

NFCG JOURNALS BY

*ED BARRETT, TED RICHMOND &
DAN BLAIR*

INTRODUCTION TO THE EYE (PART TWO)



NATIONAL FISH CARVERS GUILD

In part two of **Introduction to the Eye**, Ed Barrett will demonstrate the techniques he uses to paint a sculpted eye and Ted Richmond will be discussing sculpting eyes in your natural finish carvings. A special welcome to Dan Blair, our guest artist, who will be sharing with us his proven methods to paint glass eyes. The NFCG thanks our Journal contributors, who are all successful carvers at the expert level, for sharing their knowledge and experience.

Painting Eyes (A)

By Ed Barrett

Painting the eyes on your fish is a rewarding experience once you learn some of the basic steps of drawing the eye features and the sequence of paint application. Have some good reference available so you can see what it is you want to replicate. Here is a nice photo of a Brown Trout Eye to work from.





As you complete each step, be sure to repeat the process on the opposite side before moving on to the next stage of the eye painting process. Let's begin by using a #2 pencil to draw in the pupil size and position. Make the pupil size slightly smaller than normal. This will allow for a later step where we will remove any irregular edges of the pupil by using a fine tipped black Sharpie. A tip from the pros is to make the edge of the pupil as smooth as possible. Accomplishing this makes the whole effort of painting your eyes more believable. Next draw in the lines that separate the sclerotic cap and the iris. It will help you to get the proper proportions by sketching on paper some eye features before you begin.



After establishing the eye features get your pallet out and the paints you want to use. Also the brushes I use are a 0 or 00 and a short bristled #3 round. Set aside your black fine tipped Sharpie to adjust the pupil edge. I use Jo Sonja's tube paints in the following colors. Other brands in similar colors can also be substituted.

1. Carbon Black
2. Pale Gold
3. Rich Gold
4. Burnt Umber
5. Yellow Oxide
6. Titanium White

Have some acrylic retarder handy to extend the drying time while you paint the eye. We will be painting features of the iris and parts of the sclerotic cap utilizing a wet on wet technique. This means simply that before the first application of paint is dry we will add another color into it by stippling. This will have a blending effect and control the color intensities. Also, grab your magnifiers if you want to see what you are doing.



With the eye features established and your paints ready, lay out some carbon black and a dab of retarder on your pallet.



Paint the carbon black onto the pupil staying just inside your drawn line.



Using your 0 or 00 brush, paint the thin pale gold band around the eye. Try to keep the line as thin as possible. Keep in mind, we will adjust the line later by expanding the iris and pupil colors if necessary.



This is the first application of pale gold to establish the thin gold band around the pupil.



Next using Burnt Umber thinned with water, stipple in the line defining the sclerotic cap. Be careful not to have too much paint on your brush, dab the excess off onto a paper towel.



Next lay out some rich gold, burnt umber, and yellow oxide onto your pallet. We will paint the iris in this next step.



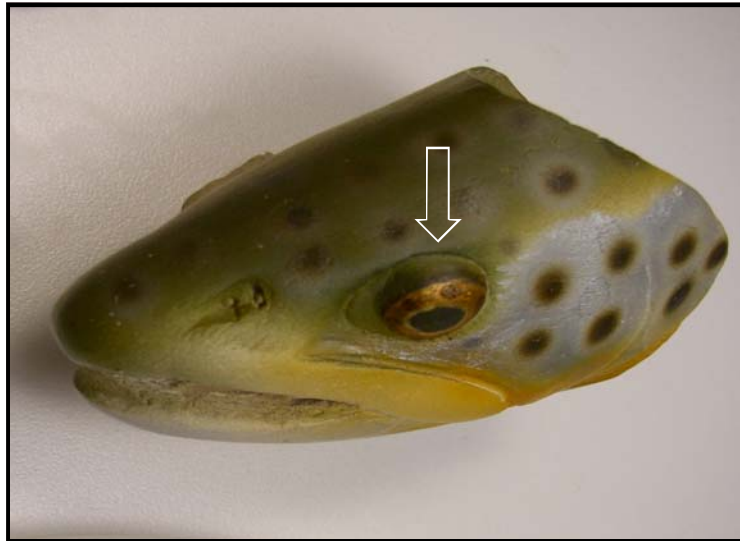
Mix up some of the burnt umber and rich gold to make a muddy gold. You will use this mixture to paint the spots or darker bands using the wet on wet technique.



First paint the rich gold mix with a small amount of retarder into the iris.



While the rich gold is wet stipple some yellow oxide into the rich gold to break up the mono tone look. Next, with the muddy gold, stipple inside the iris some spots or you could create a band inside the iris as shown in our reference . At this point in some paintings I have seen iridescent paints also stippled into the iris so let your reference and your imagination be your guide here.



Next is the sclerotic cap. Take some burnt umber and yellow oxide mixed with a small amount of retarder and stipple onto the sclerotic capsule just above the iris. Make sure you don't have too much on your brush and if you have a hard line after you apply it just touch the paint with your finger. Yup, you are now finger painting. That will knock out the hard edges.



Using some titanium white thinned to create a wash, apply this to the upper edge of the sclerotic cap to create a white fleshy look. If by chance you get too much white on the upper cap, use a wet brush to remove the excess. This is a simplified version of doing the sclerotic cap, but it will give you a good starting point to develop your skills as you progress.



This is the sclerotic cap completed. Next is to create depth in the eye by painting iridescent blue in the pupil.



I use an airbrush ready paint for this because it spreads out evenly onto the pupil when dropped into a small amount of water that is applied to the pupil. With your brush apply a small drop of water onto the pupil to form a pond inside the pupil. It doesn't take much, just enough to get the pupil visibly wet. Next, quickly load brush with a small drop of iridescent blue then touch the brush into the wet pupil. The blue will quickly spread out into the pupil where the pond is formed.

In the last step check the eyes for uneven or rough edges at the top of the iris. If needed smooth the edges with rich gold and then go to the outer edges of the thin gold band. If the edges of the pale gold band need to be adjusted to smooth the edges or to closed down and narrow on the pale gold band use the rich gold. For the pupil take your black fine point Sharpie and your magnifiers to smooth up the outer edges of the pupil if needed.



COMPLETED EYE

Before applying a clear finish coat let your paints dry over night. I use Deft lacquer semi- gloss. I first apply a very light spray and let it dry completely. After 1/2 hour I apply a finish coat to the entire fish. I hope you have enjoyed this article and find it useful. In my next article I will be discussing and demonstrating how to make a one sided mold to cast your reference fish.

*** Special acknowledgements go out to Will Hayden for his contribution of developing the eye mold in the first eye article; and Jeff Compton for his expertise in teaching several members techniques in painting an eye as illustrated in this article. Well done gentlemen! ***