

EYE-CATCHING LANDSCAPES: CITY, SHORE AND WOODS

the
artist's
magazine

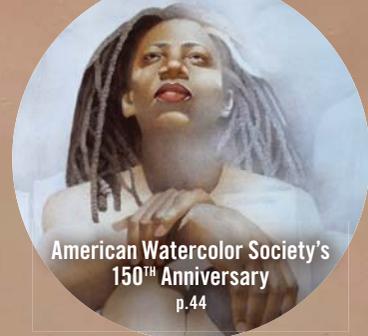
Sweet Deal!

Money-Making
Tips for the
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PLUS

Cartoon
Renaissance Style

NOVEMBER 2017
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Brian Burt's *Strawberry Yeast*
(oil on gesso board, 6x6) looks
good enough to eat.

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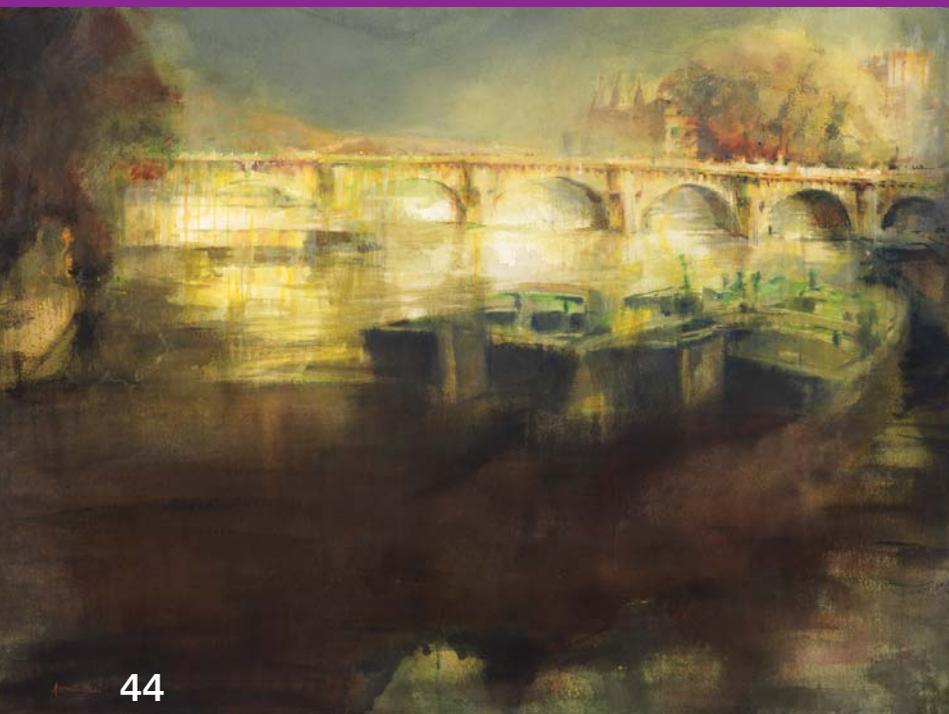


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by Joe Gyurcsak
josephgyurcsak.com



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COVER: *Strawberry Yeast* (oil on gesso board, 6x6) by Brian Burt

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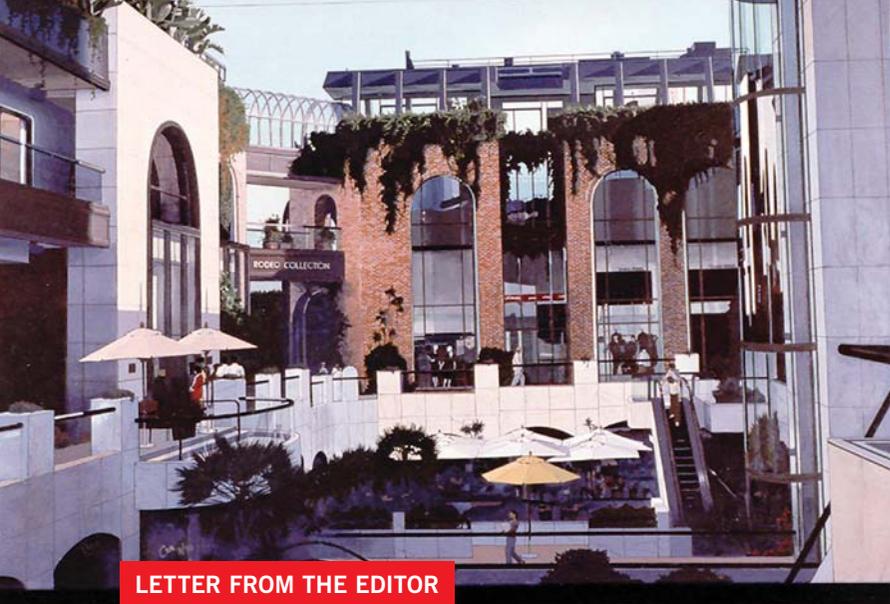
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Lay of the Land

ABOVE:
Rodeo
(acrylic on canvas, 24x36)
by Glenn Moreton brings out the casual elegance of the Rodeo Collection shopping center in Beverly Hills, Calif.

QUICKLY—what do you picture when you hear the word “landscape”? I imagine either a rural or a woodland scene, but there are far more types of landscapes for an artist to explore. Glenn Moreton paints broad, realistic cityscapes (“**Keeping Perspective**,” page 54). In **Ask the Experts** (page 30), where Michael Skalka discusses wet-to-dry color shifts in acrylics, you’ll see Lynette Cook’s more closed-in urban views. Kurt Solmssen explores the land and water close to his home in Puget Sound, Wash. (“**Homing In**,” page 34). Albert Handell gravitates to water runs, rock formations and vegetation, including his all-important composition unifier—foliage (**Brushing Up**, page 14). Our celebration of the 150th anniversary of the American Watercolor Society (“**Watermedia Wellspring**,” page 44) includes Antonio Masi’s watercolor depictions

of New York City bridges and Pat Dews’ abstracted views of rock and water. Getting the lay of the land means something different to each of these artists.

It’s an interesting expression, “getting the lay of the land.” It also refers to getting the facts or obtaining basic information on a topic. In this issue, Koo Schadler presents the lay of land on metalpoint (**Drawing Board**, page 20); Stephen Cefalo investigates Staedtler graphite and charcoal pencils (**Road Test**, page 76); and Brian Burt, Birgit O’Conner and Ursula Roma set the groundwork on seasonal money-making practices for artists (“**Working the Holidays**,” page 64). And there’s still more territory in these pages to check out—happy exploring!

Michael Gormley
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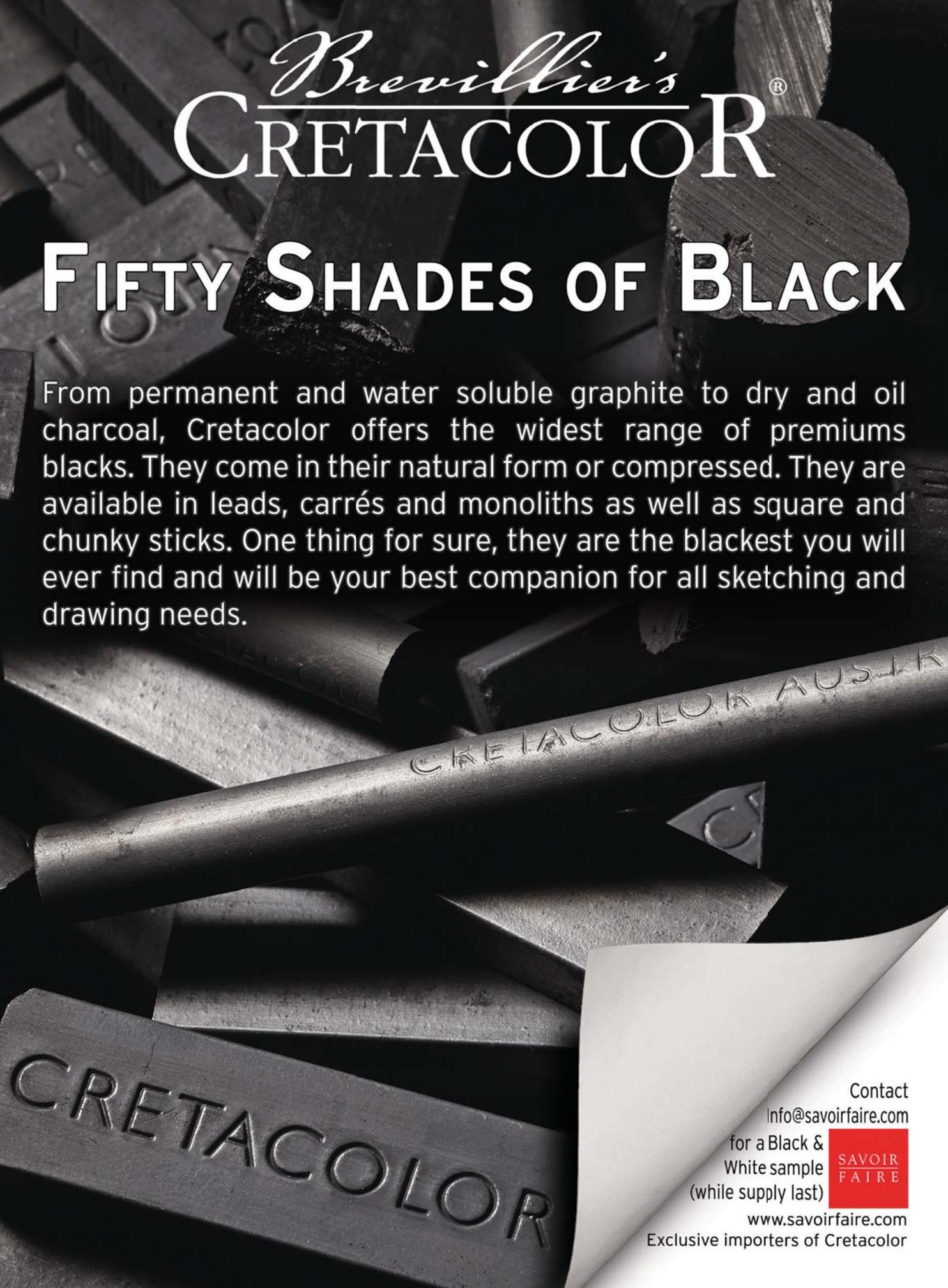
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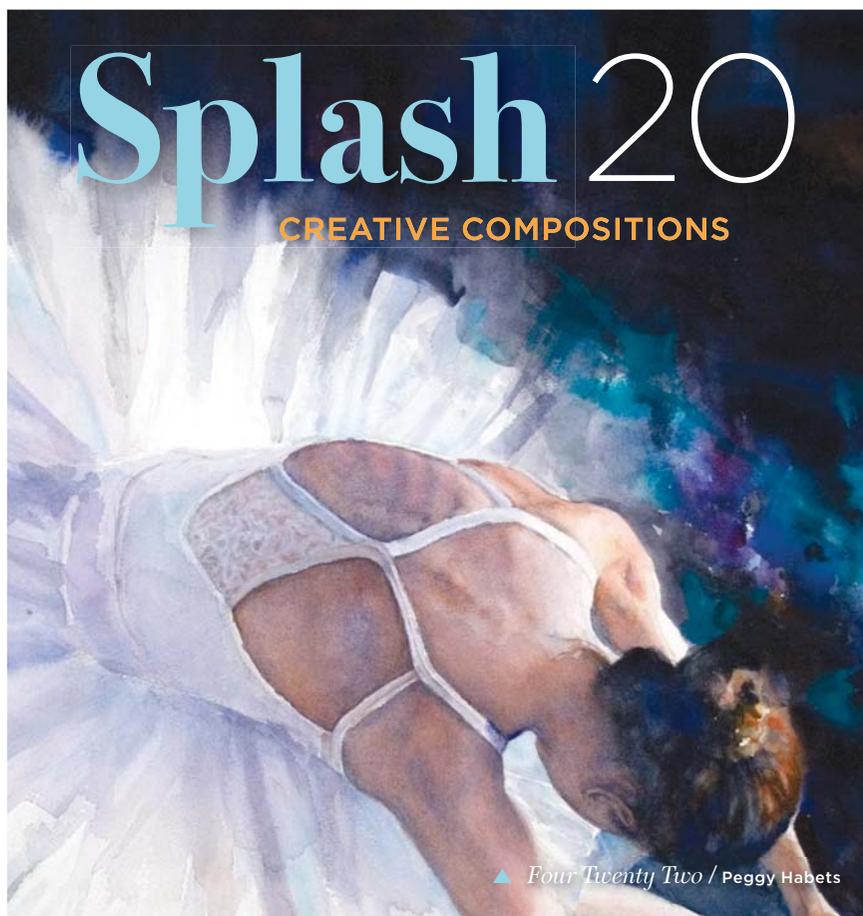


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PERSPECTIVE

NEWS, INSTRUCTION, INSPIRATION

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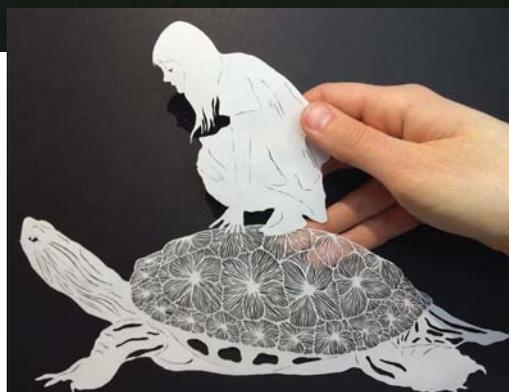
TRENDING ARTIST

MAUDE WHITE



Daffodils (left, 6½x7) and *Leaving* (below, 10½x11) were created from a feeling of both yearning and unfurling. All of White's flower pieces reach outward and upward toward something they desire.

BOTTOM: *When We Find Each Other* (10½x7½) attempts to solve the feeling of isolation and loneliness. White seeks resolution in her work with the hope that people feel safe when they observe it.



MAUDE WHITE'S PAPER CUT ART is a mediation in patience and precision. The New York-based artist is drawn to the duality of strength and sensitivity paper presents as a medium—as well as art's overwhelming ability to restore. "I believe very

strongly that art can heal, both emotionally and physically," she says in an artist's statement. "Art can be a gentle conduit, a precious, living thing that can enter both creator and viewer, and thereby extend them and connect them, making both feel larger and more beloved."

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THE ARTIST'S LIFE

Edited by Michael Woodson



Let Your Mind Wander

Throwing out preconceived ideas about his paintings, Drew Price creates dreamlike portraits.



DREW PRICE IS A BORN

TRIER. "I won *The Artist's Magazine's* Annual Art Competition student award in the portrait category," he says. "I wanted to try my hand at the regular competition once I wasn't a student." That tenacity led him to becoming a

finalist in last year's competition with his work *Battle of the Bee and the Fly* (above).

Price was raised in New Mexico, and then spent 12 years living throughout the United States and in other countries, including Italy, Guam and Turkey. The one

constant in his travels was his passion for art, which led to his enrolling at the Academy of Art University, in San Francisco, where he earned his bachelor of fine arts degree in painting and drawing in 2015.

Price's work in oil combines



ABOVE: *Over the Hill and Close to Home* (oil on gesso board, 36x36)



LEFT: *Wasp and the Wheelbarrow* (oil on gesso board, 36x36)

OPPOSITE: *Battle of the Bee and the Fly* (oil on gesso board, 36x48)

both skill and unique imagery to create pieces that are haunting, humorous and a little nostalgic. "My inspiration for *Battle of the Bee and the Fly* came from exploring what we derive from meaning," says the artist. He works in an almost abstract way, with disregard for any preconceived ideas as to how the image might look in the end. "I allowed the imagery to surface through a stream-of-consciousness type of process," he says. "It was really exciting to work this way, and each stage presented me with new sets of problems to be solved, which made it easy to stay engaged."

"I constructing a grid where I added lines that played off of the previous line or lines until an image popped into my head," he

says. "That first image was my starting point. My rule was that at each stage, I had to add the first thing that came to mind no matter what. So the subject matter of painting came about through the subconscious, each element a direct product of an association with the previous elements."

The rewards of working this way far outweigh the difficulties. "I've always enjoyed the 'study stages' of a painting, so allowing the exploration and problem solving to unfold directly onto the canvas as part of the final painting was fulfilling," he says. "This way of working felt alive, like a conversation rather than just a dictation of ideas."

See more of Price's work at drewpriceart.com.

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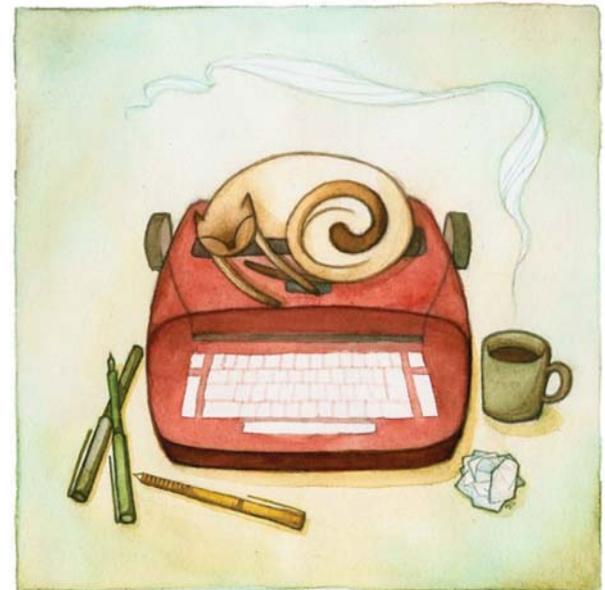
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THE ARTIST'S LIFE

WHO WE'RE FOLLOWING

ERIN BAKER



Erin Baker is a Cincinnati-based illustrator and designer, whose watercolor illustrations always leave us smiling and inspired. From family portraits to pop culture references, Baker's whimsy is contagious! ■

TOP: *Thou Cannot Toucheth This* (watercolor, walnut ink and gold India ink on paper, 5x7)

ABOVE: *Typewriter Cat* (watercolor on paper, 10x10)

Follow Baker on Instagram at @hooray-lorraine or [instagram.com/hooraylorraine](https://www.instagram.com/hooraylorraine).

