



Hay Bales

A step-by-step painting guide by Richard Robinson

Watch the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>

MY PAINTING CLUB

Introduction

Creating movement with bold brushwork and broken colour. What a lot of paintings lack is movement. Find out how to use bold impressionistic brushwork combined with shimmering broken colour to produce movement in your paintings. In this project we only use two brushes and six colours – nice and simple. Enjoy!



"Hay Bales" 11.5 x 13" Oil on Canvas by Richard Robinson.



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 Initial Painting Approach

What was the initial approach to painting the hay bales?

The initial approach to painting the hay bales was to capture the scene as it appeared on the spot. This involved focusing on the immediate visual aspects of the scene. For more insights into this approach, you can visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How did the focus of the painting change when it was redone in the studio?

When the painting was redone in the studio, the focus shifted to expressing more of the color in the scene. This allowed for a deeper exploration of the color dynamics present in the landscape. To learn more about this technique, check out the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What became a new area of interest in the painting process?

A new area of interest in the painting process was the movement within the scene, particularly how to use brush strokes to convey the movement of the wind. This added a dynamic element to the painting. For further exploration of this concept, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

2 Brushwork and Movement

How does brushwork create a sense of movement in a painting?

Brushwork can create a sense of movement in a painting by using fluid, dynamic strokes that guide the viewer's eye across the canvas. This technique helps to convey energy and life within the scene, making it feel more vibrant and engaging. For more insights into using brushwork effectively, you can explore the lesson further at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

In what way does brushwork help to lead the eye through a painting?

Brushwork helps to lead the eye through a painting by strategically directing attention with the flow and direction of the strokes. This creates a visual path that naturally guides the viewer's gaze across different elements of the artwork. To learn more about mastering this technique, visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What effect does brushwork have on the vibrancy and life of a painting?

Brushwork can significantly enhance the vibrancy and life of a painting by adding dynamic texture and movement. This approach infuses the scene with energy, making it feel more lively and captivating. For a deeper understanding of how to achieve this effect, check out the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

3 Canvas Preparation

How do you prepare a canvas for painting hay bales?

To prepare a canvas for painting hay bales, start by cutting a piece from a large roll of canvas. Stretch it out using masking tape to secure it in place. Then, apply a coat of gesso to the canvas. This helps the paint adhere better and ensures it sits nicely on the canvas. For more detailed guidance, you can visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why is it important to apply gesso to the canvas?

Applying gesso to the canvas is important because it helps the paint stick better and ensures that it sits well on the surface. This preparation step enhances the overall painting experience and final result. To explore more about canvas preparation and painting techniques, check out the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

4 Sketching Tips

What type of pencil should I use for sketching in this painting lesson?

For sketching in this painting lesson, you should use an HB pencil. It's important to sketch really lightly with it. If you want to explore more about the materials and techniques used in this lesson, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How can I accurately draw ellipses for the hay bales?

To accurately draw ellipses for the hay bales, use a center line to help get the ellipse just right. Make sure the ellipse is cut off flat at the bottom since it's sitting in long grass. For more detailed guidance on sketching techniques, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why should the bottom of the ellipse be flat when drawing hay bales?

The bottom of the ellipse should be flat when drawing hay bales because they are sitting in long grass. This helps to give a realistic appearance to the hay bales. For further insights into sketching and painting hay bales, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How should I angle the lines when sketching the tower?

When sketching the tower, the line on the left should angle down to the left, and the line on the right should angle down to the right. This perspective helps to create an accurate representation of the tower. For more tips on perspective and sketching, see the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Where should I place the tip of the roof when sketching?

The tip of the roof should be placed a little to the left of the corner of the building, as it's not actually in line with the corner. This placement helps maintain the correct perspective. To learn more about sketching buildings accurately, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How should I draw a distant hay bale to maintain perspective?

When drawing a distant hay bale, make sure it is really small to avoid making the buildings look small. This helps maintain the correct perspective in your painting. For additional tips on perspective in landscape painting, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What can I do if I find the drawing part too tricky?

If you find the drawing part too tricky, you can print out the painting at the size you want and trace it onto your canvas. This can help you get started with the painting process. For more helpful techniques and tips, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

5 Brushes and Mediums

What brushes are used in this hay bale painting?

In this hay bale painting, Richard uses two long bristled synthetic brushes from Rosemary & Co. These brushes are chosen to help convey the movement and gestural quality desired in the painting. For more details on the materials used, you can visit the lesson's sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why is no painting medium used in this painting?

