



WATERCOLOR

365

Daily Tips, Tricks & Techniques



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L Redhead

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Daily Tips, Tricks and Techniques

Leslie Redhead



NORTH LIGHT BOOKS
CINCINNATI, OHIO
artistsnetwork.com

LAVENDER DREAMS
14" x 11" (36cm x 28cm)



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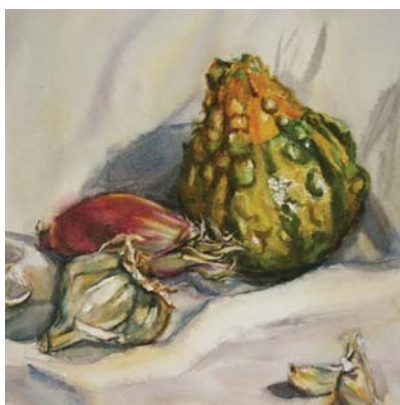
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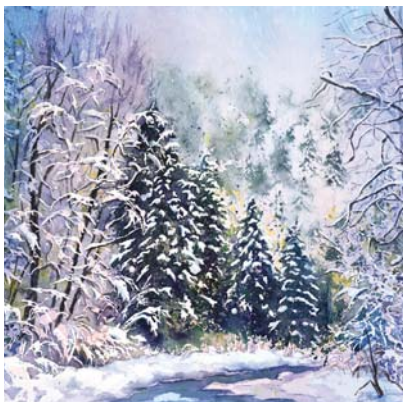
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INTRODUCTION

At long last, a watercolor book to keep you inspired throughout the year.

This book is for both the beginner and the experienced watercolorist. As a beginner, you may have heard it said that watercolor is the most difficult of all mediums to master. As an experienced watercolorist, you may realize how unpredictable and challenging it can be. It relies on the nature of water when it flows and mixes. Too much or too little water used at the wrong time can create unexpected complications—or it can provide some exquisite results. There is so much beauty to be found in its fickle temperament. Watercolor flows and it glows. It moves and dances unlike any other type of paint, allowing the painter to move and dance with it. The luminous quality of the paint can provide a freshness in a creation of art that is unique to watercolor.

It is watercolor's changeable nature that makes it so exciting. Due to watercolor's temperament, it can be difficult to know where to begin. Some of us have to ease into it and others just take the plunge. And when you think you have it all figured out—it will surprise you with more possibilities. Trying to understand it can take a lifetime, but once it has a hold of you, it can be a love affair that lasts many, many years.

It is my own love affair with watercolor and the joy that it brought into my life that led me to write this book. I have been an instructor in Victoria, British Columbia, and developed friendships with many of my students. I have seen the art of watercolor painting heal broken hearts, restore

energy to defeated bodies, and ease troubled minds. Not only have I experienced the confidence that painting brings to an anxious soul, but I have seen the confidence of my own students increase. I deeply care that these students—and now friends—continue on in their artistic journey. After a move to Vancouver, I started a daily blog called Watercolor Weapons: Tips and Techniques for Conquering Watercolor (watercolorweapons.blogspot.com), as a way to stay in touch with my former students. This blog offers watercolor painting tips and encouragement to continue to paint and pursue a creative life. Upon starting Watercolor Weapons, I began receiving questions from not only my students but from others around the world about watercolor and my studio practices. These questions and the answers were posted weekly and are now my Studio Secrets (many of which you will see in this book). After a year of posting daily, I realized I had the beginnings of a book (that and all my beloved students requested that I do one). Thus, *Watercolor 365* was created to offer tips and inspiration throughout a year of painting with watercolor.

Inside you will find explanations of basic watercolor terminology and how-to demonstrations of fundamental techniques to get you started. Inspirational and practical tips for improving your paintings, as well as studio secrets to apply to your own artistic practice, will move you beyond the doubts and reservations of living a creative life.

Please come along with me as we journey into a year of watercolor.

—Leslie

MILKWEED

29" × 21" (74cm × 53cm)





Leslie Redhead

1

Paper, Brushes and Palettes

■ Week 1, Day 1

BLESS YOURSELF

Starting a painting, especially as a beginner, can be a daunting prospect. All kinds of doubts arise and you wonder if you can even put brush to paper. To assist in overcoming these feelings of doubt and fear, there are a few suggestions I give to my students and have found useful in my own practice. The first suggestion is to *bless yourself*. Tell yourself that you are an artist here to learn and create. Painting is a process to be enjoyed. There are only positive thoughts allowed. If you think you can, you can!

■ Week 1, Day 2

WATERCOLOR PAPER

There are some practical things to consider when beginning the process of watercolor painting. One of which is choosing the right paper. Having the right paper makes all the difference.

There are many types of watercolor paper out there, and most are different versions made by the same company. One of the most important things you need to be concerned with is the fiber content of your paper. You will have more success with watercolor painting if your paper is 100 percent rag (cotton) fiber or a cotton/flax blend.

The reason for this is cotton fibers retain moisture more consistently, thereby drying more evenly than other types of paper fibers. The paint flows easier and more fluidly, so the paper doesn't buckle and warp as much. High-quality cotton paper is usually archival and lasts for a long time.

Paper that is not 100 percent cotton often has a mixture of cotton and wood pulp. It is not archival, and the acid in the wood can reduce the lifetime of the paper. Wood fibers also take longer to become as pliable to the water as cotton fibers. Therefore the paint doesn't flow as consistently; it just settles into the paper, causing it to buckle and warp. All your colors then run together, creating blooms and blossoms where you don't want them. And finally, when you try to put more color on, it just lifts the color that is already there and you get mud. Then you panic, get frustrated, and throw your brush down, grumbling that you were never meant to do watercolor. You blame yourself although it was the paper all along.

Watercolor paper most often comes in sheets that are 22" × 30" (56cm × 76cm).

■ Week 1, Day 3

HOW PAPER IS MADE

Watercolor paper is made from plant fibers. These fibers can be cotton wood, or flax (also known as linen). These fibers are cleaned, mixed with water and beat into a pulp, which increases the paper's strength and density. The pulp is then made into paper by machine, mould, or by hand.

For machine-made papers, the pulpy paste is dispensed onto a running wire mesh and put between two felts to wick away the moisture. The sheet is one continuous piece that is dried by heated cylinders. The texture of machine-made paper is uniform and consistent since the fibers are laid down in layers. Machine-made papers are the most common and economical but not necessarily the best for watercolor painting.

For mould-made paper, the pulp is poured over a slowly rotating cylinder mold into a web-like sheet.

This sheet is pressed into a felt and sandwiched by another felt and then passed through more cylinders. The fibers interlock in mould-made paper, giving the paper more strength

and a better surface on which to paint. Mould-made paper has a deckle edge that looks frayed or torn—similar to the look of handmade papers—on at least two sides.

Handmade papers have the most strength and durability. They are made individually and not by a machine, as the name implies. The pulpy mess is poured into a mould and sloshed around, causing the fibers to become more interwoven. The mould is a rectangular woven wire screen that is slightly larger than the finished sheet. A second frame, called a deckle, is placed over the mould. The mould is then lifted from a vat and put down onto a woolen felt. Multiple layers of felt and sheet are built up to form a pile. The pile is pressed and drained to remove any excess moisture. Finally the sheets are hung on a clothesline to dry. The texture is more rugged, and there is more variation to the paper. Handmade papers are known for their beautiful uneven and ruffled deckle edges.



■ Week 1, Day 4

HOT-PRESS PAPER

When you go to buy watercolor paper, you may notice that there are different textures to the paper. These textures are usually called hot-press, cold-press, and rough.

The texture of hot-press watercolor paper is smooth. Think of it as if a hot iron has smoothed it out, which is basically what happens. After the paper has been made, it is run through hot cylinders to smooth it down.

Hot-press paper is beautiful, but it can be a challenge to use when first starting out. The smooth fibers make the paper less absorbent, and the paint seems to slip and slide over the surface more. Some watercolorists enjoy this look and are able to use it as part of their style. Others tend to paint on it with a more traditional style, which is detail-oriented and uses small brushstrokes. Hot-press paper is commonly used for highly detailed botanical watercolor illustrations and can be fun for pen and ink work over watercolor washes.

ROYAL GOLD

8" × 6" (20cm × 15cm)

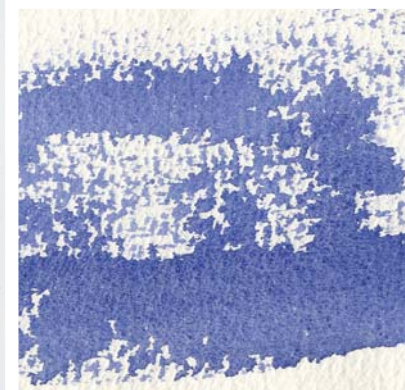
(painted on hot-press watercolor paper)



ATTITUDE

20" × 16" (51cm × 41cm)

(painted on rough watercolor paper)



Dry brush on
rough paper

■ Week 1, Day 6

ROUGH PAPER

Rough watercolor paper has the highest tooth—or most jagged texture—of all the paper surfaces. It is taken directly off a mould and not put through any cylinders. It is great for dry-brush techniques. I especially like it for painting outdoors or when I want to capture texture more quickly.



Week 1, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #1

Over the years, I have received e-mails with questions about some of my painting preferences and techniques. I have decided to dedicate one day each week to answering such questions.

This week's question is from Carol in Vancouver, British Columbia. She asks, "I have heard that watercolor paper has sizing in it. What is sizing?"

Sizing is a chemical substance, usually a gelatin, that has been added to watercolor paper for a couple of reasons. First of all, sizing protects the paper from falling apart and possibly returning to a pulpy mess. The sizing keeps the paper fibers

together. Second, the addition of sizing helps the paper be more water-resistant and thus less absorbent. Without the sizing, the paper becomes more like blotter paper, which sops up all the paint and water into one big mess.

Sizing can be added to paper either internally or externally, and sometimes it's added in both ways. Internal sizing is added when the paper is still wet and before it has been put in a mould. External sizing is added to the paper after it has dried, improving the strength of the surface and water resistance.



EL MEZQUITA DE CORDOBA

15" x 11" (38cm x 28cm)

■ Week 2, Day 1

SEPARATE YOURSELF FROM YOUR GENIUS

At the beginning of every workshop and class I would give my students four guidelines. I have already mentioned my first guideline, which is the suggestion to bless yourself.

My second guideline is to *separate yourself from your genius*.

You are not your genius. Your genius occasionally shows up and joins you in the creative process. The genius can be a little shy though. I have noticed that the genius does not like to appear in workshops or classes. However, if you show up and do your job, learning what needs to be done, you become a vessel and a guide for which the genius can manifest itself.

“ If the divine, cockeyed genius assigned to your case decides to let some sort of wonderment be glimpsed, for just one moment through your efforts, then ‘Ole!’ ”

—Elizabeth Gilbert

■ Week 2, Day 4

PAPER WEIGHTS

Watercolor paper comes in several different weights. Why do they call the paper a certain weight? That paper doesn't weigh that much! Actually, it does. When it is first made, it is rolled onto a ream and weighed. The ream is about 500 sheets of paper that measure 22" × 30" (56cm × 76cm). A ream of 140-lb. (300gsm) paper weighs 140 pounds; a ream of 300-lb. (640gsm) paper weighs 300 pounds. The most common weights are 90-lb. (192gsm), 140-lb. (300gsm), and 300-lb. (640gsm).

When choosing which weight to use, it is sometimes helpful to know what you want to paint. A 90-lb.

(192gsm) paper doesn't absorb as much water and paint since it has fewer fibers. The color appears more vibrant. It is best to do quick work with this paper since it doesn't hold up well with multiple washes and buckles and warps easily. I don't usually use this paper because I like to build up my color.

The 140-lb. paper is slightly more absorbent than 90-lb. paper. The color will not appear as vibrant. However, since it absorbs more water, there is more time to work with the color. It is also better for color layering because of the thickness. I use 140-lb. when I am traveling and for smaller paintings and studies (half sheets or smaller). This paper is the most common weight used.

The most absorbent paper is 300-lb. since it is thicker than the other weights. The paper stays wet longer and allows for more time to work with the paint. I like to use it for my larger, more serious work (such as portraits) and for my poured watercolors. This paper is very forgiving. I can wet and re-wet it many times, and I am less likely to make a hole in it when I scrub! Finally, I like the way it sits behind a mat. It just feels more substantial in my big pieces.



■ Week 2, Day 5

STRETCHING PAPER

Stretching paper is the process of wetting the paper and securing it to a board. It is not necessary and is a personal preference. One reason to stretch paper is to reduce warping. If the paper becomes too wet, especially the lighter weight paper, it will buckle and warp, creating hills and valleys. Water (and thus color) can pool in the valleys, creating problems as you paint. To make sure the paper won't warp, some artists stretch the paper before they begin painting. A second reason to stretch paper is to remove sizing. The gelatin sizing used to protect the paper will slow down and inhibit the flow of paint. Soaking the paper will remove some of the sizing, and your paint will flow more easily.

The decision to stretch the paper, for me, depends on what I am painting. For instance, I stretch my paper when I am doing very large pieces and for my pours and portraits, even if the paper is 300-lb. (640gsm). For everything else, I usually just tape the paper to a board before painting.

HOW TO STRETCH PAPER

Stretching paper is a fairly simple process. First, soak the paper in a cold-water bath for 3–5 minutes on each side. This removes some of the sizing and softens the fibers. Soaking the paper too long will cause all of the sizing to be removed, breaking the paper down into the pulpy mess it was to begin with.

Once you have soaked the paper, lay the paper flat on a board. The board I use is plywood $\frac{1}{4}$ "– $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick (6mm–13mm) that has been cut to fit a half sheet or full sheet of watercolor paper. The plywood is sealed with a clear acrylic paint or some old house paint in a neutral color to prevent chemicals in the wood from leaching into my paper. There are special stretcher boards available, but I prefer the plywood, especially for my pours. Gator board also works if you can find it.

Using a staple gun, place staples 2"–3" (5cm–8cm) apart around the edges of the paper on the board. I prefer to use 8mm staples. The larger staples tend to poke out too much

and the smaller staples end up popping out while the paper is drying. As the paper dries, you might see it warp and bubble on the board as the water evaporates. Don't worry; this is normal. As long as the paper was flat when you stapled it and it is laid flat to dry, it should be fine. I usually allow my paper to dry overnight or 24 hours before painting on it.

Once dry, the paper will be nice and tight with a beautiful surface, just like a canvas.

Week 2, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #2

When purchasing paper, you may wonder which is better: sheets or blocks?

Watercolor blocks are blocks of paper that are stacked and then attached to a backing board. The paper is kept together with glue on all four sides. The paper in the block has already been stretched and attached to a sturdy surface. You paint on the top sheet; when done, you remove that sheet and another one is ready for use. It is great if you travel and enjoy the convenience of having everything in one place.

However, my preference is for the sheets. The sheets are less expensive than the blocks. I can cut the sheet into any size I want. Sheets are just as easy to carry as the blocks; all I have to do is tape

them to a lightweight board. Plus I can work on more than one painting at a time.

I also prefer the texture of the sheets. The papers in the blocks feel like they are pressed flatter than sheets even though they both may be cold-press paper.

Finally, the paper in the blocks will warp and separate from the rest of the block with enough water; this means you may need to tape it back to the block or to another board anyway. I tend to work very wet-in-wet, so I like to know that the paper will stick to the board I've started with.

■ Week 3, Day 1

DON'T PANIC!

We have all experienced those moments when we realize that the paint is not doing what we wanted it to do. Then we panic. We grab for the tissue and blot like crazy or keep adding water and paint only to discover that we have made it worse. Panicking causes us to make poor decisions, and in a classroom setting, it can be contagious. Instead of panicking, realize that the spontaneity of the water and paint is what makes watercolor painting so exciting. Take a deep breath. Watch the paint do its magic, or think, "Okay, this wasn't what I expected, and it isn't anything like I imagined, but how can I make it still look great?" Perhaps it is just a matter of changing your perspective or your vision. But please, *don't panic!*



No. 12 round

Cat's tongue brush

■ Week 3, Day 2

COMMON BRUSHES

There are so many different types of watercolor brushes out there that it can be hard to choose the right ones. Watercolor brushes are made from different types of material in a variety of sizes and shapes. Synthetic brushes are made of polyester or nylon. Natural-hair brushes are usually made from the hair of a goat, squirrel or sable. There are even blends of synthetics, natural hair, or synthetic with natural hair.

Common shapes are round, pointed round, flat, oval and what is referred to as a cat's tongue.

A round and a pointed round are similar in shape; however, the pointed round comes to a longer point. A flat is flat and even across the top of the brush. The oval and cat's tongues are similar, but the cat's tongue comes to a nice point when wet.

As for size, there is no standard among manufacturers. All that is agreed upon is that the smaller the number on the brush, the smaller the size.

WHICH BRUSH?

The one brush that has become my closest friend is the Kolinsky sable brush. These brushes do require more of a financial investment, but I find they are worth every penny. They keep their point longer than synthetic brushes, plus they hold paint and water better when doing wet-in-wet work. I usually have a smaller sable (no. 6) and a larger one (no. 12) handy.

TREATMENT OF BRUSHES

First of all, if you leave them in the water, the tips of the bristles on your beautiful new brushes will bend or break, or the handles may become waterlogged and crack.

While we're at it, please don't dry your brushes standing up either. Water can seep into the ferrule and handle of a brush, causing that to crack as well. The best way to dry your brushes is to lay them flat and leave them flat between washes.



No. 12 Kolinsky sable round



Hake brushes

Week 3, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #3

This week's question is from Marney in Surrey, British Columbia. It is, "What would you suggest for a good brush for putting down a wash?"

My favorite brush for a wash is a hake brush. A hake brush is a Japanese brush made with soft white goat hair. I like this type of brush for applying a nice even wash and for layering washes. For instance, I use it for my layers of poured watercolors; I use it to wet the paper before I pour the paint. The brush is soft enough not to scratch the surface or lift the layer of paint that is already there. I find that synthetic wash brushes tend to lift the underlying layer of paint when you stroke across the surface, no matter how soft the bristles are.

■ Week 4, Day 1

THE MOST IMPORTANT GUIDELINE

The most important guideline of all is to *have fun!* Painting is a joy. Smile and enjoy the moments as you get lost in the act of creating.

■ Week 4, Day 2

LABEL YOUR BRUSHES

I love new brushes. They are so beautiful, and their point is still so perfect. But, that newness doesn't last forever. If you are like me, you will continue to use your brush long after the newness has worn off. Then you end up with several brushes that all look the same. How do you tell your new and your not-quite-new brushes from your old brushes? I have developed a system for my brushes.

My newest sable brush (a no. 6 round) is for my portrait work. Portraits require detail and precision so I use the newest brushes for this work. I can usually paint two or three portraits with the brush still feeling new. When it has lost that feeling, I use it for my florals. Then I move it to my landscapes stash, because they don't require as much precision. When it has finally had enough, I use it for mixing colors or it becomes an oil brush. Sometimes my kids snag it.

It became hard for me to keep track of which brush was which until I started to label them. The first thing I do before I paint with a new brush is put a sticker or some masking tape on the end of it. Then I just put the month and year on the tape. I find it much easier to keep track of my multiple brushes now.

■ Week 4, Day 3

KEEPING A POINT

While painting, you may notice that the hairs on the tip of your brush spread out. To help keep a nice point, give the tip of the brush a little twist and twirl on a cloth while painting or just before you put the brush down for the day. Leaving a little gum arabic or hair conditioner in your brush between painting sessions also helps keep the point longer. Just be sure to rinse the brush out well before painting again.



Labeled paintbrushes



WHERE DID I PUT MY BRUSH?

I am constantly losing my brushes while I paint. I put the big one down to use the little one, then I put that one down to use a scrub brush. Then I go back to the big one to find it has rolled somewhere under my painting or my palette or off the table. Ugh! I feel like I spend more time looking for my brushes than actually painting. Then I realized I could cut notches into the top of my water container. I lay the brushes across the top of the container and in the notches, and voilà! No more lost brushes!



Notched water container

■ Week 4, Day 5

LIMITED PALETTE

Are you one of those people that has a *bazillion* colors and can't remember which colors you used to mix that perfect color? That is because you have a bazillion colors.

I highly recommend starting with a limited palette. Get to know those colors really well before you add any more. You will also discover that you don't need to add too many more colors. You'll learn how to mix just about anything from the colors that you have.

My basic palette consists of eight colors: a warm and a cool of each primary color and two earth colors. All the secondary colors can be mixed from there (imagine that!).

This is my list of basic colors:

- » New Gamboge (warm yellow)
- » Winsor Yellow (cool yellow)
- » Cadmium Scarlet/Red (warm red)
- » Permanent Alizarin Crimson (cool red)
- » French Ultramarine Blue (warm blue)
- » Winsor Blue (Green Shade) (cool blue)
- » Raw Sienna (earth)
- » Burnt Sienna (earth)

Every now and again I do use other colors, but I find I keep coming back to these eight. You may choose your own, but I find that having a warm and a cool of each color works really well.



■ Week 4, Day 6

ARRANGING YOUR PALETTE

Beginning watercolorists often ask how to arrange the colors on a palette. When arranging your palette, it is best to put all your yellows together, then all your reds, and finally all your blues. I also like to keep the colors I mix often close together (such as French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna).

I also recommend positioning your palette the same way every time you paint. You will begin to intuitively know where each color is located, and you don't have to think about which color is which while you paint.



Robbie Laird watercolor palette

Week 4, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #4

A question Elizabeth from Montana recently asked is, "What brand is your palette?" I actually have several palettes. All of them are plastic. I keep several palettes around my studio because I like to work on different paintings at the same time. I can keep the mixtures I have made for a painting in one palette while I move on to the next painting and its designated palette.

I have a John Pike watercolor palette that seems to be very common and popular. I also have a round palette, which is a Robbie Laird palette. It is nice for arranging colors as they appear on a color wheel. It is also wonderful because it has

several pans that come out of it for different mixes of paint; this feature makes it my current favorite. I also have a travel palette. I am not sure the brand; I think it wore off from so much use. I take this palette with me everywhere since it is so convenient to travel with. Finally, I have all sorts of containers that litter my studio. I don't know why I have so many, but I tend to lose them and can never find the one that has the color I need in it. But sometimes when the genius shows up, you don't want to waste time finding and washing a container.

John Pike
watercolor palette



Robbie Laird
watercolor palette



Travel palette



Plastic containers
to hold paint

■ Week 5, Day 1

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

It is a common understanding that musicians need to practice their skills to improve. Each musician starts with the basics: learning notes and scales. We recognize that musicians need to practice almost every day to become better. Athletes also need to practice and to continue to stay in shape in order to be the best at what they do. Yet it seems visual artists are expected to know how to draw and paint instantly. Many a beginner has expected that of themselves. They think that painting is a natural talent and what they see in their mind's eye will flow easily from there, down their arm into their brush, and finally onto the paper. This is a misconception. Visual artists also need to learn basic skills such as drawing, perspective and color mixing before they can really excel. These skills then need to be practiced. The more these skills are practiced, the more proficient you will become. As it is said, practice makes perfect.



■ Week 5, Day 2

LABEL YOUR PALETTE

Another tip to help you remember where your colors reside is to label your palette. A piece of masking tape and a fine-tip felt pen do the trick.



■ Week 5, Day 3

FRESH PAINT

I know some artists like to squeeze out a whole tube of paint onto their palette. They then allow the paint to dry in the palette, and they're ready for their next painting adventure.

I am not one of those artists. I love fresh paint! The colors seem so much richer when the paint is fresh, and you can get your darks and your blacks quicker and easier. No more wishy-washy watercolors!

I recommend you keep your tubes handy and squirt out a little bit at a time. Squirt out more if you plan to paint more. It really isn't that much harder to carry around a few extra tubes of paint, especially when you are working with a limited palette.



French Ultramarine Blue



BUTTERFLY'S NEST
15" x 11" (38cm x 28cm)

■ Week 5, Day 5

THE TWO MUST-HAVE COLORS

I know I said you can choose the colors for your limited palette, but I feel that there are two colors that are absolutely essential to any palette, especially if you are a beginner.

These colors are French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna. They are extremely universal and versatile. You will notice that these two colors are used by many of the great watercolorists, including John Singer Sargent.

There are many reasons why I use these colors, but they will be discussed later.

■ Week 5, Day 6

SAVE YOUR RECYCLABLES

Previously I mentioned that I have all sorts of small containers around my studio that I use to mix paint. These are small recyclable containers that often come from my kitchen or laundry room. Remember to be on the lookout for them, especially on garbage day! Small recyclable containers are perfect for mixing paint for your washes or pours.



The two must-have colors: Burnt Sienna and French Ultramarine Blue

➤ Week 5, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #5

The question this week is from John. He asks, “Do you ever mix brands of paint?”

The answer is yes and no. Yes, I have all different brands of paint that I paint with. My favorite brands are Daniel Smith and Winsor & Newton. I also have a couple of Graham and Holbein colors in my collection that I really like.

There is nothing wrong with mixing different brands of paint. However, I try to stick to the brand that I start a painting with.

For instance, if I am using one brand of French Ultramarine Blue in one painting, and I run out in the middle of it, I try to continue to use that same brand until that painting is finished. If I do notice that I am running low on a certain brand that I

will be using for a painting, I will make sure I have enough in advance. If I run out during the painting process, I scour all my myriad palettes for the same color, or I run to my local art supply store as soon as possible to purchase another tube. The reason for this is that there are indeed differences in the brands of paint. Some are subtle, while some are not. If the difference is not subtle, then my painting may look a little “off” when half of it is painted with one brand of a color and the other half with another brand.

2

Paint and Other Supplies

■ Week 6, Day 1

PAINT UNTIL YOU FEEL LIKE PAINTING

There will always be days when you don't feel like painting. If you must know, I don't feel like painting every day either. Some days I would rather read. Or sleep. Or watch TV. I have all kinds of different excuses not to paint on those days.

However, because painting is my livelihood and I'm not going to get any better by just thinking about painting, paint I must. So I show up in my studio every morning and paint until I feel like painting. I tell myself that I will spend one hour in the studio painting, and I will paint until I feel like painting. This usually works, and then I end up painting like mad!

If you find yourself having a hard time getting into the painting groove, start with something simple or do a quick sketch. Swish the paint around, see what happens when you let two colors mix on the paper, paint an easy passage, or draw out an idea you have been playing with. Then before you know it, you will feel like painting.

■ Week 6, Day 2

DON'T EAT THE CADMIUMS

Cadmium paints are poisonous. So please don't eat them.

■ Week 6, Day 3

HOW DID I GET MUD?

It happens to all of us at one point or another: We paint mud without wanting to paint mud.

This is perhaps the biggest frustration with beginning watercolorists. You become adept at painting mud and wonder how it is that other watercolorists are not getting mud.

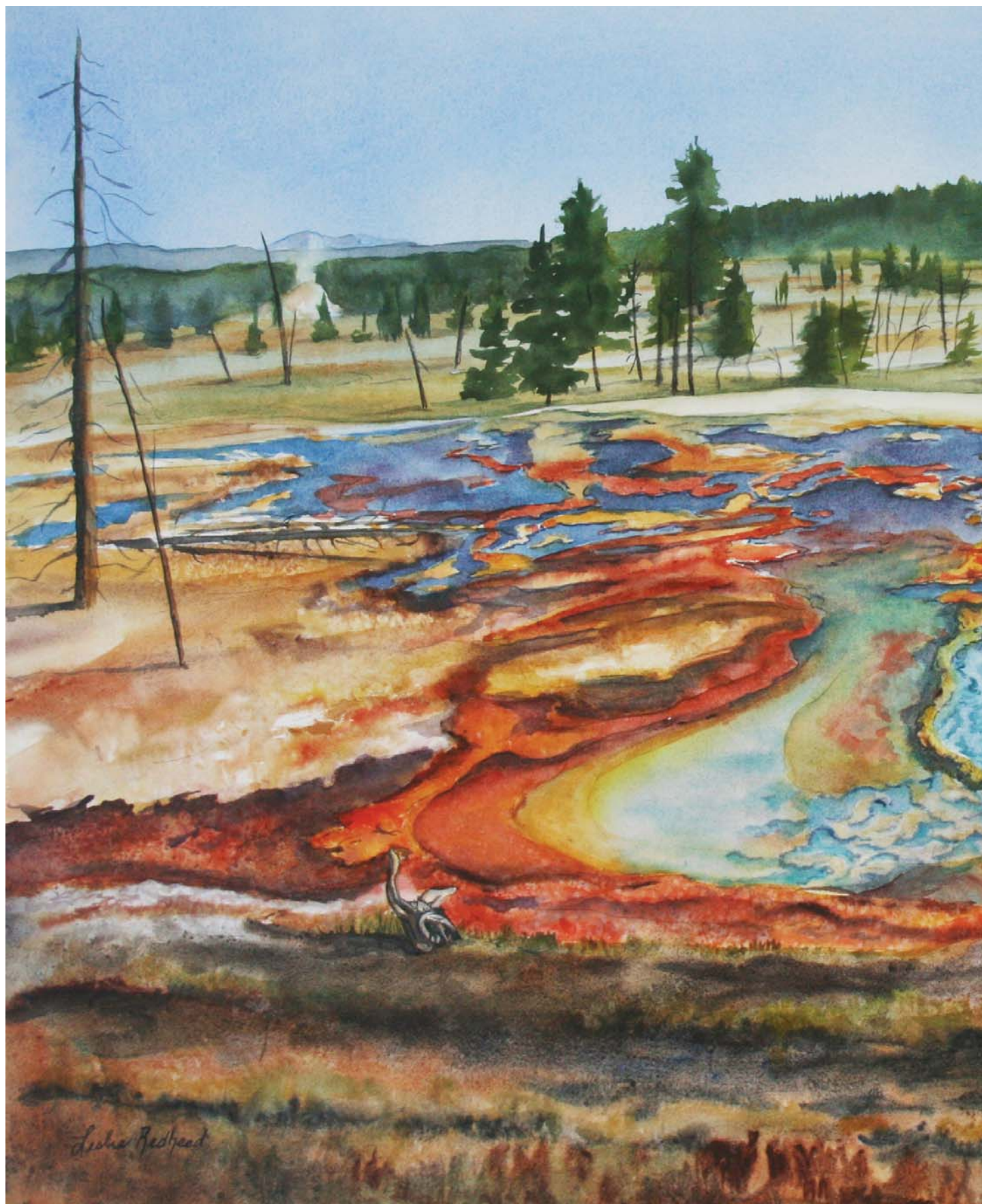
So how do you not get mud? The secret is to know the qualities of your paints.