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BRUSHING UP

By Albert Handell

A Flutter of Foliage

Work smart! With a few strokes of a palette knife or brush, you can bring your landscapes together quickly and easily.



ABOVE: During autumn and winter months, the complexity of branches and twigs replaces or enhances the flutter of foliage. I look at these branches as rhythms and movements rather than individual twigs. In *Evening Glow on Palace Avenue, Santa Fe* (oil on linen, 30x40) the branches crisscross arbitrarily and overlap the major divisions of the painting. This matrix resolves the painting while adding elements that catch the eye.

MOST OF MY STUDENTS, once they begin a landscape, will modify the block-in, paint over it and then continue to noodle, on and on, in an attempt to take the painting to the finish. My way of working is simpler. The background portions of the block-in, painted boldly, transparently and without details, I leave alone. The foreground portions of the block-in, which are then painted opaquely, I strengthen a bit, but avoid overworking. Then I'll bring the two areas together with a flutter of foliage, creating intriguing rhythms and details while resolving the painting.

The following demonstration explains how I apply this method to a spring or summer scene. For autumn and winter landscapes, I treat twigs and thin branches in the same way as I do foliage.

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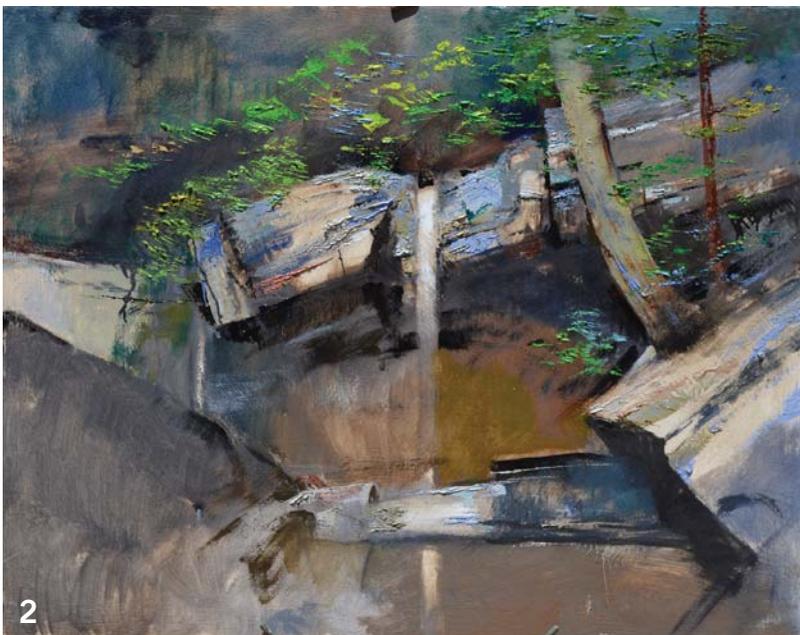


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BRUSHING UP



1. Establish the Composition

First I blocked in all areas of the linen canvas, establishing the design and composition of the painting. Notice how the opaque shapes of the rocks and tree stand out from the transparent, scrubbed-on darker colors of the background.

I varied the background colors with a combination of ultramarine blue, burnt sienna and viridian green,

applied with just a touch of Gamblin Gamsol on the brush, which diluted the colors slightly. Then I scrubbed the mixtures onto the canvas, basically “cleaning” the color from my brushes. The colors dried quickly with a transparent, luminous quality—in sharp contrast to the more opaque application of paint in the foreground. If you paint these background colors on a white surface, they will at first

MATERIALS

SURFACE: Claessens No. 66 Belgian linen

OILS: Winsor & Newton for most colors, Rembrandt for Sevres blue

MEDIUM: Gamblin Gamsol

APPLICATORS: Jack Richeson series 9629 Signature egypt brushes in sizes 8, 10 and 12; Jack Richeson Che Son Nos. 804 and 810 palette knives

look very dark, but if you scrub them on as I described, they’ll weaken, becoming transparent and luminous.

You can easily see that the background colors are more green and blue above the rocks; colors under the rocks are warmer and more red.

2. Add Foliage

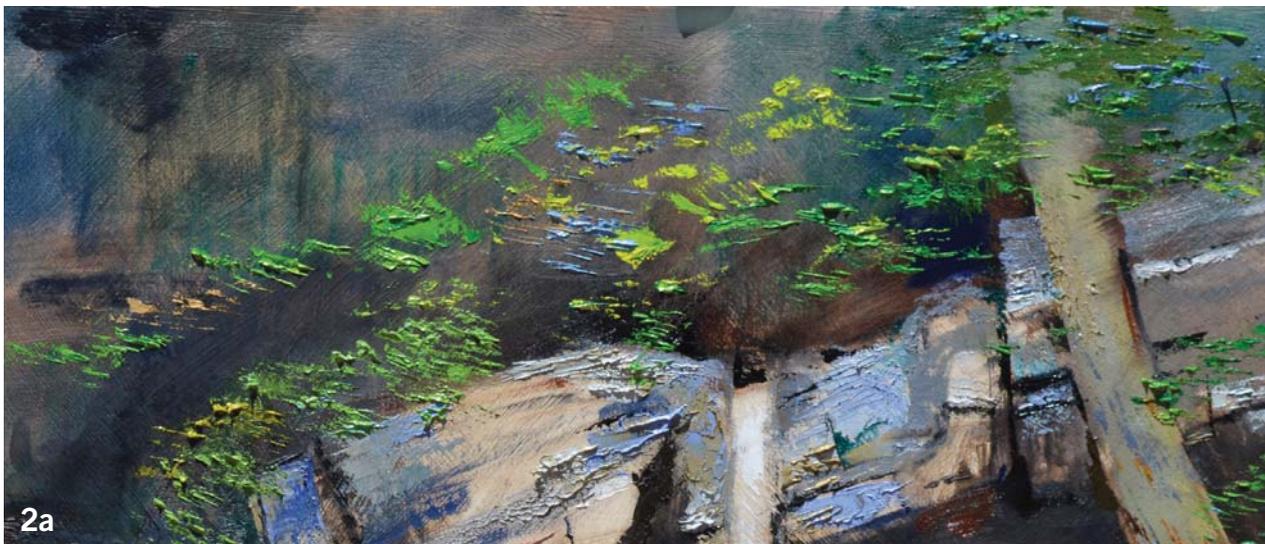
With the composition established, I strengthened the central rocks and the tree with opaque applications of paint; otherwise, I left the composition alone. I ended up with the two large contrasting areas, foreground and background.

At this point, with the rocks painted opaquely and the background transparently, the question arose: How could I marry these two dramatically different areas without noodling them to death? The answer is the introduction of a third element—foliage. Delicate foliage is all it takes to bring together the two large, contrasting areas. I think of it as the flute that ties together the different dramatic themes of a symphony.

With this in mind, I used warm and cool greens, applied with a palette knife, to simulate a flutter of leaves. The foliage dances with a life and rhythm of its own. When I apply the foliage in this way and leave it alone, I avoid belaboring and weakening the painting.

2a. A Closer Look

In this enlarged detail of the foliage, you can see how transparently I painted the background, creating a sense of space and atmosphere.



You can also sense the flutter of the foliage, which I applied with different pressures of a palette knife. I began with middle-tone, cool greens, varying the color slightly. I followed up with lighter, warm

greens placed sparingly on top as final touches. I painted intuitively, but kept in mind a movement from upper right to lower left. I was also careful not to add too much foliage, which would weaken the painting.

3. Finishing Touches

I added a few touches to the surrounding rocks and tree, but I still left the transparent background alone. Finishing the painting was basically a continuation of painting the foliage,



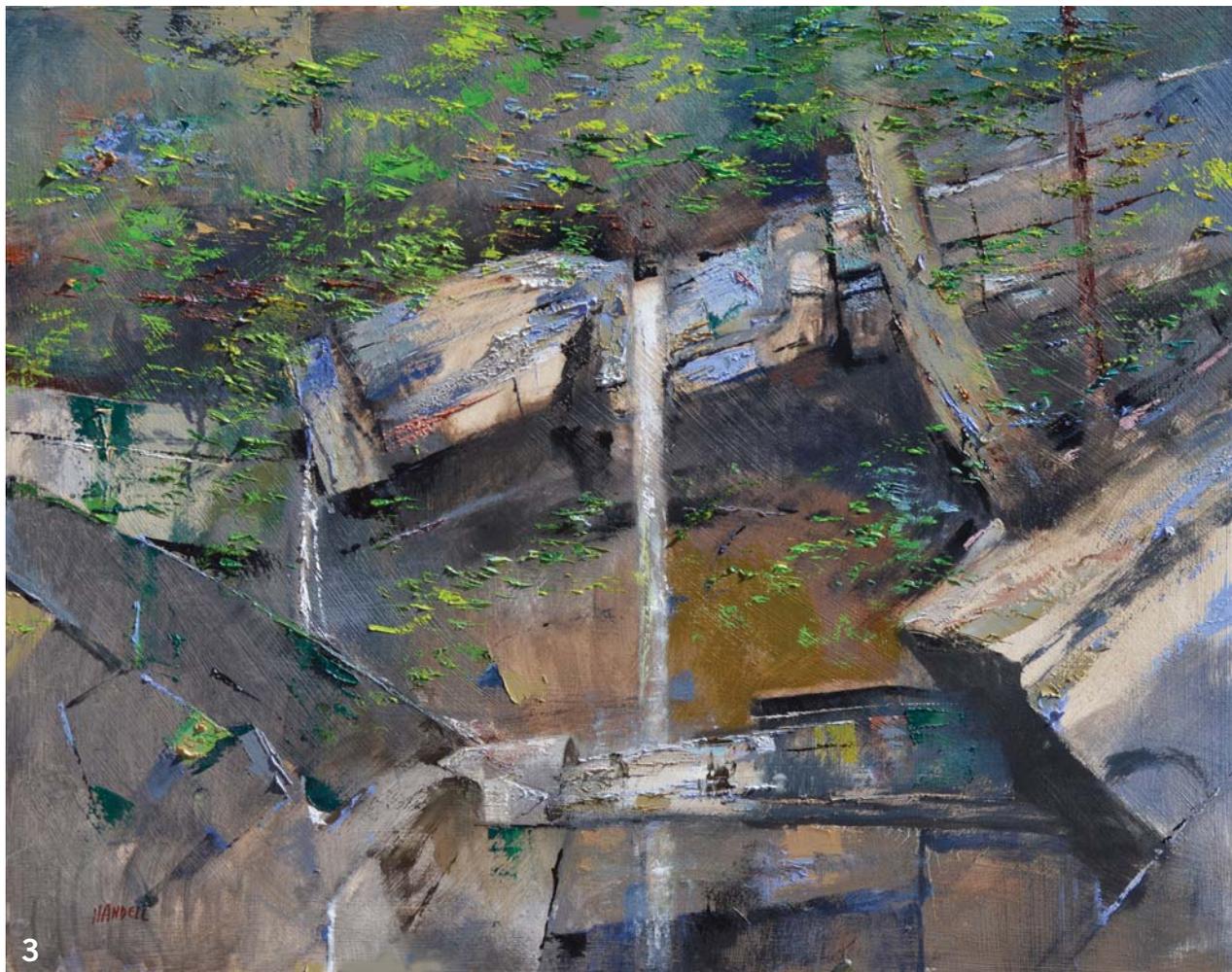
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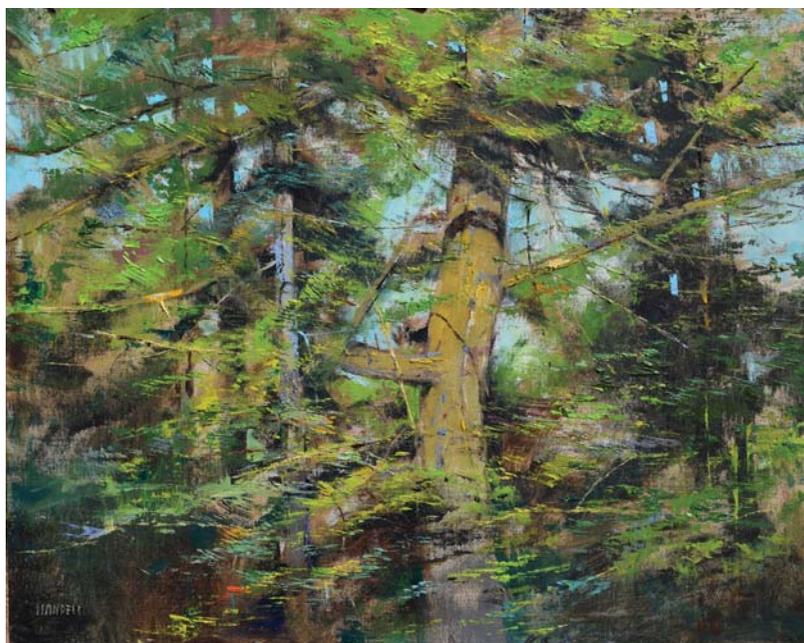
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BRUSHING UP



ABOVE: *En Route to the Kaaterskill Falls* (oil on linen, 22x28)

LEFT: In *The White Pine* (oil on linen, 22x28) the foliage is seen as rhythms and movement rather than as individual leaves.



being careful not to overdo it. This fluttery element not only stands out as a separate element, but also marries the two large contrasting areas of transparent background and opaque foreground—thus resolving the piece without further noodling. ■

ALBERT HANDELL has won many awards for his work in both oil and pastel. Visit his website at alberthandell.com to learn about his workshops and Paint-A-Long mentoring programs.



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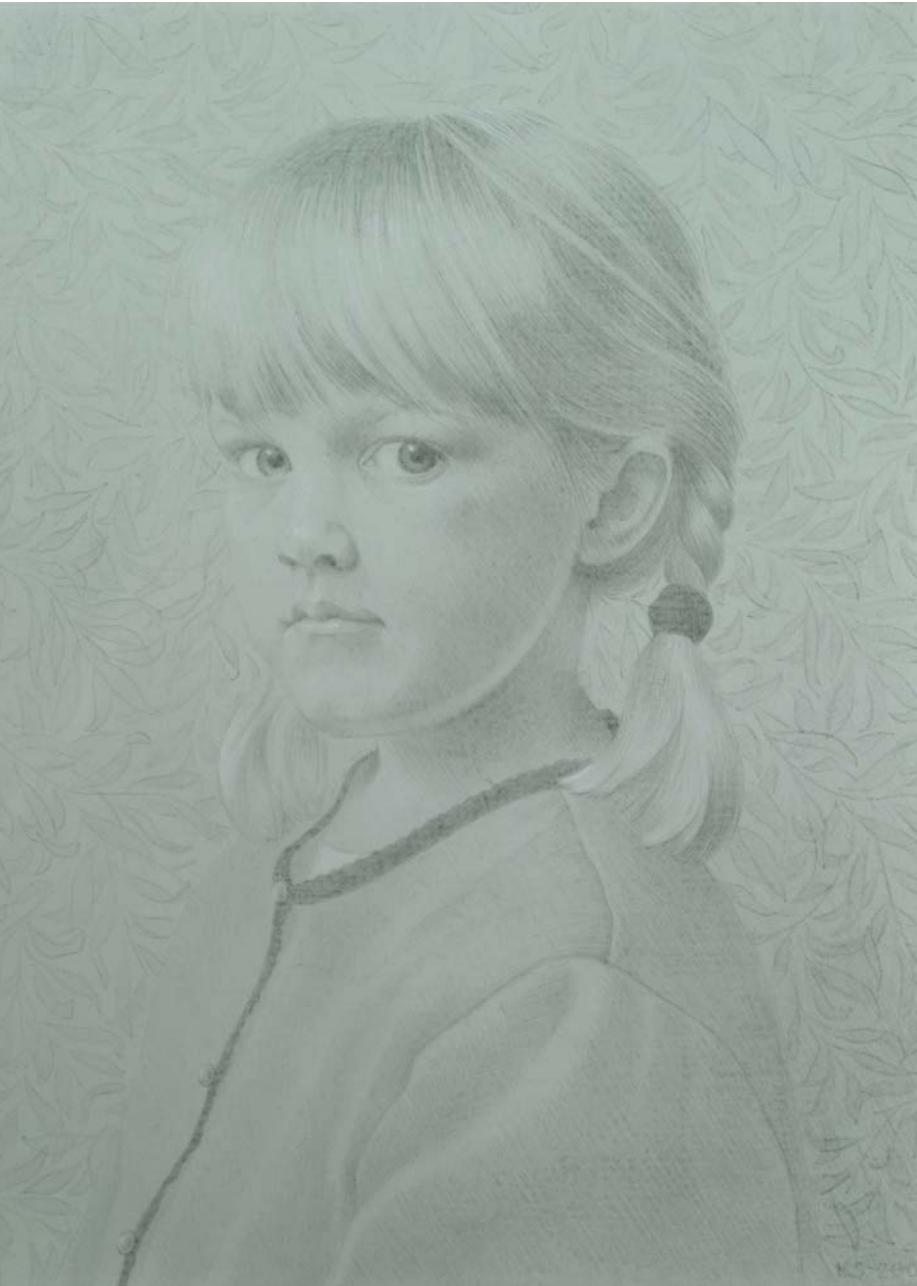


DRAWING BOARD

By Koo Schadler

Metals Show Their Mettle

For a superbly soft look of delicate, fine lines and lustrous, gray tones, try metalpoint.