No painting medium is used in this painting because Richard wants to achieve really thick gestural brushwork. Using a painting medium tends to flatten out the brushwork, which would detract from the desired effect of movement and texture. You can explore more about this technique on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the purpose of using Gamsol in this painting?

Gamsol is used in this painting as a solvent, likely to clean brushes or thin the paint slightly without affecting the thickness of the brushwork. Richard aims to maintain thick, gestural strokes, so Gamsol is a suitable choice for this purpose. To learn more about the materials and techniques, check out the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

6 Blocking in Darks

What is the first step in blocking in the darks for a hay bale painting?

The first step in blocking in the darks for a hay bale painting is to start with a big brush and dip it in a solvent like gamsol or otolith thinners. Then, mix up the dark color for the shadow side of the hay bale and block in the dark areas in very general terms. You can explore more about this technique on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why do you start with blocking in the darks when painting hay bales?

Blocking in the darks first helps establish the basic structure and contrast of the painting. By focusing on the shadow areas initially, you can create a strong foundation for the rest of the painting. This approach allows you to see the overall composition more clearly before adding lighter tones and details. For more insights, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

7 Underpainting and Brushwork

What type of brush should I use for the impasto, chunky brushwork in the light areas?

For the impasto, chunky brushwork in the light areas, you should use a smaller brush. This allows you to add texture and detail over the top of your underpainting. To explore more about brushwork techniques, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How do I decide what areas should be in shade and what should be in light?

To decide what areas should be in shade and what in light, observe your scene and make a conscious decision based on what you want to highlight or subdue. This helps in creating a dynamic composition. For more insights on light and shade in painting, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What color should I use to paint the shadows in the foreground?

For painting the shadows in the foreground, you can add a little bit of yellow ochre to achieve a vibrant shadow color. This choice helps in creating depth and warmth in the shadowed areas. To learn more about color choices in painting, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why is it important to think about brushwork during the underpainting stage?

Thinking about brushwork during the underpainting stage is important because it sets the foundation for the texture and directionality that will flow through to the next stages of your work. Even though the brushwork isn't very visible at this stage, planning it out can enhance the final painting. For more on planning your brushwork, see the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why did you choose to make the grass browner in the finished painting compared to the photograph?

I chose to make the grass browner in the finished painting because I personally prefer the look of brown grass. This artistic choice is subjective, and you can decide how green or brown you want your grass to be. For more on making creative choices in your paintings, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

8 Mixing and Applying Shadow Colors

What color should I mix for the shadow side of the wall in the painting?

For the shadow side of the wall, you should mix a nice dark brown. This helps to define the shadow and adds depth to the painting. For more detailed guidance on mixing colors for shadows, check out the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why is there a gap in the wall in the painting?

The gap in the wall is intentionally left to allow the viewer to 'walk through' and explore the rest of the painting. It prevents the wall from becoming a solid obstacle and adds shape variation, which is key to making interesting paintings. Learn more about composition techniques in the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the purpose of adding shape variation in a painting?

Adding shape variation is important because it contributes to making a painting more interesting. It breaks up solid areas and guides the viewer's eye through the artwork. For more insights on enhancing your paintings with shape variation, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How should I mix the color for the shadow side of the big tree?

For the shadow side of the big tree, mix a dark green, but not as dark as the accents that will be added later. It's important to prepare a fair amount of this color, as it will cover a large area of the tree. For further tips on color mixing, explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What should I consider when applying brushwork for the shadow areas?

When applying brushwork for shadow areas, think about how the brushstrokes will flow, particularly around the right-hand side of the painting. This helps in creating a cohesive and dynamic composition. For more detailed brushwork techniques, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

9 Foreground and Background Trees

How can I make a tree appear darker in my painting?

To make a tree appear darker, you can add some blue and a little red to your green paint mixture. This will help to darken the color and give your tree a more shadowed appearance. For more tips on painting trees, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What technique can I use to paint trees that are further back in the landscape?

To paint trees that are further back in the landscape, you should lighten and cool down the color by adding blue and white to your green mixture. This will help create the effect of distance and atmospheric perspective. You can find more detailed techniques on painting landscapes at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How should I paint the trunk and branches of a tree?

