Watercolor Demonstration

Thursday, May 9 @ 10-12 PM

Presented by the Lifelong Learning Institute of Northern VA in collaboration with the Fairfax Art League

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Spring Hill Club House
8946 Yellow Daisy Place
Lorton, VA

A SHORT DEMONSTRATION/DISCUSSION

Active Adults
Inspired Learning
Travel & Friendship

LIFETIME LEARNING INSTITUTE NORTHERN VIRGINIA

FAIRFAX ART LEAGUE
https://www.fairfaxartleague.net/

Led by Mark Geiger, local artist https://www.marksdclandscapes.com/

https://fairfaxartleague.net contact or 1fairfaxartleague@gmail.com

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Hands-on Demonstration for Prospective Watercolor Enthusiasts

- Objective- Learn some basic watercolor techniques and leave with a small painting
- Steps:
- Preparing the paper
- Quick sketch to outline the subject
- Selectively mask areas to be lighter colors (example clouds in the sky)
- Washes to add color to broad areas
- Color mixing
- Adding selective details
- Removing the mask and adding minor details

Water Color
Advantages/ characteristics of the media

Characteristic	Advantages	Limitations
Cost	Low cost (relative to oil or acrylics)	Higher costs for mounting/ framing than oil or acrylics
Portability	Easy traveling	
Color intensity	Can get strong colors	Sometimes a challenge
Speed	Fast outlines and composition	My be hard to re-work
Reworking	At least you get finished (can rework oil "forever")	Can be difficult
Progression	Light to dark	Can be "challenging" to think in reverse Hard to fix errors/omissions
Permanence	100+ years with good paper and proper preservation	Oils and sculpture can last "forever"
Unpredictability of water flow	Can be used for special effects	Some special effects aren't desired and are hard to fix

Preparing the Paper
One technique for creating a small painting ready to mat and frame

- Use a pre-cut watercolor mat to outline the size picture desire
  - Selecting a standard size eliminates the need for later mat cutting
- Need to use a small piece of paper or block (pad) of paper to avoid wrinkling and buckling
- Tape around the mat size with architect's (peel-away) tape
- Tape the paper to a larger drawing board
  - (Larger watercolor paper will require pre-wetting and shrinking (drying) to maintain tension and avoid wrinkling and bucking).

- Paint the picture

- When done with the painting, peel away the tape
  - You will have a picture suitable for matting and framing
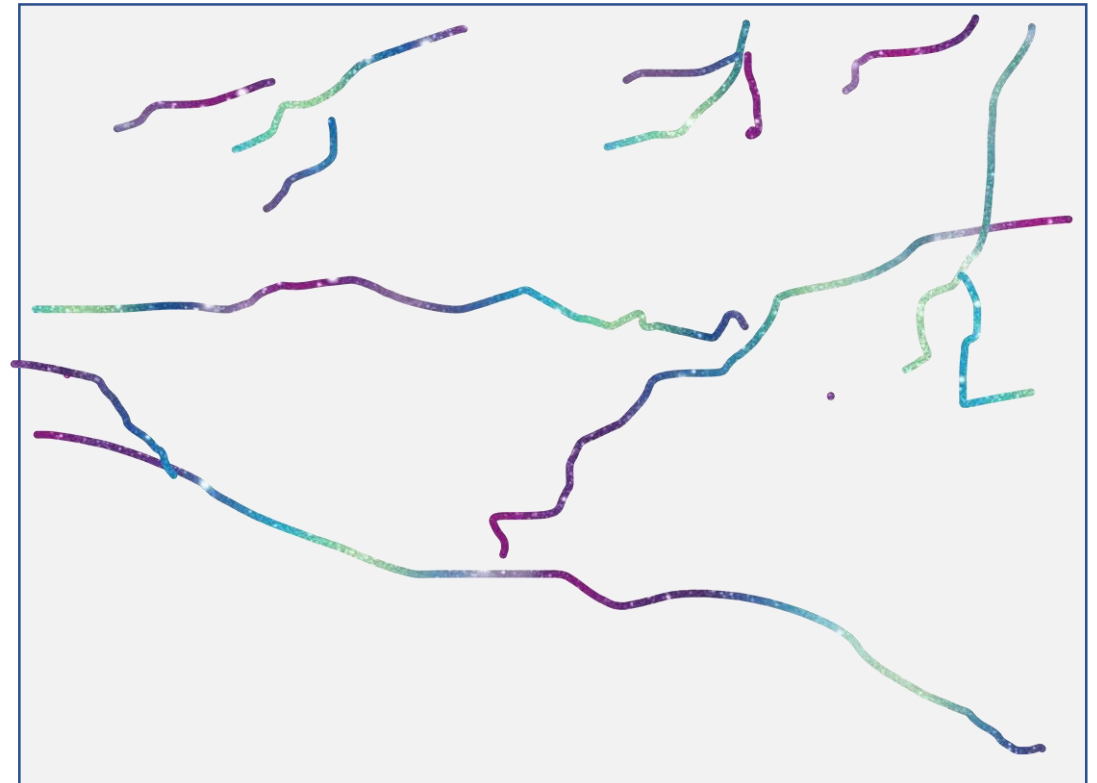 - No need for custom matting and framing

