



The Lily Boat

A step-by-step painting guide by Richard Robinson

Watch the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/240-The-Lily-Boat>

MY PAINTING CLUB

Introduction

In this chapter, we're diving into the exciting world of using Artificial Intelligence to enhance your creativity as a painter. We all know how much time can be spent searching for that perfect image to paint, only to come up empty-handed or uninspired. With AI, you can now generate your own inspiring images in just minutes, saving you countless hours of frustration. Although PaintyBot is no longer active, you can easily use OpenArt.ai to achieve the same results. I'll guide you through the process of creating beautiful, unique images using AI, and then we'll transition into painting that image step by step with acrylics on canvas. Oils work just as well if that's your preference. This scene, 'The Lily Boat,' is a particularly rewarding subject because it combines the tranquility of nature with the creativity of technology, offering a fresh perspective and a chance to explore new artistic possibilities. By the end of this chapter, you'll not only have a stunning painting but also a new tool in your creative arsenal. Let's get started and enjoy the journey!



The Lily Boat 30x30" Acrylic on Canvas by Richard Robinson



REFERENCE PHOTO 1

The scene as Richard found it.



REFERENCE PHOTO 2

The scene as Richard found it.

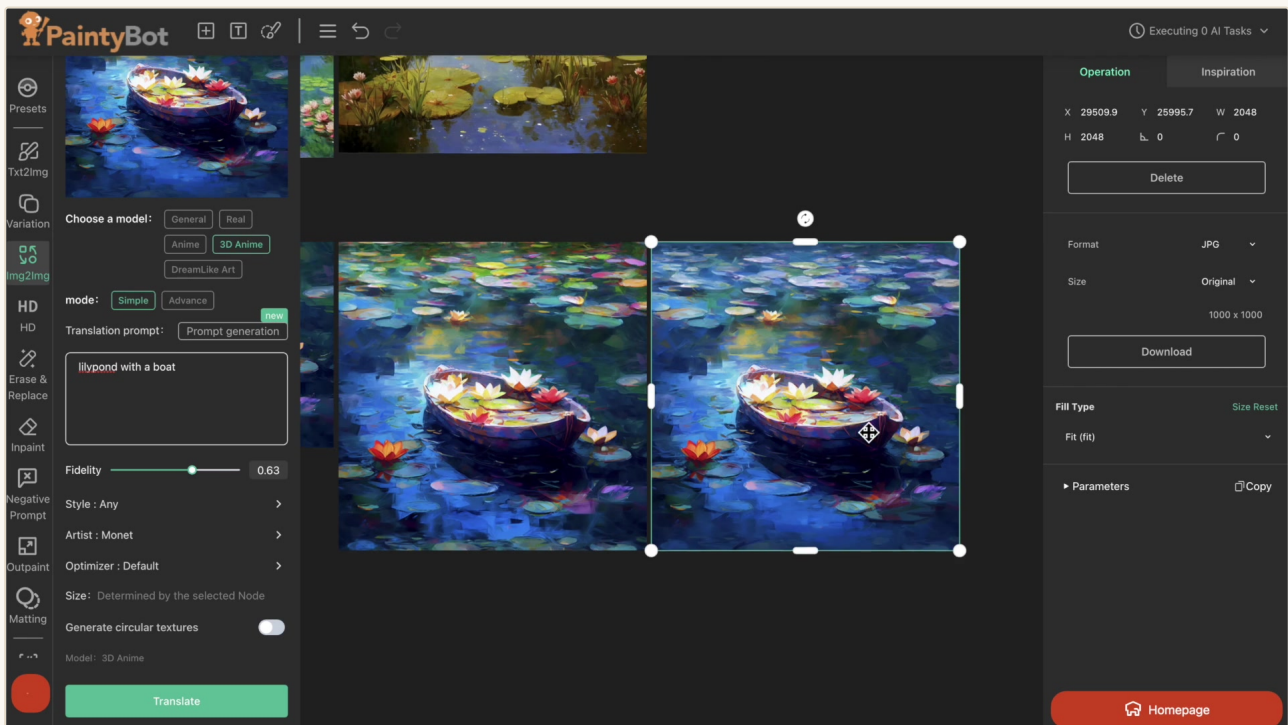
Materials

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

- Sorry, PaintyBot is no longer active. Please use
- OpenArt.ai
- instead.
- Chroma Atelier Interactive Acrylics
- Phthalo Blue
- Cadmium Red Light
- Brilliant Magenta
- Arylamide Yellow
- 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 Using Variations and Alternatives



Use the Variation Tool

Select an image you want to modify. Click on the variation tool and choose how similar you want the new image to be to the original. Click generate to create a new variation.

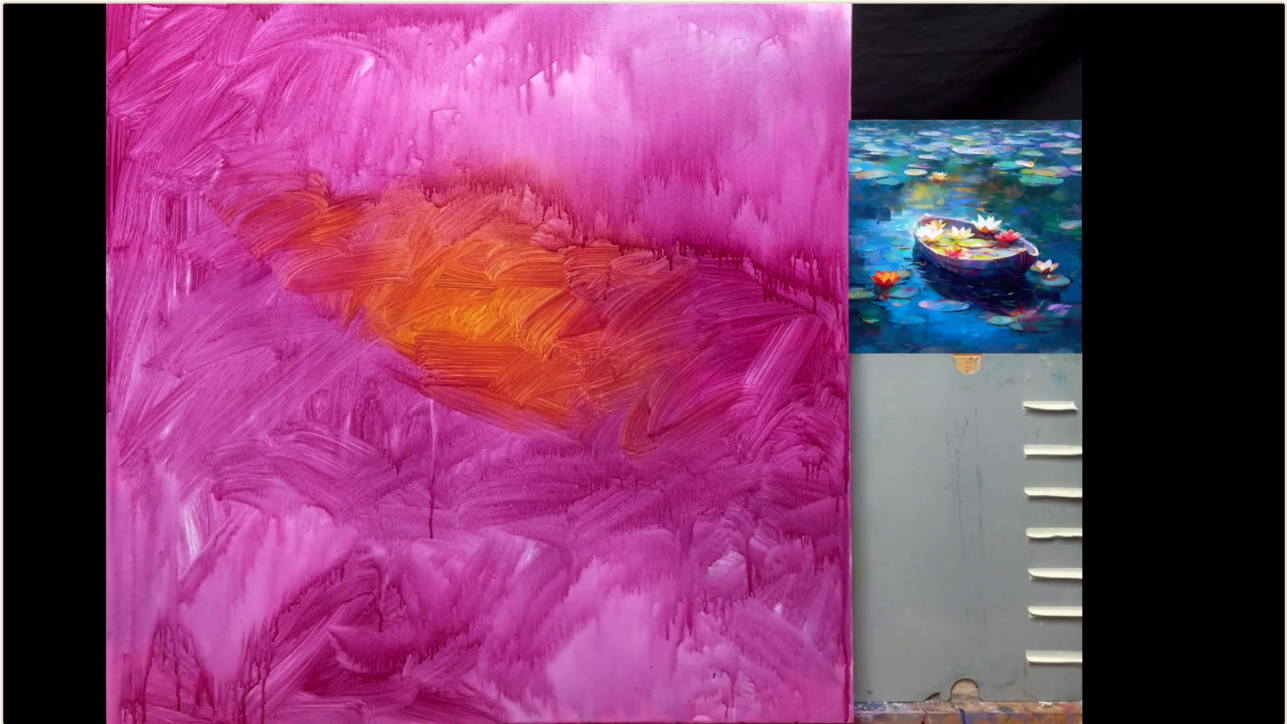
Explore and Paint from Variations

Review the generated images provided in the lesson page. Choose one that inspires you and use it as a reference for your painting. Alternatively, create your own variations using PaintyBot.