Watercolor is an inherently transparent medium. However, there are some colors that are more opaque than others. Knowing which colors are transparent and which are opaque helps you understand how to stay away from mud.

The pigment of the opaque colors tends to sit on the surface of the paper. This becomes a problem when you put down a wash with an opaque color and then put another wash on top of it. Instead of staying in the fibers of the paper, the opaque color lifts and mixes with that new wash. The next thing you know, that beautiful, clean color has turned to mud.

Transparent, staining colors will stay in the fibers of the paper and will not lift when you place another wash of color on top. So to avoid making mud, I suggest the following:

- » Use transparent, staining colors when creating layer upon layer of color.
- » Stay away from mixing too many opaques together when mixing colors.
- » Leave your opaque colors for the top washes.



FIREHOLE RIVER SPRINGS
25" x 40" (63cm x 102cm)



■ Week 6, Day 5

PAINT PROPERTIES

My favorite brands are Winsor & Newton and Daniel Smith. Winsor & Newton is consistently one of the best brands out there. They are well known for their watercolors, and I like how clean their colors are. I don't feel like they are too heavy or chalky with pigment or filler. Winsor & Newton also makes it easy to figure out the transparency of each color. A square on the tube of paint will be empty if the color is transparent; the square will have a diagonal line through it if the paint is semi-transparent (also semi-opaque); and the square will be black if the color is opaque.

My other favorite brand is Daniel Smith. Their colors are so rich and creamy right out of the tube. The quinacridone colors are especially wonderful to work with because of their transparency and vibrancy.

If you really want to know the properties of your paint, each manufacturer posts that information on their website. It makes life so much easier having that information right in front of you.



■ Week 6, Day 6

COLOR CHART

Making a color chart may seem tedious and boring, especially when you just can't wait to get to painting, but I find the chart extremely helpful. It is also a good thing to do when you don't quite feel like painting. All you need are the colors in your limited palette. I like to mix my colors in a mid-value range, not too light and not too dark—the Goldilocks of watercolor.

To make this chart, write the color names across the top and down the left-hand side of the paper. Then place pure WinsorYellow in the upper left corner, where the WinsorYellow row intersects the WinsorYellow column. Next mix Winsor Yellow with New Gamboge and put that color in the first row (the WinsorYellow row), second column (the New Gamboge column). Mix WinsorYellow with Permanent Alizarin Crimson, and place it in the first row, third column. Continue to fill in the chart. The pure colors are on the diagonal.



Week 6, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #6

A question was posed to me recently about using a limited palette. The question was, "How do you make pink and lavender with a limited palette?"

In acrylic and oil painting, white paint is added to a color to lighten it. For instance, white is added to red to make pink. That's not the case, however, in watercolor. In watercolor, water is added to a color to lighten it.

To make pink with a limited watercolor palette, water down a color like Permanent Alizarin Crimson to a lighter shade, thus making it look pinker. To make lavender, mix a nice red and blue to make purple, then add more water to lighten the color to lavender.

However, in my own painting this would be one of those instances when I would deviate from my limited palette. I would use Permanent Rose for my pink and my lavender.

In my painting *Lavender Dreams* (on page 2), I used Permanent Rose for the pink. For the lavender, I used the Permanent Rose either mixed or glazed with Winsor Blue (also called Phthalo Blue by some brands).

There are other pinks out there that you might prefer, but I find Permanent Rose (also called Quinacridone Rose) to be the most versatile.

Making this chart has a number of benefits, including the following:

- » For those new to watercolor, it will help you realize how much water you need to add to get a mid-value. It is a common misunderstanding that watercolor paint is to be used thickly and straight out of the tube, similar to acrylic or oil. It does need water added to it to get it moving and flowing.
- » You will see which color mixes you prefer and will even find yourself referring to the chart for a certain color as you are learning your palette.
- » You will get to know your colors very well. You will even start to figure out some of the properties of your paints when you do this.
- » You might actually enjoy the meditative state of mixing colors.

	WINSOR YELLOW	NEW GAMBOGE	PERMANENT ALIZARIN CRIMSON	CADMIUM SCARLET	FRENCH ULTRAMARINE BLUE	WINSOR BLUE	BURNT SIENNA	RAW SIENNA
WINSOR YELLOW								
NEW GAMBOGE								
PERMANENT ALIZARIN CRIMSON								
CADMIUM SCARLET								
FRENCH ULTRAMARINE BLUE								
WINSOR BLUE								
BURNT SIENNA								
RAW SIENNA								



THE ATTIC ROOM

35" x 25" (89cm x 64cm)

■ Week 7, Day 1

WORK IS LOVE MADE VISIBLE

“To love life through labor is to be intimate with life's innermost secret. All work is empty save when there is love, for work is love made visible.”

—Kahlil Gibran

As with all affairs of the heart, a relationship takes time and a commitment. It takes work. So it is with painting. How much time do you spend on your art? How committed are you to becoming a better artist?

Maybe today should not only be about the loved ones in your life but the love of your creative soul. Make a date with your paints. Spend some time planning the event. Tidy up your desk. Set out the water, the brushes, the palette. Find what it is that you want to do.

Perhaps get all dressed up. (I have a friend that puts on bright red lipstick before she paints. I prefer my favorite sweatshirt.)

Turn off the phone so you can be alone. Turn up the music. And get to work. Make love happen. For work is love made visible.

PENCILS

BASIC COMPOSITION

A 2x2 grid of squares. The grid is formed by three horizontal lines and three vertical lines. At each of the four intersections where a horizontal line meets a vertical line, there is a red 'X' mark. The 'X' marks are located at the intersections of the first and second horizontal lines with the first and second vertical lines.

There are other rules of composition that will help make a painting more dynamic. And like all rules, they can be stretched and the painting will still work. Before you stretch the rules though, you do need to start at the beginning. The golden ratio is a good beginning.

35



SPLASH OF RED
22" × 30" (56cm × 76cm)

■ Week 7, Day 4

DON'T DRAW ON YOUR PAPER!

Unless I am working plein air (painting outdoors) or from life, I try not to draw on my watercolor paper. That is because when I draw, I want to erase. Then draw again. And erase again. Then before I know it, I have ruined my beautiful paper with my multiple pencil marks, eraser smudges, and the oils from my fingers. It becomes difficult to get a nice even wash because I have ruined the integrity of those delicate paper fibers.

Instead of drawing directly onto your paper, draw your image on tracing paper. You can erase and smudge to your little heart's content and not ruin your paper. After the image is on the tracing paper, you can transfer it onto the watercolor paper using transfer paper (also known as graphite paper). This way your paper stays pristine. Plus you still have your drawing just in case your kids decide they want to paint on your painting when you are not looking.

■ Week 7, Day 5

EASY WAY TO DRAW

When I teach a class or workshop, I don't make my students draw out their work. If I did have them draw, we would never get to painting. Instead of drawing, I have them transfer a photocopy of what we will be painting onto the watercolor paper.

To do this, place the photocopy onto the watercolor paper and tape it down so it doesn't move. Place a piece of transfer paper underneath the photocopy with the dark side down. Trace over the photo to transfer your image onto the watercolor paper. Now you are ready to paint.



Homemade transfer paper

■ Week 7, Day 6

MAKE YOUR OWN TRANSFER PAPER

There are several brands of transfer paper available. Some are better than others. If you buy transfer paper, make sure it doesn't have any wax in it. The wax will resist the paint and a halo will appear around the pencil line.

There is also a simple way to make transfer paper with a piece of tracing paper (not to be confused with transfer paper; tracing paper is white and transparent). Put some tape around the edges so the tracing paper doesn't tear. Rub a piece of graphite on the surface of the tracing paper; a nice soft pencil also works. Rub the graphite into the paper with a tissue. Use this transfer paper just as you would use the purchased kind.



Week 7, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #7

This week's question is from Jane in White Rock, British Columbia. Her question is, "What do you use a mop brush for?"

A mop brush is a natural hair brush made from squirrel hair. It is very absorbent, holding a lot of water and paint. It is also a soft brush. In fact, it is so soft that it becomes floppy when loaded with paint, which makes it difficult for painting fine detail.

But that feature does make a mop brush great for putting down large washes of color and/or

water quickly and loosely. It is good for skies and for a quick undercoat of diluted color. Just remember, floppy and sloppy.

Watercolor artists like Sandhu Singh use a mop brush to block in large washes of color before they begin to paint detail.

Mop brush





BEAUTY AS WELL AS BREAD
22" × 30" (56cm × 76cm)

■ Week 8, Day 1

BECOME VISUALLY AWARE

Take a look at the world around you and note how things work visually. Ask yourself questions such as:

- » What color is the object?
- » What shape is the object?
- » How does the light hit the object?
- » Is it strong? Is it filtered and subdued?
- » What is the color of the object in light and in shadow?
- » How does the lighting shape an object?
- » What mood does it create?
- » What does the sky look like during certain times of the year?

- » Does the lighting of summer look different than winter lighting on an object?
- » What makes it different?

There are so many questions to ask when trying to visually describe an object or a setting. You don't need to entertain yourself with electronics. You can keep yourself busy just by reflecting on what makes something the way it is and how you would paint it.

■ Week 8, Day 2

THE BEST ERASER

The best eraser to use on your watercolor paper is a kneaded eraser. A kneaded eraser is gray and comes in a square or rectangle shape when you buy it. It is called a kneaded eraser because you can knead it into different shapes, and it eventually ends up looking like a lump of clay.

The wonderful part of a kneaded eraser is that you can shape it into a point and erase in small areas. It is also good for removing those smudges from the transfer paper without erasing the pencil lines you want to keep. The best part is that the eraser is soft enough that it doesn't harm your paper.



Kneaded
erasers

■ Week 8, Day 3

TRANSFERRING AN IMAGE

The best way to transfer your image from a drawing or photocopy with transfer paper is with a ballpoint pen. It has a nice tip for the fine lines, and you can see where you have drawn.

And if you use different color ballpoint pens, you can use your photocopy to transfer an image a couple of times. This is an especially handy tip when the kids have painted on your painting.



Ballpoint pen

■ Week 8, Day 4

BUCKETS OF WATER

Quite often I see students bring in their containers of water for my classes. They are usually small tubs that barely hold a cup of water. Or I see them struggling with large ice cream buckets (you know, the big gallon containers). I find that neither of these work very well. The water in little container gets dirty so quickly that you are either painting gray paintings or refilling it every few minutes. A gallon bucket is great if you don't want to get clean water often, but it takes up so much room on your table that you don't know where to put your painting. Plus it is very awkward to carry.

My suggestion is to use a container that holds about four cups (one liter), like an empty peanut butter or yogurt container. It's not too small and not too big—just right.



■ Week 8, Day 5

TAPING OVER THE STAPLES

When I stretch my paper using staples, I like to put tape over my staples. There are a couple of reasons why I do this.

- » If I do not put tape on, when I do a wash of color, excess paint and water will get trapped under the staples. The excess water dries slower than what is on the rest of the paper and pushes the paint out, creating a bloom. This can be a nightmare when you're painting a sky. The more water that is trapped, the bigger the bloom.
- » I pull off the tape at the end and voilà! I have a nice white border on the finished painting. It's so much better than a dirty board.



Taping over staples

■ Week 8, Day 6

TAPING YOUR PAPER ON THE BACK

Sometimes I prefer painting to the edge of my paper, especially when I want to leave that beautiful deckle edge. However, I still want to secure my paper so it doesn't move while painting. In this case, I tape the back of my paper instead of the front. To do so, tear a strip of wide masking tape as long as the paper. Place it on the paper so only one long edge of the tape sticks. Then roll the other long edge until the tape sticks to itself, creating a long loop of tape. Tape all four edges of the paper and secure the paper to a board.



Taping on the back of paper



Masking tape



Butcher's tape



Artist's tape

Week 8, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #8

This week's question is from Jenny from California. She asks, "What is a good tape to use for watercolor paper?"

There are many types of tapes out there to use.

White artist's tape works well, and it is nice that it is acid-free and pH neutral. It is not super sticky, so it is easy to lift when your painting is complete. However, it is more difficult to find outside of the United States and can be expensive.

I have also seen many artists use painter's tape, which comes in blue or green. I don't think this is a good tape to use because the color of the tape could throw off your eye. You will start to paint as if your border will always be that shade of blue or green, and it will definitely affect the outcome of your painting.

Then there is butcher's tape. This brown tape needs to be wet to adhere to the paper. I have not had success with this tape. It will not always stick, and when it does finally stick, it is difficult to remove. I have torn a few paintings trying to remove it.

Regular masking tape may not be archival or acid-free, but I find that it works great. When I first started to paint daily, or almost daily, I used a lot of tape. I discovered that masking tape is the most economical. It is also easy to find, even in remote areas, and is neutral in color. Plus you can buy it in bulk. I have rolls of it all over my studio and in my painting bags so I don't get frustrated trying to find my one roll of tape.

Higher quality masking tape is much better than the dollar store variety, though. It sticks better and has a longer shelf life. However, since masking tape is not archival, be sure to take it off your painting after a few days or weeks. The glue will affect the paper over time. Plus, the tape can bake into the paper, making it more difficult to remove.

■ Week 9, Day 1

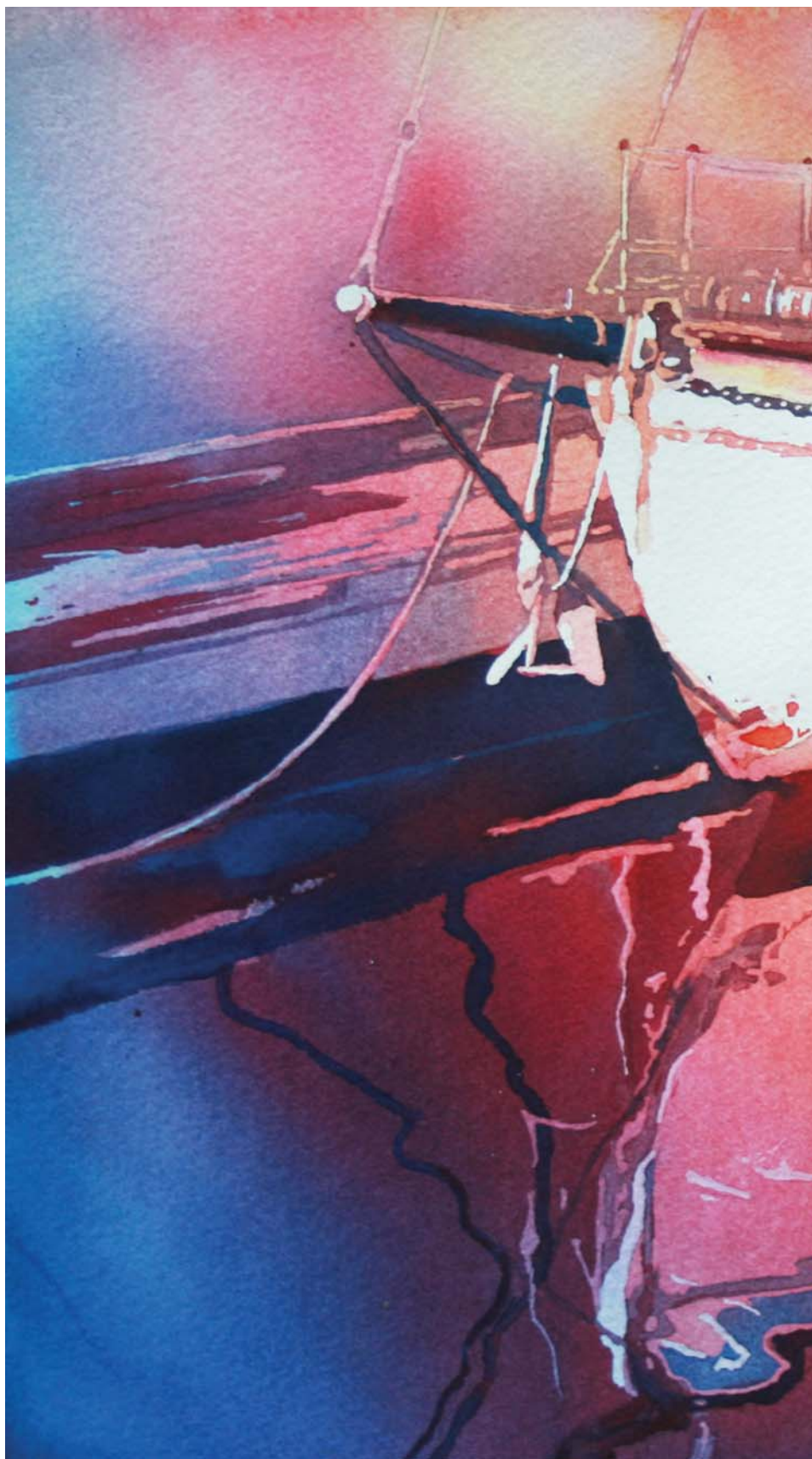
INSPIRE OTHERS

Once you have become visually aware, you can now help others appreciate the beauty that surrounds them through your art.

■ Week 9, Day 2

SKETCH IT!

Never underestimate the importance of drawing. Even though I allow my students to trace a photograph, I tell them that drawing is an important skill that will improve their paintings. Take some time to practice your drawing skills by sketching what is around you. Your sketches don't need to be seen by anyone but you, or they can be a testament of your commitment to becoming a better artist. Remember, it is the process, not the product, that counts.



TICKLED PINK
14" × 21" (36cm × 53cm)



■ Week 9, Day 3

PAINT AND DRAW FROM LIFE

The best way to improve your skill as an artist is to sketch and paint from life. Form, shape and color appear very different in real life than in a photograph. Photos tend to flatten out objects and landscapes. When you paint from life, you learn how to capture the dimensionality, or depth, of your subject better. It will also help you understand that dimensionality when you do paint from photographs.

■ Week 9, Day 4

CARRY A SKETCHBOOK

Carry a sketchbook wherever you go. Or use a tablet if you have one. You can sketch at games, in church, sitting in an airport, sitting on the bus or just waiting for time to pass. It can be a quick sketch or something more detailed.

A sketch is all about eye-hand coordination, so it doesn't matter how long you spend on it or if the sketch is completed. All that matters is that you practiced.

■ Week 9, Day 5

THE DIGITAL STUDIO

Painting from photographs is a common and often productive way to create. Many of my own paintings begin with a photograph.

I start by looking through the photos that I have taken when I am out and about. Then I start to play with my photographs, trying to find the best composition, coloring and contrast.

In these cases, my computer becomes my sketchbook. Using photoediting software, I adjust my image and even combine a couple of photos into one that will become my finished masterpiece.

■ Week 9, Day 6

PHOTO EDITING

Most photo editing programs come with the basics of zoom, crop and rotate. But they also come with features with which you can adjust the lighting. I prefer brightening my photos. Then I adjust the contrast to create more drama. Finally, I add more saturation to make the color pop.

Some programs come with filters. These can add an artistic flair to what would otherwise be a bland photo. However, nothing can replace your own artistic flair. A photo is meant to inspire you to paint. And the digital studio, like a sketchbook, helps your ideas come more into focus.



Original photo



Edited photo

➤ Week 9, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #9

Katharine from Vancouver asks, “How do I make my painting look less like my photograph and more like a piece of art?”

Photographs can be valuable references to paint from. However, photographs usually capture everything in crisp, clear detail. Life is not like that.

When we look at an object, we see only the object in detail. Our peripheral vision (the vision that occurs outside of the very center of our gaze) will sense certain objects that are there, but they are out of focus. We may not even know what the objects are; we just know they are there. They come into focus only when we change our gaze or move our head to see it more clearly.

Sometimes when we paint from a photograph, we are tempted to paint everything in detail, just as the photograph captured it. There is nothing wrong with this; it’s great for when you are trying to capture the calmness of a still life or a setting.

However, a painting might make a stronger statement if only the focal point is in crisp detail, and the objects around it are softer and out of focus. This works well when trying to capture movement and motion.

Some of my favorite artists did not have the same advantages that we have with photographs today. They relied more on painting from life and were more aware of how our vision works. Mary Cassatt and Edgar Degas, among others, sought to capture this “visual perception.” Their paintings put the detail only where they want your eye to go, thus creating movement throughout the image and giving you a sense of really being there.

3

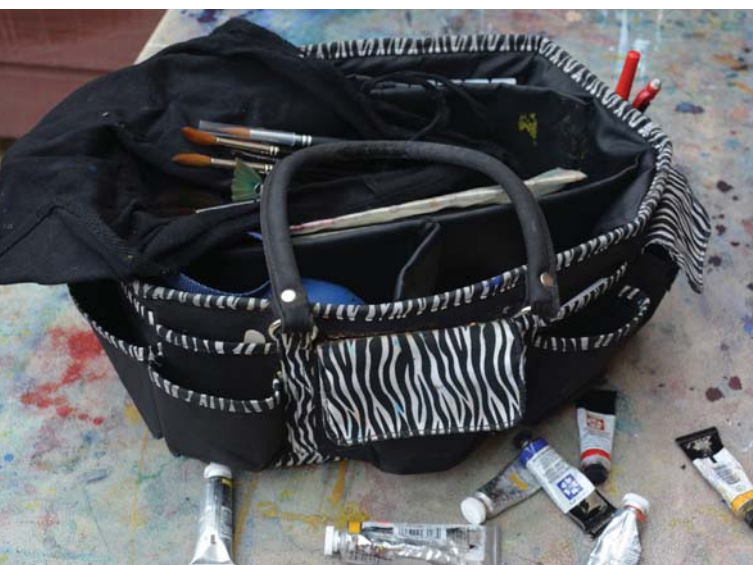
White in Watercolor

■ Week 10, Day 1

HOW INVENTIVE CAN YOU BE?

You are the creator, artist, author, poet and composer of your own imagination. It is your work to create as you please.

Invent away!



Totebag for painting supplies

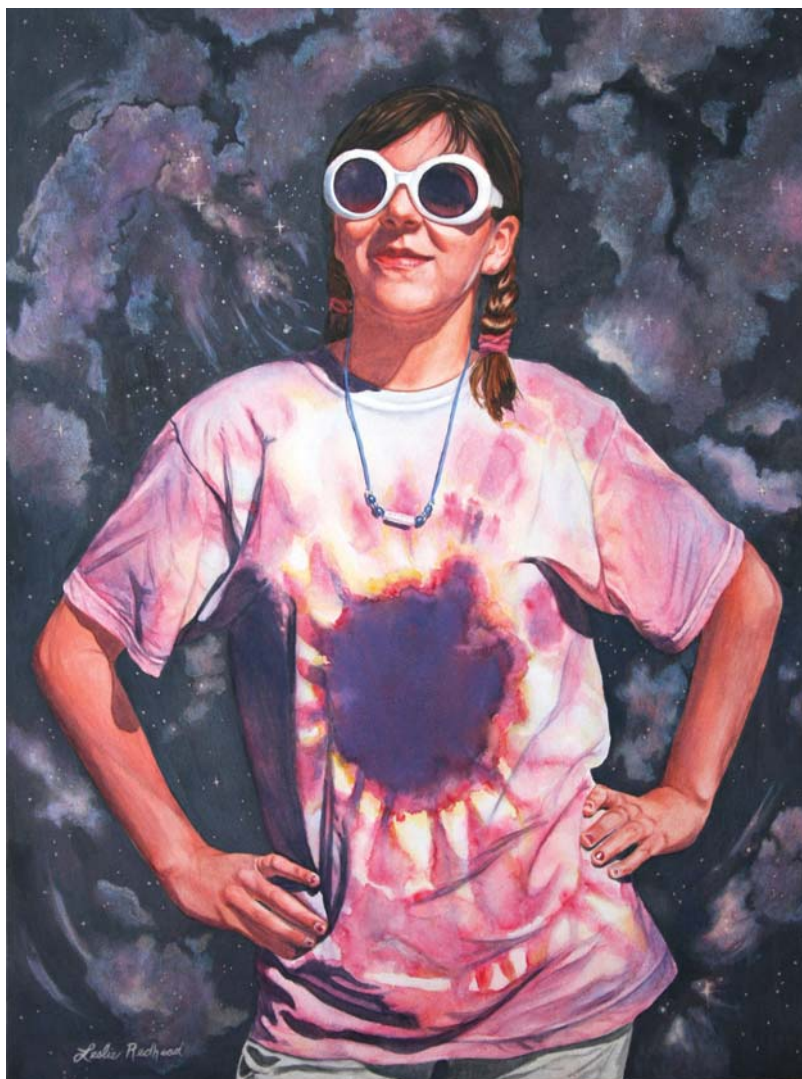
■ Week 10, Day 2

CARRY A COOL BAG

I am not an organized person, but I have discovered that I need to be somewhat organized if I want to be able to paint wherever I go, especially if I want to paint outdoors. I once had a canvas bag that I carried around, but it felt too big and clumsy. So I went on a quest to find the perfect bag. It had to be small and lightweight, and it had to hold all my watercolor necessities (excluding the paper). What I found was a cute little bag in the craft aisle, an aisle I tend to avoid at all costs because I am an artist, not a crafter. (This harkens back to my childhood and my quest to be different from my older sisters who do like to craft.) However, it was the perfect fit, and who knew that the craft aisle held so many inspirational and useful items? The best part about the handy little tote bag is that there is space for everything, including my brush roll, my palette and various odds and ends. Plus it is so cute! Bonus!

I carry it everywhere. I even keep it by my desk in my studio. I carry it upstairs to the kitchen when I want to work while the kids are doing homework. I take it on the bus. I take it to my daughter's swim meets. I take it to Spain. I feel super-organized and efficient—like an artist that paints in style.

If you are not into animal prints or polka dots, there are lightweight canvas bags that can be found in hardware stores. They disguise themselves as tool bags, but we all know that they work best as watercolor totes.



SUPERNOVA
24" × 18" (61cm × 46cm)



■ Week 10, Day 3

SAVE YOUR WHITES

White paper is a beautiful thing. It has a glow to it that white paint doesn't seem to have. Plus it looks more natural in a painting.

So in watercolor, it's important that you save your whites so you can retain this glow. To do that, you carefully and painstakingly paint around that white area. Or you protect it with a resist called masking fluid while you paint.

■ Week 10, Day 4

ARTIST'S MASKING FLUID

Masking fluid is a great way to preserve the whites in watercolor. It is applied to those areas that you do not want covered with paint, retaining the white of the paper. Once applied, you are free to paint over and around it without worrying that the area will get paint on it. After you have painted freely, remove the masking fluid and the white paper is preserved.

Here are some things to remember about masking fluid:

- » Make sure you are using nonpermanent masking fluid.
- » Do not shake your masking fluid. This creates bubbles that pop when it is applied and creates pinholes for the paint to get into. Masking fluid also clumps up in the bottle and hardens much faster when it is shaken. Instead of shaking, stir it with a straw or stick.
- » Keep it in a cool, dark place between uses. Try storing the bottle in a dark sock away from heat and sunlight.
- » If your masking fluid is older than a year, get a new bottle.
- » Do not leave your painting in a hot, sunlit place while it has masking fluid on it.



Saving the white paper with masking fluid

■ Week 10, Day 5

THE PERILS OF MASKING FLUID

Masking fluid bottles never seem to be made just right. You open a brand new bottle and start masking only to accidentally knock it over, spilling it on your jeans, on your paintings, and perhaps on your carpet, from which it will never come out. Now you no longer have masking fluid left.