ABOVE: *Eliza* (silverpoint and white egg tempera on panel with blue-tinted gesso ground, 8x6)

COLLECTION EVANSVILLE MUSEUM, IL

THE UBIQUITOUS PENCIL, a piece of graphite inside a hollow tube of wood, wasn't an option for a 15th-century draftsman—it hadn't yet been invented. Instead, for fine line drawings Renaissance artists drew with a nib of metal placed in a stylus. Both past and present artists tend to favor a silver nib, so the medium is commonly called silverpoint. In fact, almost any metal drawn across a slightly abrasive surface leaves a mark, so the technique is more broadly known as metalpoint.

Support and Ground

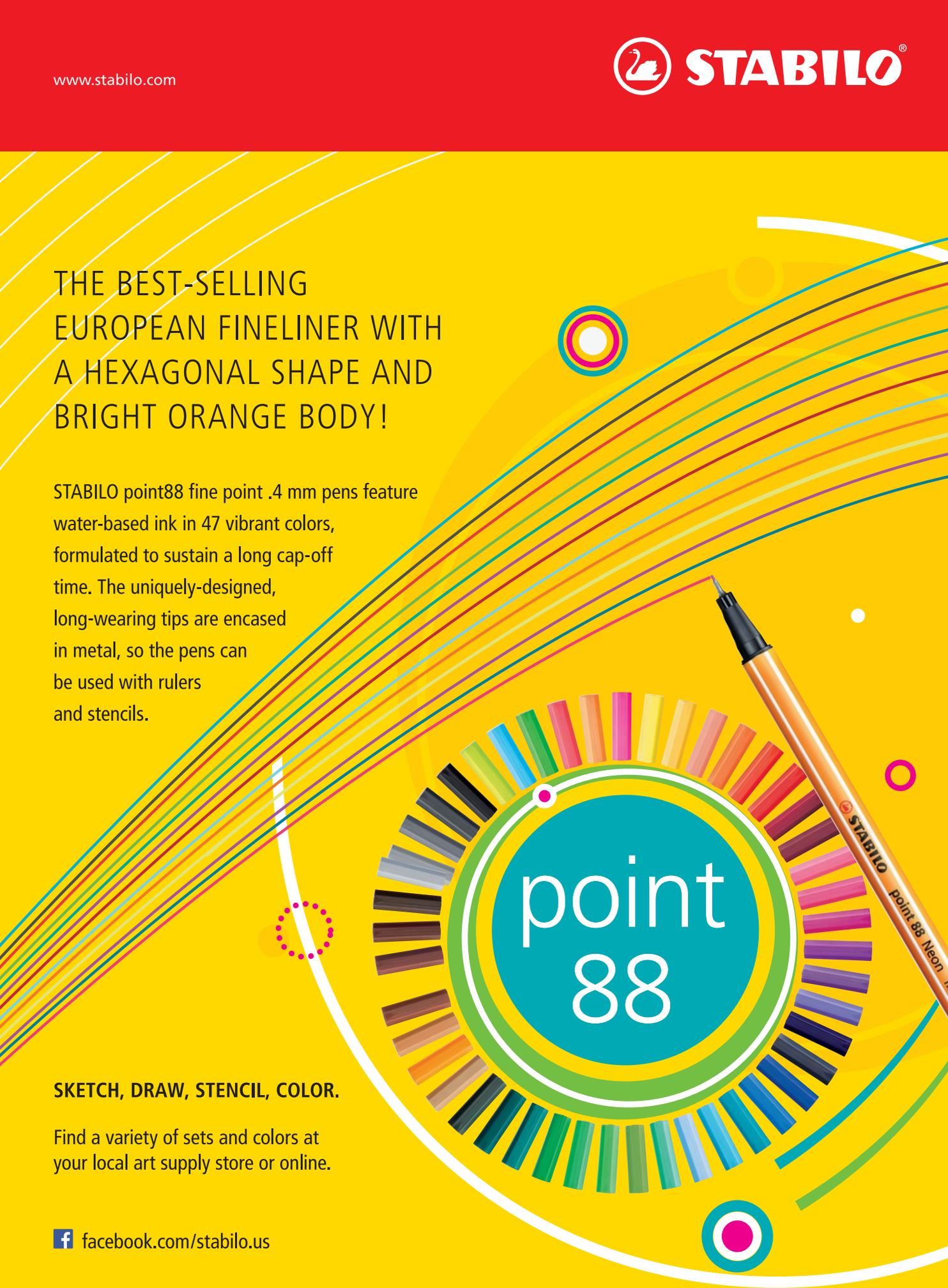
Ordinary paper won't work with metalpoint. A support (drawing surface) must be coated with a ground that has a bit of tooth to imperceptibly abrade the nib and leave behind a deposit of metal that creates a line.

A rigid support is best since most metalpoint grounds lack flexibility. Use heavyweight, smooth (hot-pressed) watermedia paper or a wood-based panel, such as hardboard or medium density fiberboard (MDF). Avoid rough, irregular surfaces, or the stylus tip may catch and leave unintended marks.

A layer of white gouache or casein paint applied to a sheet of watermedia paper makes a surface receptive to metalpoint drawing; however, a greater tonal range and variety of marks is possible on a more substantial ground. There are many recipes for homemade grounds, from traditional chalk-and-glue gesso to one that incorporates chicken bones. The simplest option is to buy a commercially produced metalpoint ground and follow the manufacturer's instructions for application.

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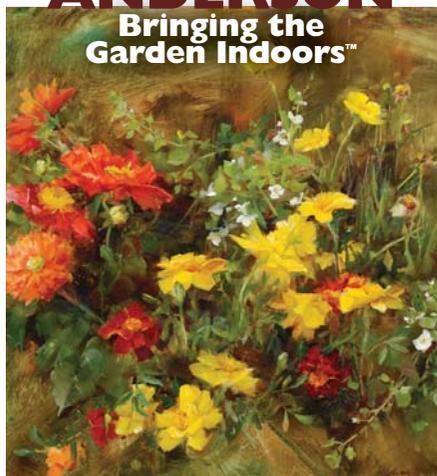
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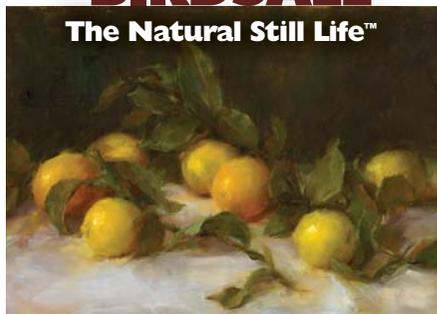
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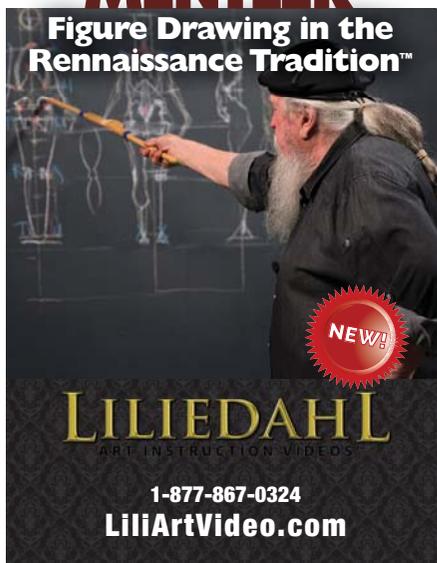
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DRAWING BOARD

Ready-made grounds are white, and silverpoint looks lustrous upon this alabaster surface. To me, however, much of the pleasure of metalpoint drawing comes from working on a lightly toned ground (see *Eliza*, page 20). I develop middle and dark values with metalpoint, then I render highlights with a bit of white (either chalk, white pencil or a paint such as gouache or egg tempera). The addition of white expands the value range and makes the image pop.

To tint an acrylic-based ground, add up to 15 percent of colored acrylic paint or mix in a few drops of an aqueous pigment dispersion (pigments suspended in water). The old masters favored colored surfaces of powder blue, pale green or red earths, but you may choose any hue that suits your imagination.

Stylus and Nib

There are commercially produced styluses designed specifically for metalpoint, but a simple, mechanical pencil (also known as a lead holder) works perfectly well. Be sure the barrel opening matches the width of your nib.

Any metal may be used for the nib—brass, copper, aluminum and gold, among others—but silver is the most popular. Silver designated as “dead soft silver” or “pure silver” renders darker, more lustrous marks, whereas “half-hard silver” or “sterling silver” create light, delicate lines.

You can buy ready-made nibs of different metals from many metalpoint suppliers (see Resources, at right). Another option is to buy wire from a jewelry or craft supplier. Both 0.9 mm and 2 mm. are common mechanical pencil openings, so look for wires in those widths. Cut the wire to about a 2-inch length. A sharp tip will scratch and mar a drawing surface, so soften the end of the cut wire by rubbing it against a sharpening stone, then use wet-dry 280 to 320-grit sandpaper to slightly round the tip. Insert the nib into your holder, and it's ready for use.

Challenges and Solutions

Working freehand in metalpoint is an exciting challenge because the lines

Resources

SUPPLIERS

Natural Pigments

(naturalpigments.com): offers all supplies necessary to work in metalpoint, including comprehensive kits; also offers a full range of pigment dispersion for tinting white grounds

Silverpoint Web

(silverpointweb.com): offers a full range of metalpoint supplies

Golden Artists Colors

(goldenpaints.com): makes Silverpoint/Drawing Ground and acrylic paints for tinting; Golden Sandable Hard Gesso and Pastel Ground also work well for metalpoint.

RECOMMENDED READING

The Craft of Old-Master Drawings

by James Watrous (University of Wisconsin Press, 2002); a study of traditional drawing techniques; includes metalpoint chapter with recipes for grounds

Drawing in Silver and Gold: Leonardo to Jasper Johns

by Stacey Sell and Hugo Chapman (Princeton University Press, 2015); an illustrated catalog to a 2015 metalpoint exhibition at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

The Luminous Trace: Drawing and Writing in Metalpoint

by Thea Burns (Archetype Publications, 2013); a history of metalpoint drawing

Silver Linings: Introduction to Silverpoint Drawing

by Banjie Getsinger Nicholas (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012); metalpoint basics

don't readily succumb to a kneaded eraser. To minimize mistakes, some artists develop an image beforehand in graphite pencil on a piece of paper. When this is complete, they rub the back of the drawing with graphite. Then they place the graphite-covered backside of the drawing over the ground of their metalpoint surface. Tracing over the drawing on the front of the paper will now transfer the outline onto the grounded surface. The artist can redraw the transferred lines in metalpoint, then remove the graphite lines with a kneaded eraser. What's left is a faint version of the drawing in metalpoint that the artist can develop with additional layers.

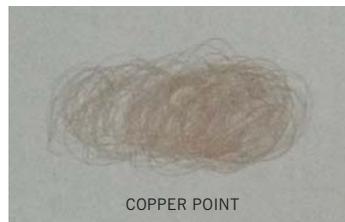
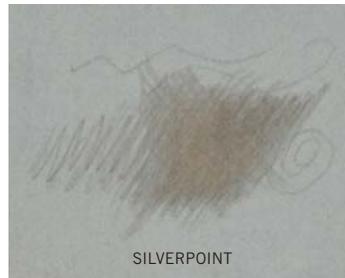
Applying white highlights to expand values on a toned ground can enhance an image, but beware: White chalk or paint adds fresh "tooth" to areas where it's applied. If you continue to draw with metalpoint around highlighted sections and the tip inadvertently touches white, the additional tooth in that area readily abrades the nib and leaves a difficult-to-remove mark where you least want it. If you plan to add highlights, wait until a drawing is complete before doing so.

Even though metalpoint has a reputation for being unremovable, there are a few tricks for lifting unwanted marks. Options include using a vinyl eraser (don't overwork the surface); swiping the mark with a cotton swab that's slightly moistened with rubbing alcohol; and light sanding with a sponge-backed, extra-fine grit sanding pad. When using any of these methods, take great care to preserve the drawing surface.

Drawing with Metalpoint

Metalpoint lines are elegant, clean and precise. They're also consistent. Changing pressure on the drawing tool doesn't influence the tone or width of a mark; in fact, applying too much pressure can damage the drawing surface. Instead, varying values are achieved through the accumulation of layers, one mark after another. It is a slow, amorphous process, and you may feel as if not much is happening. With

Metal Sampler

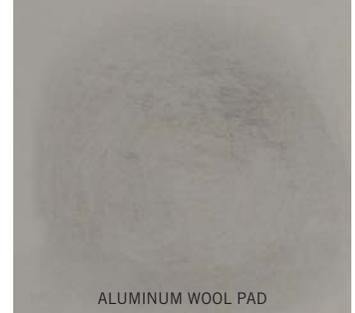
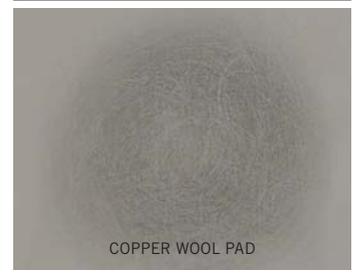
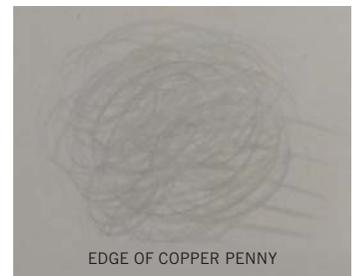


patience an image emerges. To me, seeing this happen is akin to watching a photograph develop.

While a single nib's mark is fairly uniform, other factors add variability. The more abrasive the drawing surface, the more metal detaches from the nib and, thus, the more pronounced the line. Hard metals (gold, platinum and brass) are resistant to abrasion and leave fainter marks. Soft metals (copper and silver) abrade readily and leave more substantial marks. There are also subtle distinctions in tone and temperature among metals (see Metal Sampler, above).

Keep in mind that nearly any metal item can be transformed into a drawing implement: the edge of a coin, tip of a key, or rounded side of a silver spoon. Experimenting with various objects will reveal a

Mark-Maker Sampler



DRAWING BOARD

variety of looks and textures. (See Mark-Maker Sampler, page 23.)

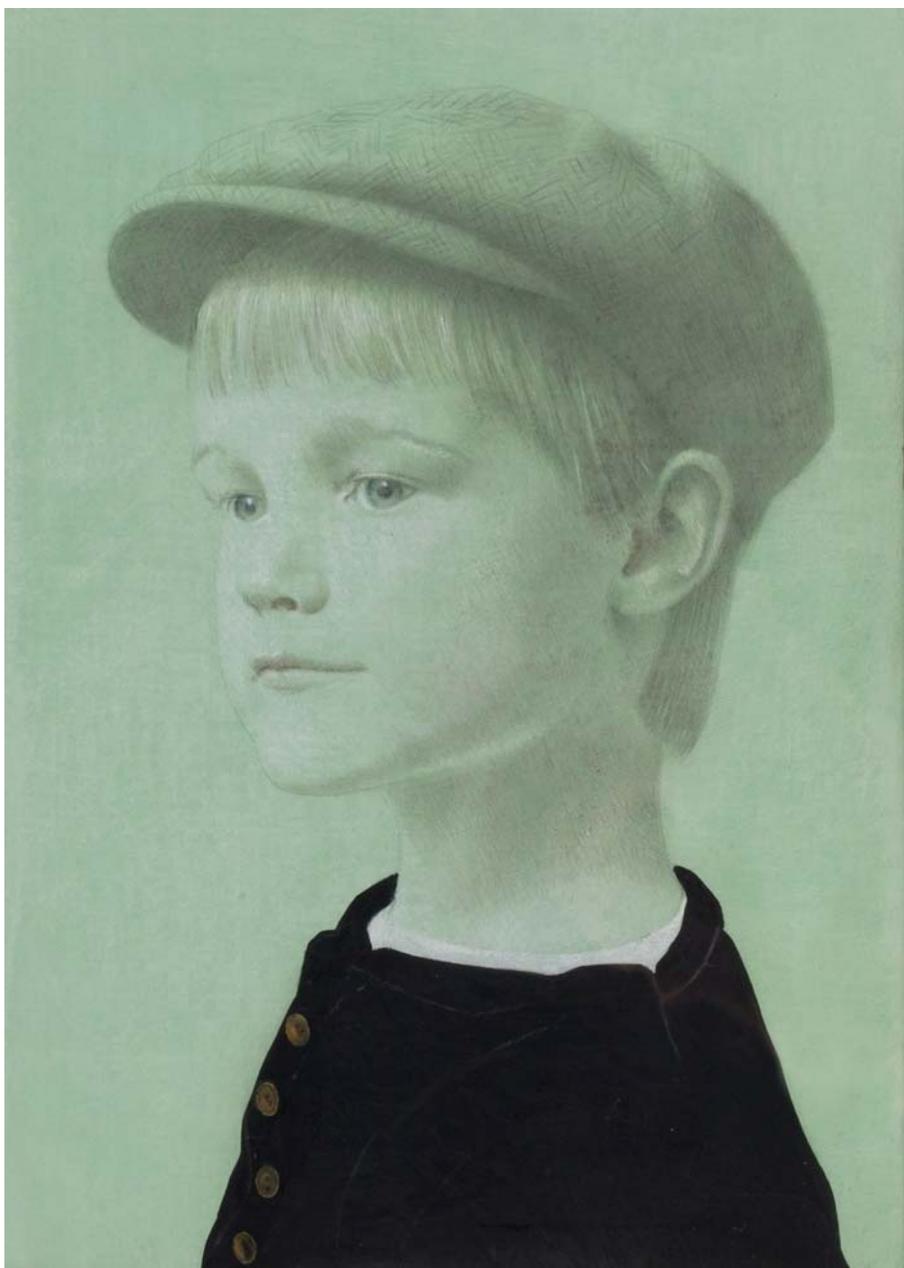
Adding Media

Additional media can be layered on a metalpoint drawing. Ink, graphite and charcoal will deepen darks. Colored pencils or paints (gouache, acrylic, egg tempera) add notes of color. As mentioned, you can use a variety of white-colored media to add highlights. A multimedia approach to metalpoint creates exciting options, as my drawing *Henry's Glance* (at right) illustrates.