When painting the trunk and branches of a tree, use a dark greenish-brown color. Make each section of the branches thinner as they go up the tree, and avoid copying the angle of one branch with another. Leaving a few gaps can suggest foliage covering them from sight. For more guidance on painting trees, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

10 Painting the Hill and Sky

What color should I mix for the hill and sky in the Hay Bales painting?

For the hill and sky in the Hay Bales painting, you should mix a fairly dark purplish grey. This color should be a mid-value, sitting halfway between black and white on your palette. You can explore more about this technique on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why is it important to keep the background and sky a mid-value in this painting?

Keeping the background and sky a mid-value is important because it helps the light on the village and tower stand out more prominently. By maintaining a darker background, the lighter elements in the painting will have a greater contrast and visual impact. Learn more about this approach by visiting the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How does the purplish grey color affect the overall composition of the painting?

The purplish grey color in the background enhances the overall composition by making the oranges and yellows in the building stand out. This color choice creates a complementary contrast that draws attention to the focal points of the painting. For further insights, check out the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What adjustments are made to the color as you move up into the sky?

As you move up into the sky, a little bit of blue and white is added to the purplish grey mix. However, the overall value remains quite dark, maintaining the mid-value tone. Discover more about these techniques on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

11 Shadow Side of the Tower

What color should be used for the shadow side of the tower?

For the shadow side of the tower, you should mix a mid-value grayish brown. This color choice helps to create a realistic shadow effect while maintaining harmony with the rest of the painting. For more detailed guidance on color mixing, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why haven't any lights been painted yet in this segment?

Lights haven't been painted yet because the focus is currently on working in the shadows. By establishing the shadow areas first, it helps to create a strong foundation for adding lights later. This approach ensures that the lights will stand out more vibrantly. You can learn more about this technique by visiting the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why are there white spots left around the trees?

White spots are left around the trees to leave room for painting in the lights later. If these areas were covered with dark paint, adding light colors on top could result in a muddied appearance. By reserving space for the lights, you ensure that the colors remain vibrant and clear. For further insights into this technique, check out the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

12 Building Shadows and Reflected Light

How does Richard Robinson suggest using color for the shadow sides of buildings?

Richard Robinson suggests using a warm color on the shadow sides of buildings, which can enhance the vibrancy of the painting. This approach is part of his technique to create a more dynamic and lively scene, and it can be adjusted according to personal taste. For more insights on this technique, visit the lesson's sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What colors does Richard Robinson recommend for painting roofs?

Richard Robinson recommends using colors like orange, red, pink, and terracotta for painting roofs, as these are typically warm colors. These choices help to bring warmth and vibrancy to the painting, but he also encourages artists to experiment with their color choices. For further details, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why does Richard Robinson avoid using very dark black for painting windows?

Richard Robinson avoids using very dark black for painting windows because it would make them stand out too much and disrupt the light and distance effect in the painting. Instead, he uses a warm color to maintain harmony and depth. To explore more about this technique, visit the lesson's sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How does Richard Robinson create reflected light in his paintings?

Richard Robinson creates reflected light by casting a little orange into the shadow side of structures, such as a tower. This simulates the effect of warm light bouncing off surfaces and illuminating other parts of the scene. For a deeper understanding of this technique, you can visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the purpose of using a purplish grey for cast shadows?

Using a purplish grey for cast shadows helps to create a natural and realistic shadow effect, adding depth and dimension to the painting. This choice complements the warm colors used elsewhere in the scene. To learn more about this technique, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

13 Painting the Tower Lights

What brush should I use to paint the lights on the tower?

For painting the lights on the tower, you should switch to a smaller brush. This allows for more control and precision as you lay in the lighter colors. You can explore more about brush selection and techniques on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How should I apply the paint for the lights compared to the shadows?

When applying the paint for the lights, use much thicker paint than you did for the shadows. The lights are applied with straight paint, without any thinners, to create a more textured, impasto effect. For more insights into paint application techniques, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What color mixture should I start with at the base of the tower?

Begin at the base of the tower with an orangey mixture. This provides a warm foundation that will transition as you move up the tower. For a detailed guide on color mixing, check out the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How does the color mixture change as you paint up the tower?

As you paint up the tower, the color mixture should become lighter and more yellow. Start with an orangey mixture at the base, then add white and yellow in the midsection, and increase the amount of white and yellow at the top. This gradient effect captures the light beautifully. Learn more about color transitions on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the texture of the paint like at the top of the tower?