And if you happen to leave the lid off of that bottle while you answer the phone or help a child with her homework, the masking starts to dry and clump, becoming difficult or impossible to use.

Or when the bottle is less than half full, the opening is not big enough to get whatever tool you are using to the bottom of the bottle. So you decide to pour it into the lid, thinking that you are being smart. But then you don't use it all up, and you pour what is in the lid back into the bottle for next time. However, when next time comes, the lid is stuck. It won't come off because the masking left in the lid has glued the lid shut. Sigh. It is all so very exhausting!

After much trial and error though, I found the perfect solution for my masking fluid. I pour what I think will be the right amount into an old film canister or spice jar and replace the lid on my full bottle of masking fluid.

Since there is just some of my masking in the film canister, if it spills, I still have more. If I have some left over and put the lid on the canister, the lid pops right off. And the opening is big enough for whatever tool I decide to use for applying the mask.



Masking fluid stored in film canisters

Rigger brush



■ Week 10, Day 6

HOW TO APPLY MASKING FLUID

Masking fluid can be temperamental and difficult to work with the first few times you use it. One important thing to remember is to never, ever use your good brushes with it. It will ruin them. Instead, use an inexpensive brush found at your local craft store or dollar store.

I prefer to apply masking fluid with a long, thin, rigger-type brush. When the masking fluid dries, it clumps up at the base and splays the hairs out. If you have a bigger brush, this splay of hairs gets bigger and more cumbersome to work with. With a thin brush, the splay is manageable. If the masking fluid does clump on the end of the bristles, I can just snip the end of the bristles and still have more brush to work with.

When using a brush, keep a jar of soapy water close by. Dip your brush into the soapy water before you dip it into the masking fluid. The soap coats the hairs on the brush and keeps the masking fluid from clumping up as quickly. Continue to dip it into the soapy water throughout the application. Dip the brush back in and swish it around in the soapy water when you feel the brush start to drag across the paper.



Soapy water for coating masking fluid brush

Week 10, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #10

This week's question is from Penny in Vancouver. It is, "What is gum arabic and why is it in watercolor paint?"

Gum arabic is a gum-like binder made from the hardened tree sap of the acacia tree. Gum arabic has properties that make it glue-like. As a binder, it's nontoxic and edible, and you'd be surprised to know how many things it is used in! Soda, candy and postage stamps are just a few.

Since it is a natural binder, it is used in watercolor paint to help pigment bind to paper. Without a binder, the pigments in paint would just brush off, like chalk or dirt. Binders ensure the paint stays where we put it.

Gum arabic is one of the oldest binders for paint. It dissolves easily in water, allowing the paint to flow. Another binder that is used in watercolor is honey.

Other binders are used for specific types of paint. Egg yolks are the binder for egg tempera. Encaustics (as well as crayons and colored pencils) use wax. Oil paints use a drying oil (the most common being linseed oil) that has been boiled with resin as its binder. Acrylics, which have only been around since the 1950s, use an acrylic polymer (a type of plastic) as the binder.

■ Week 11, Day 1

INSPIRATION

“You can’t wait for inspiration. You have to go after it with a club.”

—Jack London



■ Week 11, Day 2

RULING PEN

My favorite way to apply masking fluid is with a ruling pen. A ruling pen is a drafting tool used for drawing lines with ink when drafting by hand was more popular. Now the ruling pen can be used to draw lines and fill in areas with masking fluid.

The width of the line can be adjusted with the screw on top of the ruling pen. The pen works best when the edge of it touches the paper at an angle, letting the fluid glide across the paper.

Unlike the brush, you can allow the masking fluid to dry on the pen. Once it has dried, you can easily pull the masking from the tip of the ruling pen, making it so much easier to use and clean than a brush.



Cut a straw to serve as a quill



■ Week 11, Day 3

SUBSTITUTE RULING PEN

Now that you hunted all over the Internet and ordered a ruling pen, you are dying to use it! But it will be days before it arrives, and you really want to try masking fluid and paint now. What to do? Before throwing yourself onto your fainting couch, try making a substitute ruling pen. It can be made with an ordinary drinking straw.

Cut the end of the straw at an angle. It is best to cut it at a rounded angle instead of a point. If the straw is too pointy, it will scratch your paper and the masking as you put on the masking fluid.

The straw should act like a quill. Dip it in enough fluid that it will come out easily, but don’t dip it in so much that it comes out in a big glob. You may want to tap out the excess or practice before you put it onto your painting.

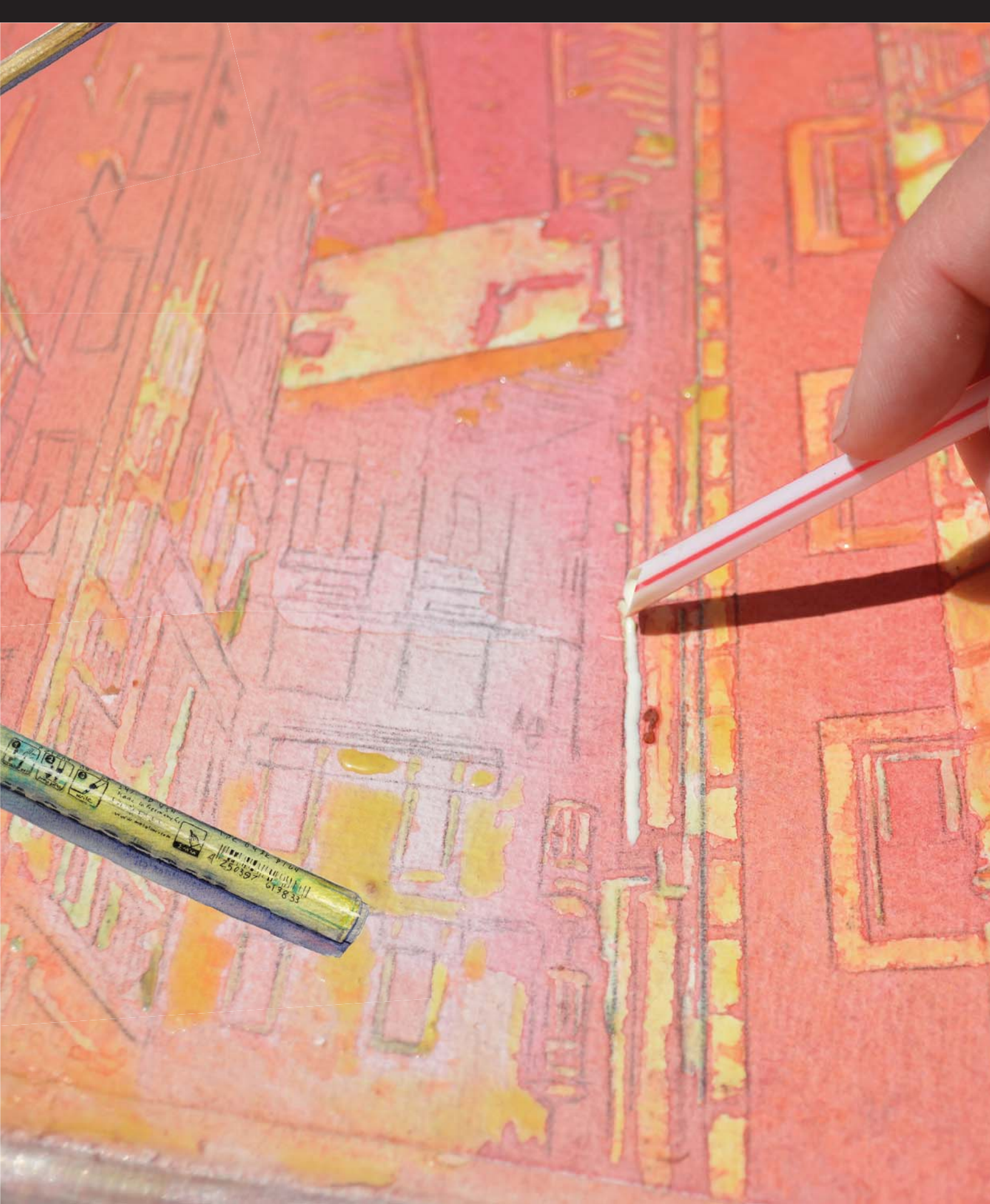
Straws are also good for stirring masking fluid. But the best part about a straw is you can throw it away or cut off the end and use the rest the next time you apply masking.



■ Week 11, Day 4

OTHER TOOLS FOR MASKING

Unless you have children or grandchildren, you may not have straws on hand. Now what? Well, there are a few other items that can be used to apply masking fluid. Chopsticks, toothpicks or even a small stick from your garden are useful tools. There are even refillable masking pens available. You may need to try a few items before you find the one that works best for you.





Mask larger areas using your finger

Use a sponge to apply textured masking fluid



■ Week 11, Day 5

MASKING LARGE AREAS

You don't usually need to mask large areas when painting. However, since I pour a lot of my paintings and can be quite sloppy about it, I do frequently need to protect larger areas of my paintings.

For these large areas, I still use masking fluid. I have tried using adhesive film products and sticky shelf liner, but I have discovered that the paint can get under the edges if my masking is not sticking properly. I tried to remedy this by sealing the edge with masking fluid, but when I lifted the masking fluid and the liner, there was a line where the fluid met the liner. And that line drives me bonkers! So I use masking fluid for the large areas. (Yes, I do use a lot, but what else are you going to do with it?)

The easiest way to apply masking fluid to large areas is to first outline the area with masking fluid using whatever tool you feel most comfortable with. Then gently pour the fluid into the area and spread it with your finger. The lined area creates a dam, and you can spread the poured mask quickly with your finger. As long as you don't spill any on your clothes or carpet, it is an easy cleanup. Just wash your hands afterward.

■ Week 11, Day 6

TEXTURE TECHNIQUES WITH MASKING FLUID

When I am painting, there are times I want to create the appearance of texture by using masking fluid. This could be the texture of a stucco building, falling snow or a dirty city sidewalk. I apply the masking fluid with a piece of scrubby sponge and then either pour paint or use a brush to paint over that area. Using this type of sponge will deposit the fluid onto your painting in a way that resembles a rough and pebbly texture. For best results, cut up the sponge into pieces that are a workable size.



HOTEL DON CURRO
30" x 20" (76cm x 51cm)

Week 11, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #11

This week's question is one that I am often asked during my studio tours and classes concerning my poured watercolors. The question is, "How do you know where to put your masking fluid?"

For my poured watercolors, I alternately apply layers of masking fluid and paint. The masking fluid preserves the colors and values that I want to save while I pour another layer of paint across the paper.

When I first decide what I am going to pour, I draw it out onto my paper, making sure the drawing is dark. For most of my watercolors, I draw with a light pencil, but for my poured watercolors, I need my pencil lines to be dark. This is because when you wet the paper and add layer upon layer of paint, the pencil lines start to fade. If the lines are too light, it is difficult to see them each time a new masking layer is added.

Using a black-and-white photograph of the image I am painting, I determine which values I want to save with my masking fluid. I start by saving the lightest value, which is white. I apply the masking fluid to the white paper and then I apply a layer of poured paint.

Once the first pour has dried, I again look at my black-and-white photo and determine the next value I want to save. I apply the masking to that value and pour again. I continue to build up the layers of masking fluid and paint until I am left with the darkest areas. Finally, I remove the masks and voilà, I have my painting!



SPARKLING WAVES
7" × 10" (18cm × 25cm)

■ Week 12, Day 1

THE PROPERTIES OF WATER

I once had a student say to me that when she realized she was painting with water, her paintings improved a great deal. That is true for her and will be true for you. Watercolor is painting first with water, and then with pigment.

Once you understand the properties of water, it is easier to let the water do most of the work. You are there to guide the pigments along as they come in contact with water and other pigments.

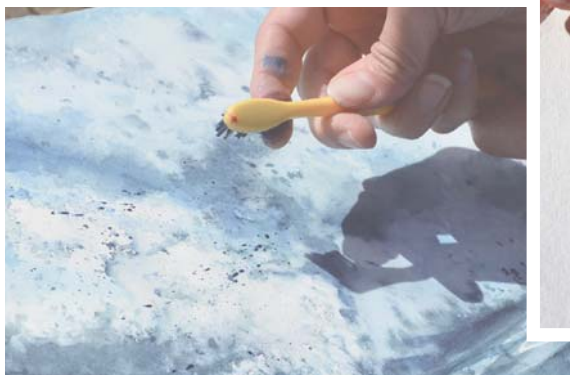
■ Week 12, Day 2

MORE TEXTURE TECHNIQUES WITH MASKING FLUID

Another way to achieve texture with masking fluid is by using a toothbrush to splatter the mask. I do this for asphalt on my poured watercolors and for the sparkles on water and waves.

My preference is for a soft child-size toothbrush—one that your child is not using (obviously). Dip it in soapy water (similar to applying masking with a brush), and then dip the toothbrush into the mask. Rub your finger along the bristles of the toothbrush with it facing toward the paper. You may want to cover up areas that you don't want masked with a paper towel while doing this. It can be messy.

Now you can pour or paint over the masking fluid, and when it is lifted, there is the appearance of texture or sparkles.



Lifting large areas of masking fluid



■ Week 12, Day 3

REMOVING MASKING FLUID

The best way to remove masking fluid is to first take a corner of a large area of mask, and then peel it away. Pull it gently up and away from your paper.

Please make sure your paper is completely dry when you do this. Now you can take that large chunk of masking fluid, roll it into a ball, and use it to rub and lift away smaller pieces of masking that remain on your painting.

■ Week 12, Day 4

RUBBER SOLE

Another great way to remove masking fluid is with a masking fluid remover or rubber cement pick up. I prefer to call it a “rubber sole,” since it reminds me of the rubber sole from the bottom of a shoe.



Detail of hand painted with watercolor and acrylic

YOUNG GIRL READING
18" × 22" (46cm × 56cm)

■ Week 12, Day 5

MASKING FLUID ACCIDENTS

It can be very difficult to remove masking fluid if it spills onto your table, floor or clothing. If the table or floor has a nonporous surface, leave the fluid to dry, and then peel it off. If the fluid spills onto carpet, clothing or some other porous surface, it gums up and is not easily removed. However, I have discovered that Goo Gone works wonders. Apply the cleaner to the area of the spill (repeating as many times as necessary) to break up the masking fluid. Blot the spill, and throw the item in the wash if appropriate.

Masking fluid
remover



■ Week 12, Day 6

KEEPING THE MASKING ON

Previously I mentioned that masking fluid should not be left on your paper in a hot or sunny place. It should also not be left on your paper for long periods of time because the masking fluid can bake into your paper and never come off. To prevent this from happening, be sure to take it off of your paper within a couple of days of application (or weeks—but no longer!), even if your painting is not done. It is easier to reapply masking fluid than it is to paint the whole painting again.

That said, I admit I have had success removing masking fluid that had been on my paper for several weeks. I was able to do this by putting the painting in a dark plastic garbage bag and keeping it in a cool spot. Please make sure the paper is dry before you place it in a bag so mold doesn't grow in that damp and dark bag. And don't forget about it! Go back and finish the painting before it is too late and you really cannot remove the masking.



Week 12, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #12

This week's question is from Donna in Victoria, British Columbia. It is, "What do you do if you have left the masking fluid on your painting too long?"

That is a problem that I have experienced myself. When I first moved to Victoria, I had a beautiful sunroom that was my studio. I loved the view and the light. I also loved the warmth from the summer sun. My previous studio had been the kitchen table, away from natural light. I was so excited to be in my new studio that I decided to start painting right away.

My painting was carefully planned out, and I got to work. It was a portrait and required careful thought and planning. I masked out a few areas of the hair and part of the hand so I could paint around it more easily.

After spending some time working on my painting, I discovered the one drawback of my sunroom: My masking fluid had baked into my paper in just a couple of days.

I was devastated! I tried everything to get the masking off, including sandpaper and a craft knife. But it was to no avail; the masking would not budge. So I decided I needed to cover it up. I got

out my white acrylic paint and set to work. I covered up the masking on the hand with a few thin layers of the white acrylic paint. Then I painted with my watercolor, and sometimes the watercolor mixed with acrylic on top of the acrylic covered mask. I applied washes in thin layers similar to how I had been working all along. Since acrylic is a water-based medium, it worked. I couldn't even tell that there was masking fluid underneath the paint. I was delighted.

I have also had success using watercolor ground when I have accidentally left the masking fluid on longer than I should. Watercolor ground is similar to a gesso or primer that is applied to a canvas wood or other surface in preparation for painting. The watercolor ground is porous like paper and accepts watercolor more easily than gesso. It is also a great way to cover up mistakes. Apply the ground, let it dry, then paint.

4

Back in the Black

■ Week 13, Day 1

GO WITH THE FLOW

Since we are talking about watercolor and painting with color and water, it is good to just go with the flow of the paint.

See what the water does. How does the water move? How do colors and pigments react with each other? Let it flow. Let it glide. Enjoy the movement and watch it dance.

■ Week 13, Day 2

SAVE YOUR OLD HAND TOWELS

When I am painting, I wipe my brush often to control the moisture that goes into my paint and onto my paper. I keep an old hand towel or washcloth handy for this purpose. If I used paper towels instead, I'd go through a whole roll very quickly. The hand towel is environmentally friendly, and I can hang it up to dry or toss it into the washer with other towels before I use it again.



MIX YOUR BLACKS

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a paintbrush. The brush has a black handle and a silver ferrule. A large, dark blue, textured paint application is on the brush head, with a small, lighter blue, curved paint stroke extending from it. The background is white. The hand is visible on the right side of the frame, with fingers gripping the handle. The paint application is thick and has a mottled, textured appearance.

■ Week 13, Day 4

THE BEST BLACK

French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna mixed together make the best black. One reason I like the combination of these two colors is I can make it a warm black by adding more Burnt Sienna or a cool black by adding more French Ultramarine Blue.

■ Week 13, Day 5

THE BEST BLACK BECOMES THE BEST GRAY

More French Ultramarine Blue
makes a cool gray



More Burnt Sienna makes a warm gray



HAROLD

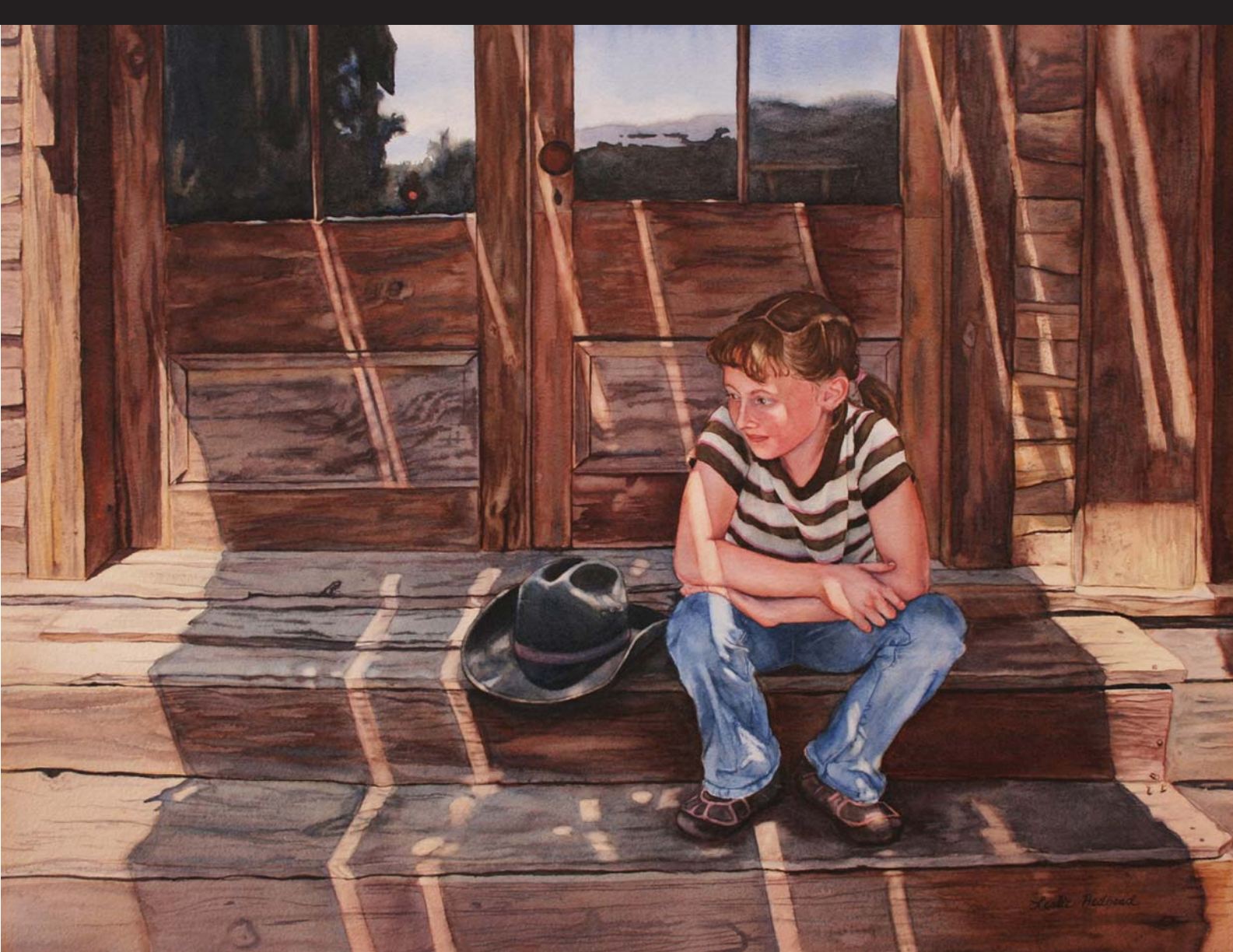
16½" × 13" (42cm × 33cm)

■ Week 13, Day 6

MORE REASONS TO LOVE THE BEST BLACK

There are so many reasons to love the mixture of French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna for your blacks. One, mentioned previously, is that you can vary your black between warm and cool, giving it interest. This effect is seen in the window behind the portrait of Harold.

Another reason is that these two colors both create a wonderful granulating effect. This granulation catches the light in different ways, making the black much more varied and appealing. This granulation can also be seen when using the combination to create gray, as seen in the wood behind Harold. Knowing that these colors create a granulating effect, I can use it in places where I want to create the illusion of rough texture.



COWGIRL

21" × 27½" (53cm × 70cm)



Week 13, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #13

Pat from Richmond, British Columbia, asks, "Do you paint every day?"

I wish I could paint every day! Unfortunately, I don't paint every day, but I do paint five or six days out of the week. Some days it is as little as thirty minutes, and other days it is for hours. There have been times in my life when I have not been able to paint at all and other times when I have been able

to paint all day and all night long. Now my goal is to pick up my paintbrush and apply paint to paper at least once a day, and although it may not be every day, I do try.



EAST END GIRL
20" × 12½" (51cm × 32cm)

■ Week 14, Day 1

LISTEN TO SOME MUSIC

I find that listening to some of my favorite music helps me get in the zone for painting. It also helps when doing different types of painting. Something fast and upbeat is good for painting quickly. Calm classical music works for detail work and when I need to stay relaxed.

Sometimes it helps you get in the zone so well that you don't even notice when the music stops. That is when you know you have entered a world of your own and you are painting to the beat of your own drum.

■ Week 14, Day 2

THE BEST REASON FOR THE BEST BLACK

It can be difficult to commit to painting a black or a really dark color. You might wonder, What if I mess it up? What if I put it in the wrong place? What if I can't undo it?!

With the French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna mix, you can undo it! Since these two colors are opaque and sit on the surface of the paper (another reason to know the properties of your paint), you can easily lift them off. Just use some water in your soft scrub brush.

Knowing how well these two colors lift, I have used the technique of lifting in several of my paintings. For *East End Girl*, I painted the background with the US (French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna) combo and then lifted out the bars behind her with a soft scrub brush.



■ Week 14, Day 4

A RICH VELVETY BLACK

Another option for black is to mix the three primary colors. One of my favorite blacks is Winsor Blue (Green Shade) mixed with Permanent Alizarin Crimson and a small amount of Winsor Yellow. Too much yellow will make the mix brown and muddy. I use just enough yellow to neutralize the purple of the Winsor Blue with the Alizarin Crimson. Of course it is easiest to get this black with fresh paint.

Since this mix is made with staining colors, it is difficult to work with. Staining colors are those colors that stay in the fibers of the paper and do not lift easily. This black does not lift easily. But it is so rich and yummy. I used this black (and gray) for *The Matriarch*, and it allowed me to create wonderful drama.

■ Week 14, Day 5

BLACK CAN BE USED

Black watercolor can be used at times. It is best to use black mixed with other colors; the addition of black will allow you to push your color over the edge if you are having a hard time getting the darkness you desire.

There are even some watercolors that already have black in the mix. Indigo is a beautiful rich blue that has black as one of its components, which makes it a deeper blue.

■ Week 14, Day 6

SCRUBBING AWAY

When trying to scrub away color or a line with your scrub brush, it is best to do so in a circular motion. Scrubbing in a straight line will create just that, a straight line. Unless that line is what you want, scrubbing in a circular motion creates a more natural transition.

Week 14, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #14

Wendy from Victoria asked me which tissues I prefer to use when painting. I do prefer a nice soft tissue when lifting paint or dabbing at excess paint. Kleenex Everyday tissues are soft, absorbent and don't have lotion or other additives in them. Paper towels and some brands of tissue are too rough for lifting and are not absorbent. These don't seem to wick the water away from the paper easily. It is also a good idea to stay away from tissues that are antiviral or have lotion in them. These contain oils that could be left behind on the paper. These oils can then become difficult to paint over, leaving a discolored spot or smudges on your painting.



THE MATRIARCH
29" x 21" (74cm x 53cm)

■ Week 15, Day 1

ONLY PAPER

Remember, it is only a piece of paper. It costs about the same as a Starbucks coffee. Painting can be more rewarding, refreshing and energizing than a cup of Joe.

So skip your coffee today and paint instead.

■ Week 15, Day 2

TO DARKEN A COLOR

When trying to darken or dull a color, you can do one of two things: add the complement or add a neutral tint.

When you add a complementary color to the original color, it will darken it. (The complementary color is the opposite color on the color wheel.) For instance, if you want to darken a red, add green to it. The same goes for purple and yellow and for blue and orange.



■ Week 15, Day 3

NEUTRAL TINT

You can also use a neutral tint to darken or gray a color. You can buy neutral tint in a tube, or you can make your own.

To make your own, mix French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna—another use for those two fabulous colors. So to darken a red, just add some French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna.



■ Week 15, Day 5

GORGEOUS GRAYS

Gray may seem like a boring color, but you can make gorgeous grays by mixing your complementary colors. (Remember that complementary colors are those that are opposites on the color wheel.) Now there are no more boring grays!

■ Week 15, Day 6

MAKE YOUR OWN VALUE CHART

Having a value chart or scale handy is essential for a new watercolorist. A value scale is a great way to organize the range of color from light to dark, or from white to black. The scale allows for the comparison of this range, with white on one end of the scale and black on the other, and shades of gray in between. You can either buy value charts, or you can easily make your own.

To make your own, use black watercolor paint or mix French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna into a black, and then draw ten or more rectangles on your watercolor paper. Paint one rectangle with the black mix; this is value 10. Leave one rectangle unpainted; this is value 1, the white of the paper.

Slowly add water to the black and paint a rectangle after each addition. Each rectangle you paint will be lighter than the next. You may end up painting more than one rectangle with the same value as you try to figure out how much water to add to the paint to make it lighter. Continue to add water until the mixture resembles weak tea; this is a light value; this is the lightest value, value 2.

Cut out the rectangles that vary in value, leaving behind those that look similar to another. Punch two holes into each. Thread a key ring through one hole in each rectangle to hold them together. Use the other hole to compare values. Place this hole over your reference photo and then your painting to check if you have painted the correct value. It helps to squint your eyes to see if the value matches. Now you can adjust the values of the painting if they don't match the photo.



YELLOW

+

PURPLE



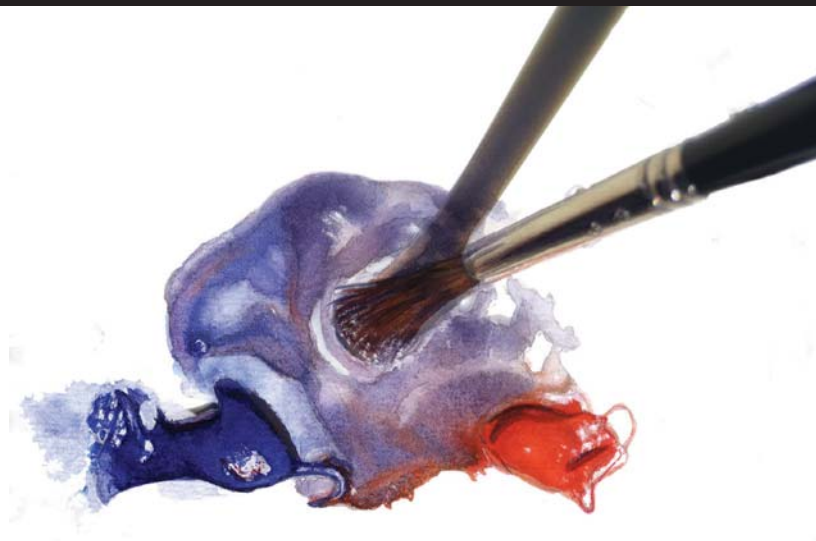
RED

+

GREEN



Value chart on key ring



BLUE + ORANGE = GORGEOUS GRAY



Mixes of various shades of gray for my final value scale. This will be reduced to ten values with black being #10 and the white of the paper being #1.



