



LANGUAGE OF COLOR

Week Two — Putting It All Together

Today's goal:

Create one finished **11 × 14**
painting using the color
relationships and techniques
we explored last week.

WHAT WE EXPLORED LAST WEEK

- Primary colors
- Secondary colors
- Tertiary colors
- Analogous colors
- Complementary colors
- Value
- Gradients
- Color mixing
- Layering
- Glazing



OUR COLOR VOCABULARY

PRIMARY

The three foundation colors.

SECONDARY

Two primaries mixed together.

TERTIARY

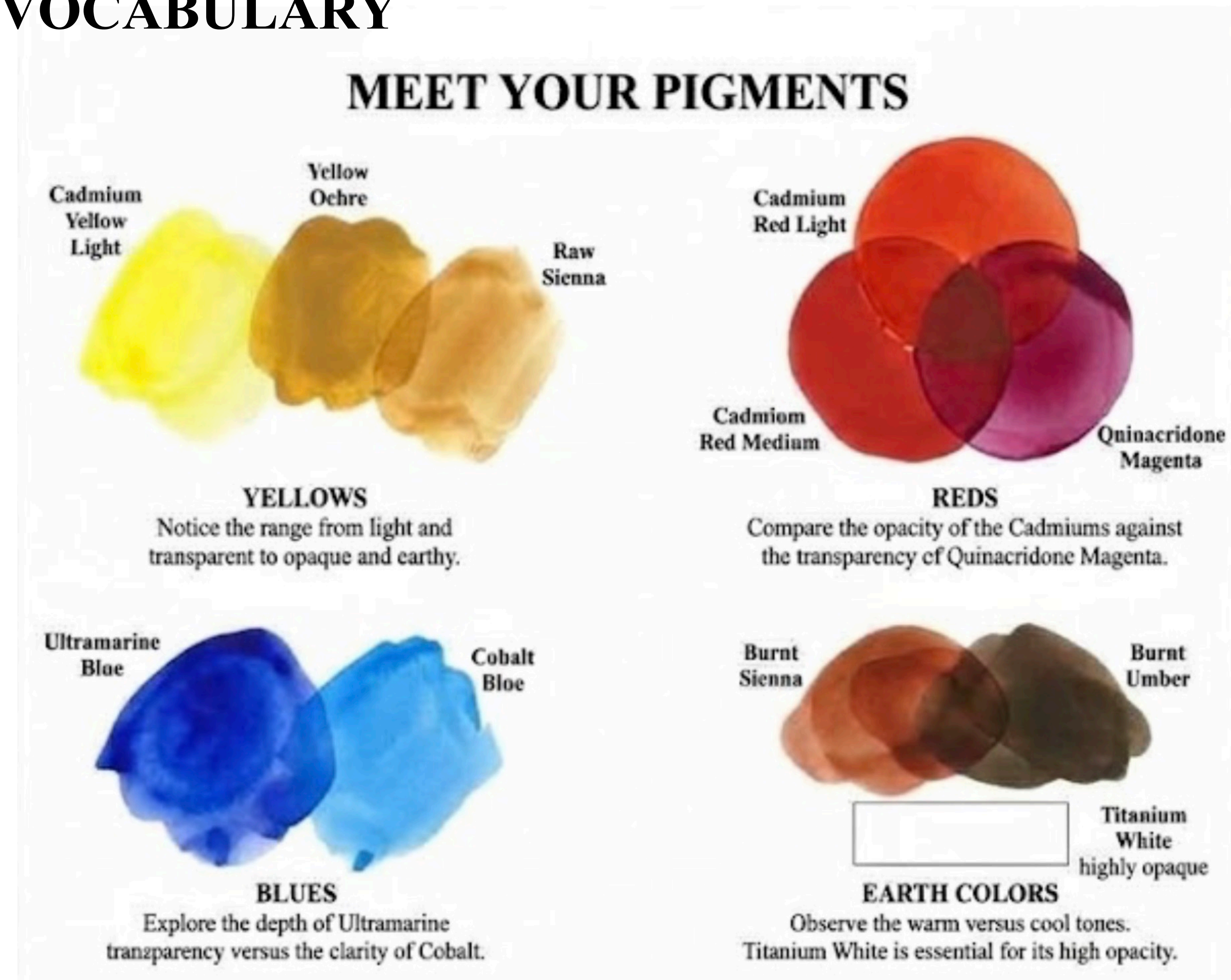
A primary mixed with its neighboring secondary.

