

## **Glossary of Art terms & definitions**



### **ENGLISH**

### **SPANISH**

#### **A**

#### **ABSORBENT GROUND**

#### **TERRENO ABSORBENTE**

A chalk ground that absorbs oil and is used in oil painting to achieve a matt effect and to speed up drying.

#### **ACRYLIC EMULSION**

#### **EMULSIÓN DE ACRÍLICO**

A water dispersion of polymers or co-polymers of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, or acrylonitrile. Acrylic emulsions dry by evaporation of the water and film coalescence.

#### **ACRYLIC SOLUTION**

#### **SOLUCIÓN ACRÍLICA**

A solution of acrylic resin in a volatile solvent. Paints made with an acrylic solution binder resemble oil paints more than those made with acrylic emulsion binders.

#### **ADDITIVE COLOR**

#### **COLOR ADITIVO**

**color that results from the mixture of two or more colored lights, the visual blending of separate spots of transmitted colored light.**

**ALKYD**

**ALQUÍDICO**

**Synthetic resin used in paints and mediums. As a medium Liquin from Winsor and Newton works as a binder that encapsulates the pigment and speeds the drying time. In Paints W&N Griffith paints are good example of alkyd paints. .**

**ALLA PRIMA**

**ALLA PRIMA**

**Technique in which the final surface of a painting is completed in one sitting, without under painting. Italian for "at the first". .**

**ANHYDROUS**

**ANHIDRO**

**Free from water.**

**ARCHIVAL**

**CALIDAD DE ARCHIVO**

**Refers to materials that meet certain criteria for permanence such as lignin-free, pH neutral, alkaline-buffered, stable in light, etc.**

**ASTM**

**----**

**The American Society for Testing and Materials. An independent standard for certain paint qualities, adopted by most manufacturers. .**

**B**

**BINDER**

**AGLUTINANTE**

The nonvolatile adhesive liquid portion of a paint that attaches pigment particles and the paint film as a whole to the support.

**BISTRE**

**BISTRE**

A brown, transparent pigment.

**BLEEDING**

**(el) MANCHADO**

In artwork, the effect of a dark color seeping through a lighter color to the surface.

**BLENDING**

**GRADACIÓN**

Smoothing the edges of two colors together so that they have a smooth gradation where they meet.

**BLOOM**

**LECHADA**

A dull, progressively opaque, white effect caused on varnished surfaces by damp conditions.

**BODY COLOR**

**COLOR DE CUBIERTA**

Opaque paint, such as gouache, which has the covering power to obliterate underlying color.

**BRUSHWORK**

**PINCELADAS**

**The characteristic way each artist brushes paint onto a support.**

**C**

**CANVAS**

**LIENZO, TELA**

**Closely woven cloth used as a support for paintings.**

**CARTOON**

**BOCETO**

**Other than what we watch on TV, it is a planning device in mural painting, often a full-scale line drawing of the design, without color and tone.**

**CASEIN**

**CASEÍNA**

**A natural protein obtained from cow's milk. Produces a flat, water-resistant film.**

**CHIAROSCURO**

**CLAROSCURO**

**Term is used to describe the effect of light and shade in a painting or drawing, especially where strong tonal contrasts are used.**

**CROSSHATCHING**

**TRAMADO**

**More than one set of close parallel lines that crisscross each other at angles, to model and indicate tone.**

**CHROMA**

**CROMA**

**The relative intensity or purity of a hue when compared to grayness or lack of hue.**

**COCKLING**

**CORRUGADO, ENTRETELA**

**Wrinkling or puckering in paper supports, caused by applying washes onto a flimsy or improperly stretched surface.**

**COLLAGE**

**COLLAGE**

**A technique of picture making in which the artist uses materials other than the traditional paint, such as cut paper, wood, sand, and so on.**

