

# Style Study

**A step by step method for identifying and incorporating artistic elements you like.**

**Document aims to support the artistic growth of those with solid technical skills, yet feel their work is missing a nebulous “something”**

**This is the process I used to find the “something” - maybe it will help you too!**

# Step 1

## Recognize current limits

Think critically, but do not bully yourself! We are often way too hard on ourselves. Be critical, but not cruel.

This process assumes you have a good grasp of at least *some* of the fundamentals.

(Eg: Anatomy, colour, perspective, composition, proportion, lighting)

- What do I wish to be artistically better at? (List your *specific* art goals)
- What is my most frequent self-directed critique?



Cute, but... missing something?

Hint: I want more structure

# Step 2

## Acknowledge your idols

Have you ever taken the time to study great historical art? Look back through art movements, take notes on what you are repeatedly drawn to.

**There is a non-exhaustive list of art movements at the end of this document.**

- Whose art do I like? Which pieces? (list)
- Why do I like those works? (specific elements - Colour? Structure? Linework? Light?)

Luminists!

MEMPHIS!!

Impressionism!

Strong structure.

Tonalists!

Big contrast.

## Step 3:

### Celebrate your strengths

You know what you don't like, you've also taken time to consider what you like (that other folks make)... Now it's time to focus on you!

- What am I good at? (List)
- What are my favourite works of mine so far? (make a mood board!)

## Step 4:

### Identify the gaps

While looking at both your own work and art that you like:

- Take the list of elements you like in other people's art (Step 2) and the list of your strengths (Step 3), and compare them.

What do you like in others' work that yours lacks? What are you doing well that is different than work you admire?

- Highlight elements you were drawn to repeatedly across different examples. What are you doing well, and what needs work?

*This can be hard to do without 'specific terms' -- see art terms glossary for a handful of them*



Detail and proportion: yes.



Lack of depth, boring lighting.

## Step 5:

### Bridge the gap

Now you know what you like, what sets your work apart, and what you aren't currently doing. This is where targeted research and active practice happens.

Pick from the group of elements that need work, prioritizing highlighted repeat elements (Step 4) if any were identified.

At this point you want to open your favourite search engine and browse effectively.

## Style Research:

### How to... What is best for...

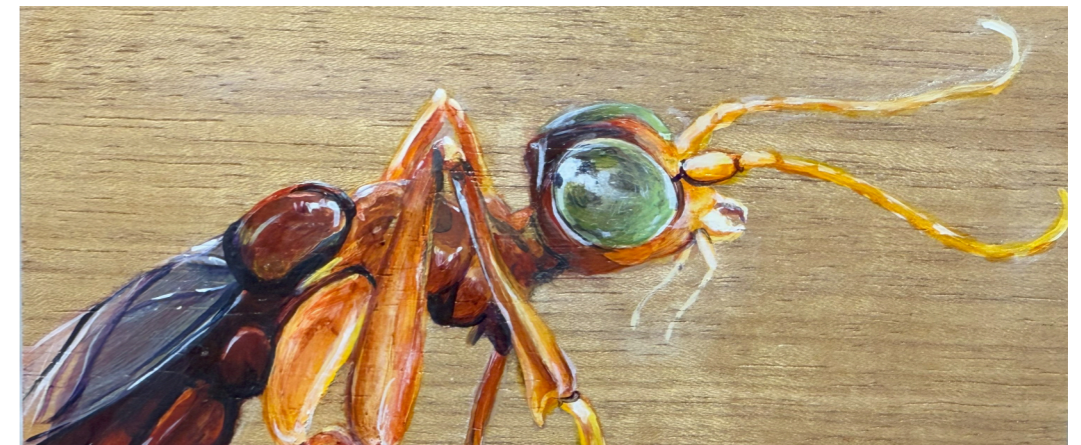
Using the right terminology can get you answers faster. Using Search Term Operators can also make a big difference - the internet is *huge*.

<b>Asterisk *</b>	Words similar to primary search term Example: glow; but also: glowing, glowy
<b>“quotations”</b>	Words within quotes will search for exact phrase. Very targeted searching!
<b>NOT</b>	Remove anything after the 'not' Example: Lighting NOT “Interior Design”
<b>AND</b>	Search for results containing both words Example: Lighting AND glow
<b>OR</b>	Search for either word, results containing either. Example: Lighting OR glow

Use these together to find precise guidance



I didn't love my sense of light. So... I focused on that.



I also wanted better blends, so I blended.

## Step 6: Implement

You've accrued a mountain of resources. Techniques to try.

Pick one, and play.

You don't need to make finished works, experiment with what you've read/watched.