At the top of the tower, the paint should be really thick and chunky, creating an impasto effect. This adds a sense of depth and texture to the painting. For more on creating texture in your paintings, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

14 Refining Tower Edges

How can I straighten the wobbly appearance of the tower in my painting?

To straighten the wobbly appearance of the tower, you can re-establish some of the shadow and paint into the light. This technique allows you to refine the edges and improve the overall structure of the tower. For more detailed guidance, you can explore the full lesson on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What should I do to refine the edges of the tower in my painting?

To refine the edges of the tower, you can adjust them to be sharper or softer as needed. This involves playing with the edges by manipulating the shadows and highlights. You can learn more about this technique by visiting the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why is it important to leave brush strokes obvious in my painting?

Leaving brush strokes obvious in your painting can add texture and interest to the work. It provides a more dynamic and expressive feel, which can enhance the overall aesthetic. For further insights into this technique, check out the lesson on the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

15 Color Variation and Hay Bales

Why are the roofs in the painting different colors?

The roofs are different colors to show color variation. One roof is orange, the next is more red, and the top one is orange again but a little yellower. This variation adds interest and realism to the painting. For more insights on color variation, you can explore the lesson further at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What color is used for the shadow in the distant field?

A dark ochery brown is used to create a soft shadow in the distant field. This helps to define the edges of the rock wall sharply and adds depth to the painting. To learn more about using shadows effectively, visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How are the individual rocks in the rock wall painted?

The individual rocks in the rock wall are painted by creating sharp edges and painting little chinks into the wall. This technique helps to denote the individual rocks and adds texture to the painting. For more detailed techniques on painting textures, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What color is used to paint the light on the hay bales?

A very light yellow color is used to block in the light on the front of the hay bales. This helps to capture the light and create a sense of roundedness. To explore more about painting light and form, visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How does the time of day affect the colors in the painting?

The colors in the painting are warmer at the end of the day, as seen in the top photo on the left. This warmth is contrasted with the cooler colors in the photo underneath it. The artist uses both resources to capture the desired color and shadow patterns. For more on how lighting affects color, see the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why is yellow ochre added to the top of the hay bale?

Yellow ochre is added to the top of the hay bale to create a sense of roundedness. This addition helps to convey that the hay bales are not flat planes but have volume and form. To learn more about creating form in your paintings, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

16 Grass and Background Simplification

How does changing the color from top to bottom affect the painting of hay bales?

Changing the color slightly from top to bottom helps create a sense of depth and dimension in the hay bales. By adding some blue-gray to the top, it helps the hay bales appear to curve away from us, enhancing the three-dimensional effect. For more detailed techniques, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the purpose of thinning the light color with Gamsol in the grasses?

Thinning the light color with Gamsol in the grasses helps to provide a base layer that is easier to paint over with chunkier brushwork. This technique allows for smoother application and better control when adding more detailed textures on top. To learn more about this method, visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why is a dark greeny brown used for the tree behind the hay bales?

A dark greeny brown is used for the tree behind the hay bales to create contrast. The darkness of the tree allows the hay bale in the front, which is highlighted with light, to stand out and 'sing' against the background. This contrast enhances the focal point of the painting. For further insights into this technique, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

17 Tree Mid-tones and Form

What is the purpose of simplifying the background in a painting?

Simplifying the background helps to make the foreground object stand out more clearly. By reducing the complexity behind the main subject, the viewer's attention is naturally drawn to the foreground object, allowing it to 'do its thing'. For more insights on this technique, you can visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How do mid-tones contribute to the form of a tree in a painting?

Mid-tones play a crucial role in giving form to the clumps of a tree by bridging the gap between darks and lights. This transition from darks through mid-tones to lights creates a rounded effect, enhancing the three-dimensional appearance of the tree. To explore this technique further, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why can't the mid-tones in the tree be clearly seen at the moment?

The mid-tones in the tree aren't clearly visible yet because the dark accents have not been added. These accents are essential to define the mid-tones as the joiner between shadows and lights, completing the form. For a detailed explanation, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the next step after applying mid-tones to the tree?

After applying mid-tones, the next step is to paint the lights. This step will further enhance the form and dimension of the tree by completing the transition from darks to lights. To learn more about this process, you can visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

18 Background Trees and Tower Contrast

How can I achieve cleaner colors for the lights in my painting?

