

**TOPICS
FOR PAINTING
PAINTINGS
AND
POSSIBLE
QUESTIONS**

COLOUR

One could ask why this or that colour is chosen. To find an answer (besides personal preferences) might be confusing. A classical painting starts with grisaille. That is easy because it is all about black and white. Grisaille is about finding light and shadow relations, about tones and about rendering shapes. When I don't know which colour palette to choose or what is the colour of this or that object, shape, situation, field, I will go for a black and white palette. I would use grey.

An advanced painter would comment as "which kind of grey?". If you mix grey yourself and you don't use lamp black, there would be all possible greys. And their difference can be dramatic. Which leads to the question: "why this grey or that?".

(Or perhaps I am just lazy with cleaning my brushes so that I would go for a very desaturated palette. Marlene Dumas says that it is her secret of the harmonic palette; she never cleans her brushes. I am personally a fan of dusty colours, maybe because I don't know how to deal with bright primary colours).

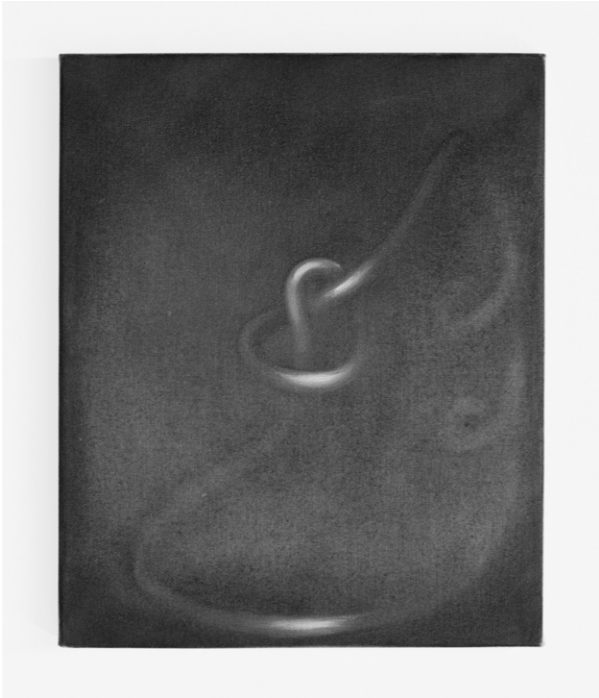
Back to real colours: I am afraid of using pink and red. One could say, "pink is so girly". Then I would compensate it with blue. When you mix blue and red, you will get purple, that would satisfy all kind of audiences. Although one could say it is a colour of insanity, I am okay with that. Another option would be to use complementary colours. Violet complements yellow. Green complements red. Orange complements blue.



