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"Color and Value Portrait"



Time from start to finish = 2+ hours

You will need the following materials:

- Canvas panel
- Acrylic paint (Red, Yellow, Blue, Black, and White)
- Paintbrushes (various sizes)
- Water cup
- Papertowels
- Pencil
- Sharpie
- Watercolor paper or other scrap paper (for testing paint colors)
- A cell phone camera (optional)

Brief project description: This colorful portrait will show you how to make a vibrant painting using the different values of each hue.

Find a digital copy here: <https://www.artsplus.org/resources/visual-art-resources>

A few helpful tips before you start:

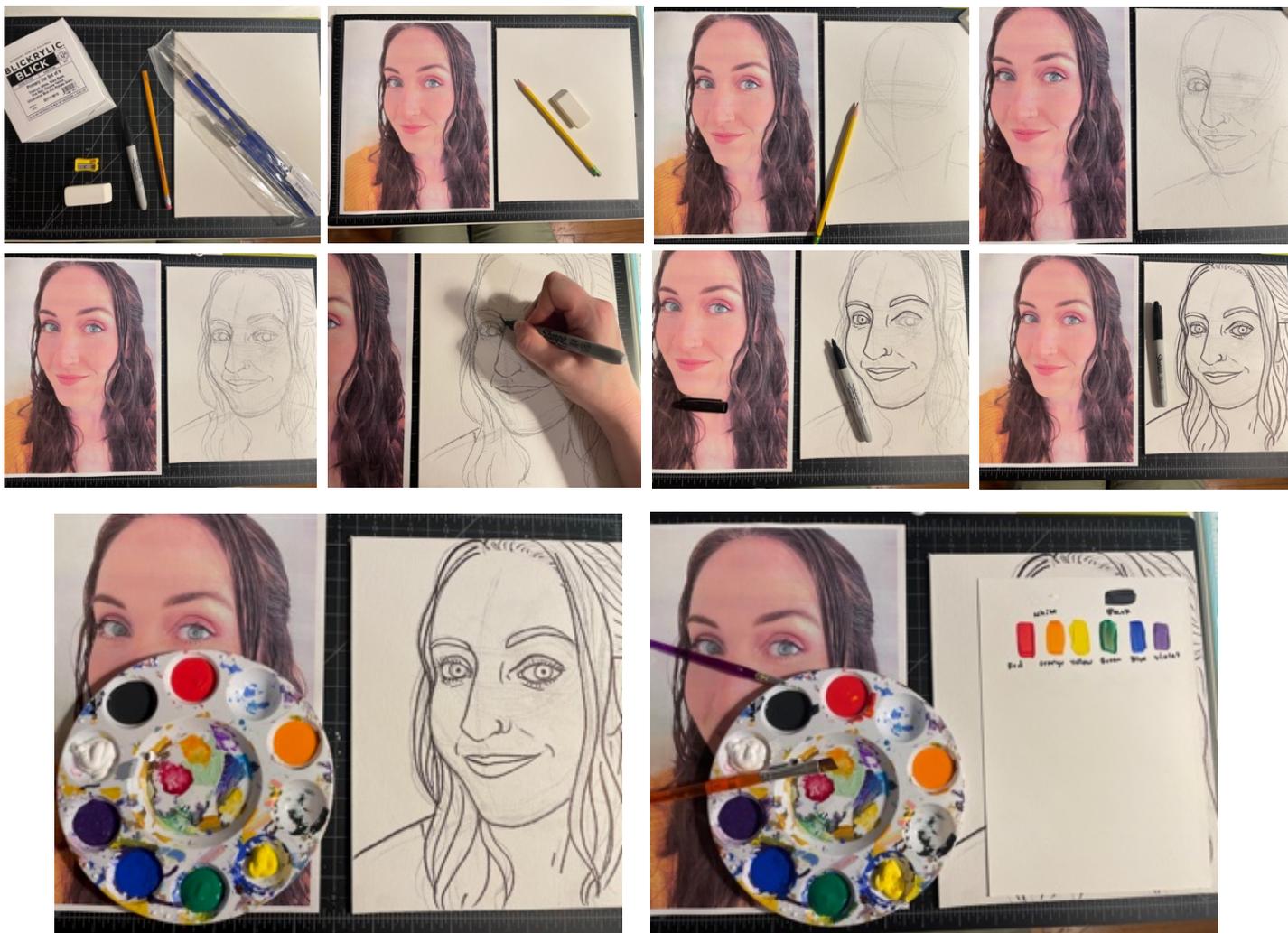
- If you have ever heard the term "value" used in art, you will know that it refers to the inherent lightness or darkness of how things appear. White is a light value and black is a dark value with various ranges of gray falling in between those two opposites. Color also has value associated with it. A pure color (a hue) can fall at various points along a value scale. Yellow will have a relatively light value (it is perceived lighter by the eye) and blue will have a darker value (it is perceived darker by the eye). You can also mix white with a color and lighten it's value by making it a "tint" (any hue mixed with white) or you can mix black with a color and darken it's value by making it a "shade" (any hue mixed with black).
- You can use a cell phone camera and set it to "black and white, "noir", or various other setting to change colors into gray-scale and see their perceived values.