**COMPOSITION**

**COMPOSICIÓN**

**The arrangement of elements by an artist in a painting or drawing.**

**CO-POLYMERS**

**COPOLÍMEROS**

**A polymer in which the molecule is of more than one type of structural unit.**

**COPAL**

**COPAL**

**A hard resin used in making varnishes and painting mediums.**

**D**

**DAMAR**

**DAMAR**

**A resin from conifer trees, used in making oil mediums and varnishes.**

**DEAD COLOR**

**COLOR CUBIERTO**

**A term for colors used in underpainting.**

**DECKLE EDGE**

**BARBA DEL PAPEL**

**The ragged edge found on handmade papers.**

**DECOUPAGE**

**DECOUPAGE**

**The act of cutting out paper designs and applying them to a surface to make an all over collage.**

**DESIGNER COLORS**

**COLORES DE DISEÑO**

**Best quality Gouache paints, often used in commercial art.**

**DILUENTS**

**DILUYENTES**

**Liquids, such as turpentine, used to dilute oil paint, the diluent for waterbased media is water.**

**DISPERSION**

**DISPERSIÓN**

**Applied to paint, a smooth, homogeneous mixture of ingredients; the process of dispersal, in which pigment particles are evenly distributed throughout the vehicle.**

**DISTEMPER**

**PINTURA AL TEMPLE**

**A blend of glue, chalk and water-based paint, used mostly for murals and posters.**

**DRIER**

**(MATERIAL) SECANTE**

**A material that accelerates or initiates the drying of an oil paint or oil by promoting oxidation.**

**DRYING OIL**

**ÓLEO FIRME**

**An oil that, when spread into a thin layer and exposed to air, absorbs oxygen and converts into a tough film.**

**E**

**EMULSION**

**EMULSIÓN**

**A liquid in which small droplets of one liquid are immiscible in, but thoroughly and evenly dispersed throughout, a second liquid. i.e. Acrylic Emulsion**

**ENCAUSTIC**

**ENCÁUSTICA**

**Literally, to burn in. A painting technique in which the binder is melted wax.**

**F**

**FAT**

**A term used to describe paints which have a high oil content.**

**FILLER**

**RELLENO**

**Inert pigment added to paint to increase its bulk, also called extender.**

**FILM**

**PELÍCULA**

**A thin coating or layer of paint, ink, etc.**

**FIXATIVE**

**FIJADOR**

**A solution, usually of shellac and alcohol, sprayed onto drawings, to prevent their smudging or crumbling off the support.**

**FRESCO**

**FRESCO**

**A painting technique in which the pigments are dispersed in plain water and applied to a damp plaster wall. The wall becomes the binder, as well as the support.**

**FUGITIVE COLORS**

**COLORES FUGITIVOS**

**Pigment or dye colors that fade when exposed to light.**

## **G**

**GESSO**

**YESO**

**A white ground material for preparing rigid supports for**



**painting, made of a mixture of chalk, white pigment, and glue. Same name applied to acrylic bound chalk and pigment used on flexible supports as well as rigid.**

**GLAZE**

**VELADURA, VELAR**

**A very thin, transparent colored paint applied over a previously painted surface to alter the appearance and color of the surface.**

**GOUACHE**

**GOUACHE, AGUADA**

**Opaque watercolors used for illustrations.**

**GRISSAILLE**

**A monochromatic painting, usually in gray, which can be used under colored glazes.**

**GROUND**

**Coating material, usually white, applied to a support to make it ready for painting.**

**GUM**

**RESINA**

**A plant substance that is soluble in water.**

**GUM ARABIC**

**GOMA ARÁBIGA**

**A gum, extracted from Acacia trees, used in solution as a medium for watercolor paints.**

## H

### **HATCHING**

### **SOMBREADO**

**A technique of modeling, indicating tone and suggesting light and shade in drawing or tempera painting, using closely set parallel line.**

