

paint an apple OR TWO A DAY

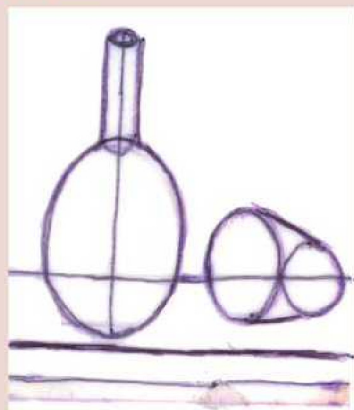
Joan Cornish Willies, member of the Royal Society of Miniatures Painters, Sculptors, and Gravers, brings us a lovely still-life tutorial.

By Joan Cornish Willies



This simple still life can be a delightful addition to a dining room. The usual dollhouse scale of one inch to the foot is used in this work. Your vase would not be larger than a foot high within the painting. Therefore, if it were set in a regular-size home, it would not be larger than one-inch high within the dollhouse size painting. There is ample room to crop from the top in the demo painting to fit whatever frame you have.

Template



Notes

1. Do not use Turpenoid Natural (in a green can) as a medium for this field, as this product is made mostly for cleaning brushes! It will not work on Ivorine as a painting medium.

2. Use Liquin Light Gel by Winsor & Newton as an isolator between glazes.

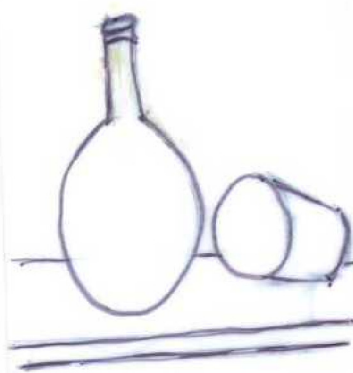
3. Use good makes for mops (the cheaper ones shed hair on your work) such as Silver Brush Company ¼" or Loew Cornell, or ¼" Winsor & Newton ¼".

Preparation

Step 1. Cut your Ivorine, and then wash it in dishwashing liquid to remove any acid from your fingers.

Step 2. Trace the template, using a pencil and tracing paper. (The thin clear plastic vellum such as draftsmen use is the best.) If you have a light-box, then place a copy of the diagram with the Ivorine on top and trace the lines.

If you do not have a light box, trace the diagram with tracing paper. Tape this to a



bright window, tape the Ivorine on top of the tracing, and trace off the drawing to the Ivorine using a water color pencil sharpened to a good point.

Step 3. With the corner of a damp paper towel, rub out the penciled center line of the fagon and the base of the basket.

Begin painting

Step 1. Place a small amount of Sienna Gold or Burnt Sienna on the palette, as well as some turpenoid in two small jars, one for cleaning and one for diluting the paint. Take a #1 brush, wet it in the turpenoid, then add



a small amount of paint to it. Test the paint to make sure that it is thinly diluted, and evenly paint this color all over the drawing with the exception of the table. Allow this to dry well about two hours.

Step 2. In the meantime, take some Ultramarine Blue, dilute it thinly with the turpenoid, and paint a very thin diluted blue over the table right down to the bottom of the drawing. This should also be allowed to dry thoroughly.



Step 3. Select the small ¼" angle brush. Lay a little Brown Madder and Burnt Umber on the palette. Dip the brush in turpenoid, then dry it within a paper towel, making the brush just damp. Flatten the side of the angle brush into the Brown Madder, turn it over, and flatten it on the other side in the Burnt Umber. Squeeze the brush between two paper towels.

Step 4. With a gentle downward movement, stipple lightly all over the tinted background from the right and then to the left, slightly overlapping the flagon and basket. Do a small area at a time, working out the color; do not put any more paint on the brush. The effect will be that the two colors will mix as you touch and tap in the background. Do not stipple over the blue table.

Step 5. Fold your paper towel into a pad and press down gently on the painting, thus removing and also flattening down any little bits which might stick up.



Step 6. Take your series 7 brush, dip it in the turpenoid, and pull it to a point through the towel. Working on the very point of the brush, trim back any paint which has got over the drawn lines of the flagon and the basket. Take small steps and clean the brush repeatedly in the turpenoid, pulling it through the towel to a point to clean up the paint you have picked up as you trim and proceed to lift out the surplus color.



