



Dundas Valley School of Art

Instructor: Jody Joseph

Class: Introduction to Modernism

About the class

These 2 paintings of the same still life set up were done over 300 years apart. How are they different? Alike? Is one better than the other?



In this class we will try to answer some of these questions as a way of helping you understand how painting changed at the end of the 1800s continuing through the mid-1960s. These changes led to many of the great painters and movements we love today: Impressionism, Matisse, Picasso, collage, Surrealism, to name a few.

The class is structured so that you get a chance to experiment with what you learn in your own painting or other artwork. The focus is on learning new painting tools, not on art history.

For example, look again at the 2 paintings above. Do they both have a sensation of space—that is, can you tell that some things are in front or on top of others? You are probably more familiar with the space-making tools the first painter uses (perspective, “shading.”) The space in the second painting does not feel as “deep,” but the painter (Matisse) still allows us navigate in the painting and understand the position of objects relative to each other. How he does this, and why his space feels compressed, or flatter, is one thing we’ll talk about in class.

The class is only 3 all-day sessions—an introduction. We’ll talk in the first part of the mornings, and look at lots of great art. Then you’ll have a chance to try out what you’ve learned. There will be a break for lunch. Bring a lunch or purchase one in town.

You do not need any special background for this course—it will be interesting to anyone who has painted and is willing to experiment!

Supplies:

You can work in the class in oil or acrylic paint.

Please bring your usual painting supplies to the first class: paints, brushes, something to paint on—canvas, paper, etc. I like students to start with the supplies they already have, and I’ll advise you individually from there, according to how you work and what additional supplies I think might help your development as a painter.

Some things everyone should bring:

Palette; Wood is fine. Big paper palette is okay—the larger the better. Glass palettes are great for oil paint, but you need thick glass with smoothed edges. You can buy a piece of glass that is thick enough, and which has finished edges at Ikea: <http://www.ikea.com/ca/en/catalog/products/00151452/>, and store it at DVSA between classes.

Palette knives—1 or 2-- the kind with the wood offset handle and a rounded-tip blade—like these. Check ones you have for creases in the blade—throw those out—blade should be flat.



Brushes: Flats are recommended—a small, medium and large one—like photos below, sizes for example, 4, 8 & 12, and whatever other brushes you like! (The ones in the photo are WN Artisan)



- Drawing materials--a small sketchbook and charcoal/pencils/ eraser--will also be used for note-taking
- Masking tape (not the green or blue stuff please!)
- Scissors
- Paper Towels (1 roll per painting--really!)

Oil paints (for those who use oil): Bring the colours you normally use. If you are just starting out with oil and want direction, you can try one of these palettes (but these are not "required" colours):

Simple "earth" Palette: Yellow Ochre, Cadmium Yellow Medium, Cadmium Red Light, Burnt Sienna, Black and White (and Ultramarine Blue if you like)

Acrylic paints (For those who use them--Your usual colours)

If you'd like to try my simple "earth" palette, include Yellow Ochre, Cadmium Yellow Medium, Cadmium Red Light, Burnt Sienna, Black and White.

NOTE on additional supplies for first class: A week or so before the first class, I will send enrolled students an e-mail with a list of any additional things to bring for class, such as still life supplies (some are also available to us in the school still life closet). I always bring extra of whatever we will be working with, and students in the class are generous about sharing.