



CASEIN PAINTING

Scott Gellatly | May 2022

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What is Casein and why do I use it?

Casein – also called “milk paint” – is an artist’s color that uses the protein from milk as the binder of the pigments. Unlike watercolor and gouache, casein is water-proof once fully dry. The fast-drying time of casein and its resistance to color “lifting” allows for immediate layering and re-working of the painting throughout the painting session.

The versatility of casein is one of its most alluring features. It can be thinned for fluid washes, moderately thinned for expressive mark-making, or applied straight with a brush or palette knife for more textural marks.

Casein has been used for centuries, for both fine art and illustration works as well as for interior wall paint, due to its durability.



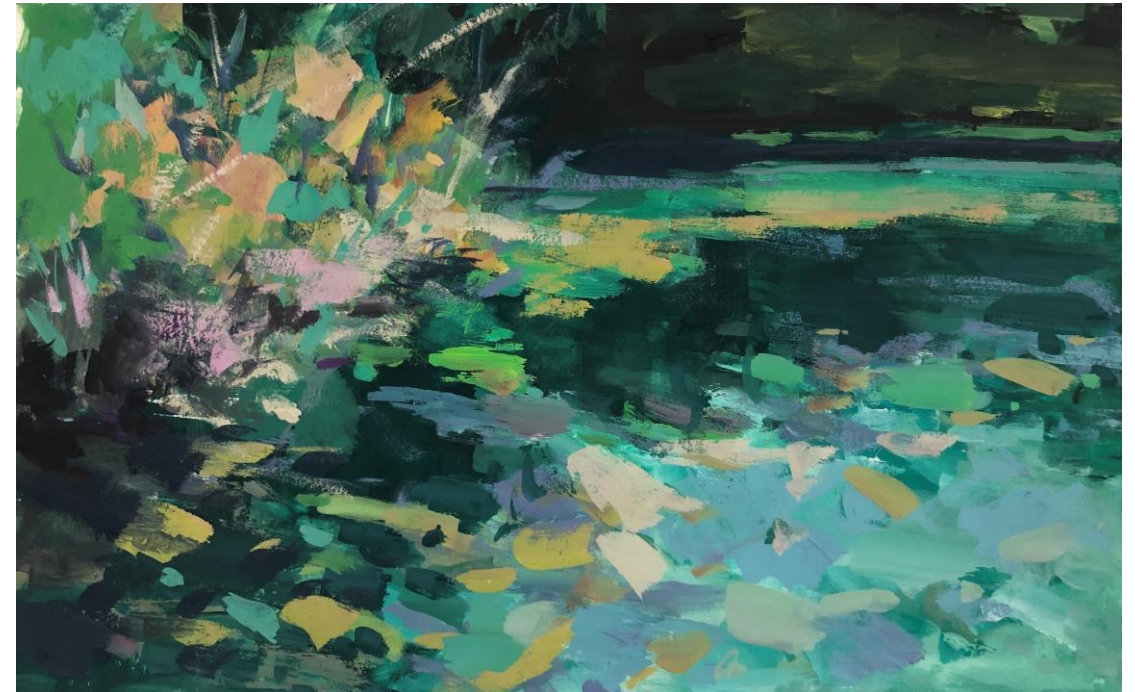
Evening Falls on Wetland, 2019
Casein on paper 7.5” x 12”

What is Casein and why do I use it?

Like oils and watercolors, casein is a natural material, and this quality comes through in the feel and handling of the paint.

I am a landscape painter at heart. My plein air practice over the past few years has transitioned from oil painting to casein painting. For me, plein air painting is an exercise in information gathering – direct observations from the landscape to inform my more abstracted studio paintings. My plein air sessions are generally short (30 – 45 minutes) and the small casein works are usually done in a watercolor book.

Beyond the practicality of the medium, the working properties of casein perfectly captures the variation in texture of the landscape and supports the expressive, responsive nature of plein air painting.



Commonwealth Greens, 2019
Casein on paper 7.5" x 12"

CASEIN IN PLEIN AIR SKETCHBOOK



Blue Autumn, 2021
Casein in Plein Air Sketchbook
5.5" x 7.5"

CASEIN IN PLEIN AIR SKETCHBOOK



Wetland Sky, 2022
Casein in Plein Air Sketchbook
5.5" x 7.5"

CASEIN IN PLEIN AIR SKETCHBOOK



Wetland Sky Reflected, 2022
Casein in Plein Air Sketchbook
5.5" x 7.5"

STUDIO PAINTINGS



From the Many Ponds, 2022
Oil on canvas, 24" x 72".