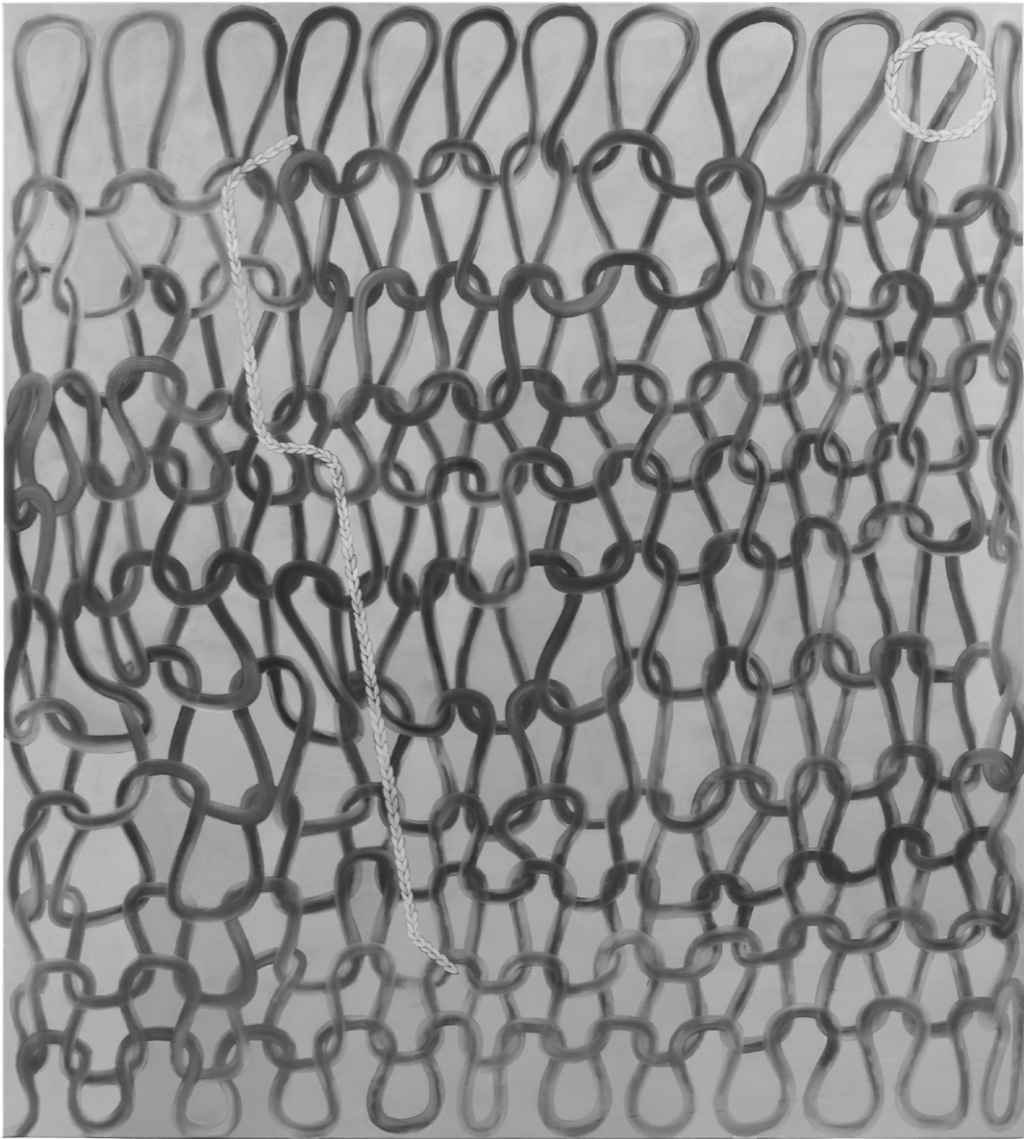
Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres and workshop, "Odalisque in Grisaille", c. 1824—34



Kast, 1690–1720. The ornament executed in grisaille (here: blue-gray, black, and white).



BACK, 37 x 30 CM, OIL ON CANVAS, 2018



MEGA KEY, 200 x 180 CM, OIL ON CANVAS, 2017

KNIT

SEE: TWIST (P. 6)

KNOT

Imagine a transparent polyester canvas. It is light, and you don't have to ground it before painting with oil since it is just 100 % polyester. It would be great to work with transparency. Transparency is when you see a front side and a back side at the same time. Easy with clothes — you would know that the side where stitches and knots are, is the back side. Bad side. Hidden side.

SEE: TURN (P. 6)



LANDSCAPE (MODE)

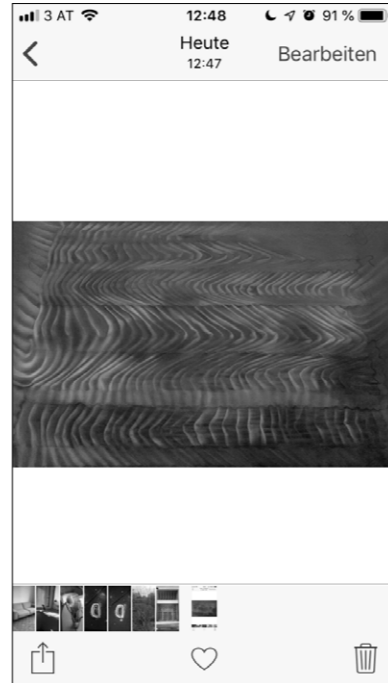
SEE: TURN (P. 6)