Week 15, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #15

A question that is often posed in my classes is, "What is the difference between regular watercolor colors and those that say hue (e.g., cobalt hue in place of cobalt blue)?"

A hue is a color that is similar to the original but an ingredient (usually the main pigment) has been substituted. This substitution is made because the original pigment is either toxic, unavailable or very expensive.

The color of a hue can be similar to the original color. However, I have noticed that since the original pigment may not be present, the property of the paint may be slightly different. For instance, the hue may not be as staining or as granulating as the original.

Both cobalt hue and manganese hue are common since the minerals have been removed from paints due to environmental concerns and environmental concerns.

5

Washes, Glazes and Wet-in-Wet

■ Week 16, Day 1

A PERFORMANCE ART

“Because watercolor actually moves on the paper, it is the most active of all mediums, almost a performance art.”

—Nita Engle

■ Week 16, Day 2

FLAT WASH

A flat wash is an even wash without any gradation from top to bottom or side to side. It is one value. There is no detail, so it can create a graphic look. It is great for glazes, underpaintings and skies.

There are a couple of ways to do a flat wash, either with a beaded wash or with a wet paper wash.



Wet-in-wet painting

■ Week 16, Day 3

BEADED WASH

A beaded wash is dependent upon gravity as it follows a bead of paint down the paper as you paint. To create a beaded wash, mix the color that you are going to use in a recyclable container or on your palette. This mix of paint and water needs to be nice and juicy. Make sure you have enough color prepared to cover the area you want to paint so you don't run out in the middle of your wash!

Tilt your board with your paper on it at an angle. The larger the angle, the faster the paint will run. Now dip your brush into the paint and start to paint. Gently follow that bead of paint down the paper. It is best to use the tip of your brush as you direct the paint; using the side may create streaks in the wash.

Let gravity guide you and the paint. You can go side to side with the bead or use small up-and-down strokes. Dip your brush back into your juicy mix as the bead starts to dry to reload it with paint. Do not dip the brush back into the water; this will dilute the paint. Leave the paper at an angle to dry.



Beaded wash with
#6 Kolinsky sable
round brush



CHINATOWN MARKET
18" x 13" (44cm x 33cm)

■ Week 16, Day 5

DON'T GO BACK

As you practice your beaded wash, you may discover that you missed a spot or two. It may be tempting to fix it in the middle of your wash. But don't go back! You will cause disarray and mayhem in your even wash.

As you carry your bead of paint down the paper, the part that you just painted is drying faster than your bead. By returning to your mishap, you will be adding very wet paint to a semi-wet area. The wet paint pushes out the drying pigment and creates a bloom.

Then your beaded wash is done for, and you hang your head and cry. The tears from your crying will create more blooms. Disaster. So don't go back. Not yet.

Instead, carry on. Keep on painting. You can take care of your mishaps after your wash has dried.

■ Week 16, Day 6

REPAIRING THE WASH

If you miss a spot or two while doing a beaded wash, don't go back and don't panic. Just wait for the wash to dry.

Then, using the paint you mixed for the wash (make sure you have not diluted it!), carefully fill in the holes. Using a smaller brush or one with a fine point (and making sure there is little paint in your brush), gently touch up the hole. If done carefully you can fill in your holes and pretend like it never happened.



Week 16, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #16

A question that is often asked by my beginning students is, "Can I use a blow dryer to dry the paint?"

Yes, you may use a blow dryer to speed up the drying process when painting. However, when doing large washes or pours, let your painting rest for at least ten to fifteen minutes before using the blow dryer. This lets the water distribute more

evenly and allows the paint to settle into the paper. Blow-drying when it is still too wet will push the water around, and unsavory things will happen.

Also realize that blow-drying will actually lighten the color. It really is best to let things dry naturally whenever possible.





■ Week 17, Day 1

GO FOR A WALK

When the weather is agreeable, get outside with your camera. Take a walk and see what you can see. Spend some time exploring the world outside. Be inspired by what is around you. Then take that inspiration back into the studio and into your paintings.

■ Week 17, Day 2

MAKING YOUR PAINT LIQUID

Mixing a color for a wash or a pour may seem simple enough, but there is actually a trick to it. Sometimes when you mix paint, lumps of the paint hide at the bottom of the mix just waiting to destroy your painting in the middle of your perfect wash. I know this from experience. Trust me.

There are ways to prevent that from happening. Start off with a pea-sized drop of paint and just a little bit of water. Instead of putting that bit of paint at the bottom of the container, put it on the side. Now use your yucky brush (*not* your nice sable), and slowly mix the paint into your water.

Once it is mixed, you may add more water until you reach the value and consistency you want. Repeat this process whenever you need to add more paint as well.

INTO THE WOODS
29" × 21" (74cm × 53cm)



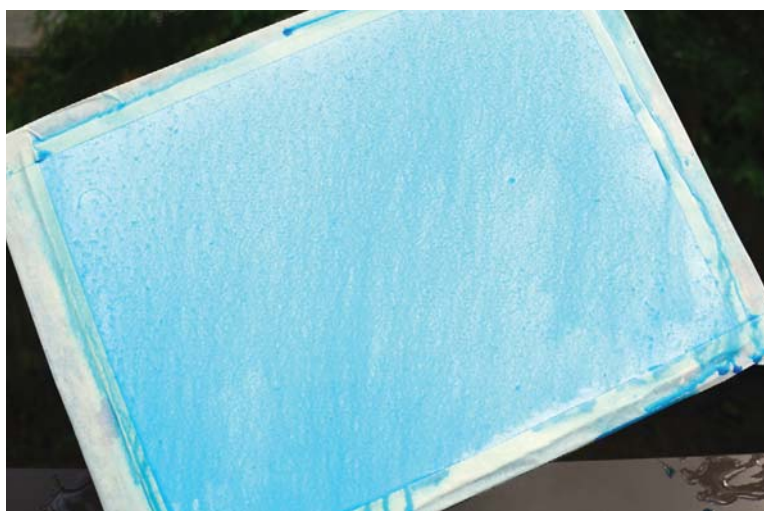
Mixing paint on the side



Wet the paper



Apply the paint



Move paper around to distribute color evenly

■ Week 17, Day 3

WET PAPER WASH

The second way to achieve an even flat wash is with what I call a wet paper wash. This type of wash works well for large areas of color.

First, mix your color in a recyclable container. Then wet your paper with clean water using your hake brush.

Once wet, apply the color that you mixed using a criss-cross motion. Then tilt and tip the board, making sure the water and paint are being distributed evenly.

After the excess paint has run off the board, wipe up with a paper towel, and leave the wash flat to dry.

■ Week 17, Day 4

GETTING THE PAINT TO MOVE

There are times—especially when it's warm—that the paper will dry too quickly when doing a wet paper wash. The paint stops moving before you get that even wash, and uneven lines or blooms of paint can be seen. To get the paint moving again, spray a light mist of water over the paper, especially where the paint has dried.



THE MATISSE
28" x 21" (71cm x 53cm)



CRASHING

14" x 20" (36cm x 51cm)

■ Week 18, Day 1

THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY
TO PAINT

Have you ever considered how differently your painting would look if you painted it yesterday or tomorrow instead of today?

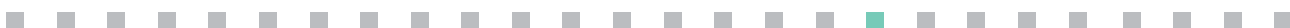
There is more than just one way to approach a painting. There is a world of possibilities out there. All of them are waiting to be tried. Which one are you going to try today?

■ Week 18, Day 2

GRADATED BEADED WASH

A graduated or graduated wash is a wash that gets progressively lighter in value. It starts out with a desired color and value and gets lighter as more water is added to the wash.

This type of wash can be done as a beaded wash. The only difference is that water is added to your mixture of color as you progress down the board. The blue stripes in the lower left-hand corner of *Crashing* are done as a gradated beaded wash.



END OF THE DAY
22" x 28" (56cm x 71cm)

■ Week 18, Day 3

GRADATED WET PAPER WASH

A gradated wet paper wash is similar to the flat wet paper wash. With the gradated wash, however, you don't put the color over the whole paper.

Start off by wetting the paper or area with water. Then add your mix of color only halfway down the area. Rinse out your brush. Remove the excess water from the brush.

Now pull the wash down into the rest of the wet area using a criss-cross motion. Continue to rinse and dry off your brush

until you reach the bottom of the paper. Tilt your paper and let the water spread evenly throughout, wiping the excess water and paint off the edges. Make sure the paint doesn't spread too far down into the area you want left lighter. Once the excess water is wiped off, leave the paper flat to dry.

■ Week 18, Day 4

LOSING HAIR

Sometimes you get a brush that is losing its hair. Or you have a dog that likes to shed. Either way, you might end up with hair in your beautiful wash.

It can be removed only when the paper is really wet or completely dry. If you try to remove the hair while the paper is in between those two stages, you will ruin your wash.

When it is really wet, take another brush and try to carefully lift or push it out. If you miss that opportunity, wait for it to dry, and then brush the hair off.

■ Week 18, Day 5

ADDING WATER TO PAINT

Adding water to your mix of paint for a gradated wash can be done by dipping your brush into the water before dipping into your paint mix. My favorite tool to add water to the mix is a medicine or eye dropper. A dropper adds more water to the mix quickly and before the bead on your wash has a chance to dry out. It is best to give your paint mix a little stir with your brush every time you add more water to it before you apply it to your bead. This is so the water and paint mix evenly.

The dropper also works well when adding color to a certain area when I am pouring paint.



Medicine or eye
dropper

■ Week 18, Day 6

GLAZING OR WET-ON-DRY

Glazing in watercolor is a type of layering of colors. In this technique, color is painted in an area and allowed to completely dry. Another thin layer of color is then painted, or glazed on top, of the dry color. Glazing is also called wet-on-dry painting.

For instance, when painting an orange, start with a yellow wash. Allow it to dry, then glaze with a red on top of the yellow.

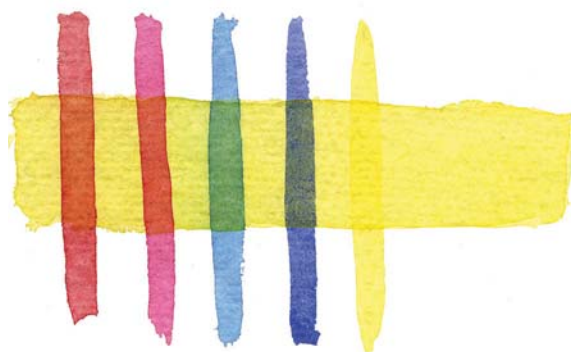
So why do I not just mix an orange? Because in glazing, the colors of each layer come through, giving a beautiful glow. There is more of a stained-glass effect with the glazing, and light seems to shine from it.



Painted orange



Glazed orange



Different colors glazed over yellow



Mixing paint into liquid
form for washes

Week 18, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #18

This week's questions were asked as part of the comments posted on my YouTube video about pouring watercolor. The first question is, "How do you wet your paper (while pouring)?"

Before I begin pouring paint, I wet my paper thoroughly with a large hake brush. A hake brush is a wash brush with soft hairs. I prefer this over a regular wash brush because the bristles are softer and don't scratch or lift the layers of paint I have already put down. I sometimes pour water onto the painting and spread it all over the paper with the hake brush. Then I pour the paint.

The second question is, "Do you use less water on the paper as you add darker layers?"

No, I do not use less water on the paper when I do the initial wash of water, but I do use less water in the paint. For the darker layers, I wet the whole paper again with the hake brush. I then shake off the water sitting on top of the layers of masking fluid. Since more masking fluid is added to the painting with each successive layer, more water will accumulate on top of the mask. While the paper is still wet, I pour on the concentrated paint color.

■ Week 19, Day 1

WHERE TO START?

I am often asked about how to begin a painting. My answer is to start with the hardest area of the painting or portion you feel will give you the greatest challenge. That way you won't paint a part of your painting beautifully just to ruin it by floundering into unknown territory.

If you find the most difficult part to be the background, do that first. If it is the main focal point, start painting there. Once you master the hard part, you will feel much better about the whole painting process.

■ Week 19, Day 2

WHY GLAZE?

Glazing is done to change or modify the color, shade or tint of previous washes. It is a great technique for getting crisp, clean detail, and as mentioned before, it is also a wonderful way to get luminous color.

■ Week 19, Day 3

BEST COLORS FOR GLAZING

It is easier to glaze with transparent colors; either staining or nonstaining colors will work.

Opaque colors tend to lift with each wash, mix with your new color(s), and create mud. Stay away from the opaques until you are nearing completion of the painting.

■ Week 19, Day 4

LAYERING COLOR FOR SUNSETS AND SUNRISES

Glazing your graduated washes makes a fabulous sky. Start with your lightest color first (I started with yellow and red). Then layer other colors on top of that color. Allow each color to dry before layering the next color.

■ Week 19, Day 5

CREATING SOFTNESS WITH WET-IN-WET WASHES

One way to create softness in your watercolor painting is to paint wet-in-wet. Wet-in-wet painting is a technique often used in watercolor and is the hardest to master since there is less control.

This technique depends on the wetness and saturation of the paper and the amount of pigment added to the wet paper. Colors can be placed side by side and allowed to flow together, or color may be dropped into another color.



Transparent colors
are better for glazing



HARD AND SOFT LINES

Our vision is such that when we focus on an object, we see the item that is in focus much clearer, sharper, and with more detail. Those items in our peripheral vision are in softer focus or appear fuzzy unless we focus on them. This is very different from a photograph.

By putting harder, crisper lines around your focal point, you will be drawing attention to it, which is what you want. Painting softer or fuzzy lines as you move away from your focal point creates dimension, and it becomes a support for your focal point instead of competing with it. Hard lines around the focal point with soft lines on the periphery also make the painting more true to human vision and less like a photograph.



■ Week 20, Day 1

ANOTHER STARTING POINT



With watercolor, you need to remember that it is best to paint light to dark. Figure out your lightest areas and paint those areas as a starting point. Then build up the painting from there.

■ Week 20, Day 2

WET-IN-WET PAINTING

Wet-in-wet painting can feel like a challenge. But as with all things, it just takes practice. It is getting to know the feel of the brush, the sheen of the paper, and the consistency of the paint.

Only practice and time spent doing it will help you master wet-in-wet painting.

■ Week 20, Day 3

DRYING PAPER

When painting wet-in-wet, you need to realize that the wetter the paper, the further the paint will spread. As the moisture in the paper evaporates or dries, the paint will not spread as far.

If you don't want the paint to spread too far, wait for the gloss, or shine, of the water to leave the paper before adding paint.

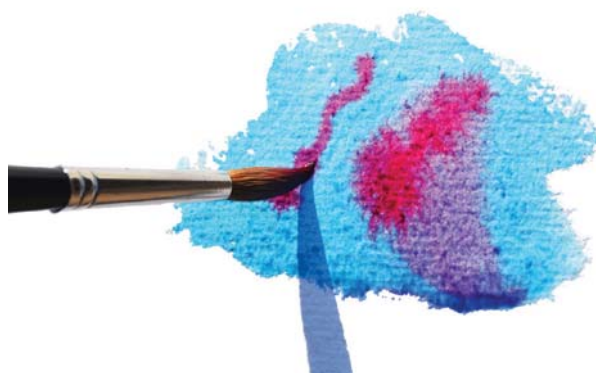
■ Week 20, Day 4

MORE PAINT THAN WATER

The most important thing to remember when painting wet-in-wet is to *have more paint in your brush than water*.

If you don't, the extra water in your brush will push out the paint already on the paper and make a bloom or blossom.

The drying paper with the addition of thicker paint will cause the paint to spread even less, and you can paint images with a softness to them. The combination of drying paper and thicker paint from your brush will cause the paint to spread even less.



Blooms result when there is more water than paint in your brush



STRANDS OF SILK
22" × 30" (56cm × 76cm)

■ Week 20, Day 6

LIFTING WITH WET-IN-WET

With wet-in-wet painting, not only can you add color, but you can take color away. You can easily lift some color out while it is still wet to create lighter, soft effects.

To do this, wait till your wet-in-wet painting is just damp after putting color into an area. Rinse your brush, dry it off, and then carefully drag it through your painting. You may need to rinse and dry off your brush often when doing this because the brush ends up picking up paint.

Keep in mind that when lifting, you sometimes won't see the full effect until the painting is completely dry.





FISH FOOD

21" x 28" (53cm x 71cm)

Week 20, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #20

Another question I am asked about my poured watercolors is, "How do you know where to pour your colors?"

That is a good question. There are a few things that I take into consideration when I start a pour. Among them are:

- » Where is the light coming from?
- » What color palette do I want to use?
- » Do I want to try to match the colors to the ones in the photograph or use a different arrangement of colors?

I also take into account that the eye is drawn to warm colors in a painting and that cool colors

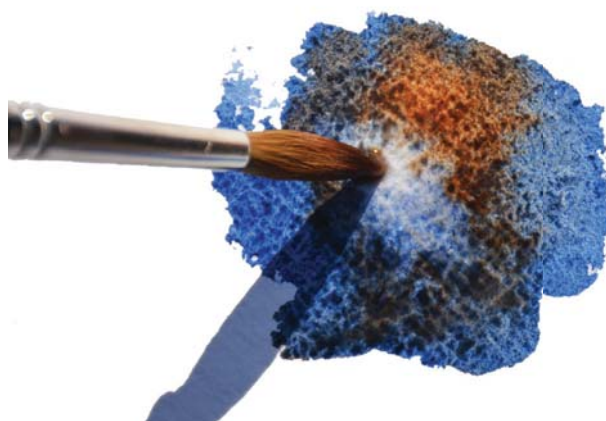
recede. I usually start with my warm colors and pour them in the direction that the light is falling across my focal point, or the direction I want the viewer's eye to move. I then pour my cooler colors around most or some of the edges of the painting. This gives the painting a vignette look that helps draw the eye to the focal point.

Since I usually use only three colors, I try to pour them in the direction that will help them mix into the colors that I want and am happy with.

■ Week 21, Day 1

FINAL JEOPARDY

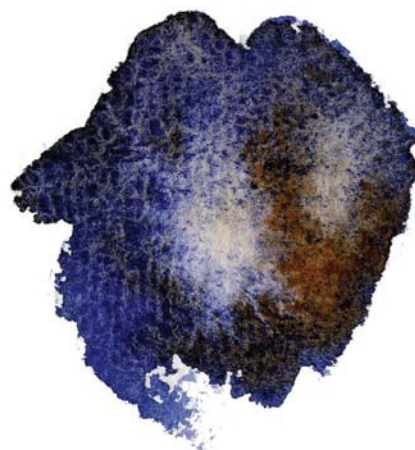
Sometimes it can be hard to be patient when painting, especially with wet-in-wet washes. Try playing a little ditty in your head as you wait for your wash to dry. For me, it is the *Final Jeopardy* theme song. Or I celebrate my birthday again by singing "Happy Birthday." Singing these songs allows enough time to pass that my wash is dry enough that I can drop in more color.



■ Week 21, Day 2

DROPPING IN WATER

Although I mentioned that it is best to have more paint in your brush than water, what would happen if just water was dropped into an area? This drop of water would push pigment out, creating a bloom or blossom that might create just the effect you want. However, the paper needs to have just the right amount of moisture for this technique to work. The paper can't be too wet or too dry—it's the Goldilocks of wet-in-wet painting. The paper will no longer be shiny, but there will still be a slight sheen or glossiness to it.



■ Week 21, Day 3

KEEP IT MOIST

When working wet-in-wet, it can be hard to keep your paper moist. That's why I have a spray bottle handy. The bottle needs to give a light mist, however. Spray a light mist of water into the air about 6" to 8" (15cm to 20cm) above your painting. This keeps the air humid and moist, and you don't have water drops affecting your wash.







GRAND PRISMATIC POOL (DETAIL)

25" × 40" (64cm × 102cm)

(Final painting on page 128)

■ Week 21, Day 6

LARGE AREAS OF WET-IN-WET PAINTING

Breaking down a painting for wet-in-wet areas is easy to do if you have natural lines in your painting where you can stop. However, sometimes you don't have a hard line, and you don't want to create one that might show through successive layers of paint.

For those areas, you can wet a smaller area with water, paint into it, then soften the edge with water before the paint reaches it. Continue to paint, softening the edges of the painted area as you go.

Week 21, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #21

This week's question comes from Sam from Brentwood Bay, British Columbia. She asks, "How do you get the diffused light spots in your backgrounds?"

There are a couple of ways to do this. The first is to work wet-in-wet, and while the paint is drying, drop in some water. Usually you want to have more paint in your brush than water, but this time you want the opposite. The drop of water will push the pigment out as it dries further, leaving behind the white of the paper.

The other way is to go back with a scrub brush after the wash has dried. Softly scrub the area with some water. Keep using clean water as you scrub, and sop up the dirty water with a tissue as you try to lighten the paint.

BEGINNINGS

30" × 22" (76cm × 56cm)

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Drybrushing and Salt Effects

■ Week 22, Day 1

ACCEPT YOUR MISTAKES

Mistakes happen. They are all part of the learning process. Accept them. Embrace them.

One thing is for certain: You will remember what you did wrong much sooner than what you did right.



■ Week 22, Day 2

SOFTENING AN EDGE

Wet-in-wet painting is a great way to paint objects softly, but sometimes you only want the edge of an object to appear soft. Softening an edge needs to be done while the paint is still wet. Take a clean, slightly wet brush (not too wet), and lightly touch just the edge of what you want softened. The paint will flow into the water that the damp brush leaves behind.



Softening an edge

■ Week 22, Day 3

DRYBRUSHING

The dry-brush technique is a wonderful way to create texture. To do this technique, make sure there is more paint than water in your brush. The brush should not be very wet, hence the name drybrushing. The paint you use can be diluted with water so it is pale, but there should still not be too much water in the brush.

Next, gently drag the brush across the surface of your paper. Use cold-press or rough paper since the raised surface of the paper will catch the paint from the brush.

A lovely texture is left on the surface, with either the white of the paper or another color showing through underneath.



LOCK AND KEY
11" × 15" (28cm × 38cm)



KNOCK, KNOCK
7" × 10" (18cm × 25cm)

■ Week 22, Day 4

WONDERFUL WOOD

One of the most common and effective uses of the dry-brush technique is for re-creating wood and peeling paint on wood. It just makes you want to reach out and touch it to see if it is real. You can even sense the prick of a splinter when drybrushing is done well.



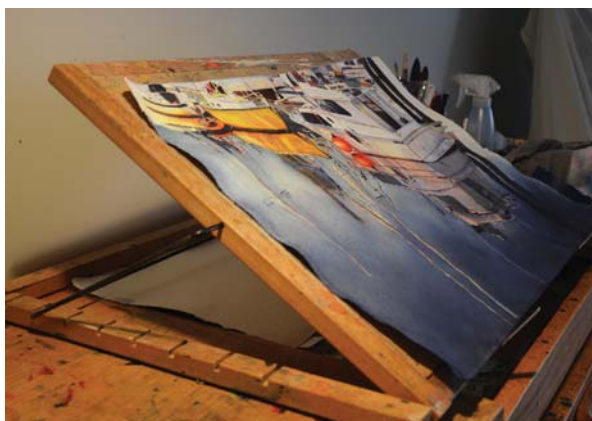
MILL BAY, BC
7" × 11" (18cm × 28cm)



■ Week 22, Day 5

SPARKLING WATER

Drybrushing is also a great and easy way to create sparkles on the water. It can be done with paint on white paper, creating a sparkling ocean on a bright sunlight day, or with darker paint over light paint. You can even use white paint over a dark color.

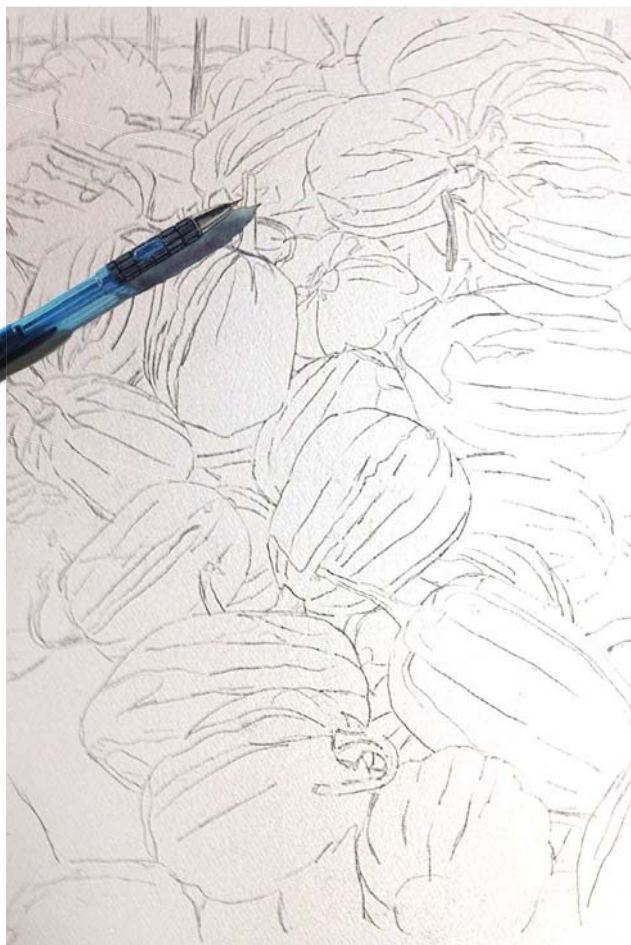


■ Week 22, Day 6

PAINT ON A TILT

There are many advantages to painting on a tilt. It allows the paint to flow downward, you can better see what you are painting, and it is easier on your neck and shoulders.

I have an easel at home that adjusts the tilt anywhere from flat to straight up and down, depending on what type of wash I am doing. It is just a tabletop easel, but it does the job well.



Drawing used at the start of the painting



AUTUMN'S BOUNTY
15" × 22" (38cm × 56cm)

Week 22, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #22

This week's question is from Kathleen. Her question is about my poured watercolors. She asks, "How do you continue to see the base drawing underneath all the layers so you can accurately apply masking?"

That is a great question. Usually when you draw out your image on watercolor paper, you don't want the pencil lines to be too dark and overtake the effect of the painted image. However,

with poured watercolors, you do want the pencil lines very dark. The lines will fade with each successive layer of water and paint that you add. Often, if the pencil lines are too dark in a white area, the masking fluid lifts them when it is taken off.

■ Week 23, Day 1

PAINT FOR THE LOVE OF IT

As I was running through my favorite park one morning, I reflected on how painting is like running.

I started running just a few years ago. I probably will never win a race. I probably will never be a great runner. I know I don't look like a runner with a thin, lithe runner's body.

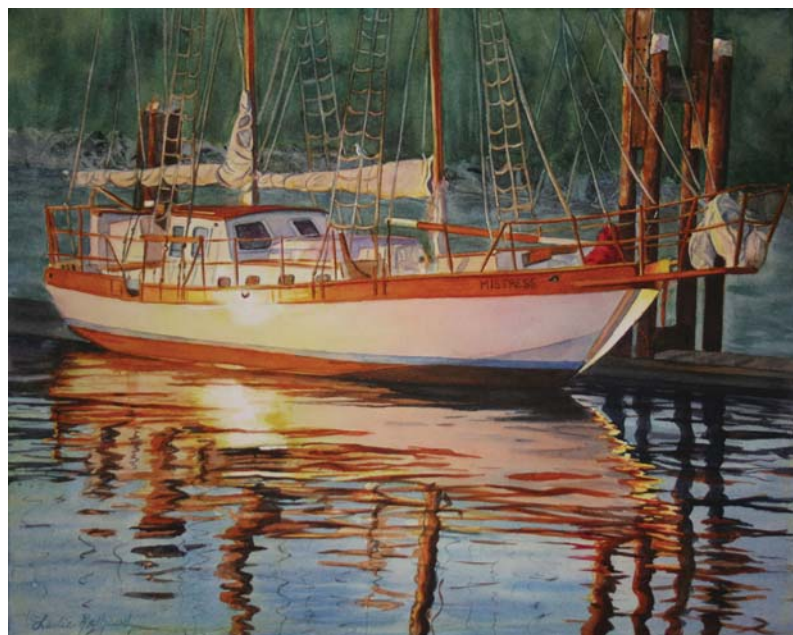
But I certainly love running. I enjoy discovering new places and seeing new things while running. I like the rhythm that my legs and my arms get into while running. I am excited by the ideas I get while running. I am relieved when the weight of the world begins to lift as I run. Most importantly, I delight in the feeling I get after I have completed a run.

