



A F T E R T H E S T O R M

After the Storm

A step-by-step painting guide by Richard Robinson

Watch the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/215-After-the-Storm>

MY PAINTING CLUB

Introduction

In this chapter, we'll embark on an exciting journey of painting 'After the Storm,' where you'll learn to capture the essence of light, atmosphere, and depth using just three colors. I've chosen a large canvas for this project, stretched on sturdy wooden frames and triple primed with gesso, ready to bring our scene to life. With a big bucket of water and a towel for wiping off, we're all set. I'll guide you through the process with a selection of brushes, each serving a unique purpose. The bristle brush will cover the canvas for the block-in, while the synthetic Rosemary & Co. brush will handle the finer details like the rim of the boat and dune grasses. This lesson is all about simplicity and effectiveness, focusing on monochromatic techniques to avoid muddy colors. By using a single brush for the majority of the work, you'll learn how to maintain clarity and vibrancy in your painting. Whether you choose acrylics for their durability or oils for their classic appeal, this scene offers a rewarding subject with its dynamic composition and the opportunity to explore soft-edged brushwork and sparkling impasto highlights. Let's dive in and enjoy the creative process together!



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Materials

Gather these materials before you start. If you don't have the exact same supplies, use what you have and substitute freely.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Chroma Atelier Interactive Acrylics
- Ultramarine Blue
- Burnt Sienna
- Yellow Ochre
- Titanium White
- Canvas
- Fredrix ultrasmooth canvas.
- You could use a canvas panel or anything you prefer.
- Brushes
- [Rosemary & Co. Richard Robinson Brush Set](#)
- Palette knife
- Paper towels
- Bucket of water

1 Canvas size and medium choice



Select Canvas Size

Choose a large canvas, ideally 36 by 48 inches, to capture the full impact of the painting. This size allows for visible brush strokes and a dynamic composition.

Choose Your Medium

Decide between acrylics or oils for your painting. Acrylics are recommended for their durability and resistance to cracking, especially for large pieces intended for long-term display.

PRO TIP

Acrylics are less prone to cracking than oils, making them a good choice for large paintings.

2 Painting popularity and color scheme



Understand the Painting's Appeal

Recognize that this painting is popular due to its ability to capture the mood of the scene, not just the subject. The simplicity of the subject and the color scheme contributes to its timeless appeal.

Choose a Simple Color Scheme

Use a limited palette to create a cohesive and atmospheric painting. Select ultramarine blue and burnt sienna as your primary colors, with the addition of yellow ochre and white to enhance the composition.

PRO TIP

Focus on capturing the mood of the scene with a simple, monochromatic color scheme.

3 Previous versions and painting evolution



Evaluate Previous Versions

Compare earlier versions of your painting to identify improvements. Notice how darker values can make objects more distinct and accessible to the eye. Assess how details like the thickness of elements and the fullness of features enhance the painting's overall strength.

Experiment with Formats

Consider different formats for your painting, such as square or diamond shapes, to see what best suits the composition. A frontal view might benefit from a balanced format, while an elevated view could work well with a diamond shape.

Use Atmospheric Perspective

Introduce atmospheric perspective to create depth. Make distant parts of the painting lighter and closer in value to the background, while increasing contrast in the foreground with darker darks.

Develop a Series

When you find a subject you love and that has potential to sell, create a series to explore and refine the theme. This approach not only helps in making sales but also improves your skills as you develop more advanced and better paintings over time.

PRO TIP

Introduce atmospheric perspective by adjusting values to create depth, making distant elements lighter and closer to the background in value.

4 Painting boats and artistic choices



Choose Your Subject

Select a boat with character and age, as these elements add interest to your painting. Consider the shape and color of the boat, as these can create a striking contrast with the surrounding environment.

Use Complementary Colors

Incorporate a complementary color scheme, such as the red of a boat against blue-green aqua water, to create visual interest and draw the viewer's eye.

Capture Light and Reflection

Observe the light and reflections on the boat's hull. Use warm colors to depict morning light and adjust the intensity to capture the scene's mood.

Focus on Painterly Techniques

Experiment with painterly techniques by setting a goal for your painting, such as achieving a chunky or swishy texture. This helps develop your painting skills and adds depth to your work.

