



Painting Waves at Waipu Cove

A step-by-step painting guide by Richard Robinson

Watch the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/233-Painting-Waves-at-Waipu-Cove>

MY PAINTING CLUB

Introduction

In this chapter, we dive into the mesmerizing world of waves at Waipu Cove, a scene that offers endless inspiration for capturing the dynamic beauty of the ocean. Painting waves is a rewarding challenge, and in this lesson, I invite you to explore the techniques that will elevate your wave paintings to new heights. Inspired by master artists like William Trost Richards, Ruo Li, and Roy Tabora, I've distilled my learnings into this bonus chapter, designed to expand your skills and creativity. We'll experiment with different canvas sizes, including panoramic formats like 10x30 inches, which are perfect for conveying the vastness of seascapes. You'll learn how to incorporate metallic paints for a unique sheen and discover how varying brush techniques and canvas toning can transform your work. By studying and integrating elements from other artists, you'll develop a distinctive style that reflects your personal vision. Whether you're painting your favorite beach or exploring new shores, this lesson will provide you with the tools and inspiration to create stunning wave paintings.



Waipu Cove

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

- Atelier Interactive Acrylics
- Black
- Phthalo Blue
- Brilliant Magenta
- Arylamide Yellow Light / Cadmium Yellow Light
- Toning Grey Mid
- 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
- Stay-wet palette
- Water spray bottle

1 Exploration of Techniques and Materials



Explore Different Canvases

Experiment with both large and small canvases to see how they affect your painting style. Try using panoramic canvases, such as a 10 by 30, to capture wide scenes like waves.

Incorporate Other Artists' Styles

Study how other artists paint waves and incorporate elements of their style into your own work. This can help you develop a unique approach by blending different techniques.

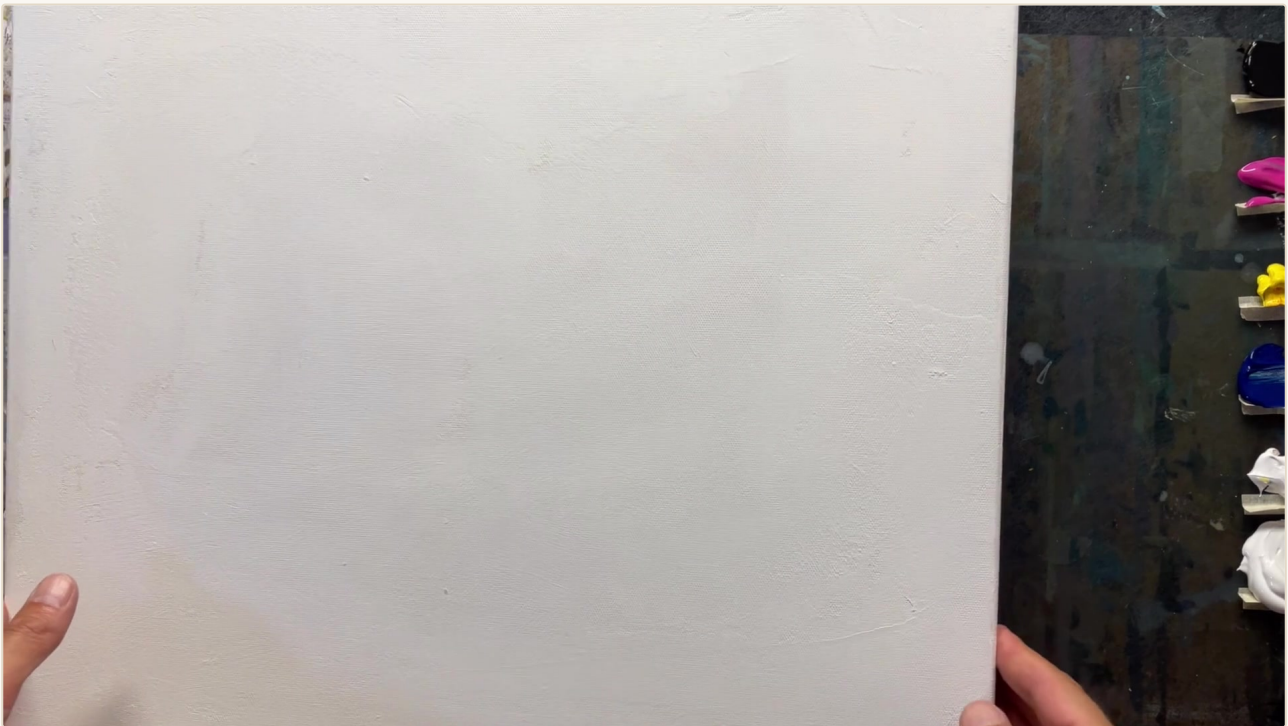
Experiment with Materials

Try using metallic paints to add a unique sheen to your paintings. Use different brushes and explore various ways of toning the canvas before painting to see how these changes impact your work.

PRO TIP

Experiment with panoramic canvases to capture wide scenes and enhance your painting style.

2 Preparing the Canvas and Materials



Prepare Your Canvas

Use a 16 by 20 inch box canvas. Plan to paint the sides as well for a complete look. This will ensure a cohesive appearance from all angles.

Select Your Colors

Choose black, brilliant magenta, abrilamide yellow light, phthalo blue, and titanium white. These are acrylic paints, but oils can be used as well. Prepare a neutral grey by mixing black and white for toning.

Mix a Toning Grey

Combine white with a little black to create a neutral grey. Aim for a value between mid-value and the lightest light, which is white. This grey will help tone the canvas without adding any hue.

Choose Your Brushes

Use synthetic brushes for acrylics, including a large hog's hair brush, a varnishing brush, and a rigger for detail work. Synthetics work better with acrylics, while natural bristles are preferred for oils.