PRO TIP

Experiment with different levels of similarity in the variation tool to discover unique compositions.

2 Preparing the Canvas



Tone the Canvas

Use a big brush to apply a Bordeaux tone to the entire canvas. Mix alizarin crimson with water for this step. This tone will serve as a warm base that enhances the colors applied later.

Create a Glowing Center

In the center of the canvas, apply Arilamide Yellow, which is similar to cadmium yellow light. This will establish a glowing spot that is essential for the composition of the Lily Boat.

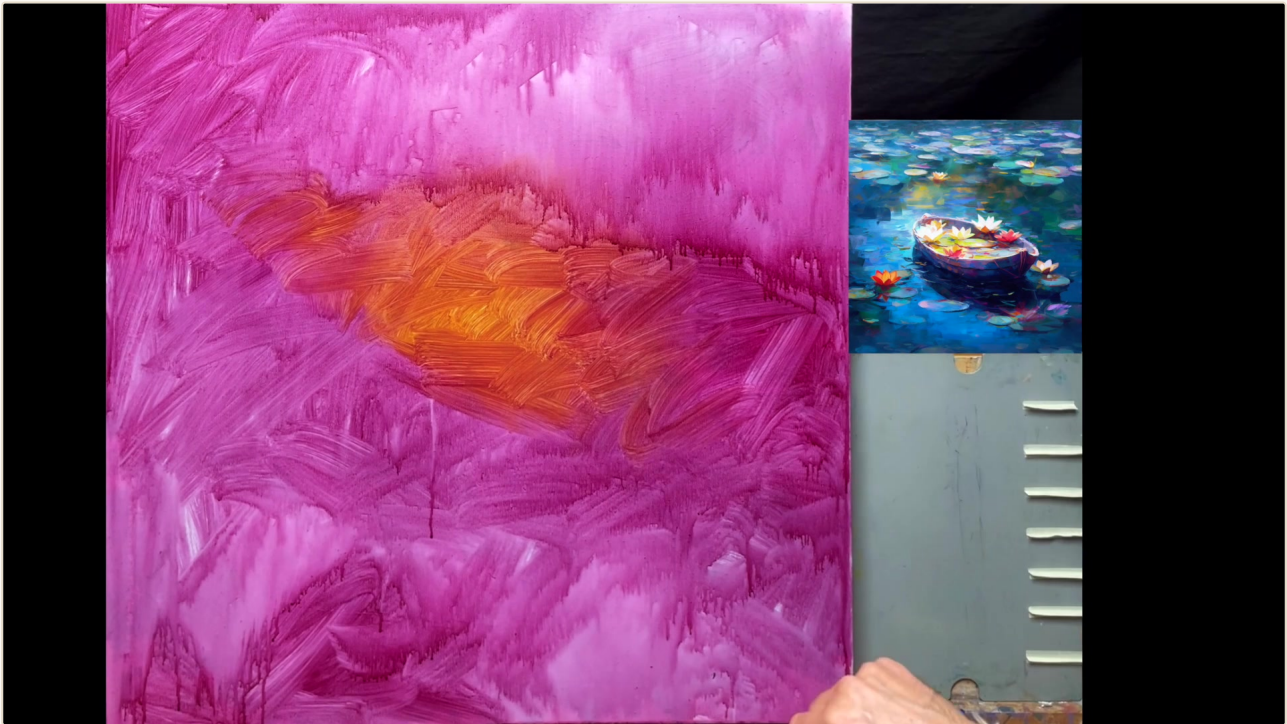
Prepare Brushes

Select a couple of large synthetic long flat brushes, such as size 12. Additionally, have a Rosemary and Co Ivory long flat number four ready for sketching the boat.

PRO TIP

Use a Bordeaux tone as a warm base to enhance the blues and greens applied later.

3 Setting Up the Palette



Prepare Your Palette

Place a generous amount of phthalo blue on your palette. Using large pots of paint is ideal for big paintings, as it allows you to use paint freely without worrying about running out. This approach encourages a painterly, expressionistic style without the concern of paint costs.

PRO TIP

Buy paint in bulk for large paintings to save money and paint more freely.

4 Efficient Painting Techniques



Apply Brilliant Magenta

Use Brilliant Magenta for its vibrant quality. Ensure your palette is positioned to prevent paint from running everywhere, maintaining control over your materials.

Add Arillamide Yellow

Incorporate Arillamide Yellow into your painting. Be mindful that runnier paint may dribble, but embrace this as part of the expressionistic style.

Include White

Add white to your palette as part of the first layer of paint. This will help in creating lighter tones and adding depth to your colors.

