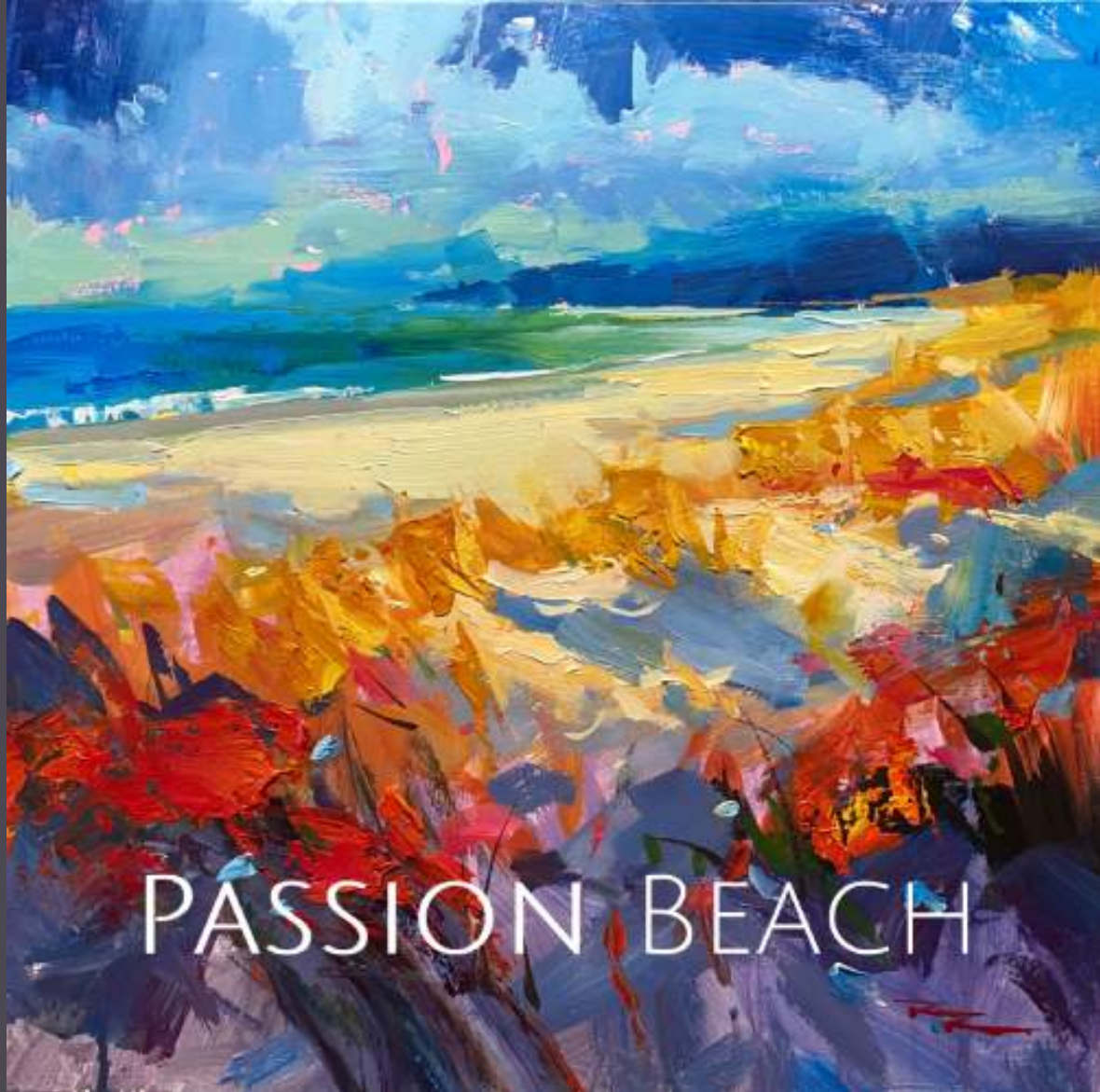




Passion Beach

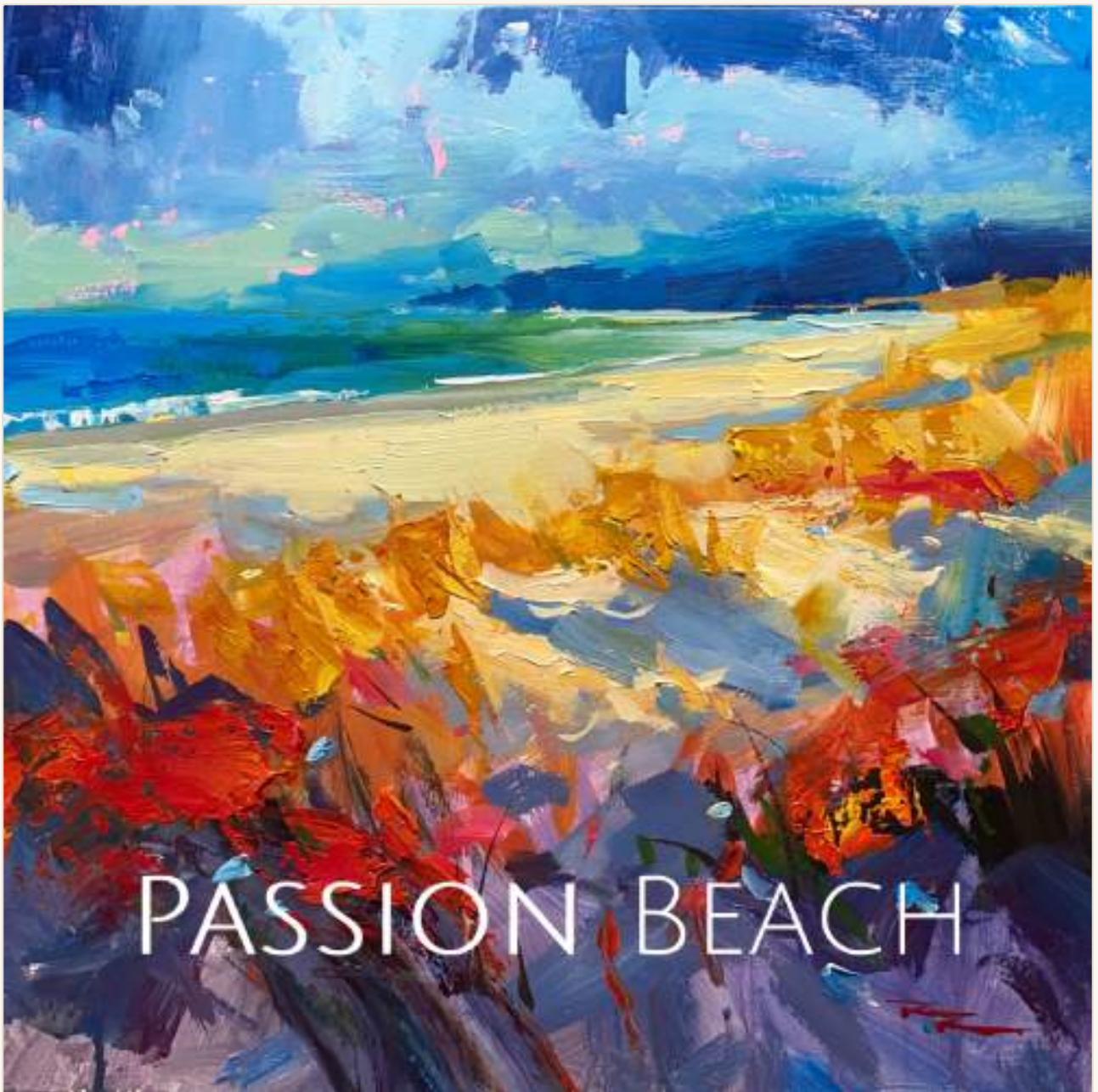
A step-by-step painting guide by Richard Robinson

Watch the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/223-Passion-Beach>

MY PAINTING CLUB

Introduction

I invite you to join me on a creative journey as we capture the enchanting beauty of Ruakaka Beach at the start of summer. This chapter is all about embracing a vibrant, passionate style to bring this expressive beach scene to life. We'll delve into designing with a large light effect, where the light in the center contrasts with a soft shadowed foreground and a darkened sky, creating a dynamic and punchy composition. You'll learn how to lay down a base coat of complementary colors using acrylics, enhancing the vibrancy of your painting. I'll guide you through the art of expressive brushwork, using various tools to achieve impasto effects that add depth and texture. We'll explore the technique of under-mixing paint to create unique painterly effects, and discuss the importance of varying edges—soft against sharp—to elevate your work. With step-by-step guidance and resource photos, you'll gain the skills to either follow along or apply these techniques to your own creations. Let's dive in and discover the joy of painting with passion and expression.



PASSION BEACH

"Passion Beach" 15x15" Acrylic on Canvas by Richard Robinson



REFERENCE PHOTO 1

The scene as Richard found it.



REFERENCE PHOTO 2

The scene as Richard found it.

