

# **STILL LIFE PAINTING**

**ARE 6926**  
**Spring 2017**



**Professor David Y. Chang**  
**Florida International University**



## **STILL LIFE PAINTING**

The great advantage of the still life is that you can choose a subject entirely within your control. Unlike a person or animal, it does not walk away; unlike landscape subjects, it does not bend with the breeze or change character when the sun goes on. You can use a still life for a period of extended study, resulting in just one or many paintings, so it is an excellent vehicle for learning your techniques and sharpening your power of observation.

Whether you are painting one object or many, and whatever scale you are working to, the active qualities of the oil paint can contribute a special character to the composition. Be prepared to experiment with techniques and try out alternative solution - even a simple arrangement of two or three fruits can be interpreted in a variety of ways.

### **OIL PAINT**

Oil paint is one of the most versatile and pliant mediums at the artist's disposal today. Since the fifteenth century, artists have experimented with oil painting, producing works of breathtaking beauty while searching for new and expressive techniques.

Linseed oil is the basic component that lends oil paint a number of unique characteristics when applied to a surface: luminosity, transparency, elasticity, color subtlety, and texture; attributes that can be exploited by the artists according to their needs.

Basically, oil paint is made up of the binder (linseed oil) and the pigment (color powder) but there are also a series of components that produce other results: adding cobalt siccative shortens the drying time; varnish produces a shiny surface, while wax is used to obtain a matte surface. Turpentine, on the other hand, is used as a solvent before drying and also, together with oil, is one of the main components of oil paints. The painter can experiment with these materials to arrive at any desired pictorial result.

The manufacturing process of oil paints has changed with the times, incorporating the latest technical advances of each age. Originally, the pigment was placed on a marble pot slab and laboriously mixed with oil until a homogenous and compact paste was obtained. Nowadays, some artists still follow this procedure, while some prefer to use electric blenders (the type used in cookery). Today, of course, most artists purchase their oil paints in tubes.

The oil medium, just as its name indicates, has an oil-based binder. Unlike water-based mediums, oil does not dry through evaporation. The drying process is produced by oxidation, a chemical reaction with air, which hardens the paint and causes it to dry gradually from the outermost layer to the inner layers. The linseed oil "breathes" when exposed to air and dries very slowly, allowing the oxygen to penetrate every particle of the paint. This slow-drying process leaves the work in a malleable state for a long period, thus allowing it to be constantly altered.

Until the invention of oil paints, pictures were generally executed in water-based paints such as egg-tempera on rigid supports owing to the fragility of the paint after drying. The discovery of oil paint, credited to the Flemish painter Jan Van Eyck (1390-1441), made it no longer necessary to use such heavy and cumbersome supports (although they continue to be used by some artists to this day). A correctly prepared canvas mounted on a stretcher frame is able to

support the picture, with the added advantage of weighing much less. One of Van Eyck's earliest masterpieces is the "Arnolfini's Marriage".

This workshop offers constructive experiences to students struggling to attain vitality of visual concept, techniques and competence in their oil and pastel painting.

### **OIL SUPPLIES**

- Oil Colors:** Titanium White  
Ivory Black  
Cadmium Yellow Medium  
Cadmium Yellow Orange (Optional)  
Yellow Ochre  
Burnt Sienna  
Cadmium Red Light  
Alizarin Crimson Permanent  
Quinacridone Magenta  
Venetian Red (Optional)  
Raw Umber  
Sap Green  
Viridian  
Azure Blue (Optional)  
Prussian Blue  
French Ultramarine
- Mediums:** Turpenoid  
Flow and Dry Medium (by Sennelier)  
or Stand Oil & Siccative
- Brushes:** Bristle (Filbert)  
Sable (Flat and Filbert)  
Fan Brush (1 medium size)
- Other:** Pallet  
Pallet knife  
Pallet medium cups  
Retouch varnish  
8 Stretched canvas (16 x 20 or larger)  
Fast Orange Hand Cleaner (The kind used by mechanics)  
Art guard (by Windsor-Newton) or Invisible Care hand cream  
Paper towels  
French Easel (Optional)  
1 color corrected light

### **RECOMMENDED BOOKS**

Chaet, Bernard. *An Artist's Notebook*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Publications.  
Mayer, Ralph. *The Painter's Craft*. New York: Penguin Books.  
Michel Eugène Chevreul. *The Principles of Harmony and Contrast of Colors*. London: Longman

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION - ARE 6926**

This course will emphasize advanced skills and knowledge necessary for creating still life paintings with oil by focusing on formal elements such as color, texture, value, volume, and space. We will examine a variety of advanced techniques of painting as well as instructional methodology.

**Attendance:** Attendance is required for all classes, tardiness and/or early departure more than once may be considered as an absence. Each absence will result in a lower grade. Students are responsible for obtaining notes and information from classmates for classes they must miss and, in some cases, students may request additional assignments to make up the missing credit.

**Requirements:** Final portfolio - Each student must present all paintings and drawings done in class, and all home studio assignments in order to receive a final grade.

Students are expected to paint outside of class at least 6 hours per week, and projects must be turned in on due dates. Late work is NOT acceptable.

Critiques are mandatory. Missing a critique is like missing an exam, although making it up is impossible. Students are expected to actively participate in critiques and are expected to master the technical terms used during the semester.

**Grading:** GRADES WILL BE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:  
30% Technique and skill.  
30% Development and improvement;  
40% Effort and involvement; participation in critiques; attendance; understanding of the various principles of painting and ability to articulate them.

### **GENERAL GRADE INTERPRETATION:**

- A -- Outstanding work and effort in and outside of class.
- B -- Very good work and effort, clearly above the minimum requirements.
- C -- Good, but average work and effort, meeting all requirements.
- D -- Below average and contributing less than the required effort.
- F -- Not enough work to justify credit for the course.
- I -- Only given in rare and emergency cases which require all legal documentations.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Professor D. Chang

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**OFFICE:** ZEB 355A, University Park Campus

**OFFICE HOURS:** T. 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

W. 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

R. 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

STILL LIFE PAINTING - OIL  
ARE 6926 SPRING 2017  
WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY 5:00 p.m. - 9:05 p.m.

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January 11	Introduction / Course Requirements / Handouts / Medium and Supplies Still life Painting throughout the History of Art
January 12	Demo / Value Palette / Volume / Perspective / Composition Observational Painting I <i>Home Studio 1 (Grad. 16 X 20 min. /undergrad. 12 X 16 min. keep ratio)</i>
January 18	Critique ( <i>Home Studio I with original print</i> ) Observational Painting I
January 19	Demo / Color Palette / Techniques / Observation / Texture / Edges Observational Painting II <i>Home Studio 2 (Grad. 16 X 20 min. /undergrad. 12 X 16 min. keep ratio)</i>
January 25	Observational Painting II
January 26	Observational Painting II
February 1	Critique ( <i>Home Studio 2 with original print</i> ) Observational Painting III
February 2	Observational Painting III <i>Home Studio 3 (Grad. 16 X 20 min. /undergrad. 12 X 16 min. keep ratio)</i>
February 8	Observational Painting III
February 9	Observational Painting IV
February 15	Critique ( <i>Home Studio 3 with original print</i> ) Observational Painting IV
February 16	Observational Painting IV
February 22	Final Critique (Presentation of Complete Portfolio)
February 23	Final Critique (Presentation of Complete Portfolio)