To achieve cleaner colors for the lights, you can leave some white spots on your canvas. This technique helps in maintaining the purity of the colors when you apply lighter and thicker brushwork. For more detailed techniques, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What colors should I use for painting background trees?

For painting background trees, you should aim for a color that is a little bit lighter and cooler. You can achieve this by adding white and blue to your mix. However, be cautious not to make it too cool. For further guidance on color mixing, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How can I make the tower stand out more in my painting?

To make the tower stand out more, you can place a darker object, like a tree, behind it. This contrast helps to push the tower forward visually. For more tips on creating contrast in your paintings, visit the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

19 Chunky Brush Strokes Technique

How can I achieve chunky brush strokes in my painting?

To achieve chunky brush strokes, try not to do too many strokes with one load of paint. This technique involves applying a stroke, then reloading your brush with paint before applying the next stroke. This method can create a beautiful effect similar to Van Gogh's work. For more details, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why does Van Gogh's technique involve reloading the brush after each stroke?

Van Gogh's technique of reloading the brush after each stroke likely contributed to the unique texture and movement in his paintings. By applying one stroke per load of paint, he achieved a distinct, chunky effect that adds dynamic movement to the artwork. You can learn more about this technique and its impact by visiting the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the benefit of using fewer brush strokes with one load of paint?

Using fewer brush strokes with one load of paint helps create a textured and dynamic appearance in your painting. This approach can add depth and interest, similar to the effect seen in Van Gogh's paintings. To explore this technique further, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

20 Painting Rock Wall Details

What color should I use to paint the cracks in the rock wall?

To paint the cracks in the rock wall, you should mix a very dark warm color. This will help to indicate the depth and shadows within the wall. For more detailed guidance on color mixing and techniques, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Should I paint every crack and rock in the rock wall?

No, you don't need to paint every crack or rock in the rock wall. This lesson focuses on impressionism, which means creating an impression of the wall rather than a detailed, literal depiction. For more on capturing the essence of a subject in your paintings, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How can I better understand the placement of rocks in a rock wall?

To better understand the placement of rocks in a rock wall, it's helpful to look at some online photos of rock walls. This will give you a sense of the natural and irregular way rocks are placed, as opposed to the uniform structure of a brick wall. For more tips on studying references and applying them to your painting, check out <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

21 Strengthening Darks and Movement

Why is it important to strengthen the darks in the foreground and mid-ground?

Strengthening the darks in the foreground and mid-ground helps to create depth and contrast in the painting, making the composition more dynamic. By enhancing these areas, you can better define the shapes and forms, which adds to the overall impact of the artwork. For more detailed techniques, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the purpose of leaving gaps between the strokes?

Leaving gaps between the strokes allows the undercolour to show through, which helps to create an impression of movement in the painting. This technique adds texture and interest, preventing the painting from looking flat and static. To learn more about this technique, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What would happen if you painted the area as a flat block of color?

If you painted the area as a flat block of color, it would lack movement and appear static and uninteresting. The absence of visible brush strokes and undercolour would result in a less dynamic and engaging painting. For more insights on how to avoid this and enhance your painting, check out the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

22 Hay Bale Details

How can I indicate the spiral pattern on the ends of hay bales?

To indicate the spiral pattern on the ends of hay bales, you can use directional brushwork. This technique helps to mimic the natural texture and pattern found on hay bales. For more detailed guidance, you can explore the lesson on our sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What effect does darkening the shadow side of a hay bale have on the painting?

Darkening the shadow side of a hay bale makes the lighter areas pop out and appear much brighter. This contrast enhances the three-dimensional effect and adds depth to your painting. For further exploration of this technique, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How does the angle of a hay bale affect its appearance in a painting?

The angle of a hay bale affects its appearance by changing the shape of the ellipse you see. For example, a hay bale at a different angle might have a thinner ellipse, providing a nice variation in shape. To learn more about capturing these variations, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

23 Grass and Light Contrast

How can I soften the transition between the wall and the grass in my painting?

To soften the transition between the wall and the grass, make the boundary irregular rather than straight and uniform. This approach prevents the area from looking like it has been mowed, adding a more natural appearance to your painting. For more tips on achieving this effect, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why should the transition between the wall and the grass be irregular?

An irregular transition between the wall and the grass helps to create a more natural and less artificial look in your painting. It avoids the appearance of a freshly mowed lawn, which can detract from the natural feel of the scene. You can explore more techniques for achieving this effect at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What effect does darkening the grass in the foreground have on the light areas?

