

FIRST DAY / Syllabus

BASIC WATERCOLOR PAINTING

Taught by Laurence E. Keefe

This class provides step-by-step instruction in the fundamentals of watercolor painting. People sometimes think of watercolor as a difficult medium but this course enables a beginner to achieve confidence and mastery and to enjoy the process. You get individual guidance and support at each stage—we engage artists in a cooperative and mutually helpful environment.

Classes consist of live demos, structured exercises, and project paintings that apply each technique. Because we proceed at a pace designed to keep us all working together, there may be some variation in this curriculum; if we have time at the end each artist may work in studio on a project of their choosing.

You will get a handout describing each technique and project in detail.

1. Introduction
 - a. Materials: why good materials make a difference, and how to put together a basic kit you can use forever. Paints, paper, brushes, drawing tools, and palettes discussed in detail.
 - b. Critiques: nothing to be afraid of. We have our patented CVS, harm-free approach where you can bring in work for feedback from other painters. Many students consider this the best part of the class.
2. Values in Watercolor
 - a. Why a good dark and a bright light are important to a watercolor painting. Different ways to create them. Why they matter.
 - b. Value exercise: paint a simple box that looks three dimensional using one wash of paint
 - c. Monochrome barn scene: a charming little barn landscape that uses all the values you will ever need
3. Mixing Colors
 - a. How to mix your paints to make colors more and less vivid: on the paper and in the palette, complementary colors and more.
 - b. A simple technique to see every single color you can possibly produce with our specific palette (or any other combination of paints)
4. Painting a Realistic Apple: Using your new knowledge of colors and the glazing technique, we will paint an apple that looks good enough to eat.
5. Shadows and reflections
 - a. How a shadow is different from a reflection, and why you should care
 - b. How we can paint water by just painting reflections
 - c. The ways that shadows can define the shapes in a landscape
6. Loose and easy: painting a massive, sunlit oak tree with a couple of splashes of paint (the 'three banana' tree)
7. Tips, Tricks and Techniques
 - a. Painting a white fence with green paint

- b. Different brush strokes and washes: flat wash, graded wash, mixed wash, dry brush, wet into wet
 - c. Salting, splattering, scratching, dripping, lifting and scraping
- 8. Wilderness Lake: we will use these multiple techniques to create a vivid painting of a northern lake in late autumn
- 9. Depth
 - a. Basic ways to create depth: overlap, recession, atmosphere
- 10. Pines in Mist: atmospheric effects and loose brushstrokes create a pine forest that seems to fade into the fog. A technique that can be used for many subjects.
- 11. Linear Perspective, Simplified
 - a. An explanation of the (very basic) theory and practical application of single and two-point perspective
- 12. Chapin Street at Sunset
 - a. A single point perspective view of a Canandaigua Street made dramatic and interesting by bold lighting and strong colors
- 13. Storm on Valentown Road
 - a. We will take a boring photograph of a country road and transform it with raking light and a towering storm.

Please direct any questions regarding this class to Rachael Baldanza, Curriculum Director at (585) 276-8956 or rbaldanza@mag.rochester.edu .

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BASIC WATERCOLOR PAINTING: STAGE II

Taught by Laurence E. Keefe

This course assumes familiarity with the fundamentals of watercolor painting such as provided in the Basic Watercolor Painting course or other introductory lessons.

The semester will include four project paintings, each completed over two class sessions. Each painting will help the artist to understand and master an important aspect of watercolor painting. The teacher provides the reference photo and a step-by-step handout for the painting.

The classes consist of:

- structured, harm-free group critique of outside work offered by the artists
- explanation and introduction to the technique/s used in the painting
- demo of each stage of the painting
- work by the artists on the project
- group evaluation of finished pieces

Lively discussion and questions are encouraged at all times.

First class will start with a quick review of the suggested paints, brushes and papers. Because some students repeat this course multiple times, an effort is made to provide fresh projects each semester. The usual course has consisted of paintings like these:

- **Half Full Glass of Water:** How to Use Precise Colors to Achieve High Realism
- **Painting a Pineapple:** Techniques to Simplify a Complex Subject:
- **Rte 5&20 Barns in a Rosy Sunset:** Glaze with Color to Impart Ambience
- **Three Antique Bottles and the Interplay of Light:** How to Use Three-point Perspective in a Still Life
- **Moose Grazing in an Adirondack Pond:** Breaking Down a Complex Subject into Simple Shapes
- **Conch Shell and Shadow:** How to Add Color to a Drab Image
- **Green Lilies:** Different Colors of White (and Black!)
- **The Greene Farmstead:** The Excitement of Shadows in Late Afternoon

We will announce each project in class the week before.

A failed painting represents an opportunity to experiment without fear. For the final class, students can bring in one painting that they're ready to burn for our "**Flog a Failure**" Day...we will try all sorts of exuberant experiments on these paintings, just to see what happens! This can be great fun; and has led to a surprising number of excellent results.

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ADVANCED WATERCOLOR

Taught by Laurence E. Keefe

This course is for an artist who wants to select their own subjects and stylistic approach to watercolor paintings, but who appreciates an opportunity to work with the support of an experienced teacher and with other painters. This assumes familiarity with the fundamentals of watercolor painting such as provided in the Basic Watercolor Painting courses or other introductory lessons.

Each session will include:

- structured, harm-free group critique of finished work offered by the artists
- a technical discussion or demo by the teacher
- group painting by the artists

Lively discussion and questions are encouraged at all times and the teacher will work one-on-one with the artists to achieve their individual goals.

Some of the technical topics covered in previous courses include:

- How to avoid 'mud' in watercolor
- Reading the label on a tube of watercolor paint
- Types of color harmony
- Choosing the right watercolor brush
- Staining paints
- Lifiable paints
- Using Interlocked, Overlapped and Negative Shapes in Landscape
- The many forms of composition
- Dry brush as a technique
- Structure of water reflections

When applicable, brief demos are provided and most topics are covered with a handout. Fresh topics will be introduced to meet the specific needs of the group.

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