



NEVSKAYA PALITRA
St. Petersburg

WATERCOLOUR PAINTING BASICS

by ELENA BAZANOVA

White Nights

FOREWORD

«One has to step over one's laziness and study what «sounds» does the palette consists of and how do color combinations sound».

Vladimir Proshkin

Watercolour is a painting material that surprises and captivates with its beauty and mobility, but having an apparent ease, it poses a lot of questions for a beginning painter. The basic ones of them are:

- the principle of making a painting palette;
- the rules for mixing colours;
- the principles of work with glazings;
- how to avoid dirt in watercolour painting.

In this training aid we will answer consistently and briefly to these principal questions.



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Tips from Elena Bazanova

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LEARN THE INGREDIENT SYMBOLS AND READ THE LABEL

Training in watercolor painting should begin with an introduction to the main working instrument, i.e. watercolours.

The process of selecting colours begins in a store where the beginning artist can be embarrassed by a variety of brands and a large choice of colors. Therefore, one must pay attention to the markings on the manufacturer's label. It includes:

1. *Pigment composition*
2. *Lightfastness*
3. *Hiding power*
4. *Washing-off resistance*
5. *Granulation*



1 **The pigment composition** of colours is indicated on the label as a color index (international code of the pigment being used), sometimes the chemical composition of the pigment is indicated next to it.



white



yellow



orange



red



blue



violet



green



brown



black

2 Lightfastness is the ability of a pigment to retain its color exposed to natural daylight and artificial light. In the manufacturer's labeling this indicator is most often indicated using asterisks. The more stars on the label, the higher the light resistance of the colour.

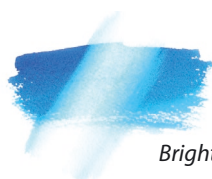
*** high lightfastness ** medium lightfastness * low lightfastness

3 Hiding power is the ability of a pigment in a given painting system to cover the underlying layer or primer so that it is not seen through. Depending on their properties, the colours are divided into pastose colours and transparent colours. The transparent ones are transparent and semi-transparent colours. The pastose colours are colours relatively transparent, semi-hiding, and little-transparent, hiding colour.

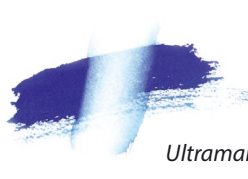
■ opaque paints ■ semi-transparent □ paints transparent paints

4 Washing-off resistance - Paint pigment ability indicating the level of paint layer reversibility when washed off from paper.

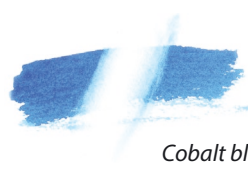
▲ staining paints ▲ semi-staining paints △ non-staining paints



Bright blue



Ultramarine



Cobalt blue

5 Granulation is the measure of the ability of granulating paints to spread unevenly and to settle when applied to paper. Designation on packaging: 'G'.

Generally, paints made from coarse particle pigments (a pigment made of relatively large particles) can easily be wiped off the surface of the paper. These paints also tend to granulate, particles of their pigments can settle as noticeable deposits on the paper, increasing the effect from the surface's texture. These paints are sometimes called 'body colours'. Some of them are opaque or relatively opaque since they can make a thick coloured coat.

On the other hand, paints made from micronised pigments easily dissolve in water, make thin, glazed layers and can be used on paper since their pigment particles are so small that they can penetrate the structure of the paint base. These paints are resistant to washing.



“

You can add any colour you like to the palette, but I would still prefer single-pigment and lightfast colours.

”

MAKING A PAINTING PALETTE

After selecting and buying colours, you are to make color tests of the working palette. This will allow you to better understand the properties of the colours used in the work. The color tests have the form of small stretches from the dense shade of the colour to the light shade of clean paper.

