

Demonstration
October 7, 2019
Mary Kay Thomas - Six Steps to a Complete Acrylic Painting

On this beautiful evening in October, close to 40 people, including one new member and four guests, came to see **Mary Kay Thomas** demonstrate how easy it really is to paint in acrylics. With her canvas set up on an easel in the front of the room and our president, Lee Peters' A/V setup, everyone had a good view of Mary Kay brushing paint on the canvas. The inspiration for her demo painting was a Lake Erie sunset. For the first step, she selected yellow as her base color. With no drawing to guide her, she just added the yellow paint to the canvas. She let it sit for a few minutes before moving on.



Second, using a different size brush, she added orange with a hint of red. When asked how she decides what to paint, she said that most of her images come from her imagination. Sometimes she just adds paint to paper and lets 'being in the moment' lead her to paint. She also gets inspiration from old movies, like the beach scene she painted of William Holden's 'Love is a Many Splendored Thing'.



Third, Mary Kay added thalo blue for the sky, being careful not to touch into the yellow for fear of creating green. She also added some white paint to "keep it bright and light". Inexpensive Crayola acrylic paints are her favorite.



Fourth, using a combination of all the colors...yellow, orange, red, blue, Mary Kay got 'into the zone' and added these colors and 'small stuff' here and there. After stepping back to look at the painting, she added a boat to the scene. It was at this point that she told us a little more about herself. She had quite an amazing story to tell. "I was born to art", she said, being strongly influenced by her mother and grandmother, who both played the piano and were active in the visual arts. She told us that at age 42 she survived a massive stroke and major brain aneurysm. She lost her memory and could no longer read. "God said to work with my faith and my art". It took eight years, but Mary Kay graduated with a 4.0 from Ursuline College, learning art therapy as a way to heal herself.



Step five is when Mary Kay added the dark colors and worked more on the boat, especially its reflection in the water.



For the last step, she said to just have fun with it. She added white paint at various locations in the painting until she was satisfied with the look. Knowing when to stop was the challenge. The group suggested she name her painting, "Red Sails in the Sunset".

Young Jaden asked Mary Kay what was her favorite subject to paint and what was her favorite color. She said, “our city, Cleveland and it’s skyline” and orange “tangerine, specially. I even have an orange car and orange luggage!”

While techniques used to approach an acrylic painting vary from artist to artist, we enjoyed Mary Kay’s ‘six steps to an acrylic painting’ and we thank her for sharing her approach with us. It was an entertaining and informative evening of art with delicious refreshments afterwards!



Thanks to our hosts, Jennifer Theil and Barb Everette, for their “Good Witch” themed refreshment table. We enjoyed a variety of tasty treats, including pumpkin cake (recipe requested), sliced apples with peanut butter dip, skewers of salami, cheese & grapes, chicken nuggets, veggies, crackers with dip, and Halloween candies.