



Homework: Lesson 4

Painting Figures

This week's homework is to learn to paint figures bathed in light, not hidden in silhouette. This exercise will familiarise you with the composition of the human form, as well as helping you mix the right colours for skin tones.

Getting the right skin tone...

Mix yellow ochre and a touch of alizarin crimson, then compare it to your own skin tone to find a shade you like! You can always darken the skin tone by adding a touch of french ultramarine blue.



STEP 1

Start by painting the figure in skin tones only. Use a small brush around a size 6. First, paint the head. Here's a tip: paint an egg shape rather than a round one.



STEP 2

Now start on the body. Again, use a larger egg shape. Add a loose impression of the arms on each side.



STEP 3

Now it's time to add the legs. At this distance you don't need to add feet, just the two strokes to suggest legs. This will give the impression of the person walking.



STEP 4

Allow this to dry, then start to add in the clothing. I've gone for a crimson jacket, but you can choose whatever you want. Try adding a darker colour to suggest shadow where the arms are.



STEP 5

A mixture of blue and burnt sienna is a great dark colour, used here to paint the hair and trousers. Notice that I have painted a shadow from the person's feet; this is the same dark colour which has been watered away with a damp brush.

After that, your figure is complete! Experiment a little with different kinds of figures; add more people, perhaps a dog or a walking stick.



Push yourself to try new things, and above all - have fun! Keep an eye out for next week's homework, and happy painting!

Matthew Palmer

