

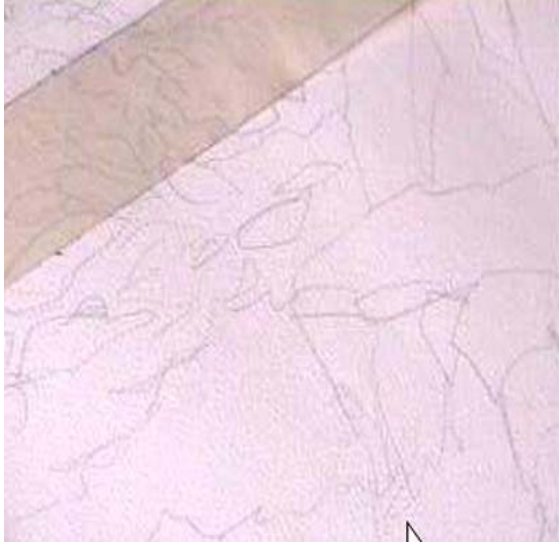
Watercolor Seascape

Sunday, March 23, 2003

This was a watercolor painting of the waves crashing against the rocky shoreline.

First Joe put masking tape over the horizon line to separate the paper in a straight line. He was blocking out the waterline so he could begin on the sky area.

First, he wet the top portion of paper and put in cerulean blue and ultramarine blue with a bit of indian red for the cloud formations. He also used cobalt blue with a touch of burnt sienna for the bottom dark edges of the clouds. He worked quickly and carefully created the cloud shapes in the sky.

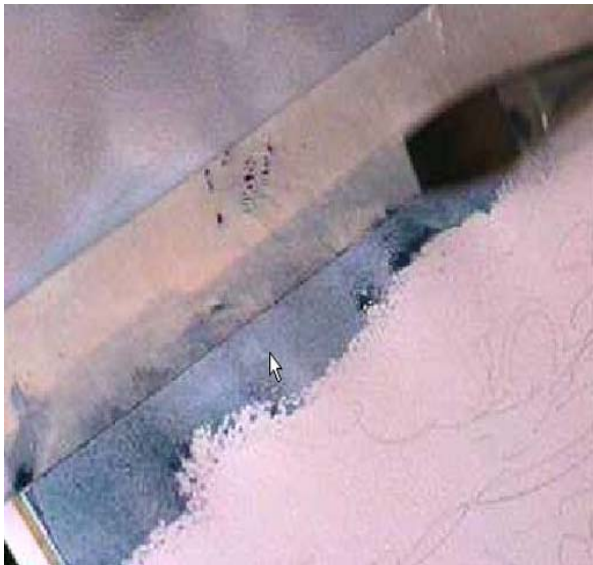


Then he reversed the masking tape, placing it at the bottom of the sky area just painted so there would be no bleed through in the sky area when working on the tops of the waves. Using ultramarine blue with a touch of burnt sienna, Joe drybrushed the area where the foam would be at the tops of the waves. He carefully created the shapes of those foam-topped waves by using a flat brush and drybrushing the area in a tapping motion – not dragging the brush over the paper but tap tap tapping over the paper, moving across and letting the white remain as the foam spray. If you don't get it right, you can go back in when it's dry and scrape out some highlighted areas of foam.



When Joe removed the masking tape, he found there was some bleed-through because the tape was old. This gave him the opportunity to show us how to correct it. He took an old oil brush (with hard bristles), put the masking tape back down under the bleed-through area, and scrubbed the color out. Gone!

After he put in some blues for the water at the horizon line, Joe began working on the area of the chopping waves at the horizon line. He said the waves here will begin to get greens in them so he made a mix of prussian blue, winsor yellow and some burnt sienna. He took these colors and started drawing the waves in with his round brush, dancing across the tops of the waves and twisting the brush to get varied lines in thickness and shape. These lines move across the top of the wave and were a nice grey-green color on top of the blue he'd laid down previously. He softened the bottom of the chops and left the tops hard-edged.



So, basically, he laid in the blue water, dried it, then put the gray-green chops on the water, all the time leaving that white foamy area of the wave alone.

Next, Joe wet the paper up to the underpart of the foam spray but not touching the spray itself. He wet the area with his brush, not the spray mister. Using ultramarine blue, indian red and burnt sienna, he cut in the color underneath the foam in order to show the shadow that would be beneath the roll of the wave. Spinning the brush around, he made irregular shapes in the shadow of the wave.

Then Joe started laying in color for the eye of the wave, putting prussian blue and winsor yellow into the cut of the wave beneath the top roll. He dried the area and then began putting in saucer-shaped greens under the area he just finished and dried. These shapes, looking like sea turtles swimming beneath the waves, show the direction the wave is flowing – downwards and outwards away from the top roll. He darkened those areas as they flowed out and down away from the spray, saying they get darker as they move away from the eye of the wave.