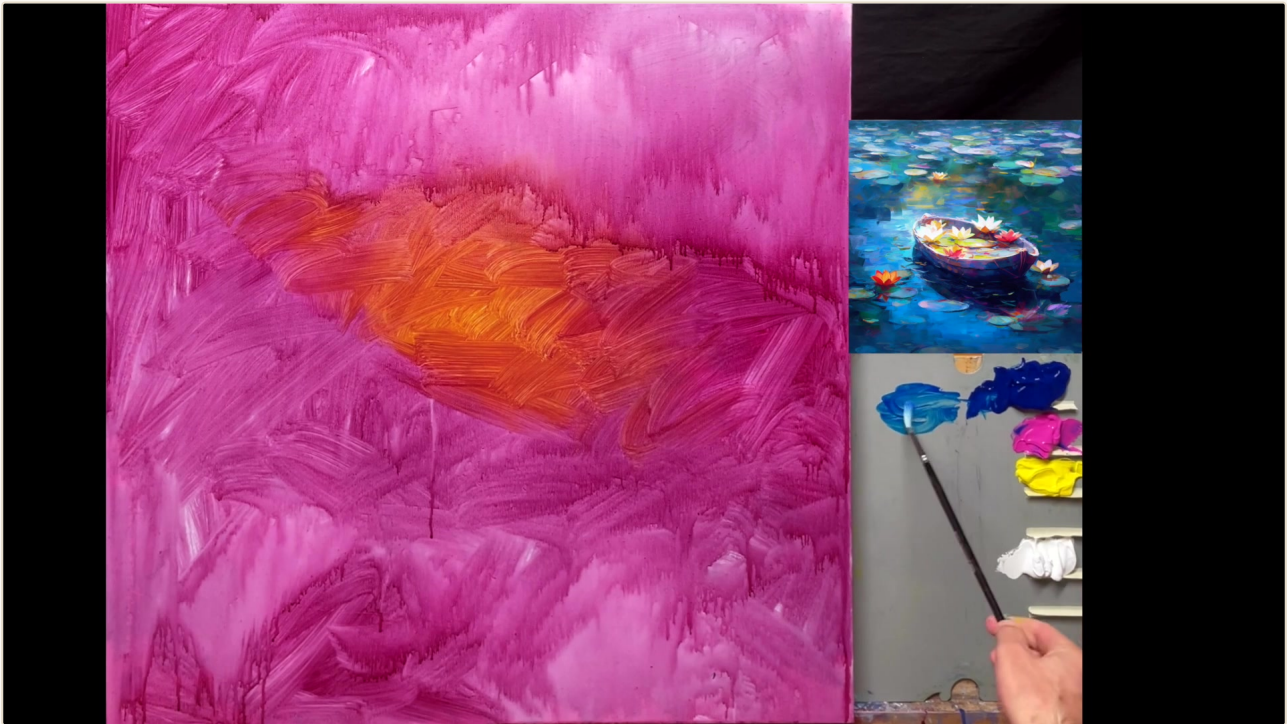
Efficient Brush Cleaning

Use a large bucket of water to wash your brushes. This method saves time and keeps your workflow efficient, preventing delays caused by inadequate cleaning setups.

PRO TIP

Position your palette to prevent paint from running, maintaining control over your materials.

5 Sketching the Boat



Establish the Boat's Center Line

Start by sketching the boat's center line on your canvas. This will help you sort out the perspective of the boat. Use a ruler if necessary to ensure accuracy.

Draw a Rectangle in Perspective

Sketch a large rectangle in perspective around the center line. This will help define the boundaries and shape of the boat.

Transfer the Image

If you're uncomfortable with freehand drawing, use a grid, projector, or the carbon transfer method to transfer the image onto your canvas. This ensures accuracy and saves time.

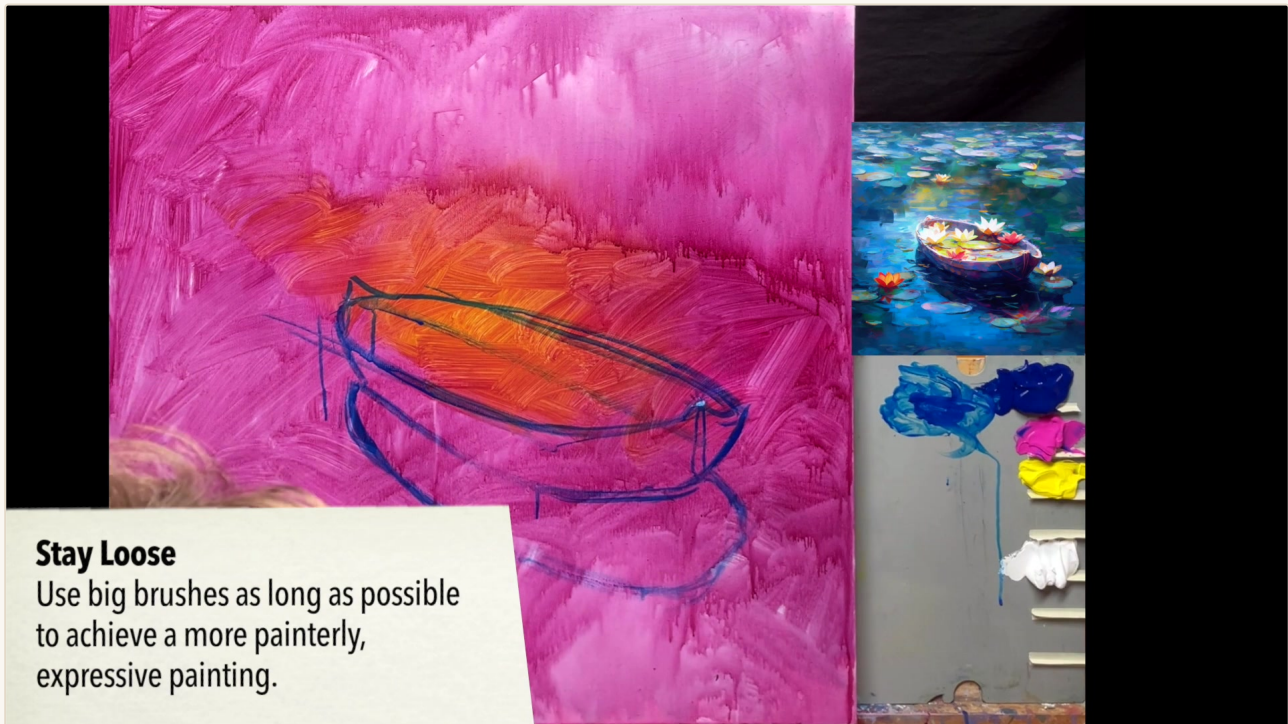
Add the Reflection

Once the boat is sketched, mark in the reflection on the water. This adds depth and realism to your composition.

PRO TIP

Use a center line to help sort out the perspective when drawing boats.

6 First Layer of Water Lilies



Stay Loose

Use big brushes as long as possible to achieve a more painterly, expressive painting.

Prepare the Palette

Use a large brush and apply plenty of paint to your palette. Avoid over-mixing the colors to allow them to blend naturally on the canvas, creating a more painterly effect.

Apply the First Layer

Start painting from the top of the canvas and work your way down. Use horizontal strokes to apply the paint, leaving some of the background color visible for added vibrancy and interest.

Vary Brushstrokes and Texture

Incorporate a variety of brushstroke sizes and paint thicknesses. Add water occasionally for a more fluid feel, or use drier paint for a broken texture.

PRO TIP

Leave bits of the background color showing through to enhance vibrancy and interaction between colors.

7 Evaluating the Painting



Evaluate the Overall Effect

Step back from your painting to get a better perspective on the large effect you're aiming for. Look for lighter areas around the boat and darker areas surrounding it. Ensure that the transitions between areas are smooth, with no hard edges except for the reflection of the boat and some edges of the water lilies.

Check for Big Areas

Squint your eyes or take your glasses off to see if the painting works as large areas from a distance. If it looks cohesive and the big areas are distinct, you're on target. Keep refining the painting with this perspective in mind.

PRO TIP

Step back 10 feet from your painting to evaluate the overall effect and ensure the big areas are working together.

8 Expressive Painting Techniques



Embrace Expressive Brushstrokes

Focus on painting large areas with big, expressive brushstrokes. Avoid getting caught up in detail at this stage to maintain a sense of freedom and movement in your work.

Define Flower Edges

Don't worry too much about the edges of the flowers initially. Plan to paint over these areas with white later to define the flowers more clearly.

Create Dynamic Transitions

Use a punchy blue to create a vibrant transition between shadow and lighter areas. This adds energy and pizzazz to your painting.