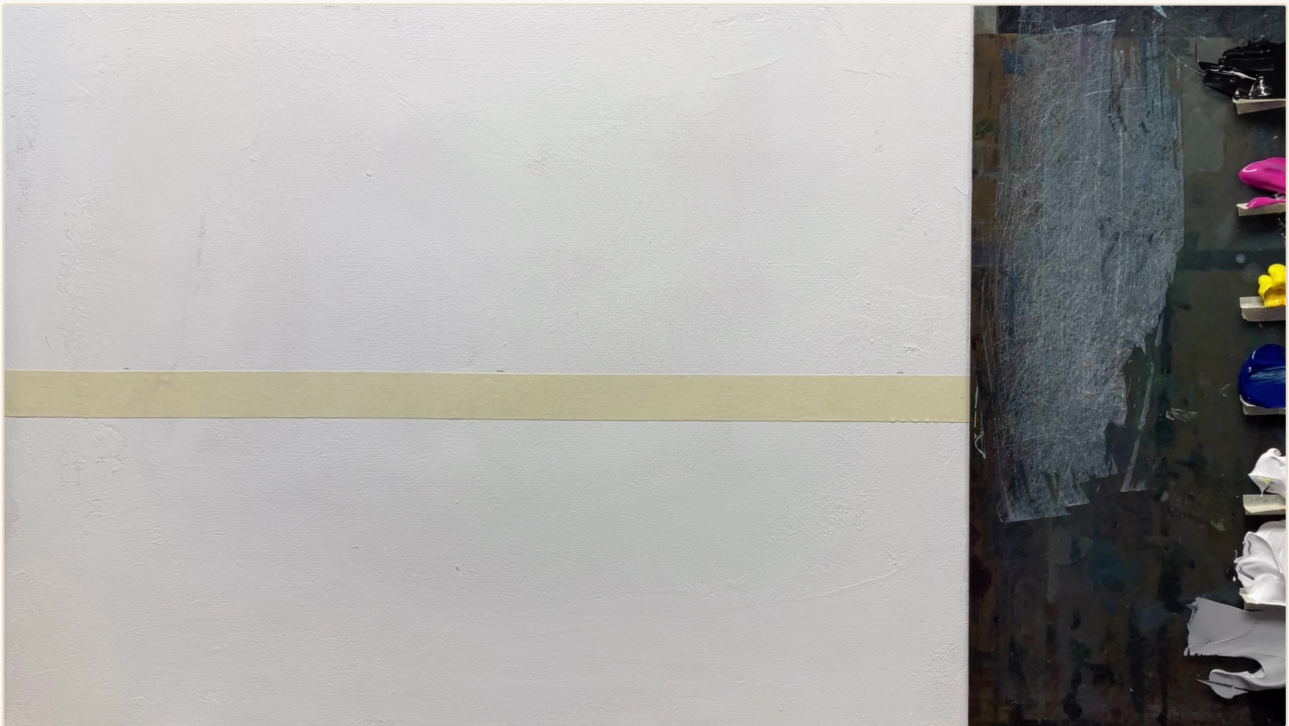
Tone the Canvas

Use the large brush to apply the toning grey to the canvas. Wet the brush and use a spray bottle to moisten the paint and canvas. This base layer enriches the final painting and prevents the canvas from showing through.

PRO TIP

Use synthetic brushes for acrylics to achieve better results and control.

3 Toning the Canvas



Plan the Sun's Position

Decide where the sun will be located on your canvas. Apply white paint to that area, adding a touch of yellow to create a bright spot for the sun.

Reflect the Sun in the Sand

Consider where the sun's reflection will appear on the wet sand. Leave space for the ocean and apply the same white and yellow mixture to indicate the reflection.

Mix and Apply Orange

Mix yellow with brilliant magenta to create an orange hue. Use this color to indicate large cloud masses, working outwards from the sun area.

Work Quickly with Acrylics

Paint quickly with acrylics to prevent them from drying too fast. Consider adding retarder medium for smoother transitions, especially in the sky.

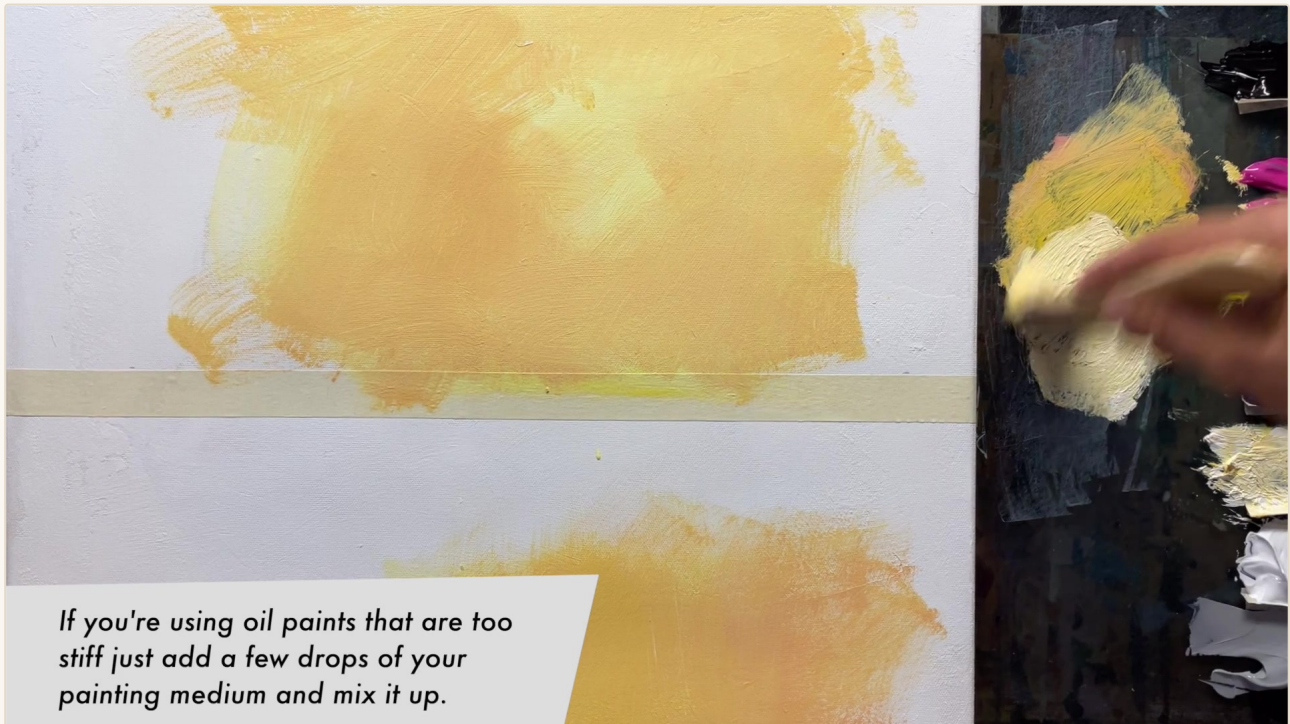
Enhance with Punchy Yellow

Add a more vibrant yellow to areas that need extra brightness. Remember, this is just the underlayer, so roughness is acceptable.

