

ia

136

December/
January 2021

The magazine for artists by artists from around the world • Le magazine pour les artistes par des artistes du monde entier
 • Das Magazin für Künstler von Künstlern aus der ganzen Welt • La revista para los artistas por artistas de todo el mundo •
 La rivista per gli artisti di artisti da tutto il mondo • 由来自世界各地的艺术家创办的艺术家杂志 • 世界のアーティストによるアーティスト
 のための雑誌 • 세계 각국에서 예술가로 예술가 잡지

international artist

INSIDE THE STUDIOS OF THE
WORLD'S BEST ARTISTS

ANNA
WYPYCH

PAINTING INNER STRENGTH

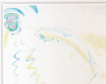
DISPLAY UNTIL 1/28/21

\$9.95US \$10.95CAN



USA \$9.95
CAN \$10.95
UK £5.95

PLUS ABSTRACT DESIGNS with Evie Zimmer





When God Softly Speaks, watercolor, 23½ x 41½" (57 x 105 cm)

As I gained confidence with my plain air watercolors, I tried ever larger paintings to try and express my experience with the vastness of the landscape. Here, a one-point perspective is framed by the rhythmic tree plantings. It beckons us to take a walk with my collie, Painter, along a familiar path toward our home along the Hudson River in Garrison, New York.

A PAINTER'S JOURNEY

PART 7

The Painter as Teacher

In the final article of this seven-part series, John Hulsey concludes his visual journey through his outdoor and studio painting processes.

I have always believed that the ability to make a life as an artist is a rare privilege, and with that privilege comes a measure of responsibility. I have also noticed that the world works on the principle of a circle, call it karma, and to receive one must give. For many of us, the giving-back process manifests in the form of teaching and sharing the knowledge we have been able to gather up and confirm through decades of doing what we love. Teaching is not for everyone, of course. Not every artist or painter possesses the temperament or interest in becoming an effective, if not inspiring teacher. Both my wife, Ann, and I had teachers in art school who probably should not have been in front of a group of impressionable young artists. However, those bad experiences were actually beneficial to us because they taught us a lot about what kind of teachers we



Fallen Trees III, watercolor, 26 x 35" (66 x 89 cm)

This is a life-size view in watercolor of a special spot on Indian Brook, which feeds into the Hudson River. Surrounded by an ancient forest and down in a deep, shadowy cleft, the brook was lit as though in a cathedral of green stained glass.



Revelation, watercolor, 20½ x 32" (52 x 81 cm)

A large watercolor of the path down to one of my favorite places to paint and teach—the Constitution Marsh Audubon Sanctuary. Once down to the water, one could walk far out into the marsh on a boardwalk and paint the incredible scenery and wildlife there.



Solitude, watercolor, 17½ x 41½" (44 x 106 cm)

This painting is a view of the Constitution Marsh near the boardwalk. It seemed to me that this wonderful place was never exactly the same day to day and presented me with fresh subjects to paint every time I visited. This painting is looking across the marsh and river to the famous Hudson Highlands. I added the egret in the studio from memory. Just the right touch.

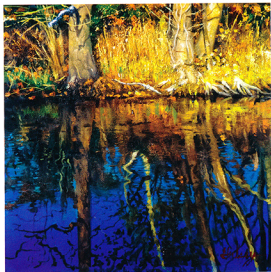
would mold ourselves into later on.

Among the many benefits of a life, which includes teaching, is the opportunity to get to know people from many different backgrounds and walks of life. I started teaching plein air watercolor workshops in about 1984, when we were living on the Hudson River just north of New York City. Back then, I never saw any other painters working outside on what is the most scenic, dramatic and beautiful part of the river. I considered the area my personal bailiwick and used it as my laboratory to learn how to paint in watercolor outdoors. After

a year, I started showing and selling my work, which brought attention from others who wanted to learn what I had learned. I decided to offer three-day plein air watercolor workshops and I immediately had 10 students signed up. I had never taught anyone before, but since they were paying me, I was determined to make a professional job of it. I organized and printed out a curriculum that could structure the class experience. Remembering those unpleasant experiences from school, I adopted compassion and positivity as my teaching style. I made some dumb

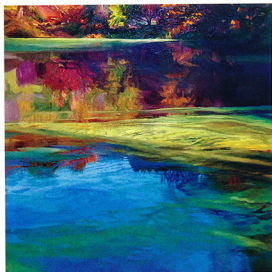
teaching mistakes that any novice does, of course. I accepted people from all ages and ability levels, and that created difficulties in moving everyone forward at the same pace. I tended to work my classes too fast, and had to adjust my expectations of what they could accomplish in a session. I didn't think to consider that my elder students would have difficulties with some of the walking and hiking we did to favorite painting spots. Things like that. Easy to fix.

