

Tip #80

More on Travel Sketching

Now that you've decided what to take with you, let's get out there and make some art!

Remember that each locale comes with its own set of challenges. Painting in the dry desert is a whole different animal from working in the humid South! Try to be prepared, both with your supplies and in your mind, for these variances. Paint *will* behave in ways unique to that environment!

Be sure to take plenty of water, both for painting and to hydrate yourself. A broad-brimmed hat will help keep the sunlight off your paper or canvas - I've been eyeing one that rolls up in your suitcase and pops right back into shape! Work from your car, a shelterhouse, or even from the shelter of an overhanging rock if you need to. (The glare of sun on a white surface will not only half blind you, but it makes it difficult to judge colors and values.)

And of course, most importantly, sketch what interests YOU - landscapes, people, animals, buildings, interiors - whatever captures the essence of your travels.

80-1, Shenandoah Afternoon

Painting by the river...

I had plenty of shade on the banks of the Shenandoah River, and a patient partner who let me keep working until I felt finished, with no sense of pressure. If you go out with someone else, be sure they support what you're doing - or join you at it! It makes all the difference in the world.



Art 80-1



80-2, July

Develop some quick-sketching techniques, too...

You can work small, for greater speed - and keep it simple! You can suggest the scene rather than going for all the details. This one is a dark gray colored pencil on a postcard sized piece of watercolor paper - I splashed the color in loosely with a flat brush, and still managed to capture the feeling of that hot, sunny, and windy July afternoon.



80-3, Distant Herd



Ink and wash is terrific for fast sketching when you're on the road, as well...a waterproof ink pen will take washes almost immediately, with no lifting or smearing. I use Micron Pigma or Zig Millennium pens, most often the .01 size. (This one appears in my new Ink & Wash CD, along with many, many more examples.)

The first of the new CDs is online, at my CafePress store -- http://www.cafepress.com/cathy_johnson.61122728! This one is on Ink & Wash, and has a 20+ minute slide show, plus PDF articles, and lots of information.

Watch for the slide show CD on painting on the spot in the Shenandoah Mountains, too...