PRO TIP

Use retarder medium with acrylics to extend drying time for smoother transitions.

4 Understanding Color Temperature



Smooth the White Paint

Mix the white paint thoroughly if it has become gluggy from a previous palette. Ensure it is smooth to avoid chunks, which can be sanded off later for a clean surface.

Add Magenta for Pink Tones

Incorporate more magenta into your mix to create a pink hue. Spray the paint with water to keep it moist and easy to spread, especially if it is drying quickly.

Create Cloud Gradation

Focus on achieving a smooth gradation of color in your clouds. Avoid intruding into the sunlight area with the pinky color to maintain the composition's integrity.

Maintain a Wet Palette

Keep your palette wet, especially when using acrylics. Consider using a stay-wet palette, which you can make or purchase, to prevent the paint from drying out.

Use Mid-Gray for Contrast

Add mid-gray to your mix to create a blue appearance against the surrounding warm colors. This contrast highlights the relative nature of color temperature.

PRO TIP

Keep your palette wet to ensure smooth application and ease of blending, especially with acrylics.

5 Painting the Sky Base Layer



Apply the Base Grey

Start by applying a pure grey to the canvas. Notice how it appears blue or cooler grey. This is just the base layer, so don't worry about the final color range yet.

Mix and Apply Sky Colors

Add phthalo blue to the grey and mix in more white and a touch of brilliant magenta. Ensure you have enough paint to cover the area. Apply this mixture to the sky area, focusing on big shapes without details.

Smooth the Surface

Use a dry, big soft brush to smooth out any roughness in the paint. This prevents interference with future layers and shapes.

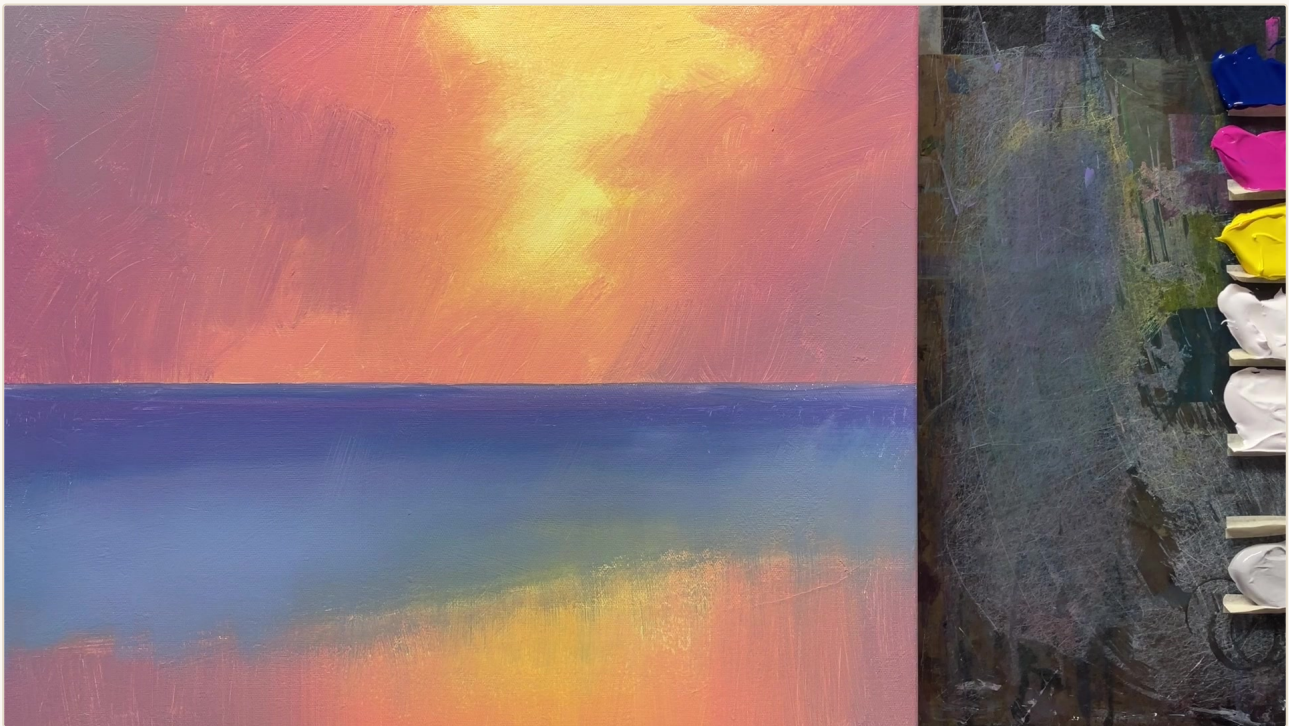
Define the Horizon

For the horizon line, use a wet brush to apply a lighter, slightly grayer version of your sky mix. Paint up to the horizon line, aiming for a straight line as a clean base for future layers.

PRO TIP

Use a big soft brush to smooth out any roughness in the paint, ensuring a clean base for future layers.

6 Adding Details to the Sky



Prepare the Canvas

Tape up the horizon line again. Use a larger synthetic brush, wet it, and lightly spray the canvas to keep it moist. This ensures a fluid application of paint.

Establish the Sun's Position

Determine where the Sun will be by starting with a very light central area. Brush outwards from this point, ensuring the strokes point back towards the Sun to create a radiant effect.

Create Fluidity

Keep the paint mixture wet by continually dipping the brush in water. Avoid dry brush techniques to maintain a smooth, fluid look. Spray the canvas and your palette occasionally to prevent fast drying.