CASEIN ON PAPER



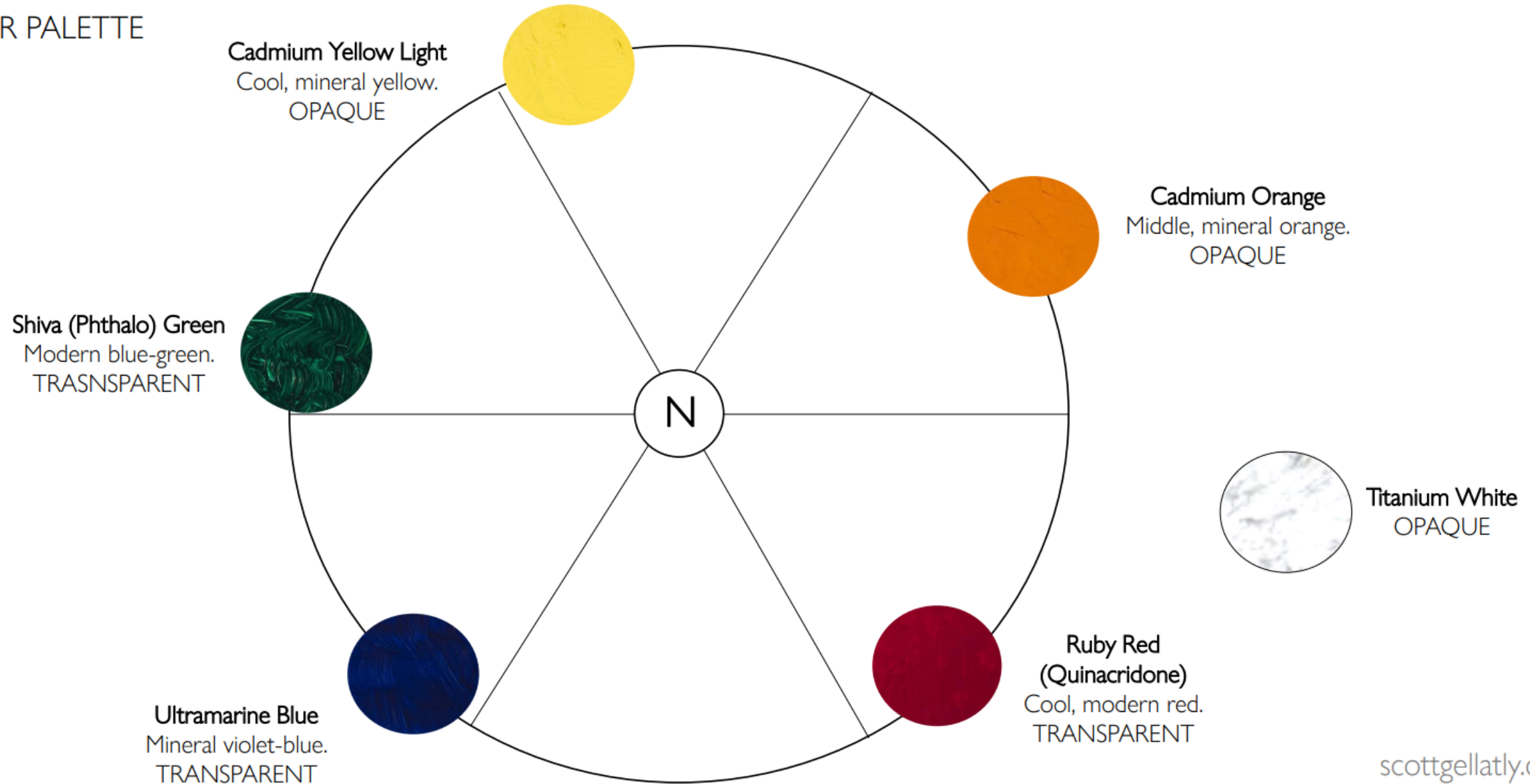
Sera Toscana, 2022
Casein on paper, 5.5" x 8".

