



Ensouling the World Through Color

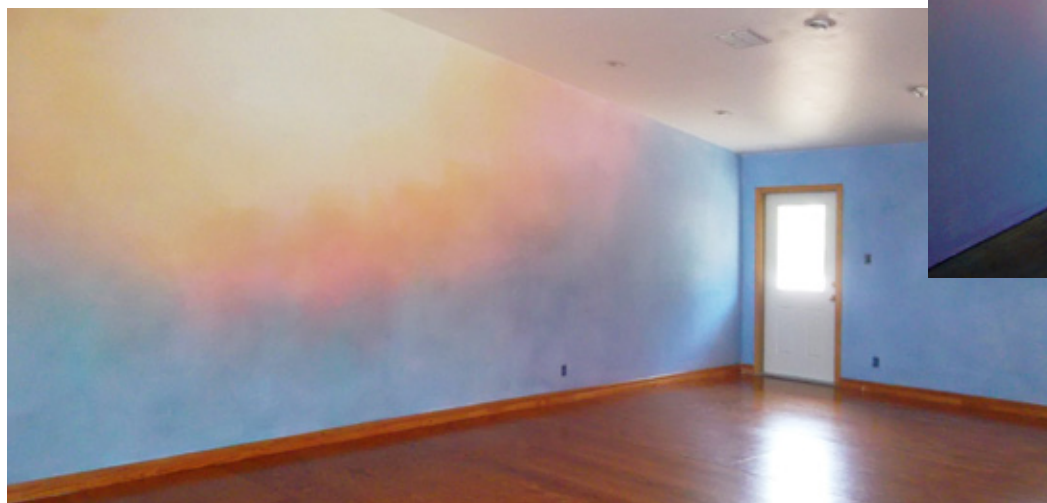
A Conversation with Lazurist CHARLES ANDRADE

Artist and master Lazurist Charles Andrade has spent more than half his life ensouling the world with color through Lazure painting, a unique European glazing finish that creates healing environments.

Andrade's initial training was in Anthroposophic art and art therapy, which he studied at the Tobias School for Art and Therapy in England.

There, he developed his colorist painting style and first learned how to Lazure. His artwork can be found in private collections in North America, Europe, and New Zealand. He lives in Colorado with his wife and two sons, who attend the Waldorf School on the Roaring Fork.

Andrade owns and operates Lazure Custom Wall Designs, a mural and decorative painting



business specializing in Lazure. Charles also teaches fine art classes, gives lectures, and offers painting and Lazure workshops worldwide. He is currently involved in a collaborative book writing project with his wife, Karyn, about the history and application of Lazure.

What is Lazure painting?

Rudolf Steiner created Lazure as a method of painting the ceiling cupolas of the first Goetheanum back in the early 1900s. Originally, the technique was developed using plant-based colors held in an organic binder, often a beeswax medium. This mix created a glaze that was then applied over a surface primed with a white milk casein paint.

Steiner's intent was to apply dozens of thin washes of color over the white surface to create

a translucent color space that in some ways mimicked stained glass illumination. Later, Lazure painting was used on the walls of Waldorf schools Steiner created. He stated that children should be surrounded by luminous flowing colors in hues that reflect the children's developmental stage from grade to grade.

While it is a decorative paint finish, Lazure is distinguished from other finishes because it does not rely on visual texture for spatial effect but rather on the atmospheric blushing of colors as they drift across the wall. As the layers are applied over a white surface, light moves through the translucent color and bounces back through the layers from the white surface beneath.

Very little actual pigment is used in the Lazure painting process. However, light is utilized as if it were a pigment, and this is at the core of what a

“LAZURE FULLY EXPLORES THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN LIGHT, COLOR, AND DARKNESS, REFLECTING THE LUMINOUS TRANSLUCENT QUALITY FOUND BOTH IN NATURE AND OUR INNER LIFE.

Lazure finish offers – color without form. Lazure painting relies on a conscious understanding of the relationship between human psychology and color, including how the two together can create living spaces that reflect the unique individuality of each client.

How did you first become interested in Lazure painting?

I first learned about Lazure at the Tobias School of Art and Therapy in England. It was part of the artistic foundation training in the first year. We were taught by British Lazurist Robert Lord, who instructed us in basic techniques and color theory. The school’s founder, Anne Stockton, thought that we should know how to create a therapeutic environment if we were to become art therapists.

In the subsequent years, it became a more significant part of my destiny path as more people began requesting it for their homes and in schools. Over time, I found myself teaching Lazure painting workshops all over the world, which crystallized my own appreciation of and interest in Lazure as a viable career path.