Add Vibrant Color Around the Sun

Apply a vibrant color punch around the Sun area. Change the brush angle frequently to create random effects and interesting textures.

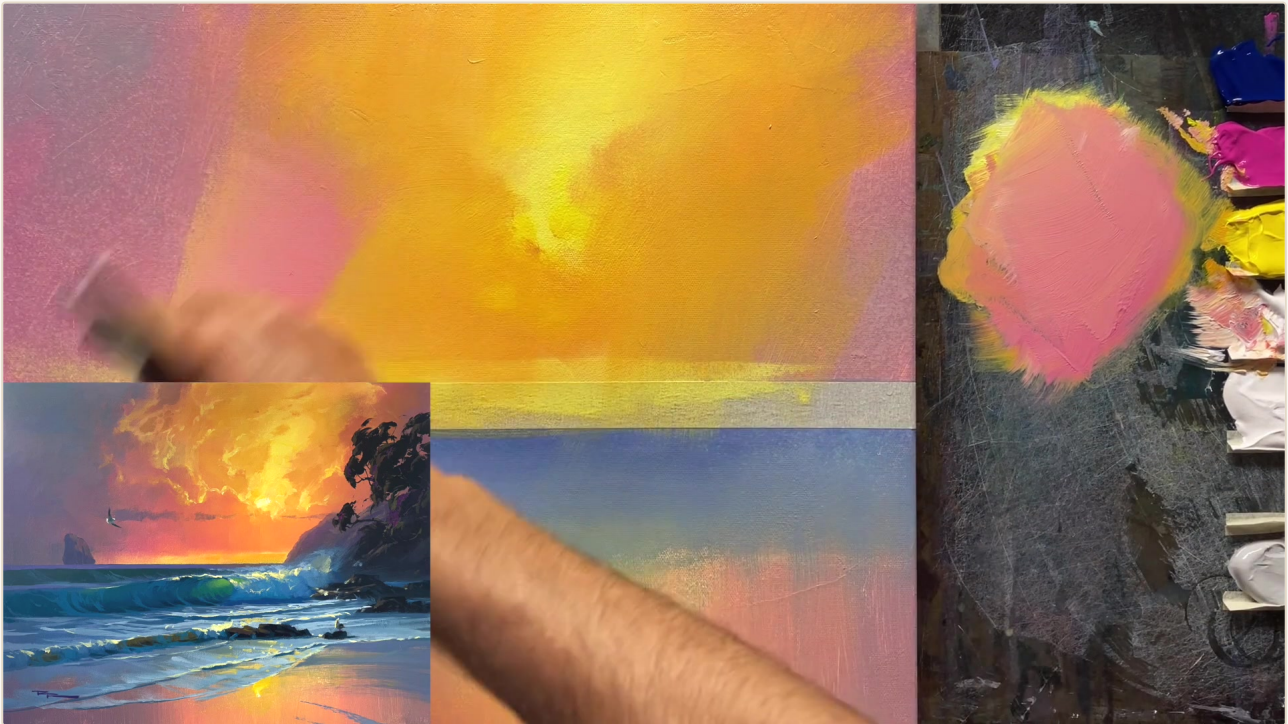
Darken the Sky Gradually

As you move away from the central light area, gradually darken the sky using more magenta. Ensure the transition is subtle so that in black and white, the central area is the lightest, gradually becoming darker.

PRO TIP

Keep the paint mixture wet and fluid by spraying the canvas and palette regularly, especially in warm conditions.

7 Creating Cloud Textures



Create a Glowing Effect

Move the paint outwards from the center to create a glowing effect. Use your finger or any tool like a credit card to add interesting textures that a brush can't achieve.

Add Light Rays

Think about light rays coming out from the sun as you work the paint outwards. Leaving certain areas untouched will naturally create the appearance of rays.

Maintain Wetness

Spray the canvas to keep it wet, especially on warm days, to allow for smoother blending and texture creation.

Use Toning Gray

Add a touch of mixing gray, also known as toning gray, to your palette. This will help in achieving the desired tone and depth in your cloud textures.