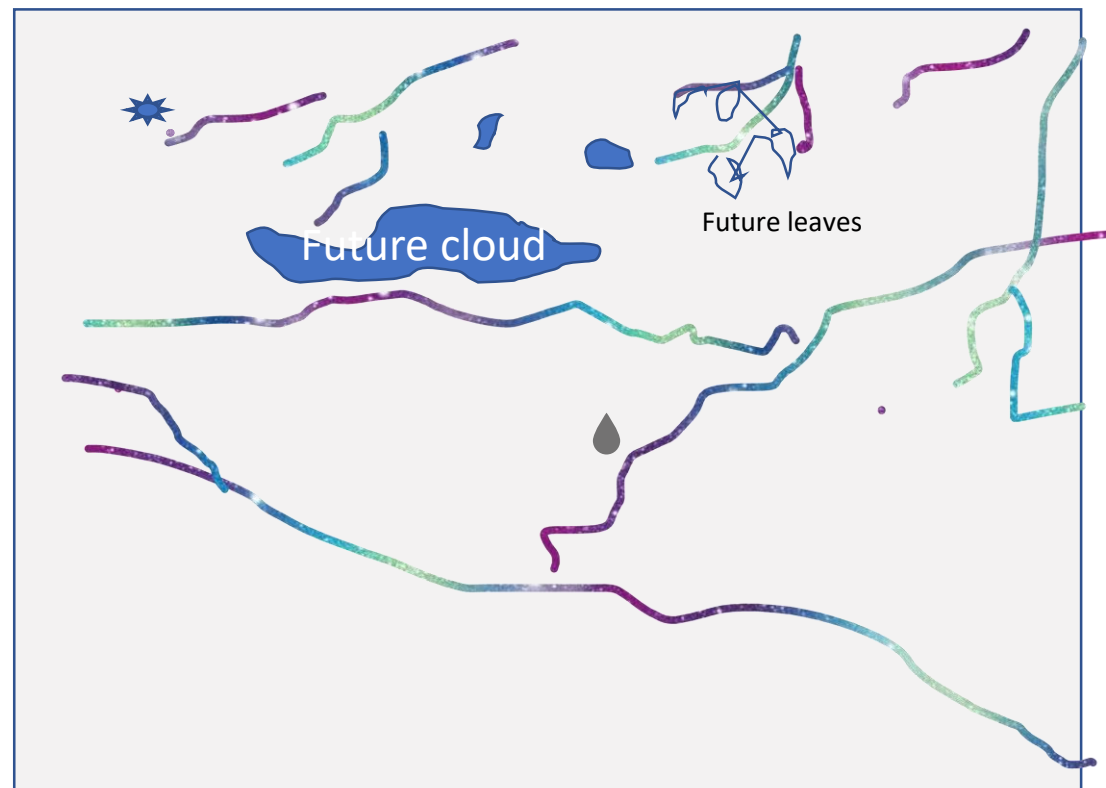# Quick sketch to outline the subject

Possible approaches

1. Outline basic shapes

2. Decide which details you <u>don't</u> need!

Bing images – location details under notes

Possible masking of light color objects

