



## WORKSHOP

# Travels Near and Far: Learning to Sketch on the Go!

**Instructor:** Winsor & Newton Resident Artist and Director of Education, Jimmy Leslie

**Skill Level:** Beginner to Novice

**Time:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 / 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

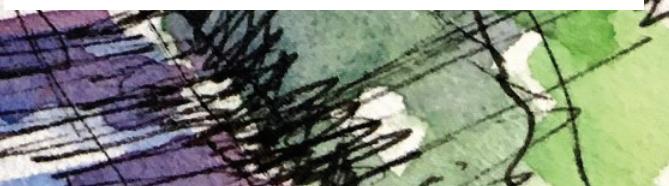


It's easy to feel overwhelmed in our fast-paced technology driven world. Creating a daily sketchbook practice can slow things down and bring a new appreciation to your surroundings, both near and far.

This workshop is aimed at providing tips and techniques for people who don't know where to begin and feel they don't have enough time or space to create art. These skills will translate from daily practice at home to travel sketching while on vacation.

Jimmy will share images from his sketchbooks and photos from travel for use during the workshop, as well as provide plenty of time for critiques and Q&A.

During the workshop we'll work in a round-robin fashion on four images, working first to build the composition in each image, then blocking in colors to final details.



### Why sketch?

- Small work can be done every day in short periods of time.
- Builds skill set through cumulative efforts; think visual exercise.
- Lots of quick sketching builds confidence and observation skills.

### Get to know your materials

- Color swatches for reference.
- Full strength and wash.

### Working from life

- See carefully rather than just looking.
- Consider your vantage point, high/low, left/right, etc.
- Consider format.
- Make quick value study thumbnails.

### Working from photo reference

- Shoot your own.
- Consider vantage point, format, etc. and shoot a lot.
- Keep a camera handy.\*
- Editing!

### Keeping it loose

- If you get the correct shape, value and color in the correct proportions the image will make itself.
- Squint your eye and draw/paint what you see rather than what you know.
- Simplify and work general to specific.
- Using the largest brush you can helps to stay simple and not get involved in details that aren't important.
- What to include/exclude: simplify non-essentials.



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## Getting Started

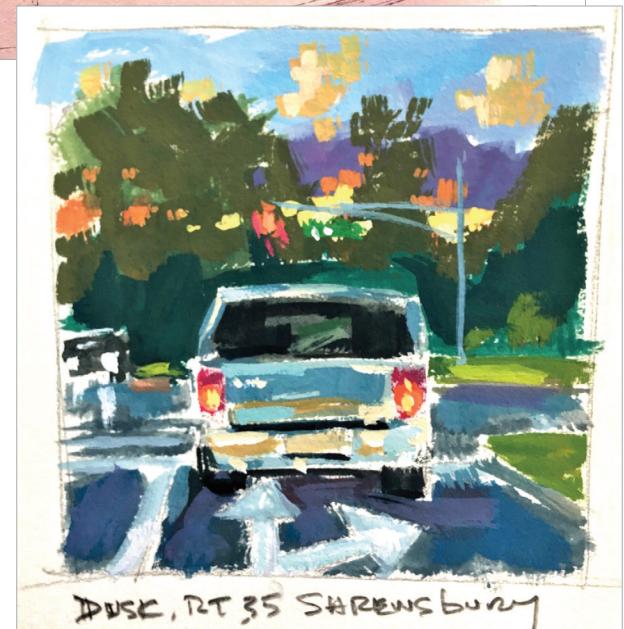
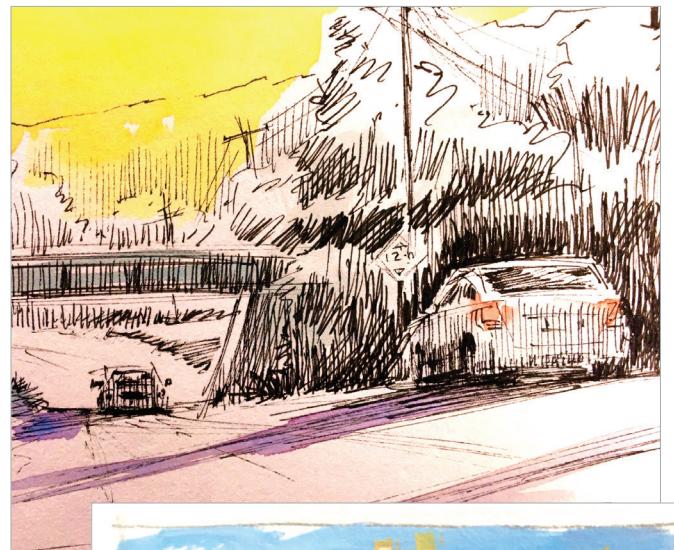
- Think highest/lowest, farthest left/right parameters.
- Look for horizon line, i.e. eye level.
- Line work: Contours, line width, dark/light, broken line, gestalt Kurt Koffka, "the whole is something else than the sum of its parts".
- Think about the Visual Elements of line, shape, form, color, value, texture and space and the Principles of Design of Balance, proportion/scale, rhythm/movement, emphasis and unity.
- Use these elements and principles to find focus and determine composition.
- What is of most interest to you?
- What about the image grabbed your attention? Don't lose sight of this.
- Let everything else be subordinate to your main point of interest.

## Paying attention to light and shadow

- Pen vs watercolor vs gouache and the various approaches.
- Squint and identify your lightest light and darkest dark and seek balance and pattern.
- Blocking in shadows.
- Identify temperatures which will inform color choices.