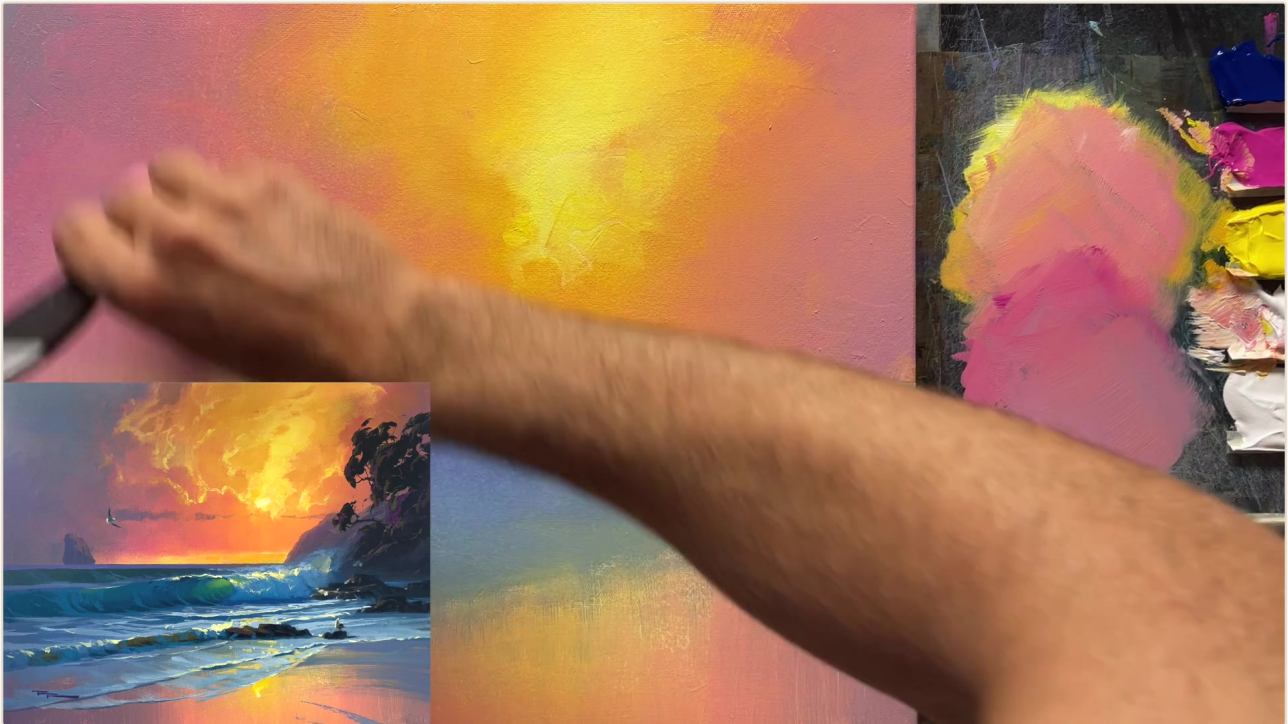
Decide on Brushstroke Texture

Use a big brush to cover up brushstrokes if you prefer a smoother finish. Alternatively, leave some brushstrokes visible for a more painterly effect.

PRO TIP

Use your finger or a credit card to add unique textures that a brush can't achieve.

8 Enhancing Cloud Details



Add Rain Effect

Introduce a bit of rain by adding a touch of blue to the existing warm tones. Be careful not to drag too much of the warm color into the blue area to avoid muddiness. If this happens, wipe the brush, reload with fresh paint, and continue.

Enhance Blue Tones

Add a little more blue and white to the painting to enhance the rain effect. Brush upwards into the existing paint to create a natural transition and suggest more rain.

Switch Brushes

Wash the current brush thoroughly and switch to a slightly smaller synthetic flat brush. Ensure the new brush is wet before starting to add details.

Add Cloud Details

Mix white, yellow, and a touch of pink or magenta to highlight cloud edges. Consider the sun's direction to create natural light effects on the clouds. Use varied brush techniques to avoid uniform edges, creating a mix of sharp and soft transitions.

Soften Edges

If the edges appear too harsh, use a dry soft brush to gently soften them. This technique is easier with oils as they remain wet longer, allowing for multiple adjustments. Soften the edges, then work back into the painting to refine the clouds.

PRO TIP

Use a dry brush to gently soften cloud edges for a natural look.

9 Adding Light Effects to Clouds



Create a Bright Sun Spot

Mix white and yellow to create a bright spot for the sun. Apply this mixture to the area where the sun is located to enhance the glowing effect.

Lighten Clouds Near the Sun

Use a lighter mix for the clouds closest to the sun. This will emphasize the strong glowing effect and add depth to the scene.

Transition to Oranges

As you move away from the sun, gradually transition the colors to softer oranges. This creates a natural gradient and enhances the three-dimensionality of the clouds.

Soften the Edges

Gently soften the edges of the clouds to blend them smoothly into the sky. This will help maintain a realistic and magical appearance.

Add and Refine

Continue to add and refine the clouds as desired. Adjust the colors and shapes to achieve the level of detail and depth you prefer.

PRO TIP

Use a lighter mix for clouds near the sun to emphasize the glowing effect.

10 Adjusting Sky and Land Colors



Tone Down Vibrant Colors

Mix some toning gray with a little blue to create a slightly lighter, grayer version of your current color. Apply this mixture to tone down overly vibrant areas, especially on the shadow side. This will add color variety and balance to your painting.

Add Landform Details

Paint the unique headland shape with a mix of brilliant magenta, a little white, and gray. Ensure the ridges are not too simplified by adding a bit of wriggle to create a natural look. This will help establish distance in your painting.

Create Soft Gradations

Add softness to the bottom of the landform by working in a blue-gray from the corner point. Gradually lighten the central highlight area to create a smooth transition, reflecting the idea used in the sky and smaller elements like hills.

Enhance Three-Dimensional Effect

Introduce a slight orange effect to the edges of the hill as it rolls away, capturing more of the sky color. Ensure the transition is a fast gradation, not a line, to enhance the three-dimensional feel of the landscape.

PRO TIP

Add a subtle orange effect to the edges of the hill to reflect the sky color and enhance the three-dimensional appearance.

11 Adding Light Rays



Add Light Rays

Mix a slightly lighter yellow version of the color already present in the area. Use a soft brush to create a gentle line representing the ray of light. Gradually decrease the intensity as you move outward from the center of the ray. Repeat the process in another area if desired, adjusting the strength of the effect to your preference.

PRO TIP

Use a soft brush to create subtle light rays, adjusting the intensity as you move outward.

12 Refining Cloud Edges



Switch Brushes

Select a filbert brush to refine the cloud edges. This brush will help you achieve the delicate backlit effect of the clouds.

Restate Light Areas

Use the filbert brush to restate some of the light areas in the clouds. Focus on enhancing the silver lining effect to highlight the backlit quality.

Adjust Rim Lighting

Decide how much you want to emphasize the rim lighting on the clouds. This will add depth and drama to your painting.

