

MALDORF CLEARING HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Notes on Painting with
Grades 6 - 8, from the
course with Frau Jünemann
at the Tobias Art School,
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Story from the Highland Hall
Rose Ceremony by Dana Williams.

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We began with an exercise in the primary colors which were not allowed to mix. These revealed qualities of cold/warm, heavy/light, major/minor.

Then we made an exercise with the three primary colors and the three secondary colors. This was richer but darker because the yellow had sacrificed itself to make the green and orange.

In the third exercise we repeated stages one and two, and then added the other primary colors to "kill" the pure colors until a grey was produced all over the paper; this revealed itself as different shades of grey.

The first exercise showed the colors in their physical aspect and in their strength they "attack" the eye. The grey exercise showed the colors at rest. Turner uses grey to bring up the other colors in a new way.

Goethe brought something new into painting for before his time painters had simply worked out of tradition. At 40 he went to Italy to study painting and gave up after two years. He asked the painters why they chose certain colors. Steiner indicates that no one could paint nature at that time. Claude Lorraine discovered how to paint light qualities in Italy during the Romantic period which was the time when man's relation to nature entered a new stage. Then Goethe began to work with his color theory: black and white as the basis for color. Before he died he felt that this was his best contribution: painters would know, not just from tradition, how to use colors, how to reinforce them by the use of the complementary color.

Painting with 6th - 8th grades: The smaller children have to live out of the soul into the color. After the 12th year the theme is the moods of nature. We have to use the grey.

Age 7 - 9: the child lives in rhythm

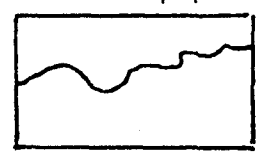
Age 9 - 11: the soul penetrates the muscles out of the temperament and rhythm of the child's organism in an individual way: karma may be said to begin with this individual step.

Age 12 - 14: The soul is nearer to the material of the physical body, to the bones, to the darkest part in us, but not yet resting in it: the child's soul "slips through" and he sees the world in its reality. This is the stage when we can begin to speak of cause and effect, and here the work with light and shadow begins.

At this stage they will be fascinated by their own shadow, will first notice how the tram rails go away into perspective. For the first time shadow is the leading factor to bring the child into the spatial element. Look at the shadow in the classroom. The soul elements die away in 5th but they become thinking qualities instead. At 14 a new imaginative quality is born and they can become creative and go on painting. In Geography the painting of maps becomes very important. The Moods of Nature is important because the students have changed, they are more closed off from the world and struggle with their moods. The volcanoes, ice and storms are all inside them. This brings the feelings into the objective to heal them. Now they are "solid" inside and can now see the real world. Before this they can see things which are not physical because they themselves are not fully physical yet.

We begin in 6th grade with the shadow drawing to prepare for this new style of painting.

LANDSCAPE: Paint a pale red wash over the paper. The line is a lie in in painting, but where two colors meet as at the horizon we can form a composition. Is the sky area to be larger than the land, or vice versa? Such a line inspires the eye to create. Draw a line across the paper two thirds down from the top. Turn it upside down. Which is to be the sky and which the land? Such paintings can be done from 4th grade up. Paint the Sussex downs in different shades of green, and make the sky grey as on a cloudy rainy day.



GEOLOGY AND EUROPEAN GEOGRAPHY: In landscapes we usually start with the earth, but here we start with the sky using cobalt blue. We want to paint white cliffs of chalk, How do we do it? Leonardo looked at a woman in a white dress in a field and he saw all the colors in the shadows of the dress. We leave the cliff area white and fill in the sand and/or the sea at the bottom. Then we add the shadows in the cliffs very pale in blue, pink, yellow. Darken top and bottom if you lose the cliffs. Paint this again in different weather conditions; this is good for their soul education. Some children will repeat the same picture and are unable to change the mood yet. This is because they are younger and their forces are not yet quite free to change the mood. You can talk about it as you review all the paintings the next week, notice it and then wait. The teacher must guard the processes going on in the child and painting will always help you to learn what is going on in the children. Therefore it is always best for the classteacher to do their own painting class and not have a specialist. If there is a special painting teacher they must keep in very close contact with the classteacher.

Then a picture was made of the red cliffs at Torquay, vermillion red with prussian blue shadows, dark sea and a pale early morning light with orange, yellow and pale green. The earth is still cool in the morning while it is warm in the evening.

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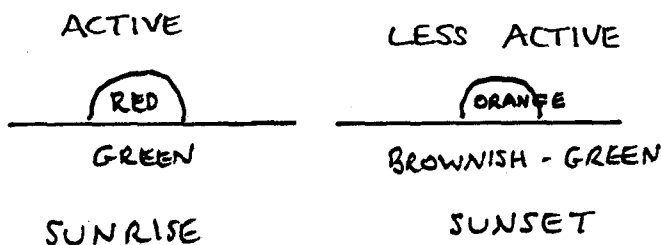
Our authority is based on the meeting of what the children think and what they do. In Astronomy and Physics we take what they have observed and work with it. Discuss with them what they have seen with a sunset and sunrise, and as we lead them on to a new understanding of it we build up a new kind of authority with them.

