

Congratulations on finding this video! You have found this video, because you have learned to ask better questions.

Objective:

The purpose of this video is to Demystify the mysterious Maroger medium by shedding the light of history. There will be videos following this one that will introduce you to methods that you should understand in before ever touching the Maroger medium.

Key Points

1. Introducing the key Players Where and how did it all begin?
2. Where did it all begin
3. It all Started With George Leslie Stout
4. The Monuments Men
5. Before Maroger there was Max Doerner
6. Fredrick Taubes
7. Jacques Maroger
8. What is the Maroger Medium
9. Let us examine paintings painted with Maroger
10. In a nutshell

1. Introducing the key Players

New York Armory Show	1913
Max Doerner	1921
George Leslie Stout	1932
The Monuments Men	1943
Fredrick Taubes	1943
Lance Mayer and Gay Myers	1945
Jacques Maroger	1948

2. Where and how did it all begin?

The book: American Painters on Technique: 1860-1945 By Lance Mayer, Gay Myers.
The topic of the book is how paintings were made. [1]
Beginning with chapter six Modernism and restoring the craft of modern painting 1910 to 1945

The turning point in the USA was the 1913 Armory show in New York City.
The show displayed many of the European modernist which sparked a controversy as to what is art.

3. Introducing George Leslie Stout: The father of Art Conservation

George Stout, who had helped begin a renaissance of sorts when he and colleagues at the Fogg Art Museum launched the periodical Technical Studies in the field of the Fine Arts in 1932, wrote (in a 1935 review of Max Doerner's The Materials of the Artist and Their Use in Painting):

A vast amount of knowledge now existed that was now coming forth. many authors contained innumerable recipes for artists to try out, and some painters seemed to want

to try them all.

He became a pioneer of scientific techniques in art restoration. Fascinated with the science behind the artistic process, he conducted in-depth laboratory research on color spectroscopy, paint composition, methods of authentication, and the influence of atmospheric conditions on works of art.

4. The Monuments Men

Stout was one of the first Monuments Men to go ashore at Normandy. As the Allies marched through France and Germany, he was near the front lines helping to rescue cultural treasures in places like Caen, Maastricht, and Aachen. His expert knowledge of safe transport for works of art was put to the test repeatedly in evacuations of repositories each time using improvised materials and unskilled labor.

Quoting Stout's Reflection of War: I have to admit that man's growth toward civilization looks slow and unsteady. At moments, whole nations seem to fall back, their people fret for deliverance from selfish fears. They pay homage to persons who have snatched power for themselves, all manner of tyrants, and people beg them for comfort and for peace. But when I look beyond the weak spots, I can notice those men who pursue knowledge for the common benefit, or labor for sound structures rather than for gain, or fight and die—not for praise or possessions but for the freedom of others. These are not strange or distant to men.

After the war he returned to his post at the Fogg Museum

5. Before Maroger there was Max Doerner

Max Doerner German artist and art theorist
The Materials of the Artist and Their Use in Painting first published in 1921
Doerner received his education at the Academy of Art in Munich and became a Professor.

The Doerner Institute was founded in 1937 Munich as a State Testing and Research Institute for Color Technology

6. Fredric Taubes

Was Polish born and was vacationing in Czechoslovakia with his family at the outbreak of WW1. He moved to Vienna, where Taubes studied at the Academy. After the war Taubes moved to Munich to study under Doerner and Franz von Stuck. After a year at the Academy in Munich he enrolled at the Bauhaus in Weimar, where he studied under Johannes Itten on Color Theory.

Taubes sailed to America in 1930. He became a successful society portraitist, creating likenesses of such monied and influential personalities as Claire Booth Luce, Baron von Romberg and Mrs. William Randolph Hearst.

Taubes' fame peaked in the mid-1940s, when his groundbreaking scientific research, followed by the appearance of several successful books, greatly increased his prestige. He spent 1942 as the Carnegie visiting professor of art and resident painter at the University of Illinois in Urbana, where he discovered and approximated the painting media used in 14th and 15th century Flemish paintings, world-renowned for their mysterious durability.

He was a regular contributor to the American Artist Magazine with the Taubes page. He published over 40 books on Oil Painting.

6. Jacques Maroger

Maroger was introduced as a young man to Louis Anquetin in 1920, who had great promise as a painter but felt they had lost something and began his studies into the lost techniques of painting.

He began his research under Edmund Bayle, Director of the laboratories de l'identité Judiciaire, Paris. There he became Bayel's expert on Antique fragments. They explored x-rays, photographs, and ultra violet light.

Maroger offers insights from the Antique authors such as: Theophilus and De Diversis Artibus, J.L.F. Mérimée's De la Peinture à l'Huile published 1830. Théodore de Mayerne, de Mayerne manuscript. Between 1620 and 1646 based on conversations with painters. The manuscript includes contributions from Rubens, van Dyck, Mytens, Paul van Somer, and Cornelius Johnson.

Francisco Pacheco was also known as the Vasari of Seville. He wrote a treatise on Painting Arte de la pintura. And many more too, for brevity's sake I will keep the list short.

Jacques Maroger was a painter and the technical director of the Louvre Museum's laboratory in Paris. He devoted his life to understanding the oil-based media of the Old Masters. He emigrated to the United States in 1939 and became an influential teacher at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. He became a guest lecturer at Parsons in New York, with his most notable student was Frank Mason. Frank Mason's most notable student was David Leffel.

