

Second Sunday Live Demo - 12 May 2019

Some Tips for Painting Florals

Demo Notes

Shadows on Flowers (to keep them from looking like dirty patches)

- use mixed greys that incorporate the color of the flower and the color of the reflected light in the surroundings
- areas of petals or leaves lit from behind often contain some green or red from the plants inner structures
- shadows often contain a bit more of the color of any reflected light (since the dominant light source is blocked); many times this is green from surrounding foliage
- don't go too dark!
- pay attention to color shifts WITHIN the shadows; they are usually not one uniform color throughout
- pay attention to hard and soft edges; often shadows on a curved surface like a petal have hard edges in some areas and soft edges in other areas

Composition

- beware the “lonely little flower in a sea of mushy green” syndrome—usually, it works better to zoom in and crop, let some of the flower be beyond the edge of the page
- if you have multiple flowers, try thinking of them as faces and consider the story implied by the “poses”; move, rearrange, bring in other flowers, to make the story or pose more interesting
- just as we follow the gaze of people or animals in paintings, we also follow the “gaze” of flowers, so use that to direct the eye around the composition

Handy Techniques

- draw with a watercolor pencil in a similar color to the flower instead of a graphite pencil to avoid unwanted lines in the pale areas of petals or to add suggestions of veins, stamens, twigs, etc
- to create an “all over” out-of-focus background, use water to add light areas that break up the wash and also help with composition
- or, add stems, leaves, parts of other flowers, etc. that extend off the page to break up the wash
- frilly edges - mist and then paint the background up to the edge
- or roll the brush on its side in a circle
- stamp leaves with torn paper or actual leaves to get interesting texture
- selectively soften portions of edges to make them recede or “round away” from you—adds depth and 3-dimensionality