Before testing the colours, make a hatching with a graphite pencil on sites of application of the color strips. The pencil lines will be clearly visible under the transparent and semi-transparent colours, as well as under weak (with much water) colour solutions. Under the hiding, pastose colours the hatching will be almost invisible. Next to the color test attach the label or accompany it with an inscription which will indicate: name, pigment composition, lightfastness and hiding power / transparency of the colour.



If you use colours in pans, you can make these color tests in accordance with the arrangement of the colors in the box. In future work it is worthwhile to observe this order so that in the process of colouring not to waste time on searching for the right color, because it is difficult to tell one colour in a pan, especially in the dark part of the palette, from another.

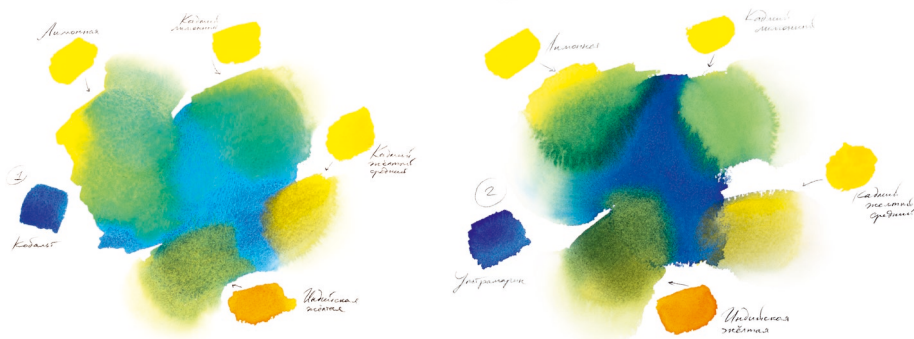
BASIC RULES FOR MIXING COLORS

1 Keeping on getting acquainted with the colours, you should study how they act in mixtures. In order to determine which mixes are the most interesting in shade, you may:

a) mix the pairs of colours one after another



b) test, on one sheet, mixtures of several colours



2 Artists are aided in creating pure and harmonic coloristic solutions by the theory of color mixing studied in color science lessons.

Color science is an educational discipline that develops analysis of color perception and visual color memory, the ability to «read» mixtures of colors. Artists use in practice the theory of color based on Isaac Newton's physical theory.

The modern basic model of the spectral circle accepted in color science is the twelve-part color circle created by Johannes Itten in the beginning of the last century.



The primary colours on the spectrum are red, yellow and blue. They can be mixed to obtain three more: orange (yellow + red), purple (blue + red) and green (blue + yellow). On the colour wheel they are on the diagonals opposite the primary colours and make up pairs: red – green, yellow – purple, blue – orange. These pairs are called **additional** or **opposite colours**. The other hues on the spectrum are made up of a mixture of neighbouring

colours and run smoothly from one to the next on the circle.

In painting, mixtures of the three primary colours of the spectrum creates an achromatic mixture (compound grey, brown or even a dirty tone). The result is the same when mixing two paints which correspond to pairs of additional colours of the spectrum. We recommend independent study of the maximum number of combinations from the painting palette, following these rules. The quality of the mixture's colour will depend on the purity of the colour and the quality of the paints (see below).



Exception: a mixture of emerald green and carmine that are opposite in the spectrum yields a noble dark shade, which perfectly solves shadows in cold reds and in cold greens, respectively.

HOW TO AVOID DIRT IN WATERCOLOUR PAINTING

Dirt is achromatic gray and brown mixtures of inexpressive shades. In decorative painting, using bright open color shades, dirt is not too noticeable visually, it works as a dense dark shade. It is completely otherwise with a transparent watercolour in which complex color transitions are perceived finely, and the layer of colour does not fully hide the glow of white paper.

The main tips and rules that help to avoid dirt in painting:

1 You can mix only two, three colours at the utmost. You should keep in mind that colours are single-pigmented and multi-pigmented, consisting of two or more pigments. It means that when mixing colours according to this rule, the mixture may consist of more than three pigments. An increase in the amount of mixed pigments greatly enhances the risk of dirt in painting.