Future cloud

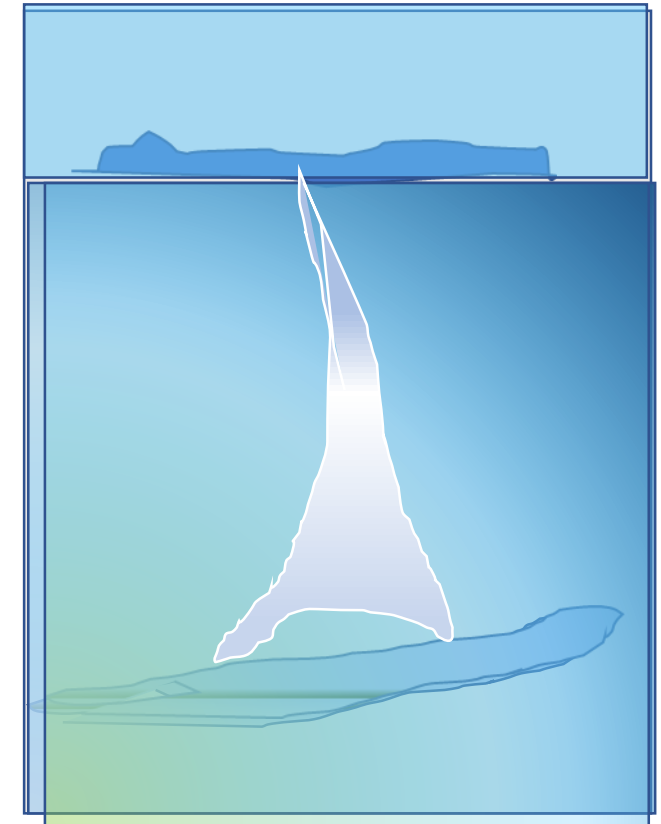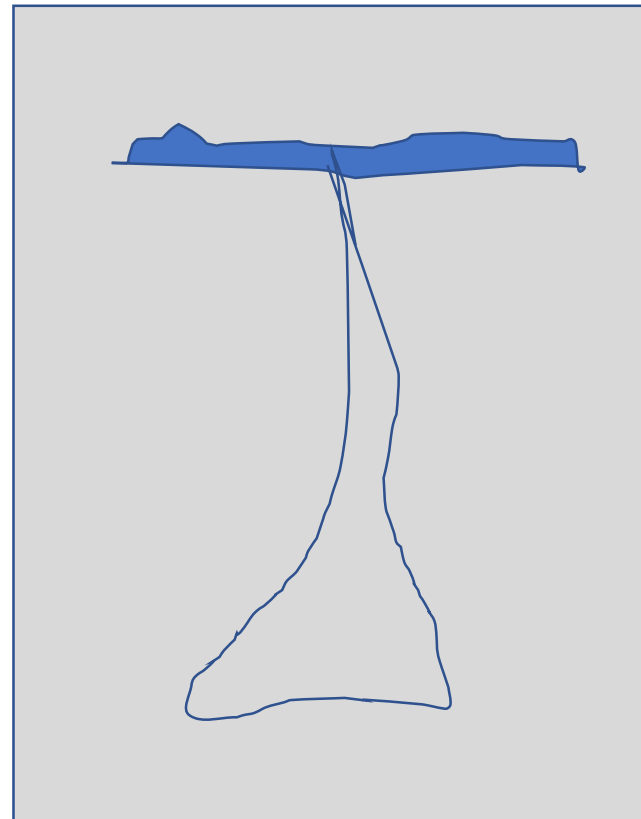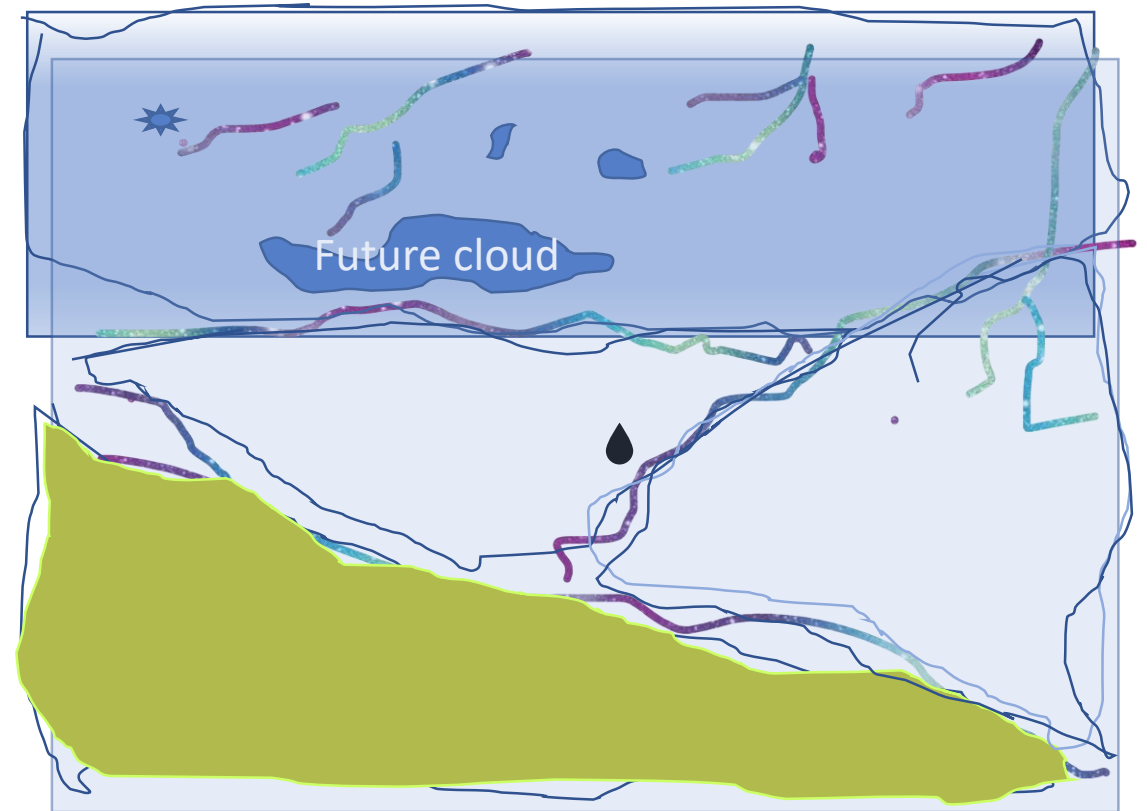Future leaves
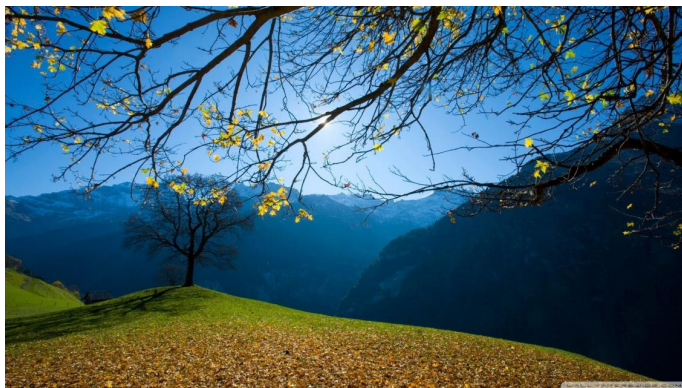
Some approaches to composing a scene

