

<i>Painting Decisions</i>	<i>Reference Checks</i>
<p>*What am I painting?</p> <p>*Darks “Design “ look for simple patterns Letters of the Alphabet (C, H, T, U, O, Z, lazy “S”); Dog bone, Steelyard, Cruciform)</p> <p>*Value Study – 3 or 4 Values</p> <p>*Center of Interest (COI) = 25 – 30 % of support area, Lightest light, Darkest dark, Sharpest Edge.</p> <p>*High Key or Low Key? (Anything in the middle ie 50%-50% light vs dark will die an early death)</p> <p>*NEUTRALS: Establish your color harmony in the neutrals.</p> <p>*Finish with as few details as possible</p> <p>*EDGES: Sharp in COI, softer everywhere else.</p> <p>*VALUE: Check as you paint, especially towards completion, with a “Value Checker”. Get at Art Stores. “You can usually paint any subject with any color if the VALUE is correct.</p> <p>*HUE: This refers to “Color”. Breakdown primaries with lighter values of same. Ie. Ultra Marine Blue with “light blue” . Works in all media.</p>	<p>* FOCAL POINT (or Center of Interest) The focal point of your painting should be 25 to 30% of the area of your painting and should be “off center” to right, or to the left, or towards the top or towards the bottom. Never centered and never smaller or larger. Exaggeration in this area rarely contributes a pictures success. In fact this is one very big reason for paintings not being selected in juried events even though they be very successfully painted with excellent color, subject and value attributes.</p> <p>*DARKS Darks are the most important element in painting. Darks are one the element that unite paintings, and they are also a major reason that paintings get away from us when we aren’t looking when they are disjointed, unrelated and separated. This is the single most important element in understanding painting. Look past the subject matter see the darks push the dark patterns until they are interesting/exciting. Then move on to the intermediates and then the lights.</p> <p>*VALUE Never begin a painting without sitting down and laying out the basic shapes in 3 or4 values with pastel, conte crayon or magic marker. The size of this sketch should not much larger than 3” x 5”, a 35mm slide opening in a slide mount. 2” x 3” can also be used for Plein Air painting. This simply forces you to see shapes rather than things, Seeing the shapes of objects and things is the biggest challenge to get used to in our quest for successful paintings or painting in general, It makes no difference whether one is a representative or abstract painter or a photo realist in this regard.</p> <p>*MIRROR Have you ever completed a painting and wondered “.... Gee, I think it looks right but there is something that I can’t seem to put my finger on what might be a problem”? Just look at it in a mirror. For some reason, errors in composition, balance and rhythm have a way of exposing themselves when seen in reverse in a mirror. Always have a small compact mirror available for “over-the-shoulder” checking when you paint. Turning the painting upside down will also reveal painting difficulties as well.</p>

Typical Painting Problems

Over reliance on photographic reference

ONE-eyed Monocular vs Binocular

Contrast in the darks are over stated The darks are too dark with little or no detail

Lack of detail in the higher keyed "Lights"

GREENS

Remove all greens from your palette except Sap Green When you see "Green" Immediately go for one of 3 standard Palette Yellows to mix with one of the 3 standard Palette Blues

OVERDRAWING

Don't do it understand it and don't do it. It is however the natural thing in the world to do

CLEAN COLOR

Be conscience of "warm vs cool" Clean your equipment "Brushes, Palette etc." after completing each stage of the painting or "as often as necessary".

DESIGN FLAWS

Darks not unified

No established COI "What am I painting?"

THINGS vs THE SHAPE THINGS MAKE

Seen objects as "Shapes" not as what they are

Things to Strive for

Authenticity

Artist understands their strengths and weaknesses and has played to their strengths as to their "line", their comfort level with their sense of "value"; their sense of design and as to their sense of color. By definition they have not "copied" someone or something else.

Authority

Best described as painted or executed with "confidence" in the use of their chosen materials. They are not "timid" with their "line" or their "rhythm of application" or use of color.