**PALETTE KNIFE PAINTING**

You can create some pretty stunning effects in your painting which are not possible with a brush

**The Pros and Cons of Using a Palette Knife.**

**Pros –**

* It is easy to clean a palette knife. One swipe with a cloth or paper towel and the paint is gone – an advantage over brushes.
* It can be cheap, depending on the quality of the palette knife.
* Great for building up thick textures and creating a broken colour effect.
* You can use the edge of the knife to create sharp lines. The bold strokes of the knife can complement the more delicate strokes created by a brush.
* You can paint on top of wet layers without having to worry about the paint blending like it does with a brush.

**Cons –**

* Double edge sword. You are not able to paint with as much accuracy using a palette knife.
* It is not as versatile as a brush

**What to look for in a palette knife**

* A flexible, but sturdy blade
* A comfortable handle
* A long, straight edge
* You do not need any unusual shapes…just a standard, shaped palette knife in a few different sizes

**Palette Knife Techniques**

* You can use the knife to create thin, usually broken lines, which can look very natural in a painting. All you need to do is load the edge of the knife with a thin amount of paint and then dab the edge on the canvas. Just make sure the paint is evenly spread across the edge of the knife. You usually only get one line per stroke so you will need to keep reloading your knife between strokes.

**Dragging One Colour into Another**

* The palette knife can be fantastic for blending edges by dragging one colour into another. What you are left with is a very rough and scattered edge. If you were to do this with a brush, you would get a much softer edge.

**Scraping Away Paint to Fix Errors or Add Details**

* This is where the palette knife really shines. You can quickly scrape away paint from the canvas to clear an area where you went wrong.
* You can also use the palette knife to scrape details into your painting…eg. You could scrape away a thin line of paint to imitate a tree branch. When doing this, you just need to be aware of what colour will be exposed in the underpainting. Staining the canvas comes in handy here as you will get some nice colour exposed, not just the glaring white of the bare canvas.

**Multi-coloured Palette Knife Strokes**

* Take a few different colours and mix them together, but not well. Take the palette knife and create a thick stroke of broken colour.

**Scrumbling Over an Underpainting**

* Use the palette knife to scrumble. What this involves is dragging paint very loosely over an underpainting so that the paint breaks off onto the canvas. This can be useful for adding variance to water or grass.

**Dabbing Small Burst of Colour**

* This involves loading the tip of the knife in thick paint and then dabbing it onto the painting, usually latterly in the painting.

**Common Uses of the Pallet Knife**

* To paint highlights on rocks
* To paint snow on mountains
* To build up texture in the foreground to imitate grass, rocks, etc.
* To paint leaves or bark on trees
* To quickly cover the canvas with paint
* To paint lines for fences, tree branches or sharp edges
* Mix colours on the palette

**Tips**

* Clean your palette knife thoroughly as paint will dry and leave a rough edge
* Mix up your strokes
* You can scrape away as easily as it can apply paint

**The palette knife comes at the sacrifice of accuracy and intricate brush strokes. Try to make up for it with the stunning use of colour**

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