CASEIN ON PAPER

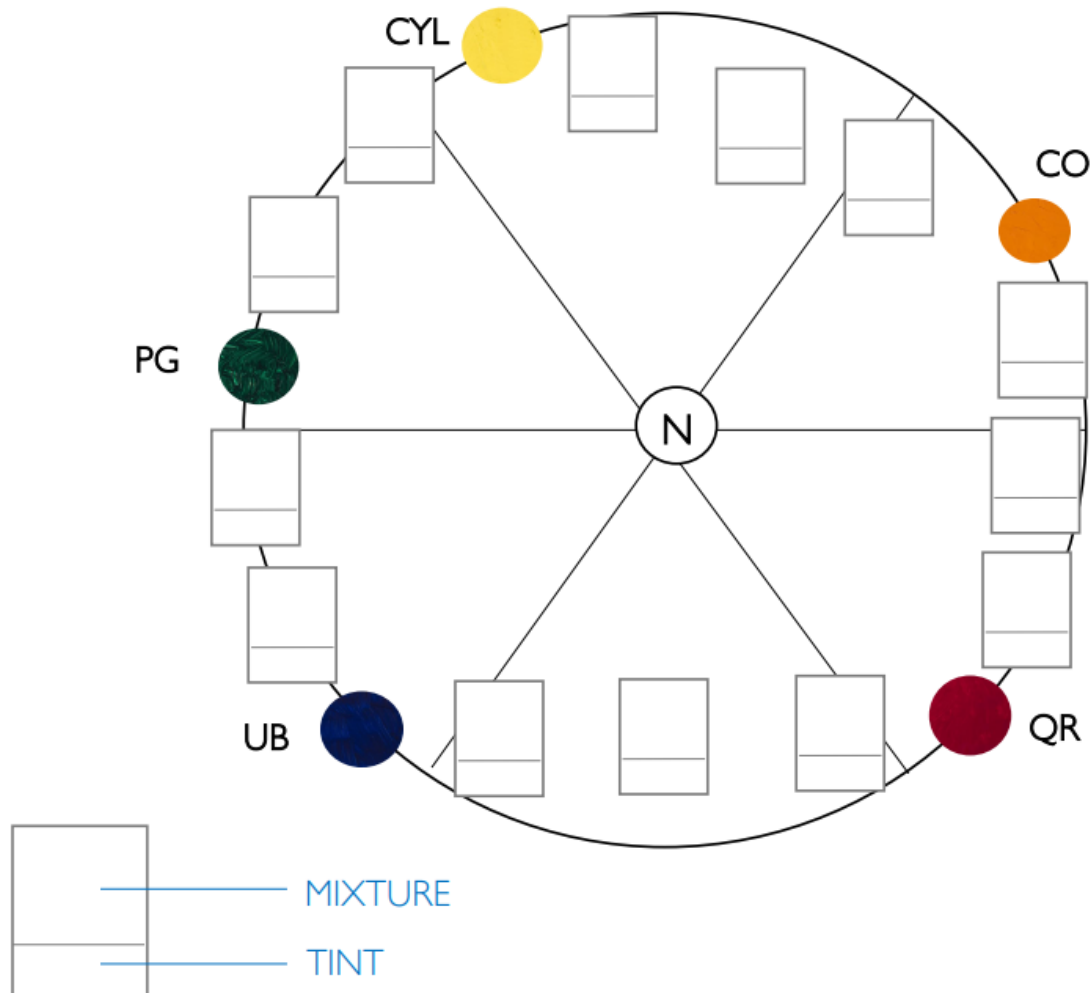


Ephemeral Pools, 2022
Casein on paper, 8" x 12".