Incorporate Diagonal Strokes

Add a few diagonal strokes along with horizontal and vertical ones. This can create the illusion of upside-down trees blurred by water movement.

Utilize Vibrant Colors

Notice how the vibrant blue contrasts powerfully against the orange. Use plenty of paint to maintain this intensity, as large expressive strokes require more paint.

PRO TIP

Use large, expressive brushstrokes to cover big areas without focusing on details.

9 Wet-on-Wet Blending



Step Back and Assess

Regularly step back about 10 feet to evaluate your painting on a larger scale. This helps you see the overall composition and balance.

Use Larger Amounts of Paint

Apply larger amounts of paint when working with acrylics. This keeps the paint wet longer, allowing for more time to create smooth wet-on-wet blending effects.

PRO TIP

Use more paint to extend the wet time for better blending with acrylics.

10 Mixing Dark Colors



Prepare Your Palette

Scrape off any light colors, including white, from your palette. This ensures a clean space for mixing pure darks without contamination from lighter hues.

Choose Your Dark Colors

Avoid using black to prevent dulling other colors on your palette. Opt for Naphthol Red Light and Phthalo Blue to create a rich, dark color for the boat.

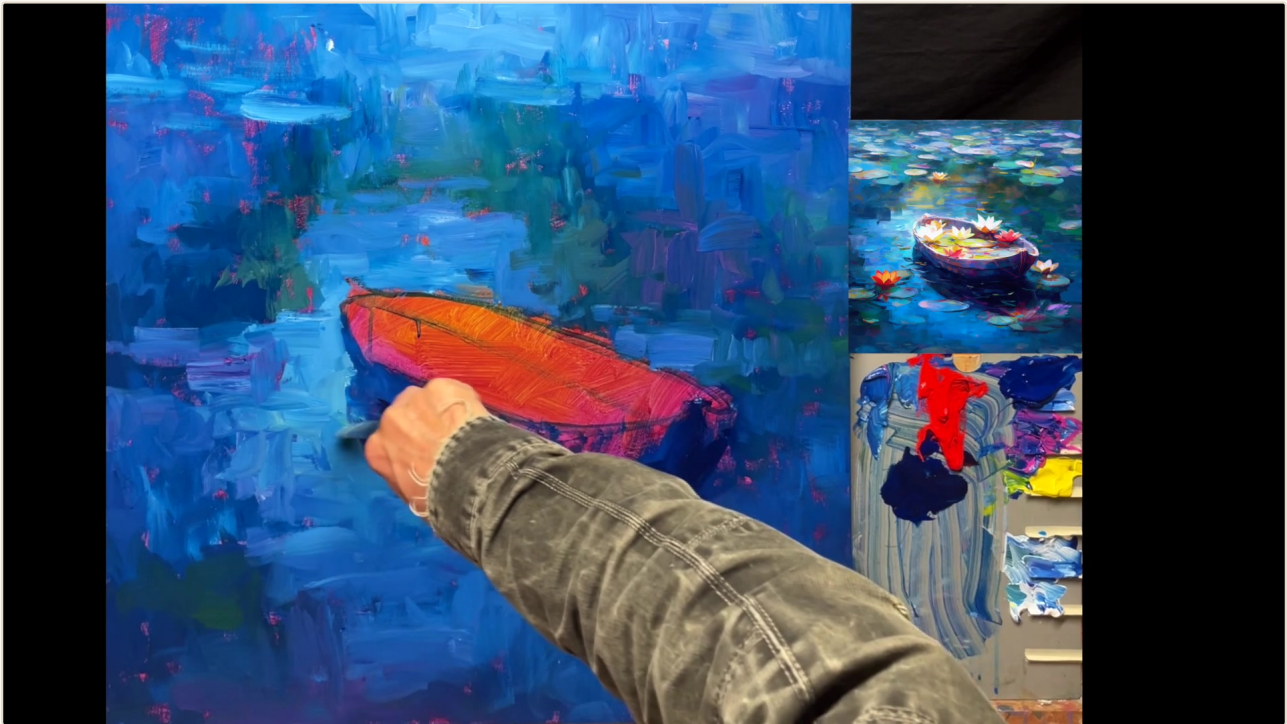
Mix the Dark Color

Combine Naphthol Red Light with Phthalo Blue on your palette. Ensure the mixture is dark and vibrant, suitable for expressive painting.

PRO TIP

Keep a clean space on your palette for mixing dark colors to avoid contamination from light colors.

11 Time Management in Painting



Set a Time Limit

Decide on a specific time limit for your painting session, such as half an hour. This will help you focus and work more efficiently.

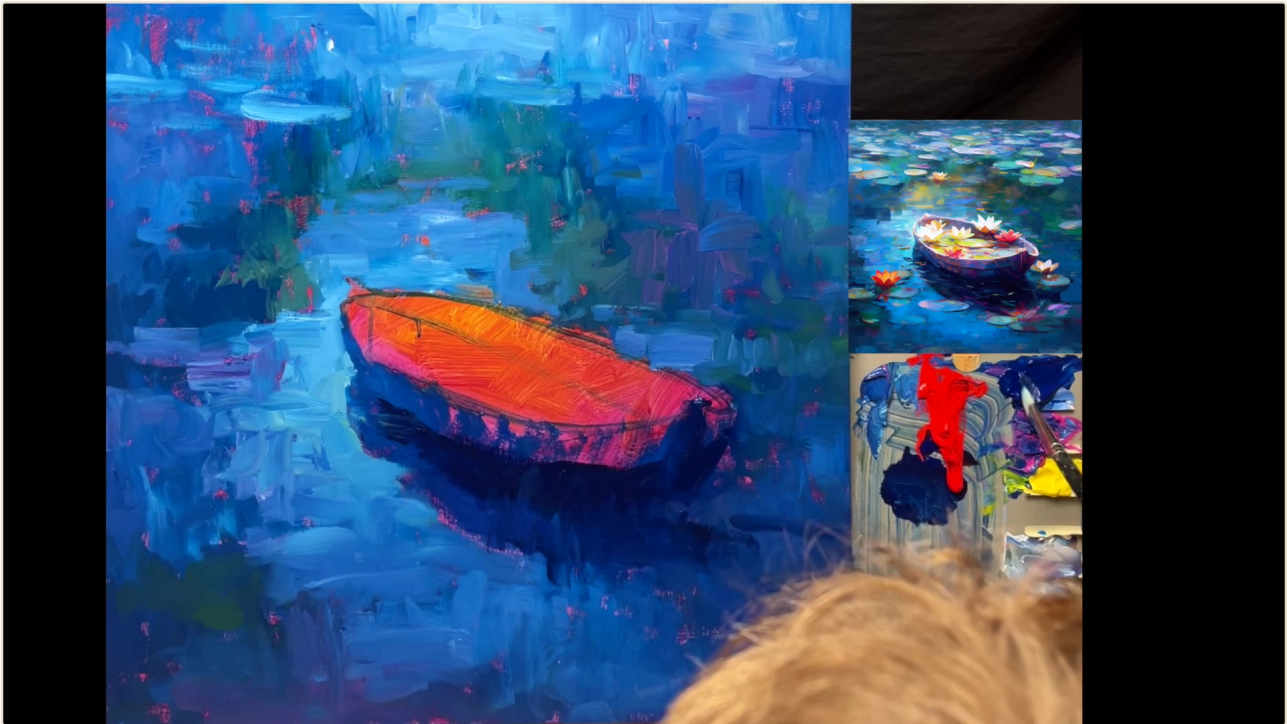
Create Urgency

Create a sense of urgency by setting an alarm or imagining a scenario where you need to finish quickly, like leaving the oven on. This encourages faster decision-making and painting.