The same can be true of painting. Many people discover painting later in life and may not ever win an award or be one of the great painters of the world; they may never look like an artist. (What does an artist look like, anyway?) However, that is not why most of us paint. We paint because we enjoy discovering new possibilities of expressing with color, line and form. We are amazed by the way colors interact. We are excited by the rhythm and flow of watercolor. Most importantly, we delight in the feeling we get while painting and in that sense of creating something of our very own. Simply put, we paint because we love it.

■ Week 23, Day 2

WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE AN EASEL

Carrying an easel everywhere you go can be a drag at times. Or maybe you just haven't invested in one that you like for your studio. If you don't have an easel but want to paint on a tilt, just use whatever is handy. A paper towel roll, a tissue box, a rolled towel, or your brush roll work well for putting your board at a tilt.



HARBOUR MISTRESS
14" x 20" (36cm x 51cm)

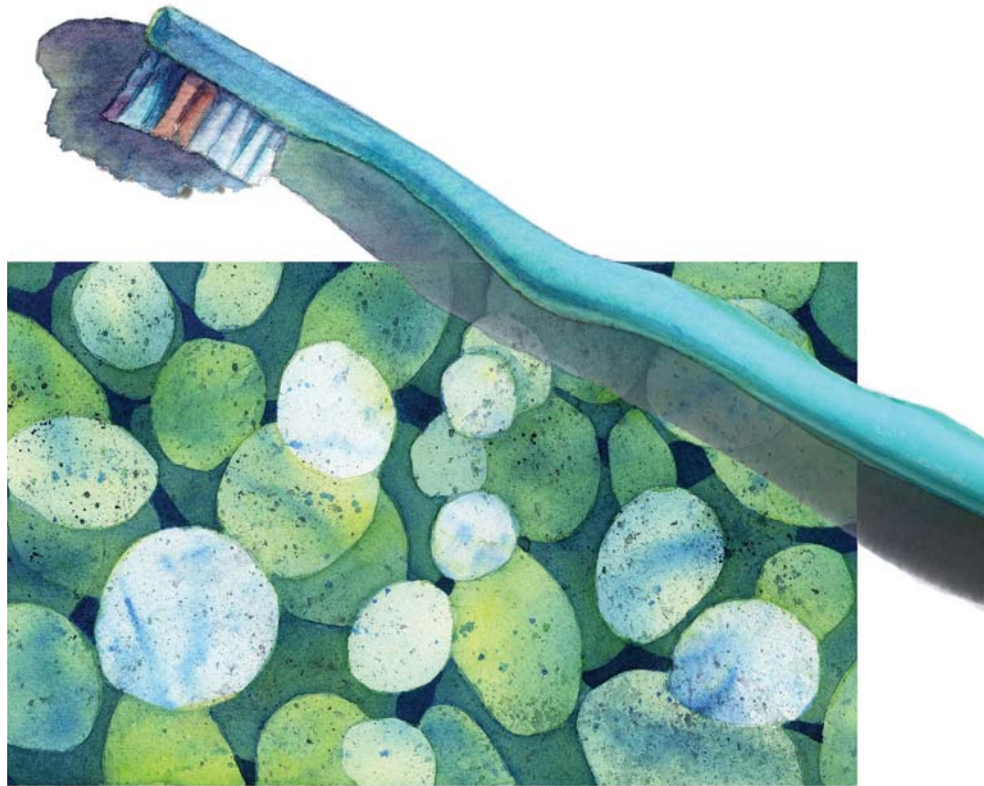


■ Week 23, Day 3

SPECKLED ROCKS

As previously mentioned, there are many wonderful uses for a toothbrush when creating texture. You can splatter masking or paint. I especially like using a toothbrush for making speckled rocks.

To do this, dip the toothbrush into your choice of paint, gently rub along the bristles with your finger, and speckle away. Spritz some of the flecks of paint with water to create softer looking marks.



■ Week 23, Day 4

ASPHALT STREETS

Not only can you splatter masking fluid with a toothbrush for asphalt streets, you can splatter paint to get the look of a pebbled road. This can be done for asphalt, dirt or gravel-covered lanes.



SPANISH OLIVE GROVE

11" x 15" (28cm x 38cm)



RATHREVOR BEACH
7" × 10" (18cm × 25cm)

■ Week 23, Day 5

FALLING SNOW

Use white watercolor, gouache or even acrylic with a toothbrush to create falling snow or a snowstorm. Also try using iridescent colors for the snow and see how it sparkles in the light.

■ Week 23, Day 6

ANOTHER WAY TO PAINT SPARKLING WATER

There are many ways to create sparkles on water. Drybrushing and using masking fluid are some ways. Splattering white paint is another.

Yet another way to create the sparkles is to use a craft knife. Gently scratch the surface of the paper to remove the paint, creating sparkles in some wonderful ways, especially if you forgot to save



Scratched paint

the whites at the beginning. I actually prefer this to using white paint because the white of the paper always looks so much fresher than paint. Just be careful not to scratch so hard that it cuts your paper!

Week 23, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #23

This week's question comes from Gillian of Vancouver, British Columbia. She asks, "Do you ever use salt for texture in your watercolor paintings? If so, when and for what effects?"

Yes, I use salt, and I find the effects of salt exciting. Salt allows for the paint to create unpredictable yet interesting textures.

There are a couple of ways and places where I use salt. I use different types of salt for capturing

the texture in buildings, such as stucco or brick. I also use salt in painting landscapes; it is great for stars, trees, sand, and other possibilities.

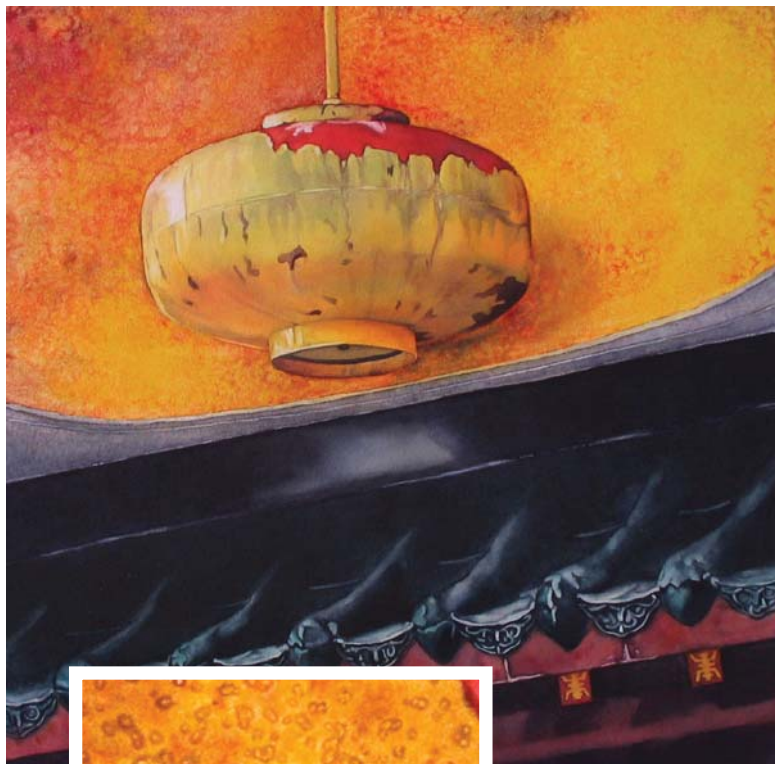
Depending on the size of the salt, you can get various effects for your painting. These effects are best created when the paint is allowed to air dry. The salt technique does not work with a blow dryer.

COARSE SALT

Coarse salt does work best if there is a generous amount of pigment. It does take longer to dry, but the effects are worth the wait.

WHICH SALT?

As you experiment, you will realize that the size of the salt affects the different effects you generate. For instance, in *Driftwood Gathering*, I used three sizes of salt to achieve the appearance of distance I wanted for the beach rocks and sand. I used table salt for the area furthest away from the viewer. For the middle ground, I used kosher salt. And for the foreground, I used big chunks of sea salt.



CHINATOWN MARKET (DETAIL)



STUDIO SECRETS #24

When using salt, I paint the area first and then add the salt while the paint is still wet. I do not paint on top of the salt area after the paint has dried, because the textural effect of the salt can be removed. However, I do apply a quick wash of water or a pale-colored glaze to the area after removing all the salt. I do this with either a large round brush or a hake brush and a light touch.

Once the dried salt is removed from the painting, some dust is left behind. I apply the wash to remove the dust, due to its possible corrosive qualities, and to brighten the painted area. As for damaging the paper, if the salt and dust are properly removed, there shouldn't be anything left to harm the paper. I have used salt for years and have not noticed any deterioration of my work because of it.



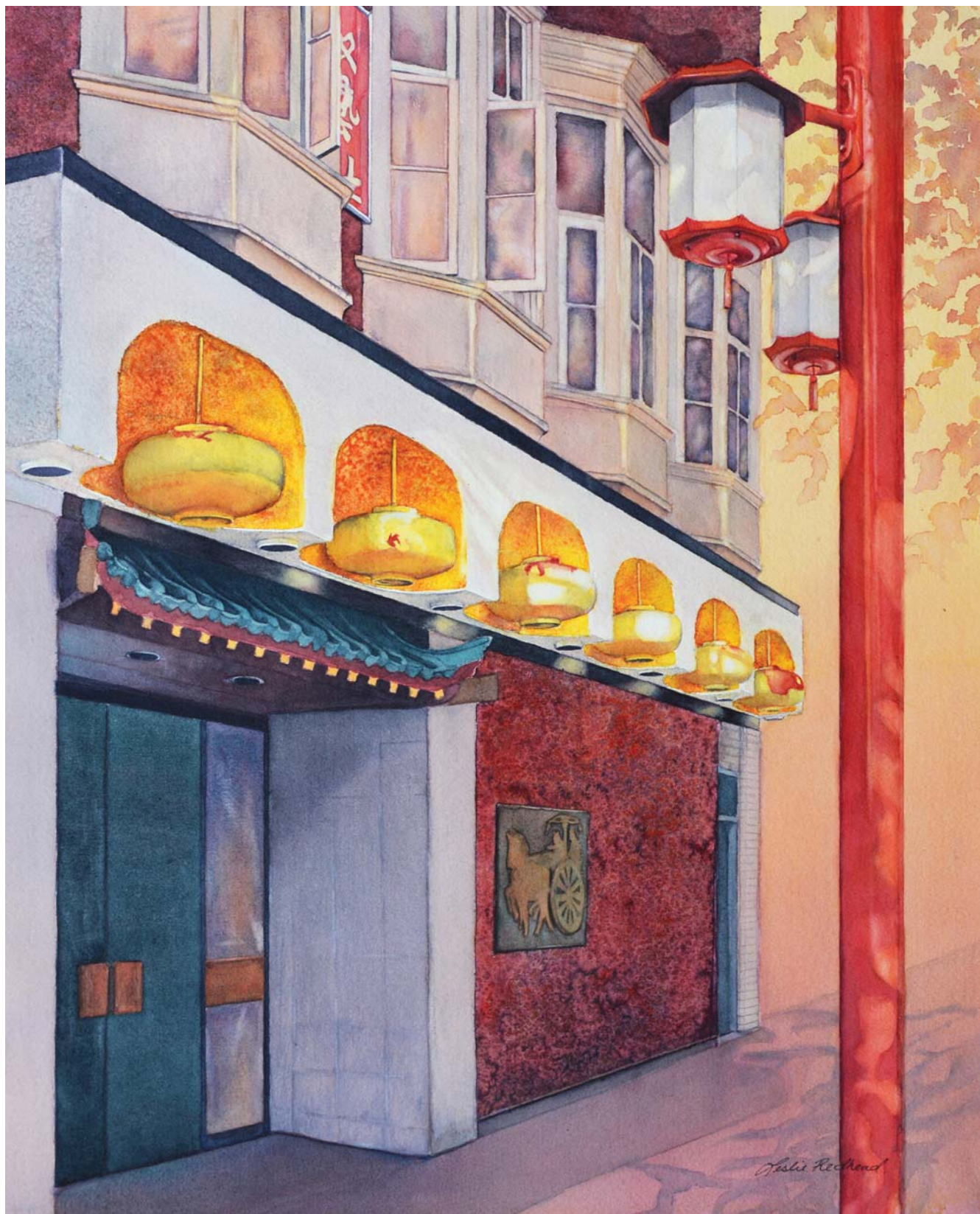
DRIFTWOOD GATHERING
24" × 35½" (61cm × 90cm)

WHAT IS YOUR MOOD?

TOO WET FOR SALT?

SCRAPING SALT

STICKY SALT



CHINATOWN, VANCOUVER, BC
27" x 21" (69cm x 53cm)

GLAZING OVER SALT

This wash may lift the pigments already in place and mix the colors together, thus reducing the salt effect and possibly making mud. To avoid this, take the glaze color nice and juicy, with enough water in it to allow it to flow easily. Then quickly pass over the surface of your paper in one go. Your brush should barely touch the paper. If you stay on the paper too long with your brush, it will lift the color.

■ Week 25, Day 6

REMEMBER THAT . . .

A watercolor painting of a red brick building facade. On the left, a doorway is partially visible, with a hanging basket of pink flowers and a black wrought-iron bracket mounted on the wall. To the right of the doorway is a tall, narrow arched window with a dark frame. The brickwork is detailed with various shades of red and orange. The painting is signed 'Charles Richmond' in the bottom right corner.

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Week 25, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #25

This week's question comes from Dana in France. She asks, "What size paper do you normally use for your watercolor work?"

My painting sizes are based on the sizes of watercolor paper that's readily available. A full sheet of paper is 22" × 30" (56cm × 76cm), which I use for my large paintings. I cut that in half to get the half sheet size of 15" × 22" (38cm × 56cm).

A quarter sheet is 11" × 15" (28cm × 38cm), but I usually tape it off for an 11" × 14" (28cm × 36cm) painting. This fits nicely into a 16" × 20" (41cm × 51cm) frame.

And finally, I will cut the quarter sheet in half, to 7½" × 11" (19cm × 28cm), for small, quick studies.



Different paper sizes: full sheet, half-sheet and eighth-sheet

7

More Texture Techniques



WELCOME TO THE MILL
15" x 11" (38cm x 28cm)

■ Week 26, Day 1

CELEBRATE!

Once a year we as Americans celebrate and reflect on the freedoms that we have and share. One such freedom is the freedom to express yourself, whether that is through words, song or paint.

Celebrate the freedom you have by painting what is in your heart. As Albert Einstein said, "Everything that is really great and inspiring is created by the individual who can labor in freedom."

■ Week 26, Day 2

COFFEE

Coffee granules can create interesting textures and allow you to achieve that perfect coffee color in a painting. Try it to get the graininess of wood or bark or for granules of mud and dirt. Be sure to test your coffee first before you add it to your painting. Freeze dried is best and some brands work better than others.



Painted coffee

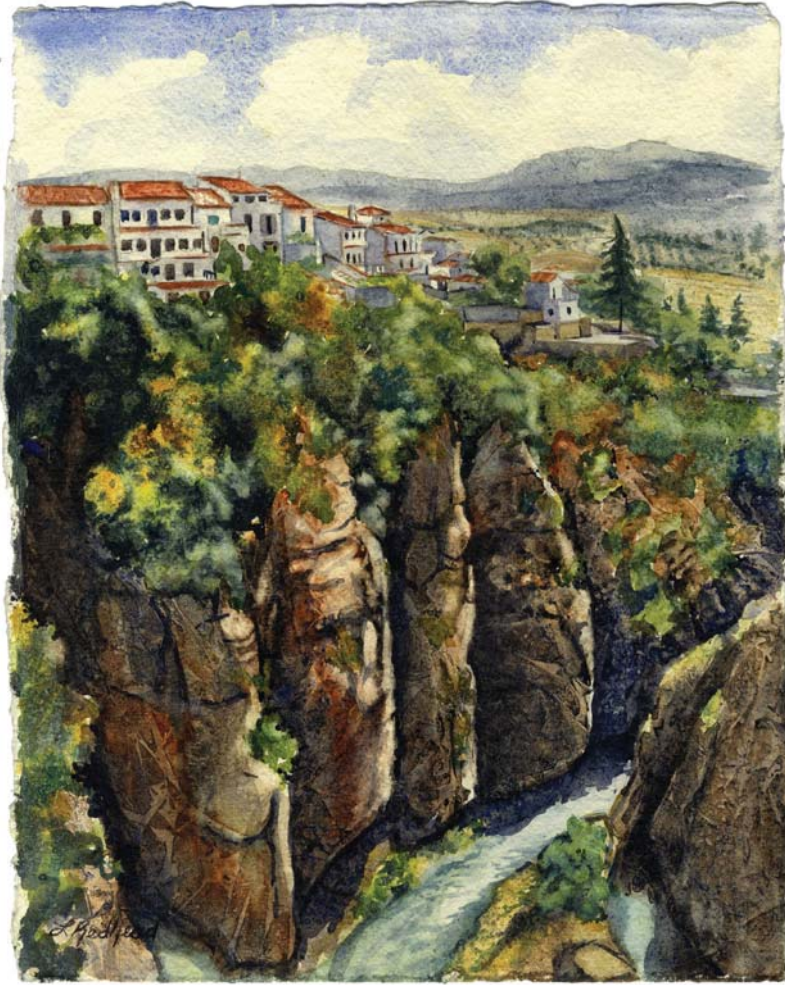
ROCKS IN WATERCOLOR

Next, put down the color where you want the rocks. While the paint is still wet, scrunch up a piece of ordinary plastic wrap and place it in the paint (Figure 1). Let the paint dry (Figure 2). Then remove the plastic wrap. You now have the beginnings of your rocks.

■ Week 26, Day 6

PLASTIC WRAP TIP





CLIFFS OF RONDA
14" x 11" (36cm x 28cm)

Week 26, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #26

A question that Jenna in Idaho asked recently was, "Can you mix watercolor and acrylic in a painting?"

The answer is: Of course!

With art, almost anything goes in the struggle to express our vision. Acrylic and watercolor work well together because they are both water-based mediums. As previously mentioned, white acrylic paint works just as well as watercolor, if not better in some situations.

I know many artists and illustrators that use both mediums. Know, however, that some transparent watercolor societies and competitions accept only purely watercolor paintings (with no

acrylic paint, gouache or ink). Other watercolor societies accept any water-based medium (including acrylic paint, watercolor and gouache). If you are interested in joining a watercolor society or competition, make sure you understand what they are looking for.

Each society has different rules and guidelines for submission and acceptance of work. These guidelines can usually be found on a society's website or in a prospectus and are enacted by a board of members accomplished in the medium or watercolor.



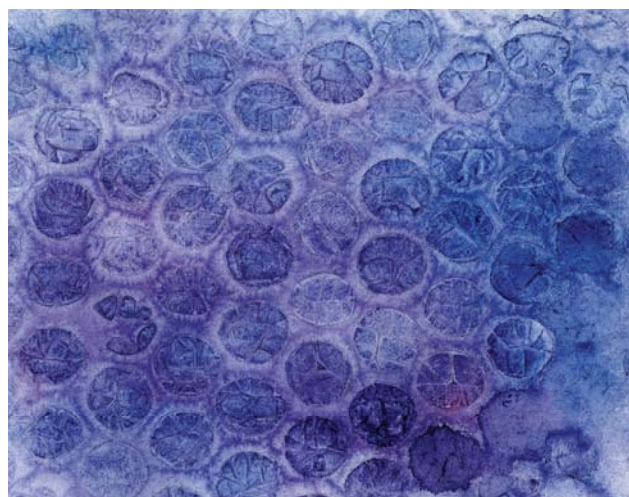
Getting out to visit local art fairs and festivals can be fun and creatively stimulating. There is so much inspiration to be found at these events. It is also a good way to meet other artists and connect with your arts community.

A watercolor illustration of a rocky coastline. The rocks are depicted with various shades of brown, tan, and ochre, showing texture and depth. Above the rocks, three dark silhouettes of birds are shown in flight against a plain, light-colored background. The style is soft and painterly, characteristic of watercolor art.

Palette-knife rocks

■ Week 27, Day 2

Another way to make rocks in watercolor is to use a palette knife. Mix a variety of rock-like colors to a thick consistency and paint them where you'd like the rocks. Using the side of your palette knife, scrape away some of the paint, creating rocks and rock shapes.



Bubble wrap effect

■ Week 27, Day 3

Bubble wrap can add some interesting elements to your water-color painting. Paint the surface, and while the paint is still wet, press bubble wrap into the paint, and allow to dry. It does help to weigh the bubble wrap down with a book while drying.

Just imagine all the pattern possibilities that different-size bubble wrap has to offer.



■ Week 27, Day 4

STAMPING

A stamp is another tool to try when painting. Stamping can be used to create grass so you don't have to paint every single blade.

To make your own grass stamp, you will need a piece of illustration or mat board. Cut out a small square of the board, then use a craft knife to scratch in some grasslike blades. Add a piece of tape on the back to make a handle for the stamp.

Apply paint to your new stamp and use that to print the grass onto your painting. You can apply one color to the stamp or a variety of grass colors, such as yellow and green. Spritz the printed grass with water so it doesn't look so contrived and more like a painting. Now you can give the impression of a whole meadow with just one stamp.



THE GUARDIAN
24" × 36" (61cm × 91cm)

Week 27, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #27

Miriam in New York asks about stamping with watercolor. "Can you reuse a stamp on another painting at a later time or do you have to make a new stamp? How deep do you cut your stamp and how much paint do you load on the stamp?"

First of all, I have been able to reuse a stamp, but not for long as it will only last a few times of being loaded up with paint. I am usually able to use one stamp for painting. However, depending on the size of the painting, I may have to cut several stamps. If it is a smaller painting, I am able to save that stamp for another small painting. It is best to make the stamp out of illustration board instead of matte board if you

want to reuse it often. It is best to make the stamp out of illustration board if you do want to reuse it more often.

Second, the deeper the stamp is cut, the more it shows the reverse of the engraved image and the more texture you will get. Play with cutting at different depths to discover what you like.

Finally, I find that I do need to put quite a bit of paint on the stamp. It is best to test the stamp on a separate piece of paper before proceeding to your masterpiece.



SECRETS SHARED

21" x 28" (53cm x 71cm)

■ Week 28, Day 6

CREATING DISTANCE WITH GRASS

When creating the sense of distance with grass, remember that things up closer will appear larger. The grass up close will be longer and taller. The strokes of grass will get smaller and smaller the farther back it goes.

Eventually, the grass will just become color without any strokes.

Week 28, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #28

Carlin in Utah asks, "Who is your favorite artist, teacher and/or style of painting?"

I love watercolor, of course, and am attracted to it wherever I go. I do have many favorite watercolorists. They are John Singer Sargent, Winslow Homer and Andrew Wyeth. All of these artists are no longer living, but they have been huge influences on my work, and I consider them to be my favorite teachers. By studying their work and trying to reproduce what they have done, I have learned how to improve my own painting.

I have also taken courses from current watercolorists to whom I feel a connection. These are usually not the artists who teach the latest

trends but the ones with wisdom in which I truly wish to partake. These artists have mastered their craft and are willing to share their knowledge and love of the medium with me as well as others.

I believe it is important to find a few artists who are passionate about their work and can be a motivation to you. Their work and inspired life can become exemplars for your own work. You will discover that there are things you can learn from these virtuosos that can be incorporated into your own vision and art.

INSPIRATION STATION

To help find that station, look for an amazing part of your painting that you really like and congratulate yourself for creating it. That was *you* who put down that gorgeous color, who captured that mood, or shaded that area perfectly. Once you acknowledge that, the critic will have to quiet down, and the rest of your painting will go much more smoothly.

SPRAY IT!

A vibrant watercolor painting of several red and orange flowers with green leaves, set against a background of blue, green, and white washes. The style is expressive and painterly. The signature 'Katie Rothman' is visible in the bottom right corner.

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FUN FOLIAGE

Load up your brush with different colors of paint. Tap the brush against another brush or stick. Be sure to get close enough to your paper that the paint lands on the paper. Be sure to protect the areas that you do not want to get splattered and messy.

■ Week 29, Day 6

FUN FOLIAGE WITH A DIFFERENT BRUSH

Different-size brushes will create different-size splatters of paint. I like to use a big floppy brush to start off my splatters because the big drops of paint that result cover a lot of area quickly. Then I move to a smaller brush for smaller drops of different colored paint as the painting begins to dry.



SPRING IN VICTORIA
11" x 14" (28cm x 36cm)



THROUGH ROSE COLORED GLASSES
22" x 30" (56cm x 76cm)
(painted on Aquabord)

Week 29, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #29

A common question I receive from my students and my collectors is, "What is Aquabord?"

Aquabord is a hard board coated with clay that is made by Ampersand. It is similar in texture to cold-press watercolor paper and accepts watercolor paint very nicely. There are a few differences between Aquabord and cold-press paper, though. The main difference is that the board surface is more workable than paper. This allows for the paint to be lifted much easier. This is obviously good for fixing mistakes or to lighten an area. However, when layering large washes of color, it doesn't seem to dry as evenly as paper. You need to make sure the area you are layering is completely dry before applying another glaze.

The color also appears more vibrant on the board than on paper. It is easier to achieve a brighter color and darker darks with fewer glazes. I also find Aquabord has an appealing texture that, while similar to cold-press paper, is a bit pebbly, and that lends well to certain subjects.

Aquabord does accept masking fluid as well as wet-in-wet painting. Painting on the Aquabord is not exactly like painting on paper but is pretty close. The best part about Aquabord is that if you seal it with a clear fixative, it doesn't need to be put behind glass.

PLAYING IT SAFE?

—Frank LaLumia

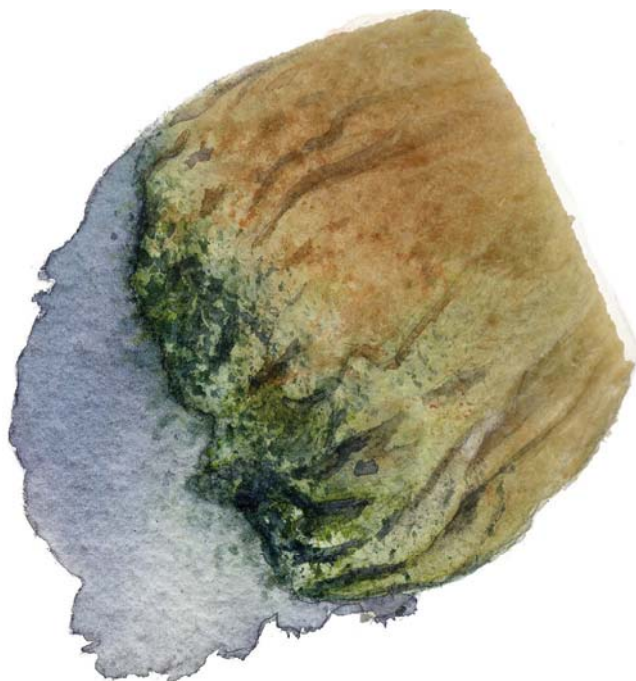
■ Week 30, Day 2

SPONGING TREES

■ Week 30, Day 3

MORE SPONGING

The background trees in *Englishman River Reflection* (page 111) were made with a sponge.



