

Outdoor Painting Workshop

Saturdays: Oct 24, 2015; Jan 16 & Apr 16, 2016

10am – 4pm

Instructor: Karen Baker CPS, PSA, PSTB

Cell: 727-366-6477

All Media * All Ability Levels

Locations: Mirror Lake, Kopsick Arboretum, Sunken Gardens

Drawing and painting on location ‘en plein aire’ is a centuries-old practice that will help sharpen your observation skills for better picture-making. Train yourself to see nature as it really is, and not merely what’s reproduced in a photograph. Through developing a series of small-format color studies, we will address important issues that apply to any painting or drawing medium. Practice identifying warm colors in sunlit areas and cool colors in shadows while capturing nature’s shapes, forms, movement, innate beauty and design. Learn a simple, no-fuss set up for the plein air experience. Instructor demos and a work assessment at day’s end round out this fun group activity. Pack a lunch. Bring an open mind. The only challenge is to commit to “doing.”

Karen Baker CPS, PSA, PSTB is an award-winning landscape and floral artist who enjoys painting both outdoors and in the studio. Her portfolio includes seasonal landscapes of Florida and northern New England, as well as her prolific Poppy Series. She has been teaching the art of landscape painting and the creative process for over 30 years and delights in helping students discover and develop their unique style of creativity.

Karen is a Signature Member of Connecticut Pastel Society, Pastel Society of America, and Pastel Society of Tampa Bay. She is also an artist member of Vermont Pastel Society and The Exhibiting Society of Artists here in Florida. She has participated in local plein aire events including St. Petersburg’s Annual Paint the Town, where her entry won an award. She has received additional awards and recognition from national and international exhibits as well as magazine competitions, including The Artist’s Magazine and Pastel Journal.
www.KBakerStudios.com

Materials

From my experience, painting outdoors doesn't necessarily require using a portable field easel. However, some seasoned plein aire painters and students working in oils or acrylics might already be accustomed to painting outdoors using an easel. You may decide for yourself what is most comfortable and practical for your manner and style of work. But, do take into consideration, since this workshop advocates creating a series of quick color studies, even oil and acrylic painters can adapt to working in a less formal manner and still accomplish the purpose and intention of the day's focus.

Students working in pastel, watercolor, or drawing media such as colored pencil and graphite will not need an easel to work successfully outdoors, but, again, it is up to the individual to make that choice. The plein aire objective is to bring a sufficient but minimal amount of equipment and materials outdoors—only what you absolutely need. Therefore, refer to the suggested list which is separated into categories by medium. You are welcome to discuss options or alternative ideas for your plein aire set up with me.

Whatever your medium, in lieu of using an easel, my suggestion is to consider bringing a light-weight folding chair, the kind for outdoor use or similar. Add to that a light-weight folding table like a TV table or an inverted plastic crate as a makeshift table to hold your paints and accessories. Place an old towel across your lap and work horizontally on small canvases, canvas panels, or small blocks of gessoed watercolor paper attached to a stiff board like foamboard or gatorboard. Think simple, practical, light-weight, less-is-more, and bring only what's necessary. After all, it's not about how much 'stuff' you can schlepp, but about the spontaneous moment-to-moment experience of creating outdoors from nature that is alive. But if all else fails, throw the "in case I need it stuff" in the car—hopefully it will stay there.

Pastels

A drawing support is necessary for mounting your art paper onto, whether you are standing at an easel or seated. I recommend a sheet of foam-core board in an approx size of 12x15” or somewhat larger, up to 15x15.” In any event, your drawing support should always be larger than the paper size you intend to use. Other adequate surfaces are Plexiglas, Masonite, or the Field Sketch Board sold in art supply stores.

Lightweight folding chair or canvas stool

Folding TV table or inverted crate for holding your painting supplies

Old towel, cloth, or apron to put on your lap under the drawing support if you are seated

Sun visor, bug spray, comfortable shoes and clothes

Camera (optional) for recording reference photos

Soft lead pencil for sketching (4B to 9B range), Small sketch pad no larger than 8x10 (spiral bound is good)

Kneaded eraser, Pencil sharpener, Masking tape, Paper towel and/or Handiwipes

Drinking water, Lunch, Snacks

Paints—An adequate assortment of pastels in any brand you are accustomed to using, in a range of colors and values—enough dark, mid, and light values. My outdoor field box is a scaled-down version of what I normally paint with indoors. (If you need to purchase pastels, I can advise you. Many companies offer sets with colors just for painting landscapes.) Brands I recommend: NuPastel, Sennelier, Unison, Mount Vision, Great American, Rembrandt.

For the color studies: Canson Mi Tientes Pastel Paper either in a 9x12” pad of **Assorted Colors (24 sheets)** or 1 full sheet of Canson paper, Moonstone #426. Cut the full sheet into smaller individual sheets approx 9x12”. If you want to select other colors of individual sheets of Canson, just be sure they are within a mid-value color range.

If you are already used to working on the popular sanded surfaces, I recommend Uart sanded paper which can be toned or underpainted before using. If you have other favorite papers or boards for pastel painting that you are accustomed to using, by all means bring them, however, the size of the paper is important. The recommend 9x12” or smaller and/or no larger than 12x16”. Other surfaces you might want to try include Art Spectrum, or La Carte by Sennelier. Central Art Supply in St Pete carries Uart paper.

Watercolors, Colored Pencil, Graphite

You may opt to follow the materials suggestions listed above for pastel students, omitting the specific pastels and papers mentioned and substituting your usual art materials. Equipment recommendations are also a practical guideline for these mediums, so base your choices on what works best for you. Additional necessities might include:

**Paints, Pencil sets, soft graphite
Brushes
Papers—Cut into smaller sizes for studies
Painting Support
Sketch Pad
Paper Towels
Water and 2 – 4 small plastic containers
Lunch, Snacks**

Oils, Acrylics

The option to use a field easel is entirely up to the student. The easy method is to use small-format (9x12” or 11x14”) canvas panels, resting on your lap. However, a field easel is allowable. Materials recommended for all other media listed above may apply as well and can be used as a guideline. Additional necessities might include:

**Paints
Brushes
Palette
Mediums
Canvas: boards, or panels—2 – 4 for smaller-format studies
Sketch pad & pencils
Paper Towels
Water, Lunch, Snacks**