Scratchmade Notes on Schmincke Watercolors

These notes compliment my full review of Schmincke Horadam watercolors located here & are simply my opinions about the Schmincke colors that I tested. Listed in the order that they are in my palette, left to right, top to bottom.

229 Naples Yellow (PW6/PY53/PBr24)
A very opaque light yellow that is a triblend of pigments. Warm, creamy, but this many pigments, especially when blended with white, are usually asking for trouble on a page.

205 Rutile Yellow (PY53)
A rather dull, opaque, cool, greenish light yellow. Rather flat looking on a page.

216 Pure Yellow (PY154)
Benzi/Azo yellow. Very beautiful, warm yellow. A great pick for a palette!

222 Yellow Orange (PY153)
Schmincke's catalog says this color is comprised of PY110. When I received it, it is actually PY153. I was very disappointed because I love PY110. PY153 isn't as soft and is more orange than PY110, but besides a bit of haloing on budget papers, it worked fine.

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217 Quin Gold Hue (PY150/PR101)
Granulates! Looks like an electric quin gold which is a bit much for an earth, but I'm not a huge quin gold fan anyway. 657 Transparent Ochre (below) is very similar in color without the garish yellowish undertone.

657 Transparent Ochre (PY42)
Weird, icky, grainy consistency and doesn't rewet easily, but I like the color. Once it is sufficiently moistened, it paints well and mixes nicely. However, it does need a fair amount of spritzing first and it shrunk a lot in the pan while drying.

653 Transparent Sienna (PR101)
Initial swatch painted out rather weak but becomes richer as it warms up and becomes sufficiently moistened. However, this PR101 explodes on the page and I have a hard time controlling it. Constant blossoming! Probably a result of a finer milling to make this version of PR101 highly transparent. I think Schmincke maybe went a tad overboard with it.

672 Mahogany Brown (PBr33)
Flat and opaque in masstone but beautiful color and granulation when diluted. Originally, I didn’t care for this color but constantly found myself reaching for it when painting. A beautifully rich, reddish brown that I slowly grew to love!

665 Green Umber (PBr7)
Schmincke describes this color as greenish brown. I think I have a sharp eye for color and see very little to no green in this PBr7. Regardless, I like the color but this PBr7 paints out rather weak, especially compared to brands that I am accustomed to using. However, I can make it work and could possibly acclimate to it if given enough time, but I'd rather not.

214 Chromium Orange (PO62)
Benzi/Azo Orange. I'm not an orange pigment person but this color is pretty. However, it's hard for me to find a place in my palette for a color that I can mix in a split second. Unless you really need a light orange, I think Saturn Red (below) is much richer and a better choice.

359 Saturn Red (PO64)
So now there are two Benzi oranges on the market: PO62 (above) and PO64 (this one). [Note: See this website's comments on the two pigments.] This is a gorgeously deep but bright orange. I think this orange is still a bit too bright and bold for any natural landscape, but some painters may find it useful.

341 Geranium Red (PR242)
Very pretty orange-red—the color is exceptionally beautiful—but performance problems. Binders are separating on all papers that I tried and are causing whitening and cloudiness. Avoid this one!
363 Scarlet Red (PR254)
Pyrrhol. Very pretty and at first glance seems rather transparent for a Pyrrhol, which I like. My favorite all-around red and a very affordable pigment, so here in the States, I'm not willing to pay the high price for a Schmincke PR254... no matter how much I like it.

344 Perylene Dk Red (PR178)
Nice cool red. Paints out very transparent so much so that it reminds me of a cool Quin Red. I actually like this one very much—much better than the Daniel Smith version!

353 Permanent Carmine (PV19)
Not a typical carmine color. Soft, warm quin rose and absolutely gorgeous! This has turned out to be one of my favorite Schmincke colors. It has lovely depth that I've not seen in many PV19s. If I were to add Schmincke to my permanent palette, this color would make the cut!

367 Purple Magenta (PR122)
Absolutely gross solo color—nearly neon. If it's any consolation, does calm slightly as it dries. Try in mixes maybe with blue, but otherwise, I'd skip it.

370 Potter’s Pink (PR233)
Highly granulating with large drying shift on some papers. Color becomes lost when it's greatly diluted. Not a color I would ever use, but the performance seems fine.

371 Perylene Violet (PV29)
This Schmincke color is love at first sight. Very similar to American Journey’s Raw Umber Violet which is my signature color, but PV29 is a tad cooler. I did notice that PV29 undergoes a fairly signifcant drying shift which can be a bit of a pain (you'll have to continue to add it in several layers to make it stand out in a final painting) but the color is just as beautiful when it dries.

481 Cerulean Blue Hue (PW4/PB15:3)
What's the point? Just use Cerulean. Like white tends to do, the PW4 sometimes separates out of this one and appears cloudy.

483 Cobalt Azure (PB35)
Cerulean - see my Cerulean feature post for more on this one

487 Cobalt Light (PB28)
Pretty pretty cobalt with nice granulation!

488 Cobalt Deep (PB74)
Rather hard to rewet. Looks very similar to a French Ultramarine but maybe a bit less red. Highly granulating. Shrank in the pan while drying.
477 Phthalo Sapphire (PB15:6)
A soft Schmincke version of Phthalo Blue Red Shade. Flows wonderfully well but has a strong tendency to blossom. Color softens as it dries, and I absolutely love this one! The only Schmincke color that stayed tacky in my palette (could have been because I used it nonstop), which did cause a bit of a problem until I moved it around. An all around excellent blue pick for a palette!

493 French Ultramarine (PB29)
Red/purplish ultramarine. Has crazy granulation which is typical of most French Ultras. It’s softer in color than Ultramarine Finest (below).

494 Ultramarine Finest (PB29)
More blue in this one than French Ultra along with less granulation and more movement. The color looks like what I consider a traditional ultramarine blue.

482 Delft Blue (PB60)
Reddish Indie blue and warmer than 498 Dark Blue (below). See my Indanthrone feature post for more on this one.

498 Dark Blue (PB60)
Gorgeous denim colored indie and cooler than 482 Delft Blue (above). My personal pick for a Schmincke Indanthrone Blue; see my feature post for more on this one.

524 May Green (PY151/PG7)
A rather opaque light, spring green but it seems to dilute well. Not a great mixer unless used with other opaques.

530 Sap Green (PY153/PG7)
Very pretty, warm, bright green. Performs well and is pretty much a standard “sap” color.

513 Viridian (PG18)
I don’t have a lot of experience with Viridian but this one seems rather typical to me. A soft blue green color with strong granulation. Rather gritty, but hey, it’s Viridian.

533 Cobalt Green Dark (PG26)
Very smooth, cool cobalt green with nice granulation.

515 Olive Green (PB15/PG8)
Gorgeous but limited lightfastness. Rather surprised that Schmincke still has PG8 on the market. Not happy with that aspect so I will only use this one when sketching. Schmincke also offers 534 Permanent Olive Green that has better lightfast ratings—wish I had seen that one before purchasing this one!

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784 Perylene Green (PBk31)
Where have you been all my life? Excellent standalone color AND in mixes! Gorgeous dilution and flow. Now a staple color in my palette albeit in a different brand, because I still struggle with those Schmincke hard edges.

789 Hematite Black (PG17)
Very pretty soft gray/black—actually a green—with lovely (aka slight) granulation.

782 Neutral Tint (PR122/PB60/PBk7)
A rather rosy, purplish gray/neutral that is absolutely gorgeous, but the triad mix has me a bit worried. I wouldn’t try this in mixes but it paints well on a page.