

## Inside the Artist's Studio:

# Master Palettes

For many artists, selecting a palette of colors is as personal as choosing subject matter. Although the tools aren't as important as the ways in which they are used, insight into the palettes of various professional painters can provide a jumping-off point for further study and experimentation in your own practice. | **by Naomi Ekperigin**

**ABOVE**  
**Woodward's Palette**  
Clockwise from bottom left: cadmium yellow lemon, cadmium yellow medium, cadmium red medium, permanent alizarin crimson, ultramarine blue, cobalt blue, raw sienna, burnt sienna, burnt umber, permanent sap green, viridian.



**LEFT**  
Woodward created these color charts to demonstrate the range of greens she can create with a handful of colors. Mixing the earth colors with sap green produces warm gray-greens.

**ABOVE**  
**View From the Trail (detail)**  
by Lori Woodward, 2011, watercolor. Collection the artist.



## Naomi Campbell

"I always enjoy finding that obscure color that insists on having its place on my palette," Naomi Campbell says. "A student recommended Old Holland's violet gray, and I've been using it ever since. I can't live without my Schminke may green, either—or so I believe. The palette pictured here is more than 20 years old and is my personal favorite. It goes where I go. When I work on a full-size painting, I add mixing trays, but in the end I always go back to this palette."



RIGHT

### Frey's Palette

Counterclockwise from top left: cadmium orange, vermillion, carmine (Holbein), quinacridone rose (Daniel Smith), opera (Holbein), cobalt blue ("the best color in the world," the artist says), French ultramarine blue, Prussian blue, peacock blue (Holbein), cobalt turquoise, thalo green, cadmium yellow lemon, cadmium yellow deep, quinacridone gold, quinacridone burnt orange, Naples yellow.

### Karen Frey

"The best way to describe my palette is 'paradox,'" says Karen Frey. "It's very basic and simple yet complex and thorough. With few exceptions, I stick with primaries. I divide these into cools and warms, then go into values, and then the characteristics of the individual colors. This palette is a result of my wet-in-wet painting applications. When developing a wet-in-wet wash, it's imperative that the water-to-pigment ratios develop from mixtures of high water and low pigment to mixtures of low water and high pigment. The varying characteristics of pigments, from transparent to sedimentary to opaque, all present on the paper in differing ways."

### Antonio Masi

"I use two butcher trays, one for my cool colors and the other for my warm colors," says Antonio Masi. "Each palette has its own Chinese white on it and its own container of water, which helps keep the colors clean. All of my colors are Winsor & Newton tube colors."

ABOVE LEFT

### Masi's Cool Palette

Left column, from top: Chinese white, Prussian blue, cobalt blue, cerulean blue; Right column, from top: ivory black, Payne's gray, neutral tint, sepia, burnt sienna.

ABOVE RIGHT

### Masi's Warm Palette

At top: Chinese white; left column, from top: yellow ochre, Naples yellow, cadmium yellow; right column, from top: alizarin crimson, cadmium red, cadmium orange.

BELOW

### Reardon's Palette

Top row, from left: viridian, amazonite genuine, jadeite genuine, phthalocyanine green yellow shade, carmine, quinacridone rose, perinone orange; middle row, from left: cobalt violet, phthalocyanine blue-red shade, cadmium orange, permanent orange, quinacridone gold; bottom row, from left: cerulean blue, ultramarine blue, cobalt blue, quinacridone burnt orange, quinacridone burnt scarlet.

### Michael Reardon

"Cobalt blue, permanent orange, and quinacridone burnt scarlet are my workhorse colors," Michael Reardon says. "Quinacridone burnt scarlet has replaced burnt sienna on my palette. I use it in many of my green mixtures, and it also works well with cobalt blue to make muted purple tints. It's probably my most indispensable color."

### Jim McFarlane

"I use a lot of colors to create mixtures," says Jim McFarlane.

