

Language of Color

Patterns of Light +Shadow

This lesson is for intermediate and advanced painters. This piece has some lovely opportunities to create something of merit from little or nothing! It's definitely one of those drive-by photos, but it does have some great patterns of light and shadow. I really exaggerated the color on this one. You can do the same or keep it more faithful to the reference. I recommend following along for a first try, then using one of the alternate reference photos to do a second piece using the same steps; just applying them to the alternate reference photo.

This is a two-part lesson. First a *Follow-Along Demo*. Follow along at your own pace but remember my suggestions for time limits!

Next is an *Independent Assignment* meant to expand on some of the principles presented in the *Follow-Along Demo* and to personalize your work. When you have completed both parts you can upload one or both images to receive a personal video critique on your work. Remember that the more mileage you get, the more progress you make, so I recommend that you complete both parts before submitting your images.

Who it's for – This lesson is for intermediate and advanced painters.

What's it's About –Playing with light and shadow and what's happening on those edges!

Set a Personal Focus - Try to focus on just a couple aspects of the painting. For instance you might want to focus on being inventive with the sky color.

Set a Time Limit - Keep it simple and don't spend more than an hour and a half on it. If you find yourself spending two or three hours on it, it's time to STOP and try another version!

Materials

1. Your pastels
2. A 12 x 12 piece of sanded paper. I used Burgundy Colorfix for this lesson, but you could use a different color or different brand of paper if you like. Please use sanded pastel paper!

Extras:

1. Easel
2. Baby wipes
3. An apron

Part I

Follow-Along Demo

Before You Start, a Few Tips on Following Along

1. Stop the video whenever you need to – it’s one of the greatest things about learning this way. Plus you don’t need to take notes!
2. Don’t feel funny about copying my pieces! It’s a time - honored way to learn and I know you’ll develop your own “style” in due course. I give you lots of ways to take off on your own and expand on the demos/lessons.
3. Take your time, but not really! I want you to speed up a bit so you can start to develop the “whole” piece all at once.
4. Do it differently. If it feels uncomfortable, you’re likely on the right track.
5. Remember the three “P’s” Perfection, Procrastination, Paralysis. There is no such thing as a perfect painting, so don’t even worry about it.
6. If you have trouble ask for help! My team and I want you to have a great experience doing the lessons!!
7. There are 5 stages in each lesson. The beginning of each stage is a good time to pause the video, take a short break and check in on how you’re doing.

Part 2

Independent Assignment

Do another version from the alternate your own reference. Maybe this lesson calls for a little photo expedition! Look out for those patterns of light and shadow stretching to the horizon. This calls for early rising and well-timed evening outings. Take along your best friend and bundle up!

When You've Completed Both Part 1 & 2

When you're done, send me your image or images and I'll reply with a personalized video critique of your efforts! Just follow the simple directions on the site. I'm curious what you'll come up with!

The Stages (applies to both part 1 & 2)

1. Planning

- Crop your reference, (feel free to crop it just like mine or change it up a bit).
- Do a quick 5 to 10 minute thumbnail. This is a great way to get a feel for the piece and visualize the final version.

2. Drawing

- Scale up your thumbnail to the correct proportion **Watch my video on scaling a sketch!**
- Lightly sketch in the essential shapes
- Use your thumbnail sketch more than your photo reference at this point

3. Blocking In

- Establish the essential shapes of the piece, (3 to 5 largest shapes) Use the sides of the sticks)
- Establish the values of those main shapes. What is the overall or average value of each shape?
- Get a feel for how the piece works as a whole.

4. Adding On

- Add a variety of hues, and intensity to each shape.
- Add texture and smooth out gradations where needed. Watch my video **To Blend or Not to Blend.**
- Add a light source or direction of light.
- Add detail.

5. Finishing

- Resolve any areas that need attention or TLC.
- Slow down make color adjustments where needed.
- Go the extra mile and exaggerate contrast and intensity where needed. Give yourself permission to do this.