Step 7. Place Brown Madder and Burnt Umber again on the palette. Dilute the paint this time by adding a little Liquin Light Gel to the color instead of turpenoid. Take a #1 sable brush, twirl it in both colors, take off surplus paint with the paper towel, and gently stroke evenly all over the background area. This smooth glaze over the stippled

YOU'LL need



- Ivoryine base
- Viva paper towels – 2 ply
- Watercolor pencil, gray or burnt umber
- Turpenoid (in the blue can)
- Liquin or Liquin Light Gel
- Several fine brushes: Winsor-Newton Series 7 Kolinsky Sable #1 and either Winsor Newton or Escodio in a #0. (You might also find an Escodio Kolinsky Sable # 00 useful.)
- Mops: ¼" (½" optional, for background)
- 150 grit sandpaper
- Silk pad (suggest shoulder pad from an old blouse)
- Photomount or Vac-U-Mount
- Paints in Winsor Newton Griffin oil/alkyd colors:
 - French Ultramarine Blue
 - Payne's Gray
 - Titanium White
 - Burnt Umber
 - Lemon Yellow
 - Rose Madder
 - Geranium Lake
 - Indian Yellow
 - Veridian
 - Perylene Black
 - Perylene Red
 - Rose Madder
 - Brown Pink
 - Winsor Red
 - Burnt Sienna Gold
 - Burnt Sienna
 - Sennelier
 - Brown Madder
 - Cadmium Red (optional)
 - Olive Green (optional)
 - Sap Green (Optional)
 - Violet Blue Gray (optional)

background reinforces it and adds to its luminosity.

Starting the basket

Step 1. When you reach the basket, change brushes and stipple a little of the background color into the bottom of the basket, taking it up a little inside of the basket and upwards to where you want to place the apples. If you want to extend the number of apples, stipple out a little further. Blot with the folded paper towel. This stippling is to allow you to be able to lift out the circles for the apples by making natural dark lines around each of them.

Step 2. With the angle brush flattened in the same mixture of Brown Madder and Burnt Umber, touched to the paper towel to remove surplus, gently stipple the right outside of the basket. Blot with the folded towel.

Step 3. Squeeze brush between the towel to remove surplus paint and gently stipple down the outside of the basket through to the end of the basket, but not into the inside of the basket.

Step 4. Blot with the paper towel. Stipple inside the basket making an area where you will be lifting out the apples. Carefully lift out the apples leaving a thin line of color between each of them; follow the picture and note that some apples are laid in front of the others, therefore whole circles do not appear everywhere. Do not stop your painting session here, as in the next step you will be weaving the basket, and lifting the lines of the reeds out of the damp stippled paint on the basket.

Weaving the basket

Step 1. Take your #1 series 7 fine Kolinsky sable brush, dip it in the turpenoid, and pull it through the paper towel, gently twisting as you go to establish a very fine point. Pull down the fine point of the brush the length of the outside of the basket through the stippled color, making a fine lifted out line which will expose the tint which you first laid on the work.

Step 2. Make three or four more lifted out thin lines, all going to the end of the basket and slightly twisting upwards as it slopes

towards the end of the basket, thus forming the basic structure of the basket over which you will weave your rushes.

Step 3. After lifting out the long lines, carefully lift out and weave the lines going round the basket, lifting then over and under the long lines as shown in the illustration below.

Do a little at a time, and keep cleaning and pointing the brush as you go.



This lift out and weaving could be the trickiest part of this rather easy painting. I would suggest that you take a spare piece of Ivoryine in the same size. Stipple and blot the color and practice stipple and lift out until you are comfortable about doing it on the basket.

If you go wrong, it is a simple task to blot off the paint and try again. The usual causes of failure are having too much wet on the brush, or the stipple is also too wet.

Adding details

Step 1. Take some Ultramarine Blue diluted to a tint, and paint the table again.

Step 2. Add some Payne's Gray to the Ultramarine Blue to tint the dark area under the edge of the table.

Step 3. When this is thoroughly dry, place a little Perylene Black oil color on the palette. Wet the brush in turpenoid and

dilute the Perylene Black to a tint with the brush. Using the point of the brush, stroke in some of this color over the right and middle of the base of the flagon and up the right of the neck. You will now see the under-painting as well as the Perylene Black tint over it.