## Creating a border to frame your sketch

- Try starting with a border and decide what to include/exclude.
- Start with a thumbnail sketch and create a border after, deciding what to include/exclude.



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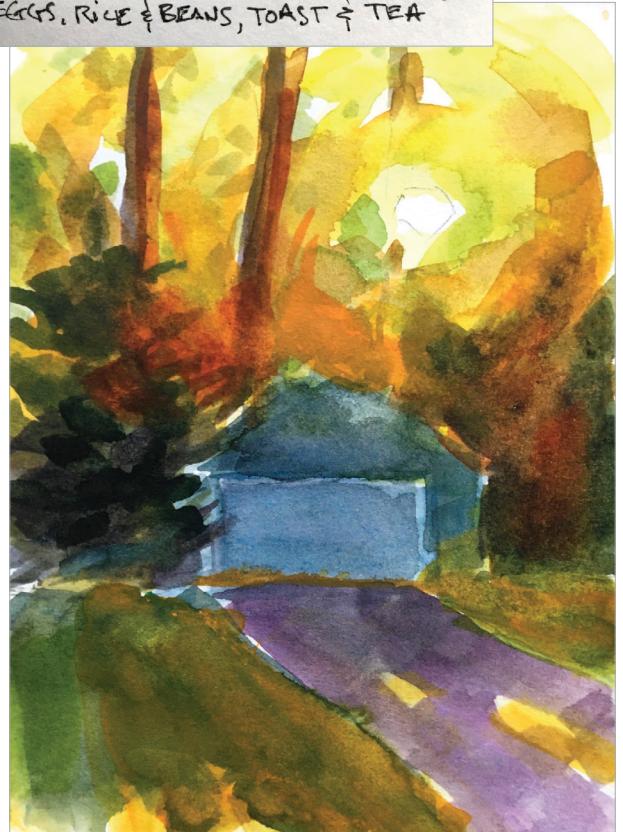
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### More about observation

- Don't look down at your surface too long. Your eye should be constantly moving back and forth between subject and surface to establish a visual connection.
- Pay attention to foreground, middle ground and background to establish depth.
- Keep things looser in the background with lighter line work, less detail and softer values.
- Notice silhouettes to help block in big forms and keep going back to the mantra of general to specific, realizing that you often don't need to get as detailed as you think you do. This is a great way to keep your image simple.
- Being aware of your whole composition keeps you from getting too involved in one area and overdoing it. Knowing when to stop can be tough otherwise, and the saying "simple isn't easy" comes to mind.

### Creating a daily practice

- Create a kit that is compact allows you to take just what you need so that it's not a burden to always have it with you.
- Realize that waiting for an appointment is an opportunity to sketch.
- If you only have three to five minutes and can't break out color, create a pen sketch with values and notations for where to add color later.
- Monochromatic studies are also a great way to work quickly.
- Stop judging yourself! Plenty of people will give unsolicited advice and judgement about your work so there's no need for you to add to it. Don't be so hard on yourself and your results.



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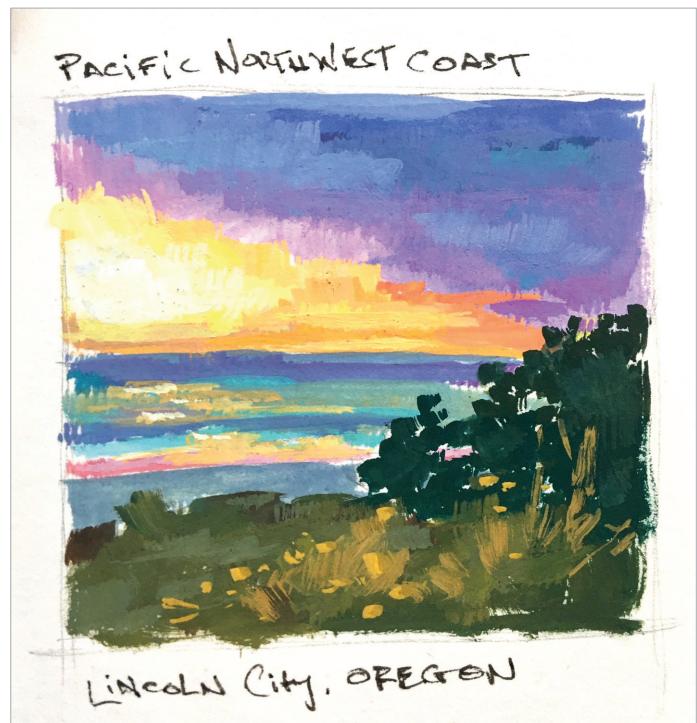
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**Experimenting and exploring**

- Vary your subjects from pure landscape to landscape populated with vehicles/people to interior spaces and still life. Everyone takes photos of their food these days, why not draw it?
- Sketching at sunrise and sunset also forces you to work quickly before the light changes. In these instances, get your composition set first and then capture the color instead of chasing light.
- Pay attention to relationships between one object and another. Where do they intersect one another? What is their height relationship?
- Start with a toned background. Color and texture can lead you to make choices you would have otherwise not thought of.
- Try splattering color to create energy, texture and movement.
- Work wet into wet to let colors react with one another in unexpected ways.
- Paint with a limited palette to help work quickly and not get overwhelmed
- Focus on a specific subject to get to know it better. Try variations of this subject over and over in different light, colors and approaches.
- Give yourself a specific time in which to finish your sketch.



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