

Learn to draw & paint portraits with Michael Britton

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PORTRAIT PAINTING

The surest method of learning to paint portraits is by copying master paintings. It is here that you acquire both the technical skills and the language of painting.

In the workshop you will complete two paintings: the first is Edgar Degas' *Albert Melita*, the second will be John Singer Sargent's *Vernon Lee*.

You will learn how to draw with the brush, linear and blocking-in and proceeding with the Ebauche (dead coloring-in) and finishing with the overpainting paying attention to both structure, color harmony and the abstract structural surface of the paint.

Materials:

Two canvases or panels: 11x14 or 12x16". The canvases should be toned with an imprimatura before the class starts. See my video on applying an imprimatura at <https://www.artacademy.com/2021/imprimatura.html>

For oil a seasoned wood palette; for acrylic a plastic palette or dishes. Your palette should be a neutral gray color, avoid a white palette or those horrid disposable paper palettes.

Palette knife for mixing and painting. Two knives are always a treat!

Medium for oil: Linseed or walnut oil or stand oil, solvent (turpentine or odorless) plus a palette cup. Advanced artists can also consider Venetian Turpentine which is an oleo-resin in addition to oil and solvent.

Materials Cont'd:

Brushes: My personal preference are filbert bristle brushes. You can also use rounds and brights if they are your preference. At minimum you should have a range of eight brushes: two each of #4, #8, #14 and #20. Don't limit yourself to small brushes. You're much better off with larger (#14's and #20's) filberts. As with everything else in life you get what you pay for. Beginners should start with mid-priced bristle brushes.

Colors: Less is more! Beginning artists on a budget can use Winton or similar. However these are dyes that mimic pigment. Dyes are identified by the word 'Hue' in their color description. i.e., vermilion hue. Intermediate and advanced artists will benefit significantly with professional grade paints such as Rublev, Old Holland, Michael Harding or Williamsburg. Avoid Winsor & Newton, they are no longer what they used to be.

Following is my preferred basic palette of eight colors.

Titanium/Zinc white (Flake is best but \$\$\$\$!) The titanium mixed with zinc white somewhat emulates Flake White. Do not get pure Zinc white!

Titanium Nickel Yellow (Old Holland) or Lead Tin Yellow (Rublev). Beginners can either choose Naples Yellow or Cadmium Yellow Medium Hue.

Yellow Ochre (Natural or Pale)

Vermilion (much preferred over Cadmium Reds which have too harsh a bite for my taste)

Venetian Red

Burnt Sienna

Raw Umber

Green Earth (Terre Verte): Nice to have but not critical.

Ivory or Vine Black

Ultramarine Blue (optional)

Page 3 : Materials Cont'd:

Rags: Cotton or old t-shirts. Your rag is an important part of your painting kit. Try to avoid using paper towels. They are of limited use.

Thin knitting needle or wooden skewer for checking measures

12" black thread anchored with some kind of weight. (Plumb line)

And, last but not least, soap for cleaning your brushes and hands.

Snacks ... nice to have but not critical.

Your reference material will be emailed to you upon registration.