

“Old Masters, New Light”

Justin Ortiz, BFA Painting

Yelizaveta Masalimova, Shira Avidor

My research sought to discover the objective impact of historical material limitation on a painting by comparing it to what the abundance of modern materials can produce. By studying the objective differences in a painting created with the limited resources of the masters and the same painting created with the plethora of modern materials, we can draw conclusions about the effect of material restriction on that work.

Three pairs of paintings were produced under three separate techniques. Each pair consisted of one trial using materials available before the 18th century, and one including modern materials. The subject and techniques were the same within each pair, the only difference being the materials used.

On average, participants in a survey described the modern paintings as more intense in color, yet the traditional paintings as having a more realistic sense of texture and space. It was concluded first that the use of limited materials produces a decrease in intensity of color. Second, that the Venetian and Flemish painting techniques maximize the effects of limited materials and perform best under limitation, creating a more realistic sense of texture and space. Data collected prompted the discovery that realism in texture and space were equally a result of the techniques and materials used.

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Justin Ortiz is an artist specializing in painting, currently working towards his BFA in painting at the Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts.

