



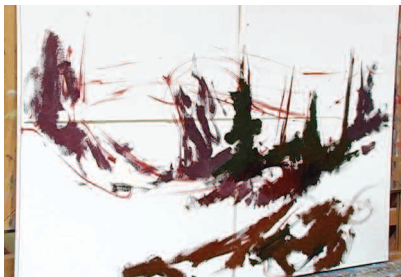
Kevin Macpherson is featured in the October Issue 2004

Kevin Macpherson Oil Painting Demonstration



Step 1: The Beginning

In the comfort of my studio, I can relive the outdoor experience by surrounding myself with plein-air studies. The study on the left will be my reference guide and departure point for the larger 24 x 30-inch oil on linen. I clean my brush with tissues between mixtures. My sketch is free and calligraphic. I feel my way mentally as much as I plot angles and positions of major elements.



Step 2: Controlling the Light

I control the pattern of light by first establishing all areas that belong to the family of shadow. Existing within this family are many colors and values, a range from the deep greens of the pines to the gray shadow of the snow. My lightest light is indicated in the lower left quadrant, this sets my parameters within the scene. Linear position and rhythms are indicated for the clouds.



Step 3: Filling in the Light

Another small plein-air sketch aids my color choices. A large hog-hair bristle brush keeps me thinking in big terms and simple shapes. My goal is to cover the canvas as accurately as possible, but I know from experience I will make countless changes. The slow drying time of oils allows for changes — I prefer to work wet into wet. My brushes consist of filberts and bristles, sizes #8 through #12.



Step 4: Puzzle Pieces

I fill in all the shapes to cover the canvas before refining any one area too much. I think of each area as an abstract shape to be placed in the proper place with the correct color and value. My enjoyment comes from the interaction of color combinations and abstract melding of the shapes. I can lose myself for a long time, solving a pleasing arrangement that goes beyond the mere depiction of representation.



Step 5: Close-up

A close-up reveals many colors (remember, I use only three). A variety of brushwork and edges add interest to the painting as two shapes meet. The paint is thin and thick, thick enough to physically move it around if necessary to redraw the shapes. All shapes large — and some thin — were made with a large brush by varying the pressure and designing with negative shapes in mind.



Step 6: The Finish

Thousands of brush strokes and hundreds of mixtures make up the finish. The initial shapes and colors are broken into smaller and smaller shapes, eventually giving the illusion of detail. I want my work to be more than documentation; I want a feeling and reflection of how I perceived the scene, which I want to share with the viewer.



KEVIN MACPHERSON PAINTS WINTER ESCAPE.

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