Describe broad shapes, mask light areas, graded washes

Washes to outline basic shapes

Future cloud

Demonstration - Exercise – Washes

- Color mixing by successive transparent washes

- Graded washes to create a sky

- Clouds (or other white spots) created by
  - Preliminary masking
  - Blotting wash with cotton swabs while wet
  - Color addition after laying on washes

Washes and Shapes

Artist: Hari Mitrushi
Title: Provocative
Year: 2006
270 W x 210 H x 25 D (mm)

https://www.absolutearts.com/watercolor/hari_mitrushi-provocative-1174131872.html
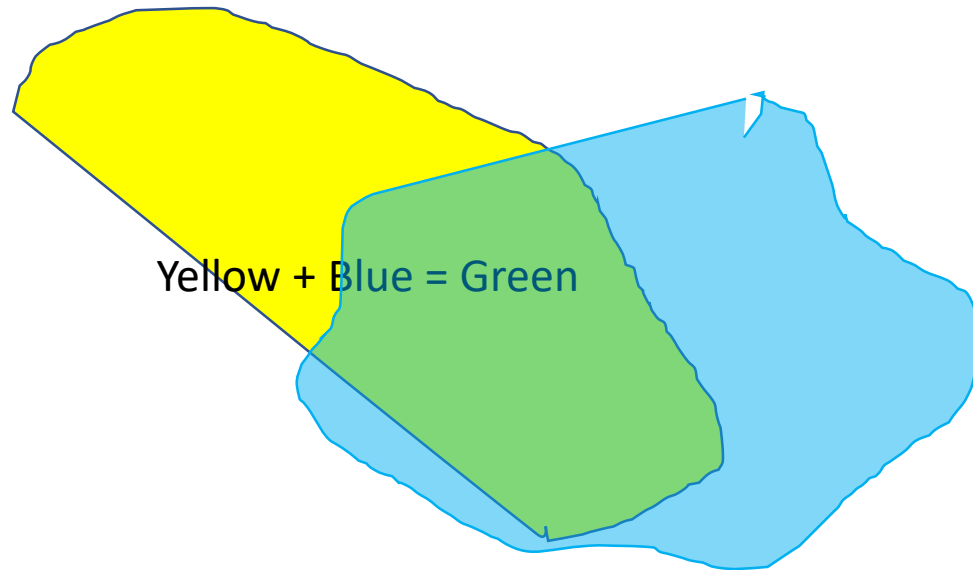
Multiple washes combined, with imagination, to make shapes