ANALOGOUS

Color neighbors.

COMPLEMENTARY

Color opposites.



The Color Wheel

PRIMARY • SECONDARY • TERTIARY • ANALOGOUS • COMPLEMENTARY

ALL THE COLORS. ALL THE RELATIONSHIPS.

THE BASICS

PRIMARY COLORS

The three foundation colors.

- Yellow
- Red
- Blue

SECONDARY COLORS

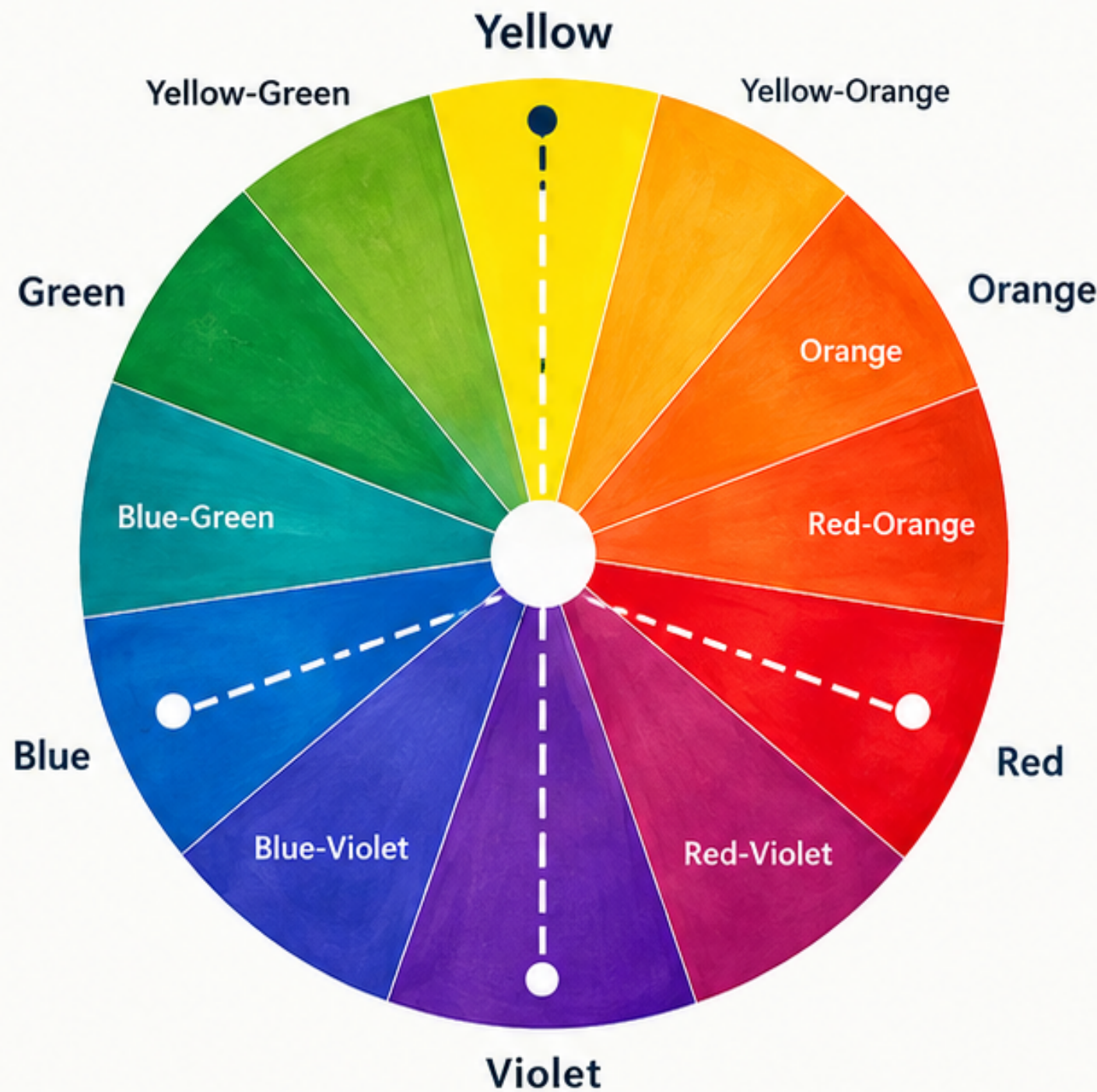
Made by mixing two primaries.

