

Artist Workshop Projects & Materials



Instructor: Jeannie McGuire

Watercolor Workshop: Figurative Design - Character Is More

All Levels: For artists' with a desire to create beyond their comfort level. Advanced beginner and up

About the Workshop:

In Jeannie's *Figurative Design Watercolor Workshops* she aims to inspire artists to create character in their figurative work. Jeannie shares her painting application and spontaneous thoughts and stories that guide her design process and style. As a student you are encouraged to be imaginative about the people in your reference photos and to study their expressions, body language, surroundings and interactions. You will hear about natural design in reference materials, cropping for impact, versatility of pigment to water ratios, intentional and spontaneous marks, use of titanium white as an additional pigment, and the freedom to change your mind (yes in watercolor). Individual workshops vary from a one project intensive to a week of varied projects such as; exploring eyes and faces in an unconventional way; focusing on a single figure with an obscure background; and intertwining a group of people with their background elements. Students receive plenty of personal attention and painting time.

The following projects are loosely described as a guideline for reference photos. Projects will vary per individual workshop.

Face Project: Character is more than a pretty face

Approach the face as a work of art versus a traditional portrait. Look for photo references that denote demeanor. This project will have you working on 3 individual faces simultaneously. Reference the same face or three different faces. Your choice of paper size but draw large so the measure from the chin to hairline is a minimum of 8" or fill a full sheet.

Single Figure Project: Character is more with an obscured background.

Simplify facial features and focus on spontaneous brushwork to allude to the subject's attitude, action or persona, body language or movement. Drawing a single figure you will replace scenery with obscure linear design, shapes and brushwork. Draw face size larger than 3".

Group of Figures Project: Character is more with contrasting focal points.

Intentionally connect, intertwine or separate your subjects of 2 or more to show a relationship or non-relationship with one another. Background objects, scenery or obscurity should play a supportive and purposeful role to the subject. Draw face size larger than 3" if possible.

Works in Progress: A painting revisited – is it really finished?

Bring along a few of your paintings that you are willing to continue painting on. Select pieces that are in progress or you are struggling with or even paintings you think might be finished.

Student Material List:

The following supplies are considered essential; a few are noted as *very helpful*.

- **Photo Reference:** Students are to bring their own personal photography or other acquired photos and snap shots as painting reference. Include posed and un-posed faces, figures and groups of 2 or more. Look for emotion in eyes, movement or gesture in figures, interesting groupings and background elements. Include photos of people that you don't know, but if you do know them pretend that you don't! (I suggest choosing photos of adults instead of children. I find that students have a harder time with character development when referencing children.)
- **Paper:** Cotton/100% rag artists' watercolor paper such as 140 lb. Arches, Lanaquarelle or other known brands. Single sheets are preferred over watercolor blocks. Sheet size can range from full to quarter in a rectangle or square format. *A variety of paper surfaces such as hot press, cold press or rough are helpful.* Do not prep paper with a medium.
- **Pigment & Palette:** Watercolor pigments; transparent, semi-transparent, opaque, values, fun colors, titanium white. *A large palette such as a Robert Wood is helpful.* Either squeeze fresh pigments into the wells or reconstitute the pigment already in your palette.
- **Brushes:** Include at least two of the following FLAT brushes – 1", 1½" or 2" such as Robert Simmons SkyFlow Flat (white bristles) or other brand. (Consider borrowing the flats from someone if you normally use rounds.)
- **Work surface:** Your preference whether a board slightly elevated about 6" on a tabletop or on a floor easel.
- **Magnifying lens:** Optional: *A linen tester or loupe, 1" 6X magnification, is very helpful to see detail in printed photos.* Some artists like to use iPads for photo reference instead of paper photos.

Artist Motto: Lose your fear by imagining your piece is going in the trash!

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