

THE
ALEXANDER
METHOD™

INTRODUCTION

The Alexander Method™ of oil painting...

The Alexander Wet-on-Wet Technique revolutionized the art of oil painting. Bill Alexander spent years developing and refining this special technique to make it possible for anyone to create a painting with a minimum of instruction. With traditional oil painting it often takes weeks, or even longer, to finish one painting. With the Alexander Method™, you can complete your painting in an afternoon.

What makes the Alexander Method™ special?

The secret is in Bill's wet-on-wet technique. In the past, oil painting required an arduous process of mixing oil paints on the palette and waiting for layers of color to dry on the canvas between applications. It often took weeks and a high level of technical know-how to complete a painting.

Now, however, a complete beginner can start productive painting with a minimum of instruction using Bill Alexander's specially designed tools, paints, and the simple brushstrokes he and other artists demonstrate in our videos. And the Alexander Method™ lets you develop your own style.

How does the Alexander Method™ work?

First the canvas is prepared with a thin coat of special medium: **Magic White™**, **Artist's Black™**, or **Magic Clear™**. Bill dubbed his paint "Magic" when he first began to develop his technique because it allows painters to do what never could be done before in oil painting — remove color, or blend the colors — right on the canvas.

The **Alexander Oil Colors** are special too. The thick, firm, paints are formulated to work with the Alexander Magic Mediums and allow you to apply color "wet-on-wet" without messy running and smearing.

The paints are applied with the **Alexander Brushes and Palette Knives** which Bill personally designed to make his wet-on-wet techniques even

simpler. Many artists copied Bill's designs proving the value of his brushes and tools to the world of art.

HOW TO PAINT THE ALEXANDER WAY

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Review your painting instructions in advance. At the beginning of each set of instructions you will find a list of tools and colors needed to complete a particular painting. You will find it helpful to set out the supplies you will be using for your painting session.

PAINTS — It is important to use Alexander oil paints with the Alexander Method™. The extra-thick Alexander paints are specially formulated to work with the Magic Mediums to give you great richness of color and detail. Traditional oils are too thin for Bill's wet-on-wet technique. They smear and bleed, causing a frustrating painting experience.

PALETTE — Painting with the Alexander Wet-on-Wet Method requires ample mixing space on your palette, so if palette with a large mixing area will work best. Arrange the paints on the palette from light to dark. If you set out your paints in the same order each time, you will eliminate any confusion about what color you need next. Using your Palette Knife, pull a thin layer of paint down from each color.



Having this thin layer of paint will make it easier to pick up a small amount of color. Clean your knife between colors.

Some paintings will contain a great many color mixes so you'll really appreciate having a large palette to work with. For convenience, mix your colors before you begin, following the formulas listed in the instructions for your painting. You may find it helpful to write the name of each mix on the palette just above each new color.

EASEL — A sturdy easel is necessary, as the Alexander Method™ of painting often requires you to “fire in” on your canvas with some energy. Our specially designed studio easel has a built-in Table-Top Easel for smaller paintings. It is built to provide stability and complete creative freedom.

CANVAS — A medium texture, cotton duck, double-primed artist’s canvas is ideal. Portrait canvas isn’t appropriate because it is too smooth and doesn’t “grab” the paint as well as a rougher surface. Portrait canvas also often has a gray tone which will dull your painting. Canvas board is not recommended for the Alexander Method™ because it doesn’t have the necessary “give.” It also soaks up the medium and doesn’t allow air to circulate behind the canvas for proper drying.



BRUSHES AND PALETTE KNIVES — the simple strokes that make the Alexander Techniques so successful require specially designed brushes and Bill’s unique broad palette knives. Traditional oil painting brushes and knives will not give you the coverage or style of stroke needed for this technique.



1. Filbert Brush
2. Petal Brush
3. Script Liner Brush
4. Round Brush
5. Background Brush
6. Medium Fan Brush
7. Large Fan Brush
8. Blending Brush
9. Foliage Brush
10. Hake Brush
11. Original Palette Knife
12. Golden Palette Knife

With a little practice and experimentation, you should learn the techniques which will enable you to achieve “magic” with each one.

CLEANING YOUR BRUSHES — Alexander Art no longer uses any harmful solvents or dangerous thinners for clean-up. A paint thinner listed as “odorless” still contains harmful fumes. You just can’t smell them. We don’t believe your studio or home needs to be filled with toxic fumes.