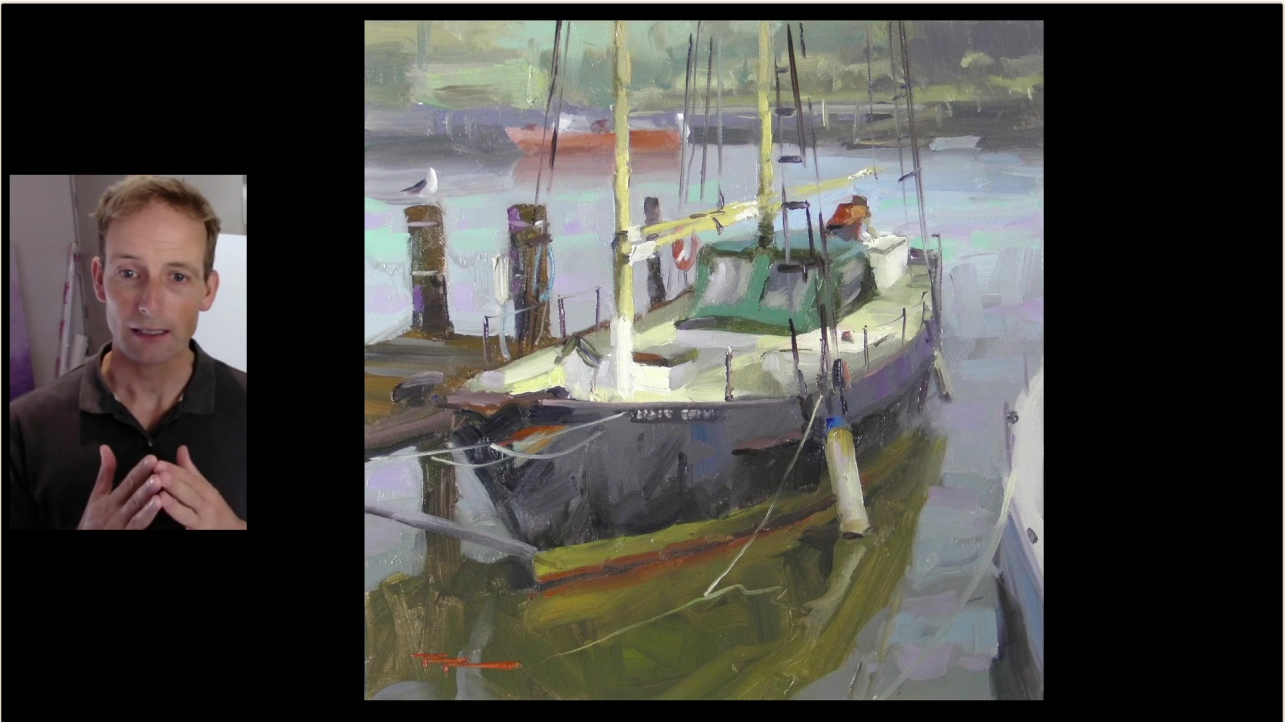
Direct the Viewer's Eye

Use crisp edges and detailed areas to focus attention on the boat. Surround these with softer edges and less detail to guide the viewer's gaze.

PRO TIP

Choose a specific painting challenge or goal to focus on in each painting to enhance your skills.

5 Boat painting inspiration



Focus on Shapes

Emphasize the contrast between large, interesting shapes and small, intricate details in your painting. This balance creates visual interest and depth, drawing the viewer's eye across the composition.

Experiment with Brushwork

Challenge yourself to explore different brushwork techniques. Consider how dynamic and expressive you can make your brushstrokes to enhance the overall feel of the painting.

Use Complementary Colors

Incorporate a strong complementary color scheme to make your painting pop. For example, pair a subdued green or gray-green with a vibrant red to create striking contrast and visual appeal.

PRO TIP

Balance large shapes with small details to create visual interest.

6 Painting process and edge management



Prepare Your Tools

Use one brush for most of the work. Have a square palette knife and an HB pencil ready for marking out areas.

Mark the Horizon

Lightly mark the horizon line on your canvas. This will help with the placement of other elements in your painting.

Plan Your Composition

Lightly sketch where you want different elements to go, such as dunes and the waterline. This will guide your painting process.