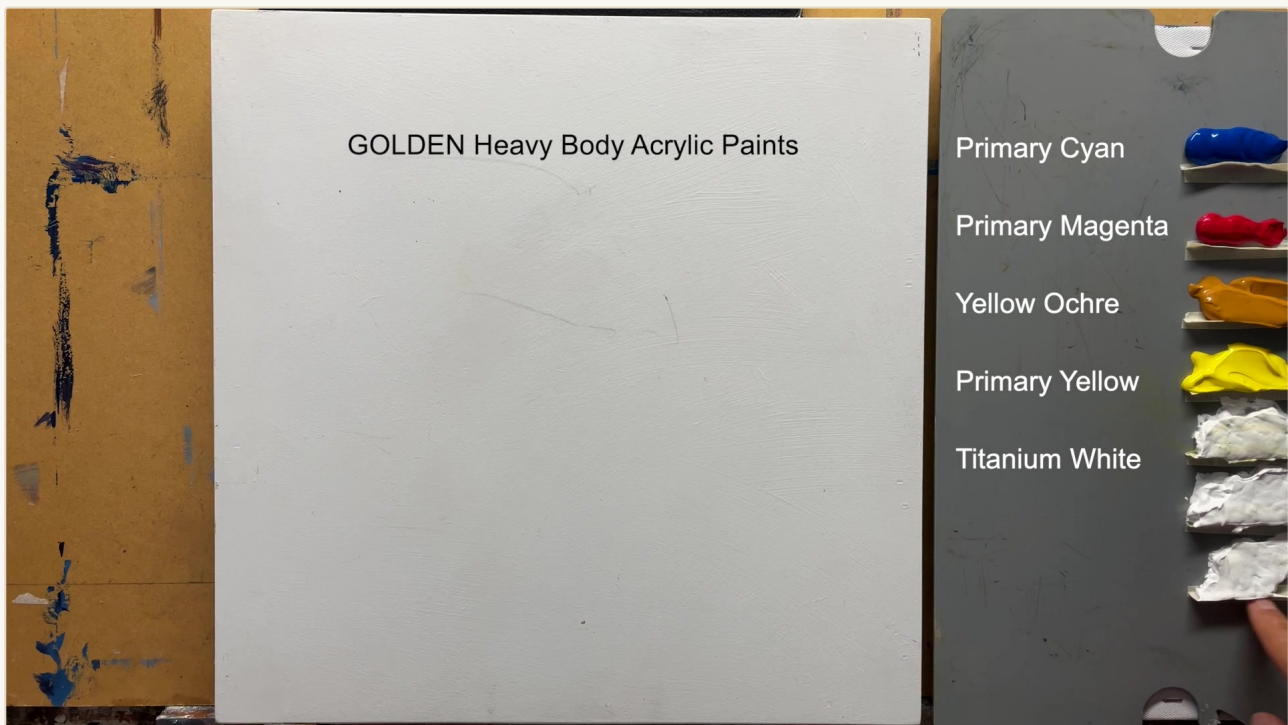
Materials

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

- Golden Heavy Body Acrylic Paints
- Primary Cyan
- Primary Magenta
- Primary Yellow
- Yellow Ochre
- Titanium White
- Board
- 15×15" MDF or Hardboard with 2 coats of acrylic gesso.
- Brushes
- [Rosemary & Co. Richard Robinson Brush Set](#)
- Paper Towels
- Water Jar
- Water spray bottle

1 Colors and brushes



Prepare Your Colors

Arrange your palette with primary cyan, primary magenta, yellow ochre, primary yellow, and three portions of titanium white. These powerful colors will provide a vibrant range for your painting.

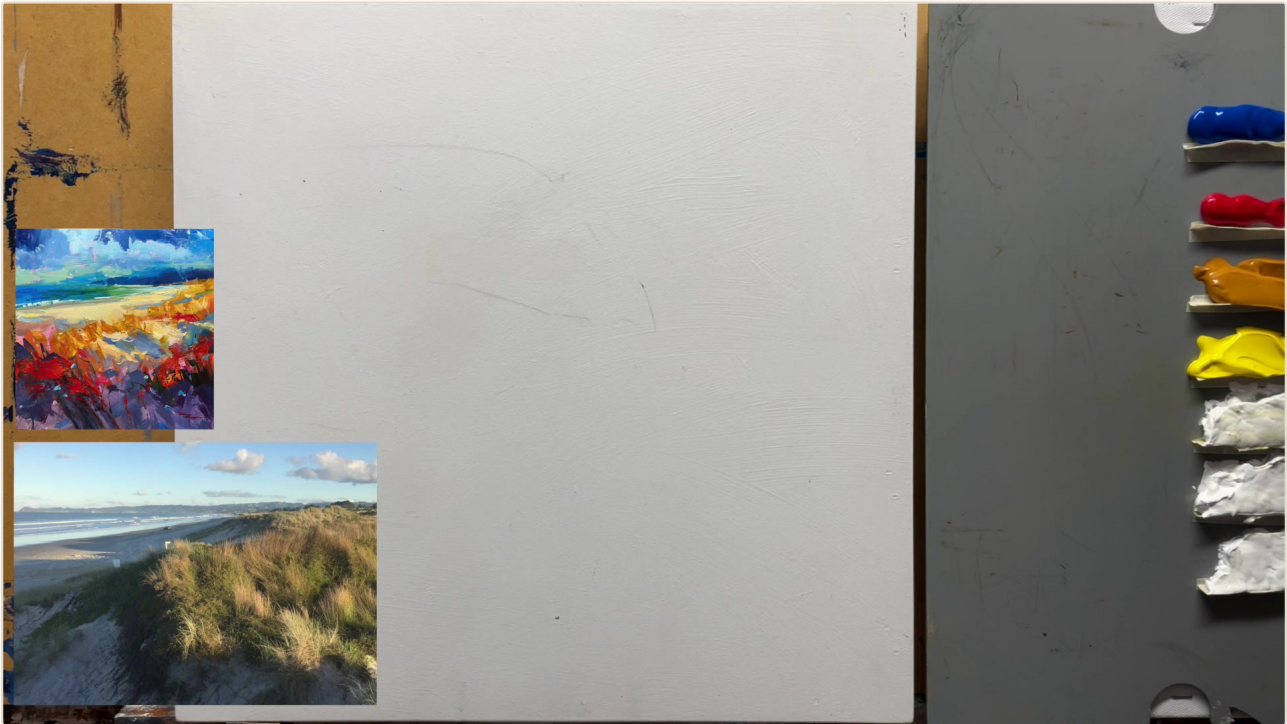
Select Your Brushes

Choose a variety of fine-bristled synthetic brushes, including flats, long flats, wide flats, and a small dagger. Include rounds, riggers, and consider using a rubber brush or roller for creating interesting marks on the canvas.

