
Mixing Black Using Acrylic Paint with Lisa Solomon

Chapter 1 - Mixing Black Using Acrylic Paint

Overview

(upbeat music) - Hi, I am Lisa Solomon. I am a mixed media artist, I'm a professor, I'm an illustrator, I've authored a craft book, and today I'm going to show you how to mix black.

Mix black using acrylic paint

- When you buy black in the tube, it pretty much comes in these two versions. You've got mars, and you've got ivory. You can see here I've painted them out. The density is a little bit different. The ivory gets a little bit more transparent than the mars, and the mars kind of has a different flavor to it, it's a little bit more intense than the ivory. So these are great, you can definitely use these. And if you are painting a black T-shirt and you want it to look black black, this is what you wanna use. But I wanna show you how to make black that maybe is a little bit more natural for other purposes. The materials that we are going to use are a piece of canvas paper, a variety of brushes, anything will really do 'cause we're just testing it out. I got a palette here with phthalo blue and burnt umber, cadmium red light, a phthalo green, a thio violet, and I've got a little bit of matte medium here in case I wanna spread the black out and do a little transparency test so I can see what it's gonna look like. I've got some palette knives, because I'm going to be doing a lot of mixing. I have some more extra brushes in case I need them. Here's some water, and we're all set, that's all you need, so I'm gonna start mixing some black. To get a true black, I'm gonna start with the phthalo and the burnt umber, and I'm spreading it out so it's ready. I'm gonna add some blue to it. Might have added a little bit too much blue, we will test it in a second and see. I think it is a little bit on the blue side, so I'm gonna add some more burnt umber just to get it a little bit darker. I am liking it. So I'm just gonna put some here to see. Looks pretty nice black and rich, and you'll see that it's got a different tonality than the stuff that comes out of the tube. I tell beginning painters all the time that the biggest mistake you can make, or the biggest key, people are gonna look at your paintings and they're gonna say, "Oh, you're a beginning painter," because you're using colors right out of the tube. So the second you start to mix your own colors, your paintings become much more developed and much more interesting to look at. And black is one of the ways to get there. I'm going to take a little bit of my matte medium so I can spread out some of this black that I just made. And you'll see it gets pretty nice and transparent. It's a little on the blue side, but that's fine. You'll notice that in real life, black has all these tints and tones to it, and I'm gonna show you how to make different tinted blacks. That's our original, that's what we're gonna start with. I'm gonna take our original black pile, and I'm gonna move a little bit of it over here, and I'm gonna add some red. And you'll see that this is coming out much warmer than the black that I just had. This is like black in a sunset. I'm gonna put this down. This is definitely looking more red than the one above, and I will paint it out a little bit so you can see it more clearly. If I wanted this to be even warmer or look redder, I would just add more red. You can keep adding red, that's not a problem. Now I'm gonna make a greener black. So I'm gonna go back to my original black and I'm gonna move some over here closer to the green. Can start adding some phthalo green to that. This would be really good, like, if you were painting a forest, and you were talking about painting dark leaves or shadows in a forest. So, now you'll see the difference. Ooh, really nice. So if that was getting too green, I could always go back and add more of the original black that I mixed, if I didn't want it to be quite that green. There

we go. And then I'm gonna just grab a different palette knife, 'cause I don't wanna mix that green black in with my purple. So I have a little bit of this original black left, and I'm gonna add some violet to it. This is probably pretty close to true black. So if I were gonna keep this, and I might keep it just to keep track, I would write little formulas down. I would say this was burnt umber and phthalo blue 50/50. This was that original black with maybe about 25% of cad red. This was that original black with about another 30% or 40% of green. And this was the magic combination of the original black with the violet, and it came out really nice and rich. And I would keep this and I would put it in my sketchbook, and then I would refer back to it. So that if I wanted to make these colors again, I would know how to get there. If you have an introductory set of colors, I would recommend making an original black and trying all the colors in them so that you have a whole array of blacks, and you can see what happens when you add yellow ochre, or cadmium yellow, and the blacks will definitely change. And it's a really good habit to have, when you buy new paints, try them out like this. You'll know what you can do with them, you'll know what kind of colors you can get, and you'll have a record of it. (upbeat music)