Paint the Landscape First

Start by painting the entire landscape. This allows you to create soft edges and blends by working wet into wet, which is important when using acrylics.

PRO TIP

Paint the landscape first to maintain soft edges by working wet into wet.

7 Acrylic painting techniques



Prepare Your Paint

Use a lot of paint to keep it wet longer, especially when working with acrylics. Place large blobs of ultramarine blue, burnt sienna, and a smaller amount of yellow ochre on your palette. This prevents the paint from drying too quickly and allows for smoother blending.

Use Water to Keep Paint Wet

Fill a spray bottle with water and intermittently mist your canvas and palette. This keeps the paint wet and workable, essential for achieving smooth gradients and blends in acrylic painting.

Choose the Right White Paint

Select an interactive white acrylic for background areas to ensure a longer working time and smoother finish. Use impasto white for elements like the boat to create texture and depth, making them stand out and catch light effectively.

Create Depth with Paint Texture

Apply flat paint for background areas to keep them smooth and unobtrusive. Use thicker impasto paint for foreground elements to add dimension and make them pop, enhancing the 3D effect on a 2D canvas.

PRO TIP

Use a spray bottle with water to keep your acrylic paint wet and workable, allowing for smoother blending and longer working time.

8 Brush preparation and painting order



Prepare the Canvas and Brushes

Lightly spray the canvas with water to keep it moist. Ensure to spray the edges as well to maintain consistency across the entire surface.

Wet the Brush

Before starting, wet your large brush thoroughly. This is crucial when using acrylics to prevent the paint from drying too quickly in the bristles, which can damage the brush.

Plan Your Painting Order

Begin painting from the back of the scene, starting with the sky. Then move to the mountain, followed by the sand dunes, and continue working forward in layers.

PRO TIP

Always wet your brush before using acrylics to prevent the paint from drying in the bristles.

9 Mountain drawing and personal story



Incorporate Local Mountains

When painting the mountain, feel free to use a mountain from your own area as inspiration. This adds a personal touch and connection to your artwork.

Capture the Essence

Think about the unique features of the mountain you choose, such as its shape or any distinctive peaks, and incorporate those into your painting. This helps convey the mountain's character and makes your painting more engaging.

PRO TIP

Use a mountain from your local area as inspiration to add a personal touch to your painting.

10 Painting into a couch technique



Apply a White Couch Layer

Apply a thin layer of white paint across the area you plan to work on. Ensure the layer is smooth and even, without being too thick. This will help keep the area wet and prevent hard edges from forming.

Maintain Soft Edges

Work the white layer gently to keep it wet, as this will allow for soft edges in your painting. Soft edges in the sky help it recede into the background, avoiding unwanted attention.

PRO TIP

Use a spray bottle to keep the paint surface moist and workable, preventing hard edges.

11 Sky gradient and blending



Warm the White

Add a tiny touch of yellow ochre to your white paint to warm it up slightly. This subtle change will create a gentle warmth in your sky. Choose a central spot for your gradient, slightly off-center, and paint around it using big brush strokes.

Introduce Blue

As you move outward from the central area, gradually add small amounts of blue to the mixture. Be cautious with the blue, as it's easy to overpower the white. Work the blue into the warmed white, avoiding the center to maintain a soft effect.

Blend the Layers

Add a bit more blue and start from where you want the gradient to end, using a circular motion. Blend this layer into the previous one, allowing some brush strokes to remain visible while avoiding hard edges. Extend the gradient past the desired endpoint to ensure smooth blending with the next layer.

PRO TIP

Use very small amounts of color when mixing with white to maintain a soft, subtle effect.

12 Color mixing and commission story



Blend the Colors

Add a little more blue and white to your palette to ensure you have enough paint. Gradually darken the mixture by adding more blue as you move outward, but do so slightly to avoid an intense blue.

Paint Over the Sand Dune

Paint down over the top of the sand dune, focusing on the edges. It's fine to cover the edges since you'll work back into it later.

Adjust the Blue Tone

Add a touch of bensina to the blue mixture to grey it down slightly. Aim for a subtle color as this painting emphasizes greys.

PRO TIP

Gradually add blue to darken the mixture without creating an intense color.

13 Clouds and color theory



Prepare the Brush

Wet a smaller brush to ensure smooth application. This helps in maintaining the wetness of the paint for easier blending.

