

HAIR DEMONSTRATION

BLACK

If you analyze black hair closely, you'll see that it is composed of many beautiful dark shades: deep purples, burgundy, mahogany and silvery or even golden highlights. Some black hair has a reddish cast, some a blue-black tone. This can vary according to the light and time of day. Study your reference carefully and see how many colors and values you can identify.



Reference Photo



MATERIALS

Surface

gessoed canvas

Paints

Burnt Sienna (Alkyd), Burnt Umber, Cadmium Red Scarlet Hue, Cadmium Yellow Hue, Permanent Magenta, Titanium White, French Ultramarine

Brushes

no. 2 short filbert
no. 4 watercolor round
½-inch (12mm) comb

Other Supplies

drying medium, palette knife

1 CREATE THE UNDERPAINTING

Tone the canvas with a Burnt Sienna (Alkyd) glaze. Let it dry. Use Burnt Umber to paint in the values of the hair. Use a no. 2 short filbert and a no. 4 watercolor round. Stroke in the direction of the hair flow. Let it dry.



2 APPLY AN OPAQUE COAT

Lay out Titanium White, Cadmium Red Scarlet Hue and French Ultramarine; stir in a drop of drying medium with each one. Mix seven values from these colors. Do not add white to the darkest values. Make one dark value more red and one more blue. Using the same brushes as in step 1, stroke in the values starting with the darkest. Vary the darks from redder to bluer to add interest. Use the ½-inch (12mm) comb to blend the hair. Let it dry.



3 ADD THE TRANSPARENT GLAZES AND HIGHLIGHTS

Lay out Permanent Magenta, French Ultramarine, Cadmium Yellow Hue and Titanium White; stir in a drop of drying medium with each. Mix Permanent Magenta and French Ultramarine into a couple of shades of purple. Glaze these two colors over the hair, varying the shades. Mix yellow and white for a highlight color and work it in the lightest areas. Don't overdo the lightest highlights. Work a little Burnt Umber into the darkest areas.

ARTIST'S TIP

Using black straight from the tube in excess can suck the life out of a painting. It's better to mix your blacks using opposite colors of strong hue. You can use a small amount of pure black accents, but too much creates an unpleasant effect.