

FUN WITH WATERCOLOUR – 1

Paper Many types of watercolour paper available and in many forms – eg full sheets (imperial), pads ~ spiral or glue bound, blocks – where the sides are firmly glued together with a corner left free to release the top sheet.

- Materials used in manufacture: *Rag, Cellulose, Chemical Cellulose*
- Methods of manufacture: *Hand and Machine made*
- Surfaces available: *Rough, Medium, Not, Hot Press*

Sizing Methods of application: *Tub Sizing, Internal Sizing*

Points for the Watercolourist to consider:

- Texture – smooth, rough, degrees of each
- Absorbency – how the paper reacts to water
- Pigment Hold Out – how the paper reacts to insoluble/sedimentary pigments
- Colour – various shades of white plus coloured papers available
- Weight – from 90 lbs through to 300 lbs+ generally speaking the heavier the paper the less it is likely to buckle and curl and more applications of paint etc can be added without deterioration
- Cost – varies from very cheap machine tub sized papers of around £1 per sheet (imperial) to £10+

The paper we will start by using on this course is a very versatile, forgiving, medium rough Bockingford 140 lbs in white – this is also internally sized so although as with all papers there is a right and wrong side it is not so obvious, approx cost £1.35 - £1.60 per sheet and available at all good art stores.

I personally prefer to stretch my paper prior to using, or for exercises only a peel off block.

Brushes Many types and qualities – it seems that every month or so the manufacturers produce a new brush that will solve all the watercolourists problems

Traditional materials:

- Sable, Fine Sable, Kolinski, Squirrel, Synthetic eg Nylon, Prolene etc
- Composition Brushes containing proportions of both natural and synthetic fibres

Points for the Watercolourist to consider:

- Resilience
- Point
- Water-holding properties
- Cost – varies from pence to almost the sky is the limit

I would personally suggest a good quality synthetic with a proportion of sable which will enable the brush to hold a reasonable amount of water.

Pigments Many qualities to consider and analyse all the manufacturers choose to use different names, however you will note that at the top of each tube (usually in very small letters) the composition and colour number will be displayed eg: Cobalt Blue Light = Cobalt-Aluminium Oxide PB28
Nb Hue is another term for student quality paints, you do end up paying a lot of money for filler rather than pigment – in my opinion they are false economy, however if the budget is tight usually the ‘earth’ pigments are safer though they may not reflect the light the same.

Points for the Watercolourist to consider:

- Traditional
- Chemical Substitutes
- Manufactured Mixture
- Manufacturers House Colours
- Hues – Versus Artist Quality
- Tubes versus Pans
- Cost

I would personally suggest a limited palette of **artist** quality tubes in the first instance of :

- French Ultramarine – Burnt Sienna
- Cobalt Light – Raw Umber
- Yellow Ochre
- Primary Blue - Berlin/Pthalocyanine Blue**
- Primary Yellow - cool**
- Primary Red - cool** ** names vary

For a ‘hotter’ palette for flowers, Mediterranean scenes etc:

- Primary Red – Magenta
- Primary Blue - Cyan
- Viridian
- Sap Green