Mix Colors for Broken Color Effect

Combine white with a tiny touch of yellow to create a subtle variation. Aim for the same value as the area you're painting into, but alter the hue slightly to introduce broken color.

Maintain Consistent Value

Darken the mixture slightly if needed to match the value of the surrounding paint. This ensures the new color integrates harmoniously, adding a shimmering effect.

Work While Wet

Apply the paint while the surface is still wet. This is crucial with acrylics, as they change value when drying, making it difficult to match colors accurately.

PRO TIP

Apply paint while the surface is wet to maintain consistent value and achieve seamless blending.

14 Variety in painting



Mixing Complementary Colors

Combine blue and burnt sienna to create a neutral grey. These colors are complements on the color wheel, which means they balance each other out to form a pleasing grey tone. Adjust the ratio of blue to burnt sienna to achieve the desired shade.

Understanding Color Complements

Recognize that burnt sienna is an orangey-red brown, essentially a dark subdued orange. On the color wheel, blue is directly opposite orange, making them complementary. This relationship is key to creating harmonious greys.

Softening Edges

Use a dry brush to soften hard edges in your painting. Gently use the tip of the brush and keep wiping it off to maintain the desired softness. This technique helps prevent the painting from looking airbrushed and maintains variety.

Balancing Edge Variety

Aim for a balance between soft and hard edges. If your painting has too many hard edges, soften some to add variety. Conversely, if it's too soft, introduce some crispness for contrast.

Creating Variety

Incorporate variety in your painting through texture, color, value, line, and hue. Just like in music, where variety can be achieved through tone and rhythm, painting offers multiple dimensions for variety.

PRO TIP

Use a dry brush to soften edges, but be mindful of the drying time to avoid permanent hard edges.

15 Mountain painting and client view



Maintain Wetness

Keep the painting surface wet, but not so much that it starts to run or dribble. Use a soft misting technique to maintain the right level of moisture.

Clean Your Brush

Regularly clean your soft brush to prevent paint buildup. Proper brush care ensures longevity and better painting results.

Paint the Mountain

Begin integrating the mountain into the background. Focus on blending it smoothly with the existing elements to create a cohesive scene.

PRO TIP

Regularly clean your brush to prevent paint buildup and extend its lifespan.

16 Mountain blending and avoiding outlines



Mix Blue Grey with Burnt Sienna

Use the same blue-grey mixture from earlier and add a touch more burnt sienna. This will help create a subtle variation in the mountain color.

Lightly Indicate Mountain Top

Lightly sketch the top of the mountain with your brush. Ensure the placement is accurate, especially if the landscape is familiar to viewers.

Blend Without Creating Outlines

Blend the mountain color smoothly to avoid creating lines of paint. Ensure the paint is well-mixed on your brush to prevent dark blue outlines, which can disrupt the depth of the painting.

PRO TIP

Avoid creating outlines by ensuring the paint is well-mixed on your brush.

17 Mountain light and contrast



Create a Blend with Value Changes

When blending, ensure you change the value regularly to avoid a flat appearance. Extend the blend beyond the desired area to allow for working back into it.

Add Warmth to the Blend

Mix in a little white and a touch of yellow ochre to introduce a warmer light. Be cautious with the yellow; too much can overpower the blend.

Blend with Care

Start the blend past the target area, lay down a band of color, and then work back into it. Use a big brush carefully, utilizing just the tip to blend and cover any pencil marks.

Adjust Contrast and Density

Return to a slightly darker mixture to enhance the density and contrast between the mountain and the sky. Aim for a light-filled effect with subtle contrast for readability from a distance.

PRO TIP

Use yellow ochre instead of bright yellow to avoid creating vibrant greens when mixing with blue.

18 Softening edges and value contrast



Soften Edges

Spray the area lightly with water. Use a dry brush to gently soften the edge by making very small, light zigzag motions. This technique prevents the area from looking like a hard cut-out.

Enhance Foreground Contrast

Keep the edges in the background soft to allow the foreground elements, like the front edge of the boat, to have sharp edges. This contrast will make the foreground pop.

Adjust Value Contrast

Observe the value contrast on your painting compared to the reference. If needed, add a little more value to certain areas by making them darker to match the desired effect.