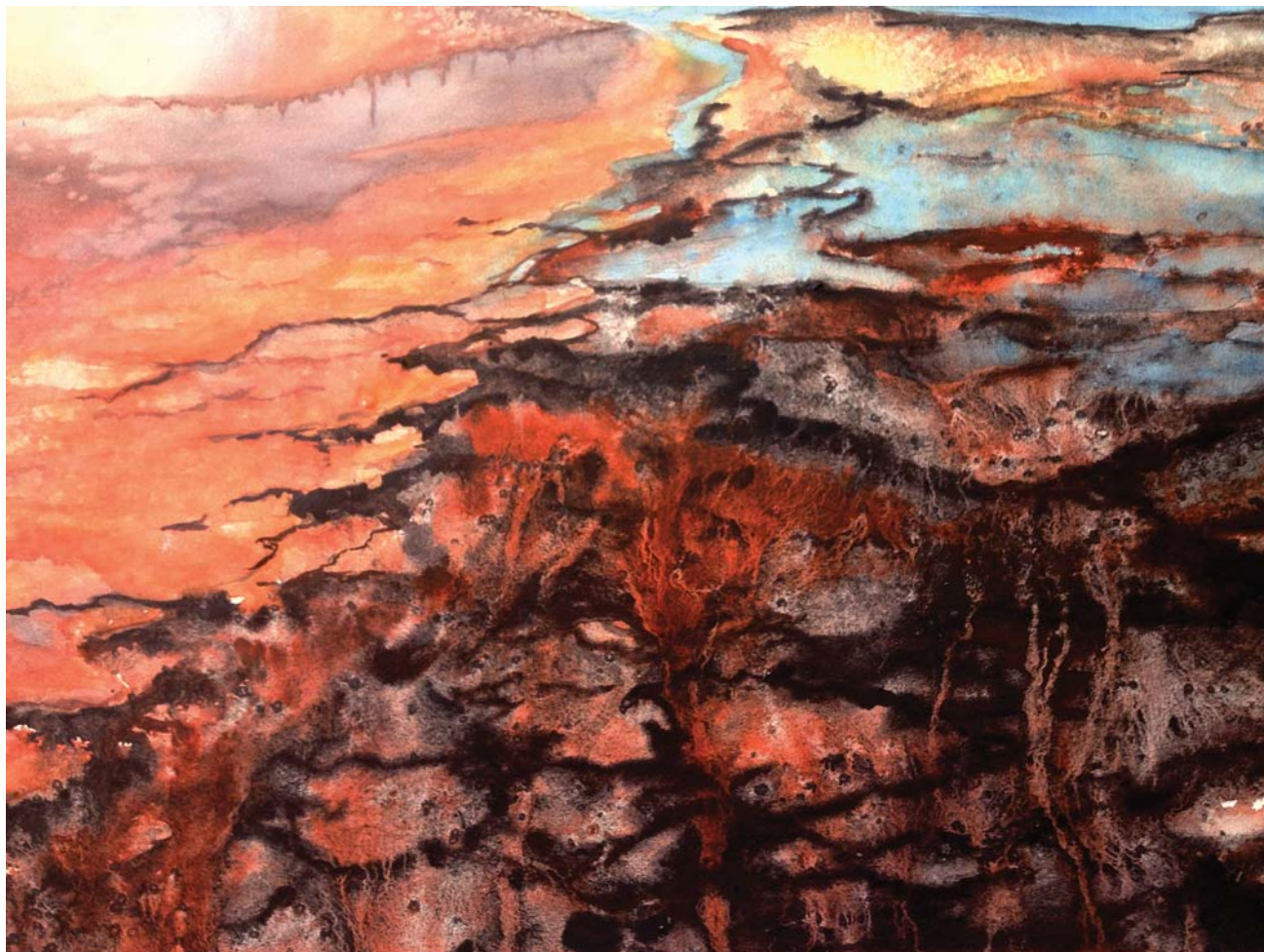
Natural sponge

■ Week 30, Day 4

PROTECTING YOUR PHOTOS

As a beginner, I wasn't sure how to complete the area where the photograph was ruined, and I would panic. Then I got smart.

Now I protect my photograph from this mishap by placing it in either in a zippered baggie or a clear plastic sleeve from an office supply store. I can still see the photograph, and when I spill paint or water, it is easy to clean up.



Detail of *Grand Prismatic Pool* (see page 128 for complete piece)

■ Week 30, Day 5

EARTH PIGMENTS

Throughout history, paint has been made from natural earth pigments. These were ground into fine powder by artists or their apprentices and mixed with a binder to make paint. As technology advanced and chemists discovered synthetic forms of paint, we got away from natural colors. However, there is a resurgence in using natural pigments for paint. Some of these pigments make unique and gorgeous colors.

The most magnificent part of using natural pigments is the way they react to each other and to water in wet-in-wet painting. Watching how different pigments push and pull each other is like having a little science lab in your painting. Since some pigments are heavier than others, they will stay put while lighter pigments move through and around them, creating wonderful texture—the perfect texture for earth.



Earth tone Malachite Genuine

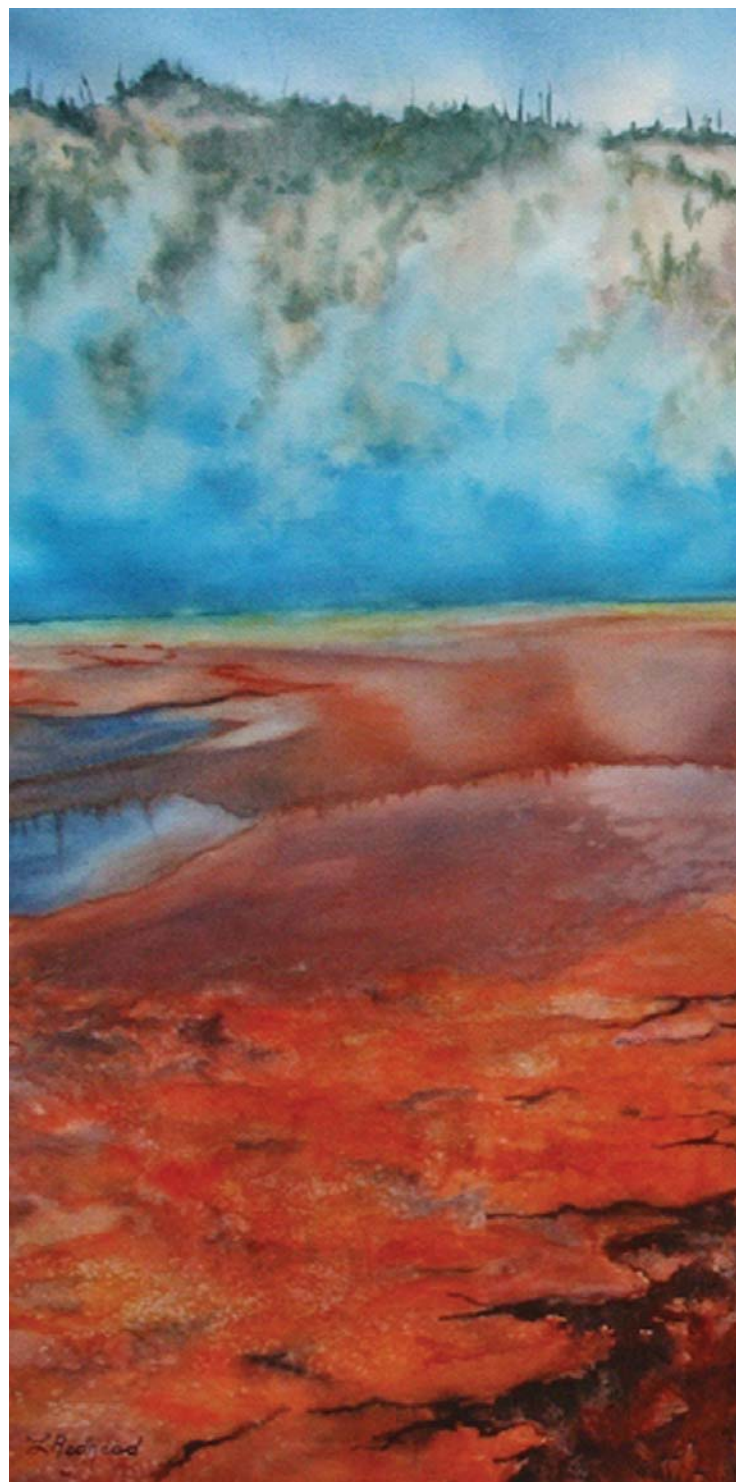
GET MESSY

And if you are worried about creating too much of a mess because you are in a small apartment or your kids will scold you, invest in a drop cloth or plastic tablecloth. Then don an old shirt or apron and let yourself go.



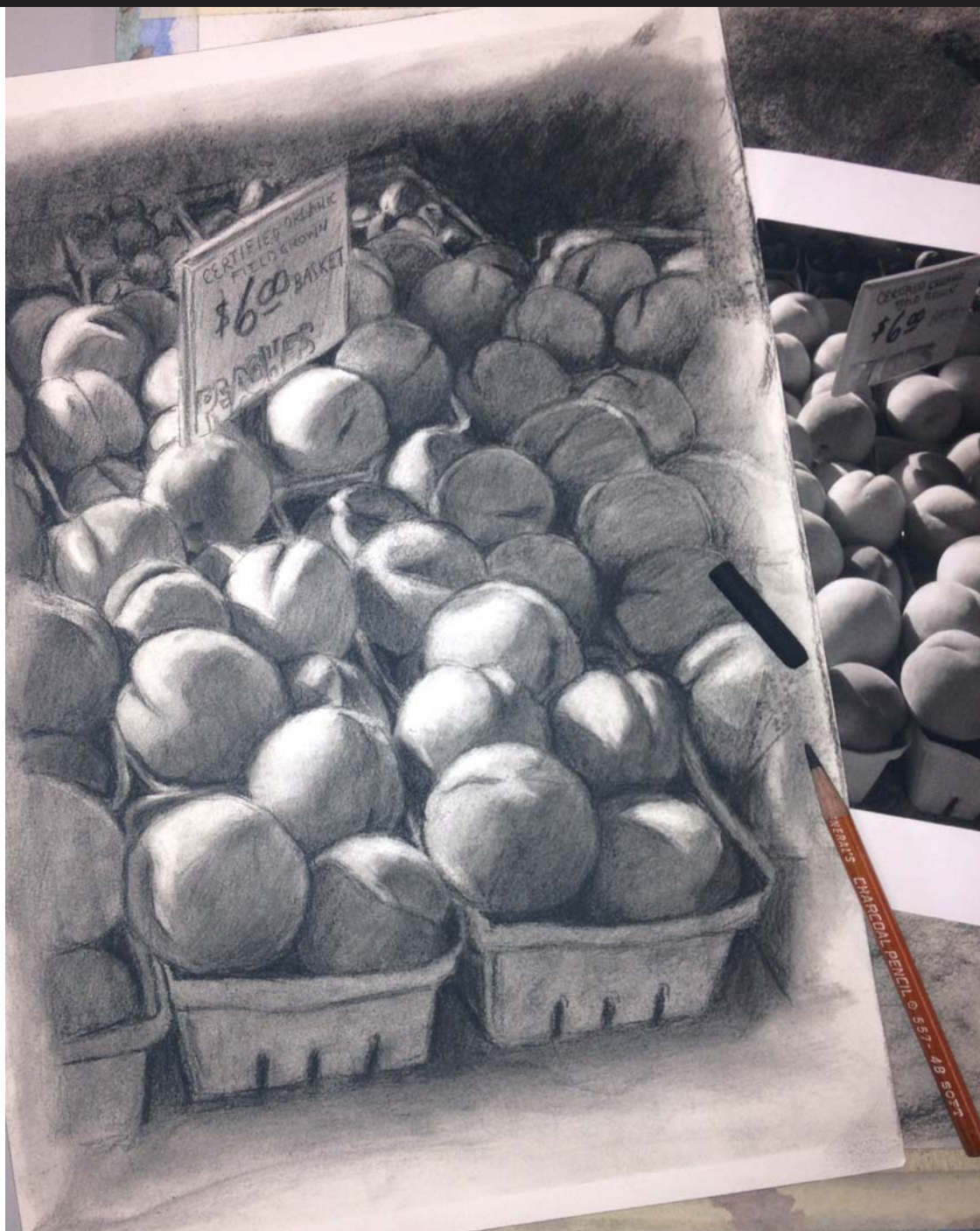
STUDIO SECRETS #30

Finally, for those of you who enjoy art of any medium, *International Artist* features artists from around the world and provides step-by-step demonstrations.



GRAND PRISMATIC POOL
25" x 40" (64cm x 102cm)





CHARCOAL STUDY OF PEACHES

11" x 14" (28cm x 36cm)

■ Week 31, Day 3

CREATIVE DECISIONS: DOES IT MAKE SENSE?

When we start on our painting journey, we want to paint everything—including everything in our photo. There are times when you need to ask yourself, what am I seeing here? Does it make sense? Will it make sense to the viewer? Does it add to the composition, mood, or story of the painting?

If it doesn't make sense, you have the option of leaving it out of your painting or changing it to tell a better story. You are the artist, after all.

■ Week 31, Day 4

SKETCHING ACTIVITY GUIDELINE

It is recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that a healthy adult engages in aerobic activity at least 150 minutes each week. This works out to be just over 20 minutes per day. It is also suggested that by increasing this amount of exercise, more health benefits will be achieved.

These are good guidelines that I feel can be applied to drawing as well. By spending 20 to 30 minutes each day sketching, you can not only maintain but also improve your drawing skills. If you want to really improve your artistic skills, spend more than 30 minutes each day engaged in painting and/or drawing.

If you need to set a timer because you have an appointment or aren't quite in the mood yet to draw, then do so. By setting a timer, you are dedicating yourself to that full 20 minutes of drawing and will not do anything else until you are done. After several sessions like this, it becomes a habit, and you will start to look forward to your drawing time. And if you have a hard time committing to a full 20 or 30 minutes, try doing two or three 10-minute sketches instead.

■ Week 31, Day 5

PRACTICE DRAWING WITH A MARKER

I discovered long ago that when I sketch with a pencil in my sketchbook, I want to erase. And erase some more. I probably spend more time erasing than sketching. Then nothing gets drawn.

Does that sound familiar? If you are someone who spends all your time sketching with your eraser instead of your pencil, try sketching with a marker or a pen instead. The temptation to erase is no longer there. You are forced to commit to a line. This commitment can be such freedom. The more you commit, the better you will get.

I saw a huge improvement in my drawing skills
when I gave up the pencil. I'm sure you will also.



■ Week 31, Day 6

DATE YOUR SKETCHES

I discovered years ago how beneficial it is to write the date on your sketches and possibly even a few thoughts about what you were doing or experiencing on those days. Either do this on the front or on the back of the sketch.





Spend time sketching

Week 31, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #31

This week's question is from Nancy in Ottawa, Ontario. She says, "I enjoy drawing detail but find myself constantly trying to fix my sketches. I can spend hours drawing before I even start painting. Is there an easier way to speed up the drawing process so I can get to painting sooner?"

Drawing is a very important skill to have if your painting technique is going to improve. It is the foundation to a good painting. It is especially important to have a good foundation in watercolor since the idea of repairing a watercolor gone wrong can be daunting. And the more detailed you want your painting, the more detailed your drawing will be. Thus, drawing will take longer. As with all skills that you wish to become good at,

drawing takes practice and time. We don't become maestros overnight.

However, there are a few things that can be done to speed up your drawing process and get you moving on to your painting. One option is to transfer an enlarged photograph to your paper using graphite paper rather than drawing the image freehand.

Another option is to use a grid, drawn out on tracing paper, for your drawing. Suggestions for how to draw a grid are on pages 136–137.

Both using a grid and transferring an image with graphite will actually help improve your drawing skills. In the meantime, practice drawing whenever you can.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING TO DRAW

According to Edwards, it is also a good idea to learn how to draw realism. By doing so, you learn to see and observe more profoundly, you gain confidence in your artistic skills, and your brain will approach problem solving more creatively.

BLIND CONTOUR DRAWING

As you continue to practice blind contour drawing, you will notice an improvement in your illustrative skills.



A drawing of my grandmother





Blind contour drawing

■ Week 32, Day 3

MODIFIED BLIND CONTOUR DRAWING

Modified blind contour is similar to the blind contour exercise, but you allow yourself a couple of peeks during the process. These glances are to reorient yourself and your drawing tool as you examine relationships of size and proportion. Modified blind contour drawing strengthens your observation skills, connecting them to your drawing skills.

As you become more accustomed to this method, you will realize how valuable this application of observing is when it is time to create your masterpiece.



■ Week 32, Day 4

AN EASY WAY TO DRAW IN PROPORTION

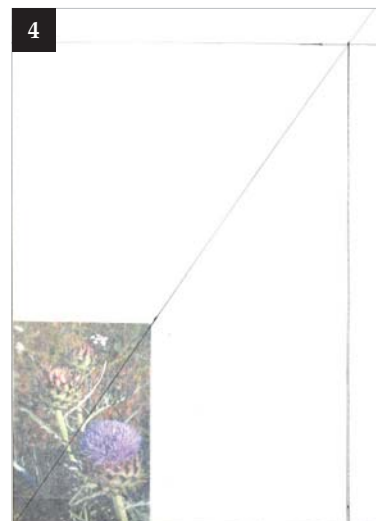
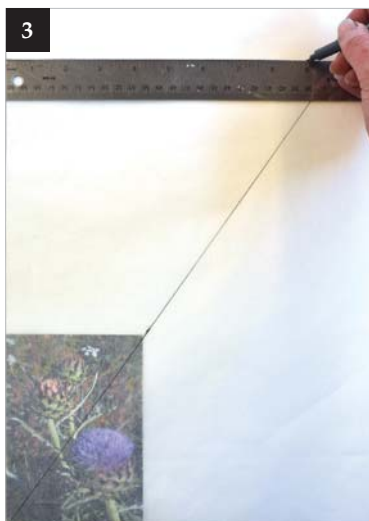
Proportion can be a difficult concept to grasp as you are drawing. This is especially true if the mathematics of it eludes you. Fortunately, there is an easy way to enlarge and draw in proportion if you are drawing from a photograph or a sketch. And it doesn't require math, which is even better.

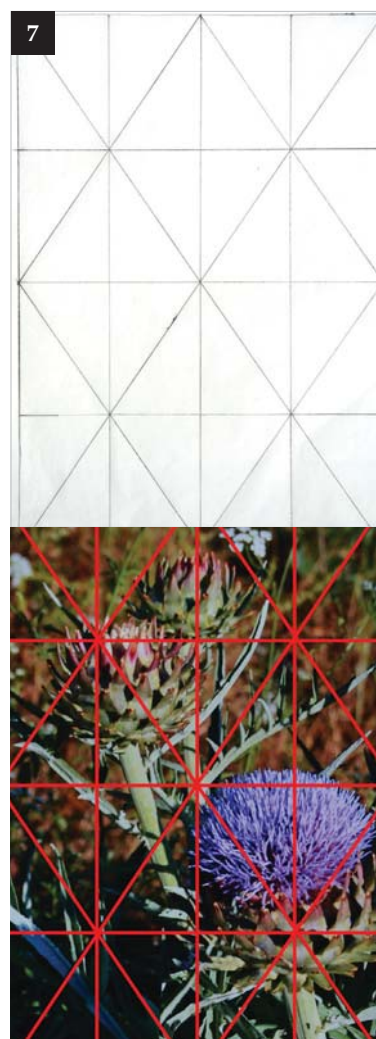
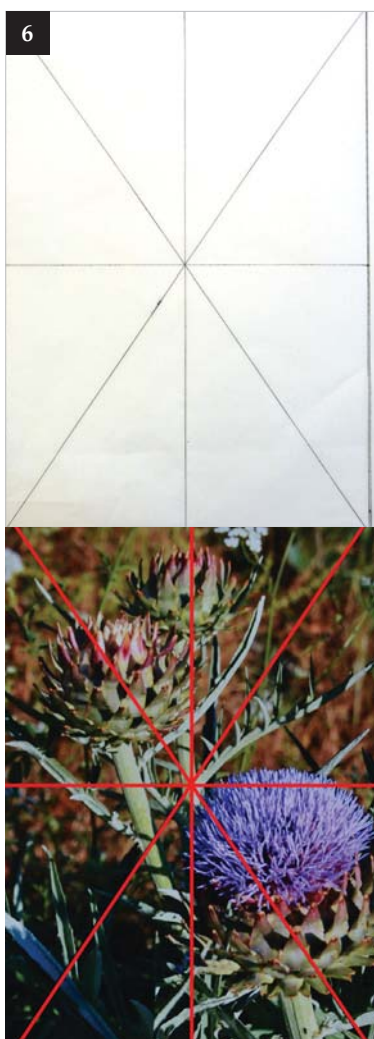
First, take your photograph and draw a diagonal line from the lower left corner to the upper right corner (Figure 1). Next, place a piece of tracing paper over the photo and draw the side and bottom edges, extending the lines out. This creates two lines that are perpendicular to each other.

Now draw another diagonal line from the lower left corner to upper right corner of the photo and extend it out further onto the tracing paper (Figure 2).

Then determine the height (or width) that you want your final painting to be. Draw a line from that height over to meet the diagonal line (Figure 3). Where that line meets the diagonal line, draw another line down (Figure 4). This will be the size of your final image and is in proportion to your photograph, allowing for a more accurate drawing.

What is great about this method is that you can extend the diagonal line out further and make the drawing as large as you want while keeping it in proportion to the photograph.





DRAWING FROM A GRID

This grid starts with how you start to draw your photograph in proportion to your future painting. Using that same piece of tracing paper from the previous page, you will draw another diagonal, making an X (Figure 5). At the same time, you will draw an X on your photograph.

Each of these rectangles can again be divided up into smaller ones in the same way (Figure 7). You can get as small as you want if you need to capture more detail. You can also label the boxes with letters and/or numbers to help remember what part of the grid you are drawing.

I found this grid easier to follow than the squares because I was able to see negative spaces and angles better, thus producing a better drawing.

MAKE YOUR OWN LIGHT TABLE

When I am in need of a light table for a large sheet of watercolor paper, I just make my own. This can be done easily if you have a kitchen or dining table that splits to accommodate a leaf. Split the table (leaving the leaf out) and lay a piece of clear acrylic (the kind available at most hardware stores) over the open area. Place a lamp on the floor underneath the clear acrylic and turn the lights down low. Then tape your enlarged drawing or photograph onto the clear acrylic. Place your watercolor paper over the enlarged drawing and trace the image onto the watercolor paper before you begin to paint.

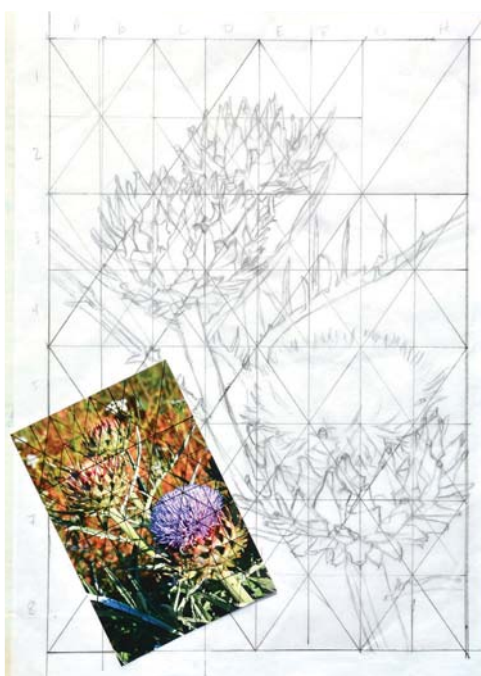


STUDIO SECRETS #32

- » *How to Make a Watercolor Paint Itself* by Nita Engle—This book is one that I refer to the most in my classes. It has so many useful techniques, and Engle really shows how to use the natural properties of water and paint to your advantage.
- » *Watercolor: Painting Outside the Lines* by Linda Kemp—This is my favorite book for teaching and understanding the concept of negative painting—that is, painting objects by painting the space around them. Since watercolor uses so much negative painting, it is a good concept to grasp.
- » *Watercolor Basics: Let's Get Started* by Jack Reid—Reid shows in simple steps how to paint in watercolor. This is demonstrated

» *Painting Beautiful Watercolors from Photographs* by Jan Kunz—This book is wonderful for showing how to set up a simple still life and photograph it. Kunz also shows how to create different compositions from a single photograph.

» *Splash: The Best of Watercolor* edited by Rachel Rubin Wolf—There are many books in the *Splash* series, published since 1991. Although they are not technically how-to books, the series has inspiration that covers all genres of watercolor. It explores and highlights the many possibilities present in this amazing medium.



Finished grid with drawing

TENDER HEARTS
20" × 16" (51cm × 41cm)

■ Week 33, Day 1

WHAT IS PAINTING?

Painting is but drawing with color.

■ Week 33, Day 2

PRACTICE MARK MAKING

It is always fun to see what your brush can do. Practice making marks with different brushes to see what a single stroke will do. Sometimes there is beauty to be found in a single mark of the brush.

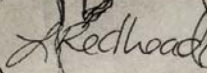


■ Week 33, Day 3

PUT A FINGER ON IT

Sometimes when I am painting an image with loads of detail and exacting requirements, I tend to lose my place in the photograph. In order to keep myself from getting lost, I put my finger on the spot in the photograph that I am painting. That way my eye travels easier and faster between photo and painting.

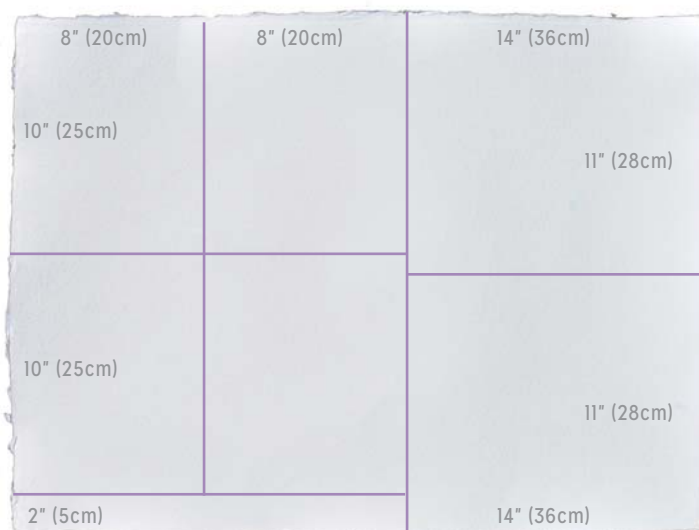
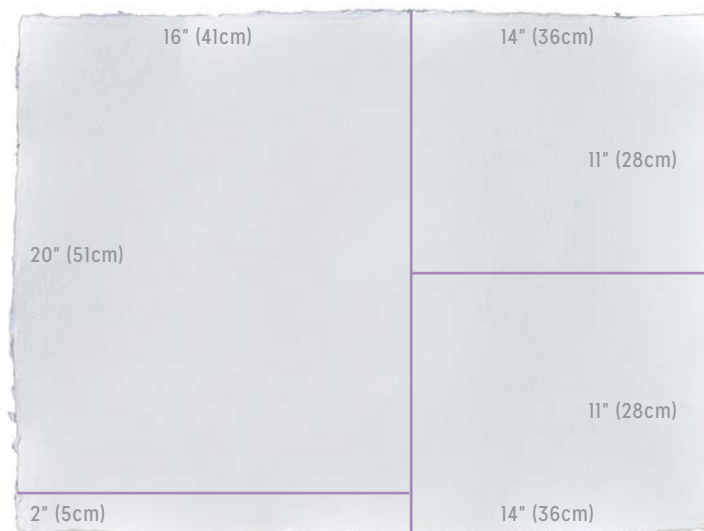
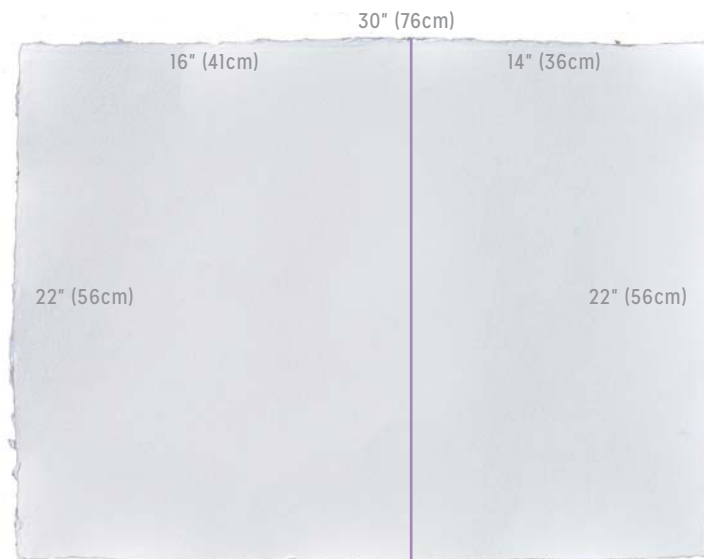




7" x 11" (18cm x 28cm)

■ Week 33, Day 4

Sometimes when you are painting, you put your paint down onto the paper and realize it is too dark. Instead of panicking and dabbing it with a paper towel, just add water. Quickly dip your brush into your bucket or grab another wet brush and add water to the paint on the paper. This will lighten the color.



PROGRESSION

A circular, textured object, possibly a piece of fabric or a small mat, featuring a grid of small, raised, light-colored squares. The object is heavily stained with various colors, including blue, yellow, red, and green, particularly concentrated in the lower right quadrant.

■ Week 34, Day 2

OPENING A STUBBORN TUBE OF PAINT

Soaking the tube in water will sometimes soften the paint enough to screw the top off. There are times, though, that the cap still refuses to open. You twist and twist until the tube feels like it will split.

A large oil painting of a deep canyon with a river and a waterfall, displayed on an easel in an art studio. The painting shows a wide, deep canyon with steep, layered rock walls in shades of orange, yellow, and brown. A river flows through the bottom of the canyon, and a waterfall cascades over a rocky ledge in the distance. The background features green hills and a blue sky. The painting is set on a wooden easel in a room with other framed artworks on the wall and various art supplies on a table in the foreground.

■ Week 34, Day 3

PAINTING UPRIGHT

Painting upright also feels freeing when you want to do big, broad strokes. It is easier to dance around the painting as you quickly put in color.

If you have a hard time standing for long periods of time, get yourself one of those plush stool-like chairs that allows you to adjust the height. Mine has wheels so I can roll it around my studio when I grow weary of standing or if I ran too far that morning. Plus it spins in circles.

