

GEORGE BOYTER ZOOM DEMO

Friday 4th December 2020



George Boyter is a professional artist who lives near Oxford but original hails from Fife in Scotland. He trained at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Dundee. He hosts his own watercolour courses and weekends in Sydenham, Oxfordshire and takes classes at the Courtyard Studios, Claydon House, Phoenix House and Henley School of Art.

George began by showing everyone a photo taken on his mobile phone of the windmill at Great Haseley. On the day the photo was taken there was no directional light and it all looked very flat. However, by cropping the photo into a long panorama shape and by putting the windmill on the third it transformed it. The line of trees gave perspective and there was potential for developing a dramatic sky.



The first thing to do with a landscape is to decide how much sky and how much land there is going to be. Always make a plan. George decided to have a very low horizon. He also decided to put a person into the painting on the opposite third to the windmill. The trees and the line from the windmill will lead the eye to the focal point to make a good composition.



George used a 6B clutch pencil to sketch the drawing onto his taped down paper. He uses Saunders Waterford Rough 140 grams. The painting is going to be about contrast and feeling. He will make the sky dark at the top and lighter and warmer at the horizon with the merest suggestion of some distant blue hills along the horizon.

George started by scumbling in a dark grey made from Burnt Sienna, Ultra Marine Blue and added a little Lavender to give it opacity. He adds water and goes lighter towards the horizon. He uses a water spray to buy him a little more time as he works up the tones and deepens the darkness to suggest rain is on its way. Just at the base of the sky he adds a little Yellow Ochre and then using a pointed brush he adds some wispy clouds in the middle distance.





At the horizon, using Cobalt Blue and the grey George puts in a faint line of hills. He then mixes Cobalt Turquoise and Yellow Ochre he creates a subtle green for the edge on both sides of the painting. Using a small mop brush, he painted the foreground by mixing Yellow Ochre and Cerulean Blue.

He likes to run his brush quickly across the page which creates an affect that he calls 'sparkly bits' where the paint skips over the 'not' paper leaving little white bits. He reminded everyone that cool colours recede and warm colour advance so for the bottom of the page he added some Burnt Sienna. He allowed the brush to 'dance' in order to make marks that could be interpreted as grass. Once again Cobalt Turquoise created more density of colour.

Using a Japanese brush that he found by chance that has a good point, still working wet in wet, he flicked in some dark colour. He also used his nail to create some interesting marks that also could be grass. At the halfway break he used his hairdryer to completely dry the painting. Beware cauliflowers develop when artists go into a wash that has already been laid down. George paints at an angle of 30 degrees to allow gravity to work for him. It enables him to judge the pigment to water ratio by watching how the wash progresses on the paper.



It was time to paint the windmill. He used a No10 synthetic sable and mixed an opaque pigment adding Lavender and Ochre to the greys to create a nice creamy mix. He lifted some of this paint on one side of the windmill to create a sense of form. He then tackled the platform and the fan. 'You don't get two goes at this part'.

People noticed the large metal palette George was using. Apparently, it is a Holbein watercolour palette with a thumbhole; and being aluminium, it is very lightweight. George likes to lay his paints out with cold colours on one side and warm ones on the other.

For the cold side he has Ultra Marine Blue, Cobalt Blue, Cobalt Turquoise and Lavender while on the warm side there is Cadmium Yellow, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna, Alizarin Crimson, and Cadmium Red. George also showed everyone three colours that look black but two were neutral tints, one warm grey and one cool grey. Neutral tints can be added to any colour to take it down a tone.



George is a big fan of Cotman Watercolour tubes rather than paying the higher price for Winsor & Newton artist quality. The fastness that is guaranteed for ages is not really essential. He does not use blocks because these can damage brushes trying to get the paint soft enough whereas the paint in the tubes comes out fresh and ready to use.

After painting the body of the windmill, the fence posts and the line of trees, he added a figure leaning into the wind walking a little dog. He gave the figure a red jacket using Pyrrole Red.



He then returned to the windmill to paint the arms of the windmill sails. He used a very dark grey and then using Chinese White straight out of the tube he painted the sharp white contrasts. Painting the detail on the fan and the windmill arms requires confidence and belief. Do not hesitate. Take the line and keep going.

At the very end look at the very darks and the very lights but be careful not to 'guild the lily'. The time comes to take the tape off. Never pull the tape towards the painting, always pull away.



[Please note all these photos were taken from the computer as screen shots. The artist's camera has created a slight bow to some of the pictures – Carole Head]