

**Favourites from my Bookshelf:**

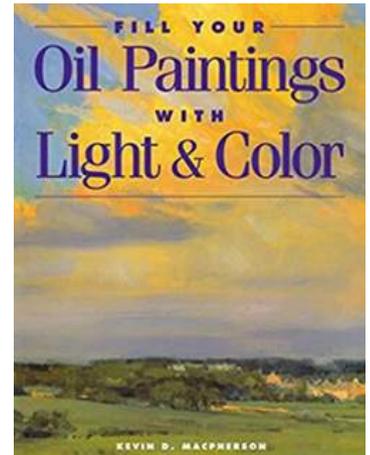
**Fill your Oil Paintings with Light and Color by Kevin Macpherson**

by Tony Westmore

I have always had a great admiration for American artists and their work, and **Kevin Macpherson** is one of the modern masters.

Kevin is a great painter and well respected teacher who has mastered the art of painting from nature 'en plein air', being able to quickly capture the true effects of colour and light. He is a founding member of the prestigious Plein Air Painters of America, and an Honorary Member of the Oil Painters of America. In this book he sets out to teach readers to develop a simple approach to painting, to see beautiful colour, to see as an artist and to understand light and shade and also to build your paintings simply and strongly from the start. This will then result in helping to build your confidence.

He emphasises making a strong start, reducing elements to the fewest and most basic shapes, to place the big obvious shapes and relationships first, as the details will take care of themselves later.



He recommends the early placement of the lightest light and darkest dark, thereby creating the value range of the painting early on. To identify the shade (shadow family) and the light (light family), by establishing these shapes early on, and by laying the shadows in first, you are more likely to keep clean colour throughout the painting.

He encourages the beauty of getting small – painting small when outside, with a Pochade Box (as John Constable and JMW Turner did) helps you gain information for larger studio paintings. Monet had a difficult time working outside on large paintings and had to return to the spot on several occasions in order to finish his painting, so by painting on a small scale outside we can finish the painting more easily in one session.

Kevin summarises the 'S-Sense (and the essence) of Painting' :-

**Starts** – The basic foundations of starting a painting are the basis for growth.

**Simple** – Keep it simple about every aspect of painting – painting gear, subject matter, painting process and colours etc.

**Shapes** – Focus on shapes not things, to think of paintings as mosaics of interlocking shapes, some larger some smaller.

**Soft** – In general, keep edges soft, as hard edges attract the eye so keep them few and in relevant places.

**Sun** – Since the sun is constantly moving, establish a single direction and colour for the sunlight in your painting, keeping the sun-side (light family) separate from the shade (shadow family) shapes.

**Shadow** – Place shadow shapes before Light shapes for more control, looking at the colour of shadows carefully to see how they contrast in both temperature and value with the light family.

**Six Colours** – Simplify your palette by using six colours. This approach lets you mix any colour relationships you want, and gives your paintings colour harmony.

Some lovely quotes crop up through the pages:

The first colour you put down must be accurate, because all subsequent colours are related to it.

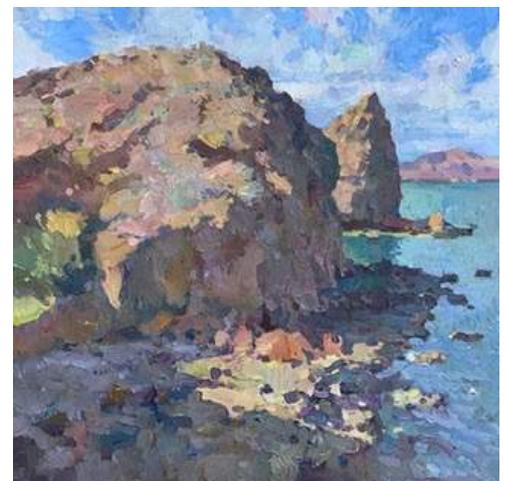
Use negative shapes to create the shape of a subject.

Paint shapes of colour and not things.

All paintings are lessons for the next one. It's an ongoing process, increasing skills for future works.

Paint as fast as you can and still be accurate.

**Tony**



'Fill your Oil Paintings with Light and Color' was published by North Light Books in 1997 and still readily available in both hard and soft back editions.

**SELECTION OF SKETCHES FROM THE PORTRAIT SESSIONS: CHRIS MUNGHAM-ADDICOTT**



**MEMBERS' GALLERY:**



**Tony Westmore:**  
**'Shell Bay – Studland'** a small 8" x 6" oil



**'Winter Morning Sun on the Medina'** 12" x 10" oil

## Tim Wilmot demo by Zoom on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> Jan:



Tim demoed a street scene from Tetbury in Glos for us from his excellent studio set up. He started by explaining how he would adjust the view from the photo into a more pleasing composition showing more lights against darks. The scene was of the backs of houses looking up a hill with background trees and foreground greenery, the sun picking up the roofs leaving the sides of the houses in deep shadow.

