

Hello,

This last Monday we painted Poppies.

I love painting but just like anyone else there are times when I am happy with the image I created other times I enjoy making the image more than the result.

Well, this week I absolutely love my painting. And I am very proud to say that. We are so often conditioned to think it is better to be humble and say we are less than what we are. So I am now doing something I would have never dreamt of doing a couple of years ago. I declare myself happy with my work and proud of it! I think that is an accomplishment. I am so happy when you have that reaction at the end of a class. When you are happy to say that you not only enjoyed painting but also the final artwork. So double pat on the back for you there!

I am not saying you shouldn't be critical nor want to constantly improve, I am just emphasising how amazing it feels to mark the moment you are happy with your work. To be fair this is a pep talk to myself more than anything else. But I hope you will continue to enthusiastically point out when you are happy with your work! It makes me so proud.

We painted poppies.

You can chose how many flowers you want in your picture depending on the size of your paper. I chose 5 as I was using an A3. For a smaller size paper consider painting 3 or painting smaller flowers.

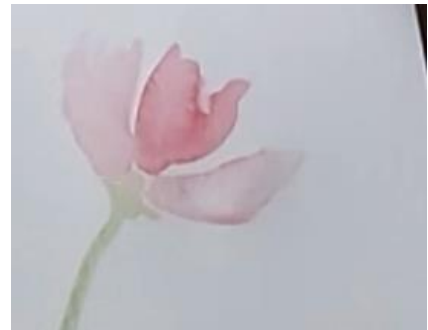
You can also challenge yourself and use a super large piece of paper and create big flowers. There is something so amazingly expressive and physical about painting large subjects. It is such a body experience. Similarly if you want to lose yourself in painting you can pick the smallest brush and a tiny piece of paper and you will have a very different experience. You will find that depending on the size of your surface you get a different relationship to your subject. You may find that you prefer one over the other and that is great!

Anyway, coming back to last Monday's class. We started painting our flower facing towards us.



Each petal had a triangular shape and the petals were not touching each other.

Next came a profile flower. For it we created 3 petals facing diagonally upwards.



Then came the half facing petals. We painted half a flower. Imagine you cut the forward facing flower at an angle. That is what we did. The cut is not perfectly horizontal, but more accidental.

As you can see, I forgot to take pictures as I was painting each step. But I am narrating those through. Hopefully you can still follow along without any issues. If you encounter any problem, do not hesitate to email me. I will do my best to help.

I added a profile flower to the bottom of my composition to balance it out. This was the first paint layer and it was red.

I am using a water down red, because I want to create layers so I need the translucent, delicate effect watered down watercolours have to offer.

The second colour we used was a very watered down green. We painted the stems with it. We aimed to create curved organic lines that would complement our composition.

Still using green we created flower buds and small leaves.



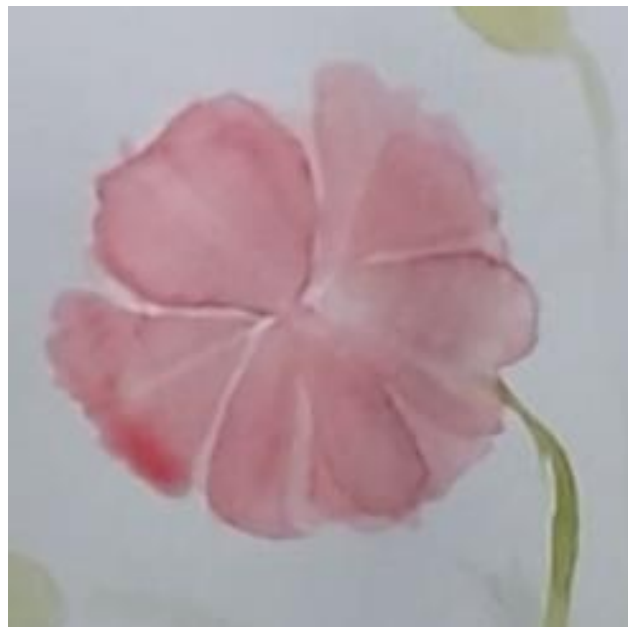
Flower buds are long and narrow ovals. They also have moustaches.



Leaves are wavy and oval in shape.



We let these layers to dry and next we added another layer of red. We overlapped another 5 petals on top of our 5 for the flower facing us, making sure we cover the white gaps we left. We overlapped three petals to our diagonally facing flowers and then we created some organic shaped petals to suggest a delicate flower turning in the wind.





As the paints dried the layers became translucent. I also suggested using more pigment in the inner area of the flower to suggest depth and shadows.

We then looked at the image and reinforced the green to counter-balance the red. We only added green where the red was overpowering. This is a personal taste issue and it is something each artist decides for themselves. I like the translucent green we had from the previous layer but I also find that I can draw attention to my flowers better if there is the complementary colour next to them.

Next we added an organic brushstroke of yellow inside the flower, where the petals would meet.(or to put it simply, we added yellow without having a geometric shape in mind)

The last step was to add the dark details. Poppy seeds are black but I find using black can easily lead to one losing control over their palette. Black can overpower the rest of the painting. I used dark purple to suggest my darkest areas. I mixed violet and blue and it worked great. Some participants who were more adventurous than myself used black and

had great results. I would say the safe and easy option is to use a mix of dark colours and saturate the brush, but if you know you can handle your black well, then please use it!





And this is the final image.

What do you think? I am very happy with it. If you paint this please share your results!

Best,

Ioana