

Zoom Demonstration March 1, 2021 Christopher Leeper - Painting a Landscape

Our Zoom demonstration for March was hosted by award winning Ohio artist, **Christopher Leeper**, demonstrating a **watercolor landscape**. Covid certainly changed the way he offers classes. He has not held in-studio workshops since March 12th of last year! Instead, he's busy doing 8 to 10 Zoom classes per week, which he hosts from his home studio in Canfield, OH. His work can be seen at www.christopherleeper.com. We thank Chris for a very informative and entertaining evening. The 25 EAA members that participated really enjoyed his presentation and were amazed at how much of the painting he completed in just two hours . . .read on.



As the Zoom session started, Chris said, "Don't mute yourselves. I like to talk!" He was able to highlight or spotlight his Zoom session in order to keep us focused on his screen. So we chatted away and used the chat function as well to ask questions.

Chris's reference for this evening was a wooded scene with a stream running through it. He likes how the light comes through the trees. Using a half sheet (15x22) of Waterford 200 lb. cold press paper, he begins his drawing. Starting with the horizontal and vertical planes, he uses a mechanical pencil to loosely sketch in shapes and his design. His lines get darker as he moves along. He considers himself a "mechanical pencil" nerd, using a BIC pencil with .07mm lead, to be exact! He continues to sketch light and loose until he finds the composition that he likes.



"I like using Waterford 200 lb. paper because it paints differently than Arches." Chris finds this paper more forgiving. It lets him lift paint easily, it's good for layering, costs \$9/sheet, and the colors dry lighter on it. Standing up while painting, Chris uses his 2" paddle brush to pre-wet the entire paper. He starts off painting wet-in-wet with quinacridone red, yellow and blue. He suggests painting darker than it should be because it dries lighter. In this first step, Chris is putting in the 'light' using warm colors that are clean and identifiable on white paper. BTW, he doesn't use masking fluid!



Next, painting loosely, he adds more layers of color letting them mix on the paper. He paints only a small area before reloading his brush. It's critical for him to have paint 'sit up' on the sizing of the paper for a juicy wash. He adds texture, using his 'go to' 1/2" brush at an angle to get cool dry brush

textures. (Just like his mentor, artist Bob Moyer.) Chris's mantra is color first, then value. He continued layering in colors from right to left and top to bottom, occasionally using his fingernail to scratch in more texture. Before adding white gouache highlights, Chris cautioned us, "If you're a purist, close your eyes." His favorite artist, Sargent used gouache, after all! Last, he puts in finer lines with a rigger type brush and adds accents of darks to add energy to the piece. Even though it looked finished, it wasn't. Chris promised to send us a picture of the finished painting.

Tips . . .Chris likes vibrant colors and to him the key to vibrant colors is fresh paint. He says not to save color on your palette because it dries out and gets lighter when you wet it. He cleans his palette often to keep colors fresh. He justifies the many colors on his palette by one of his many quotes, "You've got more than one pair of shoes, don't you?" His newest color acquisition, recommended by one of his students, is Lavender by Danial Smith. He uses the Lavender as a highlight on darker colors as it 'sits' on the surface....with amazing results!

Questions asked via Zoom chat....

Do you ever rinse your brushes in water?

No, the only time he rinses his brushes is if he's changing 'temperature'. Otherwise, he just wipes his brushes with a rag.

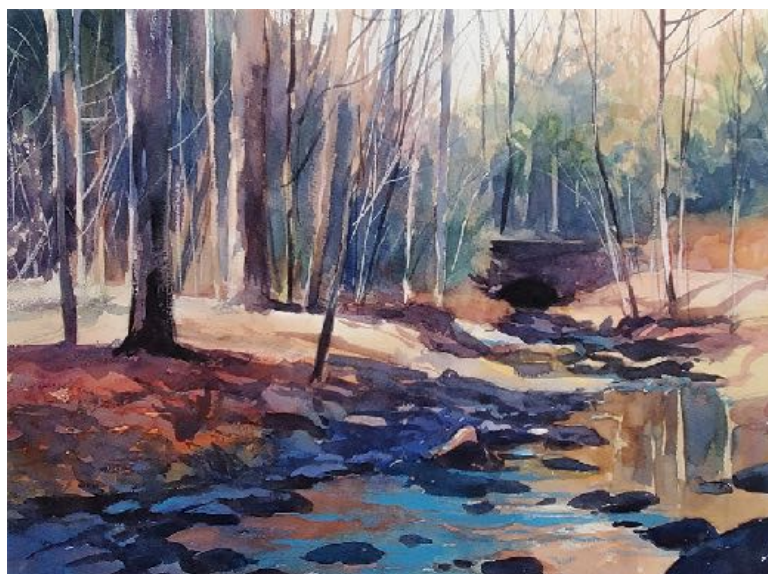
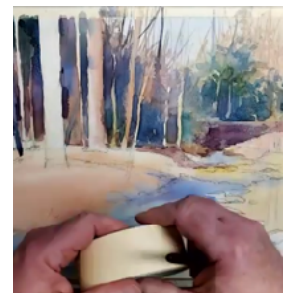
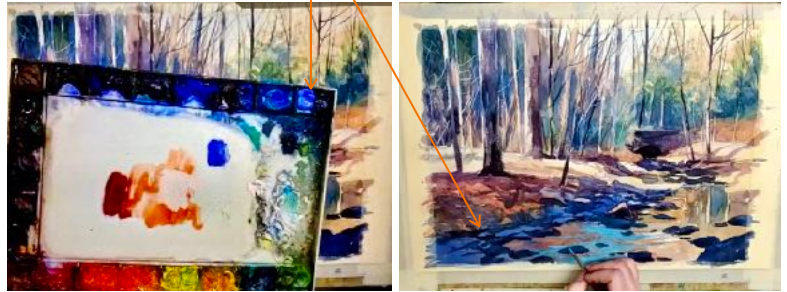
What kind of tape do you use around your painting?

Duck general purpose masking tape (about 2" wide) that he purchases from a local hardware store in Canfield.

What are your favorite brushes? Taken directly from his supply list...

Silver Brush Black Velvets (squirrel/synthetic blend) rounds: #16, #10, #8, #4, 1/4 inch flat, 1/2 inch flat, 3/4 flat, jumbo round (small); Princeton Neptune large round (#6) (synthetic squirrel); Princeton Velvetouch #4 long round; synthetic rigger

It was mid-way through the demo when Chris realized that he forgot to hit the record button. At least, we were able to get about an hour recording, which you can find at [Chris Leeper demo](#). Passcode: 0G3V4\$T9



Final painting