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MEDIA RELEASE

WHAT'S IN A PIGMENT?

Pigment is what gives paint its colour. Unlike dye, pigment is not soluble in solvent and so must be ground and mixed to make the beautiful and unique colours we use in artist paint.

Artists have been using pigments to paint for millennia. We still have evidence of this on cave walls and in the tombs of ancient Egypt. Before the industrial revolution artists used all natural rock minerals to make paint, from simple ochres and siennas to more exotic lapis lazuli and malachite. Blacks were made from grinding pure carbon. They collected these from lamps or the charred remains of bones and vegetable matter.

In modern time we use pigments that are made by the precipitation of a range of chemicals. These are mostly the products of the petrochemical industry and it is their molecular structure which largely determines their stability and lightfastness. Those with strong bonds will be ASTM 1 or 2. Those with weak bond or long stranded structures will be ASTM 3 or 4. Some colours take just a few days to precipitate and others take many months. This time determines the price of the pigment and ultimately the series of the paint made from it. When precipitation is finished, the pigment is washed, dried and ground. The particle size of the finished product usually determines whether a pigment will be transparent or opaque.

At Matisse Derivan we use only the finest pigments to give you, the artist, the greatest possible enjoyment from your work.

For more information, visit the Matisse Derivan website: www.matisse.com.au or contact Matisse Derivan on (02) 9736 2022.

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