

2022

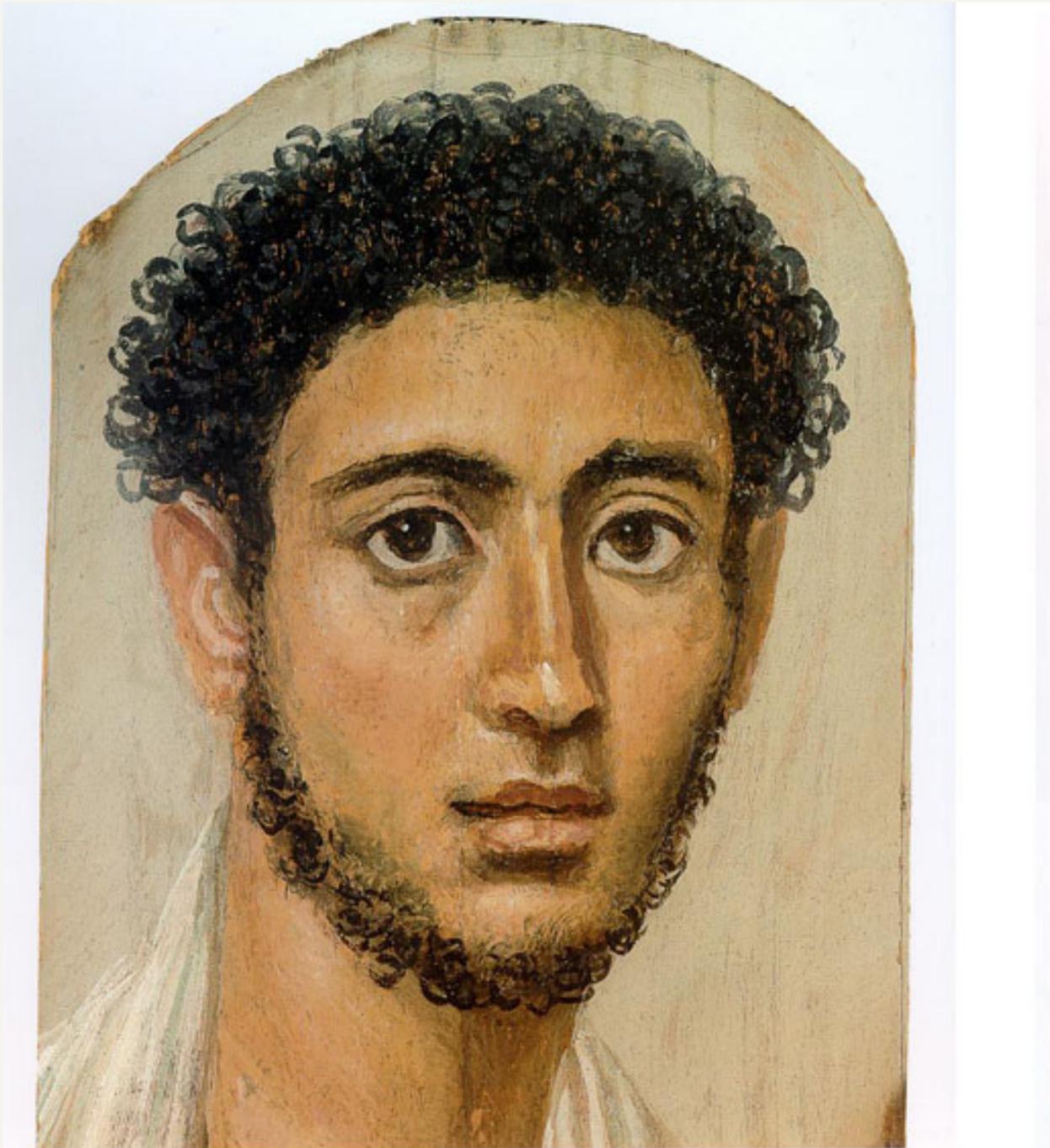
The History of Encaustic Painting

Materials and Methods

ONLINE
ATELIER
SCHOOL
OF
VISUAL
PHILOSOPHY



Oldest form of Painting



**By the end of the presentation,
you will...**

Understand the history of encaustic

See examples throughout time

View contemporary applications

Understand how artists use the
medium

An Ancient Medium

**Enkaustikos means "to heat
or burn in" in Greek**

**From Greece in the
5th Century**

The earliest known encaustic painting is from Greece in the 5th Century BC. According to Pliny the Elder, encaustic was used for everything from portrait painting to mural painting. It was first used not as an artistic medium, but as a waterproof sealer for ships. Later, as with most decorative media, pigment was added and then used to decorate the boats in addition to making them water tight.

<https://www.rfpaints.com/history-of-encaustic>



Egyptian Fayum Portraits

Egyptian portraits

The most famous of the early encaustic paintings are the Egyptian funerary portraits known as Fayum painted between the 1st and 2nd century AD by Greek painters. The wax preserved the color and the detail exquisitely for millennia.



The technical aspects of Encaustic Painting



- **Wax Melting**

Melting the wax is the most unique and laborious part of the painting process. It is for this reason (and a lack of portable melting devices) that encaustic was not a particularly popular medium after the Greeks until the 20th Century.
- **Care of the Paintings**

Encaustic paintings need to be protected from denting and chipping because the surface remains somewhat soft even after cooling. Paintings should be kept out of direct sunlight (not in a hot car) to prevent melting and away from freezing temperatures to prevent cracking. Moisture does not affect the surface at all however!
- **Unique Surface Qualities**

The addition of Damar Resin to the wax allows for a more durable and shiny surface. The wax will cool almost immediately after being applied, however, it can take about 1–3 years for it to fully cure. You can polish the surface in order to make it shiny.



