

Exploring Chardin Supply list and information— please read carefully!

Your first job is to find an image of a Chardin painting that moves you, and to find one that you think you could reasonably paint a “version” of in five days. Then, your next task will be to blow the picture up to the size you want for YOUR picture. This can be done with a photocopy machine, or by hand with a grid, or with one of many software programs out there for blowing up anything to whatever size you want on your computer and then printing it in sections. Then, this blown-up image will be transferred to your ***correctly-proportioned*** panel/canvas, and this drawing will serve as a GUIDE for your own objects that you will paint from life!

IF you do not have the means to enlarge your image, FEAR NOT, as I will have my projector and my laptop with me, and we can do this in class.

You will NOT be making a replica of a Chardin — but you WILL be paying very close attention to the painting you select as a “jumping off point.” Also, you will be using the EXACT proportions of Chardin’s original — even if you decide to paint it larger or small than the original.

As far as what props you use, feel free to attempt to replicate his props, or at least the spirit of them. Some of you will want to make a picture that could “pass” for an 18th century painting by selecting old-looking props; others will want to use modern props but still retain the all-

important Chardin spirit. I have a lot of props I can bring in if you need help.

Where does one get Chardin images? There are all sorts of books available, but the easiest source is, of course, the “images” section on google. Just enter Chardin and watch what comes up! Remember, many of the images will be repeats and some will be better resolution than others. And beware of google images that show every image in the world — including student copies of Chardin, not-really-Chardin Chardins, and paintings from the same century by other artists — make sure it is really by Chardin.

Also, be careful that you are not using a cropped image. Sometimes even museums will chop an inch off the sides just to make it fit in a catalogue, so try to compare a few images to make certain your image is not cropped.

This might sound complicated but it is not — and you WILL learn some powerful lessons by “stealing” the intervals and shapes from Mr. Chardin. Chances are you will not be able to make your props “fit” perfectly with Chardin’s design when you paint them from life, but it is still good to try!

Paint: Any artist’s oil paint is fine. I do not insist on everyone using Old Holland; on the other hand, cheap paint helps no one. I am sure that many of you use Windsor & Newton or Gamblin,

which are excellent too. I would not use anything by “Winton,” as it is the student grade of Winsor & Newton. But if this is all you have, you will not be turned away, shunned, or ridiculed. Just bear in mind that cheap materials can make everything harder to do.

As for which colors to bring, here are the usual ones I am sure most of you already have:

Flake White (lead) and Titanium White – both are important

Raw Umber

Burnt Umber

Raw Sienna

Burnt Sienna

English Red Light or any other iron oxide red

Cadmium Red Deep and/or Medium

Alizarin Crimson or anything else like it

Cadmium Orange

Cadmium Yellow light

Yellow Ochre

Cadmium Green (or equal to)

Viridian

Cerulean Blue (genuine)

Ultramarine Blue

Ivory Black

...And if this weren't enough, here are some others I like to have around for special situations:

Indian Yellow – not the real camel urine one, but any variety of the synthetic ones out there now. They can be incredibly different from one another, for instance, the Gamblin one is crazier in appearance than other brands. This color is excellent for adding warmth to shadows, and makes amazing high-key tints

.
Gamblin's Transparent Orange (mixture) – this has similar effects to Indian Yellow. Great for painting the sky, especially when you want to lighten the horizon but not turn it greenish. Also marvelous for tints.

Pthalo colors – these do have their place. If, for instance, you are painting colored glass, or Christmas ornaments, or toys, these colors are great. Otherwise, they can be a terror.

Cobalt turquoise - just beautiful. I like this for its unique coolness, especially in tints.

You can get by fine without these optional colors, but they are worth having.

If you have any other colors you love, bring them on. However, don't bring so many as to promote confusion and laziness in color mixing.

NOTE! If your objects to be painted do not require a full, open palette,(you are bringing your own props) then you are NOT required to bring the whole list! Bring only what you know you will need, and then maybe a few extras. Or, if you are a limited palette person, that is fine too -- but your limited palette should be made of colors that can easily "reach" the colors of your objects-- thus, if you have a brilliant red tomato, but only some Burnt Sienna, you may find yourself "running out of chroma", so be reasonable.

Mediums:

As for painting mediums, this is so personal that I cannot insist on one kind. However, I recommend that you try all of the Gamblin products. My favorite is the Neo-Megilp, because it doesn't dry

as fast and feels less like plastic. The Galkyd slow-dry is also good, but something of a misnomer – all of these speed up your drying time. I think the Galkyd light is the fastest dryer in the universe.

If someone has some cobalt drier, please bring it and we can all pitch in for a few drops.

Regular cold-pressed linseed oil is a must, and maybe stand oil or sun-thickened as well.

If you have any top-secret old master concoctions, bring them.

One reason you must have something that dries pretty fast (in a day) is because we will be painting FAST, and will be painting with some “layering” effects and with some glazing and scumbling. Chardin was revolutionary in his techniques as well as with his designs, so it is a good idea to try to achieve some of his magic by using indirect techniques.