Multiple shapes combined, with your imagination, to be provocative

Color mixing

On the paper with light washes

Add the lightest color first

Yellow + Blue = Green

In a shallow container

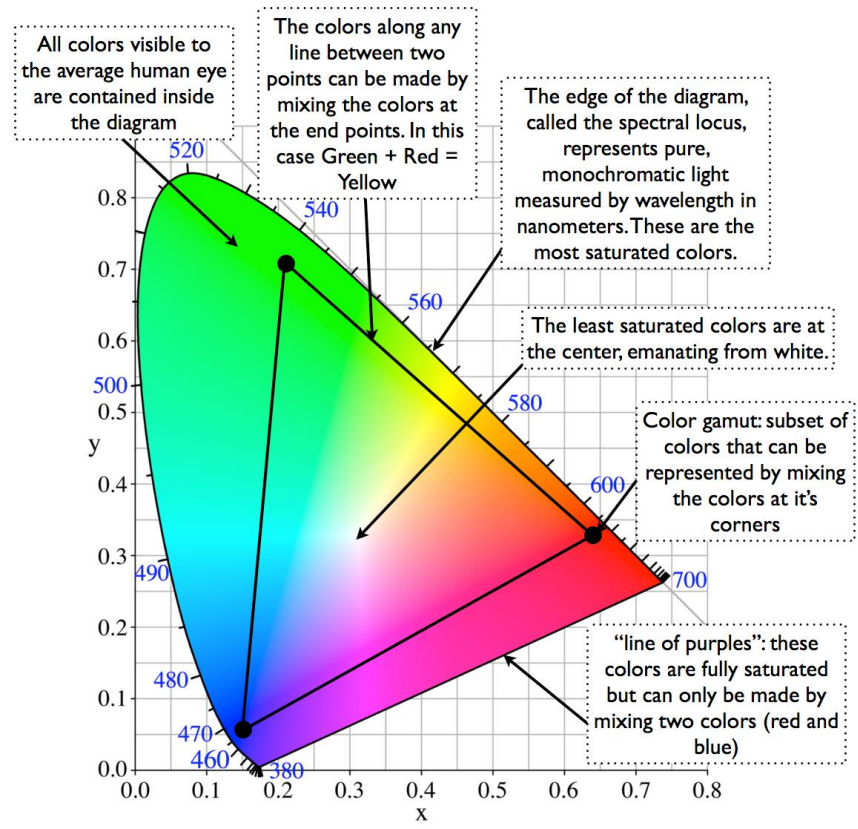**Consider a test on a separate piece of paper**

Mix here

Test here if desired

Paint here

Blending and variation is good!
You're painting nature which has variation, not the wall of a room

Use of the color wheel

Anatomy of a CIE Chromaticity Diagram

Color Wheel
Mixtures of Reflected Light

Primary colors

Secondary colors
Mixtures of primary colors

Tertiary colors

Pure Hues and Mixtures from a Color Wheel

Color wheel
Reflected versus Source Spectrum
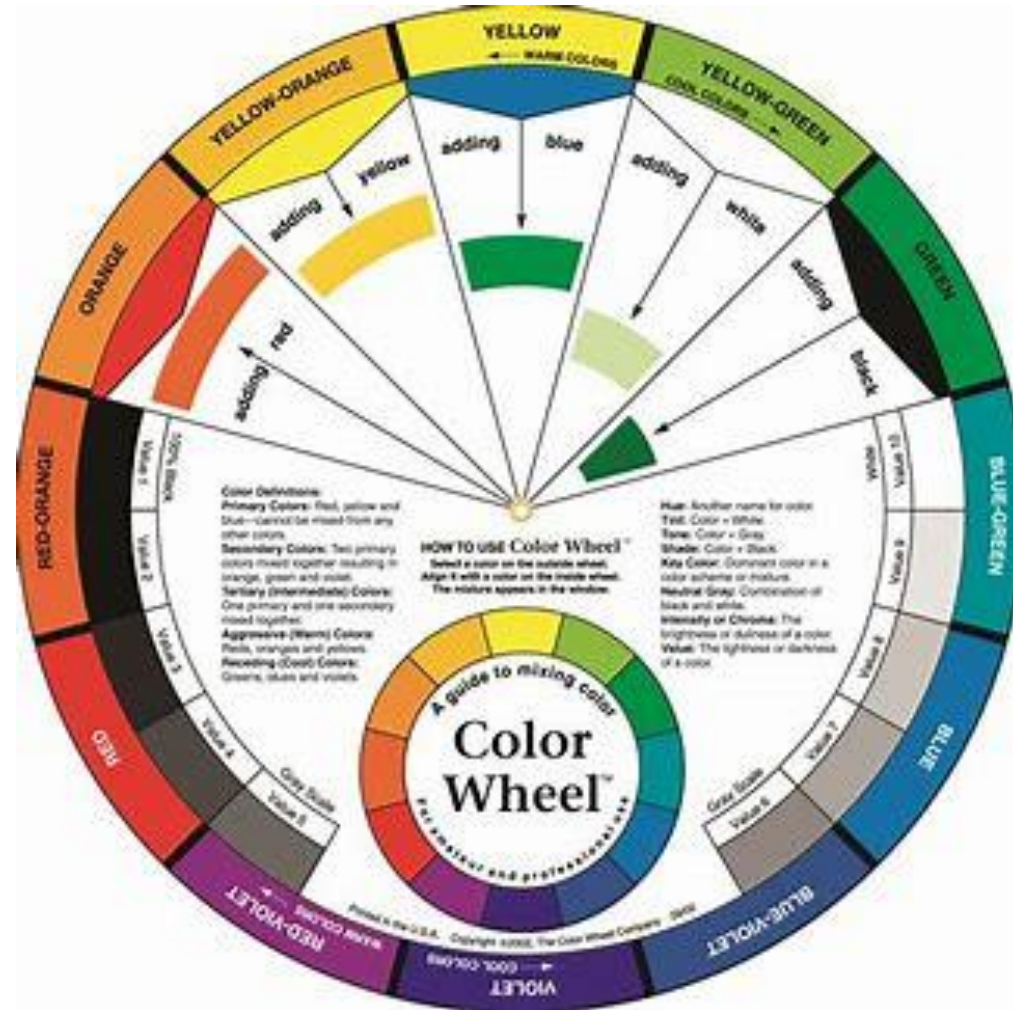
Application and Possible Exercise for Home

