

December-19



Dear Club Members,

Colour theory and art go hand in hand, all the great painters have a very clear understanding of how to use colour to bring their painting to life. How we think about colour has changed over time (I wrote an article for Ply magazine, which was published on their blog, there's a link in the Further Reading section.) But one of the key changes in recent history was the development of complementary colour theory. By arranging colours on a colour wheel, the colour that is on the opposite side of the colour wheel provides the greatest contrast.

The Impressionists were amongst the first to notice that shadows are not neutral, but instead are the complementary shade of the object casting the shadow, eg a yellow object casts a purple shadow. By using this theory they created painting with great vivacity. The Impressionists were a group of painters, primarily based in Paris, who produced work from the 1860s. The painters tended to work in the open air rather than a studio, working quickly, with loose brushwork, and a focus on capturing the fleeting quality of light.

One of the leading impressionists was Pierre Auguste Renoir, he died one hundred years ago on December 3rd 1919. Born in Limoges, south-west France in 1841, poverty forced him to finish his education early, and he became a painter in the nearby porcelain factory. As a young man he moved to Paris to begin studying painting, despite frequently not having enough money to buy paint. In 1869 he started sketching with Claude Monet, and the two men together developed the techniques that will come to characterise the Impressionist style.

Over his lifetime he evolved to paint in many different styles, at one point almost completely abandoning Impressionism and going back to the style of the old masters and focusing on technical accuracy of draughtsmanship. The reception at the time was not enthusiastic, and he gradually went back to the looser style seen in his earlier paintings.

One of the things I love most about Renoir's paintings is their punchy use of colour. Our inspiration this month comes from the beautiful shades of blue he uses as shadows when painting trees, combined with the vibrant lime green he used for the leaves. At this darkest time in the year in the Northern Hemisphere think of this as a promise of spring to come.

Happy Spinning

Katie

Further Reading-

My article on the evolution of Colour theory for Ply Magazine Blog- <https://plymagazine.com/2018/11/the-power-of-colour/>

March 2017 Time Travellers Club- Issac Newtown and his work on light
https://www.hilltopcloud.co.uk/uploads/5/5/0/2/55028183/march_17_tt_letter.pdf

Complementary Colours-
<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/c/complementary-colours>

Impressionism-
<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/i/impressionism>

Typical example of an impressionist Renoir landscape-
<https://www.christies.com/lotfinder/lot/pierre-auguste-renoir-sentier-dans-le-bois-6190579-details.aspx?lid=1&from=relatedlot&intobjectid=6190579>

Wikipedia Entry on Renoir-
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre-Auguste_Renoir

How the Impressionists used complementary colours-
<https://artsandculture.google.com/usergallery/wAISSpq17MwTKw>
<https://drawpaintacademy.com/impressionists-used-complementary-colors/>

Fibre Content- In case your parcel is missing the label
80% 19 micron Merino, 20% Ramie