### **HUE**

### **TONO**

**The perceived color of an object, identified by a common name such as red, orange, blue.**

### **HYGROSCOPIC**

### **HIDROSCÓPICO**

**Absorbing or attracting moisture from the air.**

## I

### **IMPASTO**

### **IMPASTO**

**A style of painting characterized by thick, juicy color application.**

### **IMPRIMATURA**

### **GRABADO, MARCA**

**A thin, veil of paint, or paint-tinted size, applied to a ground to lessen the ground's absorbency or to tint the ground to a middle value.**

### **INTENSITY**

### **INTENSIDAD**

**The purity and brightness of a color. Also called saturation.**

**K**

**KEY**

**TONO**

**Used to describe the prevailing tone of a painting. A predominantly light painting is said to have a high key. In contemporary mural painting, the key is the result of scratching a walls surface to prepare for final layer of plaster. similar to "tooth."**

**L**

**LAKE**

**LACA**

**A dye that has been chemically or electrically attached to a particle and does not bleed or migrate. \_**

**LATEX**

**LÁTEX**

**A dispersion in water of a solid polymeric material.**

**LEACHING**

**FILTRADO**

**The process of drawing out excess liquid through a porous substance.**

**LEAN**

**RESECO**

**Used as an adjective to describe paint thinned with a spirit, which therefore has low oil content.**

**LEVIGATING**

**LEVIGACIÓN**

**A method of water-washing pulverized pigments to clear the particles of dissolved salts or organic matter.**

**LIGHTFAST**

**COLOR INALTERABLE**

**Resistant to fading or other changes due to light.**

**LOCAL COLOR**

**COLOR LOCAL**

**The actual color of an object or surface, unaffected by shadow coloring, light quality or other factors**

**LOOM STATE**

**TELA SIN PREPARAR**

**Canvas that has not been primed, sized or otherwise prepared beforehand for painting.**

**M**

**MATIERE**

**PINTURA**

**Paint.**

**MAROUFLAGE**

**MAROUFLAGE**

**A technique for attaching, with glue, mural size painting on paper or fabric to a wall.**

**MASSTONE**

**COLOR DE LA MASA**

**The top tone or body color of a paint seen only by reflected light.**

**MAT**

**CARTÓN VISIBLE**

**A stiff cardboard with a window cut out of the center, attached to a backboard.**

**MATTE**

**MATE, SIN BRILLO**

**Flat, non-glossy; having a dull surface appearance. Variant spelling . matt. [\\_](#)**

**MEDIUM**

**TÉCNICA**

**The liquid in which pigments are suspended. Also a material chosen by the artist for working. Plural is media.**

**MIGRATION**

**MIGRACIÓN**

**The action of a pigment or dye moving through a dried film above or below it.**

**MIXED MEDIA**

**TÉCNICA MIXTA**

**In drawing and painting this refers to the use of different media in the same picture.**

**MONOMER**

**MONÓMERO**

**A material with low molecular weight that can react with similar or dissimilar materials to form a polymer.**

**MOSAIC**

**MOSAICO**

**Picture making technique using small units of variously colored materials (glass, tile, stone) set in a mortar.**

**MURAL**

**MURAL**

**Also referred to as wall painting. this word describes any painting made directly on the wall.**

**MUSEUM BOARD**

**CARTULINA DE MUSEO**

**Multi ply board made of cotton rags or buffered cellulose to ensure chemical stability and neutrality.**

**P**

**PALETTE**

**PALETA**

**The surface which a painter will mix his colors. Also the range of colors used by an artist. \_**

**PATINA**

**PÁTINA**

**Originally the green brown encrustation on bronze, this now includes the natural effects of age or exposure on a surface.**

**PENTIMENTO**

**PENTIMENTO**

**A condition of old paintings where lead-containing pigments have become more transparent over time, revealing earlier layers.**