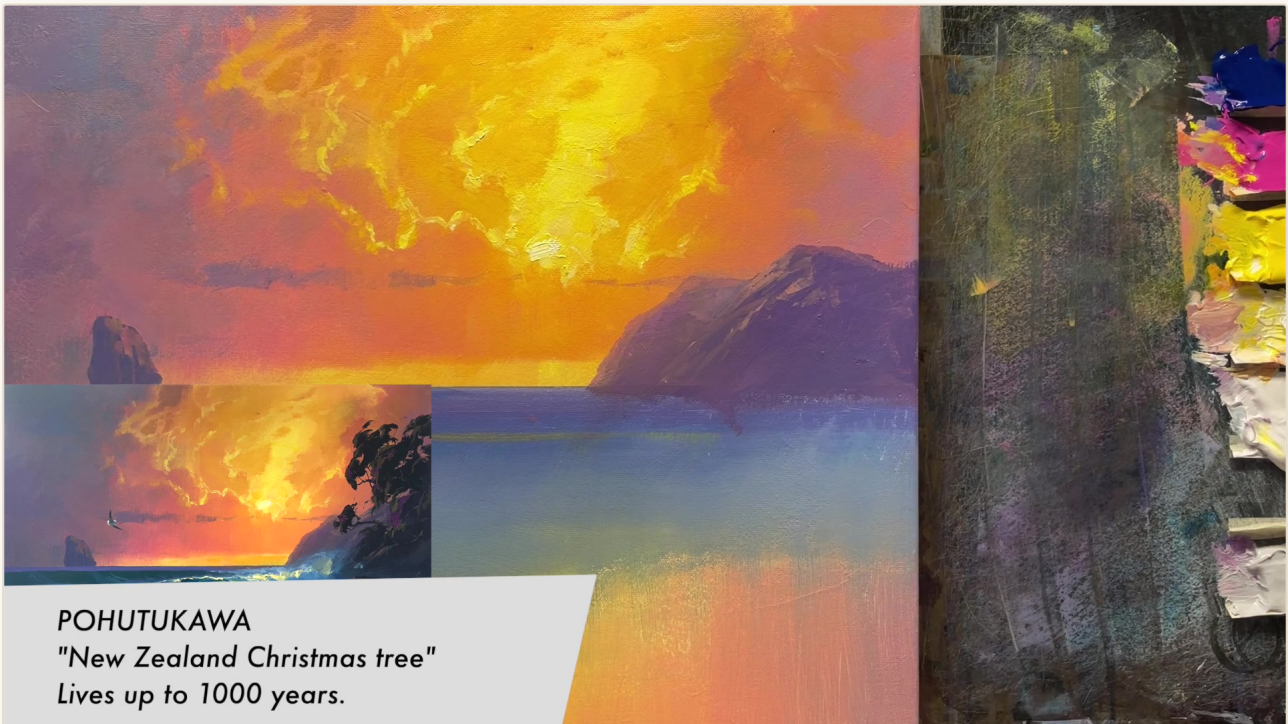
Clean Your Brush

Clean your brush thoroughly to prepare for the next steps. Keeping your tools clean ensures accurate color application.

PRO TIP

Use a filbert brush to achieve delicate cloud edges and enhance the silver lining effect.

13 Painting Rocks and Trees



POHUTUKAWA
"New Zealand Christmas tree"
Lives up to 1000 years.

Prepare Your Palette

Add black to your palette to work on the rocks and trees. Use a filbert synthetic brush for this task.

Paint the Rocks

Mix black with brilliant magenta and a little bit of blue. Decide where the rocks will be placed and paint them onto the canvas. Add small bushes and tufts around the rocks for detail.

Adjust Angles and Add More Rocks

Observe the angles of the rocks and adjust them for a more natural look. Add additional rocks where needed to enhance the composition.

Paint the Pahutukawa Tree

Use curling brushstrokes to paint the Pahutukawa tree. Think in terms of clumps, with small clumps forming larger ones. Avoid echoing shapes by adding randomness.

Add Branches

Switch to a rigger brush to paint the branches. Make the branches squiggly to capture the natural look of the tree.

PRO TIP

Avoid echoing shapes by introducing randomness in your brushstrokes.

14 Adding Spray and Water Effects



Add Spray to the Bottom

Mix white and blue on your palette. Apply this mixture to the bottom of the wave area while the paint is still wet. Use soft edges to create the effect of spray.

Increase Spray Thickness

Add more white and blue to your mixture as you work downwards. This will create a thicker spray effect at the bottom of the wave.

Layer with a Rock

Paint another rock in front of the spray to add depth. Reload your brush frequently to maintain dark tones and minimize mixing with the wet layer below. Use fewer brushstrokes to keep the layers distinct.

PRO TIP

Use fewer brushstrokes to avoid mixing layers and maintain clean, distinct colors.

15 Layering Rocks and Water



Soften Bottom Edge

Soften the bottom edge of the rock formation slightly to create a smoother transition. Consider adding another rock in front of this layer for depth.

Add Light to Rocks

While the paint is still wet, mix a little toning gray with a touch of yellow and magenta. Apply this mix to indicate light on the rocks, suggesting sunlight touching the hill. Increase the yellow and magenta with a bit more white to highlight rock faces catching warm sunlight.

Enhance Light and Spray

Clean your brush thoroughly. Add more light and spray to the wave area by using a small squirt of paint to suggest the top of the wave and spray coming off it. This prepares the scene for the dynamic wave action.

Add Water Effects

Mix a little blue-gray and apply it to suggest water running off the rocks. Use small flicking motions with your brush to create the effect of water movement.

PRO TIP

Use small flicking motions with your brush to create the effect of water running off rocks.

16 Painting the Main Wave



Shape the Main Wave

Add some blue to your palette and paint the main wave with a slight angle at the bottom. This prevents it from appearing flat and adds interest by having it fold over slightly further.

Mix and Apply Base Colors

Mix a tiny touch of yellow with blue and white to create a soft hue. Apply this mix to the wave, softening the edges as you move outward to create a natural look.

Darken the Wave's Base

Darken the bottom of the wave, as it is in shadow and contains thicker water. Use a big brush to create larger, softer effects, then add detail with a finer brush.

Add Curving Lines

With a finer brush, use some green to carve light curving lines within the wave. This enhances the effect of the curl and reflects the glow inside the tube.

Enhance Depth and Light

Deepen the color at the base of the wave with blue, a tiny touch of magenta, and yellow. While the paint is still wet, lighten the thinnest part of the wave to make it pop and come to life.

PRO TIP

Use a big brush to create larger, softer effects in the wave before adding detail with a finer brush.

17 Adding Foam Details



Mix Foam Highlight Color

Mix white with a little yellow and a touch of magenta to create a light color for the foam highlights. This combination will give the foam a warm, glowing effect.

Observe Foam Shapes

Take a moment to study the natural shapes of foam on waves. Avoid creating repetitive patterns, as this can make the painting look unnatural.

Apply First Layer of Light

Apply the mixed color to the foam areas, introducing the first layer of light. Use this layer to start defining the foam shapes.

Add Lighter Highlights

Mix a lighter version of the foam color and apply it thickly in some areas. Work within the previous layer to create a glowing effect without completely covering it.

