

Lesson #3

Simple Pleasures

KISS

(Keep it Simple, Sweetie)

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 a nice warm up for all levels! It's also a great beginner to intermediate lesson. It's a simple composition which gives you lots of opportunity to explore mark making and color in the large shapes. Follow along for a first try then complete some thumbnails from the additional reference photos provided. This is super good practice!

What's it's About – Keeping things simple and saying them simple. To capture the feeling of water and reflection, doesn't have to be too complicated.

Set a Personal Focus - Try to focus on just a couple aspects of the painting. For instance if you really are interested in color, focus on that and don't worry too much if you don't get the drawing exactly how you'd like it. Take it a step at a time!

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

Materials

1. Your pastels
2. An 12 x12 piece of Colorfix paper. I used Leaf Green for this lesson, but you could use a different color or different brand of paper if you like. Please use sanded pastel paper!
3. Sketch book and pencil or pen

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.

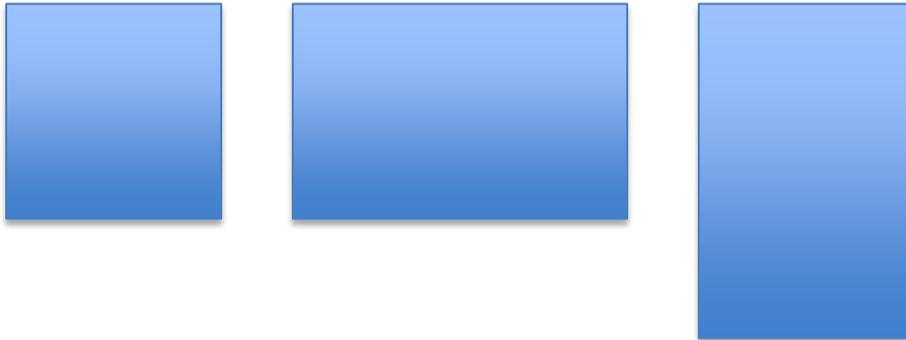
Simple Pleasures Notes: I tried to hone in on the parts of the reference photo that were essential to telling the story that I wanted to tell, so I eliminated the pathway on the left hand side. Cropping it to a square made the foreground shape pretty large, so you have to deal with quite a bit of area there. I kept this simple so that the focal point/area of interest keeps all the power.

Suggested Additional Videos: *Distilling & Simplifying, Seeing Value*

Part 2

Independent Assignment

Please take the time to do this part of the lesson! It will help to get you into the “thumbnail habit”! You want to have this habit, believe me! Once you do, you won’t ever turn back. Create a series of thumbnails from the additional reference photos provided or use your own. I suggest two versions of each photo; one square and one rectangle from each photo. If you get really ambitious, you could do a square a rectangle and a vertical rectangle.



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!

Next Up!

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

Try Lesson #4!

The Steps (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 Interest

- 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!