Joe said this painting was very intense in that it is mostly drying and glazing colors over and over to get the values and colors he wanted. He brought the blues and greens into the rest of the sea area, moving around the wave and towards the shoreline and rocks. Always putting down color and drying it, then adding more glazes over the color dried. Each time you put the glaze down, you darken to create the depth beneath the roll of the wave and you build up your areas and wave shapes.



When he saw he was losing some light areas, Joe went in with an oil brush and scrubbed out some areas to regain those light-struck parts of the wave.

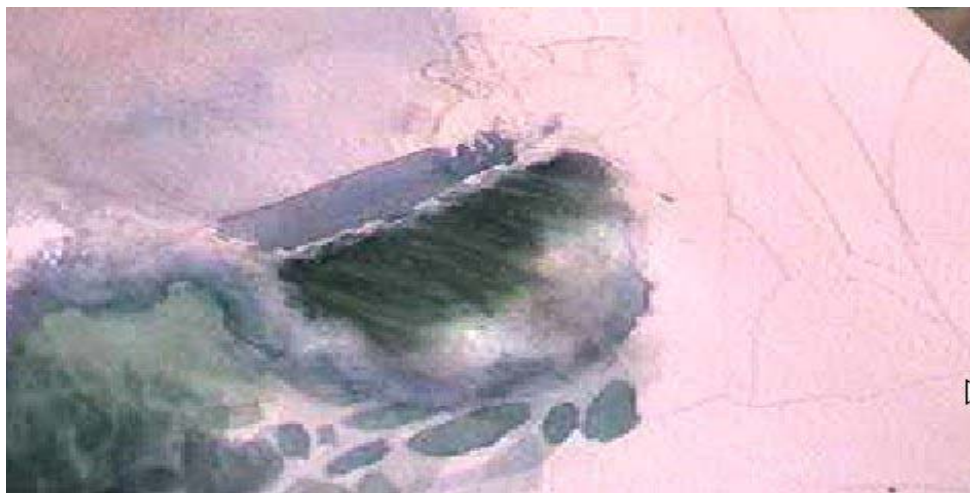
He next went in over the top of the wave on the right side of the painting and put in the horizon line there and then cut in the line streaming down from the top to the bottom of the wave roll. He took some more green – lighter in color this time – and put that at the bottom part of the wave, highlighting those areas to make it look like sunlight showing through them. He cut in some green at the top of the big, rolled wave, softening the edges, still keeping it light and white at the very tops of the waves. The wave bleeds

down from white to dark green to light green to lavender and white. He put touches of cerulean blue in the wave to tie it in with the sky color. He dried it one more time.



Some areas needed some correction to them so we got to see him use the edge of the sandpaper to regain some sparkle in places. This was needed in the part of the wave at the horizon line and the top of the wavelets to bring back the whites and sparkles. He rubbed the sandpaper upwards and outwards, making the white look like sea spray.

He also scrubbed out the areas at the bottom of the wave with a bristle brush, dabbing with a paper towel and keeping the brush clean. The more he rubbed in the bottom areas, the more lights he regained.



Then the rocks were done. He put down a mass of color in cobalt blue and burnt sienna – just laid it in and got a general cliff shape in the area at the right of the painting. Then, taking a credit card, he cut in the planes and angles, directing the thin lines of built-up paint that came to the edge of the card into areas as cracks. This took a total of 2 minutes and was gorgeous! He dried the area and began on the rocks behind the large foreground rock, making the colors more muted and lighter in value to show distance, and dabbing out areas with a paper towel. He didn't use the credit card technique on this one.



He then started on the rocks at the bottom of the picture plane. Joe mentioned that this area is NOT the center of interest so he didn't want it to be hard-edged. He wanted to keep the whole area soft and made sure to get those blues in the rocks. He used a credit card to carve in the edges but stressed that the center rock had to be much more simplified so it wouldn't draw attention away from the center of attention. He built up the cracks on all of the rocks next using a flat brush with a chisel edge, making more contours and shadowing as he went along.



He dried the rock areas and began putting in the foreground splash of water = blue foamy stuff showing the water slapping against the rocks and creating spray. He then dried this area and started carving out more planes in the foreground right side cliff area, making edges in shadow and some edges toward the sun, catching the light. He also put some lavenders and greens with prussian blue, winsor yellow, indian red and burnt sienna in the water and spray in the foreground.



Finally, he added some lines of grey-green waves moving around the rocks on the left side to draw your eye into the painting. He rubbed out some more lights in areas to get more sparkle, put in some more darks under the roll of wave and put some greens and grey-greens behind the foreground rocks to tie in the grey-green of the wave.



And it was done! An awesome painting of crashing waves in watercolor! Beautiful and powerful!

