

OCTOBER 2012

The Painter

A monthly newsletter from Christopher Leeper



The Painter

O C T O B E R 2 0 1 2

Beauty of Autumn

Isn't it amazing how each autumn we are wowed by the beauty of the changing trees? In fact, each season has it's own charms and the year that passes in between is just enough time for me to be excited and inspired by the changing landscape.

Most of October has been beautiful with sunny days and an explosion of fall color. And recently, a lot of cold weather and non-stop rain—thank you Hurricane Sandy. No matter the weather, it is still an interesting time to be a landscape painter.

I have been on the road a bit but have had time to work on a couple larger oils. The wet weather has also restored my inspiration for those rainy night paintings. I will be heading out to photograph soon.

Cincinnati was my last multi-day workshop of the year. I have really enjoyed them and would like to thank all who have taken a class with me this year.

Happy painting!

Chris

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS:

Solo Exhibition

Trumbull Art Gallery, Warren, OH
January 2013

Solo Exhibition

Anna Bier Gallery, Greenville, OH
March 2013

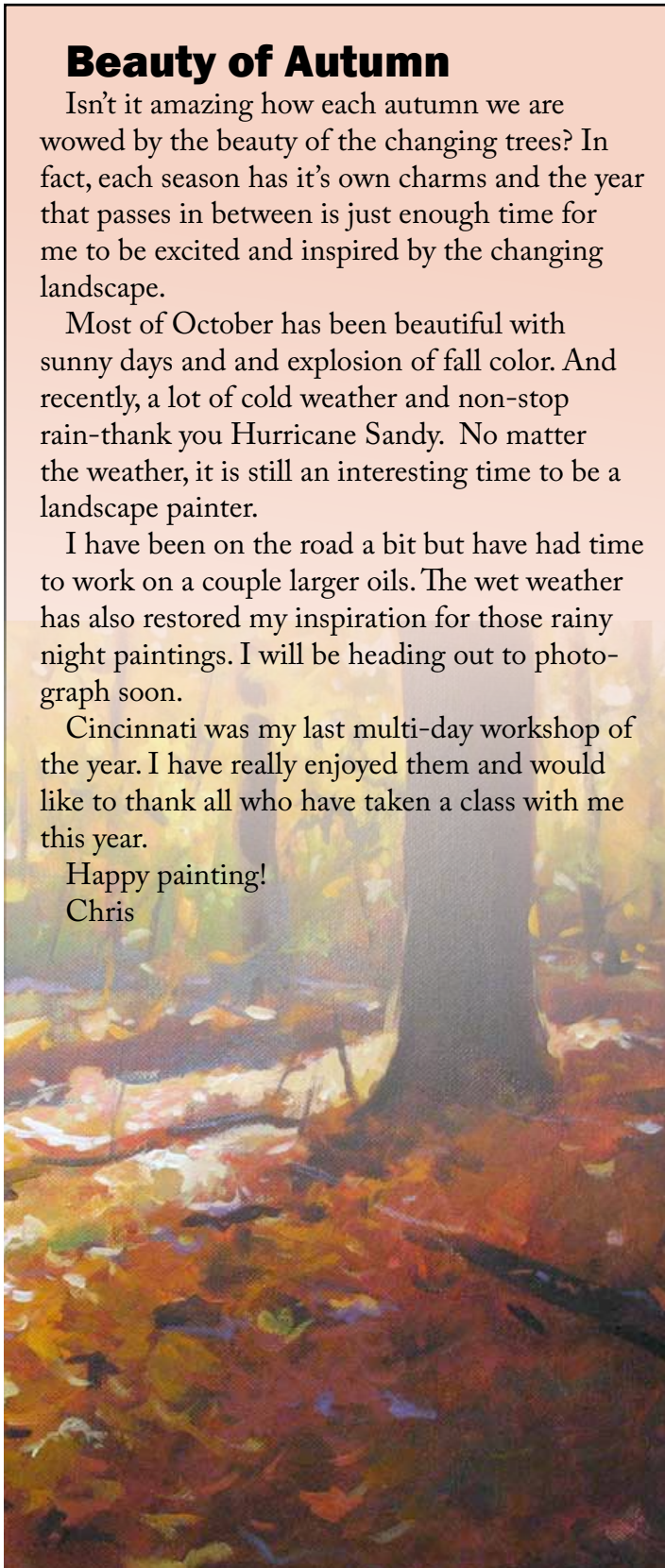
Group Exhibition

Christopher Leeper and Students
May 2013
High Road Gallery, Worthington, OH

UPCOMING WORKSHOP:

Landscape Watercolor Series
Saturday, November 10, 2012
9:00-Noon
Fee: \$32 (\$25 FFRG members)
Fellows Riverside Gardens
Mill Creek Park
123 McKinley Avenue
Youngstown, OH 44509
330.740.7116

This is the last of a series of watercolor classes emphasizing autumn in the park.



