

# BEGINNING & INTERMEDIATE WATERCOLOR PAINTING

Lampo Leong, PhD, Professor of Art

Spring 2017 • Art 2510-01 (55436) & Art 3510-01 (55437) • MW 11am–1:50pm • Room A131

LeongL@missouri.edu • Office: A219 Fine Arts • Office Hours: MW 4:50pm–5:50pm

<https://missouri.instructure.com> • <http://www.artstor.org.proxy.mul.missouri.edu>

<http://lampoleong.com>

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## Course Description:

This course introduces students to classical and contemporary watercolor painting techniques and concepts with emphasis on the understanding of its formal language and the fundamentals of artistic expression. Even though previous painting experience is not a prerequisite for this course, the vigorous training provided will prepare students for going into a professional fine art career. Painting from still-life, landscape, figure, and life models from observation will be geared towards realism; at the same time, various other watercolor painting styles could be explored. Color theory, linear perspective, compositional structure, figure/ground relationships, visual perception, spatial concepts, and critical thinking skills will all be emphasized extensively. We will also study and research major watercolor painting styles in historical context. The hope is that students will use this global approach to develop a “critical eye” in evaluation of contemporary watercolor painting. Demonstrations, videos, PowerPoint lectures, group and individual critiques will be given throughout the course. It may seem like a lot to absorb – but always remember that our main emphasis will be to encourage and nourish individuality and creativity.

## Course Objectives:

- Introduce students to the fundamental processes of visual perception and artistic expression.
- Develop students' confidence in using watercolor painting as a primary medium for artistic expression.
- Develop students' ability to verbalize ideas and processes in art making.
- Develop understanding of history, major styles and contemporary issues in watercolor painting.

## Reference Books & Required Textbooks:

- *The New Artist's Manual: A Complete Guide to Painting and Drawing Materials and Techniques* by Simon Jennings, San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2006. ISBN 13: 978-0-8118-5124-4 or ISBN 10: 0-8118-5124-9 (This required text is reserved in MU Ellis Library)
- *The Elements of Color* by Johannes Itten (Translated by Ernst Van Hagen) New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1970. ISBN 0-442-24038-4 (Optional)

## Course Content & Scope:

- Color Theory: color wheel (primary/secondary, complementary), transparency/opacity, hue, value (intensity, brightness), chroma (saturation, purity) & temperature (warm/cold).
- Color Contrast & Attributes: Interaction, harmony, psychology/mood, culture & expression.
- Composition: space, movement, balance, asymmetry, rhythm, shapes, proportion & lighting.

- Media Characteristics & Surfaces: watercolor paint, watercolor paper & watercolor canvas.
- Painting Techniques & Mediums: flat and graded washes; dry brush; wet-in-wet; blooms; wet-on-dry; layering; creating highlights by reserving white areas, lifting out paint and using body color, masking fluid and sandpaper; textures and special effects created by rock salt, sponge, wax resist, turpentine, alcohol and detergent; final varnish and spray, etc.
- Watercolor Painting History: major watercolor painting styles and masters from Renaissance to contemporary.

### **Course Requirements:**

- There will be lectures of important content – about 30 minutes – at the beginning or the middle of many classes. Some lecture time will be used for critique, discussion of required reading, educational video shown, student’s presentation, and demonstration of various watercolor painting materials and techniques.
- Required class assignments will be started in class and may need to be completed outside-of-class. Additional outside-of-class assignments, research, and homework, may take approximately six hours per week and they should be turned in for grading.
- Students are expected to keep, and turn in for evaluation, a sketchbook for sketching, thumbnail sketching, planning, idea drafting, and note.

### **Grading Policy:**

- Artistic creation is a comprehensive, developmental activity. Grading is based on students’ performance in several related areas:
  - Evidence of students’ understanding and mastery of techniques and concepts
  - Implementation of those ideas in the particular assignments
  - Willingness and attitude to experiment
  - Initiative demonstrated and individual effort during and outside class time
  - Degree of participation in class and in group critiques
  - Overall preparedness and progress throughout the semester
- Students completing the basic requirements will receive a grade corresponding approximately to a “C.”
- Students meeting the basic requirements of each assignment, who attends every class, and who contributes reasonably to the general educational environment of the group, will receive a grade of “C+.”
- “B” work exceeds the basic requirements. “A” work is exceptional.
- Each project, completed in or outside class, will receive a letter grade. Your final grade will be roughly the average of all grades received; however, final project and class participation will be counted for approximately 25% of the final grade.

