



Gondola in Venice

A step-by-step painting guide by Richard Robinson

Watch the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>

MY PAINTING CLUB

Introduction

Finish Monet's gondola in Venice painting. Claude Monet was 68 years old when he fell in love with Venice. He stayed 2 months and painted 37 paintings, but he never finished the last painting he started there. What would it have looked like? Let's find out in this workshop. Follow me step by step as I show you the techniques I use to recreate this beautiful scene of a gondola on the Grand Canal from the grand master of Impressionism. Enjoy!



"Gondola in Venice" 11x14" Oil on Canvas by Richard Robinson after Claude Monet.



REFERENCE PHOTO 1

The scene as Richard found it.



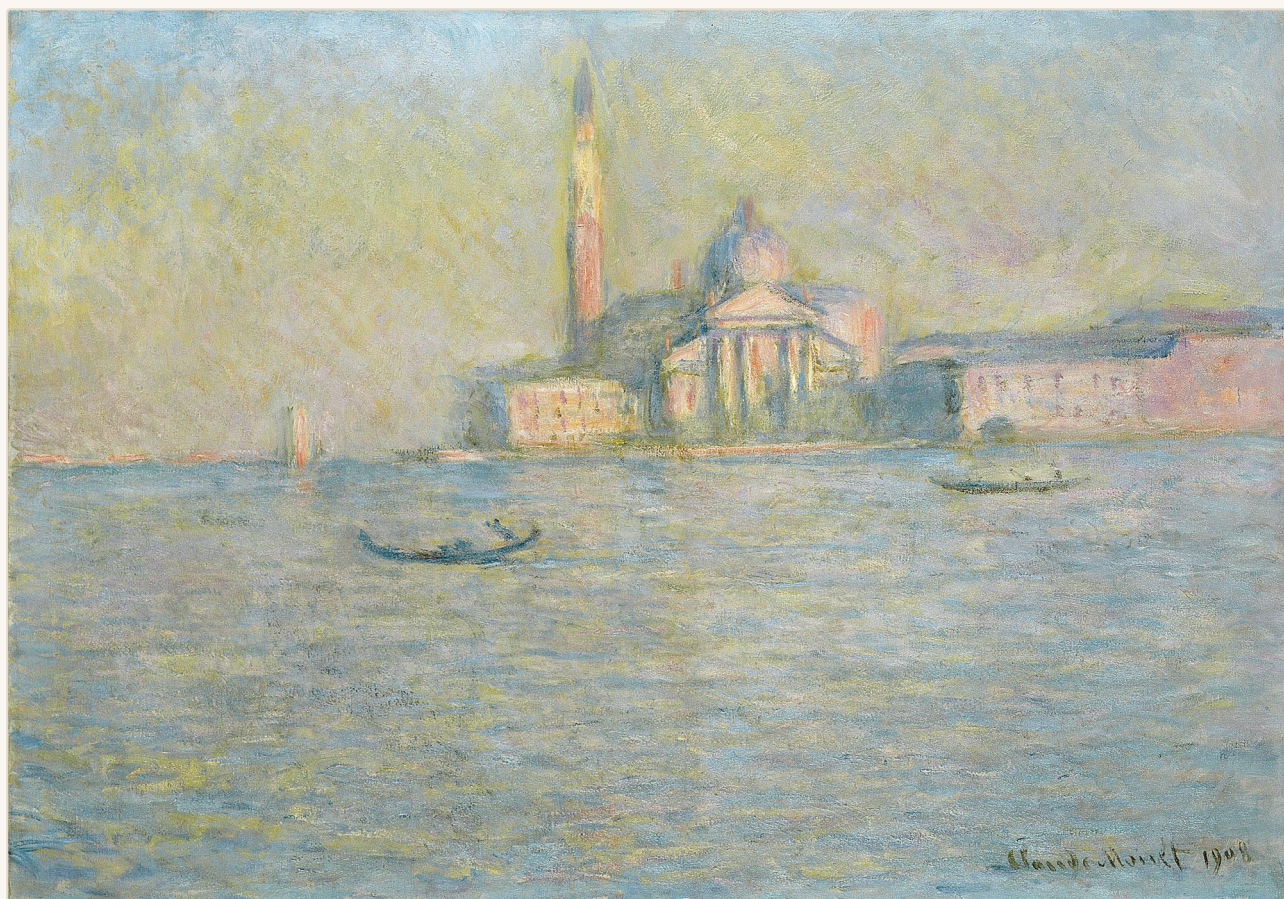
REFERENCE PHOTO 2

The scene as Richard found it.



