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Studio Craft: Mixing Chromatic Hues with Transparent Colors



Transparent colors generally look very dark straight from the tube. By adding white it's possible to reveal the full chromatic intensity of dark transparent pigments and produce a palette of brilliant opaque hues.



Intense pigments like Phthalo Blue/Green, Quinacridone Red and Alizarin Crimson work best for this application, but interesting hues can be achieved with less chromatic colors like Burnt Sienna and Prussian Green.

An assortment of transparent and semi-transparent colors can be transformed into strong, opaque primaries and secondaries.





Dispense colors on a glass palette and mix with a palette knife. Begin with full-strength color, adding white gradually until the desired intensity has been achieved. The objective is to achieve maximum chroma, the brightest possible mixture for each color.



To create a range from primary red to orange, it's necessary to add a small amount of yellow to mixtures. This should be added first, before white to avoid excessive dilution.

Mixing intense opaque colors from a transparent palette can also be done while batch-modifying with mediums.



Opaque acrylic painting mediums like Modeling paste can be used as a replacement for Titanium White while blending to full chroma.