

Watercolor Painting Advice

A Natural for Surf

TIPS & TRICKS

- Give masking fluid time to dry
- Don't soak your paper by over-spraying
- Use a color wheel for help choosing a good triad of colors
- Think scale – the largest wave should be the closest
- Alternating light and dark tones adds to the sense of depth

Tom says:

"The water and the paint will work for you if you allow it. Try not to over-manipulate the wet areas of impasto. They will give you gifts if you let them."

As you might expect, watercolor is a natural medium for painting water. And watercolor impasto gives you the added bonus of helping to create great surf effects. If you like to paint seascapes, give these ideas a try:

- First, plan your painting -- where do you want the waves to fall against the land? That's where you'll want to let more of the white paper show through. You can do this by dry-brushing liquid masking fluid in this region.

- Then, spray that area lightly with water. Follow that by using a toothbrush to splatter masking fluid into the sprayed area. This will give you a pattern of whites similar to the foam and spray of a breaking wave.

- On your palette, put three dabs (a triad) of watercolors next to each other, straight from the tubes. When the masking fluid is dry, spray the paper again and immediately apply the three colors, or triad, with a palette knife to the area below the curl of the wave. With all three colors on the knife, move it quickly like you're spreading soft butter on



toast. Moving in a downward arc gives an intermingling of colors on the paper.

- Paint the sky from the top down stopping just short of the top of the waves. Let the water and the paint do their work as they create interesting runs and patterns.

In the painting above titled "Feeding Gulls" (courtesy of the Gallery on Bridge Street, Arroyo Grande, CA.), I also used Dr. Martin's Bombay Turquoise Blue Ink (see the Fall Newsletter for more details on using waterproof inks). When the ink dried, I went back in

and and applied colors and details to the birds and the water ripples in the foreground.

I like the way this gives a sense of scale to the crashing waves and gives an additional feeling of movement in the shallow water on the beach. I could have added rocks, cliffs, driftwood or other objects that add to the feeling of a seascape. The choice is up to you!

Painting Classes & Workshops

To learn more and to see me demonstrating this technique, I offer workshops and regularly teach classes in the

Colorado Springs area (check my 2009 schedule). My DVD videos are available by contacting the studio.

If you or your group is interested in hosting a workshop, please contact my studio via [Email](#)