REFERENCE PHOTO 3

The scene as Richard found it.



REFERENCE PHOTO 4

The scene as Richard found it.

Materials

Here's everything I use for this painting. Don't worry if you don't have the exact same supplies — use what you have and substitute freely.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- M. Graham & Co. Oil Paints
- Alizarine Crimson
- Phthalo Blue
- Ultramarine Blue
- Burnt Sienna
- Cadmium Red
- Cadmium Orange
- Yellow Ochre
- Cadmium Yellow Light
- Titanium White
- Painting medium
- M. Graham & Co. Walnut Alkyd Medium or Walnut Oil
- Solvent
- Gamsol
- Canvas
- Fredrix ultrasmooth canvas (Giving it a light sanding first helps the paint stick better).
- You could use a canvas panel or anything you prefer.
- Brushes
- [Rosemary & Co. Richard Robinson Brush Set](#)
- Palette Knife
- Paper Towels
- Container for solvent
- Container for painting medium

1 Monet's Venice Experience

How old was Claude Monet when he discovered Venice?

Claude Monet was 68 years old when he discovered Venice. He and his wife Alice accepted an invitation to stay with a friend there in 1908. If you're interested in learning more about Monet's time in Venice, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How long did Monet stay in Venice and how many paintings did he produce during that time?

Monet stayed in Venice for two months, during which he painted feverishly and produced a total of 37 paintings. These works have become some of his most popular. For more insights into Monet's Venice experience, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Why was Monet initially hesitant to paint Venice?

Monet was initially hesitant to paint Venice because so many artists had already painted it before him. However, upon arriving, he was overcome by the beauty of the place and decided to paint it. To delve deeper into Monet's artistic journey in Venice, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What was Monet's painting focus before he went to Venice?

Before visiting Venice, Monet had been focused on painting water lilies in his garden for the previous five years. This shift to a new subject in Venice presented a challenge for him. You can learn more about how Monet adapted to this new scenery by visiting <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Did Monet feel satisfied with his paintings of Venice?

Monet admitted that he struggled with the new subject of Venice and was not altogether happy with his work initially. However, by the end of his stay, he was producing paintings he was more pleased with. For more about Monet's artistic process in Venice, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How does the instructor relate to Monet's experience of painting in a new place?

The instructor relates to Monet's experience by sharing that they also take some time to get comfortable painting new scenery when painting abroad. This common challenge is part of the artistic journey. To explore more about painting in new environments, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

2 Monet's Unfinished Gondola Sketch

Why did Monet never finish his sketch of the gondola in Venice?

Monet never finished his sketch of the gondola in Venice because he either didn't think it was worth pursuing or he simply ran out of time and energy for the subject. It's interesting to note that although he started this sketch, he didn't revisit it even when he returned to his Venice paintings four years later for a successful exhibition. For more insights into Monet's work and this lesson, you can visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How long was it before Monet revisited his Venice paintings?

It was four years before Monet revisited his Venice paintings. During this time, he prepared for a very well-received exhibition of 29 paintings from his time in Venice. However, the gondola sketch remained unfinished. To explore more about Monet's work and techniques, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How many of Monet's Venice paintings were included in his exhibition?

Monet's exhibition included 29 paintings from his time in Venice. Despite the success of this exhibition, the sketch of the gondola was not among the finished works. For a deeper dive into Monet's painting process and this particular lesson, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

3 Recreating Monet's Sketch

What color did Monet use to sketch his painting?

Monet used a slightly purplish color to sketch his painting. This choice of color can help set the tone and mood for the rest of the painting. For more insights into recreating Monet's techniques, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What should I do if I'm not confident in my drawing skills?

If you're not confident in your drawing skills, you might want to transfer the drawing onto your canvas using the grid method or another method that suits you. This can help ensure accuracy and give you a strong foundation to work from. Learn more about these techniques at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Did Monet tone his canvas before sketching?

Yes, Monet might have toned his canvas with a light pinkish color before starting the sketch. This can be done with an acrylic wash and helps to unify the painting's color scheme. For more details on this technique, check out <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How did Monet adjust his shapes in the sketch?

Monet adjusted some of his shapes by adding white to the sketching color, which lightens the paint and allows for corrections or enhancements. This technique can help refine details and improve the overall composition. Explore more about this approach at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What color mixture did Monet use in the water of his sketch?