2 Compound grey and brown mixtures are obtained from three paints corresponding to the primary colours of the spectrum, and from two paints of the spectrum's additional colours. The more complex and heavy the colour of the paints themselves, the higher the risk of ending up with a dirty colour. On the other hand, the cleaner the colour of the paint and the closer it is to a spectral colour, the better the colour of the mixture will be.



3 Heavy mixtures almost always occur with chromium oxide, as well as with brown, multi-pigment and pastose colours.

4 Turbidity occurs in a painting mixture due to semi-transparent non-hiding zinc white included by the manufacturer in the colour composition or by the artist in the mixture.

5 The quality of painting is also affected by the density of layers: the more transparent the layers, the more of them there can be. In glazings it is logical to start painting with transparent and finely-dispersed colours, and from above to apply layers of effect (pastose) colours having larger pigment particles. This rule is especially important in painting landscapes where the density and texture itself of the colour layer will create additional sensations of the watercolour's volume and enhance the perception of a light and airy environment.



It is also important to understand that light hiding colours, such as cadmium lemon, will «enhance» (brighten) dark mixtures in the shade, impart «soapiness» (white stripes) to the colour layer, and this is not always good. It is better in this case to colour dark, but color-saturated sites through a transparent «lemon» colour.

6 When painting in glazings it is important to take into account that if layers are painted through homogeneous mixtures or ones close in the color spectrum, the number of the glazings (layers) can be high. But if glazings are painted using heterogeneous mixtures and through mixing cold and warm layers the number of them should be minimal.

7 In painting, the knowledge of the optical properties of light and color is used when solving the illumination (cold light is warm shadow and warm light is cold shadow), when solving warm-cold ratios and in transfer of a light and air environment: what is closer to us is warmer, and what is farther from us is colder.



Warm sunlight/cold shade



Cold daylight/warm shade

8 Transparent glazing watercolor uses the principle of optical mixing. When working with glazings, one must pay attention to one very important rule: **watercolour layers that are warm in color will always hide, break the color of cold ones.**

You should pay attention to the properties of different colours to avoid unwanted results. Usually, when applying warm and cold transparent colours, it is recommended to adhere to the rule: from warmer and more intense to colder and less intense. The stronger light waves of warm colours will break through the upper layers of the cold ones, and the optical mixing will be better read, therefore it is on the mutual compatibility of the glazing colors only that will be determined whether there will be a risk of «optical» dirt. When applying warm colours over cold ones, the former will hide, “kill” the tone of the latter, and in the result the optical mixing of

the layers may not be effective.

9 Some colours have a peculiar behavior in wet painting. For example, when being introduced into wet painting, they are able to displace others more actively and dynamically. In this way «cobalt blue», «ocher light», «cadmium lemon», «cadmium yellow», «carbon black» act.

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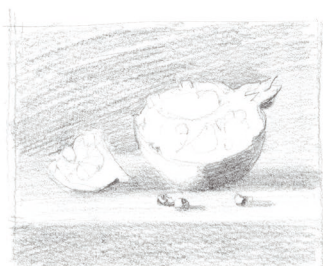
A white colour in watercolor is quite transparent, unable to be hiding, and is present in my palette only for a special case: when painting delicate pink, blue or purple flower petals, when one wants to achieve tactfulness and exquisiteness of light pastel tones. I mainly use zinc white for a technical purpose, namely in cases where there is a need to adjust, to «wash out» bright details against a dark background. I believe that in this process the property of zinc white particles to attract particles of other pigments turns out to be useful. In painting this property brings about granulation, and in the washout it helps to collect a pigment from a piece of painting being washed with a fine abrasive.

”



✓ Sketches

In order to overcome the uncertainty in the choice of colours, to avoid temptation to mix all colours without discrimination, or too often change the composition of mixtures for painting the same fragments in the work, and as a result to avoid dirt and tarnish during watercolor painting, one can make sketches prior to the painting, where to solve all ambiguities.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

«Over many years of creative activities I have developed trust and respect to the colours «White Nights». The factory «Nevskaya palitra» invariably guarantees the high quality of its products, combining old production technologies with the latest engineering achievements, satisfying the highest requirements of today's watercolour painters».