PRO TIP

Use a variety of brushes to create diverse and interesting marks on your canvas.

2 Initial sketch and composition



Prepare Your Brush

Wet a big brush to begin your initial sketch. This will help you lay down the foundational shapes and lines with ease.

Sketch the Composition

Focus on a high horizon line to emphasize the foreground. Start with big shapes and angles, capturing the interesting textures and colors in the foreground.

Define the Beach and Ocean

Avoid rounding the beach corner; instead, depict it as a sharp, knife-like shape. The ocean should also be a thin, sharp line extending into the distance.

Add Hills and Clouds

Sketch in hills of any shape and size, along with some clouds. These elements will contribute to the overall composition and balance.

Plan Light and Shadow

Decide to have most of the light in the upper area of the painting, with a soft shadow across the bottom. This will guide the viewer's eye to the focal point.

Incorporate Expressive Elements

Plan for expressive, abstract paintwork at the bottom, with more detailed work in the center of focus. This contrast will enhance the painting's dynamic.

PRO TIP

Avoid rounding the beach corner; depict it as a sharp, knife-like shape.

3 Base coat and color layering



Plan Your Painting

Begin with a clear vision of your painting's composition. Decide on a blue sky and plan to add pink undertones for a shimmering effect when the blue is layered over it.

Apply Pink Undertones

Apply pink paint to the sky area, allowing it to peek through the blue layer later. This will create a visual shimmer on the final surface of the painting.

Layer Blue and Cyan

Add blue and cyan to the lower part of the painting to achieve a rich mauve color. Use loose, gestural strokes to apply these colors.

Introduce Variation with Yellow Ochre

Mix in yellow ochre to grey down certain areas, adding variation and interest to the painting. This is not based on any reference, but rather to enhance color variety.

Embrace Painterly Effects

Allow the wet paint to dribble and create natural patterns. Adjust the canvas angle to control the direction of dribbling, or lay it flat to avoid vertical drips.

Undercoat the Central Section

Apply a layer of yellow ochre to the central section as an undercoat, preparing it for further layers.

PRO TIP

Adjust the angle of your canvas to control paint dribbling and create different effects.

4 Working with wet paint



Apply the Base Coat

Use yellow ochre to apply a little bit of undercoating in the central section. Add bright yellow and a touch of white to create a punchy base that represents June grasses. This forms the base coat for the entire painting.

Decide on Drying Time

Consider whether to let the base coat dry or to continue working while it's wet. If you choose to work while wet, expect some mixing with the layers on top.

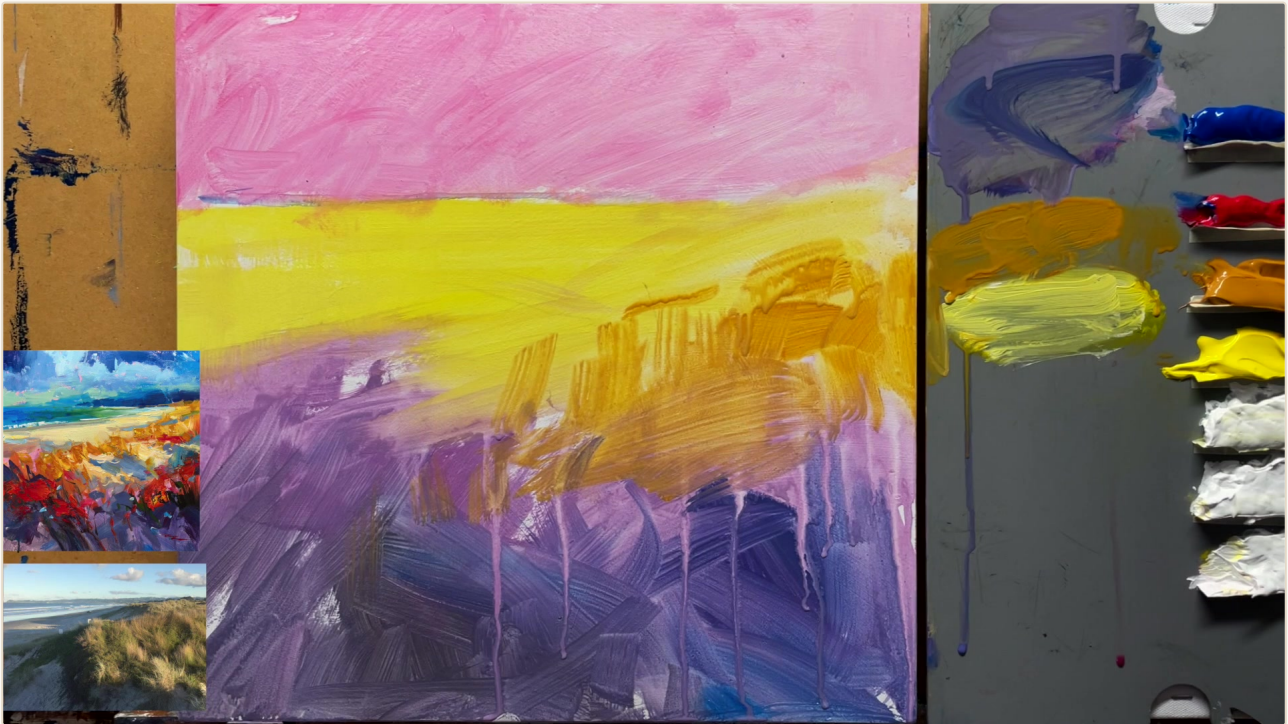
Avoid Overworking

If your paintings tend to become muddy from overworking, allow the base layer to dry before proceeding. Efficient brush strokes can help prevent muddiness if you continue painting while wet.