In the water, Monet added a very warm yellowish mixture, suggesting a color harmony between the warm background and the cooler foreground. This technique can create depth and interest in the painting. For further exploration of color harmony, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Which gondola might Monet have been sketching?

It is suspected that the gondola Monet was sketching is actually one of the gondolas present in the scene. This connection can add authenticity and context to your painting. Discover more about this scene and its elements at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

4 Background Composition Choices

What background elements are initially considered for the painting?

The initial background elements considered for the painting are some houses and a little footbridge in the sunlight. However, the instructor suggests that the church of the Santa Maria della Salute would make a much more interesting and dramatic background. For more insights into background composition choices, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What does the instructor suggest as a more interesting background for the painting?

The instructor suggests using the church of the Santa Maria della Salute as a more interesting and dramatic background for the painting. This choice is intended to enhance the visual impact of the piece. To explore more about this composition choice, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How did Manet typically build up his paintings?

Manet typically built up his paintings with several layers of thick paint over many sessions. These sessions could be spaced apart by months or just days, allowing for a complex and textured paint surface. For more on this technique, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How will the painting be completed in the demo?

In the demo, the painting will be completed in a single session, aiming to achieve a complex paint surface similar to Manet's style with lots of thick broken paint. This approach contrasts with Manet's multi-session technique. To learn more about this painting method, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

5 Painting the Church and Water

What colors are used to paint the shadow areas of the church?

To paint the shadow areas of the church, you start with a mixture of blue and white, with a tiny touch of magenta. This creates a very light mixture, as the church is meant to appear distant with a lot of air between it and the viewer. For more detailed guidance, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How does the color of the water change as it gets closer to the viewer?

The color of the water starts with the same blue used for the church and becomes darker as it gets closer to the viewer. To achieve this darker shade, you add blue, a touch of alizarin, and yellow ochre. This technique helps to create a sense of depth in the painting. For further exploration of this technique, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Why is it important to vary the size of brush strokes in this painting?

Varying the size of brush strokes is important because it helps to create depth in the painting. Brush strokes that are closer to the viewer, or lower on the canvas, should be larger than those higher up or further away. This subtle technique enhances the three-dimensional effect of the scene. To learn more about creating depth in your paintings, check out <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

6 Painting the Warm Sky

What colors does Richard use to create the warm sky in the painting?

Richard uses primary yellow and white to create the warm sky in the painting. He applies these colors thinly to achieve the desired warmth, inspired by Monet's sketch. For more details on this technique, you can visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How does Richard ensure the warm sky color doesn't mix with the dark areas?

Richard ensures the warm sky color doesn't mix with the dark areas by keeping his brush clean as he paints up against them. This careful technique helps maintain the distinct separation between the warm sky and the darker elements of the painting. For further insights, check out the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Where else does Richard use the warm sky color in the painting?

Richard uses the same warm sky color for the sunlight on the front of the building and allows it to work its way down into the water. This creates a cohesive and harmonious effect throughout the painting. To explore this technique further, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

7 Adding Warm Light to Gondola

How do you prepare the surface of the painting to add warm light to the gondola?

To add warm light to the gondola, you need to first wipe out the dark blue paint to make a clear space for the warm colors. This preparation ensures that the warm light will stand out effectively against the darker areas. For more detailed guidance on this technique, you can visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What colors should be used to depict the warm light on the gondola?

To depict the warm light on the gondola, start with pure yellow where the sun is strongest. As you move down to the shadow areas, transition through the spectrum to oranges, reds, and mauves, before blending into the existing blues and purples. This gradient captures the natural transition of light and shadow. For more insights on color selection, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

8 Maintaining Drawing Accuracy

How can I maintain drawing accuracy with loose brushwork?

Maintaining drawing accuracy with loose brushwork requires you to keep a close eye on your work as you progress through the painting. It's important to balance the freedom of loose strokes with the precision needed to keep your drawing on track. For more tips on achieving this balance, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How should warm light be reflected in the water?

Warm light should be reflected in the water, but it is often depicted as a bit darker than the light source itself. This subtle difference helps create a more realistic and visually appealing effect in your painting. For more detailed guidance on capturing light and reflections, visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What is the difference between Monet's brushwork and the instructor's?

Monet's brushwork is described as more fluid, circular, and rhythmic, while the instructor's brushwork tends to be straighter. Being aware of these differences can help you develop your own style. To learn more about different brushwork techniques, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What should I observe about Monet's painting of gondola poles?

