

N° 3

100% practical

THE ART OF  
PAINTING

**160**  
PAGES  
of hints  
and tips  
for artists  
of every level



# The Essential *guide* to MIXED MEDIA



YOUR FAVOURITE  
SUBJECTS

- Flowers • Still Lifes
- Portraits • People • Animals
- City life • Landscapes

**500**  
**HINTS**  
**AND TIPS**

THE ESSENTIALS

- ✓ Make the most of mediums
- ✓ The tricks of the trade
- ✓ The secrets of colour

**30 ILLUSTRATED STEP-BY-STEP GUIDES**

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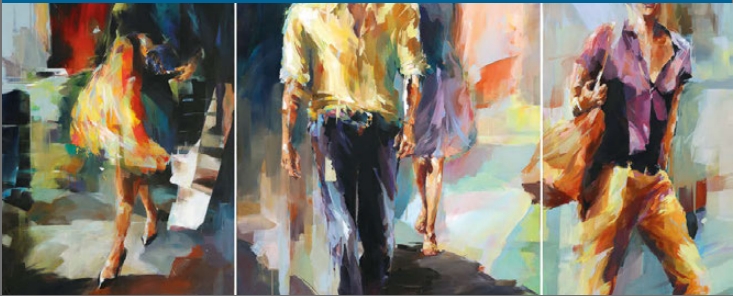
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500 HINTS  
to keep



# Light on **water**, a challenge that has become **a passion**

*Baja la marea en  
san lorenzo  
70 x 70 cm.*

Javier Torices puts all his qualities as an excellent observer, talented draughtsman and demanding colourist in the service of his passion. He paints infinite stretches of landscape filled with the magic of water, that wonderful living mirror to light and the sky. Each of his paintings brings a sense of peace and contented solitude...



Javier started training as a painter in his father's studio at the age of fourteen. From one day to the next he observed his father's works take life through the daily hard work of the painter. Preparing an imprimatura, tracing the principle lines of the composition and drawing. Dealing with proportions, marking the vanishing points, seeking out the most accomplished and precise form. "Painting can't exist without drawing" he confirms. We can still see him now, standing behind his easel, checking the precision of his straight lines, endlessly re-tracing the vanishing lines of the drawing in the fresh paint. His "colour intuition", as he likes to call it, also comes from long years of practice. Repeated daily, each movement flows into the other and forges his experience: perceiving the dominant colours, seeking the most harmonic range of tones, mixing colours without losing their intensity. Then came the day that Javier's talent needed to leave the studio to

*Brillos y espuma. Acrylic on board,  
90 x 150 cm.*



## MATERIALS

**Paints:** I use Titan and Vallejo acrylics, both brands produce high coverage paints which also dry rapidly. The pigments are pure and have excellent light resistance. I work with them for both transparent and opaque colours.



**Support:** The paint's capacity to adhere to all types of substrate means that I can paint on a wooden or MDF board, I always prepare them with two coats of titanium white. I prefer this kind of substrate to canvas, it's mostly a matter of taste as well as practical reasons. In Madrid

the temperature differences between winter and summer can be quite large. MDF with an acrylic covering resists humidity very well.

The formats depend on the various board sizes that I use: 100 x 100, 120 x 190, 130 x 180, 150 x 190 cm.

**Paintbrushes:** I use a large range of paintbrushes, from broad splatters for the backgrounds to the finest paintbrushes for the details.



way to the element of nature fuelled by its own specific poetry. Water takes the lead role, occupying the surface of the painting, leading the onlooker through the meanders of its colours and rhythms. An immensity in which we abandon ourselves.

## CREATING HALOS USING THE AIRBRUSH

Sometimes I use an airbrush to reproduce the blinding effect of the whiteness of the light on the retina. I use it to disperse tiny particles of liquid paint over the surface of the canvas to create these white halos. In this specific place, the eye cannot make out the forms, as can be the case when we are looking at a landscape subjected to intense midday sunlight.

*"I began to feel nervous in the city;  
painting water fills me with serenity  
and well-being."*



## PORTRAIT

Javier was born in Madrid in 1968 and learnt the foundations of oil painting in the studio of his father, Ramon Gonzalez who was a follower of Nicolas Prado Lopez, the artistic director of the Granada School of Art and Applied Arts. He then measured his talent as a young artist against his peers, winning a number of first prizes in art competitions held in major Spanish cities. Some of his works can be seen in the museums of contemporary arts of Barcelona and Huelva as well as a number of private collections and foundations (Barcelona, Madrid, Burgos, Segovia, Toledo).

[www.javiertorices.com](http://www.javiertorices.com)

be seen by others so that he could learn exactly what he was capable of. Javier competed regularly in art competitions during his youth. In Spain, every small to large town or city holds regular "certámenes", painting competitions for young talents through which they can get known - and winning one would also count in their educational curriculum. The winning paintings would be purchased by the town or city and the winning entrant would thus receive a significant amount of money. Javier earned a reputation for his urban paintings. His light and shadow portraits of Madrid and early morning backlit views, rarely seen in paintings, of the Gran Vía or Castellana boulevards. He is greatly attracted to the atmosphere of dusk and dawn, as a backdrop to the city lights, neon signs, reflections and traffic headlights, producing the strongest contrasts. Then, breaking away from these urban panoramas, Javier turned towards exposed

landscapes. He switched from the asphalt of the streets to the white sands of beaches, from the endless ballet of road traffic to the permanent backwash of the waves, always accenting the relations between light and shadow. "I began to feel nervous in the city, I wanted something more calm and tranquil; painting water fills me with serenity and well-being."

