

Monthly Meeting Notes

FCA Victoria, October 20, 2011 Called to order at 7:05, Windsor Park Pavilion

Chair: Agnes Cornell

Business:

1. Welcome to guests and new members
2. Chapter Membership Dues of \$20.00 were required in September. Any outstanding payment can be mailed to: Mary Conley @ #1-908 St. Charles Street, Victoria, BC V8S 3P6
3. The FCA Fall show at the Morris Gallery has been a great success, with 12 paintings sold, and 10 days left before it closes. Please see our FCA website for images of the award winners, as well as a video interview at the show opening with Marney Ward, SFCA. Painting pick-up of unsold work has been changed to Sunday, October 30th, 2011 from Noon until 3:00
4. The Greater Victoria Airport Show pick-up of paintings will take place at the airport on November 1st, 2011 from Noon until 2:00
5. Karen Casey still has various painting wrappings from the Airport Show drop-off. Please contact her at: (250) 658-4177 or email her at: karencasey@shaw.ca to retrieve them.
6. Sam Boehner announced the Harold Allanson 4-day watercolour workshop taking place Nov 11-14th, with "Cityscapes" as the subject matter. Harold is an award-winning artist in Canada as well as in the USA, and was the featured artist in the February 2011 Watercolor Artist Magazine. Harold is especially well known for his marine paintings. His work can be viewed at: <http://www.haroldallanson.ca/index.html>
For more information about this workshop, please contact Sam @ sam@samboehner.com
7. Marney is in contact with someone who has a stock of hardware and framing equipment. Anyone interested, please contact Marney @ marneyward@shaw.ca
8. Congratulations to Sandhu Singh for winning Best of Show in the Sidney Fine Art Show. Also Congratulations to Catherine Moffat SFCA for winning the brand new Diane Thorp award
9. Many art events are scheduled for this next week out in Sidney, BC. For more information, view the events calendar at: <http://mypeninsula.ca/>

Demonstration Summary: Allan Kirk <http://www.tarnincolour.com>

Allan Kirk is an award-winning, published watercolour artist originally hailing from England; however for the past 7 years he has been residing in France where he hosts watercolour painting holidays at his converted farmhouse. His style is "impressionistic" – "not detailed, nor tidy", citing appreciation for the works of such watercolourists as Trevor Chamberlain, David Curtis, John Yardley, Joseph Zbukvic and Alvaro Castagnet as strong influences on his work.

Allan general paints outdoors, using a Liz Deakin watercolour palette because of its deep wells and mixing area, and he works with a limited palette of cool and warm Winsor & Newton Watercolour pigments. His paper choice includes Arches 140lb. rough, Saunders Waterford 140lb. rough, or Bockingford 140 lb. rough, none of which he stretches. Instead, Allan tapes his paper to his board and he is ready to start.

Allan draws on his watercolour paper with a 4B pencil. He feels that any harder pencil could mar the paper and affect subsequent washes. He then masks his whites – in this case the painting was of a reservoir named Lac St. Ferreol in France near Carcassonne Castle. The image was of sail boats on the water in the mid-ground, with a distant shoreline behind, and mountains in the background. On the left side of the image was a sandy area in the foreground with people on the beach and in the water.



(This painting of Allan's is similar to the demonstration painting done for the FCA meeting).

Allan works from large shapes to small, light to dark, and from top to bottom of his painting, starting with a #10 brush, then working his way down to a rigger brush by the end of his painting. In this demonstration, he wet the sky area first, then laid in the sky colour (Cobalt Blue + Winsor Blue to warm it), and lifted his clouds with a paper towel. He then bypassed the distant mountains and low hills in the middle of the image, and then painted the blue of the water, increasing the pigment-to-water ratio towards the bottom of the painting (adding Ultramarine Blue), and painting around the people standing in the water. Allan added a combination of Raw Sienna + Cobalt Violet into the sand area of the beach, warming the colour towards the bottom to bring the area forward. He then moved up to the low hills behind the boats and added a mixture of Raw Umber and a little Ultramarine Blue in vertical strokes for a row of trees at the base of the hills. Because Allan paints with a lot of water, he frequently mopped-up the water that had pooled on the masking-taped edge to keep it from running back into the drying image. Allan added-in the distant mountains, with a light blue to achieve aerial perspective, then added the shadows on the bottom of the clouds with a mixture of Burnt Sienna + Cobalt Blue with a touch of Cobalt Violet. This was his first washes. He then strengthened his colours, and charged more colour into these wet areas. After the coffee break, which allowed his initial washes to dry, Allan removed the masking fluid from the sails of the sailboats, and then he switched to a #6 round, and increased the pigment-ratio to achieve darker colours. He continued to paint-in darker areas of the trees in the background, and he reinforced and created texture in the foreground of the beach, as well as adding ripples in the water to bring that area forward. He added Raw Umber to the water in the middle-ground to create a reflection of the background hills, and generally darkened the areas surrounding the sailboats, which was his focal point. At this point he continued to tighten up the painting with a #4 rigger, keeping in mind that his darkest darks and the most detail would surround the cluster of sailboats that was his main focus. Allan then cleaned up the edges of the sails, as well as adding such details as the trunks on the trees, painting the people into the image, and adding some darks around the people in the foreground. He then used pure pigments – his “brightest brights” on the sails to reinforce the focal point. By this time his paint was the consistency of cream. Allan finished-up his piece by adding a small amount of detailed pen work on the sailboats and sails with a Stabilo Fineliner water-soluble pen. Allan kept everyone entertained with his delightful humour, and completed his lovely impressionist demonstration of Lac St. Ferreol by 8:15.

Specific Points:

- Allan works from large shapes to small shapes, being sure to incorporate lost and found edges. He also paints from light to dark and from top to bottom.
- He starts with a #10 brush, and then he switches to a smaller brush as he tightens up his painting. When using a #10 and #6 brush, Allan holds the brush at the very end of the handle. By the time he starts painting with a rigger, he has moved his hand down the shaft of the brush and holds it like you would hold a pencil.
- Allan mentions that there are three ways to get your whites with watercolour. The first is to mask them. The second is to paint around them. The final choice is to use a body colour such as gouache to reinstate the whites at the end of the painting. Allan uses all three methods.
- The general rule for masking fluid: get it off as soon as possible.
- Allan finds that the best results are achieved with high quality pigments, papers and brushes.
- He does not buy tube greens, instead he prefers to mix his own from his blue and yellow pigments.
- If you are going to introduce a colour into your painting, be sure to add it in several areas, otherwise it will appear out-of-place.
- Because Allan paints plein air, he always marks the direction of the sun on his masking tape, so he does not alter the direction of the light as the painting proceeds.
- The general rule for reflections is that it is a tone down from what it is reflecting.
- The riggers that Allan uses are called “sword liners”. They are angled brushes that hold more water than conventional rigger brushes.
- Keeping in mind perspective, Allan mentioned that all the tops of the sail boat masts end on the same imaginary horizontal line. Only the bottom of the boats will vary, indicating their proximity to the viewer. Likewise, when drawing a group of people, all their heads will be on the same imaginary horizontal line, but the line of their feet will vary according to their position in the picture plane.
- Indicate don't state.
- “If you see a jumble, paint a jumble” (John Yardley)
- Don't be careful, don't be careless, be carefree.

Next meeting: November 17th, 2011. Harold Allanson, SFCA will be demonstrating “Boats and Reflections” in watercolour.