to be back someday to be able to do it again.

Antrese:

My experience has been with glaciers, not icebergs, but it is definitely on my bucket list and if anyone else is interested in that. Nancy also has a great Instagram page. As does Robert If

you want to follow along in her adventures. She lives on the boat right?

Robert Gamblin:

Yes I think so.

Antrese:

Very, very fun.

OK, so you mentioned this is a nice segue into a question from Jeremiah Palecek and Jeremiah is asking --you mentioned what made me think about it is you mentioned the whites and how you are using that. Jeremiah's asking, "Is there a white that's good for making glazes with? Zinc tends to make everything look chalky. Titanium is too opaque. Sometimes I'd like to make a light pink glaze for instance but when I add white to something like Quinacridone rose, it turns really chalky and looks yucky. Simply put, what's a good white for glazing?"

Robert Gamblin:

There aren't a lot of choices. And he's right that titanium is a very poor choice. So we have to go to the most transparent of the whites zinc. White is one option. And in our 1980 line we have developed a transparent white that takes another approach to doing it. But I think the answer to how being successful white in glazes or making purely white glazes is to be very careful about how much of that white is in the painting and you need painting medium. You can't just do it without. You can't just do it with paint.

The medium has to take the particles of pigment and totally spread them out so you can see clear through them to what's down below. And so it's a combination of a medium. I personally feel that Neomegip does this very well because being a solid gel it sort of holds everything in place and doesn't allow things to move around. But using a medium and a very judicious amount of the white, a very transparent white should it get the job done.

Antrese:

Next question comes from Jodi and Jodi's asking Do you ever make some of your Torit grey colors an actual color. I have a beautiful purple Torit grey that I'm using sparingly because it's not in your colors for oil.

Scott Gellatly:

You know we've never incorporated a great color into our regular artist's good color palette. Having said that, we're always interested in seeing which colors painters find useful in their color mixing and which colors really resonates with them. So you know, if you're willing to share please send us a dry swatch of it.

Antrese: Very cool, so I'll get back with Jody and make her see if she can do that.

So I'm kind of curious, how are transparent earth colors different from ochres, umbers, and siennas.

Robert Gamblin: OK let's back up just a little tiny bit.

Because, this to me is an important issue. If we were able to pile up all the pigment that's ever been used in oil painting, we would have an enormous pile of white. And then the next largest piles would be piles of the earth pigments. This shows their importance over our history but over our history there's been a huge shift in how earth colors actually perform. Natural earth colors today are not as transparent as they were in classical painting. This

is because the earth colors of today are produced for their primary customer which is the people who color concrete and the people who color stucco and those people, those industries want opacity rather than transparency. And so over the last hundred years we have seen earth colors become more and more opaque.

And so they're just not as transparent as as they were. And so if you want to create today a glowing earth colored laden painting, like one sees in a Rembrandt, one needs much greater transparency than you can get out of today's today's earth colors.

And this is where the transparent earths deliver this transparency. Now natural earth colors are iron oxides but they get their relative transparency from the amount of impurities in the form of silica and other materials that are in them. The more the impurities, the more transparent they are.

Transparent earths get their transparency in a very different manner. They get it from their chemical structure. And it's just like the color, the very opaque color Chromium Oxide Green when that molecule is hydrated it becomes the beautiful Viridian more transparent the same thing is done to an iron oxide, a natural iron oxide a pure iron oxide and it becomes hydrated and the transparent earths are created.

Antrese: Another question I have for you guys- Artists struggle a lot with, "Oh my god I can't believe I'm going to spend 40 dollars on this tube of paint!" Why are cadmium and cobalt colors so expensive and are they really worth it?

Robert Gamblin:

Excellent question. Now they are expensive and there are three reasons behind it. Both those families of colors are made from elements in the earth that are very rare and therefore costly.

The cadmium comes from cadmium ore, the Cobalt comes from Cobalt ore and it costs a whole lot to to separate the metal out of that ore. So that's the first stage in the food chain that is expensive.

And then the Cadmium Cobalt pigments are formed by taking those individual metals and compounding them fusing them at very high heat with other metals.

Cobalt blue is compounded with with aluminum, Cobalt Green is compound with zinc, Cerulean blue is compounded with tin, and it takes 2,000 degrees for eight or ten hours in order for the fusing of those metals to happen.

With the cadmium, the fusing is with sulfur, with the yellows and then the reds are fused with sulfur and selenium. So that's a step to in the process. All of that natural gas and all of that processing to produce the color contributes to the high cost. And then the last thing is what happens here in the factory. Linseed oil has a tremendous capacity to absorb Cobalt pigments and cadmium pigments.

I mean, all you have to do is go to your paintbox or get one in the aisle of the paint store and just see how heavy that tube is. Those are the heaviest items in your paper box and that is just a reflection of just how much cadmium Cobalt pigment is present in in that tube. So those three steps contribute to the to the high cost.

Now, are they worth it? Well the answer is yes.

Robert Gamblin:

If you value the beauty of the color, yes. If you value the opacity that they can produce and three if you can value the permanence. They are the most permanent of colors that we have on our palette. And it's a function of that oven. They're formed under such tremendous stress that once they come out of that, you know, come onto our palettes and onto our paintings you know, they've got a really sweet easy life from from then on out. And so there's nothing that's going to influence them to change. So they have tremendous permanence.

Antrese:

Because we've been talking so much about student grade versus professional grade colors, I remember just going if you if you're in a store and you pick up Cobalt hue versus an actual cobalt color or

the same thing with cadmium. It is amazing the difference in weight between same sized tubes. so funny.

Robert Gamblin:

Exactly. Yeah.

Antrese:

The last question that I have is for Scott because you mention that you're using Transparent Earth Red for your under-paintings. That's one of your secret weapons. What are some of the best colors that you find for blocking out a painting in the beginning?

Scott Gellatly:

Yeah it's a great question and one of the reasons I use the transparent Earth red is as a landscape painter, especially here in the Pacific Northwest where a landscape is dominated by greens and blues having that warm red underneath does a nice kind of vibrancy of color interactions by letting some of that transparent or red come through in the finished painting.

The specific Transparent Red that I use is actually in our line of Fast Matte Alkyd oil colors and this is a fast drying oil color palette that we make and we developed it a number of years back in part with underpainting techniques in mind.

You know if we think back, traditionally earth colors are used for underpainting. Partly because they dry fast due to their iron content and they dry matte.

So these are the two characteristics that we put into this line of colors, hence the name Fast Matte. And the Alkyd resin component of the Fast Matte colors enables them to dry in approximately 24 hours.

So in the initial stages of the painting, painters can take their paintings further faster. They're also formulated to dry with kind of a toothy finish which gives them the matte quality. But that toothy finish also promotes the adhesion of subsequent layers. So even though I tend to stick with just the transparent Earth reds, the Fast Matte colors have a full 24 color range that includes earth colors, mineral colors, modern colors. And this really expands the color possibilities for underpainting.

Antrese:

Nice Robert and Scott thank you so much. This is so incredibly helpful, and I got so much information out of it. And judging by the last episode that I did with you guys I think other people are going to feel the same way. You are such a wealth of information and I really appreciate you taking all this time to answer all of our questions.

Robert Gamblin:

Thank you. It's been a real pleasure to be with you again.

Scott Gellatly:

Absolutely. It's a great pleasure.