We use a simple solution of vegetable oil, dishwashing liquid, and water. This is the same formula that was used over 500 years ago by the Old Masters of the Renaissance. We recommend a solution of 1/4 vegetable oil, 1/4 dishwashing liquid, and 1/2 water. We also recommend a container with a plastic grid in the bottom. You clean your brushes by scrubbing them across the grid. The pigment will settle to the bottom. When you are finished painting you can throw away the solution in the garbage. The nontoxic nature of the cleaning solution does not require special disposal methods.

PAPER TOWELS — You may find it handy to keep a roll of paper towels nearby to clean your palette knives and brushes. They can also be used for clean-up.

ART WIPES — We also use what we call “art wipes.” These are merely “baby wipes” under a different name. There is no need to purchase expensive art wipes sold by many retailers.

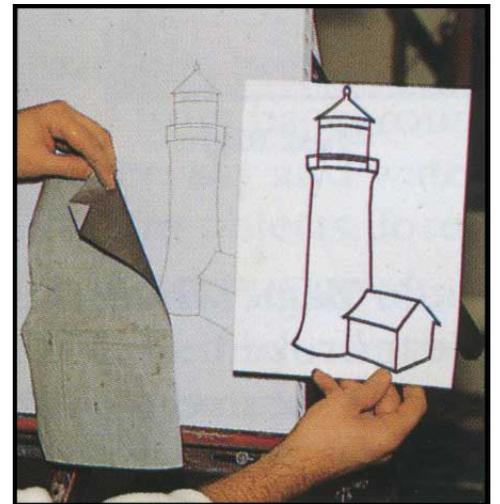
COLD CREAM — If you plan to store your brushes for a long time, we recommend you put cold cream on your brushes. You can apply the cold cream very thickly on the bristles and leave it until you're ready to paint again. This will keep your brushes supple and help them last for years.

PAINTING HINTS

Following are some suggestions that will make your painting experience more successful and enjoyable. Refer to this section often as you develop your painting skills.

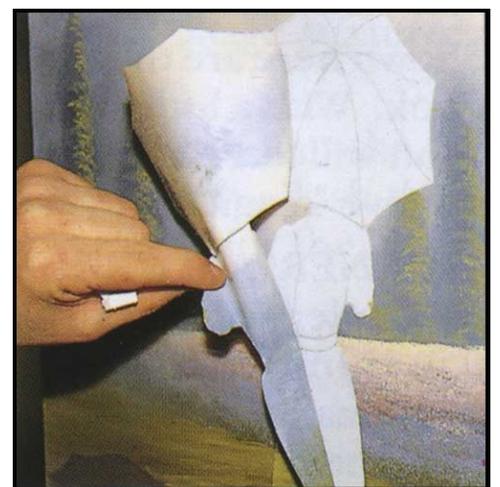
CANVAS PREPARATION — Some of the paintings on our website require the use of patterns. We try to include patterns with every painting. You can use these templates in two ways. Used with a piece of graphite paper you can transfer a sketch to the canvas. You can also make a pattern by tracing the subject onto a piece of adhesive paper.

Transferring a sketch to the canvas: Use the appropriate template included with the instructions and then check the final painting reference photo for placement. Place a piece of transfer or graphite paper between the template and the canvas and trace around the template figure, transferring the pattern to your dry canvas. After you have transferred the subject onto your canvas, go over the lines with a medium to hard pencil.



Using adhesive cutouts: To paint the fine details of some subjects it will be necessary to keep these areas free from layers of background paint. To accomplish this, you'll be using an adhesive cutout which is placed on the dry canvas.

When the instructions call for an adhesive cutout, use the appropriate template found in the instructions. Trace the subject onto a piece of self-adhesive paper using transfer or graphite paper. Cut out the shape and place the piece of cutout on the dry canvas. Continue with the instructions, working over the cutout(s).