On the Easel



Recently, I came across these pumpkins during an evening walk. There are hundreds left in this field.

The goal of this painting is to capture the contrast of the warm light and cool shadows. It is oil on linen. The painting has gone very smoothly so far and I am close to finishing.

The photo to the left shows my studio setup. I am looking at the reference photo on my computer. Besides the advantage of viewing the image at a larger size, it also allows me to zoom in and out and manipulate contrast and color temperature.

On the Easel



Here is a new oil (30x40) in process. I have included the photo reference. I have lightened the exposure in Photoshop to be able to see some of the details.

Like many of my night scenes, I establish as much color as I can get away with and then slowly back it off till there is a good mix of local color, expressive color and atmosphere. As it stands now it looks like a strange, morning light. There is still a lot of painting to go and hopefully it will look like a night scene when I am done..

In the Studio

Here are the images that I showed last month. The final painting is on the facing page. I was trying to create a painting that captured a very specific time of day and I wanted the light and sense of winter cold to infuse everything. I was thinking of the tonalists like Inness and Twatchman when I made some of my value and color choices. The detail images show the use of blues, violets and reds instead of dark green in the pine trees and notice how the reflected light affects the blues on the roof. It is a subtle difference but it is a painting of subtle color changes.



Here is a watercolor demo done last winter from the same set of photos.





Bad Roads
Oil on Linen, 30x40



Acrylic Workshop

Charlotte Fine Art Gallery, Charlotte, NC
October 4-6, 2012



I had a great time in Charlotte. A big thank goes to gallery owner, Joni Purk for her hospitality.

Here are some of my demo pieces. The paintings represent different approaches and techniques.

top - Glazing techniques

middle left - Direct painting on paper

middle right - Texture/palette knife

bottom left - Direct painting

bottom right - Sunlight effects



Watercolor Workshop

Greater Cincinnati Watercolor Society, Cincinnati, OH
October 26-28 , 2012



This was my first workshop in Cincinnati. It was a large class of 20 with a nice mix of beginning to advanced painters. It was a great time-lots of painting, laughs and even pizza!

The theme of the workshop was dramatic light effects. This theme influenced some of my choices for demos. However, we also talked about using a primary palette. The snow scene was the result. It show the variety of color possible using Ultramarine Blue, Quinacridone Red and Hansa Yellow Light.

Paintings on top were small studies done in my hotel room at night.

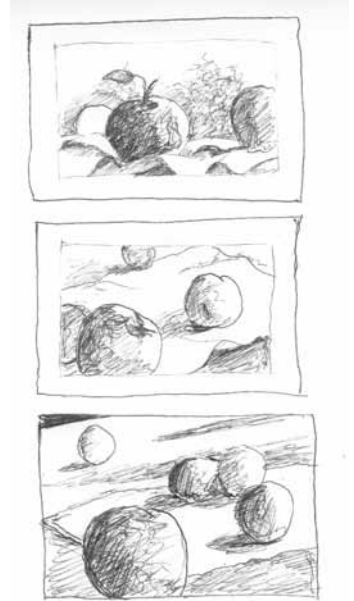
The importance of drawing in representational watercolor

I am as guilty as the next guy when it comes to drawing and watercolor painting. We want to paint and we hurry along our drawing so we can get to the good stuff-painting. Inevitably we realize that we don't have a grasp on the form and design and that "watercolor panic" feeling takes over.

The solution is simple. Draw more and don't paint till your drawing feels complete and that you understand your subject.

I know this sounds easier than it is. How can we make it happen?

- 1) Using a sketchbook, create some rough (thumbnails) of your composition. This is a great way to get a grasp of your composition and value relationships. Use a soft pencil and do not put in details-only basic shapes and forms.
- 2) Do a preliminary drawing to size and make a transfer. This is a great method if you tend to erase a lot. Watercolor paper can only take so much erasing before it start damaging your surface. Transferring can be done many ways:
 - a) Saral transfer paper
 - b) Rubbing graphite on the back of the drawing and retracing the lines onto your watercolor paper.
 - c) rubbing pastel and transfer drawing (a bit messy)
 - d) cover the back of your drawing with watercolor pencil and trace the lines onto your watercolor paper



Draw the whole form

When drawing your subject, think of how the form will be painted. Take an apple for example: In your sketchbook you could represent the stem with a single line. In a watercolor that stem has dimension and needs two lines.