It's beneficial to closely observe how Monet painted his gondola poles, especially in the context of this painting. His approach can offer insights into achieving a certain fluidity and rhythm in your own work. For a deeper dive into Monet's techniques and how they can be applied, you can view the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

9 Painting the Church with Texture

How do the colors on the church change as they move into the sun?

As the faces of the church move into the sun, the colors transition through the spectrum from blues to reds and into yellows. This technique helps to capture the dynamic lighting and adds vibrancy to the painting. For more insights into this technique, you can visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What technique is used to create texture on the church in the painting?

To create texture on the church, the technique involves getting as much paint as possible onto the canvas and patting the brush down in addition to stroking it. This approach results in a nice raised surface, adding depth and interest to the painting. You can explore this technique further by visiting the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

10 Adding Texture to the Sky

How do you start adding texture to the sky in the painting?

To start adding texture to the sky, begin with a thin yellowish base. This provides a warm foundation that you can build upon with other colors. For more detailed guidance, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What colors are used to add texture to the sky after the base layer?

After establishing the thin yellowish base, you can add a really light blue and some light pinkish colors on top. These colors help to create an interesting and dynamic texture in the sky. For further exploration of this technique, visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What brush technique is used to create texture in the sky?

To create texture in the sky, use a smaller brush and load it with as much paint as possible. Then, dab the paint onto the canvas to achieve an interesting texture. This technique is demonstrated in more detail in the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

11 Monet's Brushwork and Color Vibrations

How does Monet achieve the shimmering effect in his paintings?

Monet achieves the shimmering effect by combining brush strokes of slightly different colors in one space. This technique, known as broken color, involves laying strokes of different colors next to and on top of each other without blending them. This allows the viewer's eye to do the blending, giving the painting a rich, colorful shimmer. For more insights into Monet's techniques, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What is the most common element of Monet's work?

The most common element of Monet's work is his loose brushwork and the color vibrations he achieves with broken color. By placing strokes of different colors next to and on top of each other without blending them, Monet creates a vibrant and shimmering effect. To explore more about Monet's techniques, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Why is the video overexposed, and how can I still see the colors?

The video is a bit overexposed, which makes it difficult to see the colors clearly. However, you can refer to the finished painting in the bottom right-hand corner of the video to see the colors and the shimmering effect Monet is famous for. For a deeper understanding of the techniques used, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How does Monet's technique of broken color work?

Monet's technique of broken color involves laying strokes of different colors next to and on top of each other without blending them. This allows the viewer's eye to blend the colors naturally, creating a vibrant and shimmering effect. To learn more about this technique, you can visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What is the difference between the two paintings compared in the video?

In the video, two paintings are compared to illustrate how Monet sometimes painted over more than others. The painting on the left has been much more heavily overpainted than the one on the right. This comparison helps to highlight the variations in Monet's approach to achieving his signature shimmering effect. For further exploration, visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

12 Reflecting Colors in Water

How should I reflect the colors from the sky into the water in my painting?

To reflect the colors from the sky into the water, use a very light mauve, which is mostly white with a touch of phthalo and a tiny touch of alizarin or magenta. This creates a subtle reflection that mirrors the sky's colors. For more details on this technique, visit the lesson sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What should I be careful about when painting light areas near dark areas?

When painting light areas near dark areas, be careful not to let the dark paint muddy your light areas. If your brush picks up dark paint, clean it off and reload with fresh paint. This helps maintain the clarity of your light colors. For further guidance, check out the lesson on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How can I create contrast between warm and cool areas in my painting?

To create contrast between warm and cool areas, use an intense blue to contrast with the warm areas, such as the prow of the gondola. This contrast enhances the warmth by comparison. You can explore more about using color contrast in the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Why is it important to consider the finish of the gondola when painting reflections?

The gondola has a very shiny, high lacquer finish, which means it reflects a lot of its surroundings. This characteristic should be considered when painting reflections, as it can add realism and depth to your painting. For more tips on capturing these reflections, visit the lesson sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

13 Using Long Bristle Brushes

Why are long bristle brushes used in this painting?

Long bristle brushes are used in this painting to achieve a more calligraphic stroke, which adds a lyrical quality to the brushwork. This technique is inspired by Monet's style, where long bristles allow for fluid and expressive strokes. For more insights into using long bristle brushes, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How does the size of the brush affect the painting technique?

The size of the brush affects the painting technique by allowing for different scales of expression. While Monet used large brushes for his large paintings, in this smaller version, a smaller brush with long bristles is used to maintain the expressive quality of the strokes. This approach helps in achieving detailed yet fluid brushwork. To learn more about brush sizes and techniques, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

14 Reflections and Waterline Details

What should I consider when painting reflections on the side of a gondola?