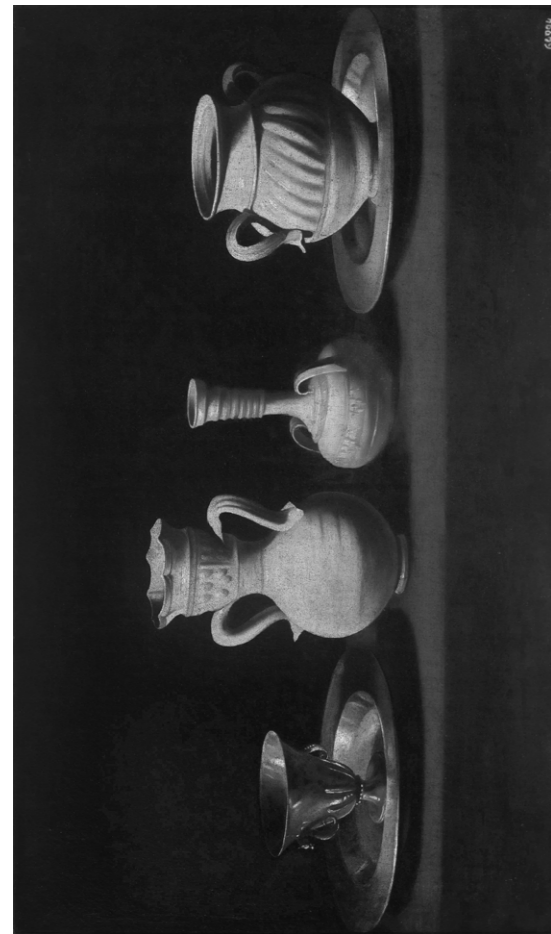
Augustus Egg, "The Travelling Companions", 1862



Miyoko Ito, "Island in the sun", 1978



PAINTING DRAPERY, 130 x 200 CM, OIL ON LINEN, 2019



Francisco de Zurbarán, "Still Life with Vessels", c. 1650

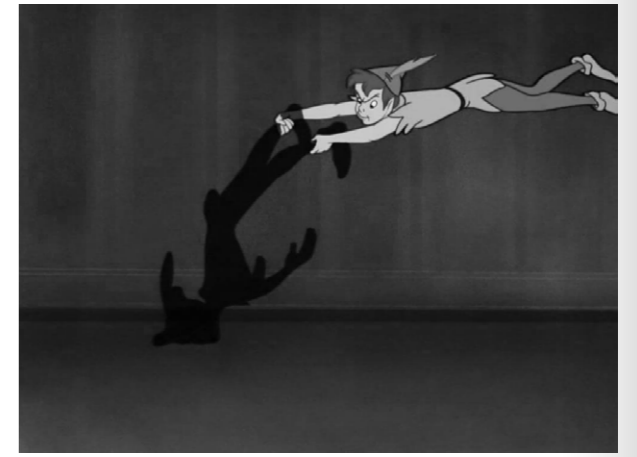
SHADOW

Running along its entire side was the name of the moving company in yard-high blue letters, each of which (including a square dot) was shaded laterally with black paint: a dishonest attempt to climb into the next dimension.

— Vladimir Nabokov, "The Gift", 1937

Consequently I used to tell my friends that the inventor of painting, according to the poets, was Narcissus, who was turned into a flower; for, as painting is the flower of all the arts, so the tale of Narcissus fits our purpose perfectly. What is painting but the act of embracing by means of art the surface of the pool? Quintilian believed that the earliest painters used to draw around shadows made by the sun, and the art eventually grew by a process of additions.