Elena Bazanova

watercolour artist, book illustrator



Elena Bazanova was born in Slantsy (Russia) on the 16th of November 1968.

1986 – graduated from secondary Art School named after B.V. Johansson under Repin Academy of Fine Arts (St. Petersburg).

1992 – graduated from the book graphics studio under the guidance of A.A. Pakhomov at Repin Academy of Fine Arts (St. Petersburg).

Since 1995 – member of the Russian Union of Artists, participates in the regular anniversary exhibitions of the Union of Artists of St. Petersburg.

Since 1997 illustrates books for children.

Since 2006 – member of the Watercolour Society of St. Petersburg.

Since 2019 – member of the IWMA (International Watercolor Masters Alliance, China).

Took part in more than 90 exhibitions in Russia and abroad. Since 1997 she has held 25 personal exhibitions and has taken part in more than 90 collective exhibitions in Russia and abroad.

She serves as a judge at large international watercolour competitions.

AWARDS

2000 – the Diploma of the 2nd degree of the Union of Artists of St. Petersburg.

2012 – the Diploma of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts.

2015 – the Gratitude of the Committee on Culture of the Government of St. Petersburg.

2018 – the Gratitude from the Governor of St. Petersburg G.S. Poltavchenko for high achievements in the field of fine arts.



elenabazanova

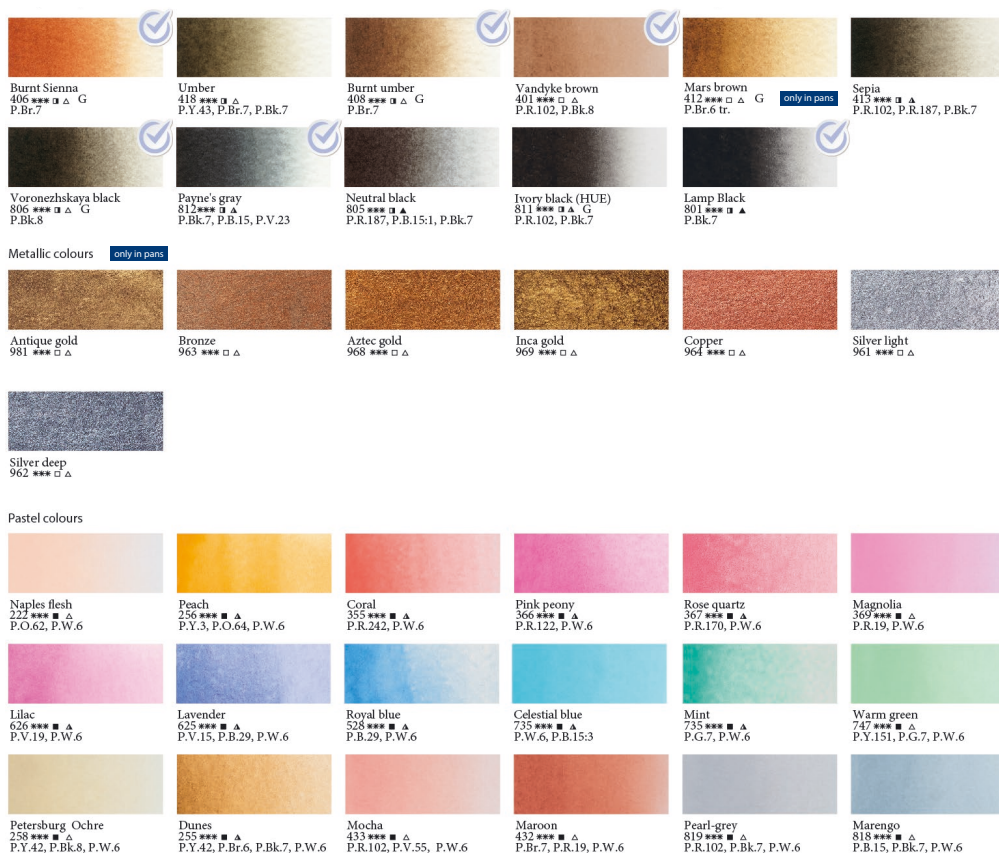



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«WHITE NIGHTS» WATERCOLOURS PALETTE

