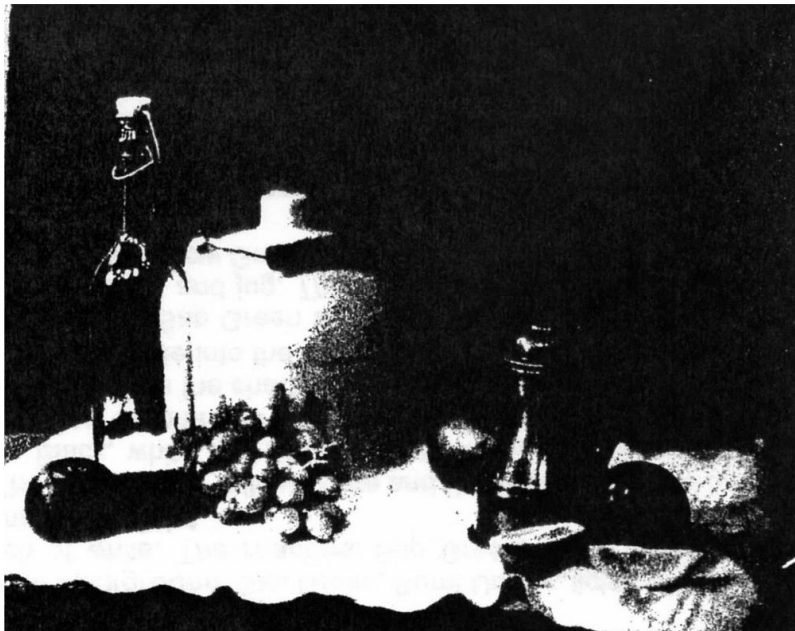


THE SUBJECT



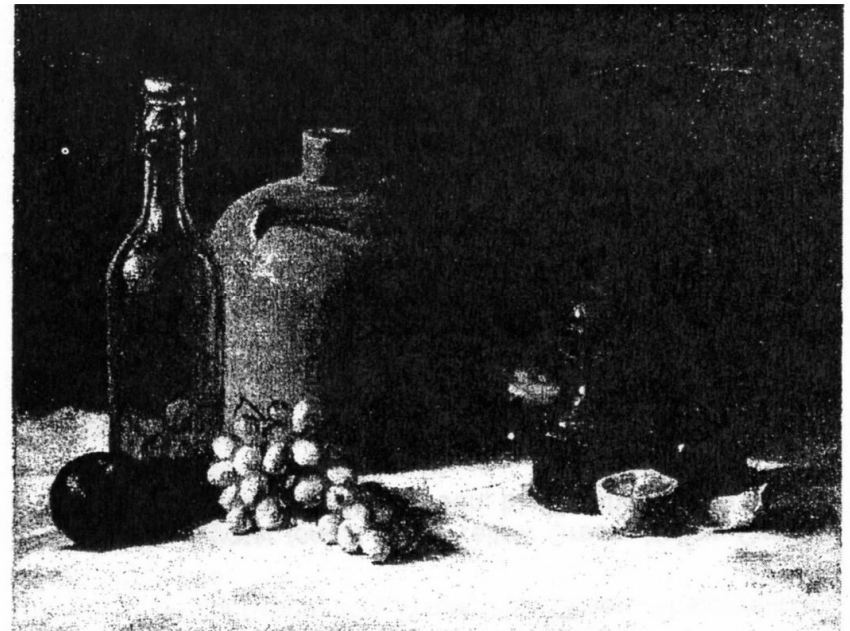
THE SUBJECT

Still life arrangements have been set up in art schools for years and years to aid in the study of painting. Lighting on a subject is of primary importance since paint can only record the tones and colors that lighting causes. The lighting should be from only one source, emulating our natural light: One sun, one light. This is the first key to painting a realistic-looking picture. Refer to this photo of the arrangement as I proceed with the painting so you can see the tones that I search for to record each subject's appearance.

THE PAINTING

A painting is an Interpretation of a subject. It's not what you paint, it's how you paint it. Don't ever be afraid to be creative. Just close your eyes and try to imagine how the subject could look in terms of paint. You then can give artistic direction to the paint which will flavor

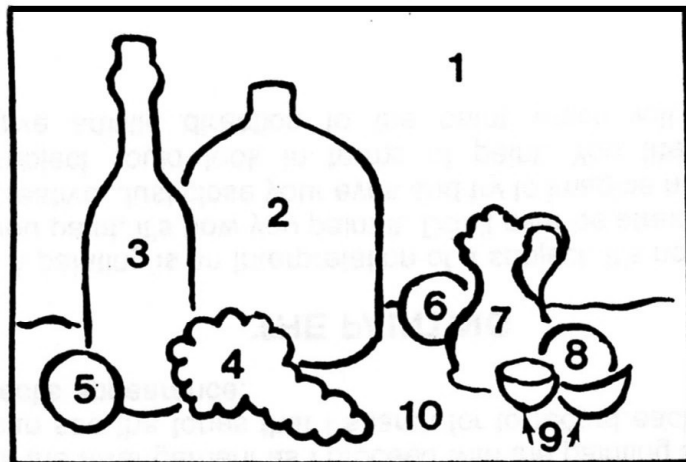
THE PAINTING (an *alla prima* approach)



Still Life by Helen Van Wyk, 20" x 24", oil on canvas.

your painting technique. My basic, reliable painting techniques are:

1. A step-by-step practical procedure, starting from the most distant area and gradually progressing to the area that is nearest to my point of view.
2. A progression of application of the tones and shapes of a subject dictated by my understanding of the anatomy and structure of the subject. One basic analysis of subjects is that textures are either reflective or non-reflective. Non-reflective ones are painted with a strict order of the five tone values. Reflective ones are mainly painted by carefully rendering the pattern of highlights and reflections.
3. These painting techniques can only be employed once the general overall composition is established. I almost always do this in tones of gray acrylic, which is called an underpainting. This underpainting serves not only as a general plan but also makes my application of oil paint more efficient and substantial in one *alla prima* rendering.



THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PAINTING IN THREE STAGES

STAGE 1

The underpainting is painted with Mars Black and Titanium White Acrylics, mixed with water, to establish the composition of contrasts and the placement of the subject on the canvas.

STAGE 2

The general colors of the body tones and body shadows of the still life are painted in oil colors in a practical progression of application:

1. **The background.** Sap Green, Burnt Umber, lightened with a touch of white. *The shadows:* Sap Green, Burnt Umber and Manganese Violet.
2. **The Jug.** White, Yellow Ochre and Burnt Umber for the *body tone*. Black, white and Alizarin Crimson for the *body shadow*. Some Raw Sienna and Burnt Sienna in the body tone or body tone Just before the shadow. The color Into the shadow: Burnt Sienna and white into the violet mixtures.
3. **The bottle.** Sap Green and white worked into the tones of the background and jug. *The wine:* Alizarin Crimson and Sap Green. Thalo Yellow Green with black and white to suggest the *lighter reflections*.
4. **The grapes.** Sap Green, Thalo Yellow Green, Yellow Ochre and white for the body tones. For the shadow: Black, Sap Green and Alizarin Crimson mixed into the body tone mixture.
5. **The apple.** Grumbacher Red, Cadmium Red Light and a touch of white. *The shadow:* A touch of Thalo Green into Grumbacher Red and Alizarin Crimson.

6. **The second apple.** Cadmium Yellow Light, Thalo Yellow Green and white for the beginning of the *body tone*. Then Cadmium Red Light was mixed into this. *The shadows* were made of a touch of Thalo Green mixed into Grumbacher Red and Alizarin Crimson.

7. **The copper pitcher.** *The highlight color:* White, Cadmium Orange and Cadmium Red Light. *The general copper color:* Burnt Sienna, Cadmium Red Light into black and white.

8. **The third apple.** Grumbacher Red and Alizarin Crimson. A touch of Thalo Green into that for the *shadow*.

9. **The lemon.** White and a breath of Alizarin Crimson for the membrane of the lemon. Cadmium Yellow Light into black, white and Alizarin Crimson for the pulp of the lemon. *The shadow:* A darker mixture of white, black, Cadmium Yellow Light and Alizarin Crimson. *The skin of the lemon:* Cadmium Yellow Light and a touch of white. *The shadow on the skin:* Cadmium Yellow Light into Manganese Violet.

10. **The foreground.** White, a touch of black and Yellow Ochre.

STAGE 3

The light and darker finishing tones:

The Jug. *Lighter tones:* White and Yellow Ochre. The highlight: White and Alizarin Crimson.

The bottle. *The highlight:* White and a touch of Alizarin Crimson. The light reflection: White, Sap Green, Thalo Yellow Green and white.

The grapes. *Lighter tones:* Thalo Yellow Green, Yellow Ochre and white. The shadows: Sap Green, black, white and a touch of Alizarin Crimson.

The apple. *Lighter tones:* Cadmium Red Light, Thalo Yellow Green and white. *The highlight:* White with a touch of Thalo Yellow Green.

The second apple. *The highlight:* White with a touch of Alizarin Crimson worked in with bright greens of white and Thalo Yellow Green. *The shadow:* Darkened with Alizarin Crimson.

The copper pitcher. *Shadows:* Burnt Sienna with a touch of Thalo Blue. *The reflections:* Black, white and Venetian Red.

The third apple. *Lighter tones:* Grumbacher Red and white; highlighted with Thalo Green into a lot of white.

The lemon skin. *Lightened* with Cadmium Yellow Light and white.

The foreground. White and a little Yellow Ochre.

THE COMPONENTS OF THE PAINTING PROCESS

COMPOSITION

An organization of contrasting tones that form a focal point. The entire organization of the patterns should be unified, varied and balanced.

DRAWING

The recording of a form's proportions and its size in relation to other forms. The recording of all forms at the same point of view in relation to one another, which is perspective, and the recording of the form's structure or anatomy

RHYTHM OF APPLICATION

The brushstrokes that are directed by a form's shape and texture and the overall appearance of the paint.

TONE

One source of light shining on forms cause five tone values. They are:

1. Body tones
2. Body shadows
3. Cast shadows
4. Reflections
5. Highlights

COLOR

The phenomenon of lighting that makes an ever-presence of the three primary colors: Red, yellow, and blue. To record this natural factor, a color in conjunction with its complement must be employed.

FOUND-AND-LOST LINES OR EDGES

This is the way two contrasting tones meet to record the periphery of a form. Sharp, or found, edges make planes project; lost, or fuzzy, edges record receding planes.

THE COLORS OF THE VAN WYK PALETTE

Mars Black
Titanium White

} Acrylic paint
for underpainting

The following colors are listed as they are arranged on my palette:

White

A lightening agent

Thalo Yellow Green
Cadmium Yellow Light
Cadmium Yellow Medium
Cadmium Orange
Cadmium Red Light
Grumbacher Red

} Bright, light, warm colors

Yellow Ochre
Raw Sienna
Light Red or
Venetian Red

} Duller, darker warm colors

Alizarin Crimson
Manganese Violet
Sap Green
Thalo Green
Thalo Blue

} Dark but bright cool colors

Burnt Umber
Burnt Sienna
Indian Red

} Dull, dark warm colors

Ivory Black

An agent to make tones of gray