

dolphin dreaming

13th January 2015
inspired Artspace, North WYong

workshop notes:

We started off the day by doing a large gradation. As well as being the background for the dolphins, it was also a good opportunity to move about and warm up our painting eyes and arms. We mixed a "Tropical Water" recipe of Pthalo Blue, Cadmium Yellow Light and White, and painted a band slightly above the centre of the canvas, to take up roughly a third of the painting.

Then we added more Cadmium Yellow Light and white, and painted a narrow band on the top and underneath the slightly darker/bluer band; and pulled them together smoothly.

We then repeated that process until we reached the top and the bottom of the canvas.

We put our canvases out to dry and grabbed some paper to investigate the shapes and anatomy of our dolphin subjects. We looked at the shapes of their dorsal fins, and tails.

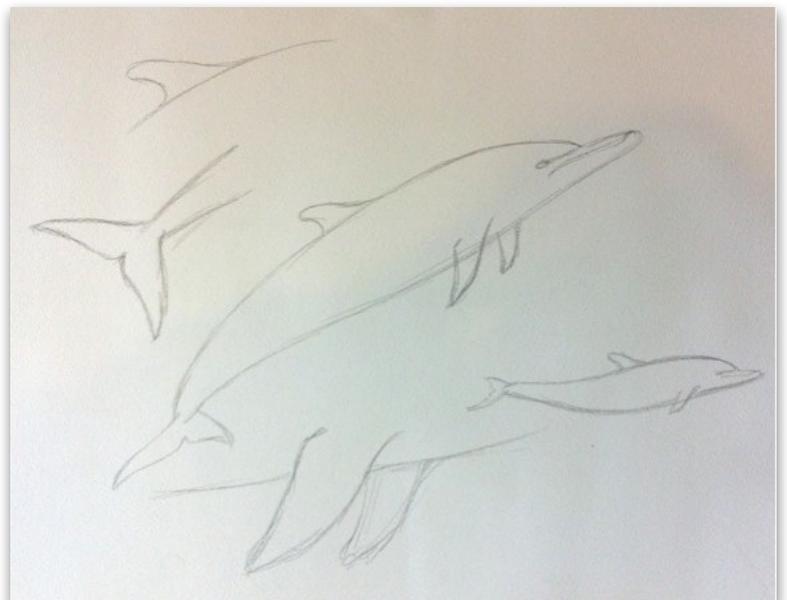
We got our paintings back in and using the same colours as we used in the water, but adding more Cadmium Yellow Light and White, we started adding refraction patterns to the substrate, using a loose, "rolly" technique with a small-ish chisel. Some of this refraction we added to the underside of the surface of the water, but just in horizontal lines here and there - a very dry brush and a very soft touch.

Now we chalked in our dolphins.

We established that water has a colour. And that the more water between us and the object we were looking at, the more that object would be affected by the colour of the water. In this case, our Tropical Water recipe as before.

We mixed up Burnt Umber, French Ultramarine Blue and White, and started painting the dark areas of our closest dolphins.

We then established our next colour, by adding White and a little bit of Burnt Umber to our previous colour, and



starting shaping the dolphins.

We repeated this process adding more White and Burnt Umber to create the highlights on the back, and give the dolphin some volume.

Once we've done this, we started to add in the dolphins in the background. Because there is more water between us and these dolphins, we added more "water colour" to our "dolphin colour" to create this illusion. The further we went from the viewer, the more this process increased, until eventually the dolphins furthest away were almost the same colour as the water behind them.



We repeated this same process to the highlights on each of the background dolphins. So in other words, each layer of highlight had the water colour added to it.

We then attempted to paint with a very dry brush, the shadows on the sand underneath the dolphin, using a mixture of Burnt Umber and Pthalo Blue.

Using the Tropical Water refraction colour from earlier, we created the illusion of light play on the backs of the dolphins. We added to this illusion by adding more White closer to the top of the dolphin to create the impression that the light was rolling brightly over the dolphin's back and diminishing down it's sides.

We cleaned our brushes, and with a very dry brush and white paint, created the illusion of rays filtering through the water. This put the dolphins *in* the painting, rather than *on* it. Mark demonstrated that this illusion could be exaggerated by using thinned Pthalo Blue, and using the same soft technique between the paler rays, they are then made stronger.

Finished. Yay, dolphins!

Many thanks to everyone for
another fantastic day at
Inspired Artspace!



For support material about what you learnt on the weekend, check out these pages:

www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/ocean-landscapes.html
www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/color-mixing-guide.html
www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/perspective-in-painting.html
www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/how-to-paint-water.html
www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/painting-waves.html
www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/gradation.html
www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/brush-technique.html
www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/acrylic-glazing.html

Please subscribe to [Acrylics Anonymous](#) if you haven't already done so!!!

and check out these video clips! (subscribe to our [Youtube channel](#) for all the latest clips):

How To Paint Tropical Water - Paint Recipes:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vH8xAeu6njY>

Brush Technique:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icWYYJHJFVc>

How to Paint Water - Refraction:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xzCGPAUXJ0g>

Acrylic Painting Techniques - Glazing:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spJETxwJsdk>

For more dolphin painting fun, check out our downloadable tutorial V-Log "Dolphin Family - Underwater":

www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/dolphin-family-underwater-v-log.html