Oxidation

"Noble" metals, like gold and platinum don't change in appearance over time; however, most metals exposed to air gradually deepen in value and take on subtle color changes. Copperpoint acquires a hint of green, brasspoint turns slightly black and silverpoint transforms into a rich brown. Part of the wonder of metalpoint drawing is that images are visually enriched by the passage of time. The length of time depends on the metal and atmospheric conditions, although six months is generally sufficient for oxidation to occur.

It's also possible to expedite the process. I use Maid-o'-Metal liver of sulfur to tarnish silver and copper. When using this product, always carefully follow the directions on the bottle, wear gloves and work with good ventilation. To oxidize your metalpoint drawing, first find an open container that will not be inclined to tip and spill. Add a few tablespoons of liver of sulfur to the container and place the container next to the drawing. Cover both the drawing and sulfur with an overturned box or tented cardboard so the image is exposed to sulfur fumes. You should see a perceptible deepening of silver and copper lines within a day or two. Limit the exposure to a few days because too much sulfur may degrade the paper. One final word of caution: Don't try this process on a drawing in which you've used lead white for highlights; lead turns black in the presence of sulfur.



Metalpoint drawing offers a rich range of artistic possibilities, allowing for both meticulous mark-making and an inventive mingling of media. I encourage you to dive in and experiment. Perhaps you'll be won over, as I was, by the singular beauty of drawings in metal. ■

KOO SCHADLER's metalpoint drawings will be featured in the upcoming exhibition "Contemporary Connections: Silverpoint" at the Lauren Rogers Museum of Art (Laurel, Miss.), from May 1 through July 29, 2018. Visit Schadler's website at koo Schadler.com.

ABOVE: *Henry's Glance* (silverpoint, graphite, ink, gold pigment and white gouache on panel with green-toned gesso ground, 6½x4⅞)

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MASTER CLASS

By Jerry N. Weiss

A Haunting Beauty

Michelangelo's *Unfinished Cartoon for a Madonna and Child* is a beautiful drawing that survived the artist's self-critical purges.



CASA BUONARROTI, FLORENCE

ABOVE: *Unfinished Cartoon for a Madonna and Child* (black and red chalk, white gouache and brown wash on paper, 21 $\frac{5}{16}$ x15 $\frac{9}{16}$) by Michelangelo

ONE OF THE MOST BASIC WAYS artists exercise control of their legacy is by deciding what to save and what to toss. Michelangelo burned many of his drawings, presumably studies that would have offered insight into his creative process. We know of two bonfires: he instructed an assistant to burn works on paper in 1518, and he destroyed more drawings just before his death in 1564. In at least one notable instance, the decision

was made for him when his life-size cartoon (the term used for preparatory drawings in the Renaissance) for the *Battle of Cascina* was torn apart, piece by piece, either by admiring students or a jealous rival.

Those drawings that have survived Michelangelo's judgment and the ravages of time—and there are, thankfully, dozens—raise as many questions as they resolve. Some were “presentation” drawings intended for patrons who had commissioned works from the artist or as gifts to friends. Other drawings were made for the benefit of younger colleagues; Michelangelo sometimes gave preparatory studies to Pontormo and Sebastiano del Piombo, which they used for their paintings. One such example of this type of drawing is his *Unfinished Cartoon for a Madonna and Child*, though we don't know to whom it was given or whether it was ever used.

Just as the purpose of Michelangelo's drawings varied, so too, did his methodology. Early studies of anatomy and drapery were often carefully drawn in pen and ink with highly controlled cross-hatching. Soon he came to favor red chalk and charcoal, both of which were capable of suggesting the subtle modeling of skin and muscle; Michelangelo's red chalk drawings allowed for a luminous quality akin to that which he achieved with his marble sculptures. While his materials and approach changed to suit the situation, his draftsmanship was consistently brilliant, and often much more. In certain respects, as in the application of artistic technique to the description of human anatomy, Michelangelo was excelled by no one and matched only by Leonardo.



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MASTER CLASS

In his later drawings, Michelangelo was given to using what we now refer to as mixed media. So it is with the Madonna and Child cartoon, which is comprised of black and red chalk, supplemented with white gouache and brown wash. It is, in parts, painted as much as it is drawn, to sculptural effect. Like much of Michelangelo's later sculpture, in which surfaces alternate between the burnished and the rough-hewn, the drawing's unfinished state juxtaposes different phases of the drawing process. This allows us to "complete" the image in our imagination, and it summons emotional responses. The child, his forms powerfully modeled as he twists to feed at his mother's breast, hints at the heroic energy of the artist's adult figures. Like the infant, the Madonna is also illuminated by a light source from the upper left, but she is lightly hatched with black chalk and is, by contrast, little more than

an apparition. Unlike the plenitude of works on the theme by Michelangelo's contemporaries, she looks away from her child, avoiding a harmonious connection with him. One scholar related a passage from Michelangelo's sonnets to this drawing: "She does not love me when she denies her eyes to me." There is at once something vigorous and discomfiting—if not tragic—suggested in the relationship, qualities that often reside simultaneously in Michelangelo's art. Even when grouped together, his figures retain their sense of isolation.

Psychological meanings aside, there's the more prosaic if no less interesting puzzle of why the drawing was left incomplete. Perhaps the artist preferred it in this state. But if this Madonna and Child cartoon was done as a reference for another artist to work from, personal aesthetic choice doesn't seem a sufficient explanation. Maybe this was always meant primarily as a

Unfinished Cartoon for a Madonna and Child is included in "Michelangelo: Divine Draftsman and Designer," November 13, 2017–February 12, 2018, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

study for the infant Christ. One imagines del Piombo telling Michelangelo, "I've got Mary covered. It's the baby I'm having trouble with."

The drawing's haunting beauty transcends what may have been its pragmatic purpose, and its emotional power goes beyond its technical excellence. This Madonna and Child cartoon survived Michelangelo's bonfires. It has lasted nearly 500 years for good reason. ■

JERRY N. WEISS is a contributing editor to *The Artist's Magazine*. He teaches at the Art Students League of New York. To see more of his work, visit jerryneweiss.com.

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ASK THE EXPERTS

By Michael Skalka



Acrylic Shifts and Shimmers

A little understanding goes a long way in getting the hues and effects you want from acrylics.

Q What causes the color shift from wet to dry acrylics?

A Color shift is a vexing problem encountered by artists working in acrylics. The cause is a simple issue. Acrylic paint formulation contains pigment, water and a host of agents that give the medium the working properties artists have come to expect. One purpose of the water is to keep acrylic polymers in a fluid state. While acrylic paints are in a tube or bottle, water creates a barrier between the acrylic polymers to keep them from solidifying. When the paint is exposed to air, the water eventually evaporates, enabling the polymers to touch each other and form cross-linked chains that meld together into a dry film.

While acrylic paints are in a fluid or viscous state, the water surrounding the pigments and acrylic polymers shifts the visual appearance of the mixture. The problem isn't in the pigment but in the acrylic polymers acting as binders. This can be seen easily with acrylic mediums. For example, when an acrylic gel or acrylic varnish is applied to a surface, the coating

LEFT: Lynette Cook, a finalist in *The Artist's Magazine's* 2016 All Media competition, shows excellent command of color in her painting *Right to Dry* (acrylic on canvas, 36x18).



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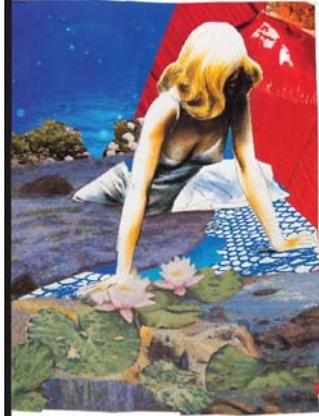
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looks milky white; however, once the gel or varnish dries, the film becomes either clear or slightly cloudy. This same phenomenon happens when pigment is present in an acrylic medium. The milky white appearance of the binder in wet acrylic paint is hidden by the presence of colored pigment; nevertheless, that wet, milky binder does affect the appearance of the paint. Once the water evaporates and the acrylic binder becomes more transparent, the true color of the pigment is revealed.



COLOR SHIFT WORKAROUNDS

Q How can I compensate for the wet-to-dry color shift in acrylics?

A One of the major concerns about wet-to-dry color shifts in acrylics is the problem of matching a freshly made, wet color mixture to a color that has already been applied

and dried on a painting. There are a few strategies an artist can use to overcome this problem.

One method is to organize the colors on one's palette in a logical order. Laying out a particular sequence of colors and using a palette knife to cut and mix consistent amounts of paint helps make the color-mixing process repeatable.

ABOVE: For the diptych *This Way and That* (acrylic on canvas, 24x48), Lynette Cook mixed more of the difficult-to-match colors than she anticipated needing and put them in jars with labels.

Another way to obtain color consistency is to create small test mixtures and paint them on the



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edge of a thin strip of stiff card stock. Once the test mixtures dry, you can place the card stock directly against the painting to check for color accuracy. If working indoors, consider using a hair dryer to accelerate the drying of your test samples.

If you need a large quantity of the same mixed color, write down the colors used and the proportions required to create the color so that you can more easily reproduce the mixture. Alternatively, you can create a large enough quantity of the paint mixture to cover the area needed. Use small jars to hold the mixtures. To be safe, write down the formulation and proportions on a piece of masking or painter's tape and place it on the outside of the jar. If the lids are tight, the mixture may remain usable for about a week. Occasionally misting the mixture with water will prolong its life—but make sure the water is clean or mold may grow on the paint.

LIGHT MATTERS

Q What is the difference between iridescent and interference acrylic paints?

A The difference between iridescent and interference paints is that iridescent paints enhance the luminosity of colors while interference paints displayed on a surface change hue depending on the viewing angle of the observer and the angle of the light illuminating the paint. The display of interference colors is limited to two hues.

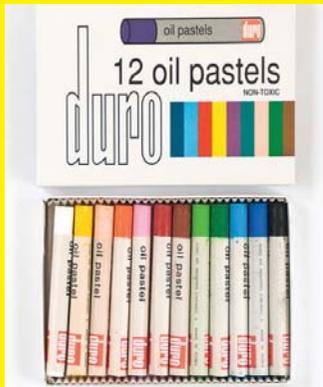
Translated into the world of artists' materials, iridescent paints display a sparkling effect. A material in the acrylic medium physically reflects light to intensify its appearance. As a result, when ordinary pigments are mixed with iridescent medium, the color takes on a shimmering appearance due to the physical properties of the iridescent particles, which

reflect light back to the observer. Interference acrylics perform a different function. This material is designed to block or filter light after it enters the medium, allowing only specific parts of visible light to be reflected. Interference paints appear much like iridescent media when wet, but once they dry, a paint containing interference particles appears in one hue when viewed from one angle and in an opposing hue when viewed from a different angle. An artist can think of iridescent media as light enhancers and interference paints as light trappers, allowing only certain wavelengths to reflect.

Iridescent and interference media have created a niche market in the art world; both paints provide a variety of interesting effects artists can exploit. ■

MICHAEL SKALKA has degrees in art history and museum studies. He is the chair of the Subcommittee on Artist Paints and related Materials for ASTM International.

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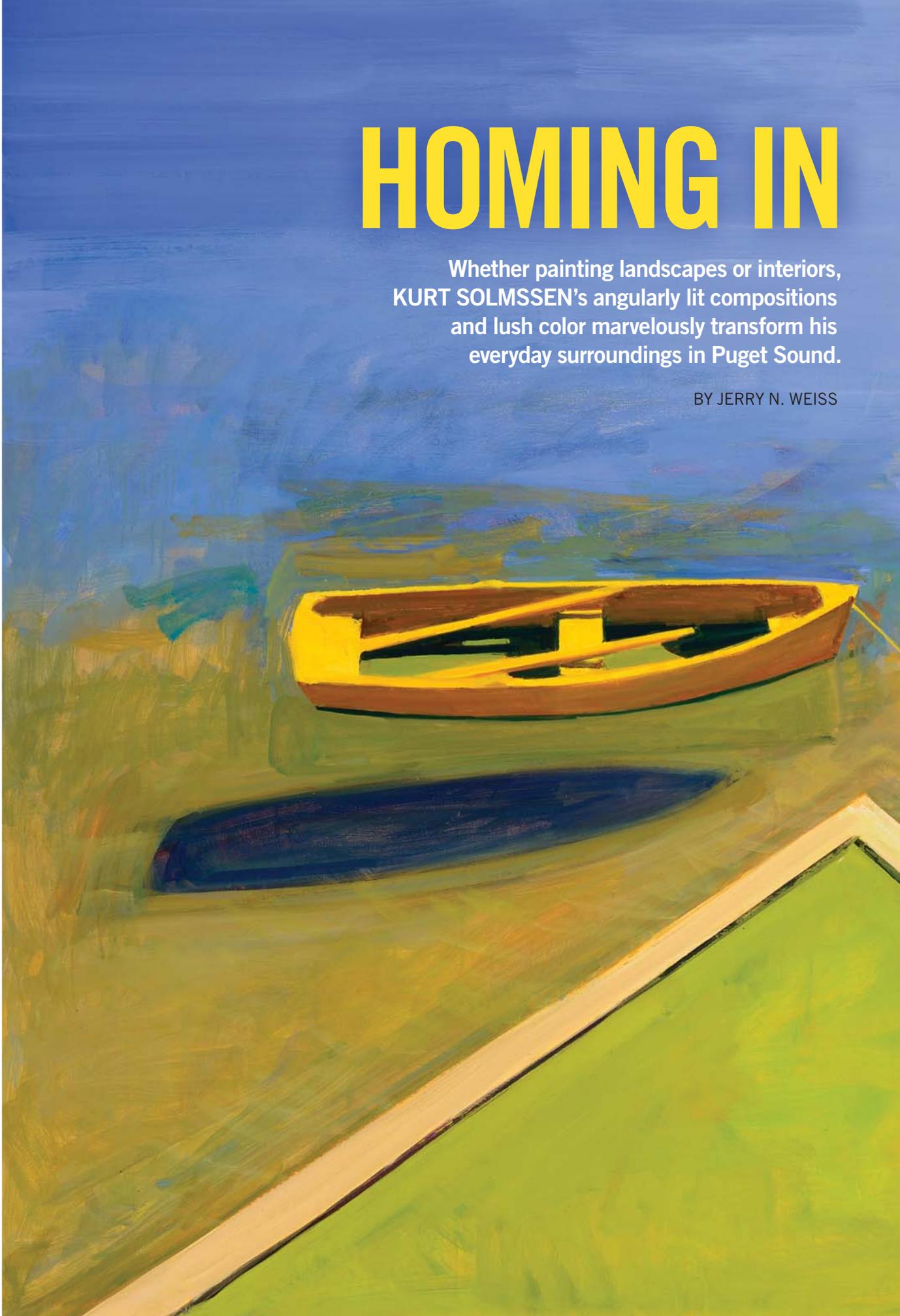
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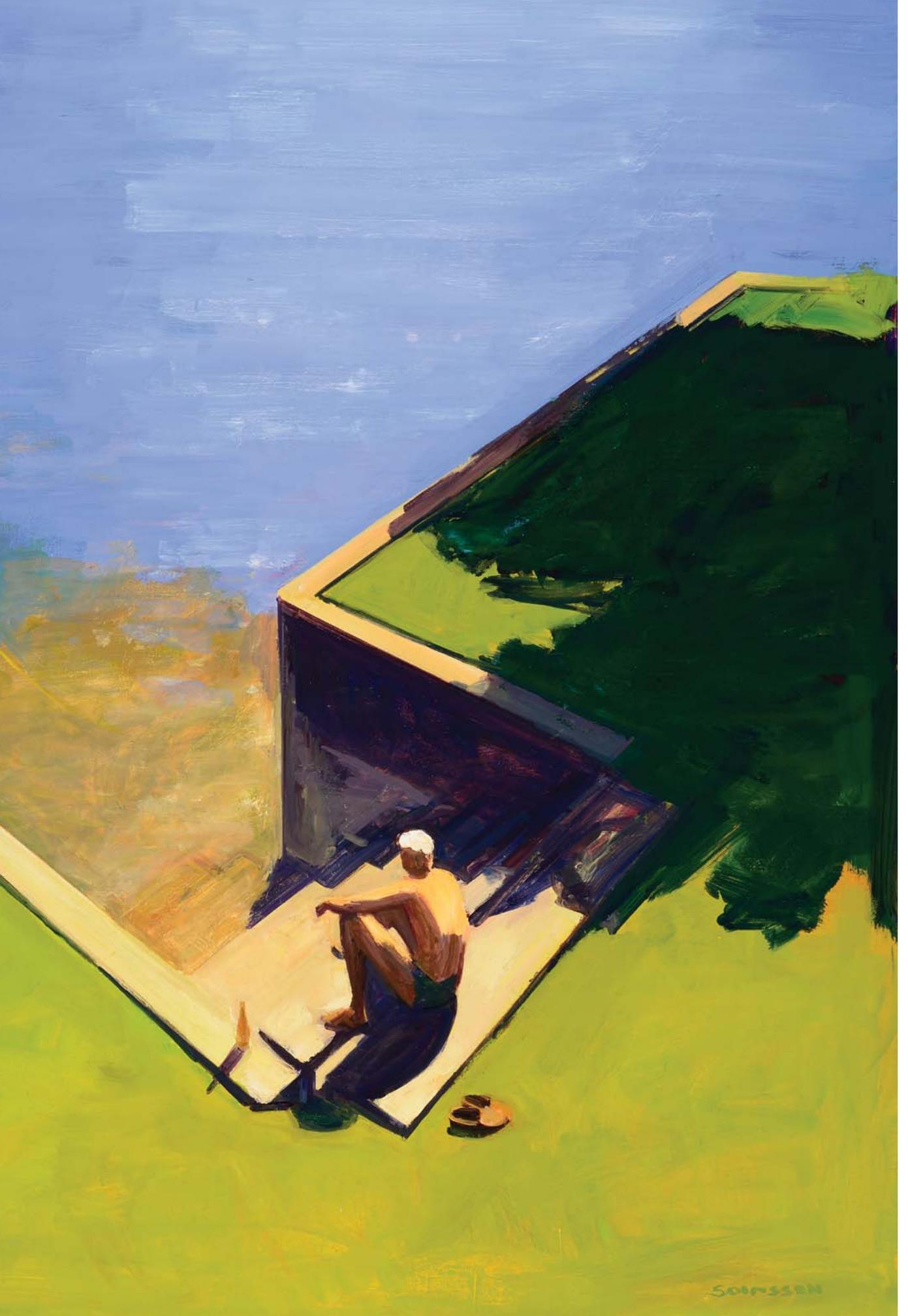
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BY JERRY N. WEISS





SOLINSON



Kurt Solmssen's work came to my attention only three years ago when I saw one of his landscape paintings hanging in a Connecticut gallery. The painting was of a yellow rowboat, a subject, at first blush, of seemingly disproportionate prominence. Bought by Solmssen's grandfather in 1938, the boat has been featured on many canvases, seen from different angles, often beached but sometimes afloat just offshore, casting a blue shadow through shallow water on the sand beneath. As a subject, it speaks to the presence of family in Solmssen's art—he has frequently drafted his wife and daughters to pose—while acting as a vehicle for his technical mastery.