**PIGMENTS**

**PIGMENTOS**

**particles with inherent color that can be mixed with adhesive binders to form paint. \_**

**PLASTICIZER**

**PLASTIFICANTE**

**Ingredients added to paint to either make it flow or be easily re-dissolved.**

**PLEIN AIR**

**AL AIRE LIBRE**

**French for "open air". Term describing paintings done outside directly from the subject.**

**POLYMER**

**POLÍMERO**

**A series of monomers strung together in a repeating**

**chainlike form. That really makes it clear.**

**PRECIPITATE**

**PRECIPITADO**

**An inert particle to which dyes can be laked.**

**PRESERVATIVE**

**PRESERVATIVO**

**A material that prevents or inhibits the growth of micro-organisms in organic mixtures.**

**PRIMER**

**IMPRIMACIÓN**

**Coating material, usually white, applied to a support to prepare it for painting.**

**PVA**

**ACETATO DE POLIVINILO**

**Polyvinyl acetate, a manmade resin used as a paint medium and in varnish.**

## **R**

**REFRACTION**

**REFRACCIÓN**

**The bending of light from one course in one medium to a different course through another medium of different refractive index.**

**REFRACTIVE INDEX**

**ÍNDICE REFRACTARIO**

**The numerical ratio of the speed of light in a vacuum to its speed in a substance.**



**RESINS**

**RESINAS**

**A general term for a wide variety of more or less transparent, fusible materials. The term is used to designate any polymer that is a basic material for paints and plastics.**

**S**

**SANQUINE**

**A red-brown chalk.**

**SAPONIFICATION**

**SAPONIFICACIÓN**

**The process in which a paint binder, under moist and alkaline conditions, becomes transparent or discolored.**

**SCUMBLING**

**ESFUMADO**

**The technique of applying a thin, semi-opaque or translucent coating of paint over a previously painted surface to alter the color or appearance of the surface without totally obscuring it.**

**SECCO**

**SECADO**

**Italian for "dry". A technique of wall-painting onto dry plaster, or lime plaster that is dampened shortly before paint is applied.**

**SFUMATO**

**ESFUMADO**

**Italian for "shaded off". Gradual, almost imperceptible transitions of color from light to dark.**

**SGRAFFITO**

**SGRAFFITO**

**Technique in which the surface layer is incised or cut away to reveal a contrasting color.**

**SHADE**

**SOMBRA**

**Term for a color darkened with black.**

**SHELLAC**

**LACA**

**A yellow resin formed from secretions of the LAC insect, used in making varnish.**

**SILICATE**

**SILICATO**

**Material, such as sand, that is composed of a metal, oxygen, and silicon.**

**SILVERPOINT**

**SILVERPOINT**

**A drawing method using a piece of metal, usually silver wire, drawn on a ground prepared with Chinese white, sometimes with pigment added.**

**SINOPIA**

**A red-brown chalk used for marking frescoes; also the preliminary drawing itself.**

**SIZE**

**Material applied to a surface as a penetrating sealer, to alter or lessen its absorbency and isolate it from subsequent coatings.**

**SKETCH**

**SKETCH, BOCETO**

**A preliminary drawing of a composition.**

**SQUARING UP**

**ENCUADRAR**

**A method for transferring an image to a larger or smaller format.**

**STRAINER**

**DEPURADOR**

**A wooden chassis for textile supports that has rigid, immovable corners.**

**STRETCHER**

**BASTIDOR**

**A wooden chassis for textile supports that has expandable corners.**

**SUBTRACTIVE COLOR**

**COLOR RESULTANTE**

**Color resulting from the absorption of light.**

**STUDY**

**PRUEBA DE ARTISTA**

**A detailed drawing or painting made of one or more parts of a final composition, but not the whole work.**

**SUPPORT**

**BASE**

**The basic substrata of the painting; paper, cotton, linen, wall, etc.**

**T**

**TEMPERA**

**TEMPERA**

**Technique of painting in which water and egg yolk or whole egg and oil mixture form the binder for the paint. Used also as a term for cheap opaque paints used in schools.**