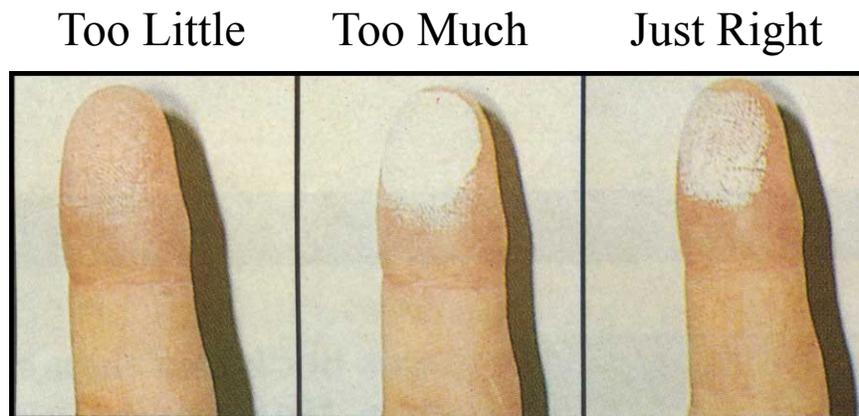


APPLYING MAGIC MEDIUMS — An important step in the Alexander Method™ is preparing your canvas with a thin coat of Magic White™,

Artist's Black™ Medium, or Magic Clear™. You will then apply your oil colors while your canvas is still wet.

To apply Magic White Medium™: We have created a special video on our website which shows the proper method of applying Magic White™. You can find the link: <https://alexanderart.com/applying-new-magic-white/>

To check for proper coverage, gently tap the canvas with your fingertip. When correctly applied, the Magic White™ will coat only the ridges of your finger, like a fingerprint. If there is too little Magic White™, the lines of your fingerprint appear broken. If there is too much, your fingerprint will be



blurred. Test your canvas in several places to ensure even coverage. Remove any excess by going over your canvas with a clean, dry Blending Brush. You will find that the Magic White™ dries more or less rapidly depending on your climate. Adjust the amount of Magic White™ applied to your canvas as necessary.

To apply Artist's Black™ Medium: Follow the same steps used to apply and test Magic White™.

To apply Magic Clear™ Medium: Follow the same steps used to apply Magic White™. Because Magic Clear™ is clear, you can not use the “fingerprint” test to check for even coverage. Instead, use a clean, lint-free cloth and wipe your canvas lightly to remove any excess Magic Clear™. Too much Magic Clear™ will cause your oil colors to “run.”

MIXING COLORS — Bill Alexander mixes the colors as he paints, while other artists pre-mix each color prior to the start of painting. The Alexander Method™ is flexible and will accommodate either style.

Mixing: When you mix colors, always start with the lightest color and add the darker colors a little at a time. You will be surprised to see how little of the dark colors you will need. Place the colors to be mixed on the mixing area of your palette and use your Palette Knife to fold and scrape them together.



The artists in our videos mix colors differently, depending on the effect they wish to create. In some paintings they may not always completely mix their colors. In these projects, their mixed colors are not totally uniform in appearance. You will see this type of mix referred to as “marbled.” The streaking and marbling gives the color more vibrancy and texture. It is especially important

not to over mix when the instructions call for your paint to have a more bold appearance.

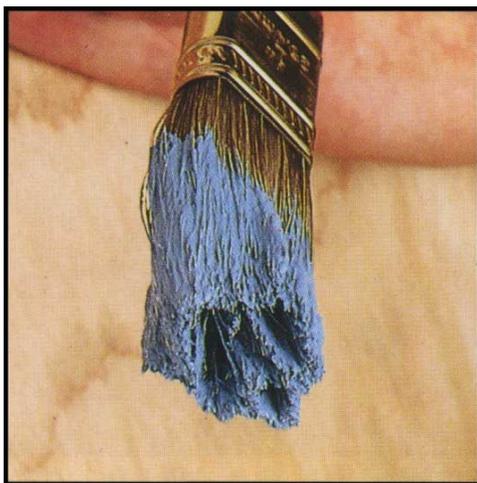
On other occasions, the artist will wish to achieve a softer or more blended effect. In these projects, the instructions will call for well-mixed, uniform colors. Fold and scrape until the texture of the paint is smooth and the color is uniform. You may see both kinds of mixing styles used within a single project. As an example, the instructions may ask you to create a thoroughly-mixed color for the background and a marbled mixture for highlighting a portion of the foreground. Look closely at the finished print of the project. You'll be able to see examples of both styles of mixing.

LOADING THE BRUSHES — You will notice that the instructions sometimes call for you to load your brush to a chiseled edge and sometimes

to a rounded edge, depending on the effect needed. In either case it is important to fully load the inside of bristles.