- Orange
- Green
- Violet

TERTIARY COLORS

Made by mixing a primary with its neighboring secondary.

- Yellow-orange
- Red-orange
- Red-violet
- Blue-violet
- Blue-green
- Yellow-green



ANALOGOUS COLOR NEIGHBORS

Colors that sit next to each other on the color wheel.



Example:
Yellow → Yellow-Orange → Orange

COMPLEMENTARY COLOR OPPOSITES

Colors directly across from each other on the color wheel.



Example:
Blue ↔ Orange

(Other pairs include: Red ↔ Green, Yellow ↔ Violet)

HOW IT ALL WORKS TOGETHER

- Primary colors are the foundation.
- Secondary colors are made from two primaries.
- Tertiary colors fill the spaces between.
- Analogous colors create harmony.
- Complementary colors create contrast and energy.

QUICK VISUAL GUIDE



Analogous (neighbors)
= harmony, flow, unity



Complementary (opposites)
= contrast, excitement, focus

REMEMBER

- Analogous = neighbors
- Complementary = opposites
- Tertiary = in-between colors (primary + adjacent secondary)
- Primary, Secondary, Tertiary = the building blocks

*Color isn't just what you see...
it's how you use it.*

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

BUILD A COLOR STORY

Your 11 × 14 painting will include:

- A dominant color
- Analogous color relationships
- A complementary accent
- Light + dark values
- At least one gradient
- Tissue-paper layering
- Transparent glazing
- Multiple layers



Your painting does not need to look like anyone else's.

LOOK AT THE EXAMPLE

What do you notice?

- What color dominates?
- Where is your eye drawn?
- Where is the strongest contrast?
- Where do you see layers?
- Where might the artist have allowed an earlier layer to remain visible?
- How does the yellow change the way we experience the red?



We're going to study the process—not copy the painting.

CHOOSE YOUR COLOR STORY

Start with ONE dominant color.

Then choose:

2–3 neighboring colors (Analogous)

and

1 contrasting/complementary color.

Think:

DOMINANT → SUPPORTING → CONTRAST



BUILD — DON'T DETAIL

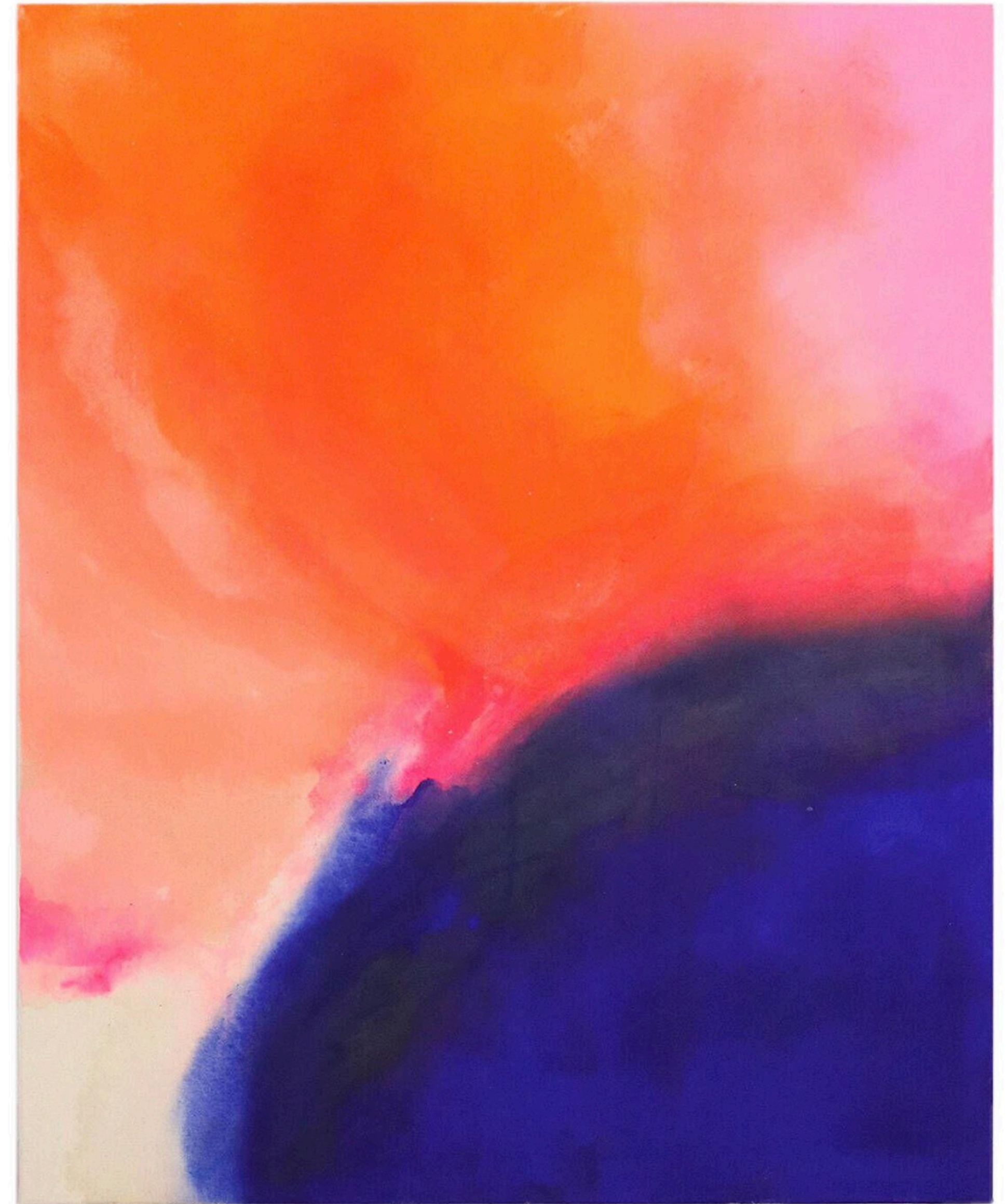
Start BIG.

