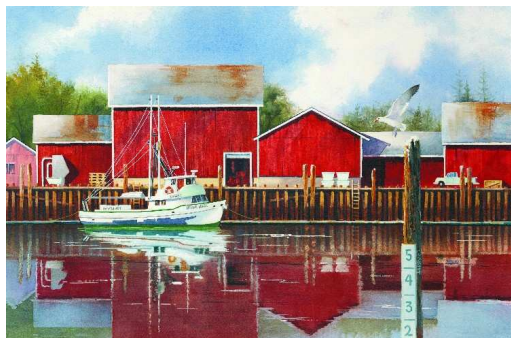


Larry Johnson's Watercolor Workshops NEWSLETTER

THE ULTIMATE COMPLIMENT

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ILWACO BOAT BASIN
From the SW Washington Coast

Last year a couple from Minneapolis purchased a framed Giclée print of Ilwaco. The family is into boating of all kinds. They said they loved the painting even though it was a scene from Washington. The husband had been to the West Coast on business trips and had

taken the family there on vacations.

When we saw them in a restaurant in Minneapolis earlier this year, the wife told me how much they enjoyed the piece and that when they hung it on the living room wall, the color of the walls clashed with the colors in the Giclée.

They decided it was the perfect time to repaint the living room to go with the colors in the painting. Of course the husband wasn't too keen on all the work he had to do. He joked that he was going to call me to ask for some help – since I was an artist – and responsible for his tasks.

Many times I've heard someone looking at paintings say that the colors of the art or the mats doesn't "match" their wall, drapes or furniture – an excuse not to buy. Now I have the perfect answer – just repaint your walls to match the art!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO PAINT

Sometimes when I'm teaching, I will hear someone say they just don't know what to paint. There's an easy solution to that – just paint the last thing you did again – with changes.

In my classes you'll learn about the six basic value combinations. So let's expand on those a little.

If you take one painting and paint each value option, there's **6** different paintings. To make it simple – flip the painting from right to left and do it all again – now you have **12** paintings.

If you add the four seasons of the

year – you'll have **48** different paintings. Now add three different times of day – early morning, noon and late afternoon – you'll have **144** paintings. Now you don't have any excuse on not having any idea what to paint next.

I use this approach to some of my paintings, but not many. In the last issue of this newsletter I mentioned that I had taken photos of a windmill. When I can, I'll take a number of photos from different angles and distances. I may use that same windmill in two or three paintings, but it will look different in

each because of a different angle. I've done the same thing with old wagons, and barns.

The role of the artist is to compose a scene that will be enjoyable to paint as well as hold the viewer's attention. And you should know that no artist that I know – could duplicate the first painting exactly.

Next time you're stumped on what to paint next – think about one that you've already done - add some mood or change value patterns.

WORKING WITH GALLERIES

Working with a gallery can be a love-hate relationship. Most artists I know want to be represented by galleries. Having your artwork displayed with other artists brings a measure of satisfaction. That is, as long as the gallery sells some of your art work. If you haven't sold any work out of a gallery for some time you need to find out what the reason may be.

First, realize the gallery is a business and expects to make a profit. They have to keep the doors open and pay all the bills that come with having a business.

Most, if not all, of the gallery's source of income is from commissions on the sales. The average is 40% and as high as 70%. It stands to reason that the gallery is going to feature those artists whose art is selling well and the gallery is col-

lecting nice commissions. You can be sure most galleries will push a \$10,000 painting over a \$500 one.

If you are not selling, you need to talk with the gallery owner and ask specific questions. Is your work priced correctly or does your subject matter appeal to only a few customers. Is your framing minimal or over done. The most important question is does the quality of your art work meet the requirements that may attract buyers.

Years ago I learned about protecting my art while in a gallery. I lost 12 original pieces when a gallery closed their doors after a big holiday show. The show was in Montana and I lived in Portland, Oregon. I had decided not to attend the show because of the distance and the winter weather.

Now I have taken a few steps to

minimize potential problems. I place my paintings in galleries that I can visit once in a while. If the location is not close by, I have friends or relatives that drop by the gallery – without letting the gallery know that I sent them. They let me know if the art work is being displayed. If I don't have that source available I have called and paid an attorney, in the same city, to have someone on his staff visit the gallery to check on my art work

Let people know the name of the gallery where you have work displayed – building gallery relationships will help your sales too.

Keep the relationship honest. If you sell a painting to a client that saw your work in a gallery and has contacted you direct. You owe the gallery it's commission. They are the reason for that sale.

WATERCOLORS GAINING POPULARITY

Watercolors are beginning to come full circle by becoming more popular again. Looking through the many art magazines, I see more watercolor workshops offered than oil or acrylic classes.

Watercolors have a "life" to them that cannot be achieved by the oil and acrylic artists painting on canvas or masonite panels. The fine pigments of the watercolors allow the light to hit the white of the paper and bounce back to the viewer. This helps maintain the glowing effect that watercolors is known for. This glow cannot be easily achieved in other mediums.

We have heard many times that watercolors are considered to be a child's medium. For young artists, watercolors are less toxic and easier to clean up.

Many times while exhibiting my paintings at the art shows, I will have people tell me that they "tried" to paint with watercolors, but switched to oils or acrylics.