Finding His Space

Solmssen, a Philadelphia native, attended the city's Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, whose figure-based instructors included Ben Kamihira and Sidney Goodman. Landscape painting offered an alternative to the school's crowded studios, and Solmssen soon accompanied instructor Louis B. Sloan outdoors. Sloan's palette proved to be influential, as was the example of the Pennsylvania impressionist Edward Willis Redfield, who painted en plein air in all seasons and in large format. Though traditional cast and life drawing were taught at the academy, Solmssen became more interested in modern and painterly representational art, particularly the work of Richard Diebenkorn and Fairfield Porter, whom he calls "a big influence."

After earning a bachelor of fine arts degree at the University of Pennsylvania,

Solmssen built a studio on Puget Sound, in Washington state, and moved into the house once owned by his grandparents (he regularly returns East, and is, by his own description, "kind of a mixture of East and West Coast."). Attracted to the summer light of the Northwest, as well as its winter pallor, he continued working outside, often in an unusually large scale.

Working Large

For years, the bed of Solmssen's Toyota pickup determined the dimensions of his canvases, and 50x70 inches became a standard format. More recently he has worked in still wider dimensions, sometimes attaching two canvases to form a diptych, a practical solution to the desire for more expansive views.

Early on, Solmssen found that easels were insufficient to support his large

ABOVE: *The Davis House in Snow* (diptych; oil on canvas, 46x120)

RIGHT: *Lauren Sleeping in Winter Sunlight* (oil on canvas, 36x48)

OPENING SPREAD: *RG and the Yellow Boat* (oil on canvas, 50x68)

canvases outside. He devised a unique solution, attaching a hinge and a 1x2 board to a crossbar on the back of his painting. The result is an improvised tripod upon which the canvas can lean. For a palette he uses a plywood sheet the size of a small tabletop, and it, too, rests on the ground. A large painting may take Solmssen weeks or months to complete, and there may be much revising, overpainting and even drawing into the painting with a pencil.

Working the Seasons

“I like to paint close to home,” says Solmssen. “There’s a lot to paint on Puget Sound.” As a result, many subjects recur, and the yellow boat and a number of architectural landmarks

are familiar motifs. There’s also a preference for certain color schemes, especially chromatic contrasts of yellow and orange alongside blue and violet. When architecture—in the form of buildings, steps or a straight-edged waterline—doesn’t supply the requisite hard angles, cast shadows are called upon to form dynamic patterns that carve razor-sharp niches into light-filled surfaces. Sometimes Solmssen puts down, paints over and then removes strips of painter’s tape to create the necessary crisp lines. These rectilinear shapes and calculated juxtapositions of values are jagged anchors to otherwise idyllic scenes.

If the summer and fall paintings are declarative in spirit, the winter works are evocative. In the winter paintings, he

Solmssen estimates that 90 percent of his landscape painting is done in front of the subject.





MATERIALS

SURFACE: Claessens No. 15 oil-primed linen

OILS: mostly Rembrandt and Winsor & Newton, plus Old Holland ultramarine blue deep

MEDIUM: 1 part refined linseed oil + ½ part Damar varnish + about 4 parts gum turpentine

BRUSHES: Robert Simmons Signet 40F bristle flats in all sizes, 1-inch gesso brushes

replaces saturated color and aggressive contrasts with variations in silver. “You can,” make millions of grays out of prismatic colors,” says Solmssen—and he does so, using the same palette. The complex light and shadow patterns of summertime are stripped down to a geometric bareness, the land swathed in snow and fog. *The Davis House in Snow* (page 36), a 10-foot wide diptych, is a good example; the house and shore are gently fogbound, and the distant landscape of the left-hand panel is completely shrouded.

Solmssen estimates that 90 percent of his landscape painting is done in front of the subject. He paints standing in the rain

and snow, and has found that precipitation creates interesting and unexpected effects when mixed with oil paint. Solmssen’s gift for improvisation is exemplified by his solutions to prosaic challenges: Inspired by a painting by Balthus, he once had his sister-in-law pose for hours on a ladder, picking cherries from a tree. When she’d exhausted the crop within reach, he duct-taped more cherries to the branches near her.

Composition, Light and Color

Preparatory drawings and small oil studies often precede the large canvases. Solmssen makes a lot of drawings when planning



ABOVE: *Sunset Interior*
(oil on canvas, 68x68)

COURTESY LEWALLEN
CONTEMPORARY

OPPOSITE: *Sunrise
Interior* (oil on canvas,
68x68)

a composition, always with a No. 2 pencil. He then starts a painting by drawing with a brush, proceeding at a brisk pace. “The faster I work, the bigger the brushes, the more fun it is,” he says. That vigor informs his painting, where the aforementioned straight-edged passages are often complemented by broad forms that have been gesturally brushed in. He leavens geometric construction by scraping, repainting and scumbling. In Solmssen’s work, there’s nearly always an exciting

tension between the illusion of atmosphere and structured flat shapes.

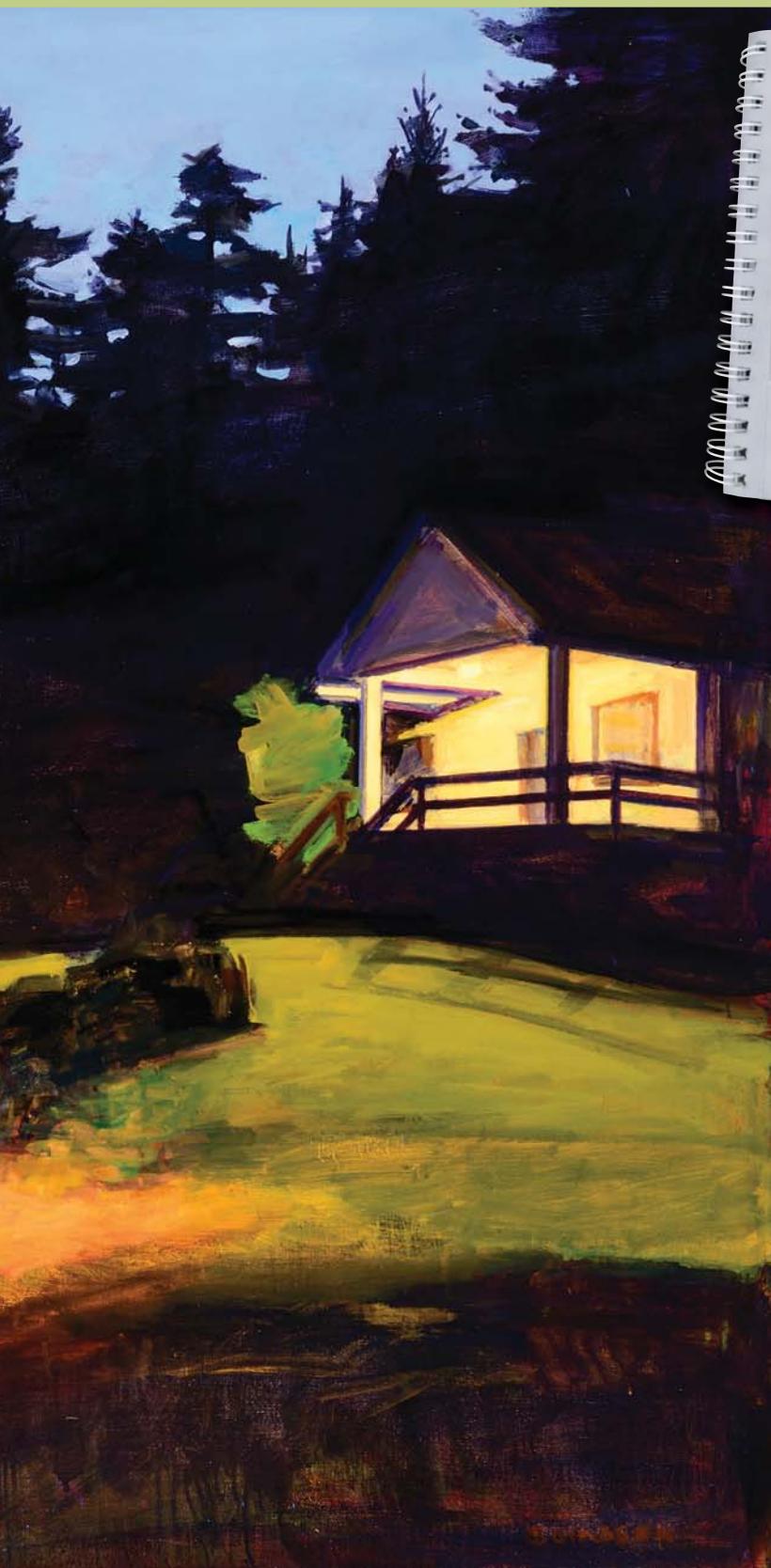
When working in sunlight, Solmssen considers the maximum window of time to be three hours. His love of direct light carries to interior compositions, where Solmssen prefers to paint the effects of sunshine illuminating a room rather than the steady indirect north light favored by many studio artists. This interest in light, color

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 42

PAINTING LIGHT IN THE DARK

By Kurt Solmssen





For the most part, I painted *Bonfire* (left) en plein air. Pencil sketches (above) helped me figure out the composition, including whether or not to include the tops of the fir trees. Then, every night as the sun was going down, I set up on the bulkhead and made a fire, keeping it going as I painted.

As light dims, we see in a more tonal way, so at a certain point of each evening, the only way I could determine the colors I was using was by their position on my palette. Later, when I viewed the painting under electric light or in daylight, I could see how the contrast between light and dark made the colors pop.

Bonfire has three light sources—the fire, the sunset and the porch light. One challenge was deciding which source would dominate. I eventually toned down the sunset to an afterglow, making the fire the focus and brightest light.

Walking home on the beach one night, I saw my daughters and their cousins and friends enjoying their own bonfire. I took photographs with a small digital camera and used those pictures to work figures into the painting.

LEFT: *Bonfire* (oil on canvas, 50x70)

BOTTOM: **The Davis House** (diptych; oil on canvas, 50x118)

BELOW: **Plein Air at Large:** Solmssen paints even the largest of his landscapes en plein air. Here he is working on the diptych *The Davis House* (at bottom). He props up large canvases like these with a 1x2-inch bar that's hinged to a board bridging the stretcher bars on the back of the painting.

OPPOSITE: **Yellow Boat, Evening** (oil on canvas, 24x28)

COURTESY LEWALLEN CONTEMPORARY

TEXT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39
and contrast suffuses his work in all genres. In their coloration, construction and angular light, paintings like *Lauren Sleeping in Winter Sunlight* (page 37) and *Sunrise Interior* (page 38) have much in common with the landscapes. There's an abundance of yellow and gold material in the interiors, as well as the pervasive blue/violet shadows that throw diagonals and move the eye around the space. *Sunset Interior* (page 39) is ablaze with evening light and benefits from a more overtly architectonic structure than the plein air paintings. A host of rectilinear shapes are softened by the rounded chair backs, floral bouquet and, most importantly, the presence of the artist's family members in the doorway. There's a lot of Diebenkorn here, as well as a reference to the intimate domesticity of Porter and, by extension, Pierre Bonnard.

Solmssen is one of the best plein air painters working today, but his work is not primarily concerned with transcribing the passing conditions that many landscape painters favor. The vibrant colors he uses to denote water or foliage have a formal purpose. *The Davis House* (at bottom), for example, is a sophisticated synthesis of a landscape with which Solmssen is familiar. A representational view of the coastline, it's an essay in color brinkmanship—the same blue-violet that appears in the distant strip of land crosses the composition when it recurs in the house at right, and a few shots of warm brown in the foreground shadows are essential to the entire painting's illusion of depth.

A Marvelous Transformation

One of the characteristics of traditional plein air painting is that it's a peripatetic calling. Landscape painters rarely seem to stay in one place for long, and their portable equipment makes travel easy. Solmssen, however, has found his place on the coast of Washington, where the themes of home and family inform subjects to which he returns again and again.

Among great painters, that sort of thematic constancy is not unusual. What is striking is the unabated sense of excitement Solmssen brings to his work. One can survey the back catalogue of his paintings and find that they're consistently intelligent in design, resolute in draftsmanship and lush in color. His power of expression only sharpens with time.





Yellow Boat, Evening (above) is reminiscent of the first painting I saw by Solmssen. It is a recent canvas, a riff on a subject he has painted before. It represents the thing seen in slanting sunlight—a small boat resting on the sand—painted with terse means. The sharpened edges of boat and oars, the green trim, its blazing yellow and reflection of orange provide a bare minimum, yet just the right amount, of information. This, like so much of Solmssen's art, is a marvelous transformation of visual fact to graphic statement, fueled by intense personal connection. ■

JERRY N. WEISS is a frequent contributor to *The Artist's Magazine*. He teaches at the Art Students League of New York.

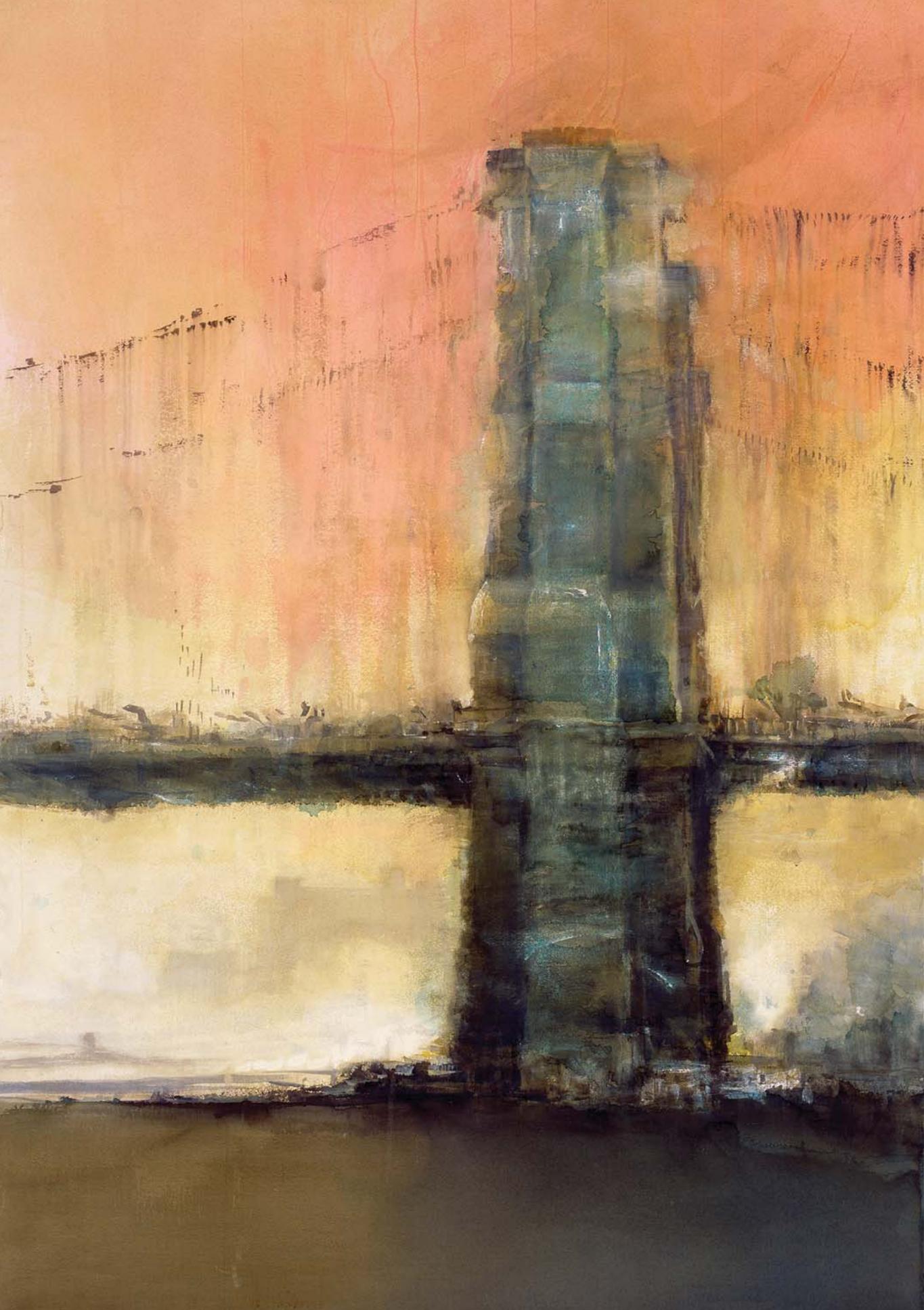


KURT SOLMSSEN

completed a four-year certificate program at Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (Philadelphia) in 1982. The following year, the Academy awarded him a William Emlen Cresson Memorial Traveling Scholarship. He received a bachelor of fine arts degree from the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia) in 1986. He exhibits his work extensively across the United States, and his paintings are part of many private, corporate and museum collections, including those of ExxonMobil Corporation, Bakersfield Museum of Art (Calif.) and the Tacoma Art Museum (Wash.)