Darkening the grass in the foreground enhances the contrast, making the light areas appear much lighter. This contrast can add depth and interest to your painting. For more insights on using contrast effectively, check out the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

24 Tree Accents and Sky Holes

How do you add depth to a tree in a painting?

To add depth to a tree in your painting, you can use darker accents with a dark blue-green color. Pay attention to the circular motion in your brushwork to enhance the effect. This technique helps to create a sense of depth and dimension in the tree. For more detailed instructions, you can visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the purpose of using a blue variant in tree painting?

Using a blue variant in tree painting helps to create an infused light effect, especially at the top of the tree where it meets the sky. This technique enhances the visual depth and gives the impression of light interacting with the tree. To explore this technique further, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How can you create the effect of sky holes in a tree painting?

To create the effect of sky holes in a tree painting, use the same blue variant around the areas where the sky holes are located. This gives the illusion of looking through the tree to the blue light behind it, enhancing the realism of the painting. For more tips on this technique, visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

25 Foreground and Background Color Unity

How can I create color unity between the foreground and background in my painting?

To create color unity between the foreground and background, you can incorporate colors from the background into the foreground. For instance, in this lesson, a dark bluish gray is mixed and added to the shadows in the foreground, and a lighter version is used for the lights. This technique helps to tie the colors together across the painting, creating a harmonious balance. For more detailed guidance, you can explore the lesson further at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What effect does using a neutral mid-grey have in a painting with warm colors?

Using a neutral mid-grey in a painting with warm colors can create a striking contrast, making the grey appear more blue due to the surrounding warmth. This contrast enhances the visual interest and helps to balance the warm and cool tones across the painting. You can learn more about this technique and see it applied in the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why is it important to mix a lighter version of the foreground color for the lights?

Mixing a lighter version of the foreground color for the lights is important because it helps to maintain the color unity while also adding depth and dimension to the painting. This approach ensures that the color harmony is consistent throughout the painting, enhancing the overall visual effect. For a deeper dive into this technique, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

26 Strengthening Wall Darks

How do you strengthen the darks in a wall when painting?

To strengthen the darks in a wall, you can apply a thicker layer of paint in the desired dark color. This technique helps to create depth and contrast before adding other colors like neutral or bluish grey. For more detailed techniques, you can explore the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What color can be used to strengthen the lines on the side of a hay bale?

You can use the same dark color that you applied to the wall to strengthen the lines on the side of a hay bale. This consistency helps to maintain harmony in your painting. For further exploration of painting techniques, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Why should you rough up the edge of a hay bale when painting?

Roughing up the edge of a hay bale helps to avoid making it look too uniform or like a tire. This technique adds a more natural and realistic texture to your painting. To learn more about creating realistic textures, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the benefit of using thick paint in certain areas of a painting?

Using thick paint in certain areas can add texture and emphasis, creating a more dynamic and visually interesting piece. It can also help to highlight specific elements within your painting. For more insights on using paint thickness effectively, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

27 Applying Broken Color

What is the purpose of using a mid value bluish gray in the painting?

The mid value bluish gray is used to create a sky shine effect on the rocks and within the shadow of the hay bale. By adjusting the lightness of the bluish gray, it can be applied in different areas of the painting to help unify the colors throughout. For more insights on this technique, you can visit the lesson page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How do you adjust the bluish gray for different areas of the painting?

To adjust the bluish gray for different areas, you can change its value by adding white to make it lighter. This adjustment helps the color fit better with the light areas it is being applied to. This technique is part of using broken color to create a cohesive look. For a deeper understanding, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is broken color and how is it applied in this painting?

Broken color involves applying small touches of color throughout the painting to create a sense of unity and depth. In this segment, broken color is used by threading the bluish gray through various parts of the painting, including the top of the hay bales, to help them curve away towards the sky. To explore more about this technique, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

28 Final Highlights and Details

What is the process for painting the tree in this lesson?

The process for painting the tree involves multiple stages. First, you paint in the dark values, followed by the mid values, and then the light values. After that, you restate the darks and add some lights back in. This layered approach helps create depth and dimension in the tree. For more detailed guidance, you can visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How do you enhance the detail in the painting?

