Conservation Colors for the 21st Century

Gamblin Conservation Colors are stable, reversible and suitable for use with a wide array of painting styles and techniques. Their innovative low molecular weight resin binder also makes Gamblin Conservation Colors safer to use.

Conservation scientists’ criteria for a new kind of conservation color included stability, safety of use, quality of manufacture, optical and working properties. Robert Gamblin has formulated artists’ materials since 1980. In 1994, he joined the research team after conservation scientists observed that making paints by hand-grinding resulted in a somewhat coarse, glossy paint which lacked the smooth paste consistency of commercially prepared paints. The collaborative goal was to develop a new kind of conservation color from lightfast, permanent materials with enhanced working and aging properties.

Conservation colors made from a low molecular weight resin binder have better optical properties and better handling properties than paints based on polymeric resin. Aldehyde resins are a more appropriate binder than some other low molecular weight resins because they are slightly polar and wet pigments more easily. The accelerated age testing was done at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. Once the binder was accepted, the team agreed that the new paints should be fairly lean and matte. Viscosity and sheen can be easily altered by adding additional binder: Galdehyde Resin.

Gamblin Artists Colors Co. produced four trial batches of paint to establish correct pigment/ratio binder for smooth brushing and easy reducibility with medium. Conservators in North America and England participated in testing. During the initial test phase the new Gamblin paints were used for retouching on over one hundred treatments from Trecento Italian to 20th century paintings. Gamblin Conservation Colors have proven useful for all techniques of inpainting including glazing. The paints have good covering power and little change in color when dry.

Technical papers available on our website: www.conservationcolors.com/papers.html

Qualities of Gamblin Conservation Colors

Stable Resin • Drawdowns have been aged 3000 hours in a weatherometer (equal to approximately 62 years of museum light exposure). The samples retained their solubility in mild solvents, showing that the resin is stable upon aging.

Fully saturated color • The high refractive index of the resin leads to colors as saturated as aged oil colors.

Low solvent requirements • Because the aldehyde resin is soluble in solvents of low polarity, conservators can greatly lower exposure to strong solvents while retouching paintings. Colors will redissolve in mild solvents to help protect the original work.

All colors light fast • Only pigments of highest lightfastness are used (including modern substitutes for Alizarin Crimson, Indian Yellow, and Brown Madder).

Excellent working properties • Robert Gamblin’s more than 30 years experience formulating artists’ materials has gone into the manufacture of these colors, so their fine working properties facilitate rather than hinder retouching.

Convenient size • All colors available in 15 ml jars.

Other Products and Raw Materials

On our web site you will find other materials used by the conservator:
• Wax/Resin fill materials
• Custom colors available, made with your special dry pigments, contact us for quote
• Resins
• Highest quality dry pigments
• Gamvar Picture Varnish: Kit containing Regal Rez and mineral spirits for making varnish

Ordering Information

A list of retail outlets, order forms, and current pricing are available on our web site:
www.conservationcolors.com

Or you may also request the information from us by phone:
Country Code: 01
Local Phone: (503) 235-1945
(8:30 am - 5:00 pm Pacific Time)
Local Fax: (503) 235-1946
Email: RGamblin@conservationcolors.com

Technical information, newsletters, list of retail outlets, and order forms may be found at: www.conservationcolors.com

Sole distributor:
Gamblin Artists Colors Co.
PO Box 15009
Portland, OR 97293
USA

Phone: 01 (503) 235-1945
Email: RGamblin@conservationcolors.com