7. What is the Maroger Medium

Through a lifetime of research Maroger presents six formulas corresponding to various techniques in painting.

These six mediums along with their individual techniques can be reduced down to two qualities, durability and brightness of paint. For the purpose of this video series, and only going to focus on one medium and that is the Rubens formula. That formula is the culmination of all the other formulas, which has its own variations of walnut oil and pine resin, and the siccatives are varied as well.

One of the most important effects of the quality of suppleness and pliability possessed by all great painting mediums from Van Eyck to Rubens was the freedom they allowed the artist in his drawing.

The Velatura helps in two ways. First the Sfumato technique, in that it helps to soften the shadow transitions. Second, by lightening the painting it helps bring the brightness of color back!

8. Let us examine Paintings to see how this medium works.

Maroger points out, that no matter how opaque your paint is, the brightness of the canvas will show through and brighten the paint.

From transparent to opaque the painting retains their brilliance from beginning to end. Note that especially in the shadows how the dark paint is the correct value does not dull!

Maroger talks about how important it is not to keep adding to the painting continuously. That is important to keep the painting fresh from start to finish.

9. How I came to know about Maroger

You might say I was brought up with it in my home from my youngest days. My dad had moved to LA on a large mural commission when he met Fredric Taubes. Taubes could not drive, so my dad drove him around for a year. My dad became his unwitting student. Taubes was one of the many artist that responded from Stout's call for artist to bring forth their individual knowledge and contribute to the world of art. As a young man I recall my father making the Ruben's Maroger medium. I do recall he explaining the properties of the medium to me. It was Taubes who was one of my dad's early influences in teaching him of the processes of high renaissance painting techniques.

10. In a nutshell

Results are what matters! Especially with Rubens, Maroger points out how Rubens paintings come to life with a bright ground.

Maroger medium is not going to cure painting ills, what it will do is help the well trained artist be able to hit those notes of color and virtuosity that otherwise not be able to hit. Fundamental to his approach is a stable and bright surface to paint, facile technique, and virtuosity. The medium is not magic in a tube, it will not cure bad painting.

[1] [American Painters on Technique: 1860-1945](#) By Lance Mayer, Gay Myers

[1]

Chapter 6

THE NEW YORK ARMORY SHOW of 1913, which brought European modernist paintings to America for the first time, provoked a crisis for many American painters. Americans responded to European modernism in very different ways: some embraced it, while others ignored or opposed these ideas.' Many painters working during the period from 1910 to 1945 had little or nothing to say about their techniques and were happy to buy oil paint in artists' supply stores and use it in conventional ways. But significant numbers of artists, including both modernists and more conservative painters, began to make technical innovations and experiments, often going so far as to mix their own grounds and make their own paints. Observers commented on this at the time; Hilaire Hiler, the American author of several books and articles about technique, wrote in 1934: "There is a real renaissance of technique going on today. The experience of the nineteenth century amply showed the disasters which might be expected when fundamental mechanical principles are ignored....the pendulum is now, technically speaking, swinging back."

George Stout, who had helped begin a renaissance of sorts when he and colleagues at the Fogg Art Museum launched the periodical *Technical Studies* in the field of the Fine Arts in 1932, wrote (in a 1935 review of Max Doerner's *The Materials of the Artist and Their Use in Painting*): "Surely the atmosphere of studios, galleries, and museums contains a much more vigorous interest in these materials and in the ways of combining them than one was able to notice twenty or even ten years ago."

For some painters, this new fascination with technique took the form of reviving methods from the past, and, in fact, in many ways this period began to resemble the era of the American "experimentalists" a hundred years earlier. As in the first half of the nineteenth century, the experiments of twentieth-century artists did not always work out as they planned, and the use of unusual materials sometimes had unforeseen consequences. There were differences, however. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, painters had focused on recovering the supposedly lost techniques of a short list of earlier artists, above all Titian and other sixteenth-century Venetian painters. By the twentieth century, artists were also seeking the secrets of earlier Italian and Northern European painters who would have been dismissed as primitives by previous experimenters. And some twentieth-century painters did not look back to the past at all; modernism put a premium on innovation, and its followers sought novel techniques that would allow them to take painting in entirely new directions.

Another difference between the first part of the twentieth century and previous periods was that a vast amount of published information now existed. Books and articles by Doerner, Hiler, Maxwell Armfield, Jacques Blockx, Martin Fischer, A.P. Laurie, Jacques Maroger, Ralph Mayer, Frederic Taubes, Daniel V. Thompson, Maximilian Toch, Rupert Turnbull, Vaclav Vytlacil, and many others contained innumerable recipes for artists to try out, and some painters seemed to want to try them all. (The scholarly periodical *Technical Studies* marked the beginning of modern conservation studies in America, but this journal focused almost exclusively on non-American art, and as far as we can tell went unnoticed by American painters.) Artists' manuscript notebooks, as well as letters in which artists shared recipes, which had nearly disappeared between 1860 and 1910, reappeared in the early twentieth century. In fact, printed and manuscript sources are so voluminous during this period that we can only summarize them briefly and refer readers to the books and manuscripts themselves.