To enhance the detail in the painting, you can add small touches like a bit of wood to draw the viewer's eye to specific areas, such as a gap in the trees. This helps create focal points and adds interest to the composition. For more tips on adding details, check out the lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What colors are used for the highlights in the tree?

For the highlights in the tree, slightly lighter and thicker paint is used to create contrast and bring out the details. This technique helps the tree stand out and adds a sense of realism. You can learn more about using highlights effectively by visiting the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

How are the final highlights applied in the foreground?

The final highlights in the foreground are applied using really thick paint on the tops of some weeds or flowers. This technique adds texture and brightness to the painting, making the foreground elements pop. For more on applying final highlights, visit <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What color is used for the highlights in the shadowed areas?

In the shadowed areas, the highlights are a more blue-grey color. While still light, this color choice helps maintain the shadowed effect while adding subtle highlights. For further exploration of color choices in shadows, see the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

What is the purpose of adding a touch of pink in the clouds?

Adding a touch of pink in the clouds introduces a hint of warmth and contrast, enhancing the overall atmosphere of the sky. This small color adjustment can make the sky appear more dynamic and interesting. For more on color techniques in skies, visit the sales page at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/59-Hay-Bales>.

Summary & Key Takeaways

As I reflect on our journey through painting the Hay Bales, I'm reminded of the importance of capturing the essence of a scene, both in its immediate visual appeal and its deeper color dynamics. From the initial block-in to the final details, my aim was to guide you in expressing movement and vibrancy through thoughtful brushwork and color choices. I hope you found joy in exploring how to convey the energy of the wind and the warmth of the landscape.

Throughout this lesson, we delved into the subtleties of brushwork and the impact it can have on the life of a painting. By preparing our canvas with care and sketching with precision, we laid a strong foundation for our creative expression. The choices we made in color mixing and shadow placement were all about enhancing the depth and interest of our composition. I trust that these techniques will empower you to create more dynamic and engaging paintings.

Remember, painting is as much about personal preference as it is about technique. Whether you choose to depict brown or green grass, or how you decide to balance light and shadow, these decisions are what make your artwork uniquely yours. I hope this lesson has inspired you to embrace your creative choices and continue to explore the endless possibilities of painting.

LESSON POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Capture the scene's essence with both immediate visual appeal and color dynamics.
- Use brushwork to convey movement and guide the viewer's eye.
- Prepare your canvas with gesso for better paint adhesion.
- Sketch lightly with an HB pencil for accurate outlines.
- Block in darks first to establish structure and contrast.
- Mix vibrant shadow colors to add depth and warmth.
- Use color variations to enhance composition interest.
- Balance light and shadow to create dynamic compositions.

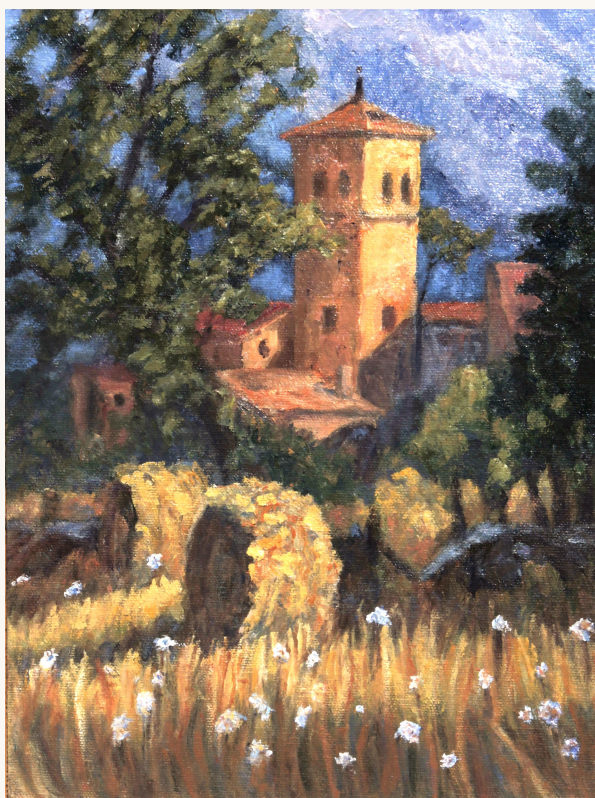


"Hay Bales" 11.5 x 13" Oil on Canvas by Richard Robinson.

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.