Step 4. The apples should also now be dry. Tint them with some Lemon Yellow diluted in the turpenoid. Using Lemon Yellow will give a glow under the subsequent color painted over the apples, whether you choose green apples or red ones.

Step 5. Tint in some Burnt Sienna to the inside of the basket. When the tint is dry, the small amount of basket weave inside the top edge of the basket can be added.

Step 6. To the bottom right-hand side of the basket stipple in a little Olive Green; then, with tiny touches of the brush, lift out some foliage. Allow the work to dry thoroughly about a couple of hours to be safe.

Step 7. When the painting is dry, feel the surface for raised areas; if you find any, take the silk pad and buff firmly. If some areas still remain raised, gently sand with the sander – do not use any pressure, just move it over the work, then check for any raised bits. Please DO NOT press heavily on the sander; however, you can press as firmly as you can on the silk pad. Wipe any dust from the sandpaper with the towel.



Painting the flagon

Step 1. Take some Liquin Light Gel placed on the paper towel and firmly wipe over the picture, making sure not to leave ridges. A clean soft mop very lightly used will help to remove any ridges. This is an isolating layer, which will help to keep the surface smooth and keep the picture luminous.

Step 2. Glaze over the flagon with a very thin tint of Ultramarine Blue diluted with turpenoid, including the area of Perylene Black which you have previously painted.

Step 3. Glaze over the lifted out area of the basket with Indian Yellow or, if you prefer, Burnt Sienna Gold. Dilute with a little Liquin Light Gel. This will cause the lifted-out area to glow.

Step 4. If you are making Granny Smith apples, glaze over the Lemon under-painting on the apples with Sap Green. Mix some Titanium White to the Sap Green or the Indian Yellow. Touch in some lights to the left of the three apples in front right of the flagon similarly to those on the red apples in the illustration.

Step 5. When the Sap Green is almost dry, pat gently with a clean soft mop, moving it gently to the right side of each apple to create a soft light which merges to the darker color. The front of the larger apple in the center should receive a touch of this light around the center. The half apple should be touched in with Indian Yellow and White, or with a hint of Sienna Gold mixed with Titanium White. As this is so small you should work only on the point of the brush and not bend the point down too much.

Step 6. When this is dry, you could go over the darker side of the apples with Olive Green mixed with Sap Green, and edge the apple with Indian Yellow and White, gently moved into the green with the point of the brush and gently touched with the mop or blotted with the paper towel.

Step 7. Paint in tiny stalks to the center of the apples with Burnt Umber. If you prefer red apples, dilute some Perylene Red with Liquin Light Gel and thinly lay this color over

the Lemon tint on all of the apples. Allow this to dry.

Step 8. Take some Ultramarine Blue, mix it on the palette with Payne's Gray, and with your angle brush carefully stipple all over the table and pat down with the paper towel. With the #1 Kolinsky brush cleaned and dipped in the turpenoid and pulled to a point through the paper, lift off squiggly lines to loosely represent marble. Remove the surplus paint from the brush by wiping in the towel, and if necessary, clean in turpenoid, pull to a point through the towel, and resume the lift off. Do a little of this on the drop below the table, or if you like just fill the drop in with Payne's Gray.

Step 9. While this is drying, add some Titanium White to light blue violet gray or to Ultramarine Blue on the palette.

Step 10. Take some Liquin Light Gel, place on a paper towel and pull the brush through this to a point. With this point, now with a small amount of Liquin on it, stroke over the whole of the flagon, its neck, top, and handle, making a soft tacky surface. Blot with the folded paper towel. Take the #1 brush and twirl it lightly to a point in the light blue violet and white mixture, (or blue and titanium white if you have used Ultramarine Blue) and highlight the left side of the flagon, its neck, the handle, and the lip at the top. Make as clean an edge as possible on the left side of the flagon.

Step 11. With another clean, dry, fine brush, pull lightly on the pale blue or blue violet color and move it towards the middle of the flagon.

Step 12. Take a small clean dry mop and mop gently from the left side towards the middle; tickle the surface and do not use pressure. With a dry clean #0 brush, stroke some of the light color towards the inside of the handle from left to right and repeat this also on the left side of the neck. The now slightly tacky surface will receive the paint, helping it to blend into the darker color on the right side of the flagon. Allow all to dry.

