

Suppliers and Useful Links

This is not a comprehensive list of possible suppliers, but some that I use regularly or know of personally. It is mainly confined to the UK, as that is where I am currently based. I shop on line wherever possible, to save both time and money. If you are a 'touch and feel' kind of shopper, there are specialist suppliers (mainly in London) which have a high street premises as well as a postal operation. Normal caveats apply – shop around for a price and product which suits you.

True gesso boards:-

Both these suppliers will post to you and their boards are a great deal less expensive than anything offered in the art shops.

www.gessoboards.co.uk: boards made with MDF to various standard sizes, variations on request.

Demitrius Nikolas-Fanourakis : boards made with high grade birch ply to your requirements and beautifully finished. Priced per square inch, email him to get a quote: dimitrialan@talktalk.net

Jacksons Discount Art: www.jacksonsart.com

Jacksons have a huge online catalogue of all conceivable art requisites. Useful for bulky orders of paint, whiting powder etc because they offer free postage with orders over a certain amount. As discounters, they offer the small pots of Cornelissen pigment at a cheaper price than Cornelissen themselves. I find Jackson's own brand of kolinsky sable brushes very good, and they regularly have sales and special offers on quality brushes. Jacksons also offer individual items such as brushes and agate burnishers on Ebay, which is more economical on postage if you are only purchasing a couple of items.

Cornelissen: www.cornelissen.com

A browsing visit to the historic Cornelissen, very near the British Museum, is a great treat but to protect your pocket go with a shopping list and stick to it if you can. Their staff are very knowledgeable and helpful and will also post supplies if you cannot visit in person. This is a 'one-stop shop' for all painting and gilding supplies, which is very useful when you are starting out and don't know for certain what you're looking for. They are not the cheapest for many items, so if economy is more important than the aesthetic experience then shop around. They have a comprehensive catalogue on-line, with much useful information and some recipes for gesso and such.

Fitzpatrick: www.apfitzpatrick.co.uk

Fitzpatrick stock Kremer pigments which they re-package in sensible plastic pots. It has to be admitted that the shop in Bethnal Green is awkward to visit unless you happen to be in the area anyway, so not much good for browsing. If you know what you want, you can order by telephone – immensely helpful staff. They have also opened a new online shop which I have not yet had occasion to use.

Stuart Stevenson: www.stuartstevenson.co.uk

Stuart Stevenson are in Clerkenwell Road, London, and again are useful as a pop-in if you are in the area. They stock Sennelier and Maimeri pigments, and also specialist gilding materials (clay bole, leaf etc).

Master Pigments (USA): masterpigments.com

I must give a plug to Master Pigments, which is a one-man outfit run by Attila Gazo, with whom I became acquainted on line. He is a painter who, finding that the 'historical' pigments supplied by the big names were unsatisfactory, set out to make his own. After years of research and sourcing the raw materials, he has a range of the highest quality lapis lazuli, azurite, vermilion and other

historical mineral and earth pigments in different grades, all ground and tested himself.

Handover: www.handover.co.uk

A manufacturer of specialist brushes and a signwriter's suppliers. As well as brushes, Handover supply gilding necessities and specialist interior decorating materials. The sheer variety of brushes on their website, in every conceivable size, is very bewildering. I mainly confine myself to the round watercolour sable brushes, the squirrel hairs, and the sable liners or riggers. This is also one of the few places to buy a square ended liner, called a designer's brush.

Rosemary & Company brushes: www.rosemaryandco.com

A specialist maker of artist brushes. I have used sables and squirrel hairs from Rosemary's brushes which were given to me, though not actually bought direct. They have been recommended to me by several artists as the best quality and the best price available.

Wrights of Lymm: www.stonehouses.co.uk

Gold leaf in every conceivable shade and quality, and the complete range of all the other paraphernalia required for different kinds of gilding. These people mill their own leaf from gold and precious metals. On-line website for ordering

Habberley Meadows: www.habberleymeadows.co.uk

Another goldbeaters, this one in Birmingham. Not so user friendly as Wrights of Lymm as they do not have an on-line shop, but you can phone an order and they are very helpful. You have to enquire the price of their gold leaf on the day, as it fluctuates according to the world price of gold, but you can be sure you're not over-paying that way.

Wilkinson or your local general hardware store

Cheap and cheerful and jolly handy for all sorts of things: sandpaper, non-shedding brushes for gesso, varnish and stain, fixtures and fittings for hanging and other necessary paraphernalia.

Ebay

Good old Ebay, so often the cheapest because one isn't tied to a minimum delivery charge. I buy d-rings, tracing paper, the occasional brush and so many other things here. Occasionally there are even artist's pigments on offer.

NB: this is a list of suggestions, and does not constitute a personal endorsement of any particular supplier. Please exercise your own discretion and take the usual security precautions when shopping, particularly when purchasing items on line.