

"PALETTE-ABLE" TIPS

From the Authors of the Palette Magazine

NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR ARTISTS WHO LOVE ART



Skip 'n Toph

Value Contrast *by Skip Lawrence*

I am the proud owner of a black lab named Jazz. When she is resting on her off white dog bed her marvelous black silhouette begs to be painted. A black shape against a white background is the strongest visual contrast possible. If it is your goal is to feature a shape or attract attention to a shape then VALUE CONTRAST works best. Value contrast refers to a colors lightness or darkness. Black is at one end of the value scale and white at the other.

Value contrast works best to make shapes visible. That is why signs are generally made with strong value contrast. Imagine a stop sign painted yellow and pink. While it may be pretty it would cause a lot of accidents. Contrasting values does not mean one should always use black and white. There are times when very subtle value contrasts are appropriate. Fog would be a good example. The values scale in fog may go from a middle dark gray to a middle light gray. Observation is your best teacher when deciding what color contrast is most evident. Other color contrasts include hue and intensity of hue. I will address these contrasts in future "Palette-ables". Value contrast in a painting also creates a more serious effect. If your subject matter is heavy, use value.

The simplest way to create value contrast is to use black and white paints. Alternatives used by many painters include charcoal, ink, graphite or anything else you can come up with. Take note that value contrast is the strongest of the color contrasts and will trump any subtle color contrast in the area.

We all begin our art life with a pencil and contrasting values. Do not forsake beautiful value contrasts for pure color when value is the perfect element.



"Jazz Dreams" *by Skip Lawrence*

Want to learn more? Purchase my new "**Skip Lawrence's Secrets of Color**" videos that cover all aspects of color contrast: Value, Hue, and Intensity. These videos are available from Cheap Joe's Art Stuff 1-800-227-2788 or through my web site: www.skiplawrence.com.

If you liked this tip, you'll love the magazine. **The Palette Magazine** is a quarterly publication written by Skip Lawrence and Christopher Schink. Sign up to receive your copies today at: www.thepalette magazine.com.