— Leon Battista Alberti, "De Pictura", 1435



Scene from Walt Disney's "Peter Pan", 1953

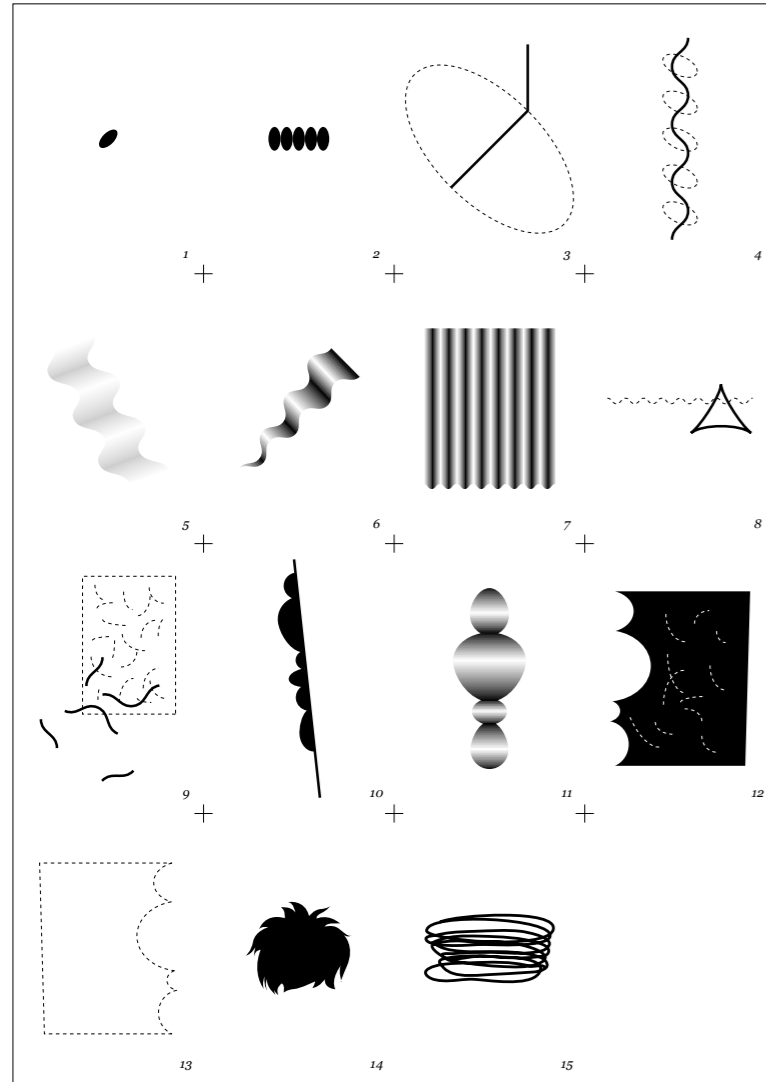
SKILL

There is something which is bothering me about the term "skill". The main point is that by the time the painting is finished, this skill I learned in order to finish it is not necessary anymore. It is a one-way skill. Like a one-way glove. I would need to start another painting and start solving it, and answering it, and having another discussion with it. By the time it is done, this solution is not needed any more. For it is impossible to repaint the same painting. Even if I decide to do it, I would be occupied with a slightly different question and different problem. Like: why would I paint now the same painting, what does it mean? So I have to paint it differently. That is what they call in German "Unikat". Unique and lonely skill.



Claude Monet, "Monet's Shadow on the Lily Pond", c. 1920

TURN



OLAD (ONCE THE LION AND THE DOT WENT FOR A WALK) 1-15, 2015

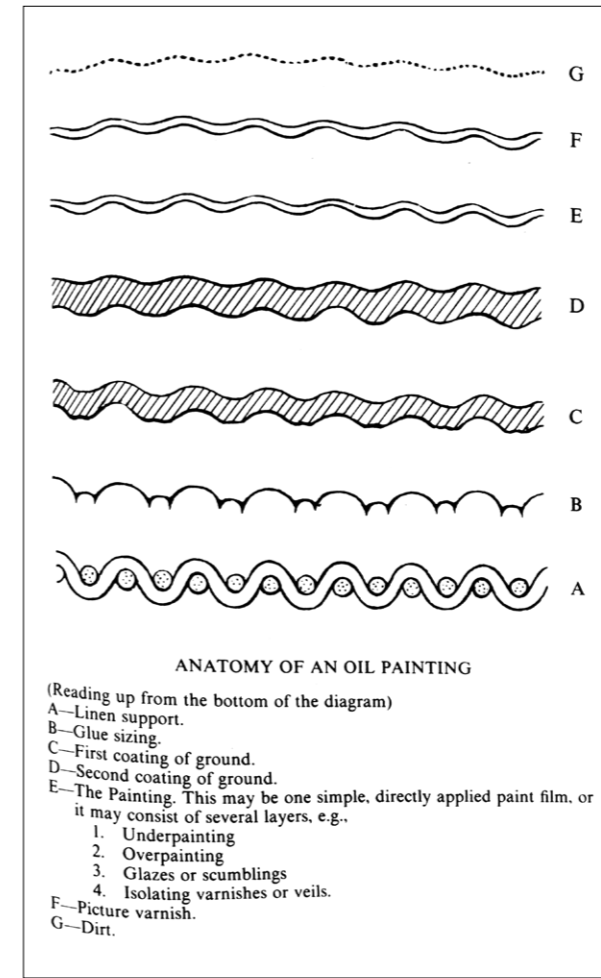
TWIST

When you examine an object visually from the outside, you would also like to test its flexibility: by bending, stretching, squeezing and twisting. Then — what a twist! — think about crossed fingers, a gesture which is usually used to wish good luck. Or even better, like you would be a child, cross your fingers behind your back so you can lie and that would be OK. As in painting, you lie (often), and that is OK.

