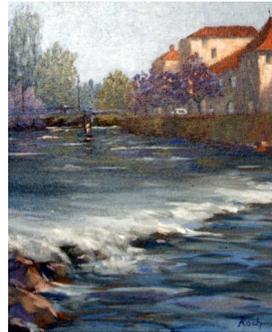


Alex Roch Demonstration "Landscape in Water Soluble Oils" 18th December 2018

Alex was born in Africa, travelling the world before settling in England as a teenager. Her early influences came from Rembrandt and Van Gogh, both steeped in drawing techniques and the use of strong tone and colour.

Following a year in the studio of Gerard Bernard in France, she studied at the City and Guilds of London Art College, where she won the Philip Connard travel award and the College drawing prize. She is now a full time, professional exhibiting painter, and teacher.



For her demonstration, Alex had chosen to use water-soluble oils and had prepared a board using primer and a light-medium tone.

She had drawn her scene in pencil and her drawing included two possible borders for the finished picture to allow her to choose the most effective composition as the painting developed. She told us that she was not too fussed about covering all pencil marks in her finished work since these frequently add a lively feel to a painting. (In fact she told us that she would ban the use of an eraser and has not even got one in her kit.)

Unlike many of our demonstrators, Alex worked from an oil sketch which she had painted *en plein air* since this more truly reflected her impression of the scene than a photograph.

She hastened to say that photos do have their place but made the point that a camera does not record an artist's general impression of a scene over time so that a painting which is faithful to a photo does not always capture the mood of the scene which caught the artist's interest.

As a general rule, she prefers to paint *en plein air* using a pochard box which automatically restricts the size of the painting. Because the light is continually changing *en plein air*, this encourages the completion of a painting in not much more than two or three hours. She cited Monet who would complete an average of four paintings in a day in order to catch the prevailing lighting conditions.

She prefers using water-soluble oils since they allow a degree of adjustment without drying too quickly as acrylics would and also remain workable on the palette long after normal oil paints would have formed a skin - this allows her the convenience of using a standard paintbox-style watercolour palette.

Unlike standard oils, her canvasses are touch dry fairly soon after a painting has been completed and all that is needed to transport completed paintings at the end of a day is separators (usually slices of cork or matchsticks) between each canvass.

Alex Roch Demonstration "Landscape in Water Soluble Oils" 18th December 2018 (continued)

Alex's approach to the painting was interesting. Instead of developing the picture on all fronts as many artists do, she developed the sky and the distance first. The result was that there was a very interesting distant view which she gradually brought downwards into the picture.

Alex favours small flat brushes which she finds give her more flexibility and, for the distant view she mainly used a 1/4 inch brush.

Although the original application of colour was quite thin, the colour was soon reinforced. Alex didn't mention whether you start fat over lean as one does with conventional oils and whether, if this was the case, the addition of water was the equivalent of using turps or Zestit in normal oils. It certainly looked as if this is what was happening.



Fairly well into the painting. The distance is well developed and a convincing middle distance tree line has been created.

Alex has applied a striking mixture of burnt sienna and cadmium yellow into the mid ground using brisk strokes with a broad flat brush.



Nearly there.

Here the building on the left of the picture has been further developed and Alex is adding finishing touches to the distant features



Finished....

Alex did say that she had drawn two possible cropping options so I took the liberty of applying one of them here.

Thank you Alex for an absorbing demonstration

Rod Jones