

Whale of a Time

June 2014
North Wyong

Workshop Notes

We leapt right into this workshop by prepping up a canvas with a reddish pinky ground, and using chalk, we investigated the “elements” of a whale.

We dissected a whale, and broke it up into fins, flippers, body, throat etc.

We drew the tail so we could understand the shape of it and the way that it fitted onto the whale. We then looked at the pectoral fins, and investigated the shape of them, and also discussed how flexible they were.

We had a good look at the “throat” of the whale, and observed the “pleats” in its throat, which allow it to expand and contract. We also noticed that whales are quite badly battered by their life in the ocean i.e. covered in barnacles and scratches from being close to their friends who are also



covered in barnacles!

Chalked in our whale and placed our flippers and tails exactly where we wanted them. We discussed that the whale's tail was further away, and therefore would have more water between us and it.



Water has a colour, therefore we had to create the illusion of the tail being further away.

We broke the colour of the whale into 3 increments (to create illusion of depth). We started first with the tail (and coming up the body a little), using French Ultramarine Blue, a little bit of Pthalo Blue, a little bit of Burnt Umber and White. We added more Burnt Umber and painted the tail and torso area.



We eventually added Dioxazine Purple and Burnt Umber to warm up the closest part of the whale, the nose and throat. Then we broke those three increments of colour up, and added White to each one (to create the impression of the sunlight hitting the upper surfaces of the whale).

Mixing as darker colour as possible (using Dioxazine Purple, Burnt Umber, touch of Pthalo Blue), we painted in the throat lines, and eye. We then painted the white parts. These are scars, barnacles, and markings on the tail and body that are unique to each whale. We added Pthalo Blue to the marks that were furthest away, to push them away. We added less Pthalo Blue to the white markings that were closer. Then we added highlights with a very very thin glaze of almost pure white to create the pleated throat look.

We painted the nodules on the nose and the detail around the eyes, and added highlights.

The next step was to represent the light play on the back of the whale. We used the refraction pattern to help shape him or her.

We mixed a glaze of Pthalo Blue, and applied it under the throat and on the tail to push the deeper bits even further away. This was done very thinly and we built up the glaze slowly, with multiple coats.

We mixed Cadmium Yellow Light with a touch of Pthalo Blue and glazed over the refraction pattern around the middle of the whale. We eliminated almost all the



Pthalo Blue, and added more of the Cadmium Yellow Light to the upper part of the whale.

We then painted the nearest flipper. This was almost pure white. We used Pthalo Blue to create depth & shape in them and almost pure White to bring any lumps forward.

We painted in the water.

The process started as painting a band about a third of the way up the painting (using a mixture of Pthalo Blue, French Ultramarine Blue & White), and then mixed Pthalo Blue, a miniscule touch of Cadmium Yellow Light, and White. We painted this in a band either side of the first one, and blended the bands together. From there, we added more Cadmium Yellow Light and White, and repeated the process either side of the last two applications.

This process happened until the painting was completely covered. When we painted around the whale, we left flecks of the red underpainting showing here and there.

We then represented surface. We did this by painting the sky (French Ultramarine Blue + White) shining through the top of the water. We added White as we moved into the top left corner, and then loosely added some greeny-gold outlines to our sky colour. Finally we added the refraction pattern on the sandy bottom to add to the illusion of depth.



Lastly we dragged a dry brush down & across our whale to create rays. We did this very very gently, using a very very dry brush and white paint. We repeated the process using Pthalo Blue, and dragged the brush upwards to reinforce the rays.

Done. One whale!



Thanks to everyone for a wonderful day on the
Central Coast!

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

www.coolwaterphoto.photoshelter.com/gallery/Humpback-Whale/G0000tFK2ptxFns/C00009wjSx5xhBUs

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

www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/shadow-painting.html

www.explore-acrylic-painting.com/support-files/aa013defaultsettingtropicalwater.pdf

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

We will have a new V-log coming out soon - very exciting! A dolphin family tutorial! This is a lovely muted and moody underwater scene. Let me know if you're interested in pre-ordering a copy of this!!

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

Painting Waves - Perspective in Whitewash:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDvlwo_e9JI

Acrylic Painting Techniques - Reflections in Whitewash:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUDJHY9h9fA>

Brush Technique:

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

How to Paint Water - Refraction:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xzCGPAUXJOg>

Acrylic Painting Techniques - Glazing:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spJETxwJsdK>

