

OUTLINE OF 6 WEEK WATERCOLOR CLASS TAUGHT BY SUSAN SCHNEIDER

WEEK 1

WELCOME TO WEEK 1 – EXPLORING WATERCOLORS

Introduction to materials: An in-depth approach

A clear and thorough introduction to the materials you will be using during the next 6 weeks.

Materials: Watercolor paper (surface, texture, weights, absorbency), synthetic and natural brushes, watercolor paints (tubes and pans/economy vs artist professional grade), plastic palettes (studio and traveling).

Other materials: wax candle, masking fluid, sponges, drawing pencils, toothbrush, test pieces, viewfinder, paper towels, Q-tips.

Organizing Your Materials

Setting out your tubes of paint (if you are not using pans) in a series of similar colors (ex- all yellows together, etc.).

Squeezing color into the palette and making a Color Chart. Writing the property of that color (transparent or opaque) (warm or cool) under each named painted square.

Topics:

1. Transparent/opaque, warm/cool colors and their importance.
2. Staining and granulating colors.
3. Strong and weak colors.
4. Caring for a brush.
5. How to hold the brush for maximum flexibility.
6. Creating lively brush strokes.
7. Understanding the role of water on a brush – loaded brush.
8. How to remove watercolor from the paper with a brush vs sponge or paper towel.
9. Resist techniques demonstrated.
10. Names of local art stores and student discounts.

The teacher will do demonstrations and show students the materials she uses.

Intermediate students will lay out their materials at their work station and start painting a watercolor of still life set-up. The teacher will discuss with them their goals and what they want to work on such as color mixing, composition, etc.

WEEK 2

UNDERSTANDING COLOR AND TONE

Review of Week 1 – Materials and topics. Questions answered.

Primary Palette – yellow, red, blue

Analogous Palettes – harmonious colors close to each other on the color wheel.

Monochromatic Palette – using one color in variations of lightness and saturation

Complementary Palette – orange/blue, red/green yellow/violet Strong color contrasts

Why they are important and how they are used to make cool grays

Permanent Staining Pigments

Transparent, non-staining pigments

Opaque Pigments

Color Mixing and Overlaying

- Overlaying to darken color

- Overlaying to lighten color

- Overlaying to change color

- Mixing colors in the palette wells

- Mixing colors on the paper directly

Analyzing Tone

Tone is the darkness or lightness of a subject.

Translating tone to color

Identifying tonal contrasts

Light source – very important

Using a black and white photograph to understand tone.

Making a gray tonal panel

Intermediates show their proficiency with light source and creating tones using the still life

WEEK 3

MASTERING TECHNIQUES OF WATERCOLOR

Review of Week 2 materials.

Explanation of range of techniques that are possible with watercolor:

1. Priming the paper
2. Laying a water wash
3. Judging the wetness of paper Flat Washes – paint laid over a large area.
4. Graded Wash – conveys subtle changes of color and tone in nature such as the sky.
5. Variegated Wash – two or more colors are combined

6. Wet-on-Dry – laying new, wet washes over earlier, dry ones is the classic way of building up a watercolor painting.
7. Wet-in-Wet – partially controllable and challenging

8. Blending – to achieve a soft, gradual transition from one color or tone to another.

9. Hard Edges – strong shapes, dramatic tonal contrasts

Practicing all of the above techniques

Intermediate students will do a page of washes so teacher can see if they have mastered the techniques. Still life set-ups will be used to continue their mastering composition.

WEEK 4

HOW DO I BEGIN A WATERCOLOR?

Review of Week 3. Questions answered

Drawing a Still Life

1. Using a Viewfinder
2. The value of a thumbnail sketch
3. Foreground/middle ground/background
4. Horizontal, vertical and square-sized paper
5. Rule of thirds
6. Focal point
7. Closed and Open watercolor
8. Using diagonals
9. Creating light and shadows – colors in shadow, cast shadow, the color of shadows
10. How Cast Shadows work
11. Backgrounds – real and imagined
12. Three-dimensional modeling – objects with defined edges, building tones, curved objects, blending washes
13. Linear and aerial perspective

Students will work from a simple still life set up to create a watercolor
Intermediate students will focus on the above subjects as they create their watercolors

WEEK 5 AND 6

PULLING YOUR WATERCOLOR PAINTINGS TOGETHER

Review of Week 4 and questions answered

These two weeks will focus on creating a watercolor still life each week and putting to work the information from the previous 4 weeks. The focus will include the following subjects:

1. Determining the focus
2. Leading the eye
3. Drawing the still life
4. Painting the biggest areas first
5. Showing the source of light
6. Painting all over the paper
7. Leaving only the whites you want to save
8. Creating Contrast – darks to light
9. Leaving details for last
10. Using matts