PRO TIP

Use a timer to keep your painting sessions focused and efficient.

12 Using Red for Dark Accents



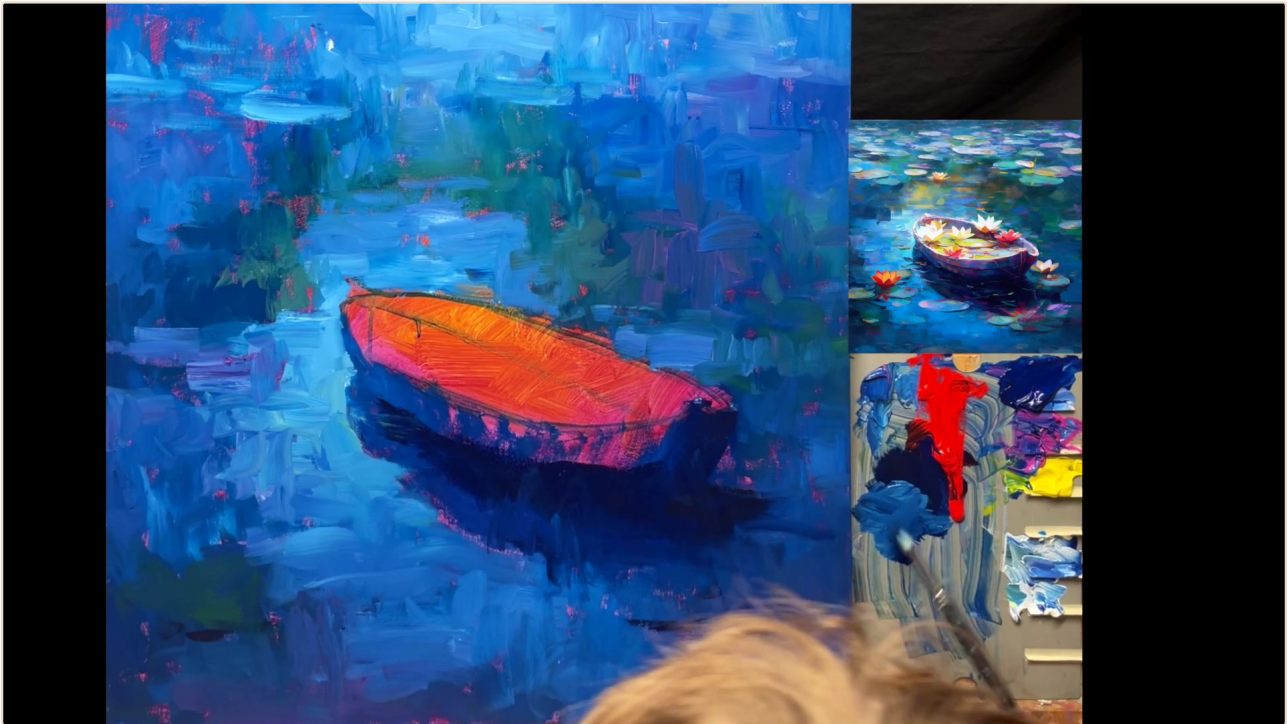
Create Rich Dark Accents

Mix a deep red with another dark color to create a rich, dark hue. Use this mixture to add accents that will contrast beautifully with the lighter areas of your painting. Apply these dark accents strategically to enhance the overall composition.

PRO TIP

Use dark red accents to make lighter areas stand out more effectively.

13 Painting the Boat's Interior



Mix and Apply White

Mix some white into your paint, but be careful not to go back into the dark areas once you've added white. This will help maintain the purity of the dark tones and create a crisp feel.

Observe and Adjust

Step back frequently to look at the big picture and ensure the balance of light and dark is correct. Add white to the side of the boat, but remember that more paint will be layered over this.

Maintain Dark Tones

While you may see a lot of reflected light in the sketch, remember that the interior should still appear dark. Beginners often make the mistake of painting reflected light too light, so keep it darker than you initially think.

PRO TIP

Keep stepping back to observe the overall balance of light and dark in your painting.

14 Preparing for the Next Layer



Prepare the Inside of the Boat

Apply a layer of paint to the inside of the boat, avoiding the taped areas to prevent unwanted red in your mixtures. Focus on adding warm reflected lights and accents to enhance the depth and warmth.

Create a Glowing Area

Mix a small amount of yellow to create a glowing area. This will serve as a base for the light, punchy colors you'll add later. Apply this mixture lightly in the areas where you want to emphasize brightness.

