

Pointillism

Pointillism in Art

Pointillism is painting using small dots. Different colors of dots are mixed to create the picture. This art technique was developed by Georges Seurat and Paul Signac in 1886. The most famous pointillism painting is *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte*, which you can see above. When you first look at this painting, can you see the dots? Probably not too much with the image as small as it is. However, if you zoom in, you can see the dots more, as you can see in the image below. What do you see in this picture? Does it surprise you to



A Sunday on La Grande Jatte, Georges Seurat,
Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

see a monkey in the scene? In the 1880s, wealthier people often kept monkeys as pets.

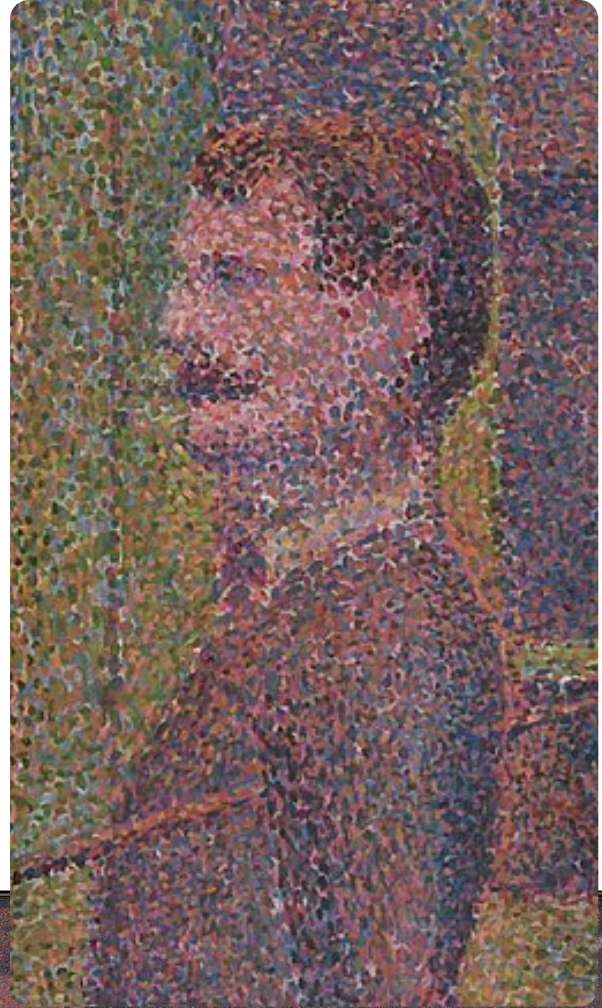
Pointillism Characteristics:

- Tiny dots
- At least 2 colors, not blended together
- Contrasting colors for optical illusions