When painting reflections on the side of a gondola, it's important to note that they are diagonal along the hull and become warmer and lighter as they approach the sun. Having a resource to refer to can be very helpful in capturing these details accurately. For more insights, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Why is the angle of the waterline important when painting a gondola?

The angle of the waterline is crucial because it provides information about the angle and position of the boat, as well as the position of the viewer relative to the boat. Even if the waterline is not clearly visible, it affects the overall perception of the scene. As the viewer's eye level gets closer to the water, the waterline appears less rounded and more horizontal. You can learn more about this in the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

15 Adjusting Reflections and Colors

Why is it important to separate the pole from the gondola in the painting?

Separating the pole from the gondola is crucial to avoid it looking like a mast, which could confuse the viewer and detract from the intended composition. By making this distinction, you ensure that each element in the painting is clearly defined, enhancing the overall visual clarity. For more insights on composition techniques, visit the lesson sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How can I prevent the viewer's eye from being drawn to the corner of the painting?

To prevent the viewer's eye from being drawn to the corner of the painting, you can keep the colors in that area darker. This technique helps maintain the viewer's focus on the center of the painting, where the main subject is located. For further tips on managing focal points in your artwork, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What colors are used to darken the reflection in the painting, and why?

Red and orange are used to darken the reflection in the painting. This choice is made because, despite the glossy and reflective nature of the surface, it is black and absorbs a lot of color. Using these warm tones helps achieve the desired depth and richness in the reflection. To explore more about color choices in painting, visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

16 Gondola Symbolism and Construction

What is the metal bit on the prow of the gondola called?

The metal bit on the prow of the gondola is called the 'ferro,' which means iron. It can be made out of various metals, not just iron. For more interesting facts about gondolas, visit the lesson's sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What does the S-shape of the ferro symbolize?

The S-shape of the ferro symbolizes the S-curve of the Grand Canal in Venice. This is just one of the many symbolic elements of the gondola. To explore more about gondola symbolism, check out the resources linked on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How many types of wood are used to make a gondola?

A gondola is constructed using eight different types of wood. This diverse use of materials contributes to the gondola's unique structure and function. For more details on gondola construction, visit the lesson's sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Why is the port side of a gondola made longer than the starboard side?

The port side of a gondola is made slightly longer than the starboard side to help resist the tendency to turn left on each forward stroke. This asymmetry is a clever design feature that aids in the gondola's navigation. Learn more about this and other design features by visiting the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

17 Final Touches and Warm Reflections

How do you create warm light reflections in the water when painting?

To create warm light reflections in the water, you should load your brush with thick paint without using any walnut oil or painting medium. Apply the paint softly across the surface to maintain a textured, impasto look. This technique helps to convey the warmth and depth of the reflection. For more detailed guidance, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Why is it important to use thick paint for warm reflections?

Using thick paint for warm reflections is important because it allows you to maintain a textured, impasto effect that enhances the vibrancy and depth of the reflection. This technique helps to make the reflections appear more realistic and dynamic. You can learn more about this technique by visiting the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What colors are used to make the reflections warmer and darker as they come closer?

To make the reflections warmer and darker as they come closer, you can add a little bit of red and maybe a touch of orange to your paint. There is already some yellow ochre in the mix, which contributes to the warmth. For further exploration of color mixing techniques, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

How do you ensure the paint maintains an impasto texture when applying it?

To ensure the paint maintains an impasto texture, apply it softly across the surface without flattening it out. Avoid using any painting mediums or oils that might thin the paint, as the goal is to keep the paint thick and textured. This technique is further explained in the full lesson, which you can access at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

18 Finishing the Painting

How do you finish a painting like 'Gondola in Venice'?

To finish a painting like 'Gondola in Venice', you can add a bit of warmth and darkness to enhance the final touches. Once you're satisfied with the painting, sign it to mark your work. Finally, remove any tape used during the painting process to reveal the clean edges of your artwork. For more detailed guidance, you can explore the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

What should I do after completing my painting?

After completing your painting, it's a great idea to celebrate your work! You can imagine yourself in the spirit of Monet by putting on a French beret, perhaps enjoying a glass of wine, and admiring your finished piece. This enjoyment is part of the artistic process. For more inspiration and techniques, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/76-Gondola-in-Venice>.