- Mix colors to develop a color wheel

- Mix complementary colors to "soften" or darken pure colors
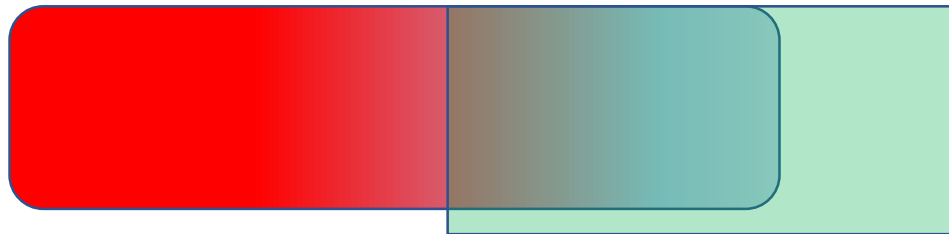
Composition
Emphasis- Sky or Land

2/3

1/3

1/3

2/3

1/2

1/2 Generally avoid
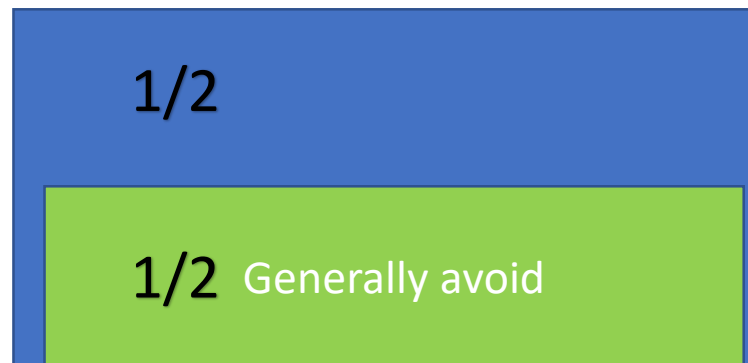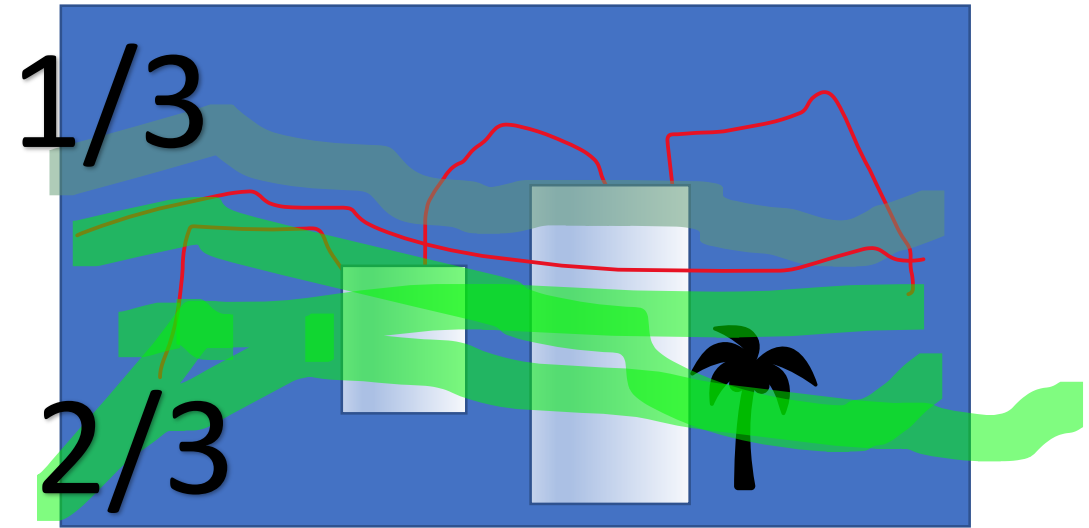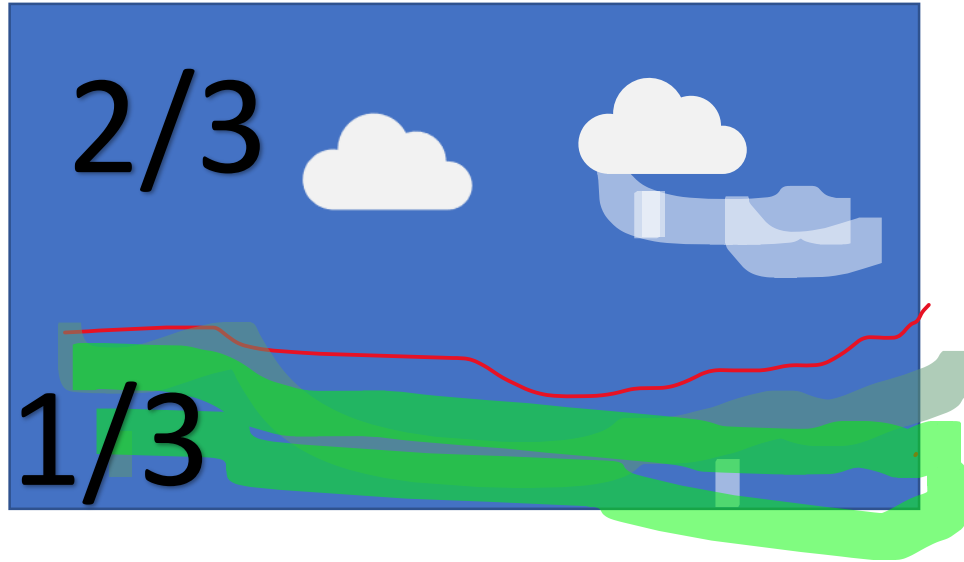
Masking