Contemporary Applications

Encaustic has some wonderful capabilities for painters and artists. It can be flat, include 3 dimensional aspects, be used with stencils, for printmaking, be scratched into, scraped off, melted, blended and combined with a multitude of materials.

Because it is essentially a waterproof barrier, however, it cannot be used with water-soluble materials. Initially, underlayers can be applied with water based media prior to applying the wax, but once the encaustic medium is painted on, water based media will bead up on the surface and just wipe off.

Contemporary artists have pushed the boundaries of these techniques and limitations however, and a great resource for encaustic materials is R&F Paints in Kingston, NY and online at rfpaints.com

Examples

ONLINE
ATELIER
SCHOOL
OF
VISUAL
PHILOSOPHY



Encaustic
Monotype

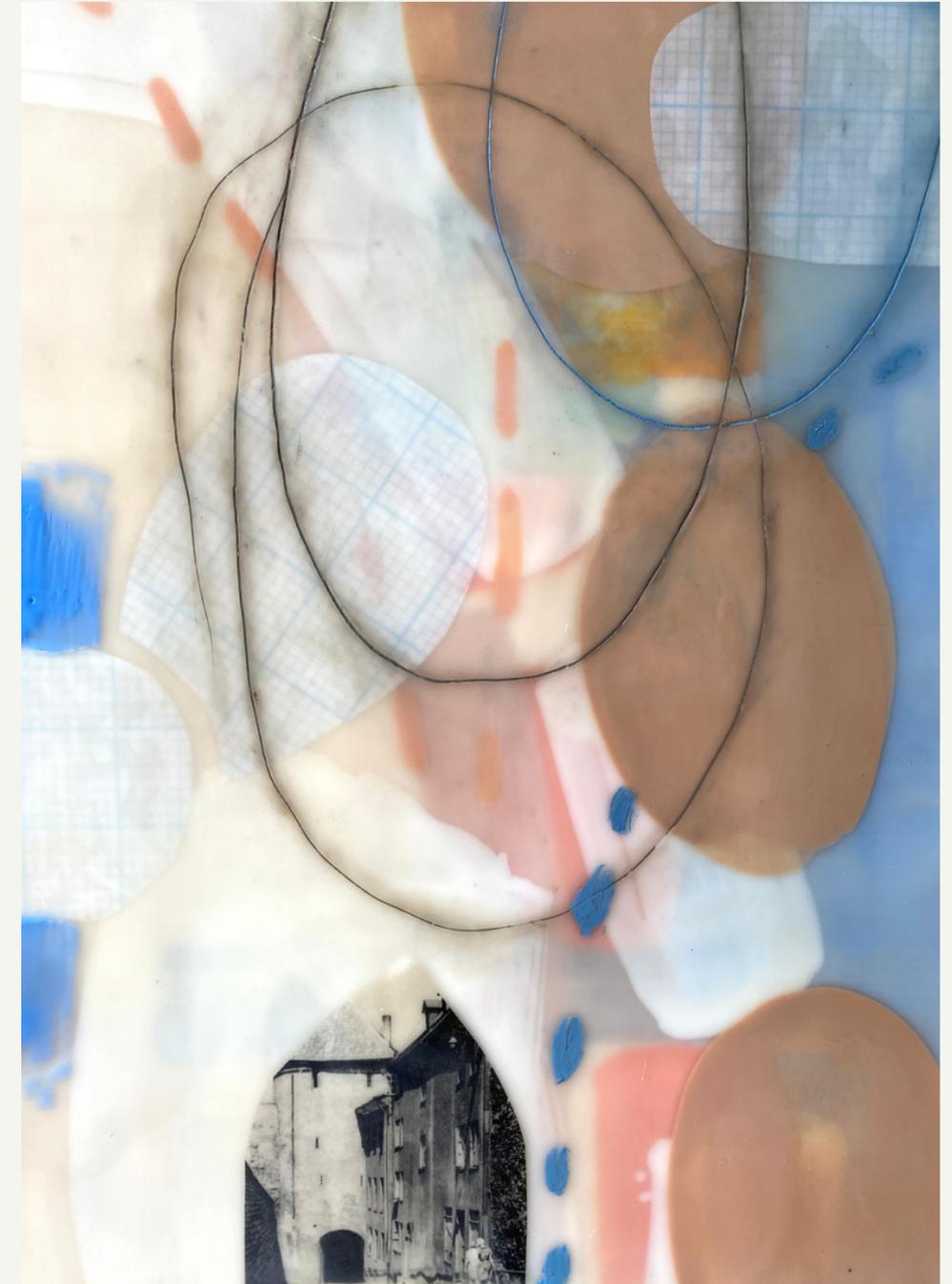
Paula Roland

Encaustic
Incising



Cecile Chong

Collage, painting
and incising



Dana Harris Seeger



Fusing the wax and additional materials to the layer below is an essential part of encaustic painting

Popular Vocabulary

Glazing

The process of applying layers of translucent paint over each other to achieve rich depth. Encaustic is perfect for this because you can add as much or as little transparent encaustic medium to make the paint more or less see through.

Fusing

The process of melting each layer of encaustic paint to the one beneath it. This ensures the paint is completely adhered to the surface (substrate) and to each other.

Transparency

The quality of a material that shows the under layers through the top layer. When a color or medium can be seen through.

Encaustic Medium

An artistic painting material made from bee's wax and Damar resin.

Check us out On Social Media



@schoolofvp



svp-online-atelier.teachable.com



@schoolofvp