FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Unvarnished Masterpieces Opens: 33 Famous Paintings, Revealed With the Varnish Digitally Lifted

A Woodstock painter shows each masterpiece as the world knows it, then unvarnished, and paints every palette by hand. The unvarnished versions have not been seen before.

WOODSTOCK, N.Y., Oct. 27, 2026 — Unvarnished Masterpieces (unvarnished.art) is now open. The collection brings together 33 famous paintings, from Vermeer's Girl with a Pearl Earring to Rembrandt's The Night Watch, Van Gogh's Sunflowers and Klimt's The Kiss. Each one is shown twice: as the world knows it, and unvarnished, with the yellowed varnish and grime that have dimmed it lifted. The unvarnished versions are new, and no one has seen these paintings this way before. They are Roberto Azank's version of what he thinks the painters painted. You be the judge.

Varnish yellows with age, and some pigments change on their own. Van Gogh's sunflowers were painted with chrome yellow, a brilliant new industrial pigment that light slowly turns brown. Klimt laid real gold leaf, with silver and platinum, into The Kiss, yet under old varnish the gold reads dull and brownish.

Azank's method is global. The aged varnish is lifted from the whole painting at once, in Adobe Photoshop and Apple Photos. No single hue is isolated, no region is masked or relit, and no AI is used. Specks and cracks are retouched by hand, one at a time.

"A palette is not just the colors a painter chose. The same colors can make many palettes," said Azank. "It is the juxtapositions: which color sits against which, and the edge where one ends and the next begins. I study that by painting each master's palette as an abstract Wavefield Homage, on a board sanded glass-smooth, wet on wet. What my hands learn at the easel goes back into a second restoration, the Unvarnished version."

Every Wavefield is painted on a 12-by-12-inch ABS board and numbered. The Toledo homage, after El Greco's View of Toledo, is Wavefield #426. A time-lapse of its painting, and a full-length session, are available online.

Visitors to unvarnished.art can compare each painting as the world knows it with the unvarnished version, using a slider, and download a free souvenir. The collection grows by one painting at a time.

Links

Collection: https://unvarnished.art
Studio video (28 s): https://media.unvarnished.art/social/toledo-naked-skating-v5.mp4
Full painting session: https://youtu.be/aKXZYluzZdE

About Unvarnished Masterpieces. Unvarnished Masterpieces is a collection of 33 famous paintings digitally restored by painter Roberto Azank, each shown beside the version the world knows, with a free download. unvarnished.art

About Roberto Azank. Azank is an Argentine-born painter based in Woodstock, N.Y. His Wavefield Homage series needed clean color in the reference images, so he began cleaning up the paintings himself, and Unvarnished emerged from that work. He has painted color-palette homages to more than 250 Old Master paintings; they are at robertoazank.com.

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Available on request: high-resolution before/after pairs for any of the 33 paintings, studio photographs of the Wavefields, and the full painting session.