

Grey Matters

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After writing this note, and then immediately reading the title above, I was suddenly struck with the thought that many of us would probably associate grey with getting old, going past one's prime, or having too many sleepless nights waiting for our kids to come back home from an unsupervised party! I must apologize if I led you down that path. In truth, this is not about getting older, or about our valued older artist members, nor is it an opinion piece on why one should not colour their hair as they age. My wife, who currently sports a full head of white hair, would appreciate such a viewpoint - but that is not what I wish to discuss today! In all

seriousness, I wish to give you an update on a new Jack Richeson product, called **Grey Matters**. It includes a new brush line that sports non-reflective hair, non-reflective ferrule and a non-reflective handle. The brushes, that come in all shapes and sizes are for use in Oil, Acrylic and/or for watercolour paintings. I have tried them over the past month and the brushes perform well with washes, and with fine detail work. The brushes are flexible in that they can be used with a host of media which helps unclutter your workspace on the day you feel ready to paint your next masterpiece!

Though the quality of these professional grade brushes rival other offerings on the market, the product line is built on the simple, yet often overlooked concept, that nothing should stand between the artist and the canvas. The non-reflective metals utilized in the construction of the brush, along with the neutral grey colours of the stem and hairs of the brush itself help the artist to focus on the painting and not be distracted by studio lights that happen to reflect off of the brush. Even outdoors, it can suppress the glint of sunlight that hits your brush then your eye when you are painting plein air. These brushes seem to 'fade away' in one's hand and the connection between your mind, hand and canvas seems strengthened without these visible distractions. What more could an artist ask for?

However, don't take my word for it...read the comments made by Betsy Dillard Stroud in a recent *Artist Magazine* article where she discusses brushes as well as this specific line of brushes. It can be found on line at http://www.richesonart.com/pdfs/RoadTest_GM.pdf

These brushes can be purchased at most art supply stores or if you can't find stock in Canada, they can be shipped from art supply houses in the U.S. During this continued pandemic, local inventories and shipments can vary greatly.

In general, we recommend that if the opportunity arises, you consider giving this line a *test drive* and see if it works for you.

In the coming months we hope to feature some other Richeson company products for three reasons. Firstly, Jack Richeson and family own and run the company and they understand the artist mentality. They are continually updating product lines. They are good people and a pleasure to deal with in my opinion. Secondly, the products they sell are of good quality. This brush line is artist grade and consistent. Thirdly, Richeson has supported our Canadian art groups in the past despite being U.S. based. For instance, I have been able to obtain donated product to be used as awards for past *CSPWC* shows, for the *COAA* art group and for *the Colour and Form Society (CFS)*. This year, the Richeson has donated a basket of goods for *CFS's* upcoming shows and have not asked anything in return. We have placed a link to their website on our *CFS* website and I decided to review this product for our artists benefit but there is no payment from the Richeson Group and no strings attached.

Once again, the Richeson group are about fine art, about supporting working artists and they currently work with many of the well-known artists in the U.S. where they are based. Though they primarily supply art stores with their product (they are not in competition with Curry's or De Serres, Cheap Joe's or Jerry's Artarama etc. in fact they are part of their supply chain.

I would love to be able to say to you that this is an objective point of view; it can never be so as it represents one person's opinion or experience. The real test is in the way it performs in **your** hand and no one else's. That all-important relationship between the artist and the materials cannot be trifled with. We simply would urge you to try the Richeson product lines when you are back in the store replenishing the supplies you need to create your next work of art. Happy painting everyone!

(This article represents the experience and thoughts of the writer and not on behalf of the CFS, SCA or CSPWC.)