

Anthony Nield Demonstration "Big Sky over the North Downs"

15th January 2019

By Rod Jones

**About the Artist:**

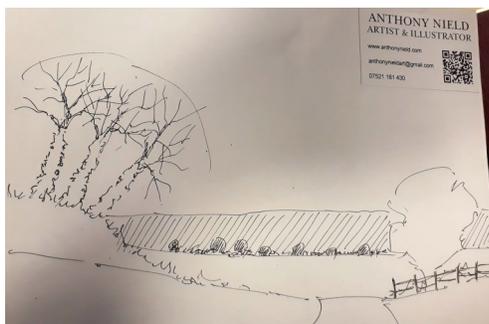
Anthony Nield first started painting watercolours about 20 years ago and during a 3 year period, when he worked in Bermuda, he exhibited with the Bermuda Arts Society. Two of his paintings were purchased and presented to the Masterworks Foundation Gallery which had been set up to collect the works of artists who have painted in Bermuda. These include Winslow Homer and Georgia O'Keeffe.

Over his three years in Bermuda, he had a number of favourable reviews of his paintings in the local press and was represented by a number of local galleries who sold his paintings to clients in the USA and Canada.

Since his return to the UK, Anthony has featured in a number of magazines, and is a regular contributor to the Leisure painter magazine, writing instructional pieces accompanied by images at various stages of completion. (Sounds like one of our demos!)

He lives in Kent and is a member of Sevenoaks Art Club. He teaches watercolour painting on cruise ships during his summer holidays and this experience was reflected in his easygoing manner and fund of stories which entertained us during this demonstration.

*The starting point.*



Like many of our demonstrators, Anthony makes extensive use of his sketchbook and uses it whenever he has a few moments during his day.

This is was his starting sketch that he circulated before his demonstration began.

*First paint the sky.*

This was a very loose sloshy wash of ultramarine painted with a large round sable brush and the board held flat across his knees. To add a suggestion of summer light, Anthony added a patch of burnt sienna to one of the clouds on the left of the painting.



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*"Once the sky is done leave it alone - don't go back into it"*

Foreground tones are now added and the horizon is indicated.

Foreground tones are added to define the central roadway.

*(There is evidence of the formation of one or two cauliflowers at the bottom of the painting but we somehow know that these will be dealt with later.)*



*Three trees are added and a covering of ivy is suggested.*

Branches are added and Anthony was at pains to emphasise the importance of varying their tones in order to give them a proper three-dimensional feel.

A shadow will be added to the right hand side of the trunks to give a greater feeling of depth.

*Adding the foliage and modelling the ivy.*

The foliage of the three trees was added by applying oblique dry-brush strokes of burnt sienna with a loosely-held Escoda Perla brush\*

The same brush was then used to apply a dark mix of burnt sienna and ultramarine down the right-hand side of the trunks of the trees to heighten the appearance of the ivy cladding.



*Suggesting the undergrowth under the trees*

This was done by applying a loose mix of Indian yellow, raw sienna and burnt sienna, varying the proportions of the mix to allow the colours and tones to fight it out and naturally produce the illusion of foliage.

*\*See the list of brushes and materials at the end of this review.*

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*Adding the shadows and distant trees.*

The tree on the right is defined, together with the hedgerow and the background row of trees is added.

A darker tone is added to the tree on the right to give it modelling.

Adding the shadows across the picture helps to define the road and adding the foreground shadow adds depth to the view and eliminates the cauliflower effect which was noted earlier.



*Nearly there...*

*Fence posts and some additional details are added to the trees*



...and there we are!

**Techniques and preferences.**

**Paper**

Anthony produced this picture on 200lb Saunders Waterford paper with a Not surface. The use of a 200lb paper meant that cockling was minimized.

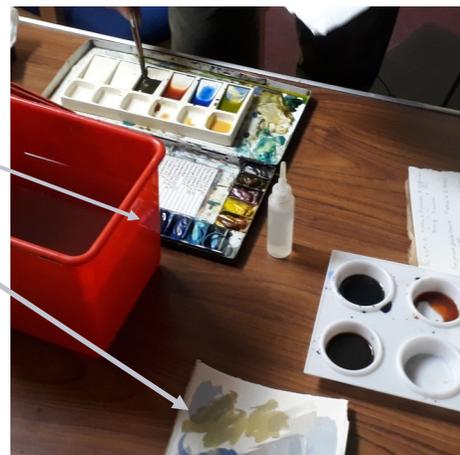
**Colours.** Anthony told us that he mainly used Winsor and Newton colours

He told us that, for this picture, he was restricting his use of blues to French Ultramarine, although a crafty glimpse at his palette shows that he had also laid out Cobalt and Cerulean blues.

He also likes to check the strength of his mixes before applying them to a painting.

For yellow he was using Indian Yellow, an interesting choice since most people tend to use Cadmium Yellow.

Indian Yellow, was once very popular with Victorian artists, including Turner, for its exceptional power and transparency.



However, the original pigment, which used to be produced from the urine of cows who had lived exclusively on a diet of mango leaves, was outlawed in 1917 on humanitarian grounds. The cows did not thrive on mango leaves which were also found to be toxic - and the smell of the paint betrayed its origins.

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It was not until 1997 that W&N saw fit to release a newly formulated non-bovine Indian Yellow which satisfied the need for a brilliant transparent yellow which was also light fast.

### **Brushes.**

For the sky and the undergrowth, Anthony used his Winsor and Newton Seven Series Round No.12 Kolinsky Sable. This is one of the most expensive brushes on the market but for quick sloshy washes worth every penny!

This was backed up by smaller Escoda Perla brushes.

*(If you are not familiar with these, they are well worth investigating. They are firmer than sable and probably have the sharpest points of any brushes on the market.*

*However, don't leave them standing in water for too long as the tip will curl!)*

### **Sketching - muscle memory helps**

The more you sketch, the better you get. Anthony recommended sharpening up your sketching skills by performing a regular drill of placing a series of dots on a cheap sketch pad and learning to join them in single straight strokes of the pencil or pen to form boxes and triangles. Holding the pen or pencil at its far end also helps to achieve fluency of line.

Thanks Anthony for an entertaining demonstration

*Rod Jones*