

WATERCOLOUR ONLINE *with* **SZCZEPAN URBANOWICZ** *for* **ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS** **(6 WEEK COURSE)**

TEACHING APPROACH

This ONLINE 6-WEEK course is designed to teach you all the fundamentals of watercolour painting. Over six weeks we will tackle each aspect to painting watercolours in a logical sequential way. From understanding all the basics of choosing the right materials to understanding the nuances of the techniques – you will get a good grasp of what watercolours is all about.

TYPICAL 6 WEEK PROGRAM

WEEK 1

- teaching you the fundamentals behind the papers, paints and brushes
- teaching the fundamentals of how we use “time” and “gravity” alongside pigment loading and saturation – 4 principles of watercolour
- understanding tone by doing a tonal study of a colour in bands
- getting you straight into painting in single monochromatic simple washes, graduated washes and variegated washes
- teaching and using some basic watercolour techniques (graduated washed, dry brush, wet on wet etc) and practicing the “two clouds” exercise “wet-on-wet clouds”
- dropping in colours – wet on wet

WEEK 2

- “dry-brush clouds” exercise
- Graduated wash exercise
- FIRST PAINTING – Sunset scene

WEEK 3

- “dry-brush clouds” exercise
- Variegated wash exercise
- SECOND PAINTING – dark clouds beach scene

WEEK 4

- “dry-brush clouds” exercise
- THIRD PAINTING – landscape scene using wet-on-wet & dry-brush (lake)
- learning about “leaving the white”, about the importance of focal points for composition and their relevance to colour contrasts.

WEEK 5

- “dry-brush clouds” exercise
- FOURTH PAINTING – landscape scene
- Further experimentation with a broad range of brush techniques.
- exploring ideas around colour, value and transparency.

WEEK 6

- “dry-brush clouds” exercise
- Wet-on-wet practice – 2 exercises
- FIFTH PAINTING – gentle water and reflections scene

TEACHING EXPECTATIONS

MY ONLINE classes DO NOT teach you to draw and they DO NOT teach you colour theory. I DO however teach you some basic ground rules how to approach both drawing and colour theory. **However, the main focus of the classes is to paint with watercolours and it is my expectation that students will leave at the end of 6 weeks with a good grounding of the basics of watercolour and have enough understanding to enable them to develop further with a renewed confidence in the medium.**

MATERIALS

I DO NOT MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS – but I do suggest you buy the best you can afford.

Have a look at the information contained further down in this document and make sure you are aware of the reasons behind why I prefer to paint with certain paints, papers and brushes. I don't want you to rush out and spend \$1000 on painting gear....however, if you feel you are interested in pursuing watercolour with some commitment then over time you may find buying the right gear will actually save you money in the long run.

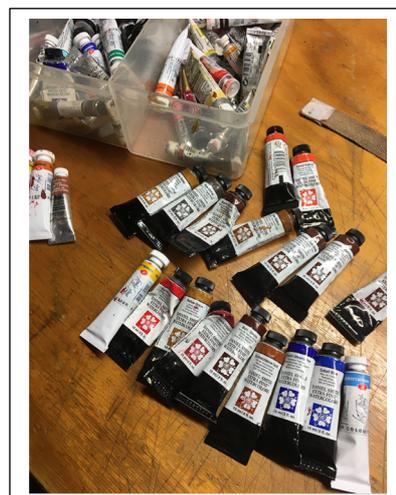
The key word with materials is ‘consistency’ and ‘predictability’. These are key to developing your skill in watercolour painting and the best way to do this is to work with quality gear. This means quality paints, paper and brushes.

The following information is of a general nature. It is intended as a bit of background as to why we use certain materials over others. It's a guide ONLY, and does not constitute a recommendation in any form. If anything, it's about the types of paints, papers and brushes I use for my watercolour painting.

PAINT

I use the following colours (to greater or lesser degrees) in my palette. I use a combination of Daniel Smith, Winsor & Newton and M.Graham colours. I do not use “Pan” style paints. The colours I tend to use are;

- Cobalt Blue
- French Ultramarine (Blue)
- Cerulean Blue
- Alizarin Crimson
- Burnt Sienna
- Viridian
- Pyroll Red (or similar)
- Yellow Ochre
- Cadmium Yellow (or similar)
- Quinacridone Red Oxide (an “exotic” I use occasionally)
- Pyroll Orange (or similar)
- Neutral Tint (I use it.....but rarely)



Many brands produce quality “tube” paints. Some of the better paints are Daniel Smith, Windsor & Newton, Schmincke Horadam, Daler-Rowney, Holbein, MaimeriBlu, Grumbacher, Da Vinci, M. Graham Artists & White Nights to name a few. Difference in quality, generally comes down to the amount of pigment contained in the paint and personal preference. “Professional” quality has generally more pigment in the paint than “student” grade. Both are acceptable and you will find very little difference in their intensity. Each brand will have different colours in their ranges and not all brands will carry the exact same tones. Preference is very much a personal thing along with price points.

PAPER

I use 100% cotton papers – “Rough” 185gsm or 300gsm paper.

I generally prefer 300gsm(thick) over 185gsm (thin) and “rough” in texture. This paper can generally be bought in block form. I buy large full-sheets in packs of 10 that can then be cut into smaller workable sizes.

Quality watercolour paper is also key. 100% cotton is PREDICTABLE. Any variation from this (ie. 25% cotton & harvested wood pulp mixes etc) means you end up working with an unpredictable surface that will absorb/repel water at differing rates generating unpredictable results. May also be “cold-pressed” – but not essential. “Medium” textured paper is still OK. Smooth, however is not useful because I cannot otherwise benefit from opportunities “rough” texture delivers when painting a “dry-brush” technique.

BRUSHES

I paint with “mop” style brushes. I use these because I paint in a much looser flowing style where I rely on delivering a lot of pigment/paint onto the paper in large amounts. Quality brushes will not only provide you with years of dependable service, but will be the means by which you’ll be able to define the strength and lightness of every stroke and gesture of your artwork. My classes will concentrate on covering large expanses of paper with rich pigment filled watercolour. The brushes we’ll use for this are called mops. Their design allows them to hold a lot of water. They have a point and are generally pretty round and robust. Traditionally made from natural fibres like sable, squirrel or goat hair, modern versions of these brushes are generally made from synthetic mixed fibres. These are OK, but often have a trade-off with more “memory”, which means the bristles return to their place a lot quicker than natural sable/squirrel hair brushes.

These again are very personal tools. Buy what you can afford – buy the best you can get. There are many types of brushes and we will go over each of these in the workshop.

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT WE USE WHEN PAINTING WATERCOLOURS

- Water container (minimum 1 litre)
- Soft rags
- Masking tape (2cm wide)
- A stiff backing board – generally slightly larger than your paper

- A paint mixing palette. Spend a bit of time looking for the right one as it will eliminate your frustration when mixing paints. Quite often shiny new plastic palettes promote the effects of “beading” on their mixing surfaces so this may require a bit of preparation before you actually put down paint for the first time.

- Soft 4B pencil and eraser (kneadable if possible)
- Notepad and pen (to take notes)
- A smartphone or iPad (to take pictures of our demo images or to electronically transfer images to your devices for ease of reference.

I attach a few pictures of my kit so you have an idea of what I use.

Here are the brushes I use. A wide assortment, however, I mainly use mops (red handled) in the middle of the shot.



Here is the palette I use. I mix all my colours in the 4 deep recessed mixing pans and the additional flat surfaces either side. Please note the colours I have. All the colours as noted in the above notes. I also have a few “exotic” colours that I use from time to time.