Visit his website at kurtsolmssen.net.

I like to paint close to home. There's a lot to paint on Puget Sound.
KURT SOLMSSEN



Antonio Masi



The American Watercolor Society celebrates 150 Years of promoting watercolor painting in America—and around the world.

WATERMEDIA WELLSPRING

By Holly Davis



You don't have to spend much time in the art world before you notice the initials "AWS" after the names of many watermedia artists. The acronym stands for "American Watercolor Society." The organization has come a long way since its first meeting in New York City on December 5, 1866, with 11 artists who called themselves the American Society of Painters in Water Colors. The society's simply stated purpose was to "promote the art of watercolor painting in America." At the time, watercolor was generally considered a sketching material—not meant for fine art.

Even in the early years, before America's early women's rights activists had gained momentum, the society accepted female members. What's more, from its first annual exhibition in 1867, the society reviewed entries from everyone—not just members, and not just Americans. Eugène Delacroix (French), J.M.W. Turner (English) and John Ruskin (English) all exhibited work in the AWS's fourth annual exhibition in

1870. These days, this juried exhibition accepts entries done in any water-soluble media, including watercolor, acrylic, casein, gouache and egg tempera—but the work must be on paper.

Levels of AWS membership include "sustaining associate" (available to everyone) and "signature" (available to those who have participated twice in the AWS's juried Annual Exhibition). Only a signature member may use the initials "AWS" after his or her name. The society also offers the Dolphin Fellowship (D.F.—for members who acquire five points in one or more AWS national annual competitions), Dolphin Medals (for people or organizations who make outstanding contributions to art) and scholarships (for art teachers who have little or no experience in watercolor).

You can learn more about the benefits and opportunities offered by the AWS at americanwatercolorssociety.org. For now, though, let's meet a few members and check out their work.

LEFT TOP:

Portrait in Black and White (watercolor on paper, 21x13) by Debra Edgerton

LEFT MIDDLE:

Gridlock (acrylic and pencil on paper 30x22) by Pat Dews

LEFT BOTTOM:

Set Pieces (watercolor on paper 15x11) by George Politis

OPPOSITE: **Sunset – Brooklyn Bridge 1** (watercolor on paper, 60x40) by Antonio Masi



ANTONIO MASI, AWS, D.F.

Antonio Masi learned about the AWS through signature member Ruth Baderian, whom his wife had met in a painting class. Baderian, who became Masi's friend and mentor, encouraged Masi to enter the AWS annual competitions. "I realized what an honor it would be to belong to this society that Winslow Homer, Andrew Wyeth and many other great American painters had belonged to," says Masi. He became a signature member in 2009, a Dolphin Fellow in 2011 and AWS president in 2016.

Masi's original medium was oil, whose thick, viscous consistency might seem fitting for conveying the powerful presence of the New York City bridges he depicts. He was

unable, however, to achieve the effects he desired with that medium. In 2002, his wife suggested he try watercolor. "I haven't looked back since," says Masi. "Watercolor best conveys air and illuminations for me. It's fluid, light, delicate and transparent, but I soon discovered that by adding a little body color, it becomes powerful. It has a life of its own. It likes to flow, do unexpected

things. It will be light and delicate one moment and strong the next.

That said, Masi's oil-painting brushes have not gone to waste—he uses them with watercolors. He explains: "Watercolor brushes carry lots of water. They're for fluidity. Oil brushes carry lots of paint, for strength and solidity. Every tool has a special mark and unique voice."

ANTONIO MASI emigrated at age 7 with his family from Italy to the United States. He holds a three-year certificate from the School of Visual Arts (New York City) and a bachelor of arts degree in art history from City University of New York. For 20 years he was a full partner at New York City's graphic art and printing company Ad-N-Color before becoming a full-time artist in 2000. His work has garnered many awards and is exhibited internationally. [Visit his website at **antoniomasi.com**.](http://www.antoniomasi.com)

MATERIALS

SURFACES: Arches or Fabriano rough 300-lb. watercolor paper

WATERCOLORS: Winsor & Newton

WATERCOLOR BRUSHES: C&M Sable-Ester, Winsor & Newton 6 mm Artists' Water Colour sable, Grumbacher Goldenedge Aquarelle (series 4622), 1½-inch synthetic

OIL BRUSHES: Nos. 2, 6, 10 and 20 Richeson 9628 Signature bristle flats



LEFT: Paint drips, especially noticeable along the outer edges of the metal framework in *Under the EL* (watercolor on paper, 30x40) suggest rainfall in a gritty city.

RIGHT: In *Bayonne Bridge* (watercolor on paper, 40x30) the light, patchy sky lends a sense of atmosphere. The values of the steel girders—receding from dark to middle to light values—combined with the progressive softening of edges, convey depth.



Antonio Masi

DEBRA EDGERTON, AWS



Debra Edgerton joined the AWS 27 years ago and became a signature member in 1993. “Being a member gives my work added credibility,” says Edgerton. “My watercolor peers understand what the initials ‘AWS’ behind my name mean. Getting a painting into an AWS exhibition is difficult, so it’s always an honor to have work selected.”

A shy person, Edgerton generally avoids the opening dinners for exhibitions. This year, however, to show her gratitude for winning the AWS High Winds Medal for *#say her name* (opposite), she chose to attend. “The extremely kind people I sat with helped me feel that I belonged,” says Edgerton, “and attending the event led to a chance meeting with an editor of *Watercolor Artist* magazine and an opportunity to have my work in an upcoming issue.”

Like many artists, she must balance her dedication to art with the responsibilities of a full-time job and a family. To maximize her painting

time, she carefully orchestrates her compositions, simplifying shapes, eliminating detail and figuring out value movement in preliminary sketches. “I think my finished work is successful if I can look at it and not see the labor involved,” says Edgerton. “I’m a slow painter, and being slow sometimes makes a work look overdone. If I look at a piece and feel the labor, I put it aside.”

Edgerton’s figures are particularly compelling. “There’s an organic quality in the human form that I relate to,” she says. Figurative work is also a means by which the artist examines and embraces her heritage. “I’m half African-American and half Japanese,” says Edgerton. “My parents grew up during a time when celebrating culture wasn’t something you could do.” Edgerton’s art exhibits no such inhibitions. Her figures, calm and self-possessed, convey a quiet strength. Through focused compositions that explore her own background, Edgerton enlarges the viewer’s world.

DEBRA EDGERTON holds master of fine arts degrees in painting and in interdisciplinary art from the San Francisco Art Institute and Vermont College of Fine Art. Her work has been exhibited in museums across the United States. She has garnered many awards and grants, including a research grant she received as a visiting scholar at Kansai University (Osaka, Japan) for her work in the development of visual folktales. Visit her website at debraedgertonart.weebly.com.

MATERIALS

SURFACES: Winsor & Newton 140-lb. cold-pressed watercolor paper

WATERCOLORS: Winsor & Newton and Daniel Smith

BRUSHES: Winsor & Newton kolinsky sable and Scharff for details, Beste for initial washes

RIGHT: *#say her name* (watercolor on paper, 25½x13½). examines the “loss of voice” experienced by many women of color, but also conveys a sense of pride.

LEFT TOP: During her 2011 fellowship in Japan, Edgerton attended many matsuri (festival) parades, for which traditional apparel is commonly worn, as seen in *Gion Matsuri 3* (watercolor on paper, 20x12).

LEFT BOTTOM: *Aoi Matsuri 1* (watercolor on paper, 24x14), composed of color blocking and shapes, conveys the intimacy of a glance in the midst of festival activity.





PAT DEWS, AWS, D.F.



The “W” in AWS may stand for “watercolor,” but because the society’s exhibitions are open to all watermedia, acrylic artists like Pat Dewes find membership valuable. For seven years she kept up her associate membership so she could be part of the AWS network and receive the yearly exhibition catalog. “I always wanted to become a signature member and entered the show every year with that hope,” says Dewes. In 1995, her hope was fulfilled, and in 2016 she became a Dolphin Fellow.

She credits the AWS for giving her many career opportunities: “At a meeting 17 years ago, I met Jada Rowland, AWS, at a member’s meeting. She told me she’d just bought a summer home in Greenport,

N.Y. I was thrilled because I have a summer home in the connecting town of Southold, N.Y. We became fast friends, and for years she has let me share her studio in the summer. I believe my membership also helped in my being asked to author two North Light books. My books and AWS status led me to a successful career as a workshop instructor.”

Dewes made an overnight leap from representational to

abstract work after taking a one-day workshop with the late Nicholas Reale, AWA, ANA (associate member of the National Academy of Design). “He never used a brush,” says Dewes. “He blew through a straw, used sponges, twigs—whatever was at hand. I was hooked! I now let the painting lead me. I take lots of photos, but instead of painting what’s before me, I paint abstract realities and nonobjective work.”

PAT DEWS is a graduate of the Fashion Institute of Technology (New York City). Her contribution to art instruction includes two books (*North Light Books*) videos (available at cheapjoes.com) and workshops. Dewes’ numerous awards include the AWS 2017 Mary Bryan Memorial Medal, the AWS 2016 Edgar Whitney Memorial Award and the 2016 China Zou Yinong Silver Award-China/National Watercolor Society Small Image Exhibition. Visit her website at patdews.com.

MATERIALS

SURFACES: BFK Rives heavyweight printmaking paper; Kilimanjaro, Canson and Arches 140-lb. cold-pressed watercolor paper; Strathmore two-ply illustration board

MEDIA: American Journey Artists’ Acrylics; Golden heavy body acrylics; Liquitex heavy body acrylics, black and white gesso and Professional acrylic ink; Daler-Rowney FW acrylic ink; Dr. Ph. Martin Tech Drawing Ink

MARK-MAKERS: palette knives; brayers; razors; textured pieces like cheese cloth, embossed wallpaper, grids, stencils, lace and waxed paper—anything!

LEFT: In *Wrapped Rocks* (acrylic on paper, 22x30), realistic rocks appear in an abstract composition. To simulate the stone, Dewes used a sanding block, sponges, sprayed-on rubbing alcohol and a final scumbling of heavy-body acrylic.

RIGHT: For the abstracted landscape *Canyon Run* (acrylic on paper, 30x22) Dewes sprayed areas of the painting, letting the colors drip to suggest a water run. She removed unwanted drips with a silk sponge.



Small signature in the bottom right corner.

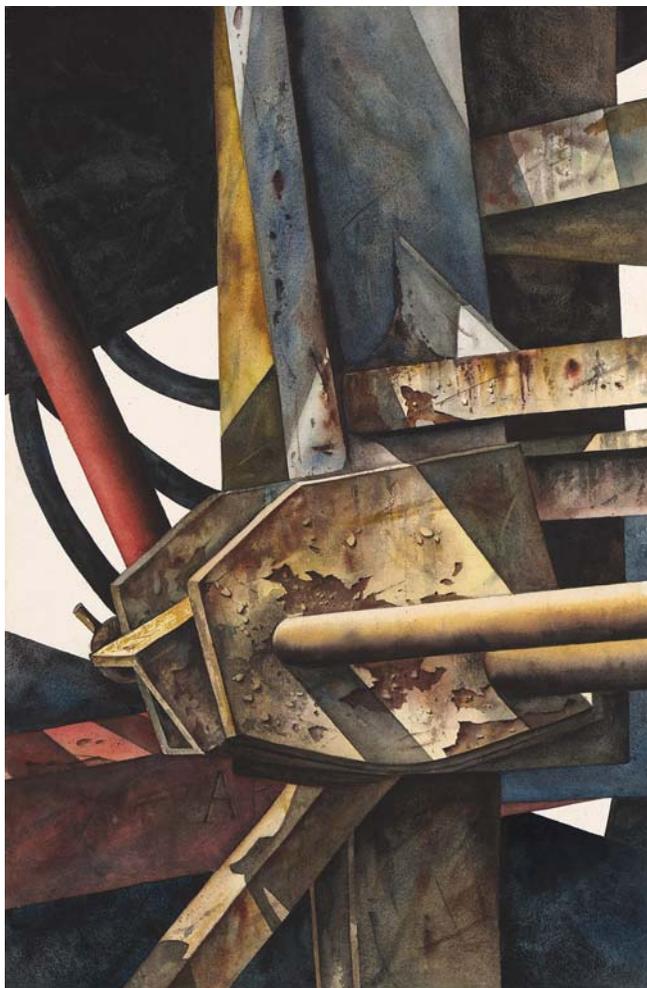
GEORGE POLITIS, AWS

A native and resident of Greece, George Politis learned of the AWS through art magazines. He began submitting work for the best exhibitions he could find, both at home and abroad, and wanted to be a part of the AWS prestigious watercolor family. He became a signature member in 2016.

Politis' work has been accepted in five of the six AWS exhibitions he has entered, but he did not attend in person until this year. "That was like a dream come true," says Politis. "There were so many artists, and some of them were good friends that I met in person for the first time. The Salmagundi Club (where the exhibition was held) was like a temple of watercolor."

In much of his recent work, Politis examines the effects of time on materials such as graffitied walls, weathered doors and large metal machines—neglected objects past their glory. "How different is the aging of those objects from the aging of people?" he asks. "I have to find and portray the beauty, as I would with a person's portrait." In his depictions of metalworks, he focuses on a small part of a much larger structure, emphasizing lighting, texture and compositional masses, shapes and lines. The results are abstract designs conveyed through representational imagery.

Although many of Politis' works are done entirely in watercolor, he also enjoys combining media—watercolor, acrylics, gouache, inks, gesso, collage and even pastels. "I like to cover areas and rework them—layers over layers," says Politis. "This helps in



GEORGE POLITIS served as president of SKETBE, a society of artists based in Thessaloniki and northern Greece, from 2009–2015. Mostly self-taught, he holds signature memberships in watercolor societies around the globe, including the Thessaloniki Painters Society (Greece), the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour (England), Institut des Arts Figuratifs (Canada) and the American Watercolor Society. In addition to showing his work in his home country of Greece, he has exhibited his work in England, France, Italy, Russia, Turkey, China, Thailand, India, Pakistan, Australia and the United States, among other countries. He teaches workshops in Greece and Canada.

Visit his website at georgepolitiss.gr.

the overall idea of having a 'history.' Also, I would use anything to create depth and interest." ■

MATERIALS

SURFACES: mostly 300-lb. Fabriano Esportazione, Saunders Waterford and Arches watercolor paper

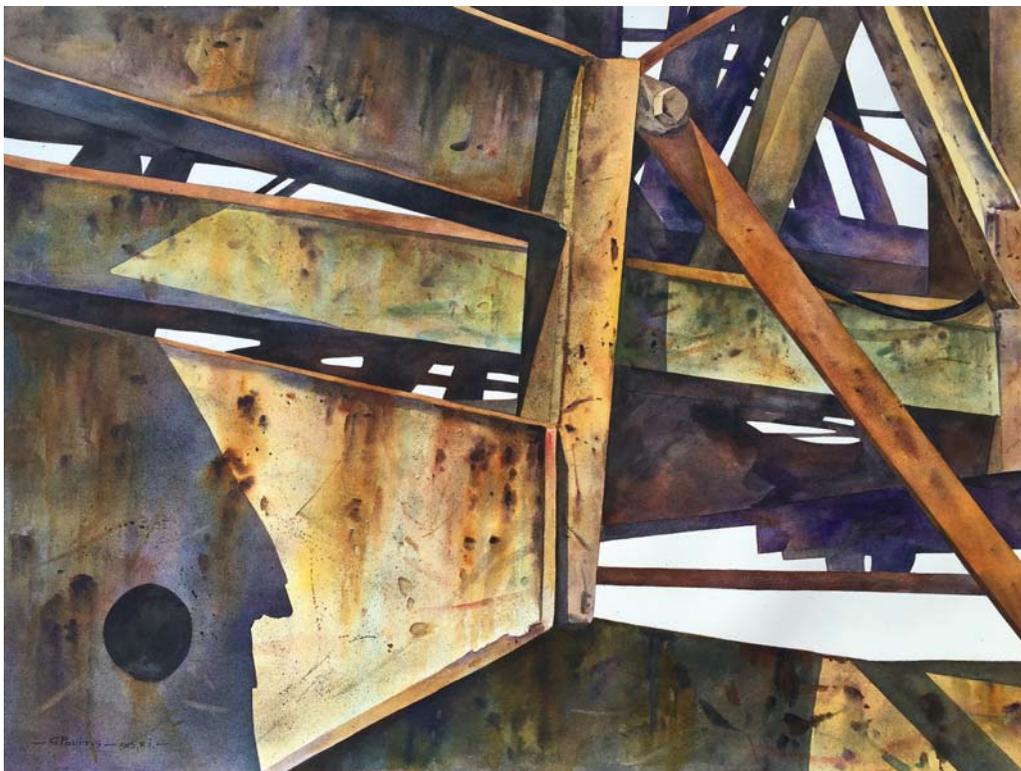
WATERMEDIA: Daniel Smith watercolors; Golden, Daler-Rowney FW and Schmincke fluid acrylics

BRUSHES: Escoda brushes in various shapes and sizes

LEFT: Politis notes that pushing the contrasts as much as possible through multiple layers gives *Crisis Is Back* (watercolor on paper, 22x15) a clear and crisp effect.

