

Creative Paintings

3 Artists' Approaches

an Art Journal

Floral Demos

Watercolor

OCTOBER 2011

INSPIRATION • IDEAS • INSTRUCTION **artist**



twmedia US \$5.99

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Display until October 24, 2011

St. Remy, France (detail; watercolor on paper, 20x16) by Eric Wiegardt

www.watercolorartistmagazine.com

Pocketful of Possibilities

Vibrant and portable watercolor kits make painting in the field anything but dull.

Bursting with Color The vivid colors in these kits are perfect for painting lively blossoms such as this one (watercolor on paper, 6x4). Here I used a Sharpie permanent marker for the line drawing.



When painting on site, artists want a variety of options, but not a lot of stuff to lug around, thus the beauty of the *plein air* watercolor kit. Lightweight and easy to store in your pocket, Koi Watercolor Field Sketch Kits by Sakura are a unique series of painting sets, available in three different varieties and sizes: the 12-color pocket-sized kit, or the 18- and 24-color postcard-sized sets.

Each set includes a water reservoir handle brush—a smaller one in the 12-color kit, and a larger one in the 18- and 24-color kits.

Little Boxes

The water reservoir handle brush has a detachable two-part handle (plug included), which makes carrying and refilling a breeze. It fits comfortably in the hand for controlled water delivery directly into its tip; just squeeze to release

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Stephen Quiller Instructional DVD's

Stephen Quiller, listed one of the top teachers in 2004 by *Artists Magazine*, offers instructional DVD's, books, a travel kit, and more.

and the plein air movement, you can get the most out of your plein air painting experience. You can get the most out of your plein air painting experience. You can get the most out of your plein air painting experience.

the water, then paint. To clean, simply squeeze again and wipe it on the sponge insert (also included). The brush has the ability to create fine or bold lines with a little or a lot of water, making blending and shading easy. Different sized tips—Nos. 2, 6 and 8 rounds—are also available, sold separately.

If you're traveling with the smaller 12-color set, it would be wise to consider cutting your paper down to 2x3 inches or using a small notebook. The larger 18- and 24-color sets can store 4x6-inch postcard size paper in their lids, which then act as easels. If weather conditions are windy, consider using a piece of tape or removable adhesive putty (available in hardware stores) to help hold the paper in place. The larger sets also contain removable

palettes that fit onto either side of the set, expanding the palette area. The detachable palettes make it versatile for both right- and left-handed artists.

The vibrant half-pan colors are great for florals as well as lively landscapes. If you're looking for more subdued hues, try mixing or incorporating some of your other favorite colors into the palette. You'll have a lot of fun creating quick, colorful postcard size sketches, and with the water reservoir already in the handle, you'll be able to paint anywhere at anytime, making your painting experience effortless and spontaneous.

Figuring It Out

What sets the Koi Watercolor Field Sketch Kits apart from others is

that the colors are brilliant and lively, which makes for enjoyable painting. The colors are so bright, however, that it can be difficult to get more natural color, unless, as I mentioned, you incorporate some of your other go-to colors into the set. I became frustrated at first, trying to use my normal style of painting and finding the color quite vivid for the subject I was trying to paint; the grass was too green.

Once I relaxed, I switched the subjects to tropical flowers. This is when the kits' colors started to work out for me. The brush delivery isn't the same as a normal watercolor brush, meaning it can lay down a pretty decent puddle of water but doesn't mop water back out as well, due to the brush's fibers. Simply use a paper towel




In the Field I used the 24-color set, along with a few of my own favorite colors, to paint this *plein air* landscape (watercolor on paper, 4x6).



Product Information: Koi Watercolor Field Sketch Kits are available in three sets (12, 18 and 24 colors). Prices range from \$26.49 to \$39.99. For more information, visit www.sakuraofamerica.com or call 800/776-6257.

- The 12-color kit includes half pans of Chinese white, lemon yellow, deep yellow, vermilion hue, crimson lake, Prussian blue, cobalt blue hue, viridian hue, yellow green, yellow ocher, light red and ivory black.
- The 18-color kit includes half pans of Chinese white, lemon yellow, permanent yellow deep, jaune brilliant, vermilion hue, crimson lake, purple, cobalt blue hue, cerulean blue, ultramarine, Prussian blue, yellow green, viridian hue, permanent green deep, yellow ocher, light red, burnt umber and ivory black.
- The 24-color kit includes half pans of Chinese white, lemon yellow, aureoline hue, permanent yellow deep, permanent orange, jaune brilliant, vermilion hue, cadmium red hue, crimson lake, quinacridone rose, purple, cobalt blue hue, cerulean blue, ultramarine, Prussian blue, yellow green, viridian hue, permanent green deep, olive green, yellow ocher, light red, burnt umber, Payne's gray and ivory black.

to soak up extra water. Since the brush can deliver a lot of water, using the wet-into-wet technique works well. I used a Sharpie permanent marker to create my line drawing instead of waiting for areas to dry to form my composition. The kits' brushes are fun and unique—great to incorporate into any field set.

Using these techniques was invigorating and turned my sketches into happy little paintings—the colors say it all. I plan on bringing the sets along on my travels; I think they'll make for some cheerful postcards. 

New issue coming in September!

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