SUNSET: Later in the day it becomes golden, the room gets dark, but the colors in the sky get warmer. In the Goethe color theory the light is enhanced because it has to go through a thick atmosphere through white, yellow, orange and red as it gets nearer to the earth. "The light suffers from the darkness" (Goethe). Red is a fight between dark and light. Show this with a water prism with soap in it or layers of paper over a light source. The astronauts saw colors looking down on the earth, but the moon was black and white because there was no atmosphere. Water, according to Steiner, is the real medium for color; the rainbow and color mediate between two worlds. The astronauts saw darkness shining in the light with warm colors; going back to the earth, going from light to dark, they saw the blue-violet colors. Look at the windows of the room through a prism and note how the light moves in a particular direction.

EXERCISE 1: A gradation of cadmium pale from a center out to the lightest on the edge. Add a darker yellow and a vermillion at the center, but keep the gradation just as subtle from center out to edge. It is a good exercise for melancholics who get too caught up in their head; all children at 12 can be too tight and this will loosen them up.

EXERCISE 2: Sunrise or sunset, a free exercise. This was for the teachers on the course, and we were not too successful with this because the details we put in the picture conflicted with what we were trying to do with the light.

We tried this again, but this time following the indications of Steiner. He indicated that at the end of Kali Yuga the light processes changed: sunrise has forces behind it in quite a different way than before. Henni Geck was given exercises to do with her painting students and they had to go out and see the sunrise. Steiner made various sketches for pupils to follow. Compare orange and vermillion spots of color: the red comes forward and expands while the orange is more peaceful. For sunrise you have to take the activity to express something coming into being. Use the color itself, do not try to imitate how we find it in nature. Steiner takes a new aspect not of naturalism, but going from the characteristic of the color. Landscape is not important for him. This work is for the adults. In classes after Sixth Grade you can use this for a new activity, a real color experience. Look at sunset and sunrise by Monet and Turner, but Steiner's indications are a new impulse which the Waldorf teacher should work with.



Still working from the theme of the Astronomy block in 6th grade, the moon offers many possibilities for variation. Pale morning moon. Golden moon. Rainbowed moon. Steiner again gives a new beginning, not from realism but from a color situation. Adults have to develop this. Paint a round moon in yellow, highlight it in orange, surround it delicately in blue with a smooth pale transition. Add more yellow to the moon. Add violet to the blue with a touch of red. Blue is all surrounding now. It's the light in the darkness that is round the moon that is interesting. Earth is the darkest. Or paint snow with a dark sky and stars and moon, a misty moon, or high and clear. Try a summer scene with carmine under Prussian Blue. Try clouds, winds, mist. Begin with a simple exercise to concentrate on the important task of the light. Try a cold silvery light on water, or a desert with sharp shadows. The moon's shape must be really round, the children don't observe this. Earth should be the solidest part. You will find that you will often see the violet anyway in your blue because it is the complementary color to the yellow.

Light and shadow forms the theme for painting from the Sixth Grade up. The first exercise on shadow and light was given in the Hague in Van Bemelen's class. See how light models the curtains. Rudolf Steiner shaded in white on the blackboard so that the vertical lines of the curtain come out. He pictured a sponge on top of a vertical stem - it became a tree. We would never have this idea which has an element of shock. We must learn to look afresh at light and shadow.

Start with this principle in Sixth Grade - never ask them to live out of the color. Let them experience the world in terms of light and shadow, and this continues into the upper school.

EXERCISE: Simple trees, such as the poplar which has an upright gesture. Napoleon planted them down roads in Europe, so this can fit in with European Geography. Vary the sizes or give an impression of perspective. Do not make them too small and be sure to indicate where the light source is, vary the green on the light and on the shadow side. The leaves move like the aspen, a silvery shade with light blue. Study Monet's. Do not put a shadow on the ground yet.

Intersperse such exercises with charcoal work. You must always draw the children's attention to cause and effect to see how the exact situation of the light will be. Astronomy and the connection of earth and sky is what is important for the children at this stage: to keep a connection with the sky and see the effects on earth.

Black and white actually begins in Sixth Grade but it takes a new turn in 9th Grade. See the lectures which were given at the end of Discussions with Teachers. (These are not published with the English text but are available from Michael Hall School in England.) Class 9 should have two hours every afternoon for four weeks to develop the faculty for seeing how the shadow of a ball falls on the floor or on the wall. They have done it before, but now it is developed further.

EXERCISE: Pale carmine is painted all over the page. Paint woods of fir or beech. Imagine beech woods in spring or summer. You are enclosed in dappled light. Or at evening where you see a meadow outside in the sunlight and you stand in the shadow in the wood. The students are becoming "housed" in their bodies now, and this complements their situation, a polarity of world and self.

Develop this exercise with a class in several steps over several weeks. You can meet the temperamental needs in your variations as well, using the seasons. The children gradually begin to grasp space in a new way.

THE PAINTING OF MAPS: Steiner indicated this as very important, yet it is often neglected. Fourth grade begins with this type of experience and may draw a garden with a fence with strange perspective. Before this pictures had only top and bottom. Compare the development in form drawing from line to space, from angle to triangle. This has to do with the loosening of the Etheric. Go to an upper point or a window above and look down. See what they do by themselves after an excursion. One girl drew stags which were not there; a boy put in a truck which he had seen near his house. They mix up what they think about with what they see. Modern children are map-conscious, but it is the process of the painting of maps which counts. What do people live on in mountain areas, by the sea, etc? These are the social aspects. Steiner indicates that we should combine geographic situations with artistic work. We should follow the direction and gesture, as for example in the interaction of water and earth. Study how the water builds up a bay, how a river silts up or eats away its banks, how the granite rocks of France are beaten on by the Atlantic.