Chiseled Edge: Hold your brush at a right angle to the palette and work the bristles directly into the pile of paint. Drag your brush away from the mound of paint, coating one side. Then go back to the mound and drag away again, coating the other side. Repeat several times, using a figure-eight pattern, until both sides are loaded evenly and the brush holds a chiseled edge. The Alexander Sable Brush is used by some artists in this manner. The small, half-inch brush holds a sharp, chiseled edge which is necessary for the fine details and sharp lines common in some paintings.

Rounded Edge: First load your brush to a chiseled edge. Then tap one corner of the brush firmly against the palette, rounding one end of the bristles.



LOADING THE PALETTE KNIFE — With your Palette Knife, pull a thin layer of color across the palette. Then, holding your knife straight into the palette, pull the edge of your blade diagonally across the thin layer of paint. This will load a “ribbon” or “roll” of paint along the edge of your knife. This technique was created by Alexander Master Artist Diane Andre. It was copied by many artists over the years.

VERTICAL VERSUS HORIZONTAL — When the instructions ask you to hold your brush or Palette Knife vertically or horizontally, they are referring to the position of the bristle ends or the edge of the



Palette Knife blade. Held horizontally, the end of the brush or blade will lie parallel to the *top* and *bottom* of the canvas. Held vertically, the end of the brush or blade will lie parallel to the *sides* of the canvas.

PERSPECTIVE BASICS — You can create a sense of depth and perspective in your landscape with a combination of three elements: size, location, and color. The more distant an object is, the smaller it becomes and the closer it appears to the middle of the canvas or horizon line. Nearer clouds, for example, are larger and closer to the top of the canvas than more distant clouds. Nearer trees would be larger and closer to the bottom of the

Horizontal

Vertical



canvas than distant trees. Distant objects are also paler in color than closer objects.

To maintain proper perspective, the elements of the painting are applied most often from top to bottom and from background to foreground in the following order: sky and water, distant objects, middle distant objects, foreground and final details.

TRANSITIONING — Depth and perspective are often achieved by controlling the values of the color. To do this, you must make a transition from one value to another. Controlling the amount of pressure applied and the amount of paint on the brush will enable you to blend the color as you apply it so that it gradually makes the transition between values. More pressure and more paint will create a dark value, while less pressure and less paint will create a light value.

CREATING MOUNTAINS — Mountains, rocks and cliffs are typically created with your Palette Knife. For each, a thin layer of base color is applied to define the shape. The texture and detail are created by adding highlights to the side facing the light source and shadows to the side away from the light source.

Applying the Mountain Base: Load your Palette Knife (or brush) with the Mountain Base Mixture. To use the Palette Knife, hold the long, working edge of the knife nearly flat against the canvas with the handle downward. *To grip the knife handle correctly, lay the loaded knife (paint side down) on a flat surface. Now pick the knife up from the table. Because the knife is on the table, you are forced to grip the handle with only your fingertips. This is how you will hold a knife to create mountains, highlights and shadows.*

Using the knife or brush, apply the paint with heavy pressure, creating the shape of the peaks using up-and-down, diagonal strokes. Then pull the paint down to fill in the body of the mountain. Remove excess paint, leaving only a thin layer of color on the canvas. You can create the illusion of mist at this point by tapping the base of your mountain with a clean, dry Blending Brush.



Applying Mountain Highlights and Shadows:

Hold the Palette Knife as described above. *Do not* place your finger on the blade. Place the edge of your loaded knife along the peak of the mountain. Using very little pressure, pull the knife down the mountain. The paint will pull off the knife, creating texture.

Creating Rocks and Cliffs: Use the same techniques used to create mountains, but adjust size and shape to fit the scale of your subject matter.

CREATING TREES — There are two basic tree shapes, the evergreen and the deciduous (or “leafy”) tree. Once you have mastered the techniques used



to create these, you can experiment further to individualize your trees and lend them a unique quality. In general, the first step in creating any tree is to apply a foliage base color to define the overall shape of the tree. Later you will create detail by adding highlights and shadows.

Evergreens: Holding the loaded brush vertically on the canvas, tap the bristles into the canvas where you want the treetop to appear. (Bill often uses a Foliage Brush loaded to a chiseled edge.) Tap with just enough force to bend the bristles, then lift the brush directly away from the canvas. To add branches, angle your brush somewhat and begin at the top of the tree, tapping the brush into the canvas, alternating from center to left and right as you work your way down the tree. Keep your foliage loose, leaving space “for the bird to fly through.”