Before starting a watercolor, the artist has to have some idea of what to do to achieve the effect that they want. The artist has to have a better understanding of the his materials and how they react with each other. Watercolor artists can't cover mistakes like the oil painters. Mistakes may mean starting over.

I started with watercolors in college. Even though I sometimes use oils or acrylics, my first choice has been watercolors. They are less messy and do not require waiting 6 months to a year before putting a protective coat of varnish on them like oils.

THREE PURCHASE AWARDS IN 2007

I participated in the 2007 Mother's Day art show in Marshfield, Wisconsin for the first time. There were about 100 artists displaying their work. The quality of

the artwork was very good. The Marshfield Clinic, a large hospital in that area, selected "The Rock Garden" to purchase for their permanent collection.

SCHEDULING THE 2008 WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

I am beginning to schedule and set the dates for the 2008 Watercolor Workshops in various locations on the West Coast.

There are previous class locations that have asked me to return for some advanced techniques. You can find some of the locations on the "Workshops" page on the web site.

I'm always willing to teach a workshop in or near a location that wants to learn new techniques.

The major problem is finding a location that is large enough to hold 12 to 18 students and have room to work. The second is scheduling a date that works for the majority of the people that want to attend. I am willing to hold the 3-day classes on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. This allows the student that works to ask for one day off the job. I also have the 5-day classes. In those I show how I paint on Fredrix watercolor canvas and use Acrylics as water-

colors on a gessoed panel. If there are enough students I can add an extra day to the 3-day sessions for the canvas and panel instructions.

If you are part of an art organization, or know of interested artists, that would like a workshop in your area please contact me through my web site.

I've kept my class fees affordable so more people can enjoy the learning experience. I hope to see you in class sometime soon.

"HEADING HOME"- A NEW ORIGINAL WATERCOLOR



A couple of years ago, I had the opportunity to take a photo an Amish buggy as it passed me on a country road. As I was looking through my slides for a new subject, I found a slide and decided to create a scene that incorporated the buggy.

I respect the Amish - that they don't like to have photo taken of themselves. I have asked and have been allowed to take photos of their horses and buggies on a couple of occasions.

I placed the buggy on a country road, softened the background and left a lot of the leaves and foliage loose and less defined. I also used the high contrast technique near the focal point.

I've had great comments on the 30" x 22" piece. Giclée prints available at this time.

ENTERING COMPETITIONS

There are numerous ads in magazines for all kinds of competitions. Some are for covers of magazines, others from galleries or art organizations. All of them want you to send money for "jury fees". Some fees are as much as \$50 per slide or up to 3 slides. If you are "rejected" there are no reasons given. How

could you have done better? Who knows?

I rarely enter any sort of "competitions" any more. I'd would rather give \$50 for an hour of valuable comments to an artist that would help me grow and produce better artwork or spend \$50 a day to attend a workshop that offers tech-

niques that I may be able to use in the future.

It annoys me that certain artists are always chosen each year by the judge. They usually belong to the same organizations and know each other.

I had two pieces in a national show and went to

the awards ceremony. A friend and his wife that were with me overheard one of the winners comment on how nice it was that 8 of 10 awards were given to the students that took the judge's workshop the days prior to the judging of the show.

Isn't that interesting?

MAKING BEAUTIFUL GRAYS – OR GREYS

Let's talk about grays – not “mud” - grays. We've all experienced making mud at one time or another. Sometimes I've wanted a muddy color to tone down the bright tone right out of the tube. It's time to learn to control the colors you mix to get grays that are vibrant and interesting – not muddy and dull.

We all know that by adding the compliment of any color we will get a “neutral” color or a grayed color. Depending on the amount of each color, or percentages, you can make blue-grays or reddish grays. Most of my shadow grays leans toward the blue-purple. If it's a warm day I will make the shadows a bit cooler. If it's a cold scene, I'll make the shadows a little warmer.

When you've over mixed your colors either on your

palette or on the paper and you've gotten mud. You can save the painting by making more mud right next to the other. Your painting will become a mid-key, muted-color painting. If you've been lucky you may still have a brighter focal area that will hold the viewers' attention. I know oil painters that use the grayed palette all the time and are quite successful.

Do short exercises on mixing different percentages of compliments on business card size pieces of paper. Then write notes on those pieces you like to keep and save them in a plastic business card sleeve as references for the next time you want nice grays

People that have taken my classes know what I mean – and better have samples when I see them.

Prairie Gold



This is a small study in Acrylic on gessoed masonite.



This is a small study in Acrylics on Multi-media board.

PAINTINGS ON DISPLAY



VINE RIPE
Watercolors & Acrylics

THE OUTBACK GALLERY

11 North E Street
Lakeview, Oregon 97630
(541) 947-3233

SODA CREEK GALLERY

183 East Hood Ave
Sisters, OR 97759
(541) 549-0600

VISIT MY WEB SITE

Www.larrys-art.com
E-mail: watercolors@centurytel.net
(608) 269-0958

STATE STREET GALLERY

1804 State Street
La Crosse, WI 54601
(608) 782-0101

PICTURE PERFECT

Cedar Creek Mall
Mosinee, WI
(715) 355-6984

WATERCOLOR WORKSHOPS

622 North Court Street
Sparta, WI 54656
(By Appointment Only)