## FROM THE CITY TO THE SEA

These days he puts all of his creativity into painting the sea, water and its infinite metamorphoses under the influence of light and wind. The wooden panel on which he paints becomes waves, foam, sand and calm stretches of silver reflections mirroring the sky, or a vertiginous green and black abyss. If the city is still occasionally present, it appears in the background in the form of emblematic locations such as Venice or New York. Famous shapes and buildings give



## SNOW

I must be drawn to water in all of its forms since I am also keen on ice! I have a preference for large empty natural spaces, minimalist almost monochromatic landscapes. Snow offers up these large virgin expanses filled with rhythms like the designs of hikers' footprints or the electric power-lines of a chairlift. Light and shadow enter and disturb the calm whiteness of these places, introducing areas of different colours and vibrant colours.



Water and sea landscapes, the issue of the painter's slow and meticulousness craft, generate an irresistible capacity to attract. Is it the panoramic angle and the nearness of the liquid element which raises this sentiment? Or is it this fascination for such a realistic representation of nature? *"The brushstrokes, as fine and precise as they may be, remain visible on the surface of the work", states Javier. "I want to show that it is a painting and that with paintbrushes and pigments you can achieve such realistic results."* This is the painter's challenge, to create a new visual experience thanks to photography which allows them to see what the eye cannot see. The painting appears to reproduce reality, yet it transmits a new reality which is specific to the painter and his complex pictorial vision of the interplay of light and the movement of water. When Javier is asked what is the secret to painting water so well, he replies most simply, using the vocabulary of his trade: *"You just need to try to present the volume of the water, observe its relief and rhythms, the ever-changing movement of liquid forms, give density to the mass of the water through an interplay of contrasts in colour and tonal values."*

Javier likes to wander the cool pathways of the Retiro park in central Madrid, where he can be close to water. There, on the edges of the Estanque, he hires a boat and in just a few oar-strokes he is in amongst the light reflections that dance upon the lake. At the end of the afternoon, the rays of the sun becomes piercing, and profound blackness gives way to the golden shades of the setting sun.



Una tarde en el parque del Retiro.  
Acrylic on board,  
150 x 150 cm.

# 1

### THE COMPOSITION

I define the subject I will paint under the inspiration of a number of photos taken from life. I like to be daring with the framing to set unique compositional scenes, such as the feet of passers by on the Fran Vía. In this case, it's not the Retiro park as a tourist site that interests me, with its equestrian column dedicated to Alphonse XII dominating the lake, but rather the luminous ambience of the reflections on the water at this time of the day and the emotion they convey. So I shall give a much larger role to the water, allowing it take up two thirds of the painting.

## WHERE TO SEE HIS WORK

> On his website:  
[www.javiertorices.com](http://www.javiertorices.com)

> In these galleries:

~ Actual Arte Contemporaneo,  
Calle Claudio Coello, 24, 28006  
Madrid

~ Fornara Gallery, Paseo  
Benabola, 6D, 29660 Puerto  
Banus-Marbella

~ Sala de Arte Van Dyck, Calle  
Menendez Valdes, 21, 33201  
Gijón

# 4

### SKETCH

I start the painting with a sketch, as I would for an oil painting. The first brushstrokes are applied thick, they will be absorbed by the support even if the MDF has already been covered over with two coats of white and a background coat in the base colour. I quickly fill the main areas, to which I will be constantly returning right up to the completion of the work. It's a way to be sure that the work will have an overall balance.



## From matt to shine:

## first sketches of a golden expanse of water

# 2

### USING A COMPUTER TO ORGANISE THE LINES

Technology needs to be used judiciously. The computer helps me to establish reference lines: to check the proportions, lines and horizons. I then transfer these guidelines freehand so that I can check the precision of my outlines at any time. The outlines are primordial. I constantly alternate adding touches of paint with correcting the outlines to organise the elements.



# 3

### THE TONAL RANGE

I gradually prepare the ranges of colour, I start with about eight. I highlight the dominants and then I can see the paler ones. To darken my shades I quite freely use black, even though other artists banish it from their palettes. Then, using experience and intuition, I refine the shades in successive layers until I get the most subtle tone. Since I do quite a lot of landscapes involving water, I am used to using a large range of blues and greys. I have also worked hard on these colours so that they don't appear too cold.



# 5

### THE DETAILS

I progress in the painting by taking on the architectural details and any human presence (quite rare in my work), but take just as much care in constructing the volume of the water and the presence of reflections. That is the secret of landscapes involving water: concentrate your attention on the volume and movement to bring life to the space such that it conveys emotion.



# 6

### PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATION

Generally it can take me six to eight weeks to complete a painting, so I organise my work to make it as efficient as possible. Whenever I get a colour right, I prepare enough of it to see me through the whole painting. I have a whole range of tones in clearly labelled airtight containers. The different shades for the sky, the water, the sand on the beaches or rocks are all labelled and numbered so when I start each painting session I don't waste any time.