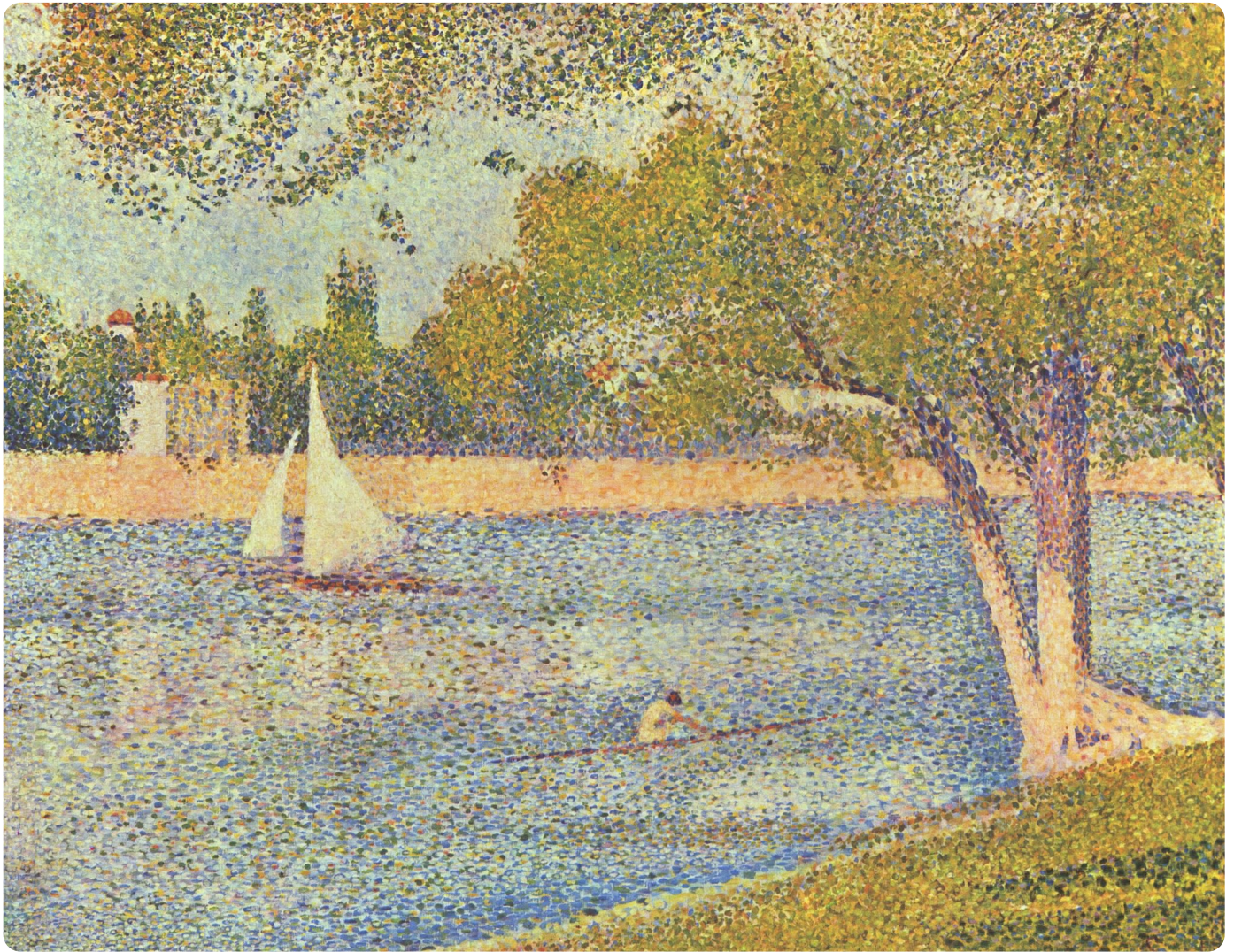


In pointillism the idea is to create a picture by thinking ahead about colors and using specific colors to create the illusion that they blend. For example, to create grass, you could use blue and yellow dots. From a distance, the dots appear to be green because the eye blends the blue and yellow together. Look at the examples of pointillism on this page and on the following pages.

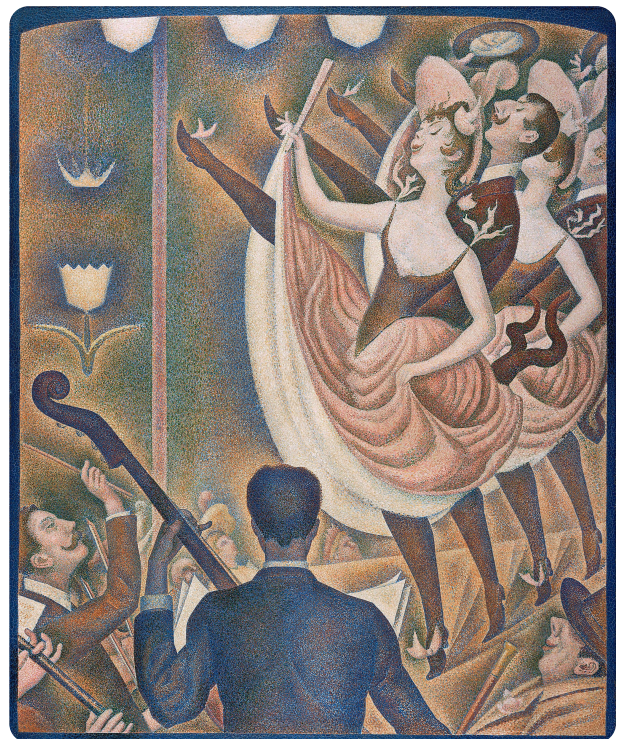
What is happening in the painting below? It is a circus parade. What colors do you see? Now look at the close up painting of the man that is on the right. What colors do you see? Find the man in the original painting below. Do any of the colors surprise you?