### **Attendance Policy, Cellphone Policy & Music Policy:**

- You are expected to attend class regularly. Excessive absences may result in a failing grade. In this class, “excessive absences” is defined as missing more than two times. After that, your final grade will be reduced by one-third-letter grade for each additional absence despite your performance otherwise.
- Medical or personal problems will be excused but only with professional documentation. This means a statement from a medical professional declaring that you have been ill enough

to miss class. A document that states that you had an appointment or that you saw a doctor is not enough. Your illness must be documented as having kept you incapacitated.

- All missed activities and work will need to be made-up outside the regular class. You are responsible for the information missed as a result of an absence. Make an appointment to see me for missed lectures. You are responsible for what you have missed.
- Three instances of tardiness will equal one absence. Missing more than 30 minutes of a class at the beginning or at the end will both be considered an absence. If you have trouble attending class, please discuss your attendance problems privately with me after class.
- Excessive tardiness and absences will be referred to the Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences.
- After six unexcused absences, you will be dropped from the course with a failing grade.
- We use cell phone as camera to help our projects from time to time, but checking email or using text messaging during class will affect your final grade.
- Painting is very much a mental exercise, which means you need to think and listen to the instruction and critique while you are painting; therefore, you should not be absorbed into your own music. The instructor will sometimes play soft music for the whole class to help create a calm atmosphere, which could be turned on and off by the instructor when needed. Violation of the music policy will affect your final grade.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor. Any student suspected of submitting work done by someone else will be reported to the Office of the Provost.

### **Americans With Disabilities Act:**

If you need accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform me immediately. Please see me privately after class, or at my office. To request academic accommodations (for example, a notetaker or extended time on exams), students must also register with the Office of Disability Services, (<http://disabilityservices.missouri.edu>), S5 Memorial Union, 882-4696. It is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting academic accommodations, and for accommodations planning in cooperation with students and instructors, as needed and consistent with course requirements. For other MU resources for students with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

### **Intellectual Pluralism:**

The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions or concerns regarding the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the Departmental Chair or Divisional Director; the Director of the Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities (<http://osrr.missouri.edu/>); or the MU Equity Office (<http://equity.missouri.edu/>), or by email at [equity@missouri.edu](mailto:equity@missouri.edu). All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor at the end of the course.

### Watercolor Painting Artists to Study:

J.M.W. Turner (1775-1851), John Singer Sargent, Andrew Wyeth, Joseph Raffael, and many other contemporary watercolor artists internationally. Also study the paintings of Vermeer, Van Gogh, Paul Cezanne, Lucian Freud, etc.

### Tentative Course Schedule and Daily Activities:

- 01/18 Lecture: Introductory PPT Lecture, Overview & Course Objective; Materials  
Homework: Read *New Artist's Manual*, Watercolor, p.103-137; Composition, p.228-233; Color, p.211-227; Still-life, p.235-269; Review *Perspective Drawing*, Chapters 1, 2 & 3; Review *Drawing From Observation*, By Brian Curtis (<http://faculty.missouri.edu/leong/Courses/InstructionalMaterial/PerceptualDrawCurtisWV.pdf>)
- 01/23 Lecture: Composition – Space, Movement, Balance, Direction & Rhythm; Golden Section (1:1.618 or 5:8) & Proportion  
Exercise: Start a 4-session watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (cube or box)
- 01/25 Lecture: Basic Color Theory (Color wheel, Primary color, Secondary color, Complementary color); Impressionism Painting; Watercolor painting technique  
Exercise: Continue the 4-session watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (cube or box)  
Homework: Research on contemporary watercolor still-life painting  
Review Linear Perspective (1, 2 & 3 points)  
([http://faculty.missouri.edu/leong/Courses/InstructionalMaterial/PerspectiveDraw11\\_26.pdf](http://faculty.missouri.edu/leong/Courses/InstructionalMaterial/PerspectiveDraw11_26.pdf))
- 01/30 Lecture: Color Contrast & Harmony – Hue, Value (intensity, brightness), Chroma (saturation, purity) & Temperature (warm & cold). Various Styles of Still-life Watercolor Painting  
Exercise: Continue the 4-session watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (cube or box)
- 02/01 Lecture: Chinese Contemporary Watercolor Paintings  
Exercise: Complete the 4-session watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (cube or box)  
Homework: Research on contemporary watercolor painting (books, ArtStor or online)  
Review Linear Perspective – Inclined Planes and Circle  
([http://faculty.missouri.edu/leong/Courses/InstructionalMaterial/PerspectiveDraw26\\_41.pdf](http://faculty.missouri.edu/leong/Courses/InstructionalMaterial/PerspectiveDraw26_41.pdf))
- 02/06 Exercise: Start a 4-session watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (bird house, books, etc.)  
Homework: Study Andrew Wyeth's works (books, ArtStor or online)
- 02/08 Lecture: Watercolor Painting Techniques: Creating Textures; Andrew Wyeth's work  
Exercise: Continue watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (bird house, books, etc.)  
Homework: Study Paul Cezanne's works (books, ArtStor or online)
- 02/13 Exercise: Continue watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (bird house, books, etc.)

