



# The Underpainting Technique

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# The Underpainting

- ▶ In painting, an underpainting is a first layer of paint applied to a canvas or board and it functions as a base for other layers of paint. It acts as a foundation for your painting and is a great way to start your painting off with some built in contrast and tonal values.



# Venetian Method

- ▶ In the early 16th century, Titian and Giorgione developed the Venetian approach to oil painting.
- ▶ The underpainting was a core feature of the Venetian Method, and was often executed in opaque colour, rather than neutral greys.





# Renaissance

- ▶ Underpainting is a painting technique made popular in the Renaissance in which you create a monochrome tonal rendering of a work before applying the full range of colours.



# "Dead Coloring," or Underpainting

- ▶ After the initial outline drawing was completed, Vermeer began the "dead coloring" (or underpainting as it is called today), one of the most important stages in his working procedure. Without a thorough knowledge and mastery of the underpainting technique, the extraordinary unity which characterizes Vermeer's most mature pictures may not have been easily achieved.





# Colours

- ▶ Underpaintings are most often executed using browns, such as umbers and siennas (known as *Imprimatura*), or black-and-white (known as *Grisaille*).



# Tonal Rendering

- ▶ The underpainting is a fairly complete tonal rendering of the final painting. This allows you to concentrate entirely on the tonal relationships of your composition, without having to worry about colour. It can be overwhelming trying to figure out both the tonal and colour relationships in a painting at the same time.

# Grisaille

- ▶ Some very famous artists have painted using a process called grisaille
- ▶ Grisaille painting (it's pronounced 'griz-EYE') is done when an artist uses a limited palette related to one color like gray to create a painting's first layer, called the underpainting.
- ▶ Grisaille results in a detailed image that looks like a carefully rendered marble statue lacking any color. In fact, grisaille is a French word meaning 'gray.'



# French word

- ▶ In fact, grisaille is a French word meaning 'gray.'
- ▶ During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Northern Europe, artists often used the grisaille method.

# First Color

- ▶ the first layer of color. In this indirect approach to oil painting, each layer of color is applied gradually. The layers become more and more transparent as they are applied.

# Second Colors

- ▶ After the first layer of color has dried, I then move on to second color in which the colors on the figure get more specific, and we bring the figure to an overall finish.



# Final Touches

- ▶ the last part of the oil painting.
- ▶ the final glazes and highlights, and bring the background to a finish.



The End