SEE: XX (P. 8)

VASE (BRUSH BOUQUET)

Sophia M. visited me in the studio. I complained about being stuck in my system of made-up rules. I wanted to paint flowers but I couldn't. Sophia said I should just paint them if I want. But there was no reason why I would paint flowers. Why would one in 2019 paint flowers? We talked about "masterpiecing" and about fear of doing things without explanation. Eventually, I was convinced there is nothing bad about flowers in 2019. I imagined a beautiful little canvas with flower bouquet — airy white background, yellow narcissi (talking about self-reflection!). The reality was, I had no little canvas and no narcissi. I marked the size of the imaginary little canvas in the middle of a bigger one. Another compromise was that the only thing I could make a bouquet from were my brushes. While painting suddenly everything made sense. It was a perfect joke — to paint brushes with painting brushes.



"The Artist's Handbook of Materials and Techniques", Ralph Mayer, Viking, 1991

WAVY LINE

On the left is an image from "The Artist's Handbook of Materials and Techniques", showing a section of a painting. The wavy line is the base, the canvas fibre. It is a curtain and a drapery. It is a line which is, in fact, longer than it seems. It needs to be wavy to fit into this space. Straighten this line, and the path wouldn't seem so tangled.

WIRE

In the Black Room from Boscotrecase the device of the dado supplies the familiar link between the chamber and the scene "beyond" its walls, only now the space "behind" the dado is built up through subtler means than perspective lines and plunges.

Its expansiveness is conveyed by freeing the fictive space from the force of gravity. Columns become tendrils and weightless stalks made of substance half way between vegetable life and metal. In this cage-like space hover birds — swans, but also parakeets and griffins; it is aerial space, free of the earth, where columns rise not as stone but as sap. Forms merge into each other without obstruction from the logic of combination or scale: reeds are put in the place of columns, fluted appendages with curly leaves and volutes are put instead of pediments, candelabra support representations of shrines, and on top of their pediments are numerous tender stalks and volutes growing up from the roots.

— Norman Bryson, "Looking at the Overlooked: Four Essays on Still life painting" (Reaktion Books Ltd, 2012), in "Xenia", p. 41—43

SEE: WAVY LINE



BRUSH BOUQUET, 60 x 70 CM, OIL ON CANVAS, 2019



Andrea Mantegna, "Lamentation of Christ", c. 1480



The Black Room" at Boscotrecase, last decade of the 1st century B.C.

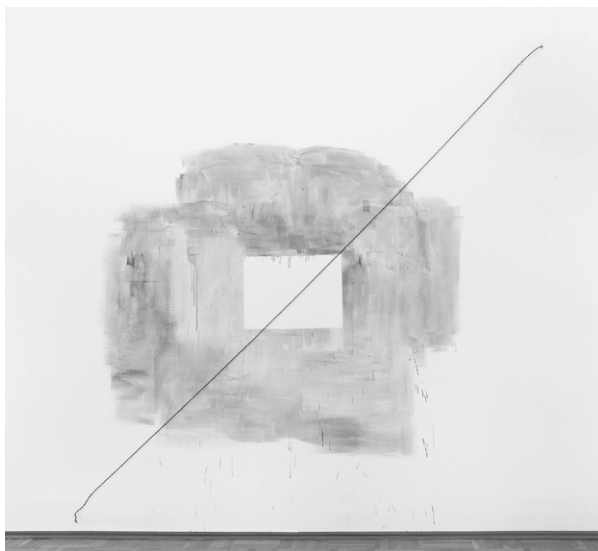
XX

According to Russian Suprematists, crosses are the most stable shape, which holds the whole composition. X is two diagonal lines, and I would agree more with Joëlle Tuerlinckx when she is using her diagonal threads as negation.

X is an absence. Very confusing, when you think about ballot papers or some application form, where you have to put X as your choice. I would read it as "no way!!!" Interesting, that crisscross is not just a mark, but two marks. Like you are really sure about your decision. You pronounce it twice. I don't know what to do with this background — I paint X instead, I cross it out. I would not know what to paint — I paint X! Or XX. Or "kiss kiss". Or crisscross.

And what is space anyway if not the body's absence at every given point?

— Joseph Brodsky, "To Urania", 1981



Joëlle Tuerlinckx, "Tache d'atelier chocolat barrée rouge", Galerie nächst St. Stephan, 2005