PRO TIP

Efficient brush strokes can prevent muddiness when working with wet paint.

5 Sky painting techniques



Darken the Sky

Make the sky darker than it actually is to enhance the contrast and make the light areas appear even lighter. This will add excitement and punch to your painting.

Lighten Near the Sun

Lighten the sky slightly closer to the sun to create a natural gradient effect. This will help emphasize the light source and add depth to your sky.

Vary Your Brushwork

Use your brush in a variety of ways throughout the painting process. Experiment with different strokes to achieve diverse textures and effects.

Let the Base Coat Show

Allow parts of the base coat or canvas to show through by not covering them completely. This will add dimension and interest to your painting.

PRO TIP

Use your brush in a variety of ways to achieve diverse textures and effects.

6 Clouds and texture



Mix Colors Lightly

Leave your colors partially mixed on the palette. This half-mixed approach on the brush creates exciting textures on the canvas that can't be achieved with overly precise mixing.

Paint Cloud Bases

Create the base of the clouds using a color lighter than the sky, with a hint of mauve. Apply this with soft edges to achieve a gentle transition between the sky and the clouds.

Add Cloud Highlights

Enhance the cloud mixture by adding white to create highlights. Use a combination of hard and soft edges to add contrast and interest.

Incorporate Texture

Use little flicks and touches of paint to add textural interest and realism. Nature is full of tiny textures, so avoid flat surfaces.

PRO TIP

Leave colors half-mixed on the brush for natural texture.

7 Ocean and horizon



Add a Greenish Tint to the Sky

Quickly paint the sky beneath the horizon with a greenish tint. Work swiftly with acrylics to prevent them from drying and to achieve soft edge effects. Aim for variety in your colors to mimic nature's diversity.

Clean Your Brush

Wash the green out of your brush using a large bucket of water. Keeping your brushes clean ensures that new color mixtures remain vibrant and uncontaminated.

Paint a Distant Mountain

Mix colors to create a distant mountain and apply it to the horizon. Ensure the horizon line is flat, as it's a crucial element to get right. Blend the mountain with the green sky to create a natural transition.

Enhance with Blue and Magenta

Add more blue and a touch of magenta to the mountain for added depth and contrast. Be careful with the horizon level to maintain a balanced composition.

PRO TIP

Use a large bucket of water to clean brushes thoroughly, ensuring new color mixtures remain pure.

8 Foreground waves and texture



Prepare the Ocean Area

Clean the area where you will paint the ocean to ensure pure colors. Avoid muddy colors by starting with a clean surface.

Apply Aqua Green Glaze

Mix a beautiful aqua green with some water to create a glaze. Apply this glaze over the yellow base to achieve vibrant aqua colors.

Enhance with Blue

Add more blue to the area with a big brush stroke to increase depth. This will create a nice contrast and enhance the ocean's texture.