**THIXOTROPIC**

**Referring to materials that are thick and viscous while at rest but will flow if brushed, stirred, or shaken. Resumes its viscous state when the agitation stops.**

**TINT**

**PLUMEADO,**

**SOMBREADO (en grabado)**

**Term for a color lightened with white. Also, in a mixture of colors, the tint is the dominant color.**

**TONER**

**VIRADOR**

**An unlaked dye that can bleed or migrate through dried paint films.**

**TOOTH**

**ESMALTE**

**Small grained but even texture. Tooth provides for the attachment of succeeding layers of paint.**

**TRACTION**

**ADHESIÓN**

**In oils, the movement of one paint layer over another.**

**TRAGACANTH**

**TRAGACANTO**

**A gum, extracted from certain Astragalus plants, used as a binding agent in watercolor paints and pastels.**

**TROMPE L'OEIL**

**TROMPE L'OEIL, EFECTO**

**French for "deceive the eye". A painting with extreme naturalistic details, aiming to persuade the viewer that they are looking at an actual object, not a representation.**

**U**

**UNDERPAINTING**

**FONDO**

**The traditional stage in oil painting of using a monochrome or dead color as a base for composition. Also known as laying in.**

**V**

**VALUE**

**VALOR (del color)**

**The relative lightness or darkness of a hue. Black is low value. White is a high value.**

**VARNISH**

**BARNIZ**

**Generally, a more or less transparent film-forming liquid that dries into a solid film.**

**VEDUTA**

**VEDUTA, VISTA**

**Italian for "view". An accurate representation of an urban landscape.**

**VEHICLE**

**VEHÍCULO**

**The entire liquid contents of a paint.**

**VENICE TURPENTINE**

**TREMENTINA DE VENECIA**

**An oil resin - the semisolid mixture of a resin and an essential**

**oil - derived from the larch and used primarily in making mediums and diluents for oil painting.**

**VERDACCIO**

**VERDACCIO, FONDO VERDE**

**Old term for green underpainting.**

**VOLATILE**

**VOLÁTIL**

**Evaporating rapidly or easily.**

**VOLUME**

**VOLUMEN**

**The space that an object or figure fills in a drawing or painting.**

## **W**

**WASH**

**AGUADA**

**A thin, usually broadly applied, layer of transparent or heavily diluted paint or ink.**

**WATERCOLOR**

**ACUARELA**

**A technique of painting using a binder made from a water-soluble gum. Watercolors can be transparent or opaque.**

**WATER TENSION BREAKER**

**LICUADOR**

**Substance added to water or to water-based paints in order to reduce surface tension. Por ej. "Ox Gall".**

**WAX PAINTING**

**See Encaustic.**

**ENCÁUSTICA**

**WAX RESIST**

**CONTRA CERA**

**The use of a waxy medium to make a design over which a colored wash is spread.**

**WET ON WET**

**SOBRE MOJADO**

**The application of fresh paint over an area on which the paint is still wet.**

**WETTING AGENT**

**AGENTE HUMECTANTE**

**See Water Tension Breaker.**

**WHITE SPIRITS**

**DESTILADOR, AGUARRÁS**

**A thinner used with oil paints replacing Turpentine.**

**WHITING**

**PIGMENTO DE TIZA**

**Chalk that is purified, ground with water and dried to form an inert pigment.**



**X**

**XYLOGRAPHY**

**XILOGRAFÍA**

**Rarely used term for woodblock printing. Also the mechanical reproduction of wood grain for decorative purposes.**

**Y**

**YELLOWING**

**AMARILLEAR, ENVEJECIMIENTO**

**This effect on oil paintings is usually caused by one of three reasons: excessive use of linseed oil medium; applying any of the varnishes that are prone to yellow with age; or most often, an accumulation of dirt embedded into the varnish.**

**Z**

**ZOOMORPHIC**

**ZOOMÓRFICO**

**Describes the forms of works of art and ornaments based on animal shapes.**