PRO TIP

Use a dry brush with light zigzag motions to soften edges without creating a hard cut-out effect.

19 Sand dune and grass painting



Create a Glow for the Boat

Add a soft glow off the top where the boat will be placed. This will help it blend in nicely and ensure the boat matches up with this glow.

Paint the Sand Dunes

Use a soft brush, wet it slightly, and mix burnt sienna with a little blue and a touch of white. This lighter value will sit back in the background and not compete with the darks in the boat.

Add Grassy Effects

Brush upwards to create a grassy effect, adding a little yellow ochre to warm it up. Darken the mixture slightly with burnt sienna and blue, brushing up from the bottom into the lights without reaching the end of the lights.

Use Light Brush Strokes

Apply a very light touch with the brush to avoid scooping off the wet paint. Use the corner of the brush for small shapes and the flat for larger shapes, ensuring variety to mimic natural grasses.

PRO TIP

Use a very light touch when working wet into wet to prevent removing paint and creating unwanted white patches.

20 Sand dune color and light effect



Mix Sand Dune Color

Combine white, blue, and a little bit of burnt sienna to create a neutral grey. Adjust the mix to be slightly cooler by adding more blue or warmer by adding more burnt sienna.

Apply the Color

Spray the area lightly to ensure a soft edge. Apply the color, ensuring no white bits show through, especially around the base of the dune grasses.

Maintain Soft Edges

Work in the wet areas to maintain soft edges. Be careful not to obliterate the dune grasses, as details can be added back later.

PRO TIP

Use a spray to keep edges soft and blend colors smoothly.

21 Grass details and drying time



Lighten Dune Grasses

As the dune grasses approach the light, lighten them slightly to reflect the illumination. Use soft edges to blend them into the sand dune, creating a natural transition.

Soften Canvas Edges

Avoid sharp edges at the edge of the canvas, as they tend to draw the eye. Soften any edges that meet the canvas boundary to maintain focus on the central elements.

Add Light to Dune Tops

Switch to a brush suitable for soft light application. Gently apply a slightly lighter tone to the top of the dune, avoiding pure white, to capture the subtle light effect.

PRO TIP

Soften edges at the canvas boundary to prevent them from drawing attention away from the main subject.

22 Dark accents and cast shadows



Select the Right Brush

Choose an ivory long flat brush from Rosemary & Co. These brushes hold a lot of paint and allow for long, calligraphic strokes due to their length and flexibility.

Mix a Dark Accent Color

Create a dark accent color by mixing a warm mid-gray, slightly darker than mid-gray. This will be used for adding depth and detail.

Apply the Dark Accents

Brush up from the bottom with your mixed color, ensuring the paint is still wet to avoid hard edges. This technique will add depth and interest to your painting.

Add Soft Cast Shadows

Include soft cast shadows in your painting to enhance realism. Pay attention to the direction and softness of these shadows for a natural look.

PRO TIP

Use an ivory long flat brush for calligraphic strokes and to hold more paint.

23 Grass highlights and light strips



Add Dark Accents

Ensure the dark accents are not too dark. Lighten them near the light source to prevent them from sticking out too much. Connect these accents with the sand dune to create a cohesive look.

Break Up Uniform Areas

Identify areas that look too uniform and break them up for variety. This adds interest and prevents the painting from looking flat.

Apply Grass Highlights

Mix yellow ochre with a little white, blue, and brown to create a highlight color. Apply these highlights to the grass areas for a punchy effect, but avoid overdoing it.

Add Light Strips

Remember to paint the strips of light sneaking through the dune grasses. These light strips add depth and realism to the scene.

Highlight Dune Tops

Add a little more light to the top of the dunes. This enhances the effect of sunlight hitting the dunes.

PRO TIP

Lighten dark accents near the light source to ensure they blend seamlessly with the surrounding areas.

24 Ocean painting and color balance



Paint the Ocean Base

Mix blue, yellow ochre, and white to create a subdued ocean color. Avoid using too much blue or green to maintain harmony with the rest of the painting. Apply this base color to the ocean area, ensuring it complements the overall color scheme.

Add Wave Details

Start with a darker base and add small amounts of blue and white. Paint over the top, leaving some dark green lines to represent waves. This creates depth and movement in the water.