PART 1: Initial sketch and choosing colors

Steps

- #1: Get started by setting out your canvas panel, pencil, eraser, and sharpie. Now choose an image you would like to paint. This example shows a portrait but this project can be done with any simple image. If you are intimidated by drawing a human face, don't worry! This project is more about color and less about making a perfect and accurate image. You can also do a self portrait by using a mirror as you work. For this example, a printed image was used to better show you the steps.
- #2: Once you've decided on an image, lightly begin drawing it out with a pencil on your canvas panel. Make your lines light and loose. Try to fill the entire panel! Once you have your pencil drawing finalized, go over your lines with a sharpie and clean up any messy marks. It's okay to leave the pencil lines since we will be painting over them.
- #3: When your drawing is complete, it is time to mix and choose colors! Grab your paint, cup of water, paintbrushes, and paper towels. You will also need something to mix your paint on. A paint palette works great but you can also use a paper plate or even a piece of wax paper! Use your colors to mix several hues: Red + Yellow = Orange, Yellow + Blue = Green, Red + Blue = Purple. You can also add white to any hue to make a tint, or add black to any color to make a shade. Play around and find some fun colors you would like to paint with. Make sure to wash your brush in the water and wipe it off on the paper towel before changing colors. Once you've chosen your colors, paint swatches of them and label them on a scrap piece of paper.



PART 2: Looking at color value and painting the portrait

Steps

- #1: Once your colors are painted on a scrap piece of paper, you can use your cell phone camera on a black and white setting to see the value of each color. If you do not have a phone camera to use, you can use this example to help you decide which colors are lighter and which are darker. A general rule is that yellows and oranges tend to be lighter, purples and blues are darker, and greens and reds are in the middle. If you mix white with a color it will make it lighter and if you mix black with a color it will make it darker. Once you've determined the value of each color, repaint the swatches in order from lightest to darkest and label them.
- #2: Now that you have your color palette, you can begin painting your portrait! You may find that will not use every color and that is okay! Only use the colors that you need to match the values in your image. The image in the example only has very small areas of dark value. Look at your chosen image and start by painting the areas that are lightest using your lightest value color. Next, paint your second lightest area and continue until you get to the darkest color. Typically, unless your image is extremely dark, you will not use solid black in any area and should opt for purple or blue instead.
- #3: Once you have your lightest to darkest colors laid out on your painting, begin blending the sections together carefully. This is easiest to do with a clean, dry brush. Using the dry brush, carefully blend along the edge where two colors meet. If you need to, you can take a small amount of the lighter color onto your brush and use it to help blend. Once everything is blended allow your painting to dry.
- #4 After the entire painting is dry, check your values using your cell phone camera again and adjust any areas that need it. You can also add final details with small areas of bright highlights and dark shadow areas. The final step is to go over your drawing lines again with the sharpie. Now enjoy your colorful painting! The reason the colors work so well and don't seem too chaotic or messy is because our eyes naturally see the value of each color and interpret the image as such!

