

DATE WITH PAINT

NOTES FOR LESSON # 2.



LESSON 2: TOOLS R' COOL!

For this lesson, my goal is for you to begin to feel comfortable with your brushes, palette knives and other tools of the trade, and to adopt a posture of curiosity and exploration. In my opinion, childlike curiosity & fearlessness is the best way to approach art making. Unless we learn to let go of expectations & agendas, we will produce art that is less free and more stilted.

Think of two dancers... one that learned the steps and performs them well (one move followed by the next); the other that entrances us as they 'become' the dance and communicate emotions in a visceral, almost mystical way.

Now of COURSE we need to learn techniques and practice our craft, because in the end that gives us greater freedom to create without needing to overthink. But it is helpful to learn to reign in the analytical mind even in the beginning stages of painting so that you don't remain stuck painting from your head rather than your heart.

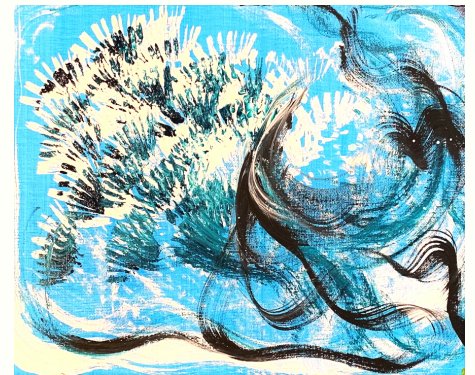
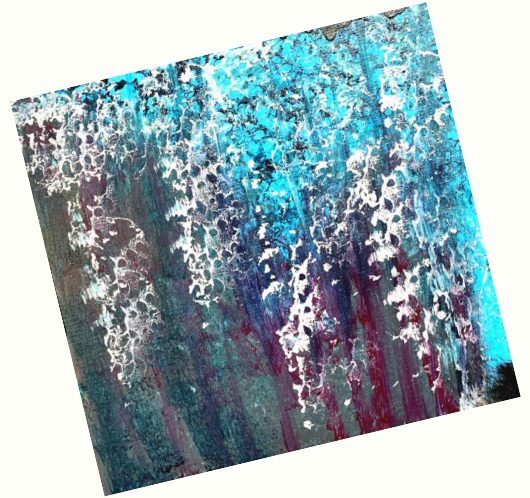
Let's get intimately acquainted with our tools!

VIDEO LESSON:

For each tool, I will first use the tool to demonstrate some of the possibilities. Then it is my hope that you will take some time to experiment with each tool, finding ways to make your own unique mark on your canvas. Everyone learns differently, so feel free to go through the lesson in a way that makes the most sense to you! Some will prefer to watch one demonstration, pause the video to do their work, then un-pause and watch the next bit, and so on. Some may prefer to watch the video in its entirety, then do all 12 experiments. YOU do YOU!

Whatever works best for your way of learning. But please don't just watch the video without doing the exercise—especially if you are relatively new to painting. Hands-on experimentation is the best way to learn and to begin to develop muscle memory.

I have found this to be the most liberating and fun approach to getting to know your tools. Like any relationship, it takes time to feel at ease with one another; but the process of getting acquainted is part of the fun.



PREPARING FOR THE EXERCISE:

You will need canvas paper (or if you prefer, you can use multiple canvases). You can divide each sheet in 2 if you would like, as you only need a small area for experimenting with each tool. For the purposes of demonstration, I used one large one, but you don't need to do it that way.

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VARIATIONS OF TOOL USE:

In your experimentation with each tool, it is good to think about the things you can vary in your approach. I focus primarily on four things that we can vary (acronym—**CAPD**)...

CONSISTENCY

-varying the consistency of your 'stroke' to create a smooth vs a broken look

ANGLE

-varying the angle of the tool on the canvas

PRESSURE

-varying the amount of pressure the tool exerts on the canvas

DIRECTION

-varying the direction of your stroke

**There are no mistakes in art...
just happy accidents!**



THE TOOLS:

1. **Mark-making Tools.** Use whatever you have in your arsenal. Things like sharpies or other permanent markers, pencil crayons, pencils, pens, gel pens. Waxy or oily products (eg. Crayons or oil pastels) are not friends with acrylic paint, so they are not good choices. Chalk pastels, charcoal, water-based markers require a spray 'fixative' or a spray varnish, otherwise they will move when you paint on top of them. I did use these in the demo for those who would like to try them; but if you don't have a fixative, please stick to the basics.

I also demonstrate painter's tape in this segment, as the use of the tape creates distinct 'marks', but if you don't have painters' tape, just skip that step.

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2. **Flat Brush.** Pretty basic stuff right here! In fact, this is likely not your first date with this type of brush if you have ever painted a wall in your house.
3. **Mop Brush.** This brush is the best at blending colours together, and is often used in a fast, circular motion. In the lesson, I will also demo my other favourite blending tool... my fingers!
4. **Round Brush.** Round brushes are useful for many things. This is my go-to brush if I don't have a mop brush for circles, spirals or lines, as well as for 'scuffling' or dry-brush techniques.
5. **Filbert Brush.** The rounded end of this brush makes nice soft edges. It is also fairly good at blending.
6. **Fan Brush.** A fun brush to play with; it can be used in skies, or to create interesting brush-strokes or marks in any style of painting.
7. **Liner Brush.** This type of brush is very good at creating long fluid lines (as the name would imply). It is similar to a small round brush, but has longer bristles and therefore, holds more paint.
8. **Putty Knife.** A less conventional tool for artists, I like to use these because they are larger than palette knives. It is used to both lay paint onto a canvas, and to scrape paint back off for interesting effects.
9. **Palette Knife.** I prefer the small ones with the 'elbow', but if you bought a set of 5, experiment with all of them to see what you prefer. It is also used to both lay paint onto a canvas, and to scrape paint back off.
10. **Catalyst.** This is a silicone wedge with various types of edges for carving different marks into paint. The type that has a straight edge is similar in use to a palette knife, but feels different in the hand; therefore, it can be manipulated in different ways.
11. **Sponges.** Sponges can be used to set paint onto your canvas to create interesting visual texture. They can also be used to blend and manipulate paint, or to rub paint off of your canvas.
12. **Spray Bottle.** A spray bottle that can emit a fine mist spray is one of my favourite tools. It can be used to create drips. I will also demonstrate a fun way to use an old paintbrush to create fine spritzes of paint on your canvas. So this is your spraying & spritzing fun!

Time to explore the endless possibilities of paint!