- Think in reverse- blank spots first!

- Complete the rest of the painting

- Return and remove masking
  - Rubber mask remover

- Add detail/ highlights to white areas
  - Especially important for clouds which aren't all white

Adding Details

Prior steps

- Selectively mask areas to be lighter colors (example clouds in the sky)
- Washes to add color to broad areas
- Color mixing

Almost finished!

- Adding selective details
- Removing the mask and adding additional minor details

Some Additional Techniques
(time permitting)

Technique	Description	Possible Applications
Dry brushing	Brush with thick paint Commonly a brush with thick bristles	Add texture (example tree trunks) Add detail
Sponging	Use a sponge (preferably a natural sponge) to add texture and variation when details would be overwhelming	Masses of foliage Rockface
Splattering	Add highlights in a semi-random way	Variation and highlights through a broad area
Stippling	Select pointillism details	Carefully applied highlights – moss, butterfly wings

Dry brushing techniques
details and highlights

Sponging –conveys variated masses

Splattering
Jackson Pollock and followers

Randomness while maintaining composition

Focused application or widespread effects

Stippling

- In a drawing or painting, the dots are made of pigment of a single colour, applied with a pen or brush; the denser the dots, the darker the apparent shade— or lighter, if the pigment is lighter than the surface. This is similar to—but distinct from— pointillism, which uses dots of different colours to simulate blended colours.

Too many details? Approaches to simplifying

- Dry brush,
- Sponging,
- Splattering,
- Stippling,
- Masking

https://www.loc.gov/item/thc1995011655/PP/

Additional information for converted enthusiasts

Common Picture Frame and Mat Sizes

Frame and Mat Size (inches)	Inner Mat Size (suggested opening) (inches)	Notes
5-7	3-5	Fits 3.5 x 5.5 or 4 x 6 picture
8-10	4.5 x 6.5	Fits 5" picture
11-14	7.5 x 9.5	Fits 8 x 10 picture
16-20	10.5 x 13.5	Fits 11 x 14 picture
18 x 24	14 x 20	2" border around mat
20 x 24	15.5 x 19.5	2" border around mat

https://matdesigners.frameusa.com/pages/opening
Also see www.frameUSA.com

Additional Supplies and Materials

Brushes

- Most basic: 1 inch flat and round number (#) 4 brush

- Medium budget: ½ inch flat, rigger (thin named for the use of painting ship's rigging), Round (pointed at the end) #4 or # 6 size and a fan brush

- Additional brushes to be considered: ¼ inch flat brush,

- Additional round brushes #1, #2, #8

Additional supplies:

- Color wheel

- Pallet (typically plastic with multiple wells and central area for mixing paints)

- Liquid mask (comes in white or slightly colored) and low-cost brush for application and gum eraser for removal

- Architects (white) tape – can be removed after use as a border or for local area masking (painter's tape also works)

- Paper towels (Bounty® or higher grade such as the blue towels sold in auto repair shops

- Sponge -natural sponges are best

- Toothbrush

- Plastic palette knife

- Two containers for water (wash and rinse) each about 8-16 oz. capacity (also a sealable quart container for outdoor work)

- Later- easel –table easel for inside, portable easel for outside – folding (camp chair)