RIGHT TOP: *Mother with Child* (multi-media on paper, 22x15) was the work of layer upon layer of applications involving pouring, painting, stenciling, collaging, monoprinting and spraying with a mouth atomizer.

RIGHT BOTTOM: The metalwork upon which *A Spark of Decency* (watercolor on paper, 22x30) is based lacked depth and interest. By playing with texture and contrast, and inventing shapes, Politis strengthened the composition.



2017-2018 AWS TRAVEL SHOW SCHEDULE

After the AWS Annual Competition exhibition in New York City, 40 paintings selected by the Jurors of Awards go on tour. You can see the 2017 traveling exhibition at the following venues:

**NOVEMBER 5–
DECEMBER 22,
2017:** Mooresville
Arts, Mooresville,
N.C.

**JANUARY 5–
FEBRUARY 2, 2018:**
Wassenberg Art
Center, Van Wert,
Ohio



Keeping Perspective





Glenn Moreton's paintings move beyond technical realism to compositional masterpieces. By Jennifer Smith

The importance of good teachers and supportive mentors cannot be overestimated," explains realist painter Glenn Moreton, "for they are rare and provide so much sustenance for burgeoning artists." This is an important, if not a bit surprising, statement from an artist who says he's mostly self-taught. However, during critical times in his artistic development, he was inspired and educated by teachers who helped him define who he would become as an artist.

ABOVE: The skillfully created composition of *Sunny Side/Shady Side* (acrylic on canvas, 16x62) illustrates Moreton's ability to draw us into the painting. Strong lines and patterns create a composition that invites the viewer to visually wander through the painting.

OPPOSITE: *Kosher Burritos* (acrylic on canvas, 26x48).



Cold War Practicality

During Moreton's high school years, the Cold War had a strong influence on the accepted curriculum—the sciences and math were promoted as a way to defeat the Russians, and art classes were relegated to the arena of an easy grade. The pull of art for Moreton was still strong in college, but living in the rural Midwest, he had no exposure to the art world or an understanding of how he could make a living as an artist. Beginning as an architecture student, Moreton completed his art training with a degree in industrial design. This curriculum helped him develop his perspective skills and fine tune his compositional skills. The artist reflects, "Some of the classes did make me realize that I'd always had an innate talent for composition, but I had never heard the term 'composition' applied to art, nor had I heard it discussed and analyzed." He continues by saying, "Today composition is the most important focus in my work."

While studying architecture, Moreton's art instructor called him out on his artistic abilities. "He recognized my talent and kept urging me to major in painting rather than architecture," Morton recalls. "Although his

words left me more conflicted than ever, they also reassured me." The artist's appreciation for such support has remained steadfast. "Over the years I have noticed the importance of encouragement by instructors. Such support for artists is rare in our society, and obstacles are many, with the fine arts being considered superfluous."

In addition to expanding Moreton's artistic perception, his academic instruction imparted technical skills he uses today. "Perhaps the most important was my high school architectural drafting class, for it taught basic drafting skills I use when laying out initial drawings of the scenes I am painting." Additionally the artist shares, "That class gave me an understanding of perspective fundamentals. My college architecture coursework gave me a basic understanding of building components, and my industrial design classes that required illustrations of my designs taught me rendering techniques and tricks that I employ today."

With Fresh Eyes

"I have no idea how or why it happened," confesses Moreton about becoming a fine artist. Like many, his career and other

ABOVE: At times Moreton will add pedestrians to his paintings, such as **17th Street Promenade** (acrylic on canvas, 26x40), but only if they add to the composition without distracting the viewer.

RIGHT TOP: **Creperie** (acrylic on canvas, 24x36) shows one of the countless small neighborhood restaurants in the city. This painting reveals the everyday allure rather than attempting to capture some picture-perfect view.

RIGHT BOTTOM: Strong shadows and light add depth and movement to this painting of the high-end stores in **Beverly Boutiques** (acrylic on canvas, 24x36).



“I find that quick reviews of masterworks are still incredibly important to me as an artist.”
The museum visits help me see and develop techniques that I am missing due to my lack of formal training.”





ABOVE: A historic building or landmark can be seen in the distance of **10th Street** (acrylic on canvas, 20x40), but it's the street itself that takes center stage.

LEFT: Following the line of the sidewalk in **257** (acrylic on canvas, 42x30) the viewer is guided down the street to experience the city as a resident would on any given day.

obligations devoured his time. He knew he wanted to create art, but for years it seemed an impossibility until one day, while driving through the city, he saw how his view of shapes and arrangements continually changed. "I began noticing interesting compositions," says Moreton. "I saw arrangements of telephone poles, buildings and power lines that normally would be considered uninteresting, yet they grabbed my attention as my mind's eye automatically began visualizing them in satisfying compositions. It almost seemed as if I had tapped into something beyond my finite self."

Having created only a few paintings up to this point, he was astounded by his first cityscape. He says, "My painting showed a facility and skill that I had never had before. It was as if during my dormant years away from painting, my brain had been developing a new artistic awareness and visualizing new technical skills, so that by the time I was ready to try painting again, I was able to do it better than I could have imagined." Several years later Moreton began painting professionally, and to this day he says he's still a bit puzzled by how it all evolved.

Quick Studies

Moreton's transition to fine art painting occurred somewhat in a bubble; he was

unaware of other artists painting in the same genre—that is, photorealistic cityscapes—until a close friend brought up the name Richard Estes in conversation. "My friend looked at me with an expression of incredulity when I asked him who Richard Estes was," Moreton confesses.

Today Moreton is apt to make trips to a museum as a way to study his craft. "I find that quick reviews of masterworks are still incredibly important to me as an artist," Moreton shares. "The museum visits help me see and develop techniques that I am missing due to my lack of formal training." His quick lessons at the museum came in handy when he ventured from his cityscapes to paint more pastoral scenes. "As I attempted to paint grass, I produced a green, smeared mess." After spending time studying artwork at the National Gallery of Art, he was able to satisfactorily depict grass in his work.

Composition First

Moreton doesn't paint typical postcard views of cities, but instead he picks scenes that will yield an exciting composition. "I love to see how the spatial elements are arranged and balanced, and I love the visual rhythms that are created by repetition of shapes or by juxtaposing contrasting shapes. I try to look at scenes with objectivity," he explains. As



ABOVE LEFT: A postcard-inspired painting of Hollywood would include the iconic sign on the hill, but Moreton prefers to depict the streets and stores frequented by the city's residents in *Hollywood: Molly's* (acrylic on canvas, 50x30).

ABOVE RIGHT: Almost spontaneously, one day Moreton saw lines of city buildings, utility poles and wires as new compositions emerging before him, as in *Chinatown '70* (acrylic on canvas, 32x47).



a result, the artist usually finds it easier to paint cities he visits—cities that he can view with a cool, objective eye—rather than his familiar hometown of Washington, D.C.

Wherever he paints, he tries to steer clear of obvious landmarks and familiar scenes. He also tries to avoid an overemphasis on “picture postcard” prettiness, or similarly, on squalor and heavy-handed social commentary. Instead, he chooses to paint a mixture of urban elements that give the viewer a chance to experience the mood of that specific locale in an everyday way—he wants the viewer to see the city through the eyes of its residents.

First and foremost, the artist is creating a study in composition. He wants his work to move beyond the traditional appeal of photorealism that makes viewers delight

in the sharp lines and elicits the “it looks just like a photo” response. According to Moreton, “Some photorealism presents little else in the painting than keen technical skill. Sometimes the paintings seem rather trite or even cold.” He continues by clarifying, “I am not unlike those photorealists in my desire to create a sharp, detailed, almost photographic image. Yet, I also aim to create a mood that is interesting, generic, inviting and perhaps even warm.”

The Artist's Process

The canvas will receive a lot of work over the one-to-three months it takes to complete a painting, so to prevent the surface from stretching, the artist devised a way to reinforce the canvas by placing a shallow plywood platform underneath. This protects



MATERIALS

BRUSHES: Angular brushes of all sizes, innumerable pointer and liner brushes, a few large and medium flat brushes and stipple brushes

PAINTS: Golden, Liquitex and Winsor & Newton

EASEL: Avanti

MARK-MAKING TOOLS: 2B to 4B grading pencils, Koh-I-Noor Rapidograph and Staedtler Lumocolor pens, Liquitex Professional Acrylic inks, Staedtler Lumocolor permanent pens

PALETTES: Small salad plates from junk shops that are covered with saucers or placed in plastic sandwich bags to keep the paints from drying out

the integrity of the canvas by creating a rigid surface on which to work.

Moreton starts with a series of photographs he has taken of the site he intends to paint, and with keen accuracy, he will eventually replicate the scene on the canvas, selectively manipulating the distortion of the buildings to pull the viewer into the painting. But first he will create a general composition for the painting and develop the color palette. Once he has selected the colors, he tests them by applying them to a different canvas to see how they will respond to each other. After he's satisfied with the final colors, he records his blending ratios for each color for future reference. Then, once he's covered the canvas with gesso, Moreton paints the entire surface with either the color he will use for the sky or the painting's predominant color.

He begins by drawing on the primed and painted canvas, often using a projector to first provide a rough outline of the scene. Next, he adds details to the drawing, and only then does he begin the painting process. In general, he paints areas in the background first and then he moves gradually to the foreground but there are exceptions to this approach. Moreton says, "I also like to paint a number of areas of the work simultaneously so that I can get an idea of how the color relationships will affect the

I am not unlike those photorealists in my desire to create a sharp, detailed, almost photographic image. Yet, I also aim to create a mood that is interesting, generic, inviting and perhaps even warm."



composition. As I paint, I will change and adjust the original sketch in order to better meet the needs of the composition.”

Seldom are imagined elements added to the painting, but it’s not uncommon for the artist to edit out parts of a scene from the final composition. The reasoning behind such edits is always the same—to strengthen the composition or provide visual clarification to an area that otherwise might be confusing.

To achieve sharp, crisp lines, Moreton reaches for his Staedtler Lumocolor pens or Koh-I-Noor Rapidograph pens with acrylic inks to outline the buildings—treating the outer edges of buildings more strongly than the inner edges. “In making the lines, I often use inks that are a complementary color to the object I’m delineating,” Moreton details. “This makes the objects visually pop.”

When it comes to brushes, he is not particular about brands but is loyal to types. For detail work, of which there is plenty, Moreton prefers fine liner and spotter brushes. The brushes he uses most frequently are small angled-tip brushes that enable him to transition easily from a small space to a larger area in one stroke.

Light and the shadows cast by the building and other objects are critical to a realistic depiction of a cityscape. Successfully painting shadows requires seeing and rendering both the soft- and the hard-edge shadows. “I achieve my fading effect by using glazes and by scrubbing the paint onto the surface,” he says.

Over the years Moreton has mastered his technique for painting skies. Where much of his work requires meticulous detail, in the sky area he’s freer with his paint; smearing, scumbling and applying it any way he can to get the look he desires.

Future Endeavors

These days, Moreton is spending more time in the Midwest, away from the large cities he’s so accustomed to painting. Whether or not he will start painting views of smaller towns is still up in the air. “It’ll really come down to composition—if I find a composition in a smaller town that really grabs my attention I’ll paint it,” Moreton admits. ■

JENNIFER SMITH is managing editor of *Acrylic Artist* magazine.

ABOVE: Asked to paint a view of the Ohio River for a New York City gallery show, Moreton found the river a bit too idyllic. Turning his back to the water, the artist instead composed this view of the Cincinnati skyline for *Riverfront Parking* (acrylic on canvas, 22x60).

RIGHT: *West Hollywood Wagon* (acrylic on canvas, 26x36) asks us: Are we leaving or fighting our way into the city? The answer is up to the viewer.



GLENN MORETON

received his degree from Washington University, in St. Louis, Mo., and his bachelor of fine arts degree in architecture from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His work has appeared in galleries across the country: in New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, in his home city of Washington, D.C. and in Moscow at Russia's State Tretyakov Gallery. Moreton is the winner of numerous competitions and awards including the Elsie Ject-Key Memorial Award.

Visit his website at glennmoreton.artspan.com.



IN A SEASON SATURATED WITH NEW TOYS AND SWEET TREATS, WE ASKED THREE ARTISTS HOW THEY STAY ALIVE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

Interview by Michael Woodson

working the HOLIDAYS

BRIAN BURT

CINCINNATI, OHIO
BMBURT.COM



Q: How has selling your art changed over the years?

A: I began by participating in art fairs throughout the Midwest and on the East coast. Getting better at my craft, introducing people to my work and myself and getting people to remember the work were most important to me. I then started approaching galleries, and I found places locally and abroad where I could sell my work. Six years after I graduated, I was a full-time painter.

Q: How has technology changed the way you sell your work?

A: Mass emailing is hit or miss for me. The greatest success for me is Instagram. I'm using my strength (visual imagery) to capture people's attention.

I've lost count of how many pieces I've sold from posting finished or in-progress shots to clients on Instagram.

Q: What are other marketing strategies you've used and seen success with in selling your work?

A: Entering competitions that can result in free marketing is always a plus. My painting *Song Of Solanum* was in *Southwest Art's* 21 Over 30 Competition years ago. Because of that exposure, I sold that painting and received commissions totaling around \$10,000 from people I probably never would've reached otherwise.

Q: What is the best advice you could give on selling work during the holidays?

A: Think about price point and size. Very few people are giving 24x36 paintings to someone for a gift, and even fewer are buying them for themselves because they're on a budget. After all, everyone is stretching their holiday spending in all sorts of directions. But a 6x6 or 8x10 painting fits very nicely under the tree!





ABOVE: *Sugar Crash* (oil on panel, 6x6)

LEFT: *Movie Theater Munchies* (oil on panel, 7x4)

OPPOSITE TOP: *Kiss Me* (oil on panel, 5x5)

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: *The Root Beer Stand* (oil on panel, 12x16)



BIRGIT O'CONNOR

MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
BIRGITOCONNOR.COM



Q: What are a few tricks of the trade in selling your work?

A: As I started to develop my painting style, I began with affordable works—cards, small prints, small paintings, etc. Outdoor fairs, month-long shows and competitions were all ways in which I was able to sell my work, and adding an open studio occasionally was very successful. Having a website and being on social media are both crucial to reaching out to your intended market as well.

Q: When should an artist be more active in his or her marketing for the holiday season?

A: Start promoting around Thanksgiving and participate in holiday fairs and open studios. But I find all holidays are an excellent way to market your work, not just those that fall during the “holiday season.” Don't forget the occasions you can focus on throughout the year, like

Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Father's Day and birthdays. These are great times to promote commissioned work.

Q: What are some standard promotional practices all artists should try?

A: Having a mailing list is crucial. Instagram and Pinterest are both great for showing your work and keeping it in the public eye. Facebook is a wonderful way to get a global exposure—but when posting original work online, consider a watermark or a very low-resolution image for safety.

Q: What are some challenges you've overcome in selling your work?

A: I live in a rural area and, at times, I felt a little paralyzed and found myself retreating to my studio. So I started showing in a small local café and then expanded to other restaurants in my area. Many of the naysayers said showing in cafés was beneath them and that I needed to be really careful with how I chose my venues. But it gave me the exposure I needed, and over time, those same people scrambled to show their own work in that café!



TOP: **Amazing Grace** (watercolor on paper, 15x22)

ABOVE: **Rhododendron Shadows** (watercolor on paper, 22x15)

OPPOSITE TOP: **Gloria Shirley** (watercolor on paper, 15x22)

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: **Apple Blossom** (watercolor on paper, 15x22)



URSULA ROMA

CINCINNATI, OHIO
 URSULAROMAMETALWORKS.COM
 URSULAROMAPAININGS.COM



Q: Are there similar qualities to marketing today versus at the start of your career?

A: In the 1990s, I advertised in source books and found them to be a great way to find new clients. But social media is primarily how I market my work today. It's free, but you can also pay to reach specific audiences, so when my budget is more flexible, I tend to sponsor some advertisements to sell my work.

Q: What do you suggest artists do for holiday marketing?

A: As the holidays near, say in October, I will start to post images of my work that would appeal to gift-givers. The prices are in a reasonable range, and the subject matter is more universal. I also participate in art shows in the fall. I try to plan solo gallery shows in the fall and winter because people tend to spend money on art during those seasons, especially commissions for family and friends. I post consistently in the fall and winter—which means daily—and I respond to people's comments

promptly. If people feel engaged by the artwork and the artist, they tend to want to purchase that artist's work!

Q: With so much advertising happening during the holidays, what practices have you found to be most successful?

A: People tend to be bombarded with imagery and sales during the holidays. I post only images and announcements for my sales and try to remain present, so that when they're ready to buy, they remember that I'm here!

Q: Any advice for artists just starting to sell their work?