COLOR PALETTE



COLOR-MIXING EXERCISE

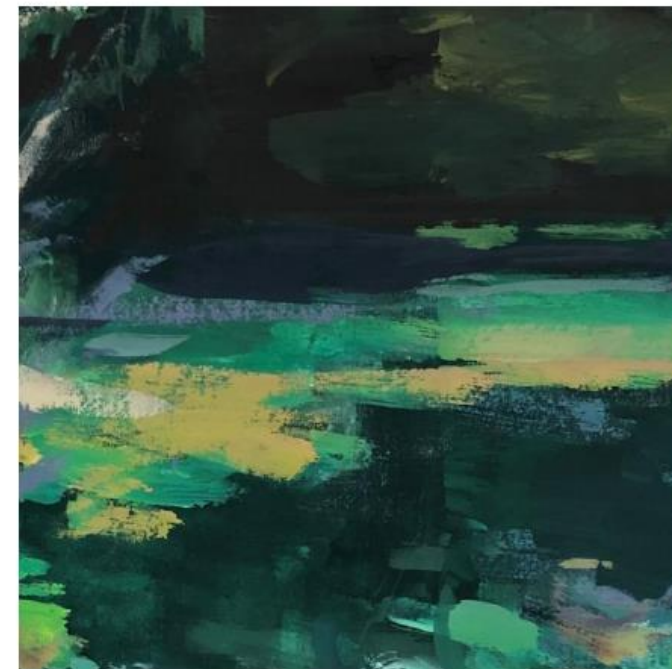


CYL						QR
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CO						UB
CO						PG
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COLOR-MIXING EXERCISE



MARK-MAKING



Commonwealth Greens (details),
2019
casein on paper
7.5" x 12"

MARK-MAKING EXERCISE



WASH



SMOOTH BLENDING



DRY BRUSH



PALETTE KNIFE

CASEIN ON PANEL



Cool Wetland, 2021
Casein on panel
6" x 6"

CASEIN ON PANEL



Overlooking Big Table, 2021
Casein on panel
5" x 14"

PRE-MADE PANELS



PANEL PREP, GESSO FORMULA

PVA GESSO FORMULA (in parts by volume):

3 – PVA Size

2 – Titanium Dioxide dry pigment

1 – Calcium carbonate (marble dust or whiting)

