Learning Basic Techniques Used in Watercolor

Adapted from Facebook Live Presentation

Below is a list of basic watercolor techniques.

Applying paint to a surface

- Wet on Dry Surface: Wet paint onto a dry surface is known as direct painting. Many beginners will start using this technique because the paint is applied directly where you place it. A brush is loaded with pigment and applied on the surface creating crisp edges.
- Wet onto Wet Surface: Unless the first application, this technique creates soft edges and blends smoothly. A wash of water is applied to entire surface of the paper or a specific area. The pigment is laid down onto the wet color. The color blooms out in any direction.

Making Edits or Correcting Mistakes

- Take a web brush and pick up the color.

- Dab an area with a material such as a paper towel to pick up color

- To make an edit, apply either frisket or artist tape to an area that you wish to keep untouched. With a Magic Erase pad you can pick up the color on the surface

Various Types of Washes

A wash is an area of color that is flat or diluted.

- Dry Flat Wash is created by dipping a brush in color and painting lines on the surface from top to bottom. As the brush moves across the page, the paint begins to lighten. On the next line, apply your brush where a small bead of color was left on the line above. Make sure your brush is wet and is sufficiently loaded with paint.

- Wet Flat Wash is a two-step process. Water is applied to the surface, so it is glistening but not sopping wet. A flat brush is dipped in color then lines are painted across the surface from top to bottom.

- Similar to the other washes, Gradient Wash or Faded Wash are applied from top to bottom. As you move to the next stroke, more water is applied to the brush. Eventually, the wash gets lighter to almost disappearing at the bottom of the page.

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Special Effect in Watercolor

There are numerous ways to add depth or texture to your watercolor painting.

- Splatter Effect creates an illusion of depth and texture to a painting. An example would be a starry night scene. Load pigment onto toothbrush gently rub finger over the bristles. Another way to splatter paint is loading one brush and tap it against another brush. A stencil could be used to control the area where the splatter effect is applied.

- Salt creates interesting textures such as snow, foam from waves, and foliage in trees. Sprinkle salt onto wet paint. It will soon absorb color. Let the painting dry before brushing off the salt.

- Sponges creates textures when paint is applied to the sponge. The finer the sponge the finer the texture.

- Paint with a sponge for texture; the finer the sponge the finer the texture.

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References for Extra Reading

7 Watercolor Tips for Beginners
https://www.strathmoreartist.com/blog-reader/id-7-watercolor-tips-for-beginners.html

5 Simple Watercolor Techniques for Beginners
https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-5-simple-watercolor-techniques-beginners

Watercolor Techniques, How-to-Paint Tutorials & Painting Ideas
https://watercolorpainting.com/

Video Reference

Albright Art Facebook Live Presentation
https://www.facebook.com/141264825912953/videos/1502613953111360