



Community Outreach

Campolindo High School Plein Air Event

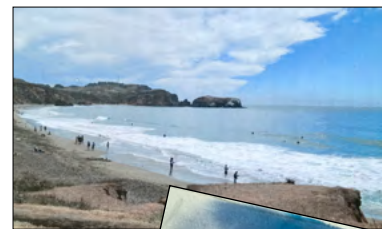


It was a lovely crisp fall morning in the town of Moraga at a beautiful historical site. Hacienda de la Flores is an original authentic Spanish-style farmhouse, built in 1917, hidden and nestled in the foothills of town. Over the years, and many owners, additions, and changes, today this Hacienda is affectionately known as the little Hearst Castle—a popular place for weddings and other special events. In the beautiful gardens surrounding this historic structure gathered a group of aspiring young artists guided by their art teacher Justin Seligman of Campolindo High School in Moraga. Their objective was to learn and experience painting outdoors in plein air using watercolor. CWA Community Outreach was asked to assist.

We started our day talking about the impressionist period. We talked about supplies needed to paint watercolor and how beautifully watercolor adapts to plein air painting. I had my own very little watercolor travel kit I have taken all over, including Europe, the Caribbean, and Mexico. This kit includes a postcard-size watercolor block to capture my travel experiences. I showed them examples of how they too could make little travel kits for themselves. During my painting demonstration, I discussed my approach when selecting a subject, how to examine what draws my eye to a particular subject, and how to use and take advantage of the effects of painting with watercolor media.

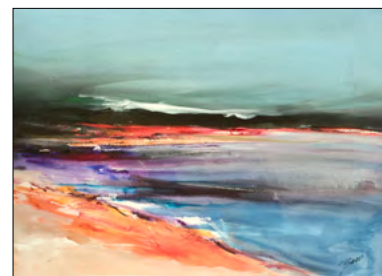
After the students had a chance to do their own paintings, we sat down and talked about their work. I brought examples of my work done in the field and showed them finished paintings developed later in my studio as a result

of my experiences gleaned from painting in the outdoor environment in plein air. A lot of my examples were from my little postcard-size watercolor block. These were drawn and painted quickly trying not to labor too much on the details, but to try and capture what first attracted me. I showed them examples of how beautifully watercolor flows and mingles



Beginning photo

Quick painting on 3 x 5 postcard size watercolor block.



Final painting

with other colors, how the white of the paper is used, and painting darks beside to create the focal points and guide the viewer's eye through the painting. Again, I emphasized the importance of not trying to create masterpieces and not being too judgmental of their work, but rather enjoying the process of painting outdoors. Hopefully, with time and practice, they too will discover the wonders, satisfaction, and joy of working with watercolor.

Georganne Zaro

Co-Director, Community Outreach