- Use your largest brushes.
- Establish 3–5 large shapes or areas.
- Think about movement.
- Think about balance.
- Think about where your eye will travel.
- Don't worry about details yet.

BIG SHAPES FIRST.

DETAILS LATER.

Let's Create!



BUILD YOUR ANALOGOUS COLORS

Think: COLOR NEIGHBORS

Let your colors move into one another.

- Blend
- Overlap
- Mix
- Change value
- Change temperature
- Allow some areas to remain distinct



One color can become another.

MAKE COLOR MOVE

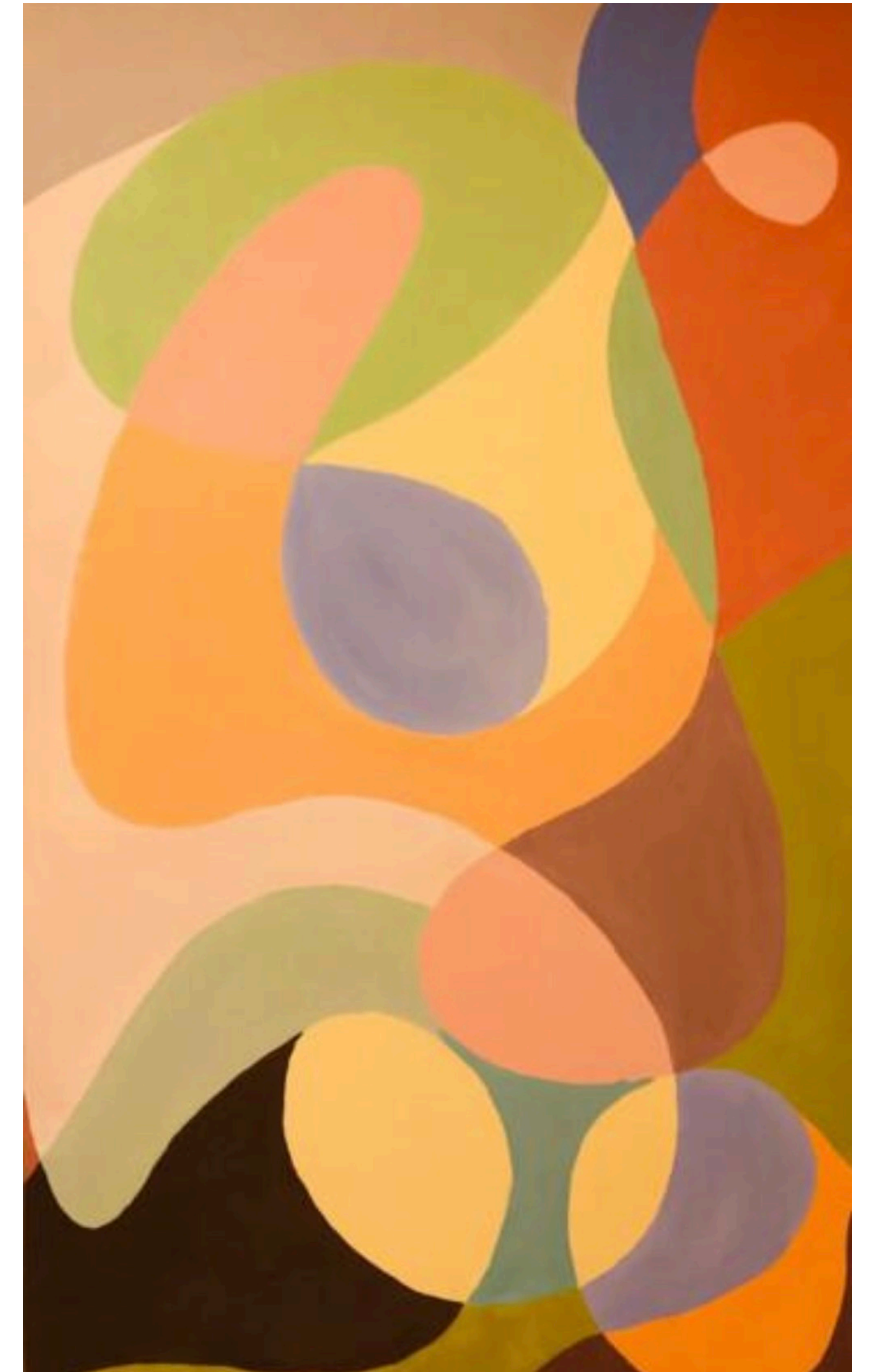
GRADIENT

A gradient can move:

- Light → dark
- Dark → light
- One hue → another
- Warm → cool
- Bright → muted

Blend where you want calm.

Keep contrast where you want energy.



ADD THE COMPLEMENT

Now create contrast.

Your complementary color can:

- Create a focal point
- Energize a quiet area
- Make another color appear more intense
- Direct the viewer's eye

You don't need much.

A little contrast can have a big impact.



BUILD YOUR LAYERS

This is where I'd return to the red/yellow example.

Think in layers:

PAINT



TISSUE



PAINT



GLAZE



TISSUE



GLAZE



FINAL ACCENTS



Don't cover everything.

Let some of the history of the painting remain visible.

TRANSPARENCY CHANGES COLOR

Glazing

A glaze is transparent color.

It can:

- Change the color underneath
- Deepen a color
- Warm or cool a color
- Unify different layers
- Create depth



**You aren't just adding color.
You're changing the color that's already there.**