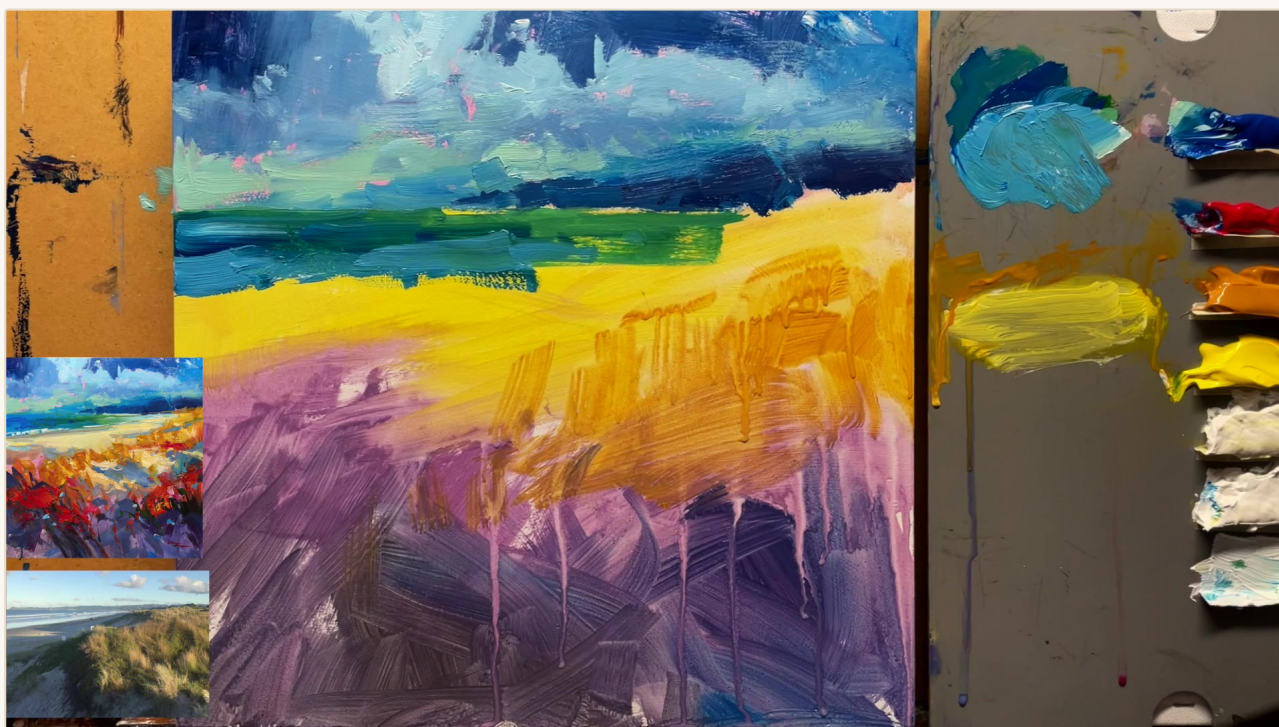
Add Lighter Blue Highlights

Mix blue with white to create a lighter blue. Apply this by pushing and pulling the paint to add texture and interest to the ocean.

PRO TIP

Use a clean surface to avoid muddy colors when painting the ocean.

9 Sand and atmospheric perspective



Add Foam to the Ocean

Mix a tint of blue with white to create a whitey blue color. Carefully apply this to the end of the ocean area to represent foam, ensuring you maintain the horizon line.

Create Textural Waves

Use a palette knife to add small waves in the foreground, enhancing the texture and interest in the painting.

Paint Wet Sand

Mix a warm grey for the wet sand, working over the ocean to form a thin dagger shape. Add a touch of mauve for color interest and shadow base work.

Add Warmth to the Sand

Introduce a bright yellow to the sand, being cautious not to make it too bright. Ensure shadow shapes cast by the dunes are maintained.

Depict a Distant Beach

Use a dagger brush to add a distant beach with a mix of blue and beach color. Keep the line horizontal to convey distance effectively.

Step Back Regularly

Periodically step back from your painting to view it from different distances. This helps in assessing the realism and maintaining gestural brushwork.

PRO TIP

Step back every few minutes to view your painting from a distance, enhancing the perception of realism and gestural quality.

10 June grasses and personal style



Prepare Your Palette and Brushes

Ensure your palette is clean for vibrant colors. Clean your brushes regularly and switch to a new brush when needed to maintain color purity.

Mix Base Colors for June Grasses

Start with yellow ochre, add a little yellow and blue, and adjust with white for a lighter tone. This mix will serve as a wash over the area to create the base color for the grasses.

Add Depth with Atmospheric Perspective

Incorporate a touch of blue and magenta to suggest distance as the beach recedes. This technique aligns colors closer to the sky color, enhancing depth.

Create Texture and Shadow

Apply a base of orange for the shadow side of the June grasses. Leave lighter tones on top and work darker shades upward to mimic a grassy texture.

Experiment with Color Variations

Feel free to explore more green or brown tones, but a yellow ochre or golden yellow can provide a warm, cohesive feel. Avoid overmixing to maintain texture.

PRO TIP

Avoid overmixing colors to achieve a unique textural feel in your painting.

11 Dark accents and brushwork



Create Dark Accents

Mix blue and magenta for a very dark tone, adding a touch of yellow ochre to grey it down slightly. Apply these gestural dark strokes into the wet paint, allowing you to choose between soft and hard edges.

Lighten and Blend

Lighten the dark mixture slightly and load your brush with water. Brush this onto the canvas, creating beautiful dark work with varied brushstrokes.

Avoid Patterns

Vary your brushstrokes to prevent creating a repetitive pattern. Nature's patterns are not regular, so aim for a more natural, varied look.

Focus on Brushstrokes

Concentrate on making bold, beautiful brushstrokes rather than focusing on form or realism. Use large strokes to add interest and movement.

Soften Edges

Use a water spray bottle to mist the paint, helping it dissolve and creating soft, beautiful edges.

PRO TIP

Vary your brushstrokes to avoid creating repetitive patterns, aiming for a natural look.

12 Sand dunes and impasto technique



Create Shadowed Sand Dunes

Mix a grey that is slightly lighter and bluer than the dark areas already on your canvas. Consider the form and where the light and shadows will fall on the sand dunes. Apply this mix to the shadow side of the dunes, focusing on big shapes to create depth.

Add Light to Sand Dunes

Switch to a different brush, wet it first, and then dry it slightly to prevent paint from getting stuck in the ferrule. Mix white with a little yellow ochre for a soft transition, and apply a large chunk of light to the dunes. Add more yellow ochre and a spot of yellow for variety, ensuring not to overmix.

Enhance with Dark Accents

Add a few darker accents to the sand dunes, using a mix slightly darker than the initial application. This will enhance the depth and form of the dunes.

Apply Impasto Technique

Use a palette knife to add impasto texture to the dune grasses and sand. Scoop up the paint without overmixing and let it graze off onto the canvas. This technique creates shapes that are difficult to achieve with a brush.

PRO TIP

Always wet your acrylic brushes first and dry them slightly to prevent paint from getting stuck in the ferrule.

13 Color contrasts and random marks



Create June Grasses

Load your brush with plenty of paint, focusing on under-mixing rather than over-mixing. Allow the paint to graze off onto the canvas to form interesting shapes. Add a touch of yellow ochre and a spot of red for variation.

