Visual Art Classes

Course:
Painting: Master Copying at the Chazen
Program # 3426-15-LAAS
8 Saturdays, September 27-November 15, 2014, noon-3 pm
Chazen Museum of Art, 750 University Ave.

Instructor:
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A welcome note from your instructor:

Throughout history, artists have understood that to become a skillful, proficient draftsman the copying of master paintings is an invaluable training tool in the development of an artist. Through imitation and repetition, one is able to better understand how the masters solved the same problems that we as artists are confronted with today.

This class is an intermediate to advanced level class that is designed for students who already have an understanding of drawing and oil painting basics. The Chazen Museum is not an ideal venue for learning how to oil paint without any prior experience. Feel free to email or call me regarding any questions that you may have regarding materials, procedures, or anything at all.

Tips for success:

Practice painting from life….
Learning to paint is an evolving process that takes place over the course of a lifetime. Although copying a master painting is extremely beneficial, there is no one task or exercise that will teach you everything about oil painting. This class is most effective in conjunction with regular, routine painting from life with a variety of different approaches and subject matter. Learning the underlying theories involved in drawing and painting, in addition to learning how to see and interpret visual phenomena, will help to inform your museum copy.

Have an open mind….
In order to learn anything, you have to be willing to try new things and to step out of your comfort zone. Success doesn’t happen without failure, and if you’re afraid to fail, then you will be limiting the possibility of your personal growth.
Come prepared, and warmed up….
When you travel abroad to a country whose language you are proficient in, it may take a few days or weeks to begin to think in that language, and for it to feel intuitive. Working on a few paintings prior to the class will be immensely valuable in that you will naturally feel more fluent in oil paint. Additionally, stepping into this class with a foundation and some recent experience will inform you as to what questions to ask, and what issues you might be having.

Study master paintings….
Walk around the museum and pick out a painting or two that you would like to copy. Additionally, look through books and the internet at paintings and drawings that you like. If you know what you like and why, it will be much easier for you to make skillful, rhythmic paintings with clear goals in mind.

Show up ready to work….
Painting requires all of our mental faculties. When you are fully attentive and immersed, your work will be filled with a sense of clarity, energy, and purpose.

Most of all, have fun with it!
“Pretend you are dancing or singing a picture. A worker or painter should enjoy his work, else the observer will not enjoy it.” - Robert Henri

Supply List:

Note: All supplies are suggestions. Mention of a brand or retailer should not be considered UW Madison endorsements. Students may make substitutions.

Required Supplies:

Drawing Materials:
(Note: Students will need only drawing materials for the first week or two of class. Please ask if there are questions about the painting and transferring materials prior to purchasing.)

Travel easel
Drawing board
Strathmore Series 400 Drawing paper between 9" x 12" and 18" x 24" (or any smooth, Bristol equivalent)
Pencils 2H, HB, B, and 2B
Pencil sharpener or razor blade and sandpaper
Kneaded eraser
Large knitting needle or equivalent (a paintbrush works fine) for comparative measuring
Clips to clip paper to drawing board
Small handheld mirror

Transferring Materials:

Masking tape
Soft vine charcoal (several pieces) or graphite powder
2 Micron technical pens (size 01) or a bottle of India ink (black or sepia tone ) with liner brush or quill tip pen

**Painting Materials:**

Stretched, lightly toned, primed canvas (in proportion to size of drawing paper to comfortably accommodate size of drawing). Any support will work, as long as it is not too absorbent. Oil primed linen works best. Again, ideal size is between 9" x 12" and 18" x 24"
Gamsol (please no substitutions)
Handheld, sealed, wooden palette
Metal palette knife any size
Paper towels
Plastic bag for dirty paper towels
Palette cups

**Brushes:** A variety of brushes is preferable, namely filberts and rounds. I like Robert Simmons Signet for filberts, sizes 2, 3, and 5, and Princeton Summit synthetic rounds, size 1, for small details.

Oil paints: The brand doesn’t matter, so long as they are not student grade or water mixable. I like Gamblin for a high quality, inexpensive brand. Your palette will depend on the painting that you choose. A basic palette might include titanium white, raw umber, burnt umber, yellow ochre/raw sienna, cadmium yellow, cadmium red, cadmium orange, burnt sienna/venetian red, alizarin crimson, cobalt blue, ultramarine blue, ivory black, and viridian.

**Optional Supplies:**

Tracing paper (needed if student does not want to destroy original drawing in transfer and opts not to use a photocopy of original drawing)
Dropcloth

**Recommended Reading:**

Robert Henri, *The Art Spirit*
Richard Schmid, *Alla Prima*
Harold Speed, *The Practice and Science of Drawing*