Deciduous Trees: Create the deciduous trees in the same manner as the



evergreen; however, vary the strokes to change the shape of the tree. You can also use the strokes to create foreground foliage.

Adding Highlights: Detail and texture are added by applying highlights to the trees. Use the same strokes used to create the tree base, keeping the strokes loose and textured.

HYPNOTIZING THE CANVAS — Hypnotizing softens your painting and is usually used on sky, cloud, and water areas. The stroke used for hypnotizing depends on the subject. Hypnotizing water areas makes the water “lie down” and create the illusion of reflections. Use long, vertical



strokes, followed by long, horizontal strokes. In other areas, short, crisscross or lazy-eight strokes are used, starting with the light areas and working toward the darker areas. In either case, use a clean, dry Blending Brush and



a very light touch, allowing only a few hairs of the brush to touch the canvas.



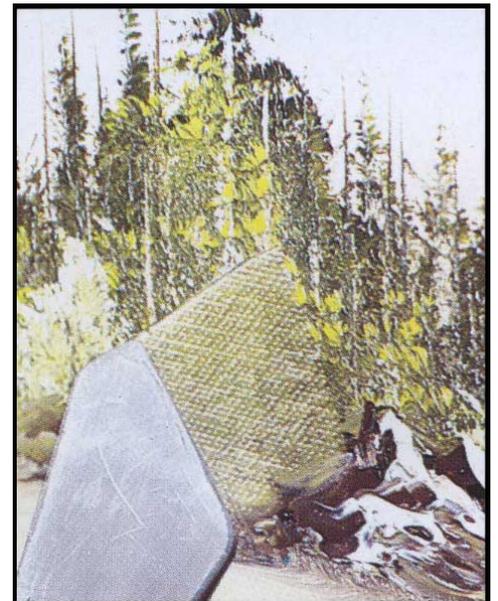
BLENDING — Blend the paint to soften the effect. When blending, use a clean, dry brush and a very light touch, allowing only a few hairs of the brush to touch the canvas. Most artists prefer to use a Blending Brush or the Hake Brush.

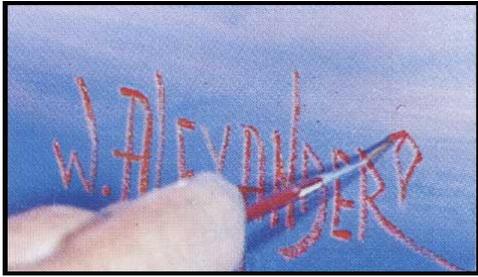
CORRECTING YOUR MISTAKES — Many “mistakes” may be your inner artist guiding you in a different direction than you had intended. Often they can make for an interesting painting.

However, if you really goofed, you can scrape away the unwanted paint. Then you can paint over it right away or use a cloth or art wipe to remove all paint from the area. Then reapply Magic White™ (if needed) and continue painting. If you use Magic Clear™ to remove the mistake, you won't have to wait for it to dry.

SIGNING YOUR PAINTING — Dip your Script Liner Brush into Magic Clear™. Then draw it through the color of your choice several times, until the brush is loaded with paint of a soupy consistency. As you sign your painting you will want to reload every few strokes. Paint your signature proudly and congratulate yourself on a job well done!

PAINTING TIME — If you don't finish your painting in one day, don't worry. Your painting will remain wet for several days. If the Magic White™ has dried, simply reapply where needed. The paints on your palette can be covered with plastic wrap and stored in the refrigerator or freezer. Allow the paints to return to room temperature before using. For long-term storage, leftover





paint can be placed in the corner of a sandwich bag and put into the freezer. To use them later, allow to defrost, snip the corner and squeeze the paints onto your palette.

CARING FOR YOUR EQUIPMENT — If you clean and dry your brushes thoroughly, they will give you many years of use. Never use soap and water to clean a brush. Instead, scrub the brush back and forth across the submerged grid in your container into which you've put our nontoxic solution. Dry your brush with paper towels or by shaking them out on to newspaper. Never slap your bristles to remove the solution. That will break your bristles and shorten the life of your brush.

PROTECTING YOUR PAINTING — Your painting will be dry to the touch within a week or two, depending on humidity. However, it will continue to cure for about six months, at which time it should be completely dry. To protect your painting, you should first dust it with a soft paintbrush. Then you can apply a sealer such as Alexander Magic Clear.™ This will protect your painting. You can use a soft, lint-free cloth or a soft brush to dust your painting from time to time.