Expect 3-15 "meh" pieces as you try to get new style elements under your belt.

When you are happy with an element, move on to another one, keeping the previous element in play.

## Step 7: Practice

Pick a subject you are comfortable with, and start working.

**Write down your steps as you go.**

If things aren't feeling "great" - make a note when/what happened when it started to feel bad. Either proceed or start over.

Use the same subject. You aren't trying to learn the subject, only pin down what technical steps you employ to achieve the style you want.

Take lots of photos!!

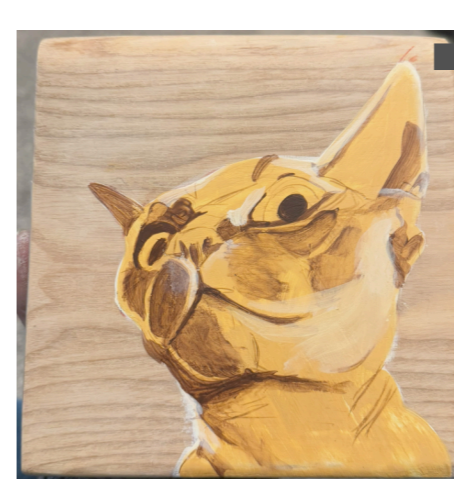
**Repeat!**



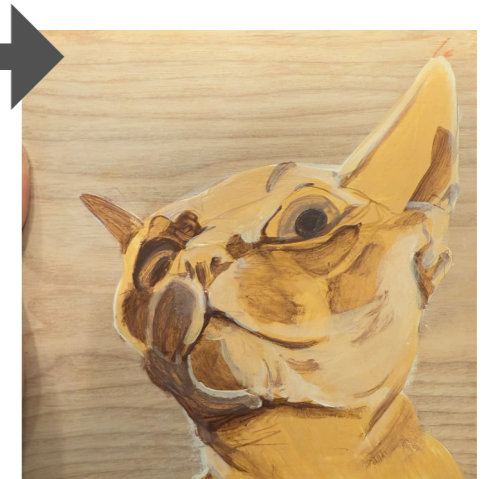
When things started to feel "bad"



When I stopped



For me, structure needs to come before colour.



Success! This was retry #3.

## Step 8:

### Reflect & Revisit!

You've written yourself a step-by-step roadmap to incorporating a style element. Does it actually work for you?

Try creating something completely different following your instructions (e.g. if you studied something hairy, now study something smooth)

If the end result appeals to you like to your previous study - congratulations! You've found a process you can build on.

## Step 9:

### Keep growing.

Use this new step-sheet as a way to be consistent in your quality, but do not let it stop you growing.

Build up your toolbox.  
Prune it as your tastes change.

Most importantly... be patient, kind, and compare your own work to your own work.

Your road and process is not the same as someone else's :)



September, 2024 - Crop of Omophriends, good, but missing rich lighting



December, 2024 - Cromulent Banana - better sense of light!

# ART MOVEMENTS

Non-exhaustive list. Using “neo + most of these words” may offer unique inspiration

Impressionism

Romanticism

Cubism

Baroque

Renaissance

Tonalism

Maximalism

Abstract

Modernism

Baroque

Luminism

Constructivism

Futurism

Neo-expressionism

Neoclassicism

Street

Classicism

Pop

Psychedelic

Digital

Realism

Bauhaus

Animation

Pointillism

Surrealism

Art Nouveau

Art Brut

Shin-hanga

Rococo

Japonisme

Fauvism

Suprematist

Ukiyo-e

Superflat

Expressionism

Panta Kalam

# ART TERMS

**Compostion -**  
Arrangement of art elements.

**Pigment -**  
Colour particles in paint

**Shape -**  
Component of an object

**Structure -**  
How an object is built

**Proportion -**  
Relative sizes of object or components in compositon

**Harmonious -**  
Calm look  
(May refer to colour, or compostion)

**Saturation/Chroma -**  
Colour Intensity

**Shade -**  
Colour Darkness

**Tone -**  
Colour richness

**Depth -**  
How close or far an object feels

**Luminous -**  
Lit from within

**Hue -**  
Colour

**Impasto -**  
Textural Painting

**Tint -**  
Colour lightness

**Emphasis -**  
Drawing attention to a specific element in work

**Glaze -**  
Thin color layers, translucent application of colour

**Rhythm -**  
Repeating elements, creates specific type of movement in piece

**Medium -**  
Material artist uses

**Foreshortening -**  
Compressing or extending proportions relative to the viewer, creates depth.

**Opacity -**  
How see through a component is