Parade de Cirque, Georges Seurat, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



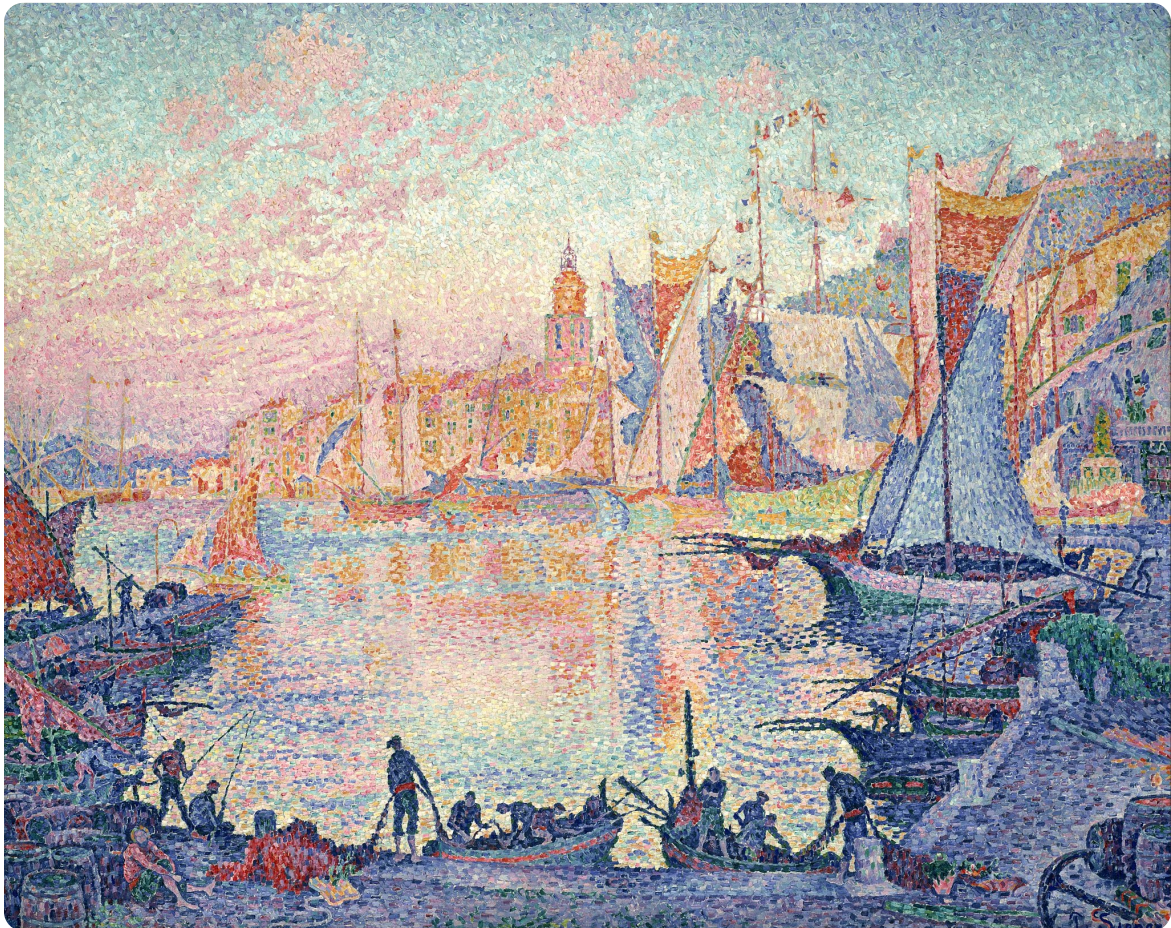
The Seine at La Grande, Georges Seurat, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