White Nights

 Zinc white 100 *** □ ▲ P.W.4	 Yellow 211 *** □ ▲ P.Y.154	 Lemon 214 *** □ ▲ P.Y.3	 Cadmium lemon 203 *** □ ▲ P.Y.35	 Aureolin 253 *** □ ▲ P.Y.151	 Cadmium yellow medium 201 *** □ ▲ P.Y.35
 Naples yellow 209 *** □ ▲ G P.Y.42, P.Y.35, P.O.20, P.W.4	 Indian yellow 228 *** □ ▲ P.Y.150	 Ochre light 206 *** □ ▲ P.Y.43	 Yellow ochre 218 *** □ ▲ P.Y.43, P.Y.154	 Naples yellow light 219 *** □ ▲ P.Y.216	 Indian gold 244 *** □ ▲ P.Y.150, P.R.101
 Naples orange 254 *** □ ▲ G P.Y.216	 Golden 216 *** □ ▲ P.Y.3, P.O.13	 Golden deep 217 *** □ ▲ P.O.62	 Cadmium orange 304 *** □ ▲ G P.O.20	 Orange 315 *** □ ▲ P.O.64	 Titan red 226 *** □ ▲ P.O.36
 Red ochre 309 *** □ ▲ P.R.102	 English red 321 *** □ ▲ P.R.101	 Venetian red 357 *** □ ▲ P.R.102, P.R.187	 Cadmium red light 302 *** □ ▲ G P.R.108	 Geranium red 364 *** □ ▲ P.R.242	 Scarlet 318 *** □ ▲ P.R.188
 Ruby 323 *** □ ▲ P.R.170	 Carmine 319 *** □ ▲ P.R.19	 Quinacridone red 361 *** □ ▲ P.R.19	 Madder lake red light 313 *** □ ▲ P.R.187	 Venice purple 365 *** □ ▲ P.R.179	 Claret 325 *** □ ▲ P.R.12
 Neon pink 368 *** □ ▲ P.R. 122, pink fluor. pigment	 Caput mortuum 604 *** □ ▲ P.R.101	 Quinacridone rose 324 *** □ ▲ P.R.122	 Quinacridone violet rose 622 *** □ ▲ P.R.19	 Quinacridone lilac 609 *** □ ▲ P.V.19	 Perylene violet 627 *** □ ▲ P.R.29
 Quinacridone violet 621 *** □ ▲ P.V.55	 Ultramarine violet 613 *** □ ▲ G P.V.15	 Violet 607 *** □ ▲ P.V.3	 Ceruleum blue 503 *** □ ▲ G P.B.35	 Azure blue 519 *** □ ▲ P.B.15.3, P.G.7	 Cobalt azure blue 532 *** □ ▲ G P.B.36
 Bright blue 509 *** □ ▲ P.B.15.3	 Azure 513 *** □ ▲ P.B.15	 Cobalt blue 508 *** □ ▲ G P.B.28	 Prussian blue 518 *** □ ▲ P.B.27	 Blue 515 *** □ ▲ P.B.15.6	 Ultramarine 511 *** □ ▲ G P.B.29
 Ultramarine deep 521 *** □ ▲ G P.B.29	 Blue lake 510 *** □ ▲ P.B.1	 Indigo 516 *** □ ▲ P.Bk.7, P.B.15, P.V.23	 Cobalt turquoise 531 *** □ ▲ G P.B.28	 Cobalt chrome turquoise 533 *** □ ▲ G P.B.36	 Turquoise blue 507 *** □ ▲ P.B.15.3, P.G.7
 Emerald green 713 *** □ ▲ P.G.7	 Green light 717 *** □ ▲ P.G.36	 Green original 719 *** □ ▲ P.Y.35, P.G.7	 May green 745 *** □ ▲ P.Y.3, P.G.36	 Yellowish green 718 *** □ ▲ P.Y.3, P.G.7	 Sap green 716 *** □ ▲ P.Y.150, P.G.36, P.Bk.7
 Olive green 727 *** □ ▲ P.Y.1, P.G.17, P.Bk.7	 Irgazin yellow 257 *** □ ▲ P.Y.129	 Chromium oxide 704 *** □ ▲ G P.G.17	 Green 725 *** □ ▲ P.G.8	 Green Earth 730 *** □ ▲ P.Br.7, P.G.17	 Raw Sienna 405 *** □ ▲ G P.Br.43



