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Andrea Kemp



Blow Away, oil on board, 20 x 40" (51 x 102 cm)

Painting Fundamentals

To portray ideas in her paintings, Andrea Kemp uses elements and principles of design such as space, pattern, value, harmony and shape

The beginning of my work always starts with the end—what I envision the final product to be. Without this clarity I have no idea what my path will be. When inspiration comes to me and I am comfortable with how I will begin and I know what the end looks like, I then must find how the path between these two points will be traveled. For some a set formula is always used, but I find in my work one formula or solution does not solve every problem. I like this about painting. It keeps the mystery alive!

My work tends to revolve around atmosphere, or strong sense of environment. It does not typically have a concrete storyline or an obvious narrative. I like to keep my work abstract in concept and open ended in its dialogue. Typically I try and achieve a similar feeling that a unique dream might feel like. It should feel relatable but unique. Now everyone has a unique and familiar idea but not all can be relatable to an audience if its presentation is poor.

A strong delivery of concept makes people look more than once and can make a viewer feel connected to the idea. For me




Drip of Spring, oil on board, 40 x 30" (102 x 76 cm)



Innocents, oil on board,
42 x 32" (107 x 81 cm)

literal but to focus on the abstract. I do this by looking at the contrast and arrangement of shapes the objects in light portray. This can only be recognized through the absence of their identity. When an object's identity is gone repetition and pattern are more easily arranged.

Through the collaboration of these concepts, principles and elements I am more easily able to find my conclusion to a painting. How they are used, or in what order, is not always the same but they are worth keeping in mind. Like I said before I have no formula, they have never worked for me. I think that painting is like life experience, the more you paint the more you are able to navigate through problems that may arise.

It seems like my work is always changing and evolving. As it matures it becomes richer because of the places it has been. At this point in my life and career, my work is slipping into its true skin. Though the underlying elements and principles must stay strong, those aspects are becoming more second nature, allowing me to explore my work's narrative and character. The theme that seems to inhabit my work right now is the idea that matter can morph into its surroundings or that what we see may not be real. I do this by building a convincing image and then purposely break it down. I want my work not to have answer, but to pose a question for the viewer, something they can communicate with. 

I like to use the fundamentals to portray an idea. These fundamentals are the elements and principles of design. I tend to lean on certain ones more than others. Principles that I am drawn to and are important to my work are space, pattern, contrast, emphasis, just to name a few. For elements, many are used but some of the most utilized in my work are edges, value, harmony, shape and line.

Creating an environment in a picture means creating an illusion of space. Space can be communicated through various elements. Line works as a strong tool to show direction and perspective of objects. Edges can also show space

by manipulating them to create an atmospheric perspective. Keeping edges sharp in the foreground and soft in the background shows depth. Having more contrast of value in the front and less so in the background can also achieve this.

The representational quality of my work is obvious but the abstract is subtle, nevertheless just as important. Play on pattern is something that must be an anchoring principle in my work. Without an interesting composition a viewer's subconscious is most likely to become bored with the picture. When putting together a compelling composition it is important not to get caught up in the

My Art in the Making What Lurks Beyond



STAGE 1 NEUTRAL COLOR AND TONE

When beginning a painting I like to start with a neutral color and tone for a background. After which I lay in a rough sketch.



STAGE 2 CREATING A SENSE OF DEPTH

I then try and work background to foreground, dark to light simultaneously. This way the painting can have a stronger sense of depth.