DOES YOUR PAINT BEAD UP TOO MUCH?

If this happens, roughen up that palette a bit. Use a sponge or some sandpaper and rub it over the surface to give it some texture. Now the paint will catch in the grooves instead of beading up.

GO AT YOUR OWN PACE



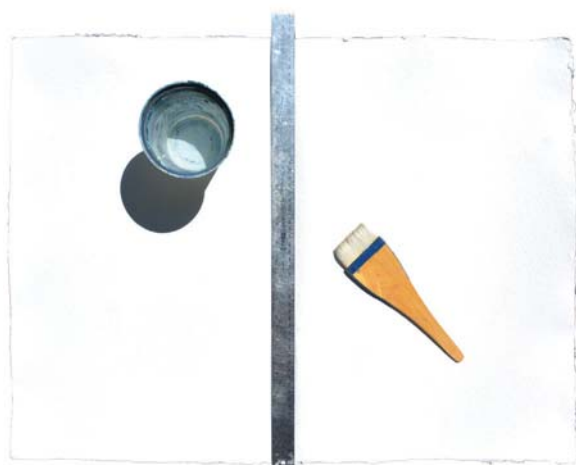
PROTECTING THE PAINTING

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a black paintbrush, applying pink and red watercolor paint to a piece of paper. The background is a textured, yellowish-orange surface.



ATHENA

Watercolor and pencil
18½" × 30" (47cm × 76cm)



Week 34, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #34

Barbara from Sidney, British Columbia, says that she loves the deckle edges of handmade watercolor paper. However, it is difficult to tear. She asks if there is a way to tear the watercolor paper so it still appears to have a deckle edge.

Yes, Barbara, there is. Handmade paper usually has fibers that are longer and tougher than mould-made paper, thus making it more difficult to tear. I have found that by wetting the side that I want to tear and using a metal ruler, I am able to tear away the paper, giving the edge a deckle look.

Negative Painting and Musical Matters

THINK POSITIVELY

PAINT NEGATIVELY



Painted rock examples

■ Week 35, Day 5

AN EXERCISE IN NEGATIVE PAINTING: DAY 3

After the second layer of paint is dry, draw a third layer of rocks. Again, place this layer underneath or around the first two layers of rocks, but these new rocks also should not touch. Continue to paint around all the layers of rocks. The color you use should be more saturated and darker in value than the first two layers of juicy color.

■ Week 35, Day 6

AN EXERCISE IN NEGATIVE PAINTING: DAY 4

Today you will no longer think of just painting around the rock shapes, you think about painting the spaces between the rocks. As you do this, the shapes of the rocks become less complete. The spaces start to look like you are painting little triangles, diamonds and other polygonal shapes. They look like they are underneath the first rocks that you drew.

For this layer, make a nice rich dark using your primary colors, including the colors that you used in the first washes. Remember, you are painting *outside* or *around* all the rocks layers.

Now you have a painting of rocks done negatively. This concept can be further applied to any number of subjects. Try leaves, flowers or even birds by layering shapes and painting the spaces between those shapes. Negative painting gets easier with practice and will flow into all other areas of your artistic practice.



Negative Painting Day 3



Negative Painting Day 4





SEPTEMBER WRENS
14" × 20" (36cm × 51cm)

Week 35, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #35

I once met another artist who asked me, "Are you a self-taught artist?" I replied, "What is a self-taught artist? Are not all artists self-taught?"

I feel that, in art, as in most aspects of life, it doesn't matter how much we are told how to paint; we don't learn until we apply that knowledge. It is up to you to apply the knowledge. It is about your own motivation and desire to learn. It is about your own hard work and perseverance. No one else but you can do that.

The properties of watercolor (and any other medium) are never fully understood until you actually paint in it. You can sit in class after class

about watercolor but the "Aha!" moments don't happen until you try what you've learned. This can happen in a university classroom, a workshop or in your studio at home.

The teaching and the learning happen as you are doing. You will always be learning if you are doing. And through all my own learning, I have discovered that painting has taught me more about myself than I have taught myself about painting.

PAINTING A STRAIGHT LINE

■ Week 36, Day 4

CHASING A BLOOM

But that's not the case. It just makes it worse!

It is best to catch the bloom while it is still growing. Once the paper becomes too dry, the bloom is harder to fix.

■ Week 36, Day 5

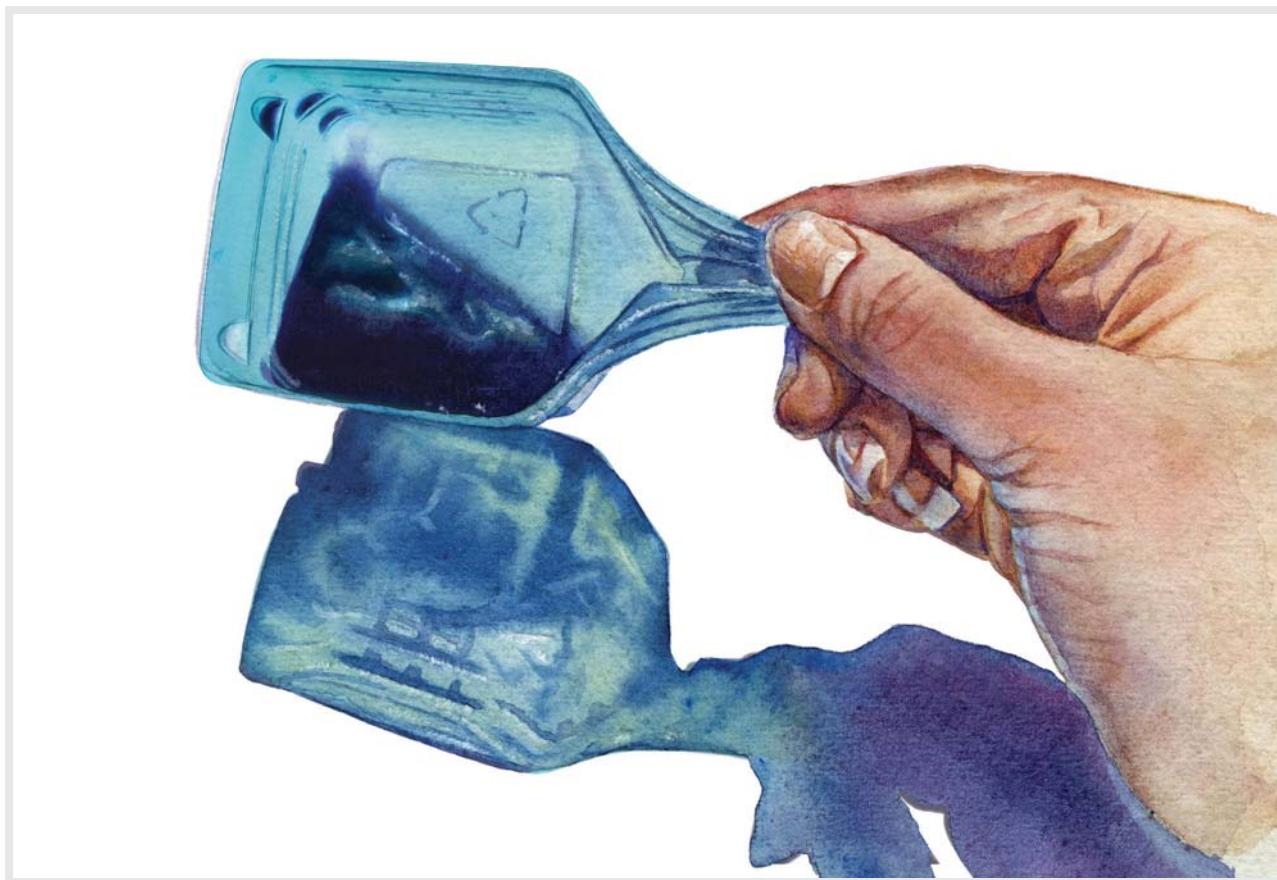
DON'T TAINT THE PAINT!

So, when mixing paint into liquid form, start with yellow, since yellow (or your lightest color) is the easiest color to taint. Mix it using clean water and a clean brush. Then move to red and finally blue.

Use cardboard to paint a straight line



Catch a bloom while it is still growing



■ Week 36, Day 6

ENHANCE, EMBELLISH AND EVEN EXAGGERATE

At times this is what an artist must do to tell the story better.



Week 36, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #36

When I teach pouring watercolor classes, I always have a couple of students hold up their paint pots to me and ask, "Is this the right color?" But what they are really asking is, "Is this the right value?"

It is difficult to tell what value a color is just by looking at it mixed up in your little container. The only way to know if you have the right value is to test it on a scrap piece of watercolor paper. If it is too light in value, add more paint. If it is too dark, add more water.

ENTERTAIN THE CREATIVE GENIUS

When that creative genius does decide to come into your studio, make sure you entertain it. Think of it as a guest coming to stay for the afternoon, and if you are lucky, for the whole day or longer. What do you normally do when a guest arrives at your door?

I know it can be hard to entertain certain guests, but think of the creative genius as your favorite guest. It is your best friend, and it has arrived at your door. If you make time for that creative genius of a guest, it will continue to be your best friend and will be there for you when you need it the most.



■ Week 37, Day 2

WARM AND COOL COLORS

Warm colors are usually associated with the sun and heat. Cool colors are associated with ice or cold. Therefore, we immediately think of the warm colors as being yellow, orange and red. Cool colors are greens, blues and purples.

Knowing this, you can plan your painting better. Since warm colors tend to come forward, they work well in a focal point, as they jump out and hug the viewer, demanding attention. Cool colors draw back, keeping their distance; they are best left to the edges of the painting where they quietly wait to be noticed.



15" x 11" (38cm x 28cm)

AVOID WHITE NEAR BORDERS

The whitest white should not be within 1 inch (25mm) of the border. Whites this close to the border will lead the viewer's eye out of the painting and into the next one. You want to keep the viewer's eye within your own painting as long as possible.



■ Week 37, Day 6

STAINING THE PAPER

When painting a white object, you may notice that the white has many different shades that range from light to dark values depending on the light source. However, it can be easy to lose that lovely white by going too dark too fast. Sometimes the white of the paper just needs a very pale stain or glaze of color over it to give it a hint of warmth or a hint of cool.

I like to think of this stain or glaze of color as a weak tea, like when you have barely dipped your tea bag into the water. The glaze should be the color and consistency of weak tea, so it just barely stains the paper.

It is always easier to gradually go darker with more glazes of thin color if you need to. It is more difficult and more work to get the white of the paper back once you've gone too dark.

Week 37, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #37

Lynn, a watercolor enthusiast, asks, "When do you make the leap to call oneself an *artist*?"

That is a wonderful question.

I recently came to the realization that I am an artist and have been my whole life. Since that realization, I have embraced the artist that I am and have noticed that we all have an artist within us.

Art comes in many forms, and you probably embrace many of them without realizing it.

It can be in something as simple as the way you look at an object; it can be in being a professional artist, and it can be everything in between. Art is but a form to capture your personal world and experiences. It is another way to express ourselves.

As German artist Joseph Beuys once said, "Every man is an artist." Pablo Picasso even said, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to

remain an artist once he grows up." I believe that the child-artist within us gets scared and hides as we age. It takes nurturing and a little care to bring it forth. (Sometimes pretty colors or shapes help, too.)

It also takes some confidence to say that you are an artist. Yet, you are already an artist. Just call that artist forth! Embrace the artist! Wear a beret if you have to. Give your inner artist that permission it needs to be an artist and to no longer hide inside of you. Go ahead and announce it to yourself, your loved ones and the world: *I am an artist!*

THE SECRET TO PAINTING

—J. M. W. Turner

DO YOU TASTE COLOR?

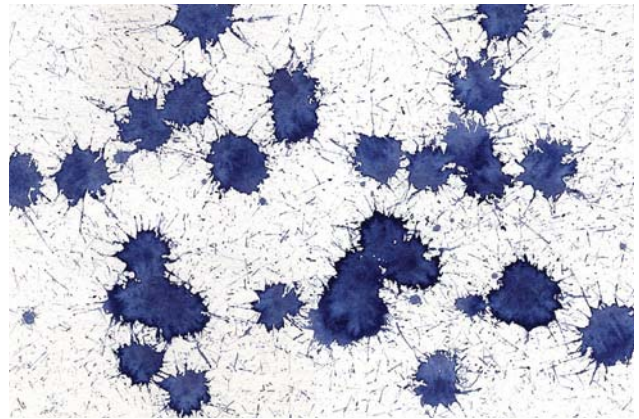
So when you see a color, can you taste it? If so, what does it taste like?

WHAT SOUND DOES COLOR MAKE?

Although you may not perceive color this way, try to listen with your eyes the next time you listen to music and see if certain notes suggest color.

WHAT DOES A SOUND LOOK LIKE?

This fun exercise will heighten your awareness of the connection between the auditory and the visual, creating some exciting experiences for you and your viewer.



The sound of rain



SPRING THAW

11" x 14" (28cm x 34cm)



Week 38, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #38

Robert from Victoria, British Columbia, asks, "How would you create the effect of ice in watercolor?"

I like to use white watercolor or gouache to create the illusion of ice. White watercolor is an

opaque paint that, when glazed over an area in your painting, will give that area an opacity similar to ice. Applying a thin layer of white watercolor to a window will also create the illusion of glass.

Creating Dynamic Paintings

CAPTURING MOOD

—Ray Hendershot

COLOR AFFECTS MOOD

We all know that color can represent and affect mood. Blue usually signifies sadness, and orange is bouncy and happy. Try creating your next painting with colors that represent how you feel and the mood you want to portray to your audience. By changing the color in your painting, you can change the mood.

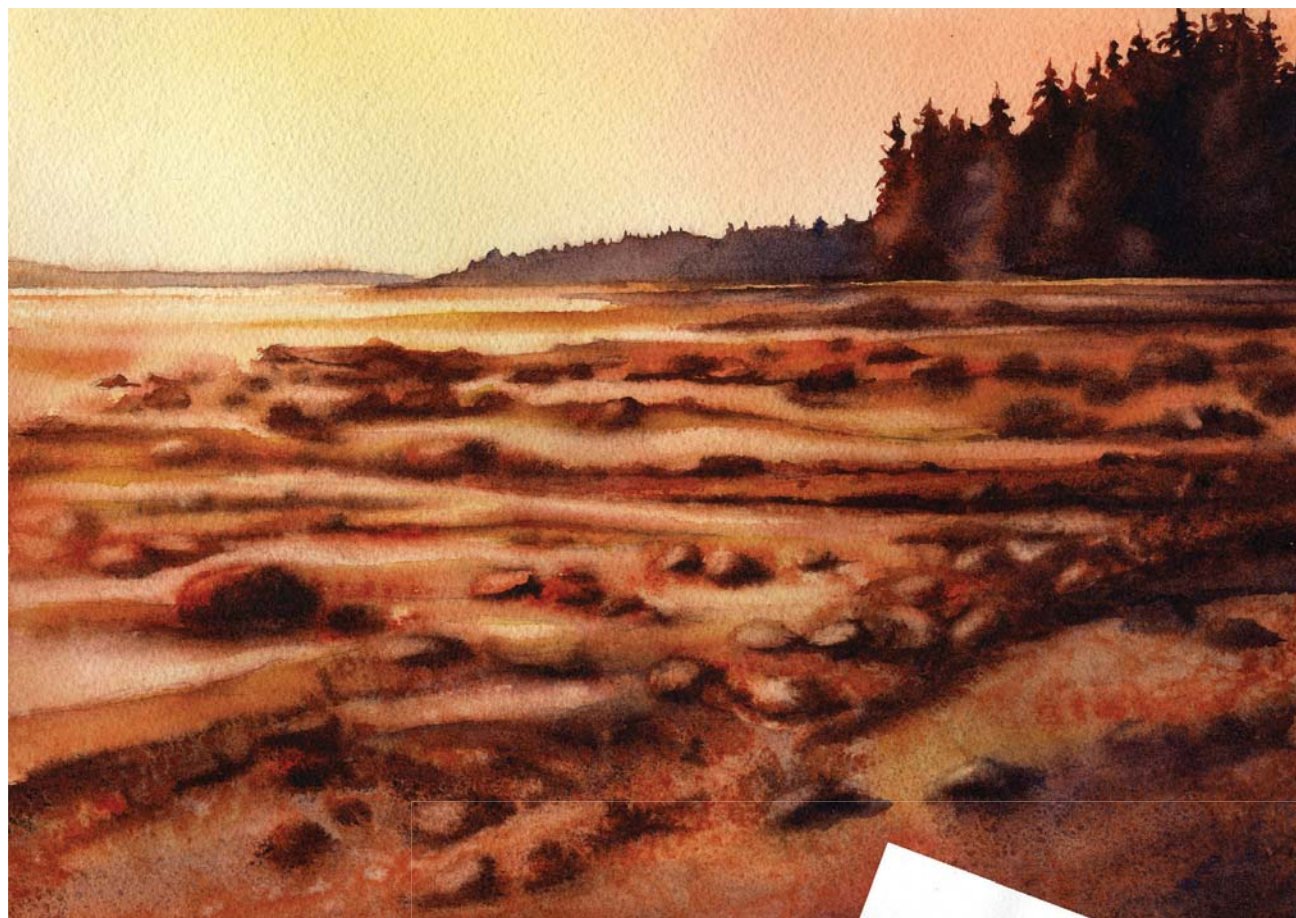
COLOR CHORDS

Watercolorist Judy Morris first introduced the term “color chords” to me many years ago. The concept is to use colors that work well together in a painting to represent a mood. Her term for this concept goes well with my belief that well-done paintings have a musical quality to them.

Instead of using the colors that occur in your photo, try a color chord. Color chords are similar to musical chords. They are different colors (like notes) that, when used together, become a harmonious and pleasing combination. These color chords can be found anywhere: a piece of fabric, a photograph from a magazine, even another painting. Once you decide on the color chord and mood you want to express, try to use those colors in your painting.

COLOR CHORD CHART

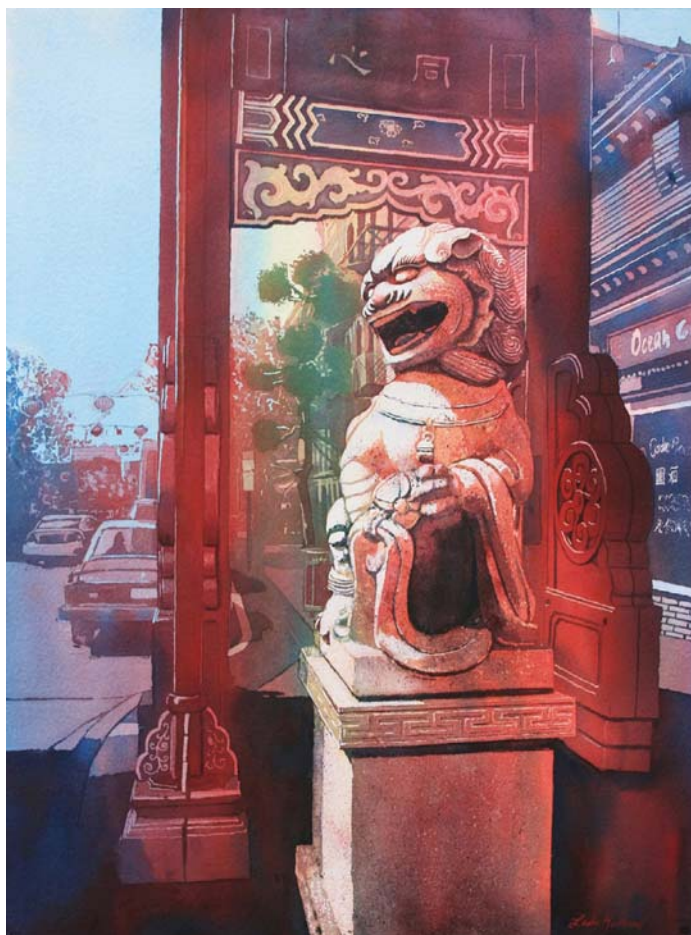
Once you have found a color chord that you like, figure out how to achieve those colors with the paints in your palette. Using a scrap piece of watercolor paper, mix and test different color concoctions to match the colors in your color chord. Make sure you label how you mixed those colors, because if you are like me, you will forget.



GOLDEN GLOW
10" × 14" (25cm × 36cm)



Color chord used for
Golden Glow



■ Week 39, Day 6

KEEPING THE VIEWER'S EYE WITHIN THE PAINTING

When trying to assess if your painting is working, track the movement of your eye. Make sure it stays within the painting and isn't being led off the paper. It should be led around the painting and back to the focal point. Usually your eye will enter a painting from the bottom and move up to the right. It will be attracted to contrast, warm colors, soft edges and subdued colors. If your eye keeps going to a section other than the focal point or is moving out of the painting, there may be some adjustments that need to be made. Your eye needs to keep going back to the focal point. You also want the viewer's eye to stay in your painting and not have it go into the painting next to it.

UNITY

30" x 22" (76cm x 56cm)

Week 39, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #39

This week's question comes from Jane in Vancouver. She asks, "Do I always need a light source and shadows in every painting?"

The answer is that it depends on what you want to say.

Most images already have a light source or several light sources. Even photos taken with a flash have a light source. The flash tends to wash things out, making some colors and values more even and making objects appear flat. Multiple light sources can cause confusion and dilute the message, unless the confusion and business of several light sources is what you want to portray.

Some paintings do have a diffused light source, such as rainy or foggy scenes. Others may have a scattered light source, such as a sun-dappled garden.

However, a single light source does help define an object, giving it more dimension and depth. This can also aid in seeing and shaping an object and painting it better, especially for novice painters. It will help create a sense of realism, and shadows help ground the object.

FAKE IT UNTIL YOU BECOME IT

Cuddy also discusses the feeling of being an impostor, which can come easily to those who wonder if we have what it takes to be an artist. She takes the fake-it-until-you-make-it approach further to suggest that you can fake it until you become it. As Cuddy says, “Don’t fake it until you make it. Fake it until you become it. Do it enough until you actually become it and internalize.”

CONTRAST

COMPLEMENTARY COLORS

169



With fog, the light is so diffused that there aren't any shadows or defined shapes. Everything becomes soft, blurry and neutral in color.

STUDIO SECRETS #40

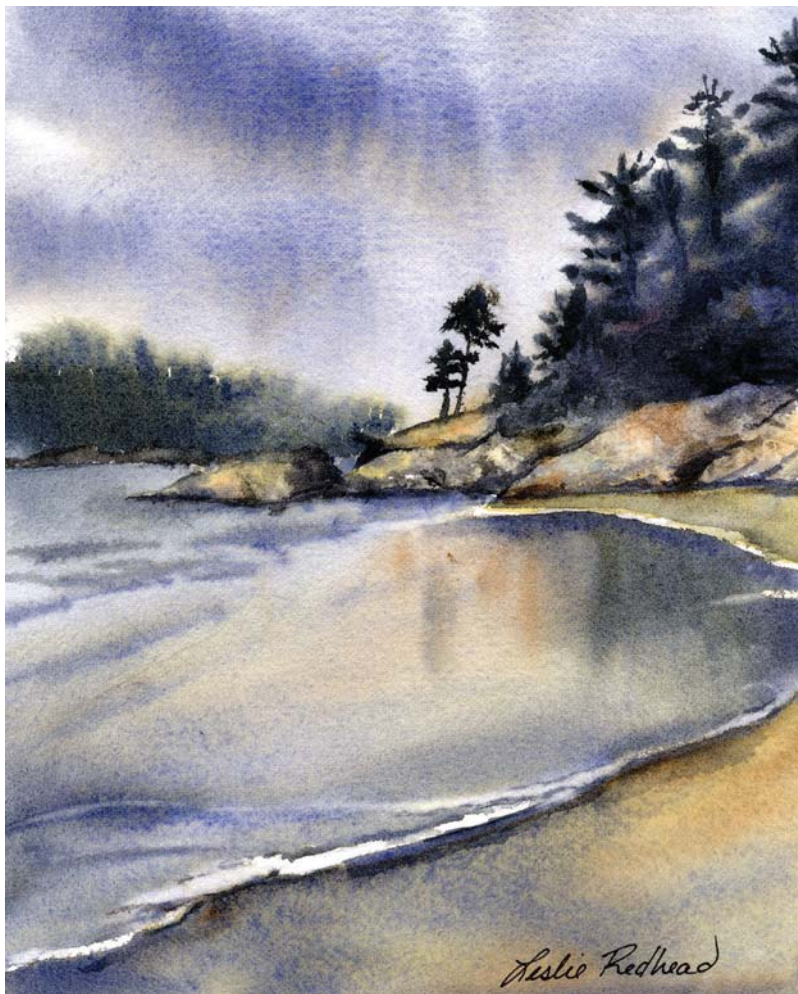
After a long hiatus from painting in watercolor, Jennifer from Vancouver returned to painting by taking some classes with me. One of her first questions was about her paint. She asks, "I have all these tubes of watercolor paints that have dried in the tube—are they still okay to use?"

Of course they are! They may just be difficult to get out of the tube. One way to get to that dried paint is to slice open the tube with a knife, making it into its own little pan of color. Spray with water to reactivate the paint, and you are good to go.

LEARN SOMETHING NEW
EVERY DAY

■ Week 41, Day 2

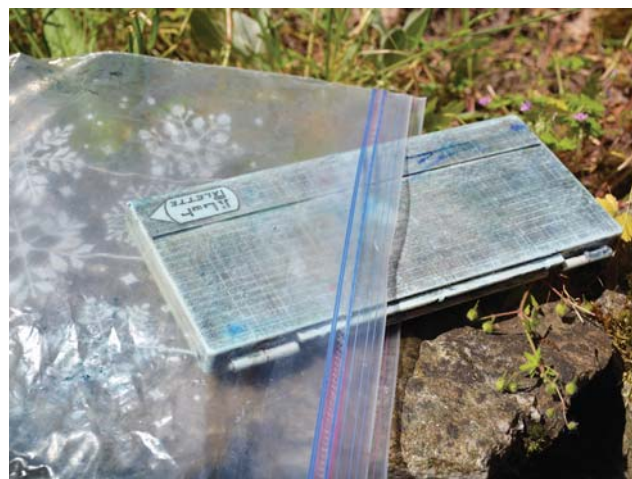
I grabbed a scrap piece of paper and went to work. And you know what? My flow returned. I was back in the game. After I completed the first one, I painted another and another. It was so satisfying to feel successful at these small pieces that I was able to return to the commission with fresh eyes. It was completed the very next day.



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HILLSIDE WINERY
15" × 11" (38cm × 28cm)



Week 42, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #42

Christine likes to paint outdoors but gets frustrated when her palette leaks everywhere. She asks if there is an easy way to keep the mess away from her other supplies.

The simple solution is to put your palette in a zippered plastic bag. This is an obvious solution, yet I am surprised how often it is not thought of and how long it took me to think of it! (My practical genius appears less often than the creative genius.)

I also pop my wet cloth into the bag when I pack up to go home. The cloth soaks up the excess from the palette, and all my other supplies stay dry and somewhat clean.

You can do the same with your bigger palette—keep it in a large bag separate from everything else. It also helps if you can keep your palette flat when transporting it.

IMPROVISE

DON'T FORGET THE WATER

Week 43, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #43

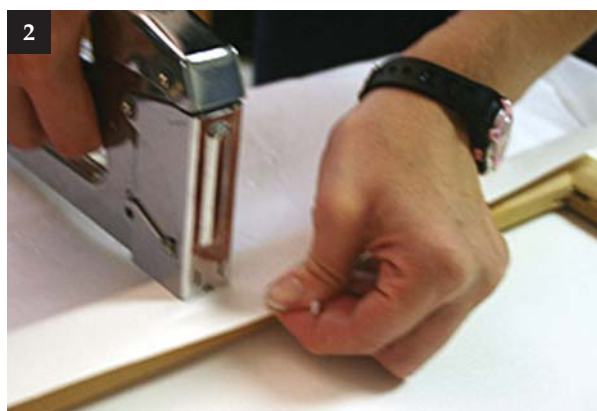
Now that we have discussed going smaller, what about going larger? Tami from Wyoming asks about the roll of watercolor paper that she bought. A roll of paper is usually 10 yards (9m) long and either 44½" (113cm) or 51" (130cm) wide. She wants to use the paper to paint much larger than a full sheet but worries about the weight of stapling it to a board. She asks if there is a way to keep a big painting lightweight.

Yes, Tami, there is. Watercolor paper can be stretched onto stretcher bars like a canvas. To do this, decide the size painting you want and prepare the stretcher bars, then cut the paper to 2" (5cm) larger on each side. This allows you to fold the paper over the stretcher bars and staple it to the back.

Wet the paper in the bathtub or by spraying it thoroughly. I like to lay a plastic tablecloth down to keep the paper clean. Now lay the bars on the paper and cut each corner up to the stretcher bar, and cut each corner at an angle (Figure 1). Next, staple the center of one side (Figure 2). Tuck in the corner (Figure 3) and staple it in place (Figure 4). Continue to staple the centers of each side and tuck in each corner. Finally, gently pull the paper and staple from the center out to the corners on each side. This is similar to stretching an ordinary canvas.

