

Tip #113

Painting Still Water, Part 2

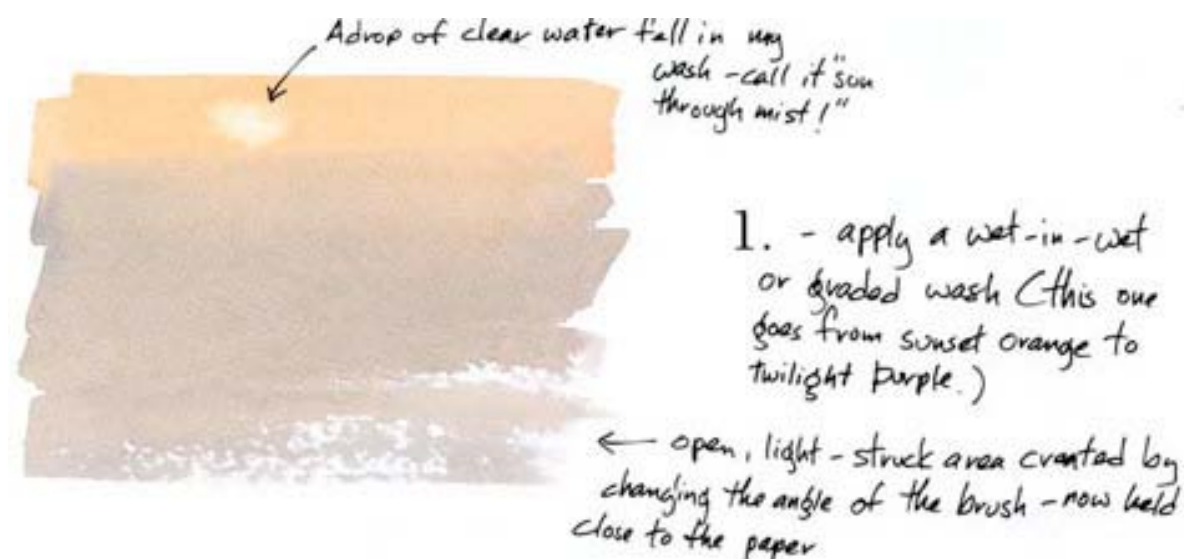


Still water DOES run deep sometimes, but it's also lovely, rich, and reflective.

You may not have thought of this as a place to use drybrush, but it can be very effective in suggesting a body of water. Try a graded wash as an underwash, perhaps, and use drybrush to suggest texture of wind on water, or the sparkle of sunlight. It's magic!

NOTE: Of course your brush is not completely dry. You fill it with water and color and then blot it on a tissue or squeeze it between thumb and forefinger to leave color but remove excess water. Brush position makes a difference, too—even if your brush is quite wet, if you hold it almost flat to the paper and work quickly, you'll get a “drybrush” effect.

113-1, Step 1



This first step is easy ... just a graded wash, wet in wet. Don't worry about it being perfectly smooth ... quite often irregularities just make your painting look MORE like water, not less.

