



adding further lighter highlights and darker shades. All this is done using very thin layers of paint thinned only with water. Having the various flesh tones pre-mixed on the wet palette makes the face painting process fairly rapid, in fact making the mixes takes about the same time as applying the first stage of layers to the face. Photograph 10 is as far as I will go with the acrylics saving the final layer for the oils.

Before moving onto this final oil coat of flesh I have painted the helmet peak, turban and horsehair mane in JS acrylics (Photo 11) ready to receive their own oil coat in the same painting session as the face. Photographs 12 and 13 have had the oil paints added, this is applied in very thin layers with the oils reduced to a skimmed milk consistency using artist's white spirit. Applying the equivalent oil mixes to the relevant tonal areas in exactly the same order as the acrylics is the first step of this process. Using a slightly larger brush (about a 0 or 1, with the very tip, just about 1mm, trimmed off) dampened with white spirit the transitions are blended using a stippling technique. This is more like gently stabbing the brush on the area to be blended rather than dragging it in a brushstroke fashion. Due to the absorbent matt ground of the acrylic and the evaporation of the white spirit the oils dry relatively quickly but still allow room for some *alla prima* (wet-on-wet) blending which is particularly useful for adding additional subtle highlights and tonal changes.