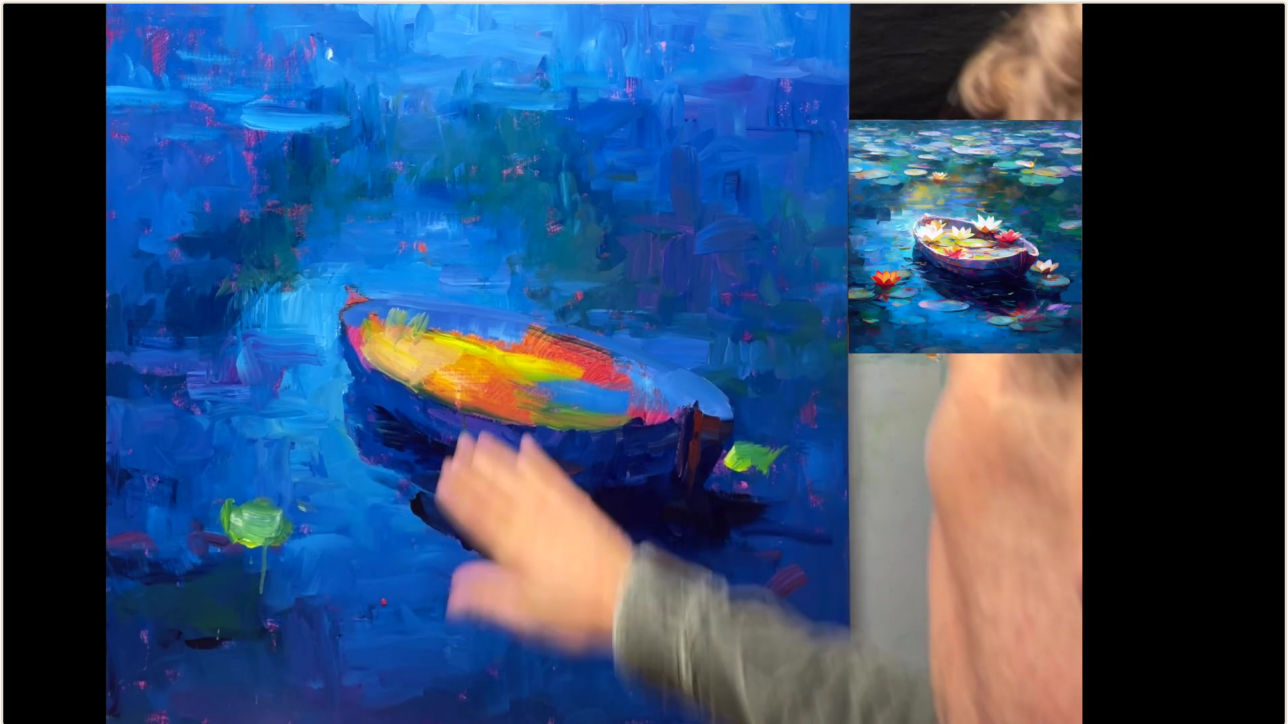
Add Light Accents

Identify areas that will have light accents and apply a lighter tone there. This will help in defining the light spots when you return to add more detail.

PRO TIP

Avoid taping areas where you don't want color bleed, especially with strong colors like red.

15 Starting the Second Day



Prepare Your Canvas

Spray the top of your canvas lightly with water and then wipe it to ensure it's not too wet. This will help the paint glide onto the surface more smoothly.

Select Your Brush

Choose a number 12 long flat brush to begin working on the lily pads at the top of the painting.

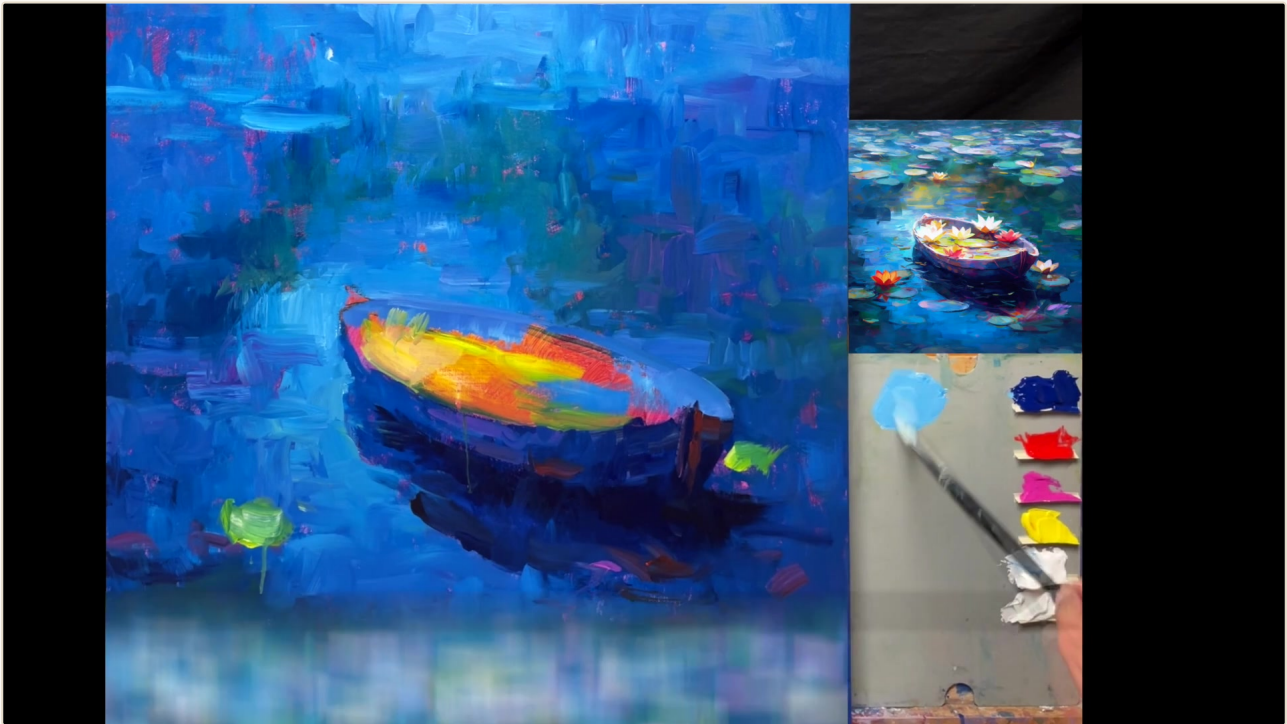
Observe Lily Pad Colors

Notice the variation in colors among the lily pads. Each one is slightly different, offering a beautiful range of hues to replicate.

PRO TIP

Lightly spray and wipe the canvas to help the paint glide smoothly.

16 Painting Water Lilies



Mix Initial Color

Start with a base color and adjust it as you go. Mix a little blue with a little yellow to create a green hue for the lily pads.

Paint Lily Pads

Paint the lily pads with varied sizes, using strokes in both directions to avoid uniformity. Begin with light pressure, increase it, then release to form the pad shape. Adjust the ends as needed.

Use Non-Dominant Hand

Try painting with your non-dominant hand to add a natural, less controlled look to your strokes.

Maintain Shape Consistency

Ensure all lily pads have a similar shape to maintain cohesion. As they move closer to the foreground, make them rounder and more vertical to enhance depth.

Avoid Diagonal Ellipses

Keep the lily pads horizontal to preserve the illusion of flat water. Avoid diagonal ellipses which can disrupt the painting's perspective.

