



Transparency

Watercolor West is dedicated to the celebration and advancement of transparent watercolor painting on paper by fostering its appreciation and encouraging its use in original artistic creations. The only allowable paper is a single piece of rag or wood pulp paper that is free of pigment or embedded materials.

Transparency in a watercolor painting occurs when watercolor pigments are made more transparent with the addition of water to create a wash. This allows light to penetrate the layers of glazes and reflect back through the pigments from the paper below. The whites are the white paper left unpainted.

To achieve its ends, Watercolor West hosts an annual International Juried Exhibition that challenges its participants to be creative with traditional transparent watercolor on a single piece of rag or wood pulp paper that is free of pigment and embedded material. The beauty and great variety possible with these more limited means can be observed by reviewing past Watercolor West International Juried Exhibition catalogs. In these exhibitions transparency and originality are paramount. "Originality" means being new or novel and not a copy or derivative of another's creative work. For an understanding of the term as understood by Watercolor West, please review the statement on Plagiarism also on this website www.watercolorwest.org.

To be clear, we have identified below a variety of media that are explicitly excluded, as they do not conform to the concept of transparent watercolor on a single piece of rag or wood pulp paper. However, in this day and age of rapid technological advances, it is not possible to cover every possible exception. The rule of thumb is: if it is not on allowable paper and painted with only transparent watercolor, it will be eliminated.

The following media, grounds, and treatments are excluded from use:

- Opaque white paint of any kind, such as titanium white, Chinese white and any transparent watercolor with opaque white added to it. Transparent watercolor includes pigments such as the cadmiums which are classified as "opaque." The cadmiums and semi-transparent pigments are acceptable as long as they are applied as a transparent wash when covering most of the paper surface. Small touches of opaque cadmiums and other watercolor pigments can be used for accents.
- Gesso, matte medium or any other priming material or exterior surface treatment.
- Gouache, acrylics or water-soluble oils.
- Ink, metallic or iridescent paint or products that leave a graphite-like sheen.
- Watercolor crayon, colored pencil, watercolor colored pencils, charcoal, pastel, Conte sticks or Conte crayon
- Varnish, wax, wax crayon, oil sticks or oil pastel.
- Collage or surface constructions, impasto, embossing.
- Watercolor resist, such as Frisket, that is not completely removed from the final painting.
- Use of digital images or enhancements printed on the paper.
- All other grounds, treatments, additives, media or art materials that do not conform to the spirit of the Exhibition.

We would be delighted if you would accept our challenge and submit entries to our Watercolor West International Juried Exhibition. We ask that you honor the objectives of this event and abide by its rules. Individual diligence and careful attention will create an enjoyable and fair experience for everyone.

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