Create Soft Transitions

Gradually add more white and blue to the mixture, softening the transition between the ocean and the mountain. Aim for a seamless blend without a hard edge.

Add Foam Details

Mix a touch of white with the existing blue-grey to create a subtle foam effect. Apply this along the ocean's surface to suggest foam without making it too stark or bright.

PRO TIP

Maintain a subtle color balance to ensure the ocean complements the rest of the painting.

25 Boat drawing and placement



Determine Boat Placement

Find the placement of the boat on your canvas by measuring the distance from the top to the highest point of the boat and from the bottom. Decide how far in from the sides you want the boat to be.

Create a Guiding Rectangle

Visualize or draw a rectangle on your canvas that encompasses the boat. This will help you get the angles right within that space.

Adjust Angles Within the Rectangle

Ensure the angles within the rectangle are correct. Remember, the angle of the boat is not horizontal; it should tilt slightly upwards.

Use Projection or Tracing

For accuracy, project the boat image onto the canvas or print it to size, rub charcoal or pencil on the back, and trace it onto the canvas.

Focus on Negative Shapes

Pay attention to the negative shapes between the rectangle and the boat. Getting these right will ensure your boat's angles are accurate.

Avoid Common Mistakes

Avoid making the boat shape too round or tipping the lines forward. Draw the angles as you see them, not as you think they should be.

PRO TIP

Focus on drawing the angles you see, not the ones you think should be there, to avoid common drawing errors.

26 Background preparation



Assess Vertical Alignment

Examine the vertical lines in your composition. Compare each vertical element to ensure they align correctly. Adjust any elements that are slightly off from the vertical to maintain balance.

Compare Shapes and Angles

Look at the shapes and angles in your composition. Compare one shape to another and one angle to another to ensure harmony and proportion. Make necessary adjustments to achieve the desired drawing accuracy.

Prepare the Background

Once satisfied with the drawing, focus on preparing the background. This will set the stage for adding the boat later. Ensure the background complements the overall composition.

PRO TIP

Always compare shapes and angles to maintain accurate proportions in your composition.

27 Shadow and gradation techniques



Prepare the Canvas

Spray the canvas lightly with water and give it a gentle rub down to ensure it's not too wet. This will help create soft edges and smooth transitions in your painting.

Mix a Light Neutral Gray

Combine blue, brown, and white to create a light neutral gray. Adjust the mixture by adding more white if it's too dark. Aim for a soft, low-contrast color suitable for the diffused light effect.

Apply the Gray to the Canvas

Use a large brush to apply the light neutral gray to the canvas, covering areas where the soft shadow will be. Paint beyond where you want the final edge to be, ensuring you have room to create soft transitions.

Create Soft Edges

Work the paint gently to achieve soft edges, especially where the shadow transitions into light. Use a wet brush to help blend the edges smoothly, enhancing the diffused light effect.

Plan for Future Details

Consider the structure and details you will add later, such as thin lines inside the shadow area. Ensure the base layer is smooth and ready for these additions.

PRO TIP

Paint beyond where you want the final edge to be to allow for confident blending and soft transitions.

28 Sand texture and dribbles



Start with Dark Values

Begin by painting the darkest darks and gradually move through the values. Pay attention to hard edges and smooth them out with a damp finger if needed.

Add Horizontal Dark Accents

Run a thin, horizontal dark accent over the area. Soften the edges slightly to blend with the surrounding colors.

Mix and Apply Mid-Tones

Add a little blue and brown to your main mixture to create a mid-tone. Use a bit of water to help the paint flow smoothly onto the canvas.

Create Light and Shadow Bands

Alternate between lighter and darker values to form distinct bands. Add a few stripes of lighter, bluer grey to suggest light reflecting off sand waves.

Adjust for Depth and Warmth

As the sand comes forward, make it darker and warmer by adding a touch of burnt sienna. This creates depth and reflects the change in light.

Plan Soft Shadows

Consider where soft shadows, such as those from a boat, will fall. Ensure these areas are darker to enhance realism.

PRO TIP

Use a smaller canvas to start, as it's easier to manage and correct mistakes.

29 Dark accents and occlusion shadow



Observe Sand Shapes

Examine the interesting shapes in the sand, noting the soft edges and curves. These curves resemble sound waves and add dynamic movement to the painting.

