



Salvador Dalí *Forgotten Horizon* 1936

- **Patricia Smithen is Conservator of Modern and Contemporary Paintings at Tate. She has just completed a study of the paintings by Salvador Dalí in the Tate Collection and is contributing to a research project on Tate's Surrealist paintings.**

This tiny picture shows how Salvador Dalí made very _____ use of traditional artists materials, such as oil paint and resin - in this case on a smooth _____ panel. "Dalí thought he was a wonderful painter! He thought he was probably the best painter of his generation! And he wanted paintings that would survive the test of time - he really wanted the world to benefit! And in some sense he actually deserves his self-congratulations. He was a wonderful technician; beautifully applied paint, really _____. What he's done on this little painting is really typical of his work - and he did a whole series of these small panels. This one is on a _____ panel which was machined very smooth and flat and then he applied the background paint. Essentially what he's doing is creating a setting to place his figures in. And what he wanted was a very very smooth finish - he said that you could not have a _____ finish for these background surfaces, for the under-painting as he called it. So once Dalí's set the stage by creating this background, this lovely beach scene at Rosas, what he does then is he lays in the figures. And in this case we sort of have these four elements, and they're painted in different ways, almost. We've got the figure group of the three erotic ballerinas in the front left corner. The source image for these is probably a postcard, the postcard's been lost but Dalí actually had a collection of postcards and there are very similar images throughout this collection. And in this case we think he's actually directly _____ the image from the postcard to the surface of the painting. When you look at the image under magnification you can actually see the under-drawing - it's very _____ and you can see the outlines of these images. And they're very specific: not only does he do the outlines of the dancers, a lot of the detail in the skirts is all outlined, very specific and obviously directly from a source. This is in real contrast to what's happening with the other figures. There's this figure in the centre of the painting - which is supposed to be his cousin Carolinetta - and there's no under-drawing at all on this figure. For me I think the difference is because the dancers are from a direct source whereas the figure of his cousin is from his imagination. And what he's done is take a very very liquid paint with a very fine _____ and laid the paint down directly on to the surface. And in this sense he is a wonderful painter. There is no margin of error when he lays down paint in this way and he's made no errors at all. There's not a single correction in any of the images on this painting. He knows exactly what he's going to do, he does it with great confidence, and he lays down this lovely liquid paint which just flows onto the surface and creates this figure. One of the ways he's able to achieve this flow of paint is he uses a _____ oil paint that's mixed with a resin. Now resin is a material, a natural material that exudes from trees - and examples of it would be copal or _____ and dammar. Dalí tended to use mainly mastic but he was also a huge fan of amber. This painting is in such perfect condition that we're unable to take any samples to confirm exactly what he used in this painting but I suspect it is an amber resin that he's used to mix in with his paint to create this very smooth-flowing material that could just be laid down with the _____ of a brush hair."



Turner *Speed, steam and rain*, 1844



Magritte, *Les amants*, 1928



Sorolla, *Niños en la playa*, 1916

Below there is a list of the most used adjectives to describe art. Read them and look in a dictionary for the ones you are not sure the meaning. Can you try to describe these pictures above using some of them? Do you agree in which ones to use?

abstract
aesthetically pleasing
appealing
artistic
astonishing
authentic
awe-inspiring
balanced
beautiful
bold
brilliant
candid
classic
colorful
complex
creative
daring
dazzling
decorative
deeply thoughtful
delicate
disruptive
dreamlike
dynamic
eclectic
emotionally charged
energetic
engaging
engrossing
enigmatic
evocative

fascinating
fresh
gorgeous
graceful
imaginative
impassioned
inspirational
intense
intensive
interesting
labyrinthine
layered
lifelike
luminous
mature
meandering
mosaic-like
moving
mysterious
mystical
original
peaceful
profound
provoking
pure
radiant
realistic
refined
refreshing
revealing
romantic

saturated
sensual
serene
simple
skilled
soft
spiritual
stimulating
studied
stunning
sublime
surreal
symbolic
talented
tasteful
textile
thought-provoking
timeless
touching
traditional
tranquil
unconventional
unexpected
unforgettable
unique
unpredictable
varied
visionary
visual
visually stimulating

Key for the gap fill

Skilled

Wooden

Gorgeous

Mahogany

fine enough

transferred

granular

brush

linseed

mastic

wisp