 - Elena Bazanova palette

** The White Nights palette of watercolors is constantly expanding. It also improves performance. The actual color chart can be seen and downloaded on the website nevskayapalitra.ru*

TIN BOXES FOR WATERCOLOURS



Our new tin cases are designed for travelling workshops and plain airs. Sturdy, reusable, and feature bright enamel exterior and white enamel interior with a foldout palette for colour mixing.

Code: 2011301444 (12 pans, light blue)

Code: 2011301445 (12 pans, lilac)

Code: 2011301446 (21 pans, light blue)

Code: 2011301447 (35 pans, light blue)

SETS OF WATERCOLOURS

White Nights



Extra-fine artists' watercolours set 'White nights', 12 colours in 2,5 ml pans, plastic box

Code: 191201440



Extra-fine artists' watercolours set 'White nights', in 2,5 ml pans, palette, plastic box

Code: 19421583 (24 cls)

Code: 19421581 (36 cls)



Extra-fine artists' watercolours set 'White nights', 24 colours in 2,5 ml pans, cardboard box

Code: 19411586



Extra-fine artists' watercolours set 'White nights', in 10 ml tubes, cardboard box

Code: 19411584 (12 cls)

Code: 19411582 (24 cls)



Extra-fine artists' watercolours set, cardboard box

Code: 1941015 (№1, 24 cls)

Code: 1941020 (№2, 16 cls)



Extra-fine artists' watercolours set 'Saint-Petersburg', 24 colours in 2,5 ml pans, palette, plastic box

Code: 1942017

3 watercolours sets with unique combination of colours in sets and a new design with images of paintings by the international watercolour masters.



Extra-fine artists' watercolours set
«White nights», 12 colours in 10 ml tubes,
cardboard box (Cover image: Igor Sava, Italy)

Code: 19411243



Extra-fine artists' watercolours set
«White nights», 12 colours in 2,5 ml pans,
plastic box (Cover image: Anirban Jana, India)

Code: 19421242



Extra-fine artists' watercolours set
«White nights», 36 colours in 2,5 ml pans,
palette, plastic box (Cover image: Eugen
Chisnicean, Moldova)

Code: 19421244



The classic "White Nights"
watercolour paint sets in ergonomic metal
boxes. The palettes were developed in
cooperation with E. Bazanova, the famous
watercolorist.

Code: 191201440 (12 cls)

Code: 191201441 (21 cls)

Code: 191201442 (35 cls)

Code: 191201443 (21 cls, palette Elena
Bazanova)



Gift sets of artists' colours 'White nights' are
produced of noble solid wood. The gift set
includes a squirrel brush by 'Neva palette'.

Code: 1944085 (24 cls, beech)

Code: 1943018 (24 cls, birch)

Code: 1943040 (36 cls, birch)

Code: 1944086 (36 cls, beech)

Code: 1943033 (48 cls, birch)

Code: 1944087 (48 cls, beech)



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