Summary & Key Takeaways

Reflecting on our journey through painting the 'Gondola in Venice,' I set out to capture the essence of Monet's unfinished sketch, bringing it to life with a fresh perspective. We explored the vibrant interplay of light and shadow that Monet so admired in Venice, focusing on creating depth and atmosphere through color and texture. I hope that by revisiting this iconic scene, you found inspiration in Monet's courage to tackle new subjects, even when they seemed daunting at first.

Throughout this lesson, we delved into techniques that Monet might have used, such as his choice of a purplish sketching color and the warm, harmonious tones that unify the painting. By experimenting with these methods, you can develop a deeper understanding of how to convey mood and emotion in your own work. Remember, the key is to balance precision with the freedom of loose brushwork, allowing your unique style to emerge.

As you continue your painting journey, I encourage you to embrace the challenges of new subjects and environments. Just as Monet found his stride in Venice, you too can discover new dimensions in your art by stepping outside your comfort zone. Keep exploring, keep experimenting, and most importantly, keep painting.

LESSON POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Use a purplish color for initial sketches to set the tone.
- Consider toning your canvas with a light acrylic wash for color harmony.
- Balance loose brushwork with drawing accuracy.
- Reflect warm light in water slightly darker than the source.
- Vary brush stroke sizes to create depth.
- Use a warm sky color for sunlight effects and harmony.
- Transition colors through the spectrum for dynamic lighting.
- Add texture by patting the brush down for a raised surface.



"Gondola in Venice" 11x14" Oil on Canvas by Richard Robinson after Claude Monet.

Student Critiques

Club members painted their own versions of this scene and I critiqued each one. Their paintings — and my feedback — are a wonderful way to see this lesson's ideas in action.

"Oil after Richard's Monet" by Candi Hogan



"Oil after Richard's Monet" 11x14" Acrylic on Canvas by Candi Hogan

Nice work Candi, I think you've captured something of Monet's work here, especially in the church and sky. You've really done a great job of copying my painting. The only advice I could give on this one would be to strengthen the darks in the gondola and remove some of the reflections in its middle which are confusing the shape somewhat. Great work!

"Monet Study" by Jane Cerami



"Monet Study" 12x16" Acrylic on Canvas by Jane Cerami

Great work Jane. The warm glow coming off the church is great contrasting against the cool blues and greens elsewhere. I also like the grey you've used in the sunlit prow of the boat which does seem more realistic than my attempts to add punchy colour there though I do miss the strong colour note. Your drawing is great - nicely done, because it's so easy to lose the drawing while applying the paint so loosely. It's a shame you left speckles of canvas showing through in places because it breaks the illusion somewhat in this case. Better if you'd toned the canvas warm or cool beforehand. Overall, really nice work.

"Gondola at Twilight 2" by Stuart J. Gourlay



"Gondola at Twilight 2" 10x12" Acrylic on Canvas by Stuart J. Gourlay

Stuart, good to have you back - though you've sure not been idle as I can see from all the paintings you've uploaded recently. I love the design of this painting! I guess you spotted that I flipped Monet's church over to suit my painting. I prefer yours in some ways because it reads left to right for us Westerners. Your colour work is good, although like mine it's beginning to look like a black gondola dipped in a pot of orange paint rather than glowing with the fires of a sunset. You could have transitioned that orange better through reds and crimsons to get to the dark blue/black to help with that. A similar transition could have helped in the sky too, instead of just mixing the warm yellow base a cool zenith together which invariably makes mud.

You did well to subdue the background with glazes in order to let the foreground dominate. You could have helped this further by lightening all the background by a value step or two. It's good to see the variety of edges you've used - quite soft in the background versus sharper in the foreground - nicely done. Overall it's great work Stuart - just a few things to think about.

"Monet in Venice" by Colin L. Williams



"Monet in Venice" Oil on Canvas by Colin L. Williams

Hi Colin, there's some great paintwork going on in here - all that shimmery broken colour in the sky and water - terrific! I like that you've thought to include the spiralling red line so many of the poles in Venice have - a nice touch. Another nice touch was adding the little gondolas in the distance. The drawing of the big gondola could use a lot of fixing whereas you've drawn the distant buildings admirably well, though the oranges you used there are too dark which spoils the illusion of depth.

At the front of the gondola you could have transitioned the colour from light to dark better (orange > red > burgundy > dark blue). I'm in two minds about your foreground water. I could either implore you to use techniques like mine or congratulate you on using various techniques as Monet often did. It depends on what you were trying to achieve. Do you think you succeeded? If so, well done, if not, take another look at the demo video.