

Watercolor Technique



"Magnolia with Silver and Crystal", 20" x 20"

Laurin McCracken is an architect who has put the skills, learned over the years as an architect, in drawing, photographing and observing to use as a watercolorist.

Born in Meridian, Mississippi, he attended Auburn University, he holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Architecture from Rice University and a Masters in Architecture and Urban Planning from Princeton University.

His award winning work has been included in juried shows across the United States. His work has been included in the Beijing Biennale in 2010 and 2012 and the Shanghai Zhujiajiao International Watercolor Biennial Exhibition in 2010 and 2012.

He is a signature member of more than a dozen watercolor societies including the American Watercolor Society, National Watercolor Society, Transparent Watercolor Society of America, Watercolor West, Southern Watercolor Society and the Watercolor USA Honor Society.

His work has been published in the leading art magazines such as American Artist, Watercolor, Watercolor Artist, Artists Magazine and International Artists. His work has also been included in books such as Splash 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13.

His work is represented by; Southside Gallery, Oxford, MS, TX, the Jack Meier Gallery, Houston, TX and Greenberg Fine Arts, Santa Fe, NM

Visit Laurin at www.lauringallery.com

Laurin McCracken's Palette & Brushes

BEYOND THE BASICS SET

ten 15 ml tubes
285 250 459

- Burnt Sienna
- Carbazole Violet
- New Gamboge
- Burnt Umber
- Perm. Alizarin Crimson
- Prussian Blue
- Venetian Red
- Shadow Violet
- Quinacridone Deep Gold
- Cerulean Blue

SAVE
\$19.18

off reg. price
of \$92.13

only
\$72.95

FAVORITE BRUSH SET

five watercolor brushes
063 500 017

- ◆ Flat Synthetic Squirrel 3/4"
- ◆ Flat Synthetic Squirrel 1/2"
- ◆ Round Kolinsky #6
- ◆ Round Kolinsky #4
- ◆ Round Kolinsky #2

SAVE \$9.78
off reg. price of \$79.73

only
\$69.96



STEP 1

The photograph, of the set up that I chose for the painting, from many that I had taken. I took the JPEG image and had a 35 mm slide made. Because of the high level of detail in the objects, I projected the slide and traced it onto 300 lb Fabriano Artistic, soft finish, paper.



STEP 2

This is an enhanced version of the drawing to show the level of detail I look for before I start painting. The higher the level of information in the drawing – the higher level of information there will be in the finished painting.



STEP 3

There are two rules in watercolor painting, paint from light to dark and the overriding rule is to paint the most difficult part first. Here I have started with the petals of the magnolia for both reasons.



STEP 4

Here I am painting the creamer. Note that I am painting from a much larger photograph—I have an Epson printer that prints 13"x19" prints. Also, I have covered the rest of the painting with a layer of light-weight tracing paper to protect the white of the paper from spatters and spills.



STEP 5

This shows the masking in the decanter and the under painting I have used. Note again, the protective tracing paper over the silver piece. It is held in place by small pieces of drafting tape.



STEP 6

I work on one object at a time. I paint each object as small area at a time. Each of these small areas is an abstract painting that adds up to the whole and becomes a realistic object.



STEP 7

This is the masking and the under painting of the sugar bowl. One of the joys of painting silver and crystal is discovering the reflective and refracted light in and around the objects. These effects created by the light give color to objects that would otherwise just be a variety of grays.



STEP 8

I use an under painting before I apply the black background for two reasons; 1, to add an overall warmth, in this case, to the black, (the black is still transparent watercolor and as the light moves through the paint to the paper and bounces back to the viewer it will pick up some of the color of the under painting), and 2, to seal the paper so that when I add the black there are no small pinhead size holes in that final wash.



STEP 9

I mix my own blacks in a thick "soup" and apply them in one continuous wash over each area, like any other kind of wash in watercolor, stops and starts are very noticeable. After this dries I erase the pencil lines with a white eraser. I will typically live with the painting for a few weeks before I sign it and frame it. During that period I make minor adjustments that add to the viewer's enjoyment of the painting.