



WAVE ~ STEP BY STEP DEMO

Structure within an image will dictate if it will work or not as a finished painting.

There are not enough words to describe what is best to do. I guess most of you will know all about the importance of the rule of thirds or 'Golden Mean'. By putting the focal point of interest in those key area positions, the eye will be drawn in and the image by default will be stronger and more pleasing.

Another aspect closely associated with the rule of thirds, is the forming of triangles within the structure. Use natural arrangements of these crucial elements to form invisible triangular shapes. They create pleasant and unconscious reactions for the viewer to enjoy the work.

Try hard when arranging these elements within the structure of the painting to keep the eye circulating around the whole canvas. Be aware of any aspect that starts to lead the eye away, even out of the canvas

It goes beyond this, other factors play vital roles in the decision making, certain numbers of key elements eg. a wildlife painting of four Zebra would look better had there been five zebra. Many say that odd numbers are easier on the eye, as it is harder to settle on even numbers.

Make sure that even if there are several animals or figures in the painting that one is in a dominant position over those that remain. It creates impact and forms a focal point from which all else radiates.

Edges are so important. Hard or sharp edges will direct the viewer's eye to that point in the work. Softer, even lost edges will be seen, but the eye will pay little regard to their importance. So, you can see by placing and using edges within the work you can direct the viewer to key areas of the painting. Adding high key values to sharp edges will only serve to strengthen the rules I have outlined.

All these factors will help you compose the work with great structure when considered together. Although not essential to observe them all, all of the time, with practice they will all be considered at some juncture when you design your next masterpiece. It is a small look at a very large topic, though I have touched upon a few important rules when you consider composition.



REFERENCE PHOTO

I have chosen a subject very close to my heart, the sea and in particular the coast in Hythe, Kent. I am painting on a natural linen canvas, but please do not worry, paint on any canvas or board you desire

STAGE 1

Working on a 12" x 16" canvas I used Burnt Umber mixed with Liquin and a # 2 round to loosely draw in the areas that are important. The lines have been designed to lead the eye up to the focal point in the top left third. The high horizon holds the viewer locked into the image.



STAGE 2



I am using two sets of primaries Cobalt Blue, Ultramarine, Cadmium Yellow Light, Cadmium Lemon Yellow, Cadmium Light Red, Alizarin and Titanium White.

The first mix is the sky, in three bands of colour. The topmost blue is Cobalt with a tiny hint of Lemon and White, then a warmer mix of Cobalt, Light red and Lemon with White. Finally, I placed a mix of Ultramarine and Alizarin at the horizon. Then haphazardly blend the three, giving the

appearance of late sky and fading light.

The sea was mixed with a darker Ultramarine and Alizarin with Cad Yellow, splashes of Red were placed to break up the uniform colour of the sea. Lastly, I blurred and diffused the horizon line, giving lost edges. This way the eye sees the horizon, but less importance is given, saving it for the focal point in the work.

