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Where I Work And How Long It Takes



"Well! The weather and the earth have made for some interesting and stimulating conversation! Out here in Washington State, we had a nasty earthquake, that rattled homes and shattered nerves, not to mention the genuine destruction of property from Olympia to Seattle and beyond. Yours truly and families fared very well, (considering) and only lost a few glass items. Books flew off shelves and drawers popped open. The power was off for a short time. As we cleaned up we had wind, rain, and hail, even a funnel cloud, (that didn't touch down). Then we watched and held our breath as a huge snowstorm descended on the eastern portion of our great country. Again, friends and family fared well through that force of nature.

So, as I count my blessings, I prepare for the wonders of nature that lure me to paint the awesome beauty that surrounds us!

In my next issue, "Some tools of my trade", from digital camera to high-quality ink-jet printers.

I have a wonderful loft to paint in. When we moved to our present home in the 1970's, I was beginning my oil painting. I set aside a small area in the laundry room that was well lit and afforded easy clean up. With two small boys, it was also out-of-the-way enough to leave my work set up.

As the children grew, my space requirements grew. I was painting larger, more ambitious canvases. We added on to our modest two bedroom home.

"...hear the roar of the waves; smell the salt air; and feel the mist on your face"

The plans included a third bedroom / family room with a loft above having skylights, North facing glass sliding doors onto a balcony, and a South facing window that can be draped if and when the sun shines. (We are blessed in the Northwest with many brightly overcast days, some with rain!) The usual amenities are there. Easels, tables, storage places, walls to hang the work (in various stages of completion), and an area for photographing larger pieces, have been included in my studio space. It is quiet and out of the flow of household activities.

Now, to answer the question, "How long does it take to do a painting?" It takes thirty years and one week for me to paint an oil seascape! Before you shake your head incredulously, let me

explain: For thirty years I have been taking lessons, studying my subject and practicing on canvas. I developed the skill to mix appropriate colors, to control the shapes and manipulate the values to create a scene that is not only believable, but so "alive", you can almost hear the roar of the waves; smell the salt air; and feel the mist on your face. Once the technical expertise had been fixed, the rest was easy. I spend from four to six hours a day, and in most cases a medium sized canvas is completed in a week's time.

"I enjoy the surroundings of my painting loft as much as the process itself"

Now my studio work area has been modified to include pastel painting and watercolor/gouache techniques. Although these media are less time consuming than traditional oils, the basic thirty year learning curve still applies. Everything is at my arms length and with such a bright and convenient work place, I enjoy the surroundings of my painting loft as much as the process itself.

Featured Artwork

Sunset Flight (Oil)



"Another day is ending in a glow of gold on the sea and rocks. Waves roll in and crash, sending spray into the evening air, while seagulls whirl in a 'sunset flight'."

High And Dry (Gouache)



"Lazy summer days mean time out of the water for this fishing boat. She sets 'high and dry' waiting to be scraped, sanded, repainted and put back to work."

Old Rooster (Pastel)



"He has lived a good life. As he gets on in age the 'spurs' on his legs grow long. His proud head bows and his elongated tail feathers fan in the slightest breeze. He is an 'old rooster' in his golden days."