Brushes: Bring your favorites, but those who only paint with bristle brushes should get some soft-hair brushes (white nylon, sable, etc). Conversely, sable-lovers should also have some

bristle brushes. I love the bristle-synthetic blend brushes from Utrecht (with the orange handles).

I am assuming that everyone knows the differences in shapes of brushes, so I'll only say that you should have the usual assortment of rounds, flats, etc. There's a much unfairly scorned brush – the fan brush – that I'd like you to have. It has its use like everything else. If you can, try to get the biggest and best one you can afford – some of the best ones are made of Badger hair. The soft hair fan brushes are usually better for blending (on a small scale) than those made of bristle. Also, I recommend small watercolor brushes for detail. These do not have to be supreme quality -- how about those little red-handled "University" ones by Windsor and Newton? Those are fine - once you trash it, you just buy a new one anyway.

THE ALL- IMPORTANT BRUSH WASHER.. Be sure to bring a brush washer. Do NOT bring a little paper cup, or a dipper cup from your palette, and then say, "here is my brush washer." This will not do!

Do not use turpentine in your brush washer; use Gamsol. If you do not have a brush washer (brush

tank), then make one out of a coffee can and a tuna can with holes punched in it, or, easier yet, just buy one of those “sillicol” brush washer jars with the metal coil inside – those are fine and are inexpensive (note: do not buy the silicol solvent, as you cannot paint with it!) Whatever you bring, make certain that it can be CLOSED when not in use.. otherwise we will be an unhappy fumigated bunch of termites, and that is no fun. A few classes ago, some people had to leave due to too much evaporated solvent . **PLEASE**, then, have a proper washer!

SUPPORTS (OR, WHAT TO PAINT ON)

We will be making ONE picture in FIVE days. Unlike other classes/forced labor camps I have taught/inflicted in the past, this one is about ONE picture, so this is all the more reason to get a nice support upon which to paint. And remember — you **MUST** be able to cut down your panel or canvas, to the correct proportions of the Chardin picture you have selected. This is why I like to use panels for this project, because it is easier to modify them. Here are some suggestions:

1) Centurion OPDLX (“oil primed deluxe”)....these are the bomb. They come in many sizes and can be easily cut down, if need be. I find the surface to be almost perfect. You will want to buy a whole bunch of these for your other paintings — so far I am yet to meet a painter who doesn’t like these! They are inexpensive too.

2) Gessobord -- I love this stuff, and the price is right too. Remember, there are other similar products that look like it; many of them are too slick and do not perform as well. The real one is called GessoBORD, and it is made by Ampersand. By the way, they also make custom sizes -- up to four by eight feet -- give them a call and they will blab all day about it in a very civil manner.

3) I love the Frederix's Lead-primed linen canvas board. These are really nice, but can be very thirsty -- usually, after you have done a layer of paint (your underpainting), they become less absorbent and behave very nicely. These you can order on-line through Jerry’s.

4) Of course there is the usual stretched canvas and stretcher bars -- no problem -- but for such a

meaningful project, do NOT buy a cheap cotton duck acrylic-primed student whatchamajigger. Get something nice!

And remember — this picture MUST be at least VERY CLOSE to the proportions of the Chardin you have selected.

Don't bring in a 16x20 when the original was 17x21 — this will not work! Thus, look into panels. Most can be cut down with a utility knife.

As a final possibility, here are two excellent companies for custom sizes:

New Traditions Art Panels, Inc.

3006 South Scott Lane #101

West Haven, Utah 84401

801-732-0208

newtraditions1@comcast.net

www.newtraditionsartpanels.com

SourceTek
P.O. Box 14765
Scottsdale, AZ 85267-4765
Phone: (480)483-6883, (800) 587-5462
FAX: (800) 298-3019
www.canvaspanels.com

HOW BIG? Part of the goal of this class is to really explore the design genius that is Chardin, and for that reason I would try to make your picture the same size as the original painting you have chosen to investigate. Sometimes Chardin would make the objects in his painting **LARGER** than life-size (check out the size of those pears in the painting in the Met!), and sometimes he would make everything quite smaller than life-size. Remember — small pictures can be beautiful, so do not feel the need to make a gigantic painting in five days. Remember — larger or small than the original, the canvas must have the same proportions— height times width! (Sorry for sounding like a broken record but this really is important!).

Do you see now why it is good to use panels? Because they can be cut down to exactly what you want. How many times have we made a

picture with stretcher bars, and wished we could chop off that tiny amount on one side? With panels you can do this.

TONE OR NOT TO TONE?

You are free to tone your canvas with some brownish/grayish *imprimatura*. I like mine around value seven, or sometimes even a bit darker. It's personal, but I think since we will be painting with raw umber first in a broad manner, it is good to have something besides stark white.

Other things that I assume you already have ...

- Drawing paper and transfer paper or conte-crayon or compressed charcoal for transferring, if you wish to draw on paper first before transferring to canvas;
- Rags or paper towels (Viva are my faves);
- Dipper cups;
- A palette -- glass, wood, whatever, but everyone should at least try using a palette that is holdable --so you can see what you are doing;
- A maul stick, if you are so inclined (all right, they do have their use);

Questions? CALL ME at 646-894-8778 or
518-758-8884 (my studio) and we'll gab some
more if you want.

JOHN