"Prussian blue and perylene maroon make a wonderful black, and Prussian blue with quinacridone gold makes spectacular greens. I use sepia to darken a color without changing the hue. Indian red and viridian make a great gray."

### McFarlane's Palette

Clockwise from lower left: cobalt blue, Prussian blue, manganese blue, cerulean blue, cobalt turquoise, viridian, green gold, cobalt violet, mineral violet, thioindigo violet, perylene maroon, permanent red, permanent rose quinacridone, vermillion, perylene red, quinacridone, sienna, cadmium orange, aureolin, quinacridone gold, sepia, raw sienna, Indian red.



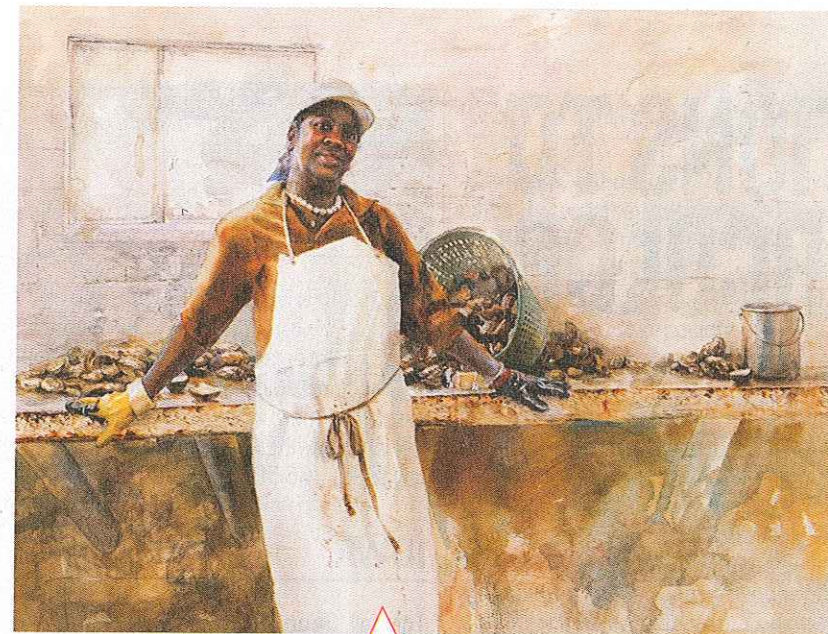
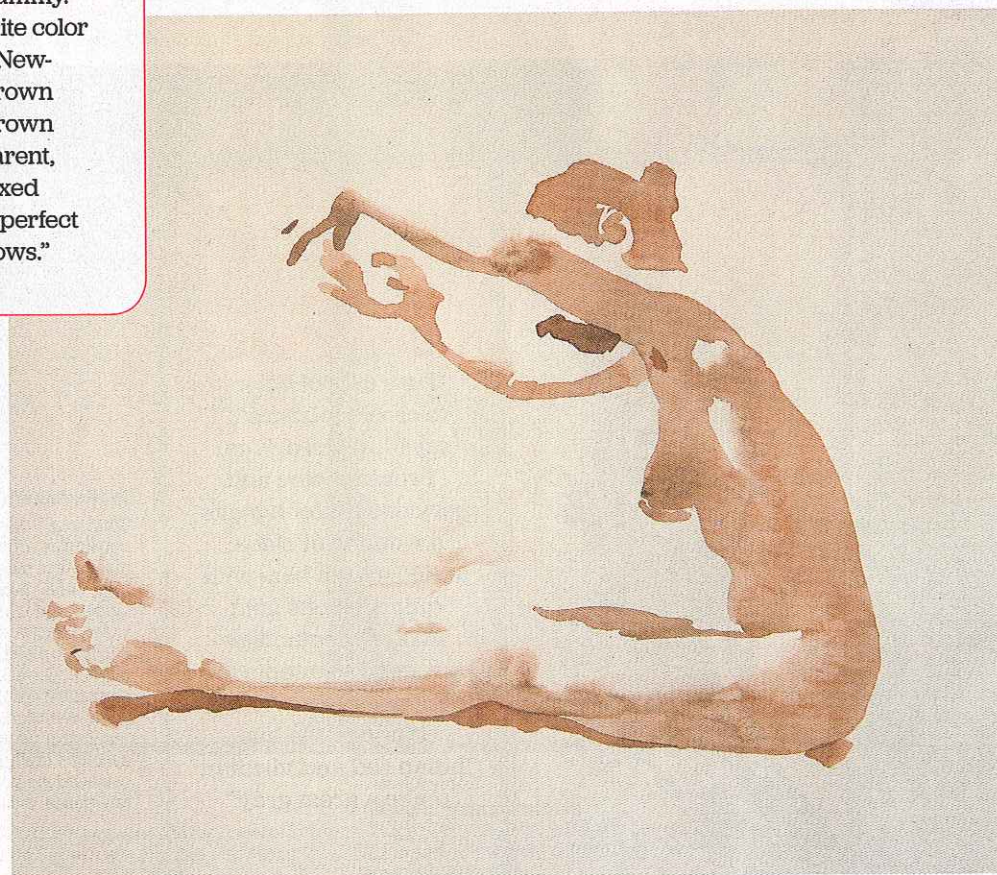


