

The Flow of Time and Water in Watercolour. Or “Six of the Best” with Graham Thew

Time is precious, and the time we can find in our busy schedules for our enthusiasm for art is even more precious.

Many people say they would love to paint more and on a regular basis but cannot seem to find this thing they call “*the time*”.

This why watercolour is such an ideal medium to “solve” the *problem* of limited time.

Watercolours can be painted really quickly and it is surprising just how little time you actually need to create something worthwhile.

Many experienced watercolorists will tell that too much time can often be the enemy and true and fluid watercolour work can often be spoiled by overworking.

There is a saying in watercolour circles.....

“The best time to finish a watercolour painting is ten minutes before you actually do.”

Today’s projects are going to show you just how to use your limited time_ to good effect.

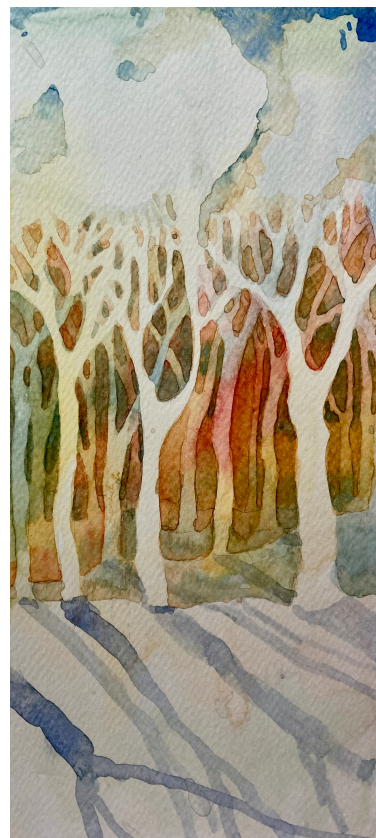
The exercises are warming up pictures, practice projects for you to let it “all hang out” , play and go for it.

If you **DON’T** produce something you are pleased with, well at least you only “wasted” ten-fifteen minutes and a bit of scrap of paper!

However if you **DO** produce something you are pleased with, Well you’ve probably:

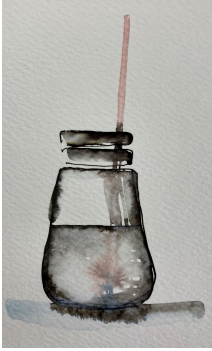
- loosened up a little,
- learnt something about how pigments mix on the papers,
- seen some subtle blending of colours,
- discovered how different mediums can interact with watercolour to good effect,
- and best of all ignited some ideas about how these 6minute fun ideas can translate into larger works.

This may all prove to be the basis of larger artworks you can pop into exhibitions and maybe even sell to fund the purchase of that special brush you’ve been promising yourself!



NEVER be afraid to experiment, even if the experiment fails you will have learnt some more, expanding your knowledge of just how to conquer the exciting medium that is watercolour.





LEARN about water.

Watercolour is *nothing* without water.

Watercolour, either out of a tube or from a solid “pan” is mixed with water either on a palette with a brush or on the paper using a wet-into-wet technique where the pigments you drop onto the water on the paper, blend flow and bloom.

The amount of water to pigment is the key to successful watercolour art and something you can really only learn by experience. Practice, practice, practice.

Too little pigment and you produce tinted water and lose the vibrancy of the medium. **Too much** pigment and the work loses the subtlety that is achieved by the blending and layering of colour.

See how the pigments flow and mix whilst the water is still flowing, wet or damp. Speed in working before the application dries can often make the difference to your work . Have your choice of colours ready , mixed and ready to flow! layer your colours to create monochrome sketches by building up layers of paint thereby increasing the strength of the pigment. Practice, practice, practice.

You can enjoy yourself sitting and watching paint dry!!!

It may sound obvious, but always keep your water clean . Clean water is essential for both vibrant and subtle work.

If the water is muddy it will tint the colours you are laying down. Preferably work with two jars of water, one to remove the residual colour from the brush before you move onto another colour, and the other to dip in as insurance your brush is clean and to soak up the H2O before starting with your next pigment.

And if that isn't good enough reason remember always that that greenish, greyish sludge in your water jar is unused, unwanted and unloved pigment that you actually paid for!!