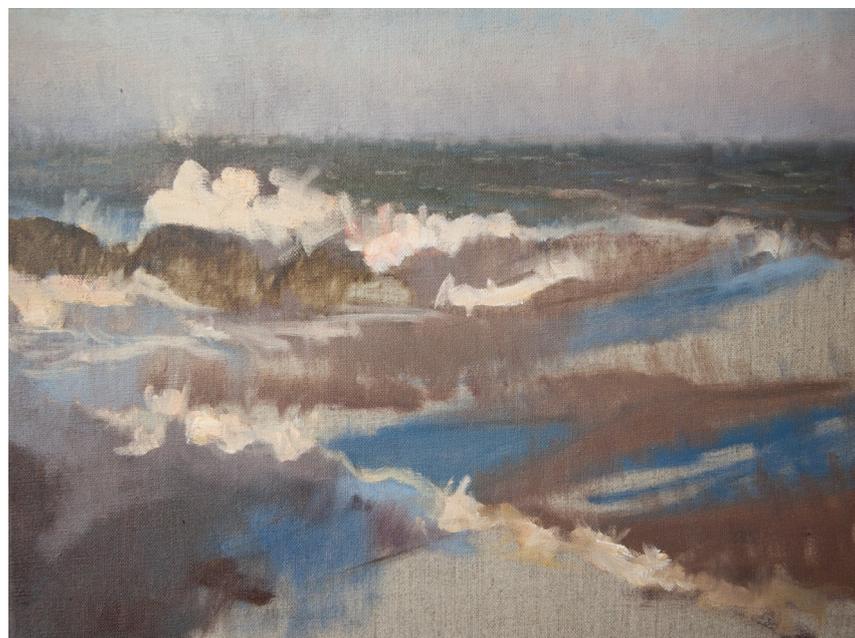
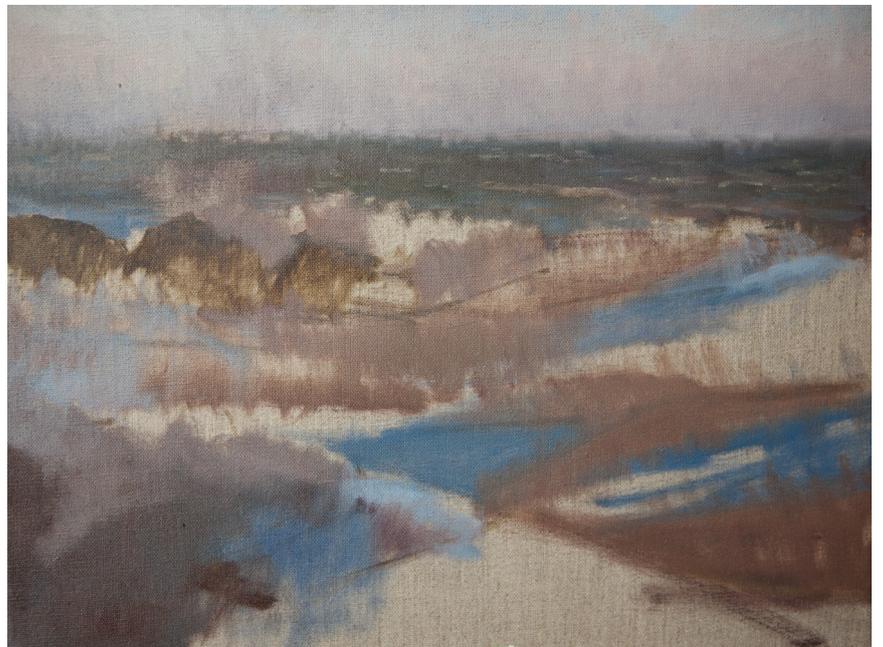


STAGE 3

Some whites were laid into the sea creating rough waves, a lighter Cobalt value against the rocks. This will help them to stand out.

STAGE 4

Areas of blue shadow and warmer blocks of colour were added to the foreground.



STAGE 5

White was added to the crests of the waves, as these denote the lightest areas of the work.

The rocks were added in deep Ultramarine, Alizarin and a hint of Cadmium Yellow as a deep black and warmed in places with lighter values.

STAGE 6

Looking at the reference I added various blues and warmer red browns with a no.4 filbert, using the brush on the flat and its edge to change the marks, Some muted violets in the foreground were also included. There was an element of lemon added to the blues as it added to the cool mood. Lastly White and a tiny amount of



Cadmium Yellow and Cadmium Red were mixed to the tops of the waves and surge against the rocks. This mix is the brightest colour you can achieve and is saved for that all important



STAGE 7

I am adding complimentary marks of opposing colour values to add interest to each part of the wave. I am paying attention to the ebb and flow of the wave structure; these also include areas in highlight and shade. Very warm almost pure oranges were added to the wave height on the right.



STAGE 8

I am now finishing the work adding highlights to the swells and waves at the base of the rocks using a rigger with a fluid solution or pigment and Liquin, using my brightest values.

This includes the tops of the waves with small flicks indicating spray.



STAGE 9

After a few more additions to the foreground wave, I feel that I have completed this image.

I hope that you have enjoyed this exercise and that by following my descriptions and work you will use the reference and create your own image.