Seascape Lesson Plan: “Duck Mountain”, SK Canada

Lesson plan by:
Nikki Jacquin copyright 2011; Michaels Instructor; Regina, SK Canada
Palette to be used: SEASCAPE
Titanium White, Cad. Red Lt., Ultramarine Blue, Cad. Yellow Med., Alizarin Crimson, Cad. Yellow Lt., Cerulean Blue
#8 Filbert brush, #2 Round Brush, #2 Bright Brush

Introduction:
With any photo you have the option to change a few elements and have a new composition. From one photo you can come up with endless paintings, by changing the orientation (landscape or portrait), zoom in or zoom out, move elements such as the canoe here, or try different colour schemes. Thumb nail sketches can help you quickly work out a few compositions and select the one you want to paint. A value sketch thumb nail has only three values, the white of the paper, one middle tone grey, and the darkest dark. (I showed these two sketches I had done) Think of shapes of light and dark and don’t get bogged down in detail.

Step 1: Trees and Water

- In any seascape or landscape the horizon is the line where the sky appears to meet the land. This is an imaginary line. You should place the horizon 1/3 from the bottom or 1/3 from the top of your canvas.
- We will mix Cerulean Blue and Titanium White in a 1:4 ratio
- With your #8 Filbert show the distant trees and steaks in the water. The dashes in the water will be larger and farther apart in the foreground (or front area of your painting). This gives the illusion of depth and distance in our painting.
- Demonstrate the tear drop shape stroke to use for small waves
- 2nd Layer of Background Trees: With your brush dirty with last mix pick up a bit of Ultramarine Blue and make a few vertical trees. You can also darken the line under your trees with this.
Step 2: Middle Ground Trees

- Using Alizarin Red, Ultramarine Blue, and Cadmium Yellow Medium in a 1:2 + touch of yellow, mix a deep purple for these trees. I use the side of my pallet knife and chop the paint to mix it. In this way you paint stays in a smaller area and will stay wet longer.
- Using our #8 Filbert brush still, we are just painting the shadow portion of the trees and the shore line. Add this colour to the shore line in the background too.

Step 3: Middle Green of Trees

- With Cadmium Yellow Light, Ultramarine Blue, + a dot of Alizarin Red mixed in a (2:1 + dot ratio) to mix an olive green use your #8 filbert to paint more leaf detail into your middle ground tree. Change the direction of your strokes to give a dabbing feeling of leaves. Remember to leave sky holes where you can see sky between clumps of leaves for realism. If you have painted in too much you can go back in and paint some sky holes in with Titanium White. Vary the size of your foliage shapes and as you get to the outer edge of the tree you can have a few dabs that seem to be separate from the tree to suggest individual leaves. Remember be random, don't space your stokes to evenly apart. Nature is random in appearance.
- You can also paint some of this colour at the base of this island and into the water using your #2 Bright Brush. Connect the water lines near the base of the land to suggest tree reflections into the water.

Step 4: Warmer Green for Foliage

- Darken your tree shadows with the dark purple mixed in step #2 as you need to get a good contrast or variation of light and dark between the middle green of the trees and the shadow.
- With Cadmium Yellow Medium, Cerulean Blue, and Cadmium Red in a (6:1 + 2 dots ration) mix a warm light green for our foreground trees. Use your #8 Filbert for the trees.
- Using your #2 Bright Bristelette you can drop some of this colour into your water using a wavy horizontal stroke and use a vertical stroke to paint some of this colour into the grass also.
- Warm colours like this yellow green appear to move forward in a painting while the bluey greens appear to move backward in the painting adding to the illusion of depth.
Step 5: Middle Ground Trees

- Knock in sky holes if needed with some Titanium White and your #2 Bright Brush.
- Using your #2 Round Brush and Titanium White paint in the birch trees & logs laying in the water. Starting at the ground and painting upward while slightly twirling your brush. Branches are painted starting from the trunk and painting outward so your branches end in a pointy line. Also start and stop these branch lines as if they are hidden by clumps of leaves.
- Add another layer of white on the left side of the trees to give the trees more dimension. This is the side the light is coming from.
- Using the dark purple mix from step #2 to dot in some detail on your birch trees. (see below) . Vary the detail add a few dots too.

Step 6: The Canoe

- Using Titanium White , Cadmium Yellow Medium and Cadmium Red in a (4:1 + a dot ratio) mix a light flesh colour. With your#2. Round brush paint in the canoe opening. Think of a half pea shell.
- Use cad. Red for the outside of the canoe.
- Wash a bit of the dark purple mix from step 2 on the inside left side of the canoe for shadow.
- Add a touch of dark purple #2 under the boat as shadow to connect it to the ground.
- Darken any other darks with this colour as needed.