

This vase scene demanded careful recession and color.

Olive Lake, oil, 24 x 24" (61 x 61cm)

my inspiration

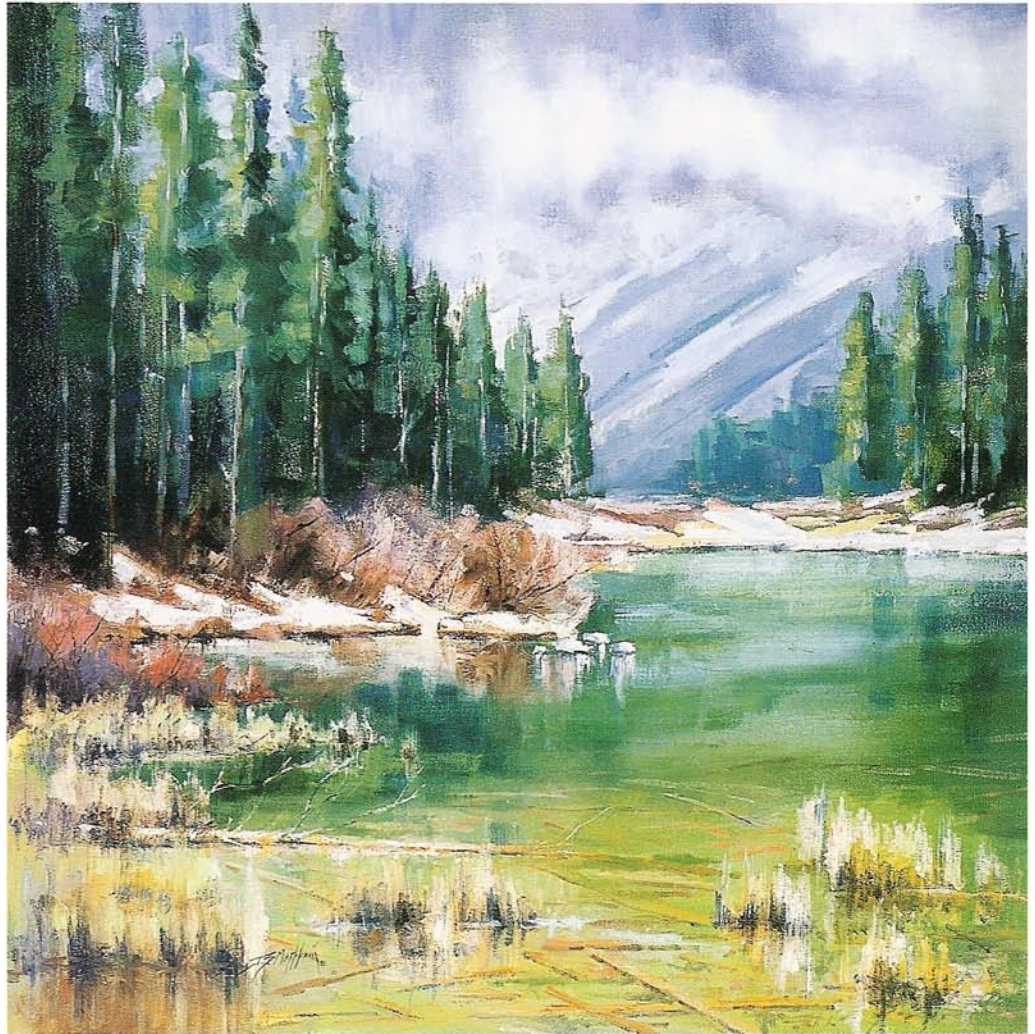
On my way to a paint-out in the Rocky Mountains, I passed a particular mountain lake near Radium. Stop the van! There's a painting in there. The radiant, clear green water and the way the yellow weeds were meeting the logs at the bottom of the lake caught my eye. It was spring, and there was still some snow under the trees. Always looking for something that makes a painting, I knew this moment was rare and seized the opportunity to take many photos.

my design strategy

In this painting, I used size variation from the foreground, middle ground and background. Notice how the foreground dominates. To create a sense of depth, I also reduced the values and cooled off the temperatures as objects recede into the distance. I tried to create a circular eye path to hold the viewer's attention inside the painting.

my working process

- By doing a few thumbnail sketches and a small painting, I worked out my value pattern and determined that a square format was best.
- I started by covering the canvas with a thin coat of painting medium. I then proceeded to draw in the major shapes with a thin wash of a mixed red and a No. 4 flat hog hair brush.
- Using transparent color, I put in the fairly dark areas first, leaving room for the darkest accents. Then, working from dark to light, I built up all areas of the painting, concentrating on value exchanges and edges.
- I finished with opaque lighter values as well as dark accents.



my advice to you

- There is no destination, so enjoy the journey. Struggles don't go away because there is always more to learn.
- Don't underestimate technical knowledge and rules. As D.B. Swinton said, "True freedom comes by understanding rules".
- Make time to paint outside and understand color and value relationships in nature because photos are not accurate, especially in their values. Cameras make darks too dark and lights too light.

what I used

support

Canvas

other

Painting medium

brushes

Hog hair flats Nos. 2 to 18;
hog hair rounds Nos. 2 to 5;
two sizes of palette knives

oil colors

