



really dictates the results, either because it's porous and it quickly absorbs the solvent in the paint or because it's smooth and allows the paint to move quickly over the surface. I especially like the latter, and I've been using a method of lead priming I read about in one of Richard Schmid's books from the 1970s. I build up the surface of the canvas with the lead primer applied with a palette knife, allowing the white material to remain roughly textured. Once the lead primer is dry, I paint over it with the combination of thin and thick layers of oil color.

"The first layers of paint are usually thin, bright, pure notes of color such as quinacridones or phthalocyanines," Watts adds. "I then build duller, grayer, and thicker colors over those notes. I prefer to work *alla prima*, but my schedule often requires that I allow

OPPOSITE PAGE

Nude With Book

2005, oil, 16 x 20.
Courtesy Greenhouse
Gallery of Fine Art,
San Antonio, Texas.

ABOVE

**Life Drawing
Portrait**

2005, Conté pencil,
24 x 18. Collection
the artist.

passages to dry and then go back over them on subsequent days of painting. If I know my time is limited, I try to anchor the painting by completing the face of the figure or the focal point of a landscape so there is a context for completing the rest of the picture.

"The palette of colors I use in the studio is quite extensive," Watts continues. "I originally worked with Emile Gruppe's palette of a warm and cool version of the primaries, then I added the quinacridones and phthalocyanines. When I paint outdoors, however, I use a more limited palette of opaque colors because there isn't as