Add Red and Yellow Chunks

Place larger chunks of red and yellow at the bottom of the canvas. These colors will pop against the purple background, creating a vibrant contrast.

Introduce Muted Green

Use a dagger brush to mix a muted green by adding a little red, which is opposite green on the color wheel. Apply this muted green to enhance the vibrancy when placed next to red.

Incorporate Violet and Blue

Mix a lighter violet for more contrast and add it to your painting. Include pure sky reflections by adding some blue to create a harmonious effect.

Add Vibrant Pink Accents

Introduce vibrant pinks, inspired by magenta ice plants, to bring out seasonal beauty. Tone down areas with yellow ochre if needed.

Create Natural Marks

Step back from the canvas to assess your work. If any marks seem too deliberate, use your thumb, a palette knife, or a different brush to break them up, making them appear more random and natural.

PRO TIP

Step back from the canvas frequently to evaluate your work, and consider viewing it in a mirror for a fresh perspective.

14 Final details and finishing touches



Add Fine Accents

Switch to the Rigor Brush to create very fine marks. Add little dark and light accents to introduce subtle sparkles and details.

Paint Seagulls

Use the Rigor Brush to paint a couple of seagulls in the sky. These small details add life and interest to the scene.

Define the Surf Line

Flatten the brush and push the edge into the flat paint to create a final line of surf down the beach. Aim for a crisp edge to enhance the realism of the water.

Soften the Horizon

Add a touch of blue to the horizon at the ocean level. This will give the scene more distance and depth, softening any areas that feel too dark.

PRO TIP

Use the Rigor Brush for fine details like seagulls and sparkles to enhance the painting's realism.

Summary & Key Takeaways

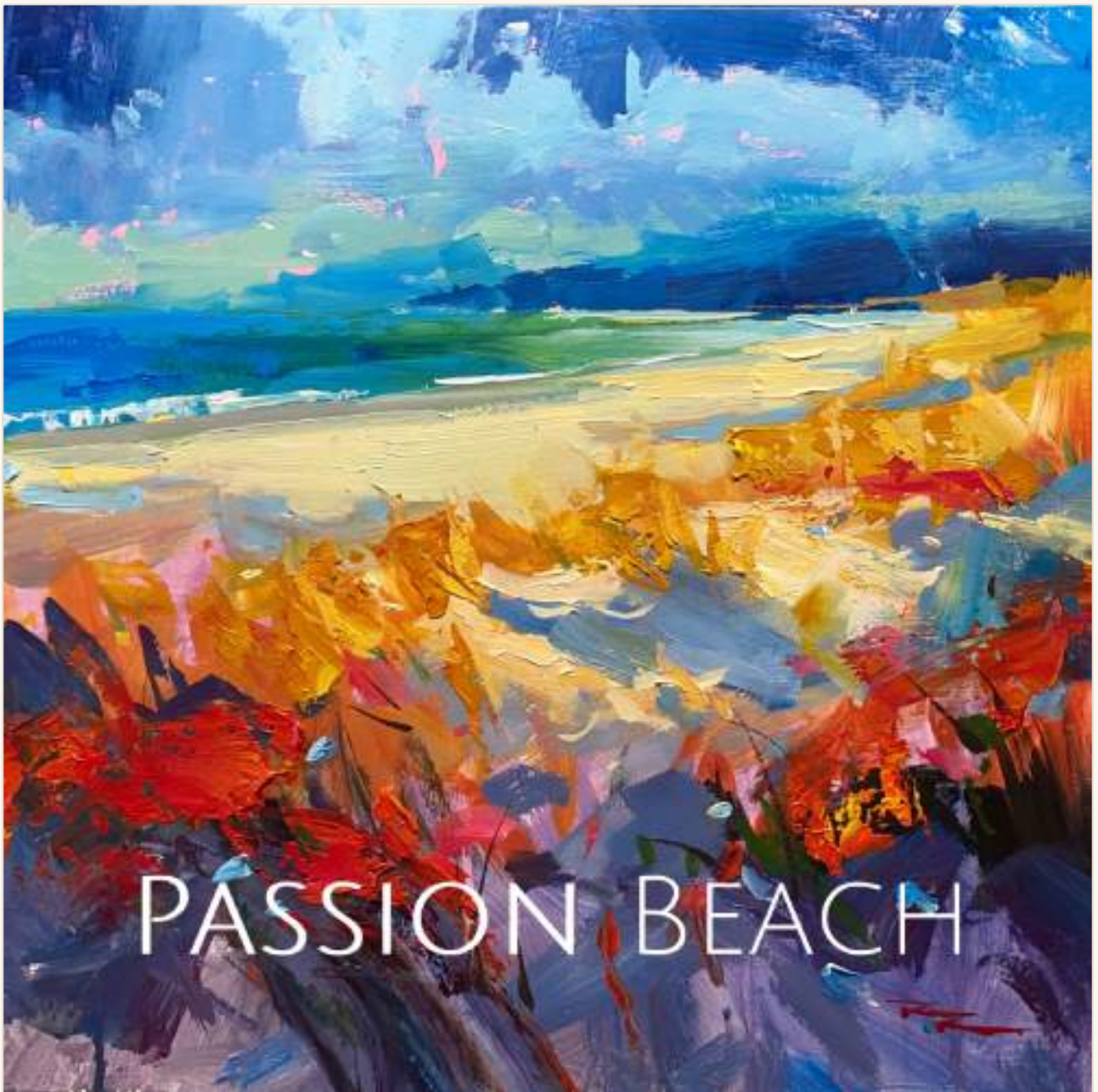
Embark on your painting journey by arranging a vibrant palette and selecting a variety of brushes to create diverse marks. Begin with a high horizon line in your initial sketch to emphasize the foreground, and use expressive strokes to lay down the base coat. Layer colors thoughtfully, allowing undertones to shine through for a shimmering effect.