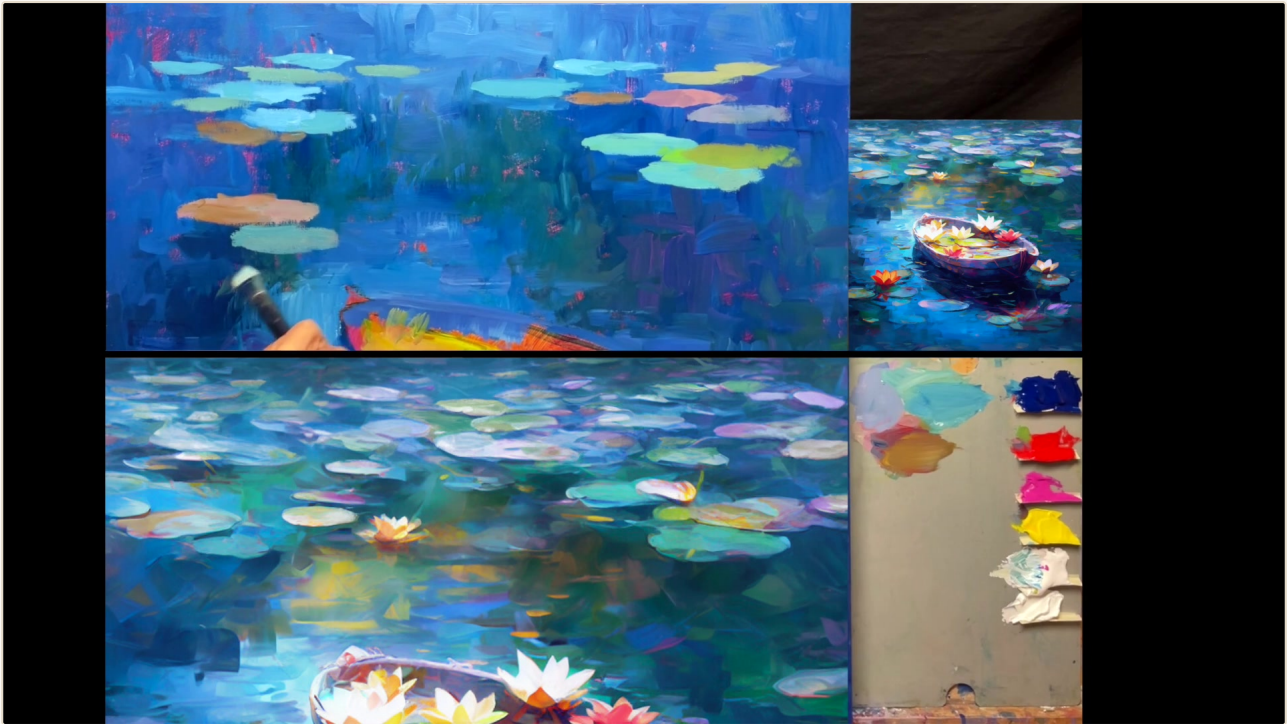
Vary Colors

Continuously change the color of the lily pads to add interest. The more color variety, the more engaging the painting will be.

PRO TIP

Paint lily pads with varied strokes and pressure to avoid uniformity and enhance natural appearance.

17 Color Modulation



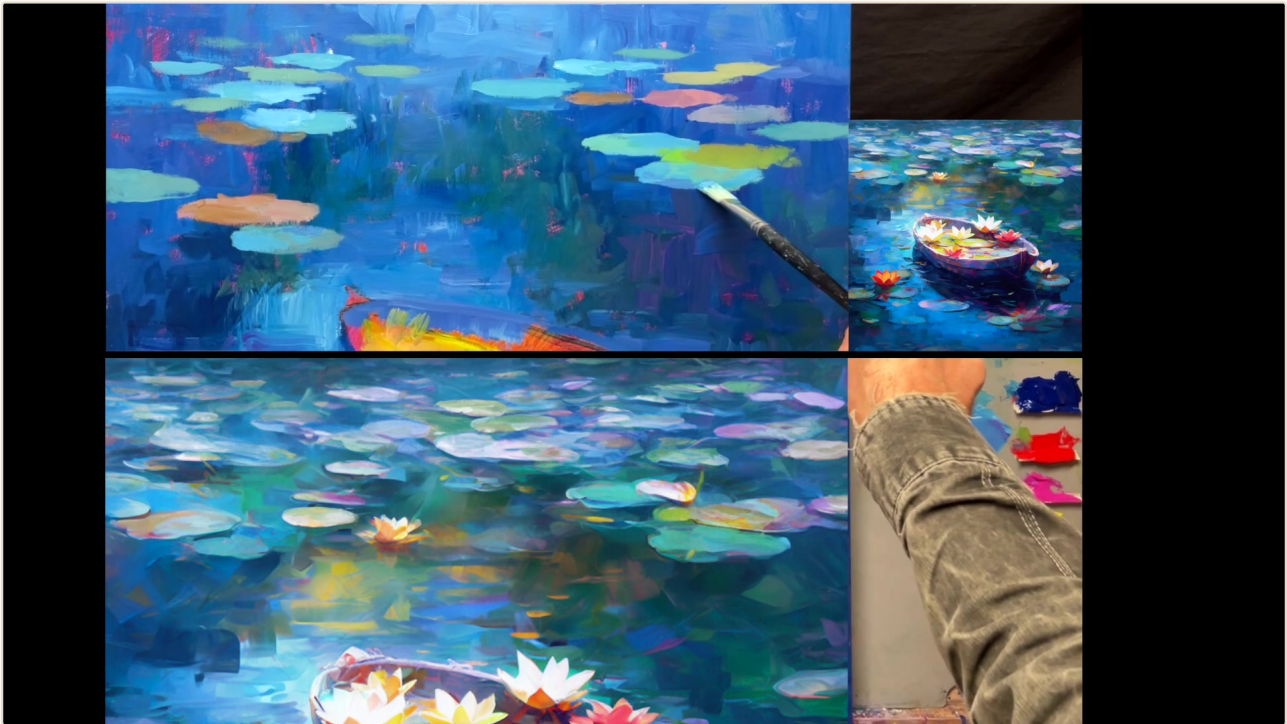
Modulate Water Lily Colors

After painting the water lilies in a single color, adjust the colors within each lily. Introduce a variety of hues to create a shimmering, beautiful symphony of colors. This adds depth and interest to your painting.

PRO TIP

Introduce a variety of hues within each water lily to create a shimmering effect.

18 Adding Shadows and Highlights



Add Shadow Edges

Use a darker blue with a different brush to create shadow edges around the water lilies. Incorporate some magenta into the mix to enhance the visual shimmer, similar to Monet's technique.