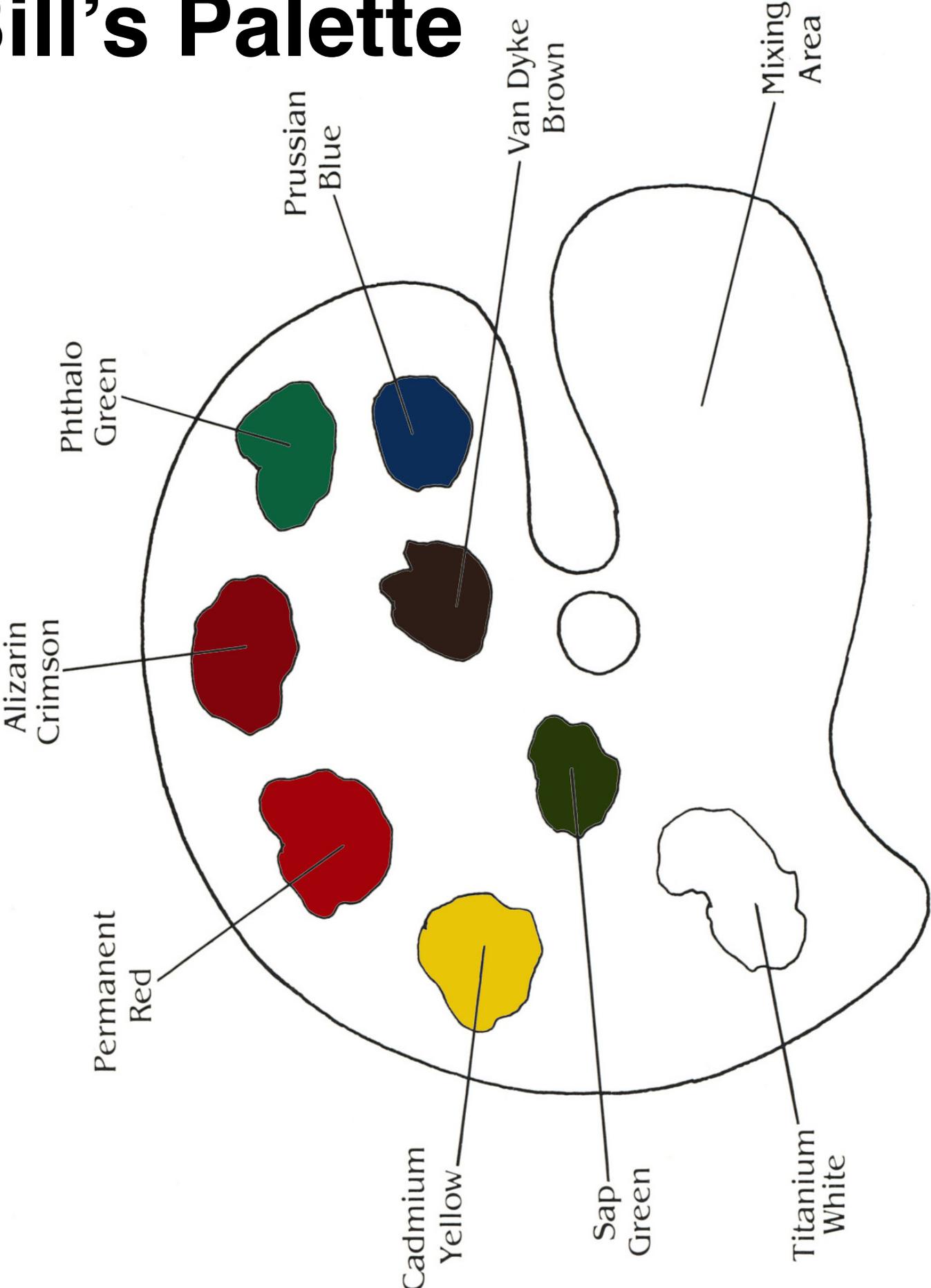
ABOUT THIS BOOK

The important thing to remember when painting is to relax and enjoy yourself. With the Alexander Method™ you can be the artist you always wanted to be.

Happy Painting!

The Alexander Art team

Bill's Palette



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Applying Magic White

With a clean, dry Blending Brush, cover your canvas with a very thin, even coat of Magic White™. Use heavy pressure while making long vertical and horizontal strokes. Work back and forth making sure the paint is evenly distributed over the canvas.