REVEAL + CONCEAL

What should remain visible?

Let us see:

- Earlier colors
- Tissue
- Brushwork
- Edges
- Overlapping shapes
- Transparent layers



A successful layered painting doesn't hide everything underneath.

STOP & LOOK

Put your brush down.

Step back.

Look at your painting from several feet away.

Ask yourself:

- Where does my eye go first?
- Where does it go next?
- Do I have enough light?
- Do I have enough dark?
- Is my complementary color helping?
- Is anything competing too much?
- Do my layers feel connected?



Don't fix it yet. Just look.

FINAL ACCENTS

Now make **intentional** decisions.

Consider adding:

- A dark accent
- A light accent
- A sharper edge
- A softer edge
- A small complementary accent
- A final glaze
- A mark that creates movement

Don't fill an empty space just because it's empty.

THE COLOR THEORY CHECK

Before you call it finished:

- ☐ Dominant color
- ☐ Analogous colors
- ☐ Complementary color
- ☐ Light + dark values
- ☐ Gradient
- ☐ Tissue layer
- ☐ Glazing
- ☐ Multiple layers
- ☐ Focal point
- ☐ Visual balance



WHAT DID YOUR COLOR SAY?

Share briefly:

My dominant color is...

My complementary color is...

The color relationship I enjoyed most was...

One thing I discovered about color was...





You have the paint, and the
brush, and the colors, and the
canvas, and the vision; go on,
create your masterpiece.

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