## Wendy Artin

"I love Winsor & Newton sepia," says Wendy Artin. "It's exactly the right amount of warmth, the right density, and it allows for a wide range of tones—it's excellent as a thin wash and gives a velvety rich dark without becoming gummy. For quick nudes, my favorite color combination is Winsor & Newton sepia and Sennelier brown madder. On its own, the brown madder is too hot, transparent, and gummy, but when mixed with sepia it becomes the perfect color for warm skin shadows."

ABOVE  
Artin's palette.

RIGHT  
**Marzia Reaching**  
by Wendy Artin,  
2010, watercolor,  
8 x 10. Collection  
the artist.



## Mary Whyte

"Ultramarine blue and burnt sienna are the warm and cool I can't do without," says Mary Whyte. "I use Sennelier paints, which are made with honey as a binder. Getting a thick consistency is important for creating very dark darks. Regardless of the skin color of the subject, I use the same colors: quinacridone rose or permanent rose, raw sienna, and ultramarine blue. Sometimes I'll swap out the last two for burnt sienna or cerulean blue."

**Pearl Shucker,**  
Urbanna,  
Virginia)

by Mary  
Whyte, 2009,  
watercolor,  
22½ x 30¼.  
Private  
collection.

## THE ULTIMATE PALETTE?

THE FOLLOWING COLORS APPEARED ON THE PALETTES OF FOUR OR MORE OF THE ARTISTS WE INTERVIEWED. ADD ONE OR ALL OF THEM TO YOUR PALETTE AND DISCOVER NEW MIXTURES THAT CAN ADD DEPTH AND LUMINOSITY TO YOUR PAINTINGS.

- cadmium orange
- alizarin crimson
- ultramarine blue
- burnt sienna
- raw sienna
- quinacridone gold

## Janet Walsh

"I add a small amount of Cheap Joe's peachy keen to other colors to soften the tone," says Janet Walsh. "It's also called Juane Brilliant No. 2, from Holbein." Like many of the artists featured in this article, Walsh arranges her palette with warm colors on one side and cool colors on the other. She paints with a fairly extensive selection of colors, including six different reds.

### Walsh's Palette

Clockwise from bottom left: peachy keen, cadmium yellow light, raw sienna, Indian yellow, cadmium orange, cadmium scarlet, phthalocyanine red, cadmium red light, magenta, alizarin crimson, permanent rose, cobalt violet, Winsor violet, cerulean blue, cobalt blue, ultramarine blue, phthalocyanine blue, phthalocyanine yellow green, turquoise, burnt sienna.