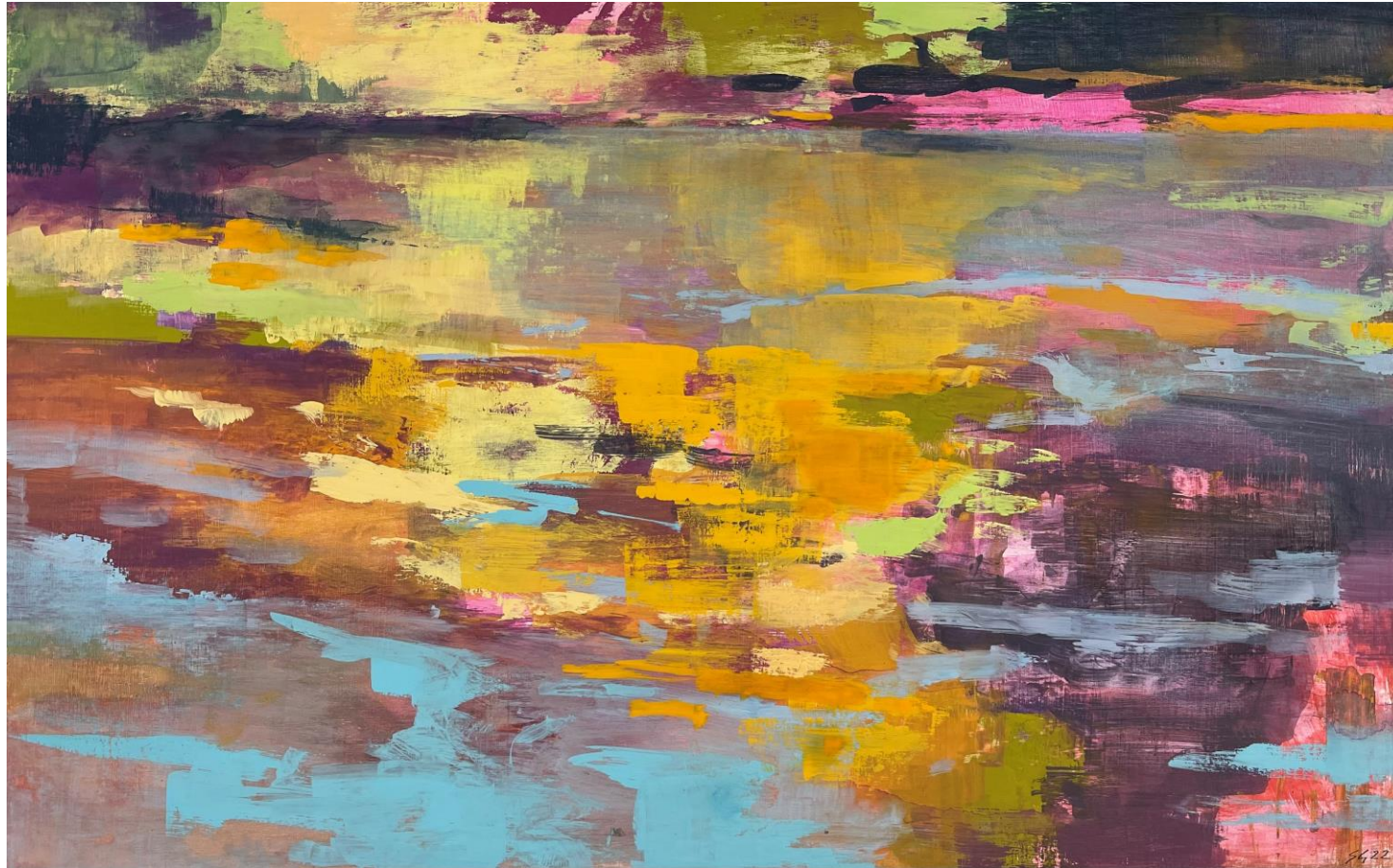
1 – Gypsum



PANEL PREP



CASEIN ON PANEL



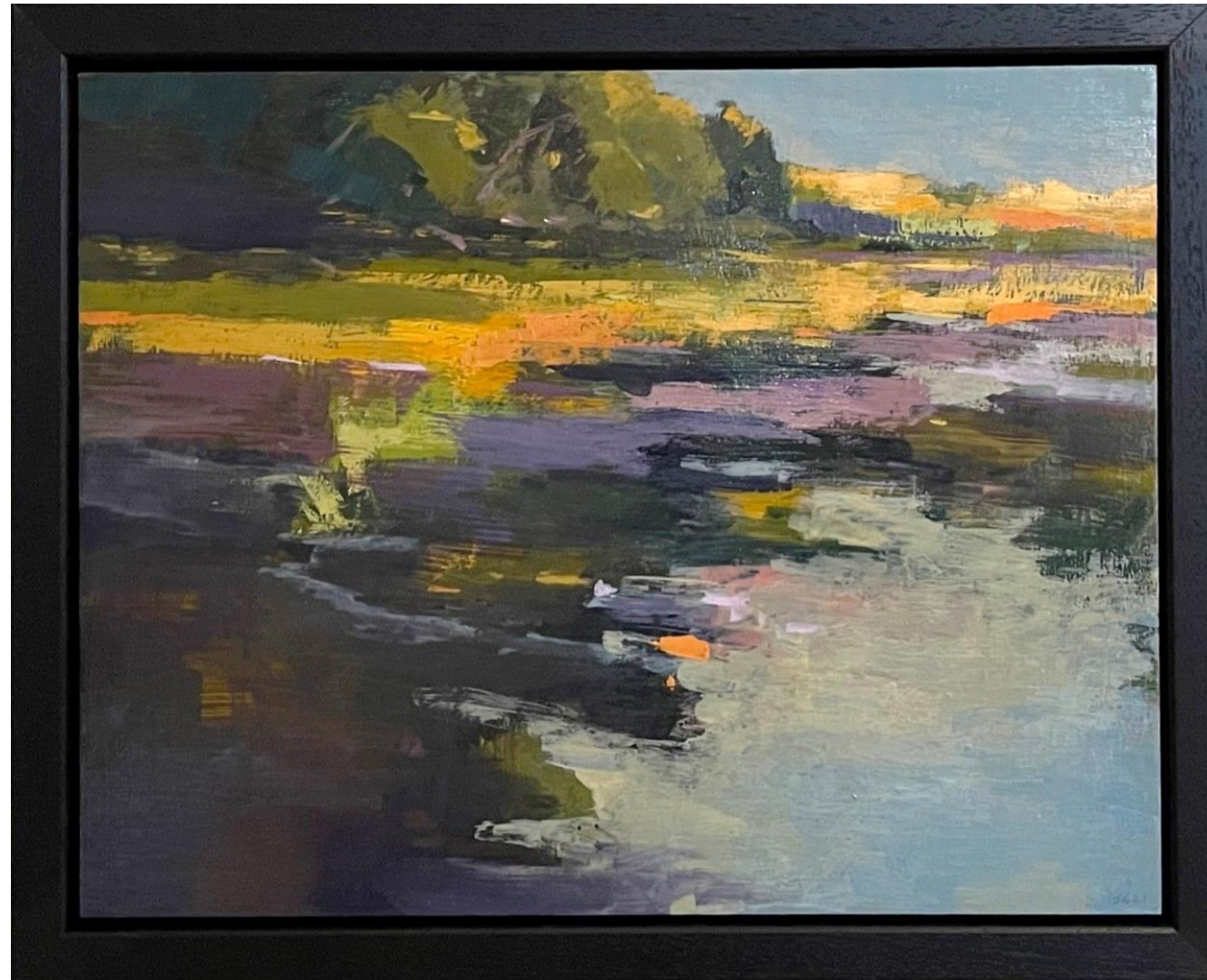
Pond Surface, 2022
Casein on panel
10" x 16"

