

The Dance of Line and Color



Expressive sketching and Painting in the Central Coast Landscape



The Dance of Line and Color is a 3-day Sketching Workshop Retreat at beautiful Willow Pond in San Luis Obispo

Line and color can each play expressive parts in your sketch, and **the magic happens when we let each of these elements do what it does best!**

In this workshop retreat, we'll make the most of the expressive possibilities of line and color, as we explore how they can play exciting, complementary roles in your sketches.

- * **Develop more confident, expressive lines**, and explore your personal vocabulary of expressive marks and lines to create a more exciting visual story
- * **Use color with confidence** to bring emphasis, depth, and emotion to your sketches, and create a mood with harmony and contrast
- * **Practice the art of leaving something out** and refine the way you compose your sketches by using line and color in a complementary way



*What can Line do?
What does Color bring?*

The character of line and color are very different, and we'll practice bringing them together in a fresh way!

Line does more than describe edges and contours—an expressive line can carry feeling, intention, and dynamic movement. Your lines are as individual as your handwriting—you can dramatically change expression with your variety of marks.

Color can convey not only what we see, but also what we feel. Let your color decisions be bold! We will practice laying confident, fluid washes, and how to keep it fresh.

Thursday Evening

We'll have informal gathering, and introduce ourselves. Each participant briefly shares about their art journey, followed by a short presentation of the workshop program. Instructor will share personal sketchbooks and talk about the attitude of the sketch—**play, experiment, and discovery!**

Friday Morning: The Dance begins with Line

We'll start by **experimenting** with all that a line can do, and explore the range of exciting marks we can achieve **with a variety of line tools!**



Edges, pattern and texture...

experiment with different kinds of lines
to describe different things

Feel the line...

and the connection between your hand,
the tool, and the paper

What you leave out...

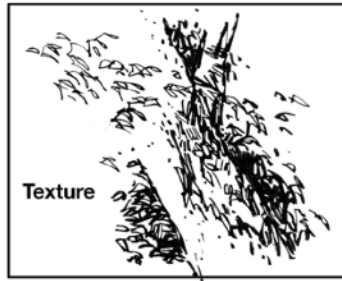
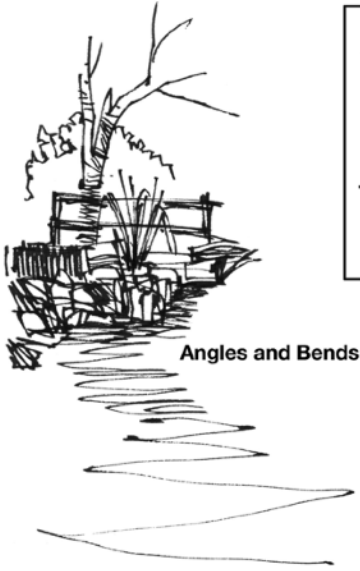
can be just as important as what you include



We'll then **explore our location** with a quick-sketch walk, using prompts to try out different line approaches, and experimenting with a variety of lines and marks. Participants will learn how to **observe carefully, and interpret freely!** This is also a great way to discover the character of the place, and where you want to focus your story.



Expressive drawing...



*Pace, energy, intention
and the character of your line*

Friday Afternoon: Color Notes



After a morning of expressive line drawing, we'll explore the art of leaving something out, and add simple areas of color.

*Where...and how
much color?*

Where will color be most effective?



Where would negative space add impact to your story?

Saturday Morning: The Power of Color

We'll start to focus on what color brings to the picture, especially **depth**

We will have a "color lab", to understand a few important things about **color**, and practice some watercolor techniques.

- * **Value: from light to dark**—quick monochrome studies to focus on light and shadow
- * **Color Temperature: warm and cool**—using a limited palette to create a sense of depth
- * **Saturation and Contrast**—develop the heart of your story/scene (focal point)



We'll look at some of the masters who use color to achieve depth in landscapes, like **Edgar Payne**, at right, **John Singer Sargent** and others.



We'll explore using value contrast, color temperature and saturation to achieve a sense of landscape depth and distance. This will be a great opportunity to practice mixing a range of greens, as well as observing the colors in light and shadows!



Saturday Afternoon: Color Strategies



Color can convey not only what we see, but what we feel. We'll look at different color strategies, to see how color creates mood and emotion.

Does the location feel quite and serene? try soft, analogous colors to create a sense of harmony.

Do you want to convey energy and excitement? Using contrasting colors and strong value contrast!

Do you want to unify the scene? Try a monochrome color scheme.



Sunday Morning: The Dance of Line and Color

We've looked at how the character of line and color are very different, and now we'll bring them together in a fresh way!

Who will lead the Dance...

Line or Color?

You can lead with line to develop structure, and quickly frame the essence of the story you want to tell in the scene—and then use color washes freely for things like foliage and background elements. Or use line sparingly, and then allow color to deliver a powerful emotional punch!



Use Color to bring emphasis to the focus of your story...

Look for patterns...

**Big, bold shapes
Patterns of light and shade
Saturated and muted color
Warm and cool colors**



The Dance of Line and Color© is at the heart of what I have been teaching and honing for a variety of workshops in the last 10 years. I have discovered that practicing and developing the expressive qualities of line and color as complementary partners in a sketch is a powerful way to foster skill, confidence, and pure enjoyment in drawing and painting. I've found this to be an effective approach both for landscape and urban sketching.

I like to encourage the attitude of an experiment—it shifts the mindset from succeeding or failing to focus instead on what can be learned from the experience. I try to bring a sense of fun and experimentation—the best antidote I know for overcoming fear. If I can open the doors a bit with encouragement, it is exciting to see the growth and progress that is made, and acknowledge it! It's my mission as a teacher to find ways to make sketching as fulfilling and fun for others as it is for me!