Create Occlusion Shadow

Mix a very dark color on your palette for the occlusion shadow under the boat. This area receives minimal light, so it should be painted darker than it appears, as acrylics dry lighter.

PRO TIP

Paint dark areas slightly darker than desired, as acrylics will dry lighter.

30 Sand details and tide lines



Add Warmth to the Sand

Mix a little more brown into your paint to add warmth. Use a smaller brush to merge this slightly lighter version into the existing sand color. This will help blend the sand into the boat area, avoiding a harsh white line later.

Highlight Sand Undulations

Lighten your mix slightly, but avoid making it too blue. Use a fine line to add touches of reflected skylight on the tops of the sand undulations. This adds realism to the scene.

Create Dark Tide Lines

Mix a darker, slightly browner color with a touch of yellow ochre for warmth. Apply these dark lines in a natural, irregular pattern to mimic tide lines. Avoid painting straight strips, as they would look out of place.

PRO TIP

Use a fine line to add reflected skylight on sand undulations for realism.

31 Splashy effects and stopping point



Create the Tide Line

Paint the tide line by considering the angle and how it coincides with the bottom of the boat. Ensure the lines get thinner as they move into the distance, similar to railroad tracks, with lines further apart at one end and closer together at the other.

Add Splashy Effects

Use a clean, large, soft brush to add splashy effects. Spray the area lightly and add a thin layer of yellow ochre for warmth. Flick the paint onto the canvas to create a moist, splashy look. Allow it to dry slightly before adding more detail.

Create Intermediary Effects

Mix a color that is between the existing colors and use a fair amount to splash around. The speed of your brush strokes affects the vigor of the splash. To create dribbles, apply wet paint and add water until it dribbles down naturally.

Know When to Stop

The challenge with splashy effects is knowing when to stop. Avoid covering the entire canvas, which can lead to a muddy appearance. Stop before you think you need to, preserving the beauty of the white canvas.

PRO TIP

Stop adding splashy effects before you think you need to, to avoid overworking the canvas.

32 Boat painting and impasto technique



Select Brushes

Use a number 10 long flat synthetic brush and a number 4 ivory long flat synthetic brush for this painting. These brushes will help you achieve the necessary detail and texture.

Mix and Apply Dark Values

Mix blue and burnt sienna to create a neutral grey for the darkest parts of the boat. Ensure this dark value is not as dark as the foreground to maintain depth. Spray lightly and wipe to keep the paint workable.

Block in the Boat

Carefully block in the boat, paying attention to the drawing for realism. Notice the complex structure, such as the thickness of the sides and the angles, which are crucial for a realistic appearance.

Add Subtle Variations

Switch to a smaller brush to work into the block-in. Look for subtle variations in color and contrast, such as slightly lighter and bluer areas, to enhance the seat and other details.

Maintain Angles and Perspective

Keep in mind that horizontal angles are slightly tilted due to the boat's resting position. Adjust vertical lines to about 5 degrees to the left for accuracy.

Apply Impasto Technique

Use impasto white for highlights, applying thick paint with a light touch to maintain texture. Build up to the strongest highlights, starting from darker areas and working towards the light.

Create Highlights and Texture

Add more white and a touch of blue to create highlights on the seat. Drag the paint lightly to add texture, ensuring it catches the light in certain areas.

Enhance Form with Light Spots

Add light spots on the top and side of the boat to suggest form and depth. Use a clean brush with normal white to create a glow around the highlight area.

PRO TIP

For straight lines, keep your arm locked and rotate your body to achieve a smooth motion.

33 Final touches and depth creation



Add Lighter Grey to Edge

Apply a mid-grey to the edge of the boat where it curves and reflects more light. Use downstrokes to achieve a weathered look, but vary the strokes for a natural effect.

Darken Underneath

Mix blue and brown to create a dark shade, almost black, for the area under the boat. This adds depth and contrast to the painting.

Apply Thick Paint

Use a thicker application of paint on the closest part of the boat to create a sense of depth. Don't overmix on the palette to allow for interesting paint effects.

Enhance with Color Notes

Introduce more intense blue and other color notes to add interest. Let small strips of color pop through for a dynamic effect.