- 02/15 Exercise: Complete watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (bird house, books, etc.)
- 02/20 Exercise: Start a 4-session watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (fruit, bottle & basket)
- 02/22 Exercise: Continue watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (fruit, bottle & basket)
- 02/27 Exercise: Continue watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (fruit, bottle, & basket)  
Homework: Look for good photo reference for your texture painting
- 03/01 Exercise: Complete watercolor painting. Prop: Still-life (fruit, bottle, & basket)
- 03/06 Exercise: Start a 4-session painting of texture (rusted metal, door, wall, barn)
- 03/08 Exercise: Continue the 4-session painting of texture (rusted metal, door, wall, barn)
- 03/13 Exercise: Continue the 4-session painting of texture (rusted metal, door, wall, barn)  
Homework: Look for good photo reference for your landscape painting
- 03/15 Exercise: Complete the 4-session painting of texture (rusted metal, door, wall, barn)  
Homework: Read *New Artist's Manual*, Depth & Distance, p.274-305
- 03/20 Lecture: Aerial (Atmospheric) Perspective & Watercolor Landscape Painting  
Video: Cezanne: *The Man and the Mountain* & *French Impressionists*  
Exercise: Start a 4-session landscape painting from photo reference (nature)  
Homework: Study landscape watercolor painting by Turner (1775-1851)
- 03/22 Exercise: Continue the landscape painting from photo reference (nature)  
Video: *Van Gogh's Van Gogh* (56:46)
- 04/03 Exercise: Continue the landscape painting from photo reference (nature)  
Homework: Look for good photo reference for your architecture/machinery painting
- 04/05 Exercise: Complete the landscape painting from photo reference (nature)
- 04/10 Exercise: Start a 4-session watercolor painting. Subject: architecture or machinery
- 04/12 Exercise: Continue the 4-session watercolor painting of architecture or machinery
- 04/17 Exercise: Continue the 4-session watercolor painting of architecture or machinery  
Homework: Look for good photo reference for your portrait watercolor painting
- 04/19 Exercise: Complete the 4-session watercolor painting of architecture or machinery  
Homework: Study watercolor painting by John Singer Sargent  
Read *New Artist's Manual*, The Human Form (portrait/figure), p. 306-341
- 04/24 Lecture: Various Styles of Watercolor Portrait Painting; Paintings of Lucian Freud; Proportion of the Human Head  
Exercise: Start a 4-session watercolor portrait painting from photo reference
- 04/26 Exercise: Continue the watercolor portrait painting. Subject: portrait from photo
- 05/01 Exercise: Continue the watercolor portrait painting. Subject: portrait from photo
- 05/03 Exercise: Complete the watercolor portrait painting. Subject: portrait from photo
- 05/08 Final Critique and Exam: Monday, 7:30am–9:30pm

This is the general pace of the class and is not intended to be a complete list of assignments and exams. Special assignments and modifications of this plan will likely to occur in order to accommodate students' needs and to solve specific painting problems that arise.

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