PRESENTATION: CASEIN ON PAPER



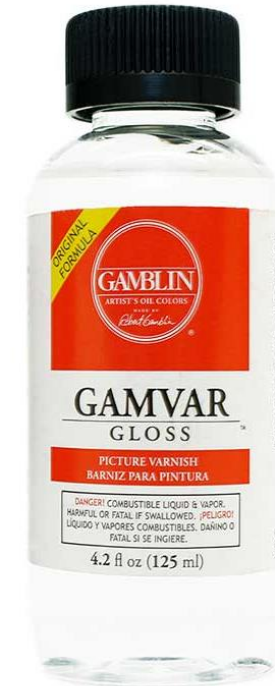
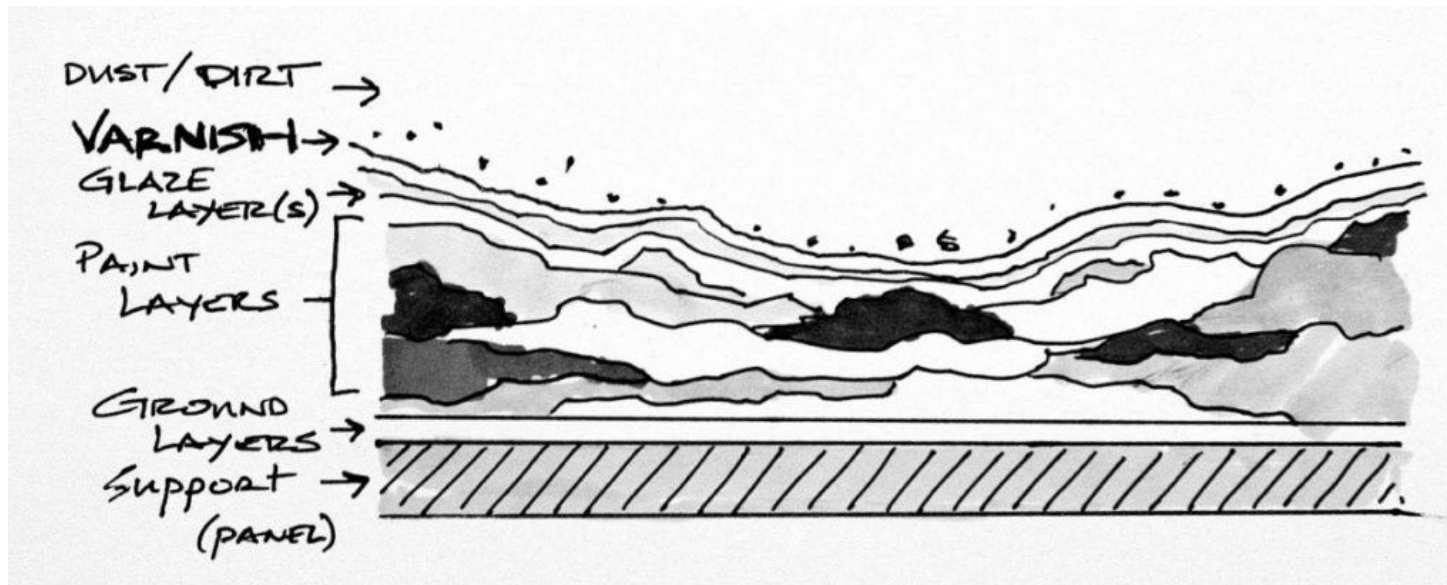
Commonwealth Greens, 2019
Casein on paper
7.5" x 12"

PRESENTATION: CASEIN ON PANEL



Wetland Sunset, 2021
Casein on panel
11" x 14"

VARNISHING CASEIN



GAMVAR PICTURE VARNISH



COLD WAX MEDIUM

Varnishing a casein painting should be an aesthetic choice. A varnish layer unifies the surface of the finished casein painting – with a gloss, satin, or matte surface quality. Consider a matte varnish (i.e. Cold Wax Medium) if you want to retain the natural matte surface of the casein. A gloss varnish (i.e. Gamvar) will saturate colors and deepen values and will create an appearance closer to an oil painting. A varnish layer also protects the paint layers from dust/dirt and is removable.