PRO TIP

Avoid repetitive patterns in foam shapes to maintain a natural look.

18 Highlighting Rocks and Foam



Add Foam Highlights

Introduce a little foam in the shadow areas of the wave to add interest. This creates a second layer of detail as the foam explodes out the front.

Highlight Wet Rocks

Mix toning grey with a touch of yellow, magenta, and possibly a little black to create a highlight color. Apply this to the wet rocks, which reflect the pure color of the sun. Adjust the brightness by adding more black if needed.

Enhance Rock Clumps

Curl the brush as you apply the highlight to create a nice top for the rock clumps. Consider the three-dimensional shape and which faces are turned towards the sun. Add a little more orange to the mix if necessary for a better effect.

PRO TIP

Curl the brush while highlighting to create a natural top for rock clumps.

19 Adding Tree Details



Add Light to Tree Trunks

Use a rigger brush to mix a gray version of the existing color. Apply this gray to the tree trunks to create areas that catch the light. Focus on adding these highlights to enhance the texture and depth of the trunks.

PRO TIP

Use a rigger brush for precise lines and details on tree trunks.

20 Painting Foreground Waves



Add Foreground Foam

Paint more foam in the foreground by creating little wavelets. Use a color that includes the sunlit sand tones to reflect the sandy beach. This will give the waves a more realistic appearance as they break on the rocks.

Create Wave Shadows

At the base of the waves, apply a shadow to give depth. Mix white with toning gray-blue and magenta, then use the tip of a flat brush to paint thin zigzag shapes. This technique helps define the wave's form and movement.

Enhance Shadows with Blue

Add a little more blue to your mix for the shadow sides of the waves. Start with a darker tone and gradually lighten it. This creates the deepest shadow in the wave foam, enhancing the wave's dimensionality.

Lighten the Foam

Add more white to your mix and brush down from the top in small segments. This will create a splashy effect and highlight the foam. Work from the edge and brush back on a diagonal to form natural foam patterns.

Refine Foam Patterns

Make the paint a bit wetter and use thinner zigzag strokes as you move back towards the wave. This will create intricate foam patterns. Avoid painting over existing dark ridges to maintain contrast.

PRO TIP

Use the tip of a flat brush to create thin zigzag shapes for realistic wave foam.

21 Creating Foam Patterns



Define Foam Patterns

Create crisp, sharp edges on the foam patterns to make them a prominent design feature. Observe how the angle of the foam lines changes slightly as the water comes in flat onto a sloping beach.

Adjust Angles and Curves

Notice the slight curve in the foam lines as they approach the beach, and make the angles steeper as they move to the side of your vision. This creates a realistic sensation of the water's movement.

Carve Around Rocks

Add definition by carving around the rocks, enhancing the shapes and creating contrast. This technique highlights the thin, flat water and the underlying colors.

PRO TIP

Use sharp edges on foam patterns to make them stand out as a design feature.

22 Adding Sunlit Foam Highlights



Lighten the Foam Highlights

Mix a lighter color to create highlights on the back of the dark shadow of the wave. Focus on the area where the foam front is pushing forward, creating a little lump.

Align Highlights with the Sun

Directly in line with the sun, lighten the foam highlights further. Avoid painting over the dark wavelet to maintain contrast.

Enhance the Foam Patterns

Add more light to the tops of the foam patterns, where they catch the sunlight. Use a warm light to emphasize the foam shapes that are standing up.

Reserve Brightest Highlights

Apply the lightest, warmest highlights to the bubbly foam where the light shines through. Reserve these highlights for the most prominent areas to ensure they stand out.

PRO TIP

Use the lightest highlights sparingly on bubbly foam to create a striking effect.

23 Detailing Wave Curves



Add Splashy Highlights

Use a dagger brush to add splashy highlights on the wavelet. Focus on the top and leading edge of the wavelet to give it a lighter treatment. This will create a sense of movement and light catching the wave.

Create Sparkly Bits

Add a few sparkly bits throughout the area directly down from the sun. This will enhance the effect of sunlight reflecting on the water, adding vibrancy to the scene.

Reflect Strong Orange

In areas of clear water with no foam, add reflections of strong orange. This will mimic the effect of sunlight penetrating the water, adding depth and warmth.

Run Foam Shapes

Mix white and blue with a tiny touch of magenta and some water to create crisp foam shapes. Run these shapes up into the wave, following the curve and connecting with foam shapes in the light. This continuity helps suggest the wave's curve and enhances the sense of movement.

PRO TIP

Use a dagger brush to add splashy highlights and enhance the wave's movement.

24 Ensuring Randomness in Patterns



Create Random Patterns

Focus on making each wave unique to avoid repetitive patterns. Vary the size, shape, and direction of each wave to enhance realism. Avoid duplicating any successful wave pattern nearby.

Sharpen Soft Edges

If your wave shapes become too soft, add a little water to your brush. This will help you achieve crisper, more defined edges for each wave.

PRO TIP

Vary wave patterns to avoid repetitive, unrealistic designs.

25 Using Brushes for Detail



Select the Right Brush

Choose a crisp little synthetic filbert brush for adding detail to your waves. A dagger brush can also work well, but ensure it's the right size for the specific area you're working on.

PRO TIP

Use a small synthetic filbert brush for precise detail work on waves.

26 Adjusting Ocean Background



Lighten the Ocean Background

Add a little water to your paint to lighten the ocean background. This will help create a more dynamic scene with depth and movement.

Add Foam Shapes

Introduce foam shapes into the ocean background to suggest movement and texture. This adds realism and interest to the scene.

Adjust the Ocean Color

Mix a slightly lighter color by adding a touch of white to your base ocean color. Remember, acrylics dry darker, so aim for a shade lighter than your desired final result.

Create a Swell

Paint a wave forming in the background to depict a swell. This adds depth and a sense of the ocean's power.

PRO TIP

Acrylics dry darker, so mix your colors slightly lighter than your intended final shade.

27 Adding Background Waves



Add Reflections to Flat Water

Mix a little pink with yellow and white to create a soft reflection of the Sun. Apply this mixture to the flat water areas to suggest the sunlight reflecting on the surface.