As you work with wet paint, consider the balance between letting layers dry and continuing to paint for dynamic mixing. Enhance the sky with darker tones for contrast, and let parts of the base coat peek through for added texture. Use half-mixed colors to create natural textures in clouds and waves, and maintain a clean palette to keep colors vibrant.

In the final stages, focus on adding depth and interest with varied brushstrokes and impasto techniques. Introduce color contrasts and random marks to bring your painting to life. Finish with fine details like seagulls and surf lines using a Rigor Brush, ensuring your Passion Beach scene captures the essence of a lively coastal landscape.

LESSON POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Use a variety of brushes to create diverse and interesting marks on your canvas.
- Avoid rounding the beach corner; depict it as a sharp, knife-like shape.
- Adjust the angle of your canvas to control paint dribbling and create different effects.
- Efficient brush strokes can prevent muddiness when working with wet paint.
- Use your brush in a variety of ways to achieve diverse textures and effects.
- Leave colors half-mixed on the brush for natural texture.
- Use a clean surface to avoid muddy colors when painting the ocean.
- Step back every few minutes to view your painting from a distance, enhancing the perception of realism and gestural quality.



PASSION BEACH

"Passion Beach" 15x15" Acrylic on Canvas by Richard Robinson

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.

Paradise Beach Redux by Steven Rowell



Paradise Beach Redux by Steven Rowell

Really interesting approach Steven. Love the power in the brushwork and the intensity of colour contrast and value contrast. The spacing and size of your highlights in the foreground is conspicuously similar, hinting at manmade structure. Adding more variety there will give a more natural feel.

Passion Beach acrylic by Evelyn Tuhi-Herewini



Passion Beach acrylic by Evelyn Tuhi-Herewini

Nice to see this different soft-edged scumbling effect, Evelyn. I feel that the grasses could do with more impasto paintwork in the mid values to better match the upper half of the painting. Make sure the bases of your hills are flat as they seem to be angling up towards the right.

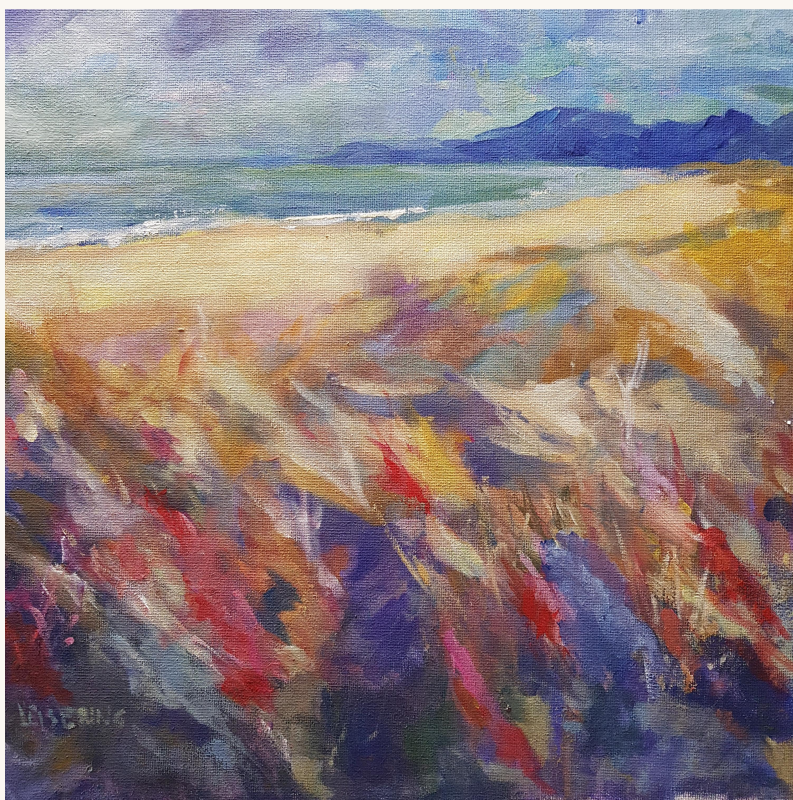
Francis Beach Half Moon Bay CA by Claudia Morgan



Francis Beach Half Moon Bay CA by Claudia Morgan

Some beautiful work in here Claudia, especially in the cloud - deliciously painterly and rich with complex colour. I'd like to see more of that treatment in the foreground. Just looks like you ran out of steam there.

German Version by Anne-Dore Leisering



German Version by Anne-Dore Leisering

Good job Anne-Dore! Nothing I'd change here. The heavily textured canvas is working to soften the edges of your brushwork creating a softer feel overall, and a sensation of the blurred effects of wind through the grasses. Nice!