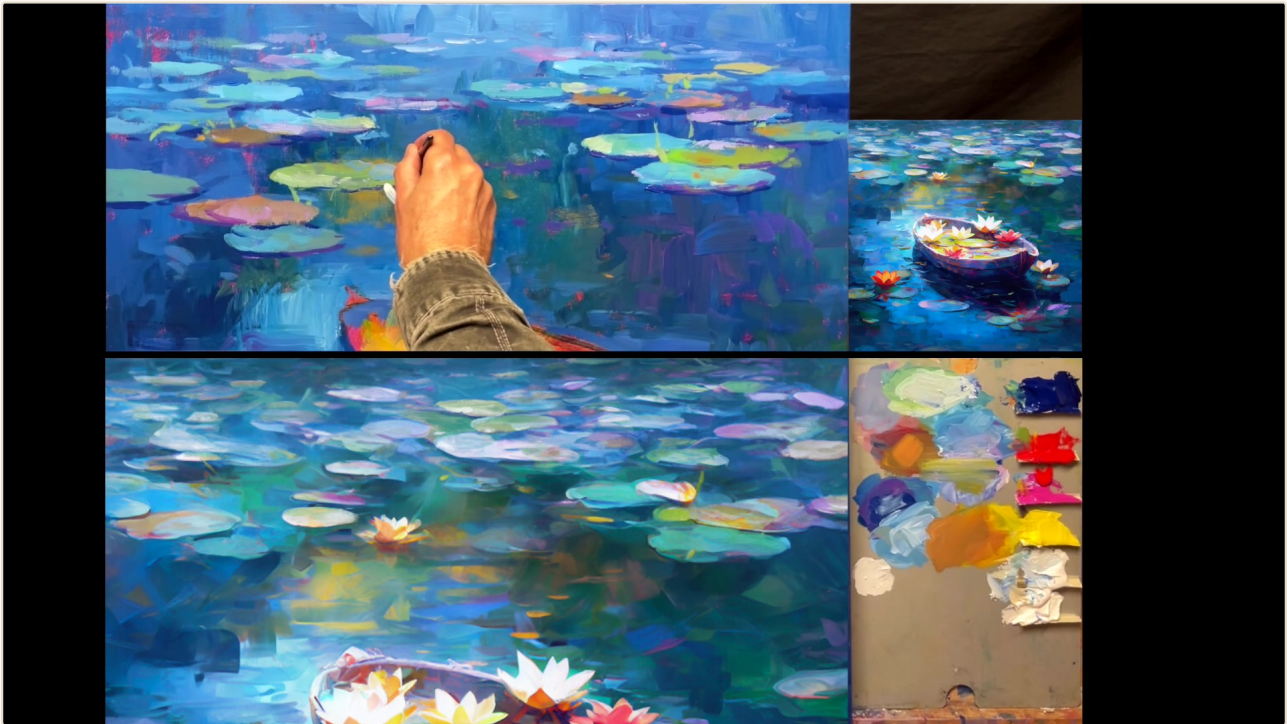
Deepen the Shadows

Apply a deeper tone with more magenta to the shadow areas. This will create a rich contrast and add depth to the painting.

PRO TIP

Incorporate magenta around the edges of water lilies to create a shimmering effect.

19 Detailing the Flower



Prepare the Base Layer

Start by applying a layer of white paint to the blossom areas. Allow this layer to dry completely before proceeding. This base will ensure that the final colors appear vibrant and punchy.

Shape the Petals

Use a filbert brush to shape the petals. The brush's point allows for precision, while squishing it out creates the rest of the petal. Aim each petal towards the central point of the flower.

Maintain Petal Consistency

Ensure the tips of the petals stay within a tight arc. Avoid having any petals extend outside this arc to maintain a natural look.

Vary Petal Sizes

Vary the size of the petals slightly. Some should be a bit larger, others smaller, to create a more natural appearance.

Vary Flower Shapes

Make sure not all flowers look the same. Some can be squatter while others are more vertical to add interest and realism.

PRO TIP

Apply a white base layer to ensure vibrant and punchy final colors.

20 Under-Mixing Colors



Explore Under-Mixing Colors

Allow your colors to mix directly on the canvas rather than fully blending them on your palette. This technique creates unique variations and textures in your brushwork, adding depth and interest to your painting. Embrace the unpredictability of this method to achieve effects that are difficult to replicate otherwise.

PRO TIP

Let colors mix on the canvas for natural variations and texture.

21 Encouragement to Experiment



Experiment with Color

Try using colors in a way that feels daring and risky. This approach can lead to beautiful variations and blends that are unique and striking. Embrace the challenge and see what new and exciting results you can achieve.

PRO TIP

Embrace risk in your color choices to discover unique and beautiful variations.

22 Refining the Boat Shape



Refine the Boat's Top Edge

While the paint is drying, focus on restating the shape of the boat, particularly the top edge. Use a steady hand to ensure the line is clean and precise.

Add Darker Accents

Introduce darker accents to the boat to enhance its definition and contrast. This will help the boat stand out against the surrounding elements.

Adjust the Boat's Shape

If the shape of the boat doesn't seem quite right, don't hesitate to refine it. Acrylics allow you to paint over areas easily, so adjust until satisfied with the shape.

PRO TIP

Use acrylics to easily adjust and refine shapes by painting over areas that need correction.

23 Adding Light and Color Variations



Create a Glowing Area

Keep the colors very light in the hot spot of the painting to create a glowing effect. Ensure the brush is clean when transitioning to orange to avoid muddying the colors.

Apply Orange with Clean Brush

Start at the bottom and brush upwards with a clean brush to apply the orange. Aim for a single stroke to maintain the purity of the color.

Add Vibrant Pink

Mix white and red to create a vibrant pink. Apply it over the white base to enhance its vibrancy, as it wouldn't stand out over a dark base.

Darken with Red and Blue

Use red with a touch of blue to darken the bottom area. This creates interesting details and adds depth.

Enhance with Red Highlights

Add crisp red highlights to warm up the painting. These highlights should contrast with the surrounding colors to draw attention.

PRO TIP

Keep the brush clean when transitioning between colors to maintain the purity and vibrancy of each hue.

24 Finishing Touches



Add Warm Light to the Scene

Mix a tiny bit of yellow with white to create a warm light effect. Apply this mixture to areas where you want to enhance the warmth and glow.

Paint the Edge of the Boat

Tint white with a little bit of blue for the boat's edge. Apply this with a loose hand to maintain a painterly feel, allowing for slight wobbles or breaks to add spontaneity.

PRO TIP

Allow for slight color variations and imperfections to maintain a painterly spontaneity.

25 Completing the Painting



Enhance the Yellow Area

Add more impasto paint to the yellow area to strengthen it. Use thicker paint to create interesting texture, as this is the center of interest and should grab the viewer's eye.

Define the Boat's Waterline

Add a hint of where the boat touches the water using a mid-tone blue. Avoid making it too bright, as it should subtly integrate with the rest of the painting.

Add Final Details

Use a dagger brush to add a few small, dynamic strokes around the painting. Consider adding a rope detail to the front of the boat for an extra feature.

PRO TIP

Use impasto technique to create texture in the focal area, enhancing visual interest.

Summary & Key Takeaways

Embark on your painting journey by selecting an inspiring image and experimenting with variations to find a unique composition. Begin with a warm Bordeaux base on your canvas, setting the stage for vibrant colors and a glowing focal point. As you prepare your palette, embrace the freedom of using generous amounts of paint to encourage a bold, expressionistic style.

As you progress, focus on efficient techniques, such as sketching the boat's perspective accurately and layering your water lilies with natural, painterly strokes. Step back frequently to evaluate the overall effect, ensuring smooth transitions and a cohesive composition. Use expressive brushstrokes to maintain movement and energy, allowing colors to blend naturally on the canvas.

In the final stages, refine your painting by adding shadows, highlights, and details to the flowers, ensuring each element contributes to the shimmering, vibrant scene. Embrace the unpredictability of under-mixing colors directly on the canvas, allowing for unique textures and variations that bring your painting to life. Remember, each step is an opportunity to explore and express your creativity.

LESSON POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Experiment with different levels of similarity in the variation tool for unique compositions.
- Use a Bordeaux tone as a warm base to enhance blues and greens.
- Buy paint in bulk for large paintings to save money and paint more freely.
- Position your palette to prevent paint from running, maintaining control over your materials.
- Use a center line to help sort out the perspective when drawing boats.
- Leave bits of the background color showing through to enhance vibrancy.
- Step back 10 feet from your painting to evaluate the overall effect.
- Use large, expressive brushstrokes to cover big areas without focusing on details.



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