Be sure to keep a spray bottle handy in case the paper starts to dry. Leave it to dry, with the paper side up, in a dry area.

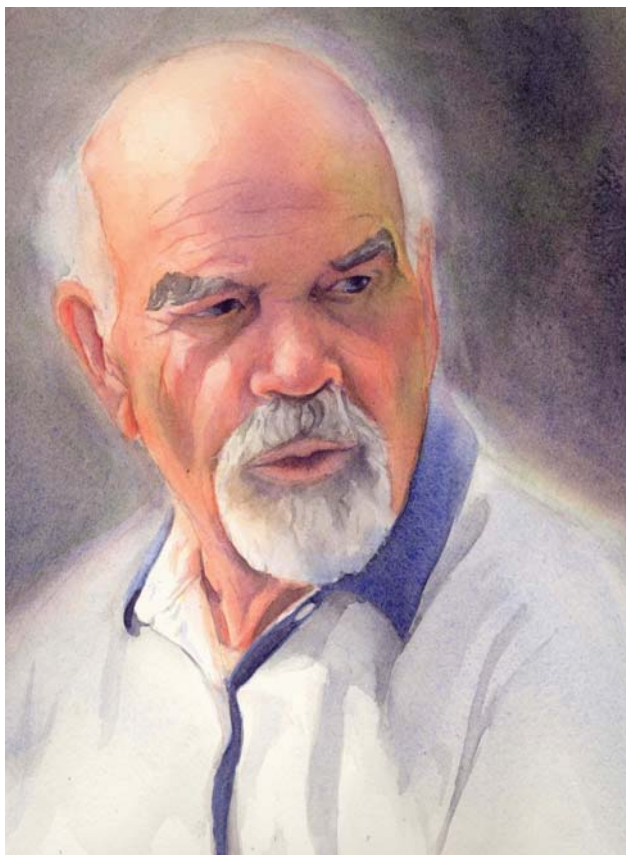
Remember to use 100% cotton paper. It will expand when it is wet and will shrink up tight like a actual canvas when it is dry.



Portraits

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

—Oscar Wilde



PAINTING A PORTRAIT

DRAWING A PORTRAIT

If you do choose a photo from a magazine or online, remember to respect the copyright of the artist or photographer. It is okay to practice your painting skills from their work; it is not okay to sell it for profit.



PAINTING SKIN TONES

For warm complexions, I often use a combination of New Gamboge with either Permanent Alizarin Crimson or Permanent Rose. For cool or darker complexions, a

combination of Raw Sienna with either Permanent Alizarin Crimson or Permanent Rose is a good base color. This undercoat is a very light and loose mix placed over the whole face, including the eyes and teeth, the neck, and into the hair and the clothing.



MODELING THE FACE

The lightest colors on the face should be closest to the light source, keeping in mind that the highlights should be reserved for shiny areas and/or those areas closest to the viewer.



Progression of a wash



Week 44, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #44

Coral from Prince Rupert, British Columbia, asks, "What is the advantage of using 300-lb. (640gsm) cold press paper for portraits?"

There are a few advantages to this.

First of all, it doesn't buckle the way 140-lb. (300gsm) tends to buckle and warp when it gets really wet.

Thus, the heavier weight paper will accept a lot of water easier, which makes layering and working wet-in-wet is easier to do.

You can layer and build up your portrait without worrying that your paper will no longer accept the paint.

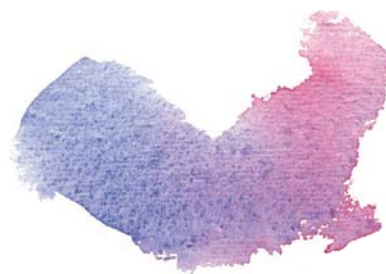
Second, since the paper is thick, you can also scrub and erase much more easily. This is helpful when you are a beginner.

Also, if you are heavy-handed with the paint and color and want to lighten up, making a more subtle or softer portrait, the 300-lb. (640gsm) paper will help with this. As mentioned, it absorbs more water and paint than 140-lb. (300gsm) paper, making the final appearance lighter than it would be on the lighter weight paper.

Finally, I personally like the way a heavier piece of paper sits behind a mat. It just feels like it needs to be taken more seriously, similar to how others view the painting of portraits.

TECHNIQUE ALLOWS FOR FLUENCY

By learning how to paint and mastering technique, you can better express yourself with visual language.



COBALT
BLUE

+

PERMANENT
ROSE

SHADOW COLORS

I prefer using Cobalt Blue and either Permanent Alizarin Crimson or Permanent Rose for the color of shadows. For darker complexions, continue to add Burnt Sienna to the mix.

COBALT
BLUE

+

PERMANENT
ALIZARIN
CRIMSON

COBALT VS. FRENCH ULTRAMARINE BLUE

PERMANENT
ROSE

+

RAW
SIENNA

+

COBALT
BLUE

DON'T EAT THE COBALT



Cobalt paints



JESSECA'S RABBITS
20" × 16" (41cm × 51cm)



■ Week 46, Day 1

Have you ever laid out your work in a room? Hung it all up on a wall from end to end? If not, you may want to. Pull out all the sketches, the paintings and ideas. Lay them out to be viewed as a whole body of work. You will be surprised by how far you have come from the start of your artistic journey until now. Then consider how many more wonderful things are out there to create and capture in paint.

Your artistic vision and style is a process that reveals itself over a time. A truly genuine creative achievement is not just the result of a sudden flash of insight, but comes after years of diligent and consistent hard work. Be proud of that work and look forward to the next step in the process.

SUMMER SHADES



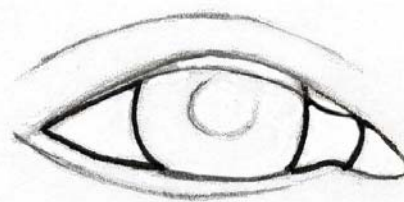
MY BEST FRIEND WHEN DADDY IS NOT HERE

11" x 17" (28cm x 43cm)

■ Week 46, Day 2

EYE SHAPE

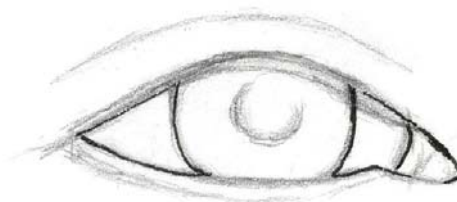
The eye is not almond-shaped as most people think. When drawing or painting an eye, think of the eye as a sphere or ball resting within the eye socket. To draw an eye, start by drawing a circle. Draw another circle within the eye for the iris and another within that for the pupil. Now draw the eyelids around it, remembering that the eyelids do partially cover the iris or the circle you just drew. Also notice the corner of the eye and be sure to draw in the tear duct.



■ Week 46, Day 3

ANOTHER WAY TO DRAW THE EYE

Another way to draw the eye is to start with the whites of the eyes. This should help in getting the curvature and placement of the iris correct, as well as the shape of the tear duct.



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE EYES

EYELID SHADOW

TWINKLE IN MY EYE



Then, once the paint is dry, take that handy dandy craft knife and flick or scratch out the highlight.



Invest in a digital camera

Week 46, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #46

Becky from Wisconsin wrote asks, “What is the best way to photograph my paintings to submit for an art competition?”

That is a fantastic question and something that every artist needs to know how to do.

First of all, buy or borrow a really good digital camera. I suggest that you invest in one as soon as you possibly can for more than just photographing your artwork. Then borrow or buy a tripod.

Next, you want to set up your unframed painting (you don’t want glare from the glass) so that it is level against a wall or upright on an easel. There should be even lighting in the area where you are working and no shadows from any direction. The piece should also be against a white or neutral wall. Use natural, bright indirect lighting. Do not use a flash. If you need to diffuse the light, try bouncing it off a white surface such as a piece of poster paper or foam core.

Then set up your camera on the tripod so that your painting is centered within the shot and fills the frame fully. Play with the zoom so there isn’t any distortion, and be sure to take your images on the RAW setting. Be sure to take several shots so you have many to choose from.

My favorite place to take photographs of my artwork is in my carport when the lighting is even and not in direct sunlight. I have a white wall that I either tape my paintings on or set an easel against.

Finally, crop the image so just the painting is showing, and follow the suggested guidelines for submitting your artwork to the competition.

■ Week 47, Day 1

PERFECTION

“ Artists who seek perfection in everything are those who cannot attain it in anything.”

—Gustave Flaubert

■ Week 47, Day 2

SHOULDERS

Trying to draw how wide a person's shoulders are can be difficult. But there is a general rule of thumb to help in understanding how wide those shoulders should be.

A woman's shoulder width is usually the width of her head. That makes a woman, from shoulder to shoulder (don't forget to include her head!) three head widths across.

For a man, take his egg-shaped head and turn it on its side. Each shoulder is about the length of his head.



■ Week 47, Day 3

FIGURE IN THE DISTANCE

Painting a figure or silhouette of a figure in the distance is all a matter of breaking it down into simple shapes. First, start with a circle for a head

Next, add an oval for the body. This oval can be long and thin or more circular depending on what body shape you want.

Now add a triangle or carrot-like shape for the legs. This will give the figure the impression of walking.

As you practice this basic figure, you can start to add color or an arm swinging to the side. Make the oval body more square; add a hat to the top of the head. Have some fun making all sorts of figures that can be added to your paintings.





MULTIPLE FIGURES

MAKING A BACKGROUND RECEDE



RECEDING THE BACKGROUND ANOTHER WAY



SUPER BLAKE

29" x 21" (74cm x 53cm)

Crossing the Finish Line

■ Week 48, Day 1

EVERYONE CAN CREATE

“ The desire to create is one of the deepest yearnings of the human soul. No matter our talents, education, backgrounds, or abilities, we each have an inherent wish to create something that did not exist before.

Everyone can create. You don't need money, position, or influence in order to create something of substance or beauty."

—Dieter F. Uchtdorf



SIWASH ROCK
32" x 40" (81cm x 102cm)

■ Week 48, Day 2

LIGHT REVEALS

Light reveals shape, texture and detail.
Objects will appear more crisp and clear.

■ Week 48, Day 3

SHADOWS CONNECT

Shadows connect objects to the ground
or to other objects. This connection can
also bring harmony and unity to a piece.

■ Week 48, Day 4

CHIAROSCURO

Chiaroscuro is a concept applied frequently in painting. It is the use of light and dark, the sunlight and the shadows. A well-crafted painting usually has a good balance of light and dark. A painting with only light or bright values isn't as interesting as one interspersed with dark areas. It is because of the dark that the light can be seen more fully and appreciated more completely.

Like a good painting, life has its light and dark moments. Yes, the light makes us feel good, and it would be wonderful to have the light constantly, but why does the light make us feel good? It is because it chases away the shadows, and reveals warmth, understanding, and clarity. Life can be more enriching and flavorful if punctuated by the knowledge that comes from those dark moments.

We have all experienced dark moments, the shadows falling upon us.

Learn to appreciate the dark because, like shadows in a painting, it does create connection. It will connect you to other people and humanity. It can keep you grounded and make you aware of the suffering of others. Be grateful for the bitter because it does make the sweet taste better.



FAITH OF GENERATIONS

29" x 21" (53cm x 74cm)

■ Week 48, Day 5

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

Keeping a photographic record as you paint is a wonderful way to document your progress. This will help remind you of how you painted that really awesome painting years from now.



POUR 2



POUR 1



POUR 3



POUR 4



POUR 5



The big reveal after all of the mask
has been removed

HARMONY GATE
25" x 35" (64cm x 89cm)



SUMMER STORM
11" × 14" (28cm × 36cm)

■ Week 48, Day 6

ART VIEWED AT A DISTANCE

Often we can get stuck in the habit of only viewing our paintings up close and personal. It is easy to do since you have to be close to paint it.

However, most art is viewed at a distance, not at nose length.

It is therefore a good idea to step back every so often to view the whole picture as your viewer would observe it and assess if it is working.



Week 48, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #48

One of my students, Sandy, mentioned to me that even when she tapes her watercolor paper to the board, the paper will still sometimes warp and buckle. She asked if there was a way to flatten her finished watercolor paintings in preparation for framing.

Yes, there is a simple way to do this. First wet the back of the painting so the paper is wet but the painting on the front is still preserved. Next, turn the paper over and place onto a smooth surface, such as a piece of Plexiglas or a countertop. Then place some paper towels over the painting. Finally, stack all of your heaviest books on top of the painting.

The paper towels will absorb the excess moisture without doing any harm to the painting.

Let the books sit on top of your painting for 24 to 48 hours (depending on humidity). Now you will be able to frame your watercolor without it looking warped behind the mat.



WALK AWAY FROM THE PAINTING

Get up and walk away from the painting. Go do the dishes. Do the laundry. Take the dog for a walk. But don't keep working on your painting.

■ Week 49, Day 2

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

While painting, our brain will get used to what it sees and sometimes gets a little too comfortable with what it is seeing. The danger in this is that we can disconnect from what the goal and purpose of the painting may be.

Looking at differently can be as easy
as viewing at your painting in the mirror.

A still life painting by L. Peckhead. The scene is set on a red brick surface. On the right is a highly detailed, ornate silver teapot with a lid and a handle. To its left is a silver bowl filled with green and yellow grapes, with a few red strawberries scattered around it. The background is a soft, hazy landscape with a blue sky and distant hills. The artist's signature 'L. Peckhead' is visible in the bottom right corner.

SUMMER TEA
14" x 20" (36cm x 51cm)



REDUCE IT

Seeing it small helps you to see if things are working together as a whole. It focuses on composition and mood over technique.

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■ Week 49, Day 6

SACRIFICING FOR THE GREATER GOOD

There are times when we have painted something really wonderful into our painting. The object is well rendered, the texture may be awesome, and the concept is really cool.

However, it doesn't fit with the painting as a whole.

It is times like these when it is better to sacrifice this really wonderful part to the greater good of the overall painting.

For instance, in my painting *Yellowstone Gold*, the dead tree near the bottom center had a beautiful trunk. It was all twisty on the bottom and I liked the look of it in the photograph.

I also like the concept of the dead tree because of the battle with nature that is part of Yellowstone—the concept that the earth sometimes can only sustain growth for a short period of time.

When I thought the painting was completed, I struggled with the composition. I went through my bag of tricks while assessing the painting, and that dead tree still stuck out like a sore thumb. I realized that even though the concept of this tree was interesting, it wasn't what I originally wanted to say by painting the canyon.

I had to make the decision to cut it down, sacrificing it for the whole, and thus creating a better feel to the painting that focused on the canyon instead of a dead tree.



The dead tree originally in *Yellowstone Gold*



Week 49, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #49

Becky from Wisconsin emailed me with a question about signing a finished painting.

She asks, "How do you sign your paintings? With paint, marker, colored pencil?"

I sign most of my paintings with paint using a brush with a good point. I occasionally sign my paintings with an archival pigment-based ink pen such as a Pigma Micron marker. You can also sign paintings with an acrylic paint marker. The most

important thing to do is to make sure the paint or ink is archival and therefore will not fade over time.

If you have a problem with signing your name straight, draw a light pencil guideline with a ruler before signing. Once the paint or ink has dried, that pencil line can be easily erased.



YELLOWSTONE GOLD
24" × 18" (61cm × 46cm)

■ Week 50, Day 2

FORM A CRITIQUE GROUP

It is always beneficial to have support from other artists, people who share your passion for watercolor and painting.

A critique group is a great way to get feedback about your work. Proper feedback helps you progress and move forward in your artistic journey.

It is best to find at least a couple of other people who are willing to be a part of this group. It is also best to find those around your level of skill and comfort, as well as individuals who can be honest. Not brutal, but honest. Having another set of eyes and perspective to view our work helps us to know if we are on the right path. Often these people are found in classes that you take or the artistic organizations you join.

I have had a couple of different types of critique groups over the years. One was a group of watercolor artists that would meet once a week to paint and to discuss our work. These artists understood the medium, and I learned great deal about technique and other ways to approach a painting by watching them paint. Another was a group of artists working in all different mediums, but we were in the same place with our careers as artists. This group may not have understood watercolor as well, but they still helped me formulate my ideas and my compositions. They also helped me formulate a better business plan.

It may be hard to find the right mix of people and the time to meet, but it is definitely worth trying.

■ Week 50, Day 3

LIFTING WITH A SPONGE

As previously discussed, parts of a watercolor painting can be lifted with a scrub brush. However, it can be difficult to lift larger areas with your small scrub brush, and the brush will also create a roughness to the paper that will no longer allow the paint to flow smoothly.

When wanting to lift an area that will be repainted, I have discovered that using a natural sea sponge to do this works the best. It is the gentlest method of removing the paint while allowing the integrity of the paper to remain intact. As long as you do not scrub too hard, the sponge will cause very minimal damage to the paper. Most paint will lift easily just by gently washing the sponge over it.

■ Week 50, Day 4

LIFTING LARGER AREAS

There have been times when a part of my painting seems amiss. Usually it is the way the background interacts with the subject or the color is just not quite right. When it is a larger area, such as a background, I have removed color from the area by placing the whole painting underwater and gently scrubbing away the area that I want removed with a natural sea sponge.

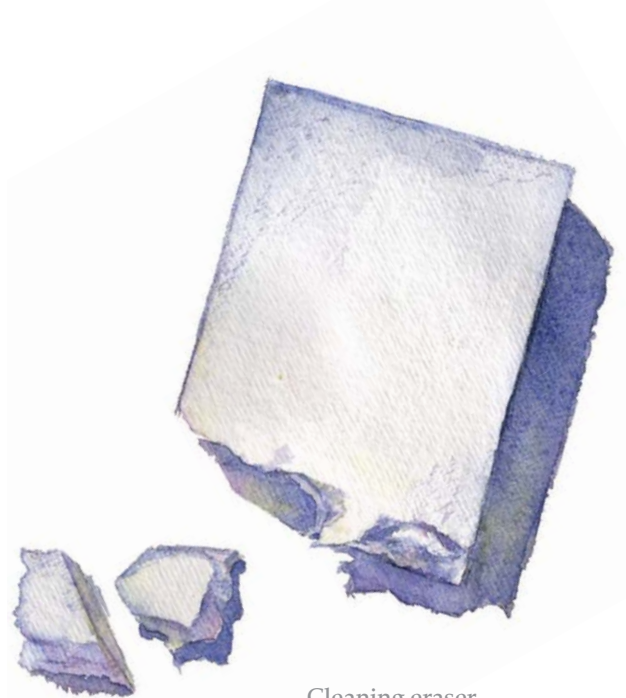
It may seem a little scary to immerse the whole painting in water but the other areas will stay the way they were originally painted. Those areas will not be ruined if the sponge is used on only the areas to be removed.



ANOTHER WAY TO LIFT

However, several watercolorists have discovered that if it can lift crayon and a child's painted handprints from walls, it just might lift paint from paper. And it does!

This eraser is to be used gently though. I would recommend using it sparingly and not to scrub back to white (unless it is a pale color you are lifting). It is a micro-abrasive, and excessive scrubbing will ruin or even tear your paper. I would also recommend using the original formula instead of all the other kinds that might have additional chemicals.



Cleaning eraser

A hand is shown holding a small, brown, textured object, possibly a piece of wood or bark, over a colorful, abstract painting. The painting depicts a pond scene with blue and purple lily pads, green foliage, and a small brown insect on a lily pad. The background is a mix of yellow, green, and blue washes.

ERASING SMALL AREAS AND FINE LINES

To avoid doing this, use packing tape around the desired region. You can even cut out the shape you want lifted and lay the tape over it. Then use a sea sponge or cleaning eraser to lift the area.

This technique also works well when trying to clean up or create a line. Just make sure the tape is completely pressed down to avoid any water seeping underneath it.



Varnishing brush

Week 50, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #50

One of my students, Sue, asks, “Is there a way to varnish or seal a watercolor so it does not have to be put under glass?” The answer is yes.

I do find that, at times, the feel of an authentic watercolor gets lost, but it is possible and I have done it on some my paintings.

You can use an acrylic varnish to varnish a watercolor painting. There are some spray varnishes out there, but I prefer to use a brush-on varnish.

However, the difficulty of varnishing a watercolor with the brush-on varnish is figuring out how to put it onto the painting without smearing all the beautiful colors you have painted.

My solution is to first use a fixative-type spray on the painting. I prefer a matte spray, such as Krylon UV-Resistant Acrylic Coating, spraying a couple of times and allowing each coat to dry in between.

After that has dried for a day, I will slightly dampen the back of my painting with water and apply acrylic medium. I will then adhere the paper to a hardboard that is the size of the painting. The medium acts like a glue so the paper sticks to the board. I like to use a crisscross pattern with a hake brush to apply the medium, making sure I cover the whole area to be glued to the board.

Next, I place my painting facedown on wax paper and weigh it down with all my heavy books (similar to how I flatten a painting). Make sure there is not any medium spilling out onto the front of the painting or onto the books. It is an adhesive and will cause the wax paper and/or parts of the books to stick to the painting.

After the medium has dried and the paper is securely glued to the board, I brush a couple of coats of Golden acrylic polymer varnish onto the front and sides of the painting. I prefer the gloss varnish because it is the strongest type of varnish, and some of the matte varnishes have a whitening agent in them. If I don’t want it too glossy, I will water the varnish down and apply a couple more coats of it to the painting.

Now the painting can be framed so that it doesn’t have to be put under glass.

■ Week 51, Day 1

GIVE THE GIFT OF ART

One of my most favorite gifts to receive is the gift of art. I am blessed to receive many such gifts from my students.

They almost always come in the form of a card that features a painting that they completed during the year or handcrafted with a quick sketch or painting. It is a joy to know that they put time, thought and themselves into such a touching gift.

This year you might consider giving such gifts to loved ones. Art is a way to share the beauty of your world, the joy of painting, and the awesomeness of you. The unselfish give of themselves and your art could be that gift of yourself that you share with another.



SOLAR FLARE
11" x 14" (28cm x 36cm)

■ Week 51, Day 2

TAKE IT OFF!

I like putting tape around the edges of my paper, even when I stretch and staple the paper.

That is because when I am done, I can take the tape off and have an instant border! And what a difference that white border makes to the painting.



■ Week 51, Day 6

FRAME IT AND HANG IT

Framing makes a world of difference to just about any painting. It feels complete and real.

It now has presence and cannot be pushed under the bed and forgotten.

It needs to be hung and admired by all. Don't forget to sign it before you frame it though! The world needs to know who did that fabulous work of art.



Week 51, Day 7

STUDIO SECRETS #51

Jessica from Idaho asks about fixing frames at shows. Jessica explained that she has just started to exhibit her work and although she tries to protect her paintings while in transit, she occasionally gets some scrapes and scratches on her frames. She wonders if there is an easier way to fix a frame so she doesn't have to invest in a new one.

Scratched frames are a common problem for every artist new to exhibiting their work. We all try to package and stack our work so the frames receive the least amount of damage possible. However, we do occasionally have time constraints, weather mishaps, or help from some well-meaning friends that result in nicks, scratches and scuffs. It took me a summer of shows before I discovered paint markers

for frames at my local hardware store. These paint markers come in a variety of colors that matched my frames. They are now included in my bag o' tricks that I keep for when I transport and exhibit my work. If a nick or mark does occur during the moving or hanging of my work, I just pull out one of my handy-dandy markers and do a quick fix.

For deeper gauges and scuffs, I have discovered wood repair filler sticks. These sticks are wood putty in a variety of colors and can be carried around easily. They may not match your frame exactly but are a great option when in a pinch.



GIFT YOURSELF

Even though you may know what your gift will be, be sure to wrap it up. Put a bow on it.

Fill out a gift certificate declaring that you have an hour or a day free from distractions so you can paint.

Wrap that up also. With a bow. Sign it from Santa and put it under the tree if you need to. It makes the joy of art that much more fun.



REMOVE ALL EVIDENCE

Every once in a while a critic comes along and likes to point out that my painting is different from my photograph.

This critic will then continue to compare my painting to the photograph, and not in a way that will help me improve my painting skills. (You know the kind I am talking about—the kind who has never tried to put paint to paper!)

I try to explain that it is my artistic interpretation of what I see and feel in the photograph, but to no avail. The critic will always remain just that: a critic.

Don't give these types of critics the opportunity to find fault with your painting or drawing. Don't let them compare your skills to a camera's. Your painting represents more than that photograph does. You no longer need that photo.

Rip it up. Recycle it. Delete it from your files if you must.
Remove all evidence of your photograph from prying eyes.

The real image to be cherished is your work of art, and the joy you felt while painting it.

COLLAGE IT

When all else fails, you can always use your watercolor as the background for a collage, or cut it up for use in a collage. There are still so many creative possibilities!



LAVENDER BLUE

14" × 21" (36cm × 53cm)

(collage)

■ Week 52, Day 4

ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

It has been said that having an attitude of gratitude will change your life. It can also change your art. This change in mindset helps you to see opportunities throughout your day—artistic opportunities that can lead to wonderful visual expressions. As you practice an attitude of gratitude, you will notice treasures in everyday moments and gain a sense of wonder in the world around you. This sense of wonder will open your eyes to so

many more creative possibilities than you can even imagine, and it will begin to infuse your art, and thus your life. It will make you happier and healthier, and enjoy the process of producing art. Besides, no one really enjoys the reluctant painter burdened with talent, especially one that whines.



CAST UPON THESE SHORES
16" x 20" (41cm x 51cm)

■ Week 52, Day 6

A LIFETIME OF PAINTING

“The good watercolors take a lifetime—plus a half an hour.”

—Toni Onley

Week 52, Day 7

GO FORTH AND PAINT!

Now that you have been armed with knowledge of how to create with watercolor, grab that brush and paper, and ...

Go forth and paint!

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LESLIE REDHEAD is an artist, teacher and author whose watercolor paintings have earned international awards and recognition. In addition to being a signature member of the Northwest Watercolor Society (NWWWS), the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour (CSPWC) and the Federation of Canadian Artists (FCA), Leslie holds a Master's of Education in art education.

Leslie was born in Utah, grew up in Maryland, attended school in Hawaii and Utah, and raised her children in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Canada. The artist currently divides her time between Victoria, British Columbia, and Idaho, giving painting instruction at the University of Victoria and in workshops throughout Canada, the U.S. and Spain. Her two creative, intelligent children have lovingly given her the superhero personas of Watercolor Woman and The Water Bender.

Inspiration for Leslie's work come from everyday moments and adventures as she visually journals the people and landscape that surround her. She enjoys encouraging others to find the artist within and continues to seek the creative in all things. Leslie has always wanted to be a hand model and with this book, that dream is now realized.

DEDICATION

For Hannah and Blake—

May you have the courage to keep moving forward and live your dreams.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have been blessed by Jennifers and am deeply grateful for all of them—Jennifer Burrows, Jennifer Fenske, Jenny Estep, Ginny Dunford (must be counted among my Jennys), and especially the sister that I chose, Jen Olsen.

I could not have done this without the encouragement, assistance and support of Sandra Boehner, Yra and Mike Binstead, Donna Guns, Jane and Doug Scott, Bryan Yorke, Shoni and Lou Robertson, Michelle Wiebe, Janette Sproston, Donald Bergland, Robert Dalton, Kim Borrows, Dianne Walter, Nancy Stanwick, Nada Foster, Glenn Davidson, Chantel Allen, Daleen Thomas, Carlin Tingey, Tami Young, Indigo Art Papers, the Dovetail Program, and the wonderful women and sponsors of the Cridge Transition House for Women. Thank you to all of them and to my wonderfully patient editor, Kristin Conlin.



Catch up with Leslie online and through social media:



Website: leslieredheadart.com



Blog: leslieredheadart.blogspot.com



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DISTRIBUTED IN CANADA BY FRASER DIRECT
100 Armstrong Avenue
Georgetown, ON, Canada L7G 5S4
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DISTRIBUTED IN THE U.K. AND EUROPE
BY F&W MEDIA INTERNATIONAL LTD
Pynes Hill Court, Pynes Hill
Rydon Lane, Exeter, EX2 5AZ, UK
Tel: (+44) 1392 797680
Tel: (+44) 1626 323200
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ISBN 13: 978-1-4403-4-4077

Edited by Kristy Conlin and Christine Doyle
Designed by Breanna Loebach
Production coordinated by Jennifer Bass

Composition 6 (1913)

Wassily Kandisky

Oil on Canvas

77" x 118" (195cm x 200cm)

The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia

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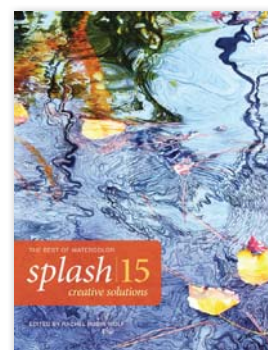
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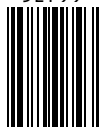
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