

Working Spaces

Sabrina Pistoria

Abstract

As with any series, the artist sets out to explore one concept but with time and further immersion into the practice, different concepts present themselves and prove equally as important and meaningful to this exploration. In this particular series, the painting studio at Millersville University provided the subject of desire, and with time and practice the themes of light, color and application rose to the forefront. This series explores how the same subject matter presents differently in the face of different qualities.

The work I chose to present represents a series of artwork inspired by the painting studio. As a student of the arts, I have taken many painting courses during which I have found great admiration for the space in which the creation occurs. The many easels and cart-like taborets at which different artists work with, captured my attention and sought me to bring this often overlooked and taken for granted space to life. This is a painting series in which I explore the painting studio as my subject matter but also tackle greater artistic concepts such as light, color and application.

I used color to help exhibit my explorations with light. In doing so, I used primarily warm-toned colors and mixed tints by adding white to lighten colors for my desired effect. I then mixed shades of cool-toned colors to provide contrast and put emphasis on the lighter spaces. Together the tints and shades allowed me to exhibit how

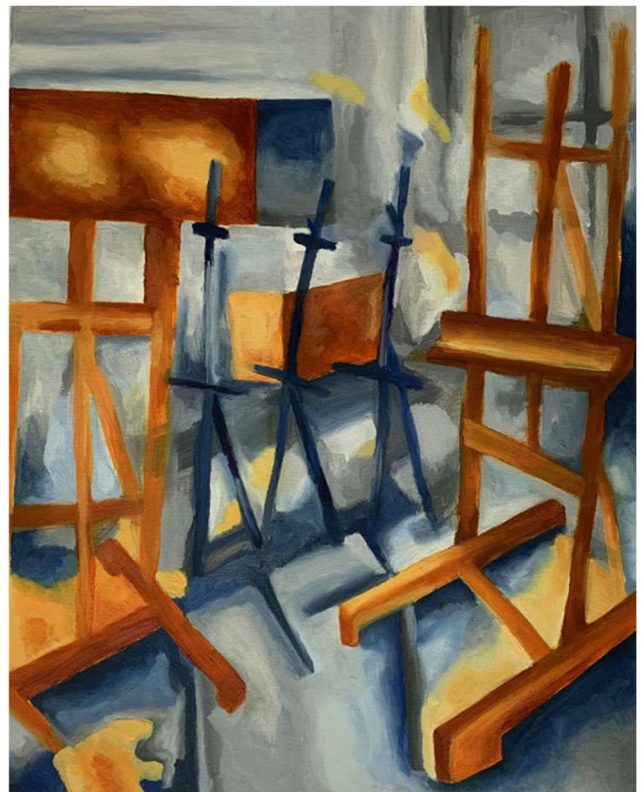
the light moves across the space and highlight certain objects. Thus, the lighter spaces of the painting capture the viewer's eye first. As the darker spaces help balance the painting, the viewer's eye is then carried around the painting as a whole.

In my explorations with color I used a limited palette. In some cases, this meant using complementary colors, while in others, it meant examining the space and setting out to use a set number of colors. I wanted to challenge myself as an artist to mix my own colors and, in working under the restriction of a set palette, I found beautiful colors that I would not have discovered otherwise. I tried various color combinations to expand beyond the traditional methods of making a color lighter or darker. My color choices also greatly affected the mood of each painting. None of the renditions of the painting studio represent the authentic colors found in this space but rather showcase the mood and

emotion. A cooler-toned painting shows a more serious side, while a warmer-toned painting reads as more playful.

My explorations with application were what I found most enjoyable. In experimenting with application, you are bringing the painting to life and adding character with every brushstroke or swipe of the palette knife. However, paintbrushes and palette knives produce very different effects. Paintbrushes allow for a smooth finish in which colors can blend seamlessly into one another, whereas palette knives create a raised surface and allow each mark to be viewed individually. Bigger palette knives allow for a broader application while smaller pointed palette knives allow for precision and intricate marks. In creating this series, I used both paintbrushes and palette knives to explore application. The paintings in which I utilized a palette knife read as rougher and are less detailed than those where I painted with a paintbrush.

I set out to explore the painting studio as a subject matter. I drew inspiration from the very tools artists had used to create. After my many explorations, I came to realize, although my muse was the space itself, what really carried my paintings and continued to captivate my attention were the concepts of art I was exploring within these paintings. I captured light by thinking deliberately about my choices of color and bringing certain objects to the forefront to capture the viewer's eye and ultimately carry the viewer throughout the piece. I also worked with a limited color palette to expand beyond the traditional methods of color mixing. Lastly, I experimented with application by using both a paintbrush and a palette knife to produce different but equally desirable effects. Ultimately these concepts allow each painting to stand out on its own but also work together as a greater body of work.





Recommended Citation

Pistoria, S. (2020). Working spaces. *Made in Millersville Journal*, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.mimjournal.com/pistoria-2020>