WHAT THE ARTIST USED

Materials

- » ¼-inch Masonite surface double-primed with acrylic gesso
- » Glass palette
- » Paper towels
- » Latex gloves
- » Gamsol
- » Walnut oil
- » Liquin

Brushes

- » My brushes vary in size from very small to very large. I mostly use flats and filberts and avoid using brights. The fan brush is a staple in my brush collection and I have them in various sizes

Colors

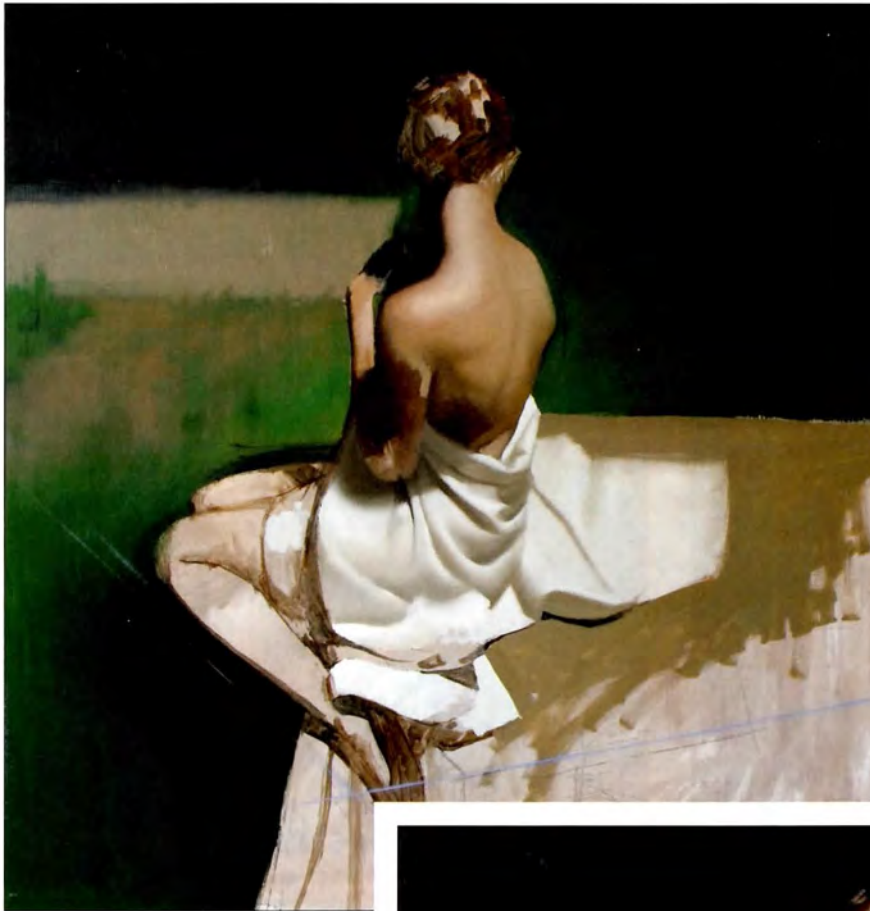
- » Alizarin crimson
- » Cadmium red
- » Cadmium red light
- » Cadmium yellow medium
- » Cerulean blue
- » Ivory black
- » Lemon yellow
- » Naples yellow
- » Phthalo green
- » Raw umber
- » Sap green
- » Titanium white
- » Transparent brown oxide
- » Ultramarine blue
- » Yellow ochre



STAGE 3 BLOCKING IN THE FIGURE

Here I am blocking in the figure with more exactness and starting to resolve aspects to a higher quality. I will not finish any particular area to a finished quality yet because I like to bring out the entire picture somewhat altogether.

Continued ▶



STAGE 4
SURFACE ELEMENTS

Again, avoiding getting too ahead of myself, I pull back from resolving the figure too much and go back to working background to foreground, focusing on the surface she is sitting on.



