

SKETCHING — IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER (2010)

A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A PERSONAL SKETCHING STYLE FOR STUDIO USE

- Sketch only what will go into the finished painting!!!!!!
- Establish the direction of the sun.
- Observe the “lights & darks” OBSERVE, OBSERVE, OBSERVE! the knowledgeable use of “lights & darks” in your sketch will add depth and vibrancy to the sketch and ultimately your painting.
- Notice, that by moving your angle of view that the scene changes. By lowering the angle, vertical objects in the foreground get higher and may cross the horizontal lines in the background...this can give added depth to a sketch. Cross lines rather than having them meet like a “T”.
- Look at the scene from many angles, to see if the original view cannot be improved upon.
- Look for “lines” that lead you “into” the sketch, that lead you “around” the sketch... beware of lines that lead the eye “out” of the sketch, if such lines exist “fuzz” them or make them indistinct. In general it is a horizontal line that does this. Cross it with a vertical line (tree) or a “smudge” (bush).
- Learn to develop a “shorthand” for the various trees, shrubs, light and dark patches, sky formation & colour that are used constantly in landscape painting.
- Concentrate on “thumbnail” sketches, smaller ones rather than filling a large page. Graduate to the larger sketches after you have been refining your technique. I use a 5” x 8” sketch pad for my field work, easier to manage!!!!
- Nature is not always perfect, sometimes it is preferable to omit or add objects in the landscape painting, to make it more appealing to the viewer..so it is not always necessary to paint exactly what you see... this of course is not true of a sketch that you may be doing for someone else, of a building or particular scene.
- The terms, “sweet spot” that part of the sketch that contains “the subject” and “quiet spots” those sections in the sketch where the eye can rest before moving on, are very relevant to the formation of a good compositional sketch / painting.
- Always carry your sketching materials with you!!!!...a handy item is a shoulder strap case (laptop computer case) use your gear!!!!

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