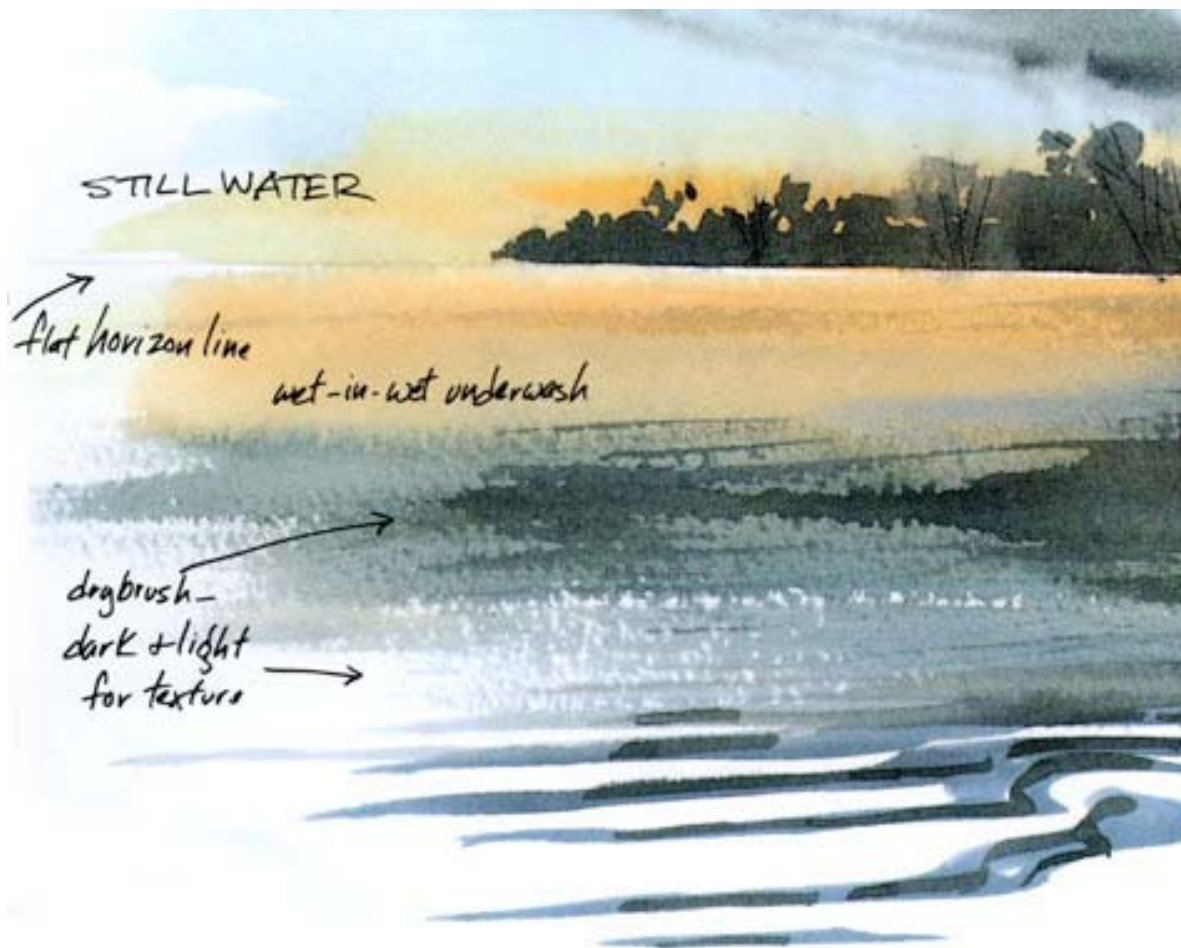
113-2, Step 2

2. - let
dry and add
drybrush for
texture



Once your graded wash is thoroughly dry, you can come back in with an almost dry brush and pull it over the surface of the paper for a broken effect.

113-3, Step up the Drama!



I don't like Drama in my life, but love it in a painting! Depending on the colors you've chosen, you can create an evocative mood like this using the techniques you've been practicing. A dark, silhouetted shore suggests evening; because of the kind of light you don't see a reflection, here. (And remember, that horizon line stays level!)

113-4, Putting it all together – Tupper Lake



This one ended up in Watercolor Artist Magazine – the islands in the lake really helped define it. You can see the bit of graded wash and a suggestion of drybrush here. It sold quickly when I put it on my gallery blog, <http://cathyjohnsonart.blogspot.com/>.

And of course you can always combine still and moving water, as where the distant ocean is smooth and the waves crash into the shore, or where a deep pool in a river flows into a waterfall. Painting water IS challenging, but you can approach it step by step just like any other subject!

The demos are from my *First Steps Series, Painting Watercolors*, still popular though it was published in 1995. You can find it here, <http://cathyjohnson.info/bookpages/paintingwatercolors.html>.

Please drop by my artists blog, <http://katequicksilvr.livejournal.com/>, my fine arts gallery blog, located at <http://cathyjohnsonart.blogspot.com/>, where I often offer mini-demos, my CafePress store, located at http://www.cafepress.com/cathy_johnson, where you can find instructional CDs for artists, or drop by for a visit on Facebook, <http://www.facebook.com/cathy.johnson1!>

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