

**TRANSPARENCY
PAINTING
ON LINEN**

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Transparency Painting on Linen by W. Williams

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W. WILLIAMS

**TRANSPARENCY
PAINTING
ON LINEN**



TRANSPARENCY PAINTING

ON LINEN:

FOR DECORATIVE PURPOSES, PANORAMIC AND DIORAMIC EFFECTS,
ORNAMENTAL BLINDS, &c.,
WITH INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE LINEN, THE
COMBINATION AND TRANSFER OF ORNAMENTAL DESIGNS,
COMBINED SURFACES, &c.

BY W. WILLIAMS.

With Illustrations by Charles Sibley, Engraved by Dalziel.



Arts probat artificem.

LONDON:

WINSOR AND NEWTON, 38, RATHBONE PLACE,

Artists' Colour Makers, by Special Appointment, to Her Majesty,
and to R. R. Prince Albert.

1855.

170. m. 82.

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P R E F A C E.



FROM the ordinary examples of the Art commonly known as "Transparency Painting," no accurate estimate can be formed of the perfection to which this mode of representation may be carried. Little more is generally known of it than may have been seen, from time to time in the celebrations of royal birth-days ; or, on signal occasions of popular rejoicing. But these examples have all, hitherto, been of the humblest order. With, however, any degree of taste and artistic knowledge, even these might have been made interesting, without any approach to the enchanting effects which are produced in transparent pictures now known under other names.

In every branch of Art, correct drawing and judicious effect are indispensable ; and since educated artists have directed their attention to Transparency Painting, it has been raised to high consideration as a Fine Art. The lighting of large surfaces by gas is now so easily effected,

that there is no reason why transparencies should not assume the dimensions of very large historical pictures, aspiring to the best qualities of high Art. By means of transparent pictures, the most perfect illusions have been effected. In verification of this, we need only instance the marvellous effects formerly exhibited at the Diorama in the Regent's Park; although it is not to be expected that the student who may acquire his first knowledge of the practice of Dioramic painting from this little Treatise should attempt anything on an enlarged scale until after mature experience.

The principles of the Art are few and simple, and they are here laid down according to the best methods of practice, and all that can be said in commending them to the student, is to counsel, at the same time, the study of drawing and effect, as therein lies the truth of all Art. If one transparency be better than another, it will be found that—as in every other branch of Art there is no secret—application is the source of the superior excellence.

H. M.

TRANSPARENCY PAINTING

ON

LINEN.

THE PREPARATION OF THE LINEN.

THE material upon which transparencies are painted, is muslin of a fine and even texture; and this, like most other surfaces intended to receive colour, must undergo the preparation peculiar to the kind of painting for which it is intended. Muslin, for a transparency, before being worked upon, must be strained and sized.

The straining frame is formed of two upright flat deal bars, having in the ends long mortice holes, in which the tenons of two cross-bars slide. Along the front inner edge of each bar, a strip of girt webbing is fastened; and to this the muslin is sewn slightly, but in a manner sufficiently secure to allow of its being tightly strained.

The frame being closed, that is, the bars being brought together as close as the tenons and mortices will allow, the

edges of the muslin are sewn all round to the girt webbing ; and, in order to extend the muslin, the frame must be drawn out so as sufficiently to tighten the cloth. The frame is kept at this degree of tension by wire pins, which pass through the ends.

Being thus properly stretched, the muslin is ready for sizing.

The size usually employed, is that known as gilders', or clear size, which, if good, is preferable to any other. It is prepared from parchment cuttings, and is to be procured at a trifling cost, at shops where gilders' materials are sold.

An excellent size is made from isinglass, which is most valuable where extreme purity of colour is necessary. The fine colourless gelatine, now very commonly sold, when dissolved and diluted to a proper strength, yields, also, a size well adapted for the preparation of muslin.

In sizing the cloth, great care must be exercised, in order that every part of the surface be covered ; for if any part of the muslin remain unsized, the colour will then be absorbed by the fabric, and damage the work, by staining the cloth.

When the first coating of size is dry, it will be found that the muslin has slackened, and hangs loosely in the frame. It will, therefore, be necessary to extend the frame, so as again to tighten the muslin. A second coat of size must be applied, and when this is dry, the muslin must be again extended as before.