Le Cirque and Le Chahut, Georges Seurat, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



Cassis, Cap Lombard, Opus 196, and The Port of Saint-Tropez by Paul Signac, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



Palouse Hills Pointillism Acrylic Art

Try your own pointillism painting based on the Palouse Hills.

Materials:

- 5x7 Sheet of mixed media paper
- Qtips (at least 5 per child)
- Acrylic paints: yellow, blue, brown (additional colors optional)
- Paper plate to put paint on
- Thin black sharpie marker
- Tractor cut out

The Palouse Hills

Do you see the dots in the painting on the right? That is what makes it pointillism style. There are at least two colors in each painted section.

If you want to paint a landscape scene that you see, first limit the scope of the scene. One way to do this is to take a picture, like the photo below of the Palouse Hills.

Use a pencil to draw basic lines, and then use basic colors to paint what you see. It does not need to be exact, and you can even add in things that you do not see. Notice that the painting on the right did not include the windmills, fence, or building that you can see in the photo. The lines of the hills are also very basic. In addition, the painting has a sun and blue sky, while the photo has an overcast sky.



Instructions:

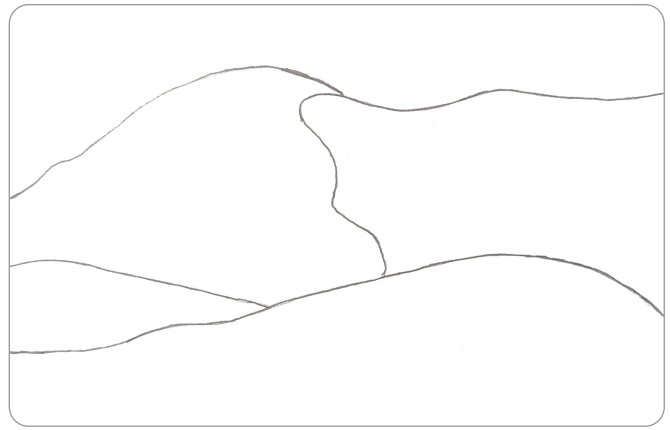
1) Trace the hills pattern on your 5 x 7 sheet of mixed media paper. Alternatively, you can look at the pattern or photo on the previous page to draw the basic lines.

2) Put dabs of acrylic paint on a paper plate or paint palette. Dip the end of a Qtip in paint and dot a section of your paper with that color. Do the same with each section. Use a clean Qtip for each new color so that you do not mix the colors.

3) When you are finished, let it dry. If desired, go over the pencil lines with a thin black sharpie marker to highlight the sections. Finally, glue on the tractor cutout.

A Note About Colors

True pointillism uses at least two colors. Notice the paintings to the right. The first uses dots of color, but it only uses one color per section, so it isn't truly pointillism. The second painting uses at least two colors per section. Note that the "green" field in the second painting actually didn't use any green at all. It was done using dots of blue and yellow. The yellow fields were dots of light and dark yellow. For the brown fields, one field was a solid color, but the other was rows of dark and light brown. The two different types of fields gives the illusion that one is farther away



than the other. The second painting has a sun that was made by using yellow, red, and orange dots. The sky in the second painting is mostly blue, but there are also purple dots.





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Student Examples