Paints

You may wish to use either paint in tubes or pan paint (More portable and usable on-location)

Most Basic	Additional Paints for slightly higher budgets	Additional paints (to be considered)
Alizarin crimson	Antwerp blue	
	Burnt sienna	Burnt umber
	Cerulean Blue	Hooker's green
	Naples Yellow	
Prussian Blue	Payne's Grey	New Gamboge
Cobalt Blue	Permanent Mauve	Permanent Rose
	Permanent Sap Green	Raw umber
Windsor Red	Sepia	Ultramarine Blue
Winsor Yellow	Viridian Green	Windsor Orange
	Yellow Ochre	

Rapid drawings for scene layout
Sandra Gobar

https://sand-warren-gobar.com/home.html

1 One minute- preliminary sketch

2 45 Second quick look

3 15 second gesture (no kidding)

4 30- 45 Second quick look (only look at the scene)

5 One minute- final sketch

Two Stage Watercolor Painting

Stage 1

- Take photos for later reference
- Quick drawing- composition in a hurry
- Preliminary water color – relatively small size
  - Mount paper to size for matting and framing
    - The preliminary might become a "final"
  - Preliminary pencil drawing or light brush outline
  - "Draft" watercolor focusing upon color and composition

Stage 2

- Mount paper to size for matting and framing
- Preliminary drawing – fairly detailed
- Preliminary masking, if needed. (Example clouds)
- Washes to layout composition
- Detailed painting
- Remove masking
  - Finish details- example shade clouds
- Final details- some may be completed at home

Paper and Drawing Boards

- Paper- 140-pound cold press or 90-pound hot press (minimum suggested weight) in sheets or blocks.

- Full-size paper sheets are 22 by 32 inches, but large sheets are often folded and cut before use. (Also available are Elephant is 29 x 41 inches and Double elephant is 40 x 60 inches).

- Alternative to stretching and fussing
  - A block contains multiple sheets and is glued on all four sides.
  - Available in multiple common sizes
  - Travels well (no muss or fuss on-site)

- Buy quality 100 percent cotton (rag) paper because it lasts longer, reacts better to water and responds effectively to varied techniques.

- Drawing board -large enough for 22 x 32 -inch paper -which will be mounted onto this board.

- Most boards have clips to secure paper.

Review: Techniques to consider when the details are overwhelming

- Washes- combine to make colors and shapes
- Dry brush,
- Sponging
- Splattering
- Stippling
- Masking

Back-up Slides

Matting and Framing
Setting up for success and low costs

- Information Sources
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mat_%28picture_framing%29
- How to cut a mat, on U-tube
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BHWJoddPvsw
- Most popular frame sizes
- https://www.frameusa.com/blog/most-popular-picture-frame-sizes/
- Common commercial sources
- https://matdesigners.frameusa.com/standard-mats
- Frames organized by opening size
- https://www.michaels.com/frames/shop-by-opening-size/850265988
- https://matdesigners.frameusa.com/pages/opening

Color Theory

- https://en.ikipedia.org/wiki/Additive_color
- Additive color
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grassmann%27s_laws_(color_science)
- CIE color space https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CIE_1931_color_space

Color theory as related to water color history Resources

- http://www.arthistory.net/watercolor/
- What is Watercolor? A brief look at this luminous fine art medium
- Pamela Michaelis, http://www.collectorsguide.com/fa/fa043.shtml
- U-tube
- https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=history+of+watercolor+painting&view=detail&mid=17BF54F97BAF89022B6417BF54F97BAF89022B64&FORM=VIRE
- https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=history+of+watercolor+painting&&view=detail&mid=EF662E5B162792E7B48CEF662E5B162792E7B48C&rvsmid=17BF54F97BAF89022B6417BF54F97BAF89022B64&FORM=VDRVRV
- https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=history+of+watercolor+painting&&view=detail&mid=EF662E5B162792E7B48CEF662E5B162792E7B48C&rvsmid=17BF54F97BAF89022B6417BF54F97BAF89022B64&FORM=VDRVRV

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- Pamela Michaelis, http://www.collectorsguide.com/fa/fa043.shtml
- U-tube
- https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=history+of+watercolor+painting&view=detail&mid=17BF54F97BAF89022B6417BF54F97BAF89022B64&FORM=VIRE
- https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=history+of+watercolor+painting&&view=detail&mid=EF662E5B162792E7B48CEF662E5B162792E7B48C&rvsmid=17BF54F97BAF89022B6417BF54F97BAF89022B64&FORM=VDRVRV
- https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=history+of+watercolor+painting&&view=detail&mid=EF662E5B162792E7B48CEF662E5B162792E7B48C&rvsmid=17BF54F97BAF89022B6417BF54F97BAF89022B64&FORM=VDRVRV