He started by checking composition – balance - contrast – simplifying the scene and using his drawing skills to achieve the correct perspective while

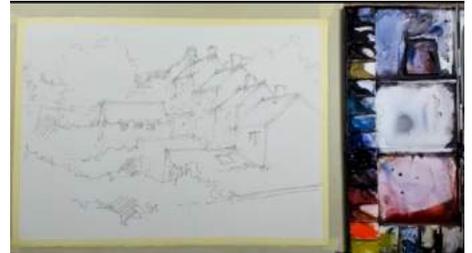
looking uphill. He separates his paintings into four stages:

Step 1 – Drawing outline with perspective.

Step 2 – Weak wash, getting colour onto the paper- unless leaving some white area if needed.

Step 3 – Laying down shadows, shade, tonal contrasts to give shape form.

Step 4 – Details: Windows, aerals etc.



Tim started his drawing using a mechanical 3B pencil on SW NOT 300gsm (140lb) paper. He tends to start drawing at the focal point working outwards, taking great care on checking the correct perspective for the roof lines of the 5 main houses staggered down the hill. He spent a lot of time getting his drawing to his liking, moving the background trees to give contrast behind the rooftops. The foreground foliage he adjusted to make a more pleasing shape, thinking ahead to how he would put in shadows to add interest.

He worked without a break, straight onto the painting. I was initially surprised by the amount of colours he had in his palette, but he only actually used a fairly limited amount. He used Jackman's hand made watercolour paints (10% discount if you mention his name!) with a faux squirrel mop, a no12 synthetic round plus a no4 and a rigger for detail.

The sky went in first, a very washy Cerulean for clouds, with darker blue behind for the sky allowed to soften into the cloud shapes. Burnt Sienna was painted on the background houses then Yellow Ochre with a dash of Cad Orange was washed over the houses facing the sun, with a dark added to the vague areas of the rooftops with erratic brush marks applied in a very loose manner! Tim called it "a total mess at this stage".

For his darks he mostly used Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna, but changed to warmer greys as he worked forward, mixing continually, tonal value rather than colour. As he worked round the houses and chimneys with the point of the no12 round, the forms reappeared from his "total mess" and the painting took shape.

The background trees were added lightly with the side of the mop, the green (Ult blue + Cad Yellow) being darker, the foreground mix with more yellow to show the Spring greens. Deeper blue/green was added for shadow which was flicked up to blend into the sun dappled tops of hedges and grasses.

Detail was added to the undersides of the roofs and where deep shadow was needed with the no4 and the rigger for the aerals giving verticals. Finally tube thick white gouache was sparingly added to some light facing edges.

Tim hoped this had been an exercise for us in composing an urban scene, simplifying by changing what we see, giving balance, contrast and perspective showing a late Spring day. He talked us through each stage continually so only a few questions, which he answered as he painted. His love for painting shone

through with his willingness to impart his considerable knowledge, even though it's not his 'day job'! As over 30 members were still watching at the end, I think we can agree it was a very successful afternoon.

There is a link to the demo on YouTube sent to members.



**Gillian**

*Left: Birgit Ackroyd painted along with Tim on Tuesday afternoon using Tim's original photo. Well done Birgit!*

## MORE NEWS:

The **Summer Programme starting in May** is well under way and being finalised by **Neil** with some different venues to appeal to all members. It will be on the website in late March with corresponding video by **Paul** on Facebook of all the places we will visit.

One for the diary is a **Queen's Jubilee Garden Party** to be held at **John and Jose Hunt's** beautiful garden in Wootton on **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022** at 2pm. Everyone is invited to bring cake(s) and John and Jose will kindly provide tea and cold drinks. Details with the address and parking arrangements will be given nearer the time. Some members will already know how beautiful and colourful the Hunt's garden will be in June.

**Membership Voucher:** We have been asked on occasion for a membership voucher that family and friends can give as a gift, particularly around Christmas time but could be given at any time of year for the following year's subscription. With that in mind we will be producing a **Gift Voucher** to be redeemed only against annual membership, a facsimile of which will appear in the next Newsletter.

**Your Club needs your help!** At the moment, the Council consists of only 9 members. Most have several jobs to do which we do happily, but it can be quite time consuming as we also like to paint! We are asking if any members who have any skills or interests which they think might be useful to the running of the Club to contact us. You do not necessarily have to join the Council, we have several members who help at Exhibition time for example who just volunteer their time without being Council members. We would particularly like to hear from anyone with **IT** or **Publicity** skills, please contact the Editor in the first instance on [gilliannye@rocketmail.com](mailto:gilliannye@rocketmail.com) Thank you.

## MEMBERS'S GALLERY:



**Tony Westmore:** *Above:* Tony's excellent portrait of **Neil Barton**. Painted in oil, NOT painted during the 20 min sketching!

**Gillian Nye:** *Above right:* **View from St Catherine's**. Oil 60cm x 30cm  
*Right:* **Sailing Home - Gurnard** or Harry being towed home after he wouldn't come in and it was getting dark!

100cm x 50cm Acrylic - A family Christmas present now in situ. **Gillian**



**We hope you've enjoyed reading this Newsletter and viewing members' paintings and sketches. We would be grateful if you could send any photos to the Editor at [gilliannye@rocketmail.com](mailto:gilliannye@rocketmail.com) for inclusion next time. Thanks!**