HELPFUL LINKS:

Richeson Casein Colors:

<https://www.richesonart.com/products/paints/richesoncasein/richesoncaseinmain.html>

Strathmore Watercolor Book:

<https://www.strathmoreartist.com/paint-watercolor/id-400-series-watercolor-hardbound-art-journal.html>

Ampersand Panels:

<https://ampersandart.com/>

New Wave Palettes – UGO Pochade Box:

<https://newwaveart.com/collections/u-go-plein-air-anywhere-pochade-boxes>

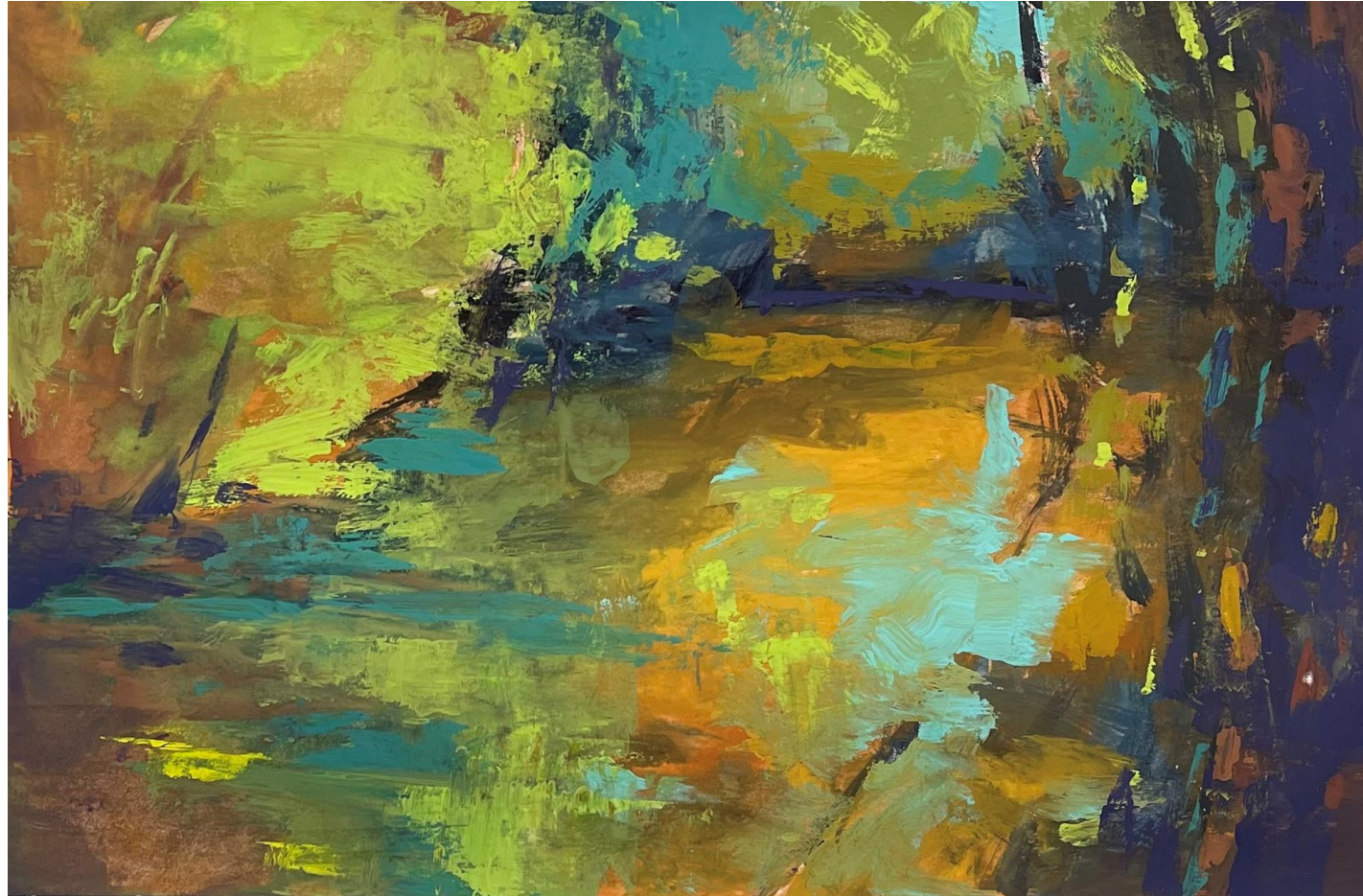


REFERENCE IMAGE:



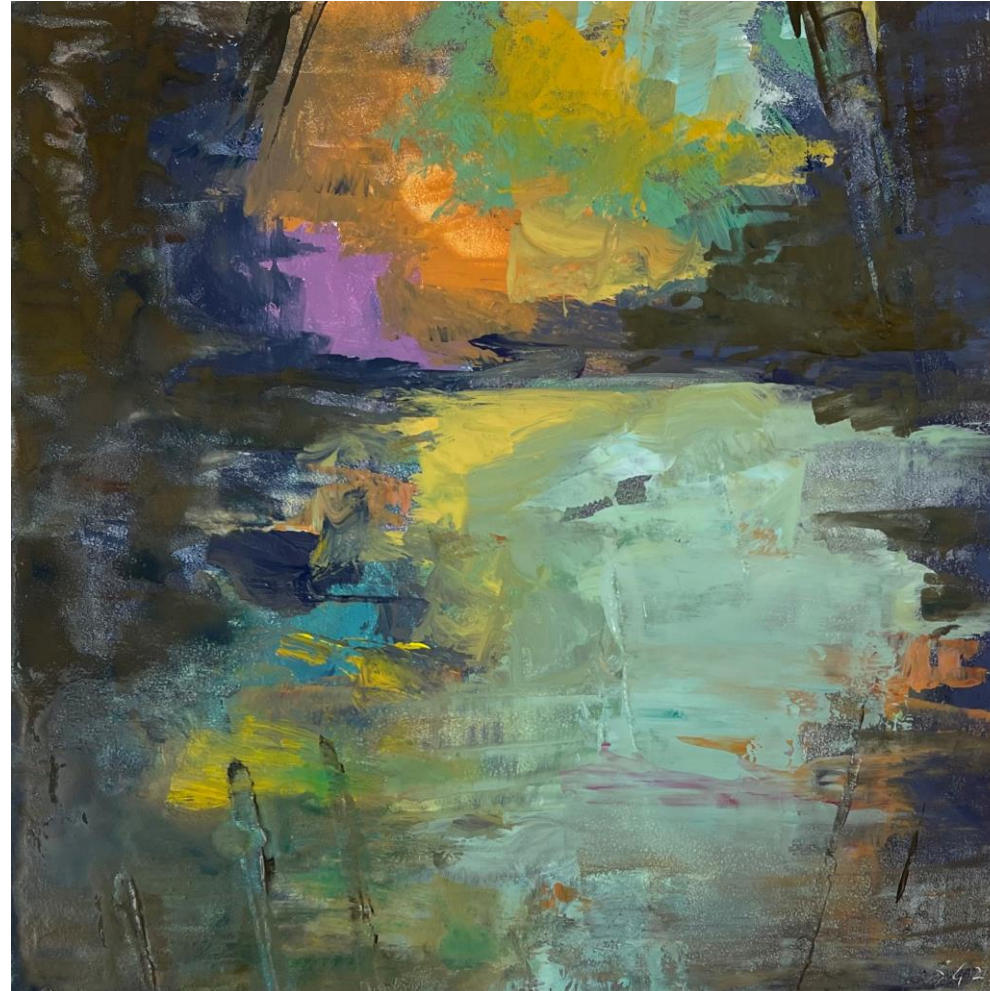
Creekbed, 2022
Casein in Plein Air Sketchbook
5.5" x 7.5"

DEMO PAINTING



Creekbed, 2022
Casein on Paper
6.5" x 10"

DEMO PAINTING



Creekbed, 2022
Casein on Gessoboard
6" x 6"