STAGE 5

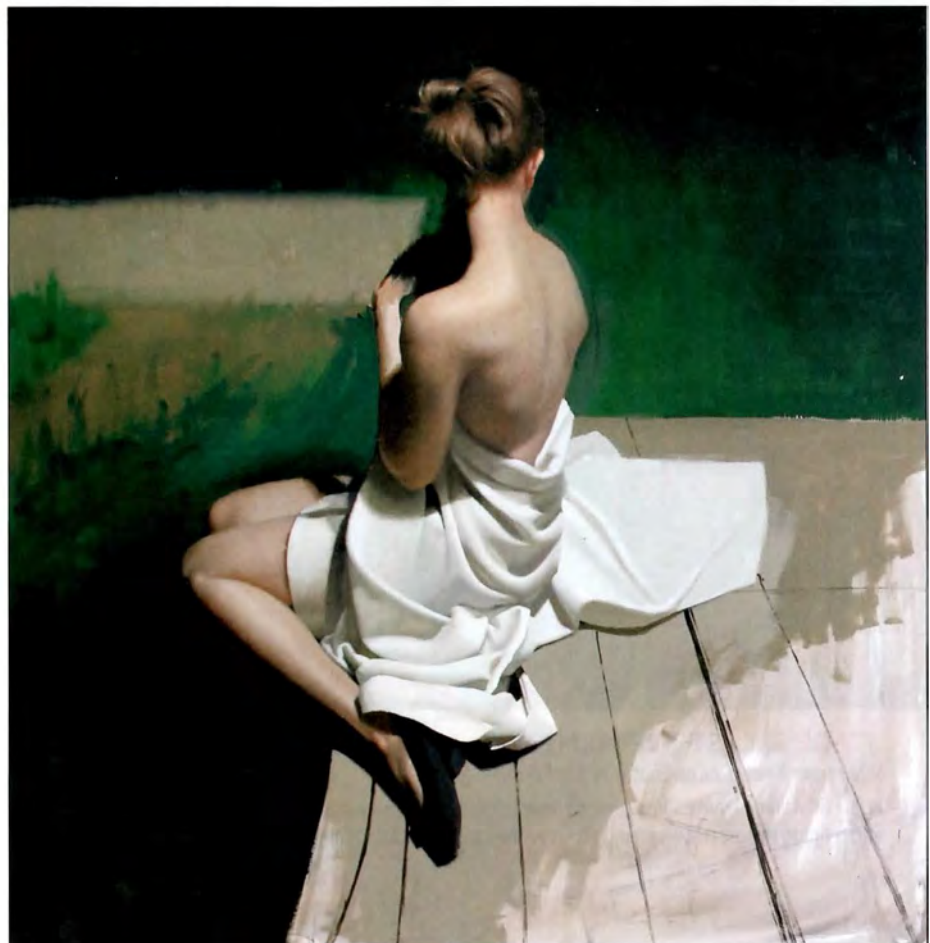
VALUE AND COLOR

By adding more of the value and color of the surface I can develop the figure more because there is something to soften edges into.



STAGE 6
THREE-DIMENSIONAL SPACE

Going back into the figure at this point and having surrounding values established allows me to soften edges and create enhanced illusions of three-dimensional space.



STAGE 7

BALANCING THE IMAGE

After establishing most of my major values, colors and shapes, I go back into the painting and work on rendering everything to a similar state. This gives the piece some balance, avoiding anything looking out of place. I also add in the perspective of the surface she is sitting on. This creates a much stronger sense of depth.



STAGE 8 LAST REFINEMENTS

What Lurks Beyond, oil on board, 36 x 36" (91 x 91 cm)

In the final stage I make some compositional choices in the background by taking out the sidewalk and refining the grass. Everything else is refined as well to bring things into harmony.



Transcending, oil on board, 10 x 12" (25 x 30 cm)



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Andrea Kemp grew up in the small mountain town of Glenwood Springs, Colorado, USA. From an early age she was heavily influenced by the arts. Her mother, a piano teacher, quilter and knitter, always taught her the beauty of artistic creation. Not following exactly in her mother's footsteps she gravitated toward drawing and painting. In high school she stumbled upon a fellow Glenwood Springs resident, Daniel Sprick, while taking a community college figure drawing class. His help and guidance helped pave the path for her future as an artist. After high school she went on to study fine art at the Lyme Academy of Fine Art, in Old Lyme, Connecticut, USA. She spent two years there focusing on a more academic tradition of fine art. From there she went on to study and complete her formal education at the University of Utah where she graduated with a degree in fine arts, an emphasis in painting and drawing. After finishing college she continued to paint and grow as an artist. Kemp lives in Colorado and teaches at the Art Students League of Denver.

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