

Make the Most of a Small Studio: **6 QUICK TIPS**

PASTEL

Journal

**MAKE A
DIFFERENCE!**
Painting for
the Public
Good

p. 4

Landscape Inspirations

6 Artists
Share
Lessons
Learned

CALL OF THE WILD

How to Paint Both
Animal *and* Environment

FEBRUARY 2021

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PASTELS ON SUEDE**



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(detail; 10x8) by Dalibor Dejanović

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Breakthroughs



Some of the most important breakthrough moments for artists occur with pastel or brush in hand. You might remember a time when you tried a new underpainting approach or perhaps used a familiar technique but on a new surface, and the results were surprisingly effective—and worth repeating. Other times, however,

creative discoveries happen outside of the studio and may not involve the mastery of an essential skill or a new technique. In fact, very often, the biggest breakthroughs have more to do with mindfulness than materials.

In this issue, which turns the spotlight on landscape painting, you'll read Frederick Somers' story of a breakthrough moment that occurred while he was walking in the woods. There, he made an observation that completely changed the way he approached the composition of his paintings. For Richard McKinley, it was a painting trip to a not particularly picturesque desert landscape that altered the course of his painting. The breakthrough for Anna Wainright took place in the studio, more gradually,

but like Somers and McKinley, it was a mindset change that led to a more introspective attitude in her art-making. In his conversations with these three artists (page 18),

“A work of art can only come from the interior of man.”

—EDVARD MUNCH

Robert Carsten digs into the conceptual work of landscape painting. He explores how these masters of landscape not only use on-site observation but also draw upon memory, dreams and the imagination to eventually arrive at a vision that feels even more “true” than the original inspiration.

Even if landscape isn't a subject you paint often, you'll be sure to find inspiration in the atmospheric impressions of Kathleen McDonnell (page 42), the luminous imagery of Dalibor Dejanović (page 34), the energetic expressions of Laurinda Phakos O'Connor (page 26) and Lisa Gleim's captivating scenes of animals within an environment (page 52).

To set the groundwork for a creative breakthrough, it's essential to make experimentation and exploration a part of your regular art-making practice; it's also important to allow time for “internal discourse”—to be alone with your thoughts now and then—to make space for illumination. *PJ*

Anne Hevener

PASTEL Journal

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WATER, LIGHT, & WILDLIFE

LISA GLEIM'S DEPICTIONS OF ANIMALS IN WATERY SETTINGS ENCOURAGE VIEWERS TO PAUSE AND ADMIRE THE NATURAL WORLD.

By Tracey Norvell



WHEN NOT AT AN EASEL, artist Lisa Gleim is a woman seemingly in constant motion. In addition to being a wife and mother of an active family, she's continually traveling to places that inspire her work. Since childhood, she has been drawing, pursuing education and exploring a variety of interests. Along the way, she has found a venue for her two great passions: animals and pastels.

As an artist, Gleim has refined her natural strength in composition through her narrative works. Her paintings capture motion, largely through the depiction of water, which heightens the engagement and emotional response of her viewers. Her work has become widely recognized and, equally important to the artist, it allows her to share the detail and nuances of the vast, ever-changing world of nature through her art.

ABOVE
Red Frisbee (16x20)

OPPOSITE
Otters (29x20)

Seth Hopkins, executive director of Booth Western Art Museum, says that Gleim's work "combines a wonderful composition, mastery of her chosen media and interaction among the subjects that invites the viewer to create their own narrative."

IMMERSING THE VIEWER

To understand Gleim's creative approach, consider the words "bear," "otter," "raven," "swan" and "dog." Possibly, you quickly conjured static images of those particular creatures. Without a narrative, your thoughts might easily move on—much as museum and gallery visitors might breeze by a painting or sculpture. When looking at a picture of an animal or bird, what does it take to induce the viewer to pause—to ponder variations of a species, characteristic details or the typical surroundings inhabited by a wild or domestic animal or bird?

This is the challenge Gleim addresses. She searches for possible common ground—details of her subject to which

viewers can connect and relate. "I ask myself, 'What could someone tell me about a tree he or she just passed?' People possess keen observational skills, and perhaps, as I do, might also have real-life experiences to draw upon."

Gleim believes the demands of our daily lives often make us yearn for unrushed time to look, watch, contemplate and enjoy the grace of a swan gliding across a pond, the playfulness of a dog plunging into a lake, or the serenity of a blue heron surveying the swampy low country. "I want my work to elicit the awe of nature, to engage multiple senses and emotions beyond the moment frozen in a picture frame," says Gleim. "Imagine, for example, a swimming animal emerging from water, how the running water makes for a glossy texture and, as it recedes or is shaken off, how it produces spiky or clumpy fur or hair."

The artist's sensitivity to such observations, coupled with her technical skill, yields impressive results. Michael A. Paderewski, president of the Sportsman's Gallery, Ltd. &

OPPOSITE TOP
Blue Heron (16x12)

OPPOSITE BOTTOM
Glide (20x24)

BELOW
Swan Song (20x24)





Paderewski Fine Art, says, “From the multihued coat of a bear to the shimmer of a raven’s feathering, she has captured in pastel the subtleties found in nature.”