A: Artists should try to remember that buyers have limited budgets and lots of people to shop for. The holidays are a good time to promote work that is within a reasonable price range and has positive imagery! Smaller items are always bestsellers during the holidays. ■



LEFT TOP: **Cat Head Ornament** (steel with enamel finish, 5½x5½)

LEFT BOTTOM: **Rainbow Circle Birds** (steel with enamel finish, 11x16)

RIGHT TOP: **Flower Painting** (acrylic on wood, 11x24)

RIGHT BOTTOM: **Herd of Cats** (steel with enamel finish, 11x23)



ARTISTS & MATERIALS SHOWCASE

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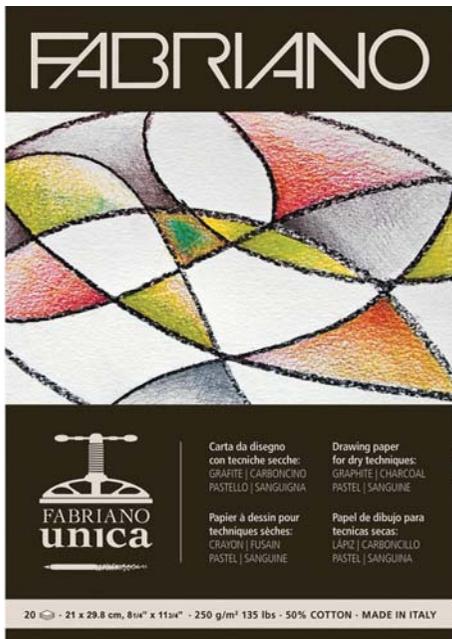
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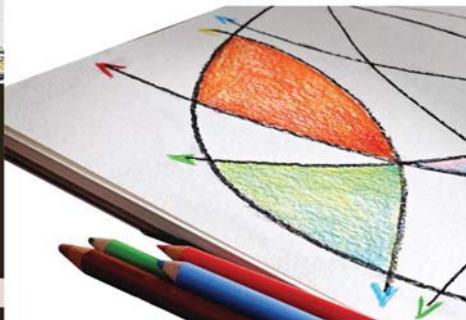
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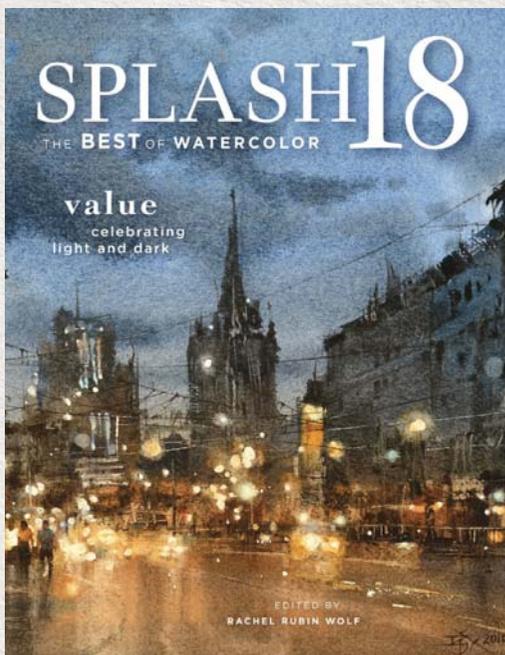
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Iowa Farm, Anita K. Plucker, from *Splash 18*



Splash 18

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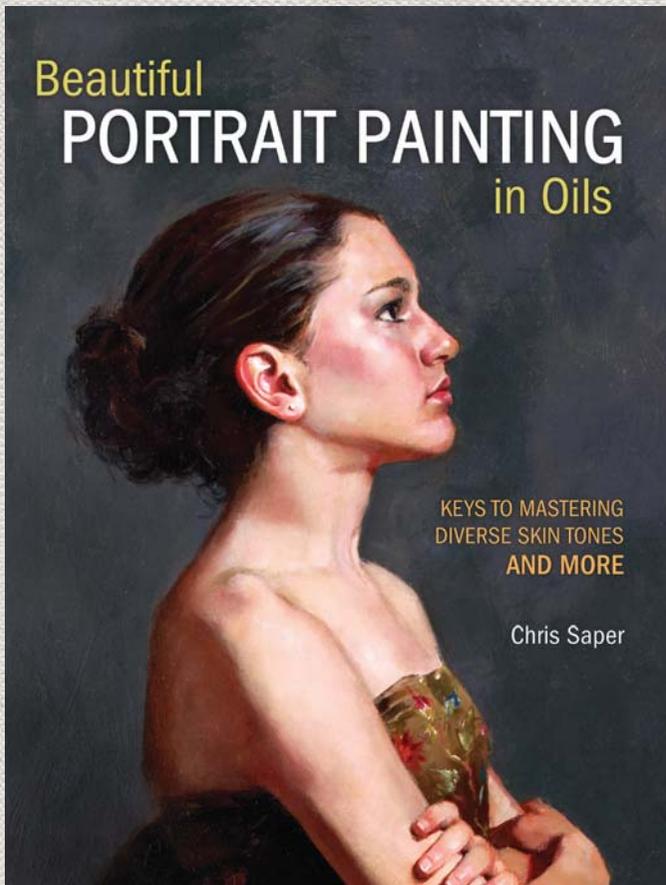
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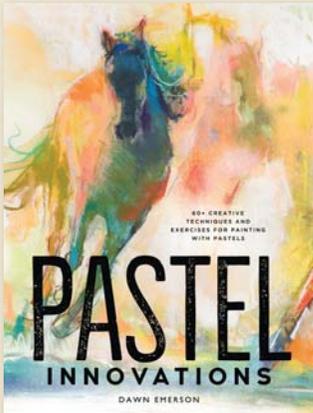
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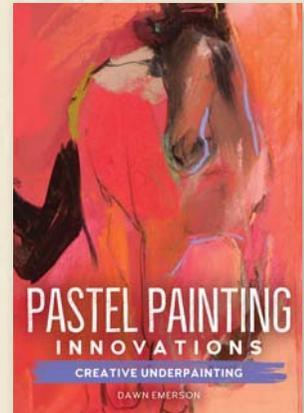
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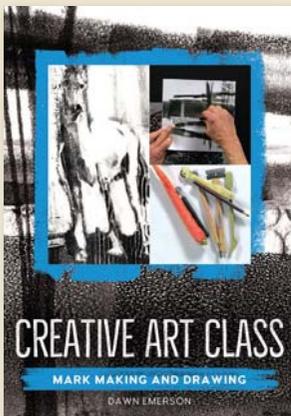
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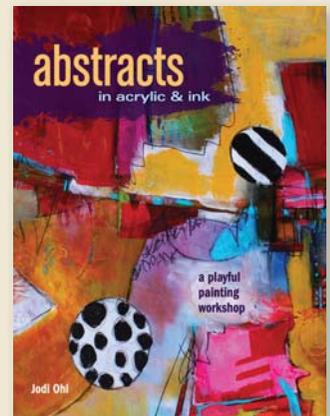
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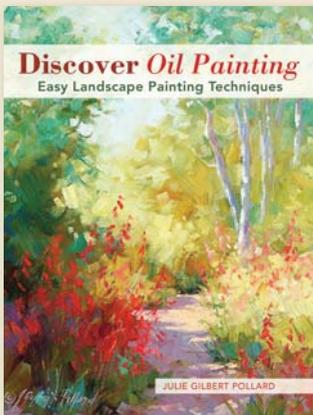
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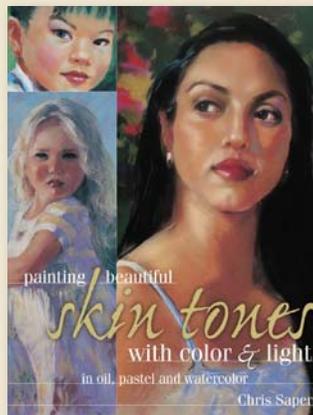
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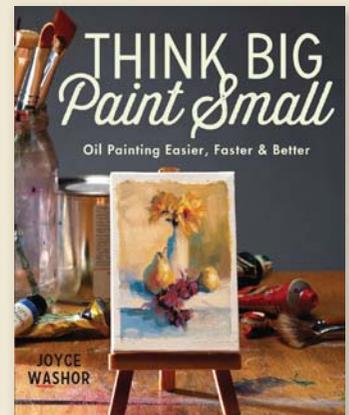
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ROAD TEST

By Stephen Cefalo

Top-Notch Drawing Materials

A variety of Staedtler's pencils and markers for artists get a hearty thumbs-up.



ALWAYS A FAN OF STAEDTLER, I was delighted to recently receive an invitation to critique some of their products (see *Staedtler Materials Tested*, page 77). As it happens, they're produced in my own birthplace, Nuremberg, Germany—a city known for its artists and artisans. Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) created impossibly fine, yet epically elaborate etchings that typify German craft. The city is also famous for its gingerbread Christmas cookies (Nuremberg Lebkuchen) and clock maker Peter Henlen's 1504 invention of the watch. Nuremberg has a rich history of excellent craftsmanship, and Staedtler's art materials are no exception.

Overview of Materials

There's an array of choices out there when it comes to drawing

LEFT: The various drawing material I used on *Kayla Over Midwood* (Staedtler Ergosoft watercolor pencil, Triplus Fineliner pen, fine pigment liner and charcoal pencil on paper; 16x12) worked well together, giving the drawing a fully unified look.



LEFT: *Transit Napping* (Staedtler Mars Lumograph pencils (graphite, carbon and aquarell) on paper, 16x120)

STAEDTLER MATERIALS TESTED

Mars Lumograph graphite pencils

Mars Lumograph Black (combination of graphite and carbon pencils)

Mars Lumograph charcoal pencils

Mars Lumograph aquarell water-soluble graphite pencils

Ergosoft watercolor pencils

Triplus Fineliner pens

Pigment liner sketch pens

Drawing 1: Many Media

The first drawing I created with the materials Staedtler sent me was *Kayla Over Midwood* (page 76). I began my experiments with the Ergosoft watercolor pencils. Working on watercolor paper, I lightly blocked in the image using the pencils without water. I then added water with a watercolor brush to spread the color over larger areas. The colors drawn in with the pencils became darker when water was added, but the color blotted out easily when it went darker than I wanted.

I began crisping up a few edges with the black ink pigment liners, and before I knew it, I was knee-deep in a mixed media project! I saw colors in the pack of markers (Triplus Fineliner pens) that would be perfect for certain areas, so I mixed them in. I found that the colored markers play very well with the watercolor pencils. Although the markers are not designed for wet media and are not water soluble, I discovered that strokes of water over the markers lent a lovely softening effect. Later, looking over my piece, I could hardly tell which colors I'd worked with the pencils and which with the markers.

Having lost the white of my paper in washes of watercolor, I eventually decided to bring in some whites with Staedtler's white charcoal pencil. These lightened values can be seen in the areas of sky around the subject's

pencils. It's not easy to judge quality by the packaging, so choosing good pencils can be a matter of trial and error. If you're like me, you've probably experienced frustration with pencils getting chewed up in the sharpener, as if accidentally caught in a meat grinder (to give that bratwurst a little extra kick).

The first thing I noticed about Staedtler Mars Lumograph pencils was how sturdy they are. They sharpen to a satisfying point, and I've never had the problem of discovering that the graphite had broken into pieces as I'd sharpened. These pencils handle

well, and have an excellent range of values. Staedtler's charcoal pencils are also of fine quality, and I've noticed they have the same durability and range as the Mars Lumograph products. I've enjoyed Staedtler's Aquarell water-soluble graphite pencils, and am getting a kick out of their Ergosoft watercolor pencils. Since I've recently returned to doing more illustrative work, I've added Staedtler's multicolored Triplus Fineliner pens, as well as their Pigment liner sketch pens (black ink pens in assorted tip sizes) to my drawing materials.

NUREMBERG HAS A RICH HISTORY OF EXCELLENT CRAFTSMANSHIP, AND STAEDTLER'S ART MATERIALS ARE NO EXCEPTION. STEPHEN CEFALO

ROAD TEST

head, in the backlit areas of her body and in a few highlights. The white charcoal worked very well, and on the backlit areas of the figure, I even worked back over the white hatching, stroking in a single direction with both pencils and markers to achieve the tones I wanted. With my black charcoal pencils I pulled some shadows into the background, pulling the two areas together with a paper stump.

Artist-grade colored pencils, such as Staedtler Ergosoft watercolor pencils, have an interesting painterly quality, and you can build the colors up opaquely using the lean-to-fat principle of oil painting. While building up colors this way, one trick of the trade is to rub the white pencil over other colors in order to blend or pull the tones together. Used in this way, the white pencil also doubles as a glazing medium over other colors. Strokes made over a saturation of white have a fluid, gliding feel that's similar to oils.

I used this technique largely in building up the muscles of the figure's back. I was particularly fond of one of the yellow-colored pencils that I used as a warm glaze over a completely modeled area. A rub of this color over a waxy, saturated area of colored pencil gave the figure the effect of being bathed in warm light—similar to the effect of an Indian yellow glaze used in oils.

Drawing 2: Water-Soluble and Traditional Graphite

After a few experiments on scrap paper, I found that the Mars Lumograph aquarell water-soluble graphite pencils play best alone or with the Mars Lumograph pencils. I began a portrait of my son (see *Transit Napping*, page 77), using these, which was great fun. The Aquarells truly handled like regular graphites, except that the graphite could be moved around, and even erased if desired, in washes of water. This is wonderful

for blocking in large dark areas or background tones. The traditional Mars Lumograph graphite and carbon pencils won't budge with water added. Wet areas of the Aquarell pencils will dry fairly permanently and aren't easy to erase. On sturdy watercolor paper, however, I found that I could rub out the highlight on the nose with a bit of fine sandpaper. Finally, I loved just letting the water do its thing—dripping and spattering where it would. The element of chance is part of the fun!

Conclusion

Whether you prefer working traditionally or mixing it up, as I did, there's a special magic in cracking open a package of new drawing supplies, and the Staedtler products I tested are top notch. Happy experimenting! ■

STEPHEN CEFALO is a frequent contributor to *The Artist's Magazine*. Visit his website at stephencefalo.com.

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 2/9-2/11/18, Huntsville. Sara Beth Fair, Painting with Light, Color & Joy.
 4/6-4/8/18, Huntsville. Lian Quan Zhen, Watercolor Painting: Let the Colors Paint Themselves.
 5/3-5/6/18, Huntsville. David Dunlop, Natural Elements; Painting with the Masters, Old & New Techniques.
 6/1-6/2/18, Huntsville. Alan Shuptrine, Realistic Watercolor Landscapes.
 Contact: Laura E. Smith, Director of Education/Museum Academy, 256/535-4350 x222
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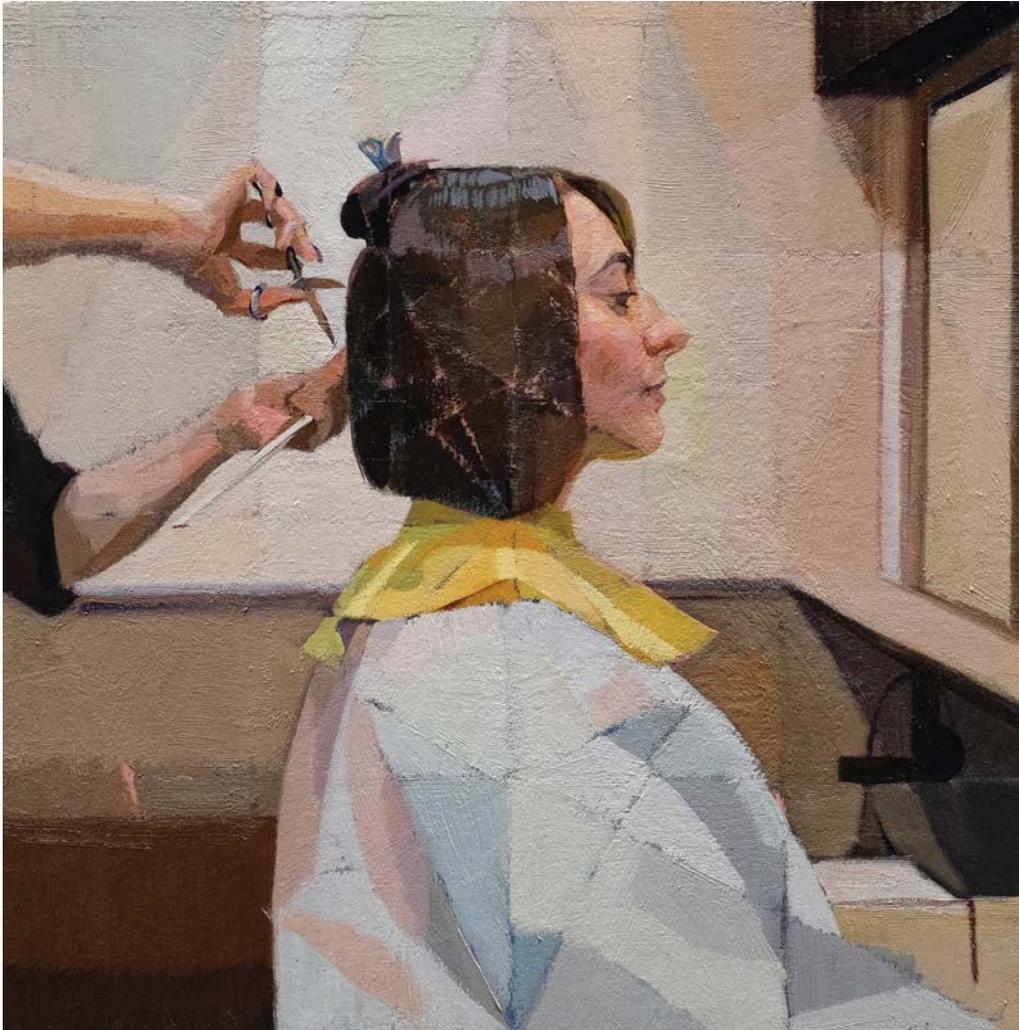
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LEFT: *Haircut Type 1*,
(oil on canvas, 20x20)

Hiroshi Sato

San Francisco, California • hiroshisatoart.com

WHEN I WAS about 8 years old, there was an art teacher at my school whom I never



had a class with or spoke to. He was middle aged, balding in the center, always wearing a tie-dyed T-shirt, flip-flops and black eyeliner. He didn't speak much and he didn't smile much. I was watching him paint a mural one day and, without turning around, he said, "I heard you're pretty good at drawing. You should do art." Something clicked for me, and I decided that art was what I was going to do.

For *Haircut Type 1* I asked myself, "In what context would one see a floating head in a side profile?" The answer I came upon was the hair salon. You only see the head of the person next to you looking forward into a mirror, isolated in space by the apron.

My work begins with flat, geometric swatches of color and value. I construct shapes by dividing the canvas with a

root 4 rectangle. I construct form on top of the geometric swatches, varying the number of planes from area to area. This creates tension between the illusion of form and flatness. *Haircut Type 1* was challenging in terms of achieving color harmony and getting the work to a more finished look. My favorite aspect is the balance of finish versus freshness. ■

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