Adding to the apples

Step 1. Take Perylene Red and reglaze the apples, then, while they are tacky, touch

in some Indian Yellow mixed with a little Titanium White, or you could try Cadmium Red Light with a hint of White, and touch in these colors to the light areas of the apples making tinted highlights. (It is not always necessary to use pure white highlights.) The paint will settle into the tacky surface of the apples and will be soft at the edges. This can be enhanced with a light pat of the mop using it on its side,

Step 2. Using Burnt Umber, add in the two tiny pips in the center of the half apple.

Step 3. Take some Brown Madder and mix it with Perylene Black, and just a touch of Liquin Light Gel. Gently touch this into the darkened side of the apples; it will subtly darken the edges of the apples as they merge into the shadows. Allow to dry.

Step 4. If you wish, add a little Sap Green and Thalo Yellow Green, for highlights, to the tiny strokes of foliage at the bottom right of the basket. If you do not want to put these in, the background can be brought down lower, and when final shadows are added to the basket they can be taken back into the bottom of the basket.



Finishing touches

Step 1. You could leave the background at the previous stage, or as I have done, you could repeat the same glaze over the background, using your #1 brush but

adding a small amount of Payne's Gray to the mixture of Brown Madder and Burnt Umber just at the bottom of the painting.

As you apply the background glaze, bring it in and merge it with the Perylene Black of the right side of the flask and mop to blend with a soft dry mop.

Step 2. Take a little of the red, mix with Liquin Light gel, and touch in a little red reflection on the flask from the closest apples. Pat it down gently with a small clean brush or mop. Re-highlight the handle and edge of the basket if necessary.

Step 3. Take some titanium white loosely mixed with Liquin Light Gel, and twirled with the #1 brush, drag the point of the brush horizontally across the left side of the table, in little streaks, to represent some shine on the table. Some of this can also be dragged with the point of the brush along the upper edge of the table.

Adding shadows

Step 1. Finally we will add shadows. Good transparent shadows can be made with two parts veridian, and one part each of Payne's Gray and Rose Madder or Geranium Lake, both oil alkyds from Winsor & Newton. (The Veridian should be more than each of the other two colors.)

Step 2. Take this color and add a little to the bottom of the flagon just below its curved edge toward the first apple and second apples. Pull a little shadow color down across the third apple which is balanced on the first two, and alongside the large apple on the right. Take a little shadow and paint it in a thin line under the half apple and cast a curved shadow of that apple against the one behind it.

Step 3. Paint more shadow behind the second apple on the right under the basket and into the leaves or into the back ground if you have not used the leaves. You will note that the cast shadow from the right of the basket goes over half of the upper edge of the table. Note also the reflection of the flagon into the table. For this, you could use the shadow color, or add a little of the Perylene Black to the mixture.

Step 4. Add the shadow color to the drop



under the table. Make sure that you really closely observe and place the shadows, as they can make the picture look almost three-dimensional, even in its tiny size.

Step 5. When the picture is completely dry, rub in another layer of the isolator Liquin Light gel with the soft paper towel. After leaving the work to dry as you proceed, remember to check for raised areas of dust or hairs, and buff firmly with the silk pad. After the step with the Liquin Isolator is introduced, make sure that you re-do this isolation each time you recommence each stage of the work (so long as the painting is completely dry).

Step 6. Sign the work with tiny initials in white or pale blue. Look through the magnifying glass as you do it and hold your breath, supporting your right wrist with your left if you are right handed and vice versa if you are left handed.

Step 7. Varnish the work with Schmincke

matte varnish spray and do not spray heavily at first. Start with a very light spray and when this is done, repeat another light spray. Do not use a varnish which contains damar, because this is a strong varnish and could crackle the surface of a delicately glazed miniature.

The varnish should be removable, so do not use photo varnishes which cannot be removed. A soft eggshell finish is prettier than a very glossy one which when the light is reflected against it could obscure the delicate work you have put into the painting.

Step 8. After varnishing the work, mount the Ivorine on a thin piece of cardboard with photomount or Vac-u-mount.

These directions can also be used for larger miniature works, suitable for the home. You could even make one for both your home and for your dollhouse. I would recommend that you don't make your mini frame too large, as the size could overpower the beauty of your mini painting. **DHM**