Over time, I kept offering workshops and I think that I improved as a teacher, gradually, and I relaxed a bit more into



The Voice, oil on linen, 12 x 12" (30 x 30 cm)

After I taught myself to paint in oil, I took those paints out on the water with me as well. By this time, I saw the landscape as paintings, not as a collection of trees, shrubs and water. I adopted a square format and began to recompose the wide landscape as semi-abstract compositions of color and shape.




Moment of Reflection II, oil on linen, 60 x 60" (152 x 152 cm)

A play on words, but true enough. Working from the boat, I decided to follow Monet's lead. Foreground and background, sky and water are one and the same in the abstraction which is painting. Beauty dictates the way, and both the subject and the surface serve the goal of expressing something new with art. This large studio piece was worked up from smaller plein air boat studies.

very most.

Our current reality has changed the experience of teaching for all of us and made it imperative to teach online. Ann and I designed our live web classes to be as close to the in-person

experience as is possible. Bite-sized demonstrations peppered with solid advice and encouragement are the rule of the day, and we have begun to find a new, national audience hungry for art and what our experience can offer them.

It appears that now, more than ever, creative pursuits offer all of us a much-needed outlet for our quarantine-weary spirits, and we are grateful to be a part of that movement toward the light. 

ABOUT THE ARTIST

John Hulsey is a nationally recognized artist and accomplished master painter in watercolor, oil and pastel. A sought-after teacher who has been teaching painting for more than 35 years, Hulsey maintains an active studio practice along with his international and domestic teaching commitments. The recipient of numerous art awards and art grants, his work has been exhibited in group and solo exhibitions in galleries across the United States, from New York to California. During the 10 years Hulsey worked in New York, his paintings were featured on the cover of Time magazine and most of the

major book and magazine publishers. His paintings are included in a number of private collections.

He has been awarded residencies by the National Park Service at Glacier National Park, Montana; Yosemite National Park, California; and Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado. Hulsey and his painter-wife, Ann Trusty, founded The Artist's Road teaching site in 2010 to share their lifetime of experience in art to an international audience. To date, they have created over 750 articles and interviews on art for the site. Some of his teaching videos can be found on YouTube at John Hulsey Fine Art.



Contact at

www.johnhulsey.com
www.theartistsroad.net

If you would like to paint with John, join in on one of his live, online painting workshops. Reserve your place at theartistsroadstore.com/workshops



On Heron Pond, watercolor, 35½ x 32" (90 x 81 cm)

I like to push boundaries, and this large-scale watercolor of our new home in Kansas was the largest watercolor I had ever attempted. It takes a big subject to make a big watercolor have power, and my enthusiasm for our new environment gave me the confidence. This was a studio piece worked up from smaller plein air studies painted in a boat.



Morning Mist, oil, 24 x 31" (61 x 79)

All around the pond are these lovely old overgrown Midwestern woods—not as tall as the Hudson River trees—but interesting in their own unique way. I love to catch the warm dawn sunlight as it lights up the fog that still hovers briefly over the pond in the fall and spring.

it. Along the way, I learned a lot about people, life and painting watercolor. I always learn something valuable from my students, especially about painting.

Thirty-six years later, I am still painting and teaching, having added oil painting to my repertoire. I find that the change of thinking required to switch from teaching oil to teaching watercolor and back is very beneficial to my art, and perhaps the flexibility of my older brain. What is also true is that the necessity of thinking through my painting process and breaking it down into explainable pieces enriches my understanding not only of painting in general, but my own choices as well. I love it when students ask me why I do something in a certain way or a specific order. Much of what I do when I am painting alone in my studio comes from either the knowledge I have slowly acquired, or habit. The roots of that "knowing" can become forgotten. Having to clearly explain a process always challenges my rationale

and calls into question the logic of old habits. This is good for creativity and artistic growth.

Teaching painting of any kind outdoors adds another dimension of challenge both for the student and the teacher. Learning how to paint outdoors can be a tall mountain to climb for the novice. I found that I have to slow down my usual frantic pace of painting a demonstration and teach with immense compassion and understanding of the struggles encountered while working out in the weather and sunlight. All the lessons one has learned about it over the years come into play during class. Perhaps the biggest lesson I learned is that plein air painting should be about gathering up information and enjoying the experience, not necessarily producing a finished product to hang on the wall. When I do manage to create something special outdoors, I consider it a benediction.

Long ago, I realized that the most

necessary part of any creative work can be initial failure. We must be willing to welcome the uncomfortable feeling of not knowing how something will turn out—or if it will turn out at all. If we are not failing at something, we probably aren't learning anything new. Success only begets more of the same, in my view. That is the best attitude to have when painting outdoors. There is no system or bag of tricks I know of which will satisfactorily solve all of our pictorial problems. Each painting situation is unique and nature reveals her secrets slowly, so we must be patient and determined to stick with it. All I can do is act as an expert guide and source of information—the rest is up to the student. I can't describe the great pleasure I get when a student of mine has an aha! moment while painting. It is like the curtains have parted, revealing a creative vision of Nature frequently discussed but never before realized. It is a familiar moment I can relate directly to, and what I love about teaching the