Paint the Background Waves

Use a different brush to paint the background waves slightly darker and bluer than the existing water. Add a touch of green to the mix to reflect the deeper water. Adjust until the color looks natural and harmonious with the rest of the scene.

Add Foam Patterns

Include some foam patterns in the waves to enhance the realism. Use a lighter color for the foam, suggesting areas where the waves are curling and breaking.

Tidy Up the Sky

If any paint has dirtied the sky area, carefully clean it up to maintain a clear and vibrant sky.

PRO TIP

Use a mix of pink, yellow, and white to create a soft reflection of sunlight on the flat water.

28 Refining Rock Details



Add Dark Blue to Rock Faces

Use a very dark blue to enhance the faces of the rock that are pointing towards the blue light. This will give the rocks more three-dimensionality and depth.

Create Cast Shadows on Foam

Add a small cast shadow on the foam behind the rocks. This connects the rocks to the water and enhances the realism of the scene.

PRO TIP

Use dark blue to enhance rock faces and add depth.

29 Painting a Seagull



Select a Smaller Brush

Switch to a slightly smaller brush, such as a synthetic square, to add finer details to the seagull.

Mix White and Yellow

Mix a tiny touch of white with yellow to create a light color for the seagull's body.

Add Legs and Beak

Use a rigger brush carefully to paint small legs and a little beak, giving the seagull a more complete appearance.

PRO TIP

Use a rigger brush for fine details like the seagull's legs and beak.

30 Adding Beach Details



Prepare the Brush and Paint

Use a bigger brush to cover more area efficiently. Mix white with a touch of toning grey, magenta, and black to create a toned-down color. This will add subtlety to the beach details.

Apply the Paint

Lightly spray the canvas with water to ensure smoother application. Add a bit more white to the mix to enhance the dynamic quality of the beach details.

PRO TIP

Spray the canvas lightly with water for smoother paint application.

31 Signing and Final Thoughts



Sign Your Painting

Use your regular brush to sign your painting. Mix blue and magenta to create a signature color that complements your artwork.

Reflect and Apply

Consider the techniques and concepts you've learned. While copying can be a useful learning tool, apply these methods to your own beach scenes to create paintings you truly love.

PRO TIP

Paint what you love, and you'll love what you paint.

Summary & Key Takeaways

Embark on your painting journey by experimenting with different canvas sizes and materials to find what best captures the dynamic essence of waves at Waipu Cove. Begin by preparing your canvas with a neutral grey tone, setting the stage for a cohesive and vibrant painting. As you layer colors, focus on the interplay of light and shadow, especially where the sun meets the ocean, to create a luminous and atmospheric scene.

As you build up the composition, pay attention to color temperature and transitions. Use retarder medium to extend the drying time of acrylics, allowing for smoother blends and more nuanced gradients. The sky and clouds are your playground for exploring textures and light effects, using tools like brushes, fingers, or even a credit card to achieve unique results. Keep your palette wet and your colors fluid to maintain control over your painting.

In the final stages, refine your details by adding light effects and enhancing textures. Use soft brushes to create subtle light rays and a filbert brush for delicate cloud edges. Introduce depth with rocks and trees, using varied brushstrokes to capture their natural forms. Finally, add the dynamic spray of the waves, ensuring distinct layers for a clean, vibrant finish. With each step, embrace the creative process and let your personal style shine through.

LESSON POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Experiment with panoramic canvases to capture wide scenes.
- Use synthetic brushes for acrylics for better control.
- Keep your palette wet to ensure smooth blending.
- Use retarder medium to extend drying time for acrylics.
- Use a big soft brush to smooth out rough paint layers.
- Add randomness in brushstrokes to avoid echoing shapes.
- Use a filbert brush to enhance delicate cloud edges.
- Use fewer brushstrokes to maintain clean, distinct layers.



Waipu Cove

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.

“Waves at Waipu Cove 53x56cm” by Anne-Dore Leisering



Waves at Waipu Cove 53x56cm

Hi Anne-Dore, good job with the drawing and colour, and some of that brushwork is elegant, particularly in the tree and the foreground thin foam.

I'd like to see a more gradual transition from dark cool to warm light in the clouds. Not easy, I know.

Also, painting over some of the choppy foam pattern in the face of the swell behind the main wave would help simplify it and smooth it out.

“Waipu Cove in oils” by **Geoffrey Geeson**



Waipu Cove in oils

Hi Geoffrey, pretty decent drawing and colour work here. Great wave shape. My only tip would be to avoid over-painting as much as you can. You've done a fair bit of overpainting, most prevalent here in the sky.

The only way to achieve a fresh painterly look without over-working the paint is to consider each brushstroke before you place it. What do I want to achieve with this stroke? How will I load the paint on the brush to achieve that? Is the paint the right thickness for my purpose? Am I using the best brush for that? How will I move and turn the brush to achieve that? All those questions go into brushwork that actually looks effortless when it's achieved.

Of course, it's easier the second, third, fourth time you paint a thing. You build a brushstroke toolkit in your mind for achieving different things over time. That's why I'd like to challenge you to paint this again but with all those brushstrokey thoughts in mind as you go through the painting. Other than that, you've got everything working nicely in this painting.

“Sunset breaks, acrylic with oil glazing, canvas, 40 cm x 50 cm” by **Elena Sokolova**



Sunset breaks, acrylic with oil glazing, canvas, 40 cm x 50 cm

Bold colourful work Elena, as usual. Just two things I'd like to tweak.

The gradation of colour from dark to light in the clouds could be smoother. You could create more of a soft blur of sea spray over and around the foam crashing against the rocks in the distance. Currently their sharp edges bring them forward too much.

Good job!

“Waipu Beach” by Jay Trotter



Waipu Beach

Great work, Jay. Strong colour and confident brushwork. Good to see. I'd suggest you take a look at this in a mirror or flip it over in the computer and take a note of the things that seem a little off to your eye in the first few seconds of viewing it. Some of the foam angles are off.

You've got a great glowing effect in the sky but the cloud shapes themselves could do with some more thought.

When you're adding the lights to a tree try to make family groupings of shapes rather than dabbing the same pattern all over.

Overall very nice.