



# Community Outreach — Oakland Veterans

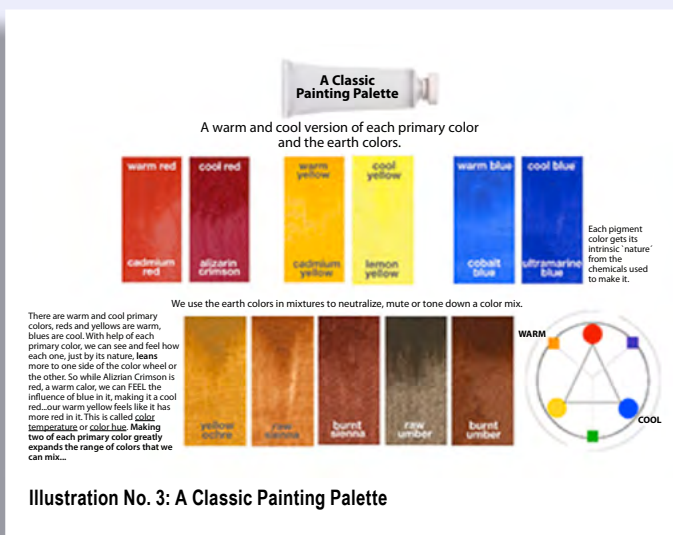
## Color Us with the Theory by Sheila Cain

The Oakland Vets requested a lesson in mixing colors. We spent a whole class on some basic aspects of color theory. The group has three teachers: Michael Friedland, Pat Moseuk, and Sheila (myself). Each brought something to share with the class.



Sheila painted a wet-into-wet color wheel, labeling the cool and warm primary pigments with those in between. She also created three neutral colors by mixing the primary colors directly across with the secondary colors: red with green, yellow with violet, and blue with orange (see illustration No. 2).

Michael began by explaining and showing swatches of the colors in the classic palette: a warm and a cool version of the three primary colors, followed by earth colors like yellow ochre, raw sienna, burnt sienna, raw umber, and burnt umber. Most of the group began working on Pat's color wheel exercise: 1. Start by painting the triangle of primary colors, 2. Then mix the triangle of secondary colors, and 3. finally fill in the tertiary colors like yellow/green, blue/violet, etc. (see illustration number 1).



Michael explained, "With two of each primary color (one cool and one warm), we can see and feel how each one, by its nature, leans more to one side of the color wheel or the other. This is called color temperature or color bias." Also, there can be more than one pigment that can serve as one of our primary colors. For example, for warm red, one could use cadmium red or vermilion, or for cool yellow, one could use lemon yellow or aureolin yellow. However, most watercolor artists would agree that cobalt blue is the preferred cool (Michael sees it as warm) blue and that ultramarine blue is the preferred warm (Michael sees it as cool) blue. Michael also pointed out another way to create neutrals is by mixing a primary or secondary color with the earth colors; yellow ochre, raw sienna, burnt sienna, raw umber, and burnt umber are the earth colors (see Illustration No. 3).



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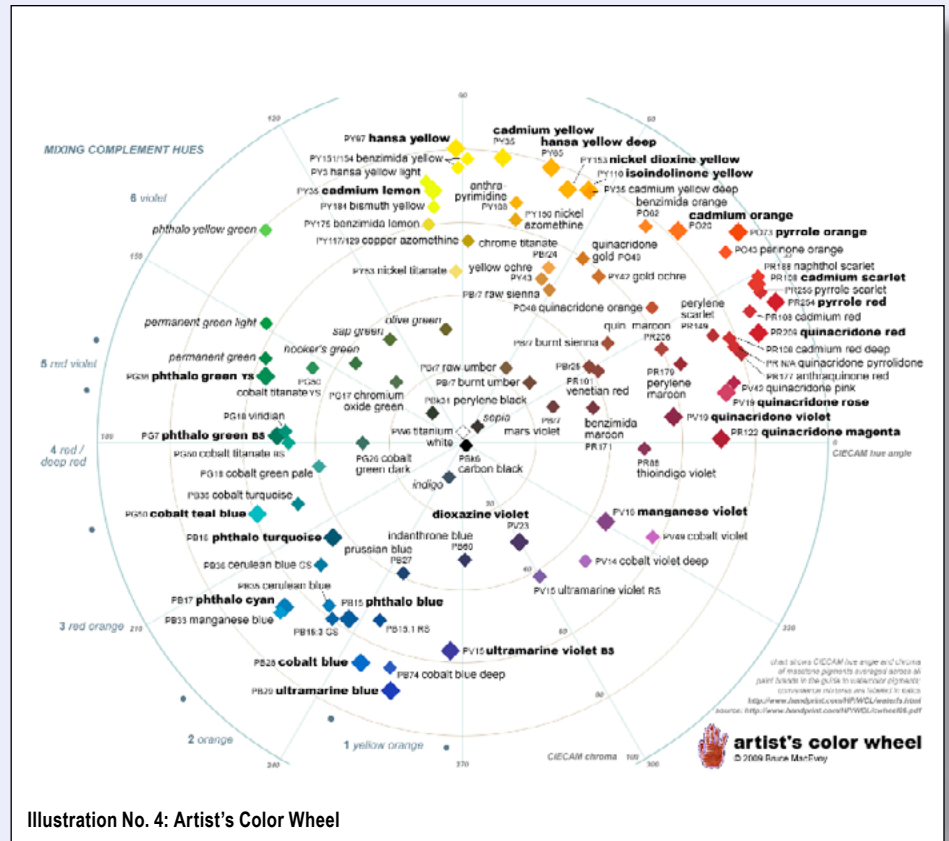
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## Outreach

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Towards the end of our painting session, Michael showed us a very cool chart that shows watercolor pigments relative to one another in intensity. It places the pigments around the center, black. It also shows their International Color Index Number. One of the many takeaways from this chart is that it shows how intense the colors are based on their position. The most intense is closer to the largest circle, and the less intense the color, the closer it is toward the center. To equally empower blue and red, one must either use more blue pigment than red or give blue more real estate on the paper than red (see Illustration No. 4 or [click here](#)).

Our group didn't have a critique for this session. We learned the basics of color mixing but also learned that there was more to learn. Now we had our own color wheels for reference, and we look forward to applying this newfound knowledge to our next project.

*Sheila Cain*

Co-Director, Community Outreach