What kinds of spaces benefit from Lazure painting? Why might someone choose a Lazure finish for their home, office, classroom, etc.?

Homes, offices, places of worship, and hospitals, to mention a few, have all benefited from the subtle beauty that Lazure painting brings to interior environments. Some say that the atmospheric colors in this type of decorative finish have healing properties.

Where opaque paint absorbs light and captures color monochromatically, Lazure painting is applied in very thin veils of water-media color. This subtle interval of illuminated color offers a calming effect on the viewer. This aspect of Lazure takes time to appreciate as the eye must quietly rest on what it is seeing. Much like the undertone in a piece of music, it requires the listener to really pay attention to it.

Can you talk a bit about how you work with color?

The color theory behind Lazure painting works with the idea that color is born out of a dynamic relationship between light and darkness as





originally conceived of by Johanne Wolfgang von Goethe and further elucidated by Rudolf Steiner.

Deeper elaborations of Goethe and Steiner's color theories for artistic use have come from the artist and color therapist, Liane Collot D'Herbois, and her Emerald Foundation School of Therapeutic Painting in the Netherlands. The Collot training leads students to eventually perceive a more etheric sense of color, free from form and more spiritual in essence. It offers a healing approach to working with color and imagery artistically. I am most impressed with how it succinctly relates the human condition to the panorama of colors in their relationship to Steiner's idea of the threefold man.

This school of thought continues to offer a wealth of investigative inquiry to therapists, artists, and laypeople alike and has been the biggest influence on my artwork. That being said, I still research different color theories and ideas outside

of my base and find numerous applications that contribute to my broader understanding of color and the human experience. However, it is Collot's approach to creating imagery that I use when my Lazure painting goes into mural work.

Are certain colors better for certain kinds of spaces?

Color is one of the most important design principles when it comes to decorating an interior space. It sets the emotional tone and ambient mood for the activity that will take place there. Lazure fully explores the connections between light, color, and darkness, reflecting the luminous translucent quality found both in nature and our inner life.

Regarding specific colors as they pertain to interior design, I like to use Goethe's warmer colors on the color wheel for the more social parts of a home because they have been shown to stimulate blood flow, physical activity, conversation, and in some cases, appetite.



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Goethe's passive or cool colors are generally more suited for personal spaces — the bedrooms, library, study, or other spaces for reflective private time and inward contemplation. Kitchens can be a bouquet of colors, reflecting the multi-dimensional hues of the foods prepared in that space.

These are general guidelines, although my clients may have very different ideas for their interior spaces. I enjoy finding the right color tint, tone, or shade for each person I work with.

What influence has Lazure painting had on your work as a fine artist?

I discovered both Lazure painting and the Anthroposophic approach to watercolor veil painting while studying at the Tobias Art School. While the color theory behind both techniques links them together, Lazure painting does not explore the more complex aspects of color, value, and composition that a fine art painting needs.

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Lazure painting, in general, is meant to be a background enhancement to a room and not the focus, as a painting would be. However, in many ways, Lazure painting is a fine art technique masquerading as a decorative paint finish. By this, I mean that the potential for more artistic expression is unlimited, and this is how I often use a mural-esque application of the Lazure technique in a similar way as my watercolor veil paintings.

Steiner commissioned artists to work with the essence of their particular medium. For painters, that meant investigating the living quality of each color: the expansiveness of yellow, the cool contractive quality of blue, and the dynamic stillness of red. This process takes one out of the mere psychology of creating and into communication with the spiritual nature of their chosen medium, in my case - color. This has a very regenerative effect on the painter.

I see you have Lazure kits available for purchase on your website. Can you tell us about that

and how accessible Lazure painting might be for the DIY Lazure painter?

I created the DIY Lazure kits with my wife as an alternative to the weekend Lazure painting workshops that I teach. It offers the individual more flexibility in learning the technique by providing all the tools and guidance needed to create Lazured spaces in your own home and at your own pace.

We designed the kit to Lazure a single room with the materials included. The kits come with two European Lazure brushes, a set of custom high-quality artist colors, a detailed brochure on basic color theory, along with a 30-minute comprehensive instructional streaming video.

Additional Lazure brushes and colors can be purchased from our website for larger-scale projects. I also am available to answer specific questions for anyone who purchases the kit.

Charles Andrade is a Lazurist and fine artist living in Colorado. He is the owner and operator of Lazure Custom Wall Designs, and he offers classes, lectures, and workshops worldwide. For more information about Charles Andrade and/or Lazure, please visit: lazure.com.