NOTE: Gently tap the canvas with your fingertip. For the Magic White™ to be correctly applied, the paint should only be on the ridges of your finger like a fingerprint. If too heavily applied, remove excess paint with a clean blending brush. See the video on our website on how to apply the new Magic White™. [Here is the link.](#)

Loading Your Brush

To fully load the inside bristles of your brush, hold it perpendicular to the palette. Work the bristles in a figure eight pattern into the pile of paint. Holding the bristles at a 45 degree angle, drag the brush across your palette and away from the mound of color. Flipping your brush from side to side will ensure both sides will be loaded evenly (a).

NOTE: When the bristles come to a chiseled or sharp flat edge, the brush is loaded correctly (b). For some strokes you may want one end of your bristles to be rounded. To do this, stand the brush vertically on the palette. Firmly pull forward, working the bristles in one direction. Lift off the palette with each stroke. This will form a rounded or “dog-paw” effect.

Mixing For Highlights

Place the tip of your loaded brush in the Magic White™. Allow only a small amount of paint to remain on the bristles. Standing the bristles of the brush on the palette, gently tap against the palette just enough to open up the bristles and loosen the paint.

Alternatively, you can dip the tip of the brush into our Magic Clear™ and mix with the paint to loosen it.

Loading The Palette Knife

With your Palette Knife, pull the mixture of paint in a thin layer down across the palette. Holding your knife in a straight upward position, pull the long working edge of your knife diagonally across the paint. This creates a roll of paint on your knife (c).

Hypnotizing The Canvas

Use a clean dry Blending Brush. Start at the lightest area and work toward the darkest. Use a light feathery touch. Work over the painting area in all directions. The blended paint will soften the effect. Allow only a few hairs of the brush to touch the canvas and use just enough pressure to soften the color.

Mixing Paint To A Marbled Appearance

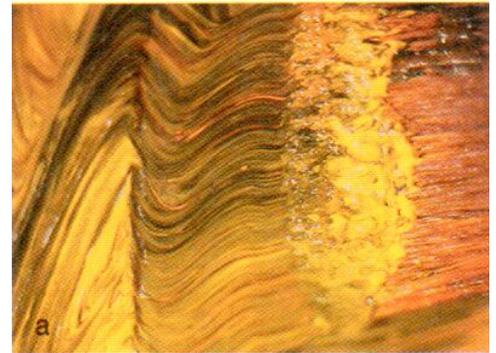
Place the different colors on the mixing area of your palette and use your Palette Knife to scrape and fold the paints together. You want to create a streaked appearance rather than a single color. Be careful not to overmix (d).

Loading Your Palette

It is helpful to always place the paints on your palette in the same order. You will soon reach for each color automatically. Beginning at the left, place your colors from light to dark around your palette.

Mixing Colors

When you mix colors, always begin with the lightest color and add the darker colors a little at a time. You will be surprised how little dark color you will need.





ABOUT THE ARTIST —

Bill Alexander was born in East Prussia in 1915. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to an upholsterer. Drafted into the German army during World War II, Bill was wounded three times and became a prisoner of war in an American prison camp. As a prisoner, Bill's artistic abilities and personality attracted the attention of the camp officers, who befriended him and assisted in his emigrating to Canada.

Between 1952 and 1973, Bill traveled throughout the United States and Canada demonstrating and teaching oil painting. It was during this period that he developed and refined his technique of wet-on-wet oil painting.

In 1974, Bill completed a Public Television series which went on to win an Emmy Award. This first series was quickly followed by four more, each equally as well-received. In addition to the television series, Bill has over one million books in print making him one of the best known artists in the world.

Bill died in 1997 but his spirit lives on at AlexanderArt.com through his teaching videos and instruction files. Alexander Art is committed to restoring Bill's legacy and continuing his work.



Alexander Art
You Can Paint, We Promise!

Create Beautiful Art Everyone Loves

Enroll in **MASTER CLASS**



Structured Learning

From beginning painter to accomplished artist in fifteen paintings.



Personal Feedback

You are never alone - your mentor works with you every step of the way to help you succeed.



Tested and Proven

Developed and perfected over thousands of students over twenty years means if you have the desire, you can learn to paint.



100% Satisfaction Guarantee

If we can't teach you to paint, we'll refund your enrollment fee. No questions asked!

Learn More at this link
<https://alexanderart.com/ycp-masterclass/>