Start loose

Hold your pencil with a sketching grip (between thumb and index finger). Create light flowing, variable value lines. Lightly block in your major shapes. Then indicate the next smallest shapes and so on till the composition is established.

Details come last

Indicate the specific contour towards the end of your drawing only after the basic shapes, forms and perspective is correct.

Draw darker

Only after you have everything blocked in do you draw more specifically and at that stage draw a bit darker than usual. This allows you to see your drawing throughout the painting process. Even though it is a darker drawing, **do not press hard and create a dark, heavy, mechanical line.** Lines should have variety and be fluid and lively. If you draw with a heavy, dark line you will be invested in that line and if it is wrong, you will have little chance of changing it.

Keep your pencil sharp

A sharp pencil allows for crisp lines. I like using mechanical pencils for my watercolor drawings.

Make drawing a daily practice

I have had many students say that they don't like to draw. I think that the reason is that they don't like their drawings. It feels like a chore because they are not getting a positive outcome (no reward) for the hard work. The way to change that is to practice. Start simple. Draw from life. Set up easy still lifes of boxes and cups, etc. Try to draw a half-hour every day. You will see a steady improvement. It takes time. You are training your brain, eye and hand to work together. If you draw more you will draw better-guaranteed!



Finally, if you still are impatient to start, give your painting at least 5-15 extra minutes of drawing before the brush touches the paper. I think you will be glad you did.

Workshops in My Studio



Workshops for six people or less. Topics can include oils, acrylics, watercolor or drawing. They can be scheduled in 2 or 3 day sessions, 9-5 each day. Classes must be scheduled well in advance.

These workshops include demos, handouts and lots of one-on-one attention. I try to provide plenty of information in a short amount of time. I can shape the workshop to the group's needs. You can bring your own reference or we can work together on the same subject. The workshop can also be focused to learn a specific technique or concept. Weather-permitting, these sessions can include plein air painting.



There is a new Hampton Inn just five miles from the studio and many nearby restaurants and shopping venues. Your workshop can also be combined with a visit to the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio and/or a visit to beautiful Mill Creek Park.

“ I have taken many workshops over the years and you have been the most helpful. I learned more in three days than I have in the past 20 years. Plus, it was so much fun! ”

Fees:

1-2 students:	2 day class: \$400 per student / 3-day class: \$600 per student
3 students	2-day class: \$275 per student / 3-day class: \$400 per student
4 students:	2-day class: \$200 per student / 3-day class: \$300 per student
5-6 students:	2-day class: \$150 per student / 3-day class: \$250 per student

Call or email me if you have any questions or to schedule a workshop

Christopher Leeper Studio

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About my studio classes

One of the quickest and most efficient ways to improve your painting is to study privately with a qualified instructor. It is also a great way to learn a new medium. If you are a watercolor painter and you always wanted to try oils or acrylics or vice versa, starting with solid instruction makes for a much more enjoyable learning experience.

I work with teens to adults and with beginning to advanced painters and tailor my instruction to the specific needs of the student. My instruction is about traditional, representational painting. I draw and paint along with students and offer advice on such things as materials, technique, color mixing, and design.

Students can select the type of subjects that they want to paint. I also have a large library of art instruction books and magazines that are always available for extra inspiration.

If the student chooses and the weather allows, lessons can be done plein air at locations like Mill Creek Park.

For cost savings, you can take lessons with a friend, or with a small group of four or less.

Areas of study include: oil, acrylic, watercolor (traditional and on Yupo), drawing and pastel. Figure drawing/painting is also available, however there is an additional model fee.

Fees:

Individual: 2 hr. class - \$50 per class
3 hr. class - \$75 per class

2 students: 2 hr. class - \$40 per class/per student
3 hr. class - \$55 per class/per student

3-4 students:

2 hr. class - \$35 per class/per student
3 hr. class - \$45 per class/per student



2012 schedule (Sept-Dec.):

**I will be scheduling classes on
Weekdays 9-4**

Call or email me if you have any questions or to schedule classes.

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