"Spanish Countryside" by Candi Hogan

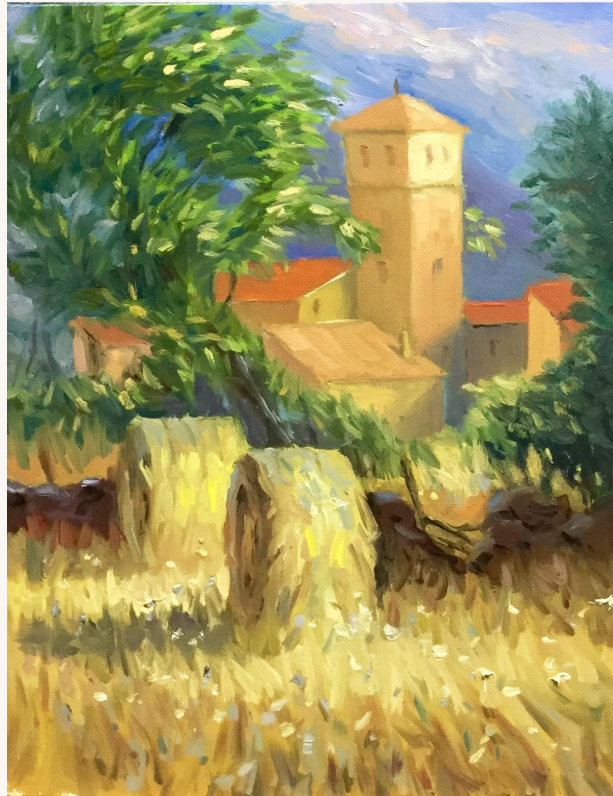


"Spanish Countryside" 12x9" Oil on Canvas by Candi Hogan

Nice work Candi - there's a lot of life in this painting. The drawing is good and you have a strong sense for light and shadow shapes. The brushwork is true to your usual style with a little more movement thrown in. I've noticed a tendency to gray darks in all your paintings. I wonder if that's a particular dark colour on your palette doing that or a result of your dabby brushwork, which tends to make gray if you don't constantly reload your brush and clean it between making strokes where darks and lights have mixed. Maybe you just prefer grayish shadows.

The white flowers could be made a little more subtle by shrinking the ones further away and making the ones in the foreground shadow a blue-gray, and by changing the shape of them more since they wouldn't all be facing you. Overall you've done a very good job.

“Haybales in Matabuena” by Lori Ippolito



"Haybales in Matabuena" Oil on Canvas by Lori Ippolito

Great movement in this painting Lori! You really knocked this out of the park with brushwork. Great to see you putting the cool grays in there with the warms as well. The only thing I can see that would improve this is to straighten up the drawing of the tower a little which is making me think of Pisa. Oh and you mentioned your ochre colours lacking punch in the final painting, but you can easily glaze over some of that with an orange or yellow when it's dry to raise the vibrancy. I suppose that would help it match the vibrancy of the greens in the tree, though if you knocked those down a bit you'd achieve the same thing. Great work!

"Strawbales 2" by Silke Sauritz



"Strawbales 2" 20x20cm Oil on Canvas by Silke Sauritz

Wonderful movement in this piece Silke - a real Van Gogh! It's clear that you had a close look at how Van Gogh builds his subjects with thick brushstrokes, one at a time like bendable bricks. I love how the spiralling forms in the bales are echoed in the clouds. When this happens it's like the whole world is in harmony. Speaking on harmonies (smooth segue) the complementary harmony of yellow/purple and orange/purple is working well. Nice job! Nothing I would change.

“Warm Evening” by **Christophe Borrel Ducroz**



"Warm Evening" 30x25cm Oil on Paper by Christophe Borrel Ducroz

Nice work Christophe. You've done a decent copy of the photograph while simplifying the background and including detail where it was needed in the main elements. The lacey brushwork in the trees works well and it's good to see you experimenting with large gestural brushwork in the foreground. Couple of things to watch out for - you've outlined some elements including the haybale, roofs and the edge of the foreground shadow. Doing that tends to flatten the painting, spoiling the illusion of depth created by overlapping objects.

Darks too dark: photos of high contrast scenes like this usually make the darks too darks, losing colour information there, and you've fallen into the trap of copying that without the knowledge to introduce more colour into the darks. Doing this saps colour from the painting making it look less lively, and using the same dark darks in the background trees as in the foreground also reduces the depth that could be gained by slightly lightening and bluing the darks back there.