Visual Art Classes

Course: Painting Realism in Oils and Acrylics  
Program # 3449-16-LAAS  
8 Fridays, Sept 25-Nov 13, 2015, 8 am-noon  
Humanities Bldg., Rm 7101, 455 N. Park St.

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A welcome note from your instructor:  
I am looking forward to teaching Realist Painting this coming semester and helping each of you reach your painting goals. In addition to whole class demonstrations I will concentrate on teaching each of you individually. Whether it is mixing better flesh tones, how to begin a painting, learning glazing techniques or how to transfer a drawing to canvas, we can do it all.

There are many different approaches to realist painting. I hope to help guide each of you through a process I feel would best be suited to your goals and the type of painting you want to create.

Tips for success:  
Students should come prepared to the first class prepared to paint.

You should bring your own photo-reference, still life objects or a reproduction of a masterwork to copy.

Most students work from photo-reference. Since realist painting relies heavily on good visual information the quality of photo you choose plays an important part in the technical success of your painting. It is best to work from a photo that doesn’t have flat black area in the shadows, has a good range of value (dark to light), and has a directional light source that defines volume and form rather than flash photography, which tends to flatten out the subject. It would be best to bring in several source photos to choose from.

Another tip for reference: some students bring in their laptop or iPad to work from which allows them to zoom in and lighten/darken the image in order to see more detail.

It is very useful to me if the student brings in examples of artists work they like and that shows me what direction they would like to take in their own work. These could be images on your smart phone, magazines or books. If you have images of your own work that would also be useful.
Visual Art Classes

A note about oil or acrylic: If you are interested in a very blended application of paint to achieve a high degree of realism I would recommend oil paint. Because of the slow drying time with oils it allows us to manipulate and blend after we have applied it to canvas.

Materials Fee: (Fees paid directly to instructor for course materials provided by instructor)
   Basic fee: None

Supply List (Bring your own)
Note: All supplies are suggestions. Mention of a brand or retailer should not be considered UW-Madison endorsements. Students may make substitutions.

Please note that the following supply lists, oil and acrylic, consist of some suggestions and that the student is not expected to purchase everything on the list. Most students already have painting supplies and may bring what they have.

Supply List-Oil
Paints: You may wish to purchase water mixable oil paints to avoid the use of solvents. The use of solvents requires ventilation.
Pigment suggestions: Titanium or Titanium/Zinc white, Ivory black, Yellow Ochre, Cadmium Yellow Pale, Alizarin Crimson, Cadmium Red Medium, Ultramarine Blue, Cerulean Blue, Raw Umber, Burnt Sienna, Sap Green
Brushes: In general oil brushes have long handles. Basically there are two types of brushes: sable or synthetic sable which are soft and bristle which are stiff. You should have a variety of types, sizes and shapes.
Supports: Get a size you are comfortable with. Supports can be primed canvas on wooden stretchers or gessoed hardboard/plywood panels.

Mediums and thinners for regular oils: Please avoid the use of turpentine in the studio.
Mineral spirits can be used to thin your paint and for clean up. It is best to purchase this at an art store and I would recommend Gamsol.
You can mix your own medium or buy a ready prepared medium.
I recommend Liquin original for glazing and highly detailed/refined work.
If you mix your own medium a common mixture is 50% Gamsol and 50% refined linseed oil.
Visual Art Classes

Mediums and thinners for water mixable oils: to thin your paint you will need Winsor & Newton Artisan “thinner” and any ready prepared artist painting medium or linseed oil for water mixable oil paints.

Miscellaneous: Palette (avoid watercolor palettes) you will need a large flat mixing area, sketchbook, drawing pencil and kneaded eraser, rags, palette knife, jar/can with lid to hold solvent or water, small cup to hold medium, brush soap.

Supply List – Acrylic
Pigment suggestions: see oil list

Brushes: In general, synthetic brushes and white nylon work best for acrylic painting. Get a variety of size and shape.

Supports: see oil list. Acrylics can also be used on watercolor paper.

Mediums: gloss, matte or gel mediums are available but typically water is used to thin the paint.

Miscellaneous: palette-I recommend the stay-wet palette for acrylics (avoid watercolor palettes as you will need a large flat mixing area), two water containers, palette knife, sketchbook, drawing pencil, kneaded eraser, atomizer, brush soap.