Detail the Bumper

Use pure burnt sienna on the top of the boat's bumper to show wear. Add scratches or use a palette knife for an organic, beaten-up appearance.

Highlight with Pure White

Apply pure white to the end of the brush and lay it on the bumper. Allow the edge to be broken and varied to enhance the worn look.

PRO TIP

Use thick paint on the closest part of the boat to create depth and make it jump forward.

Summary & Key Takeaways

Embark on your painting journey by selecting a large canvas and choosing between acrylics or oils, with acrylics offering durability for expansive works. As you begin, focus on capturing the mood of the scene with a limited palette, using colors like ultramarine blue and burnt sienna to create a cohesive and atmospheric piece. Consider the evolution of your painting by comparing earlier versions and experimenting with different formats to enhance the composition.

As you paint, pay attention to the character and age of elements like boats, which add intrigue and contrast to your work. Use complementary color schemes to draw the viewer's eye and explore painterly techniques to develop your skills. Manage your painting process by starting with a light sketch and working from the background to the foreground, maintaining soft edges by working wet into wet.

Incorporate variety through texture, color, and value, and use techniques like softening edges with a dry brush to prevent a uniform look. Regularly clean your brushes to maintain their quality and ensure smooth blending, especially in areas like mountains where avoiding outlines is crucial. With each step, challenge yourself to explore new techniques and enhance your painting's depth and interest.

LESSON POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Choose a large canvas and consider acrylics for durability.
- Capture the mood with a simple, monochromatic color scheme.
- Introduce atmospheric perspective by adjusting values for depth.
- Focus on a specific painting challenge to enhance your skills.
- Use a spray bottle to keep acrylic paint wet for smooth blending.
- Always wet your brush before using acrylics to prevent drying.
- Apply paint while the surface is wet for consistent value.
- Use a dry brush to soften edges and add variety.



After the Storm 2

Student Critiques

Club members painted their own versions of this scene and I critiqued each one. Their paintings — and my feedback — are a wonderful way to see this lesson's ideas in action.

“Washed up” by **Lindsay Shaw**



Washed up

Great work Lindsay! Love that intense glow in the sky and the real sense of light on the mountains. Beautiful subtle shadows cast by the dune grasses too, though the grasses themselves could do with a little fertiliser. The drawing of the boat is pretty decent and there's a lot of nice expressive brushwork in there. If you darken the foreground sand a little more it will connect with the boat better and also provide a stronger sense of depth as the eye travels from the shade into the light. Nice job!

“After The Storm Oil video lesson 3.21” by **Jill Frazier**



After The Storm Oil video lesson 3.21

Hi Jill, nice work. Great to see this on a smaller scale. I love your expressive brushwork that ties the whole painting together. Looks to me like you may be using a little too much painting medium with your oils and it's letting the weave of the canvas show through. Try painting with less medium and use bigger piles of paint. Other than that I've only got praise for this one. Nice!

“‘Quiet Beach’ in (ordinary) acrylics!” by **Barbara Magor**



‘Quiet Beach’ in (ordinary) acrylics!

Hi Barbara, yes it does feel like a very quiet beach! The tighter your style, the more quiet the beach will seem. Looks like you've come to appreciate how fast normal acrylics dry, so you've ended up painting over dry layers and that gives you the grainy dry brush look with lots of hard edges. Maybe that's what you were after, but it wasn't what I was teaching. You know, that was about the seventh time I've painted that boat, so of course I can paint it very quickly now, which, combined with the techniques I showed in the video, gives a very painterly wet in wet look akin to oil paints. If you were to paint this one again you'd be able to paint it a little faster and avoid much of the dry-brush look. Also, check your boat against the photo in a mirror. The drawing's a bit wonky. You've created a good sense of light and space in the background. Good on you!

“"After The Storm" watercolour & gouache, by Eric Hillmer, Toronto, ON, Canada.”
by **Eric Hillmer**



"After The Storm" watercolour & gouache, by Eric Hillmer, Toronto, ON, Canada.

Hey Eric, nice to see this one in watercolour! Great job too with all the colours and sense of light. Just the drawing letting you down a but and I'd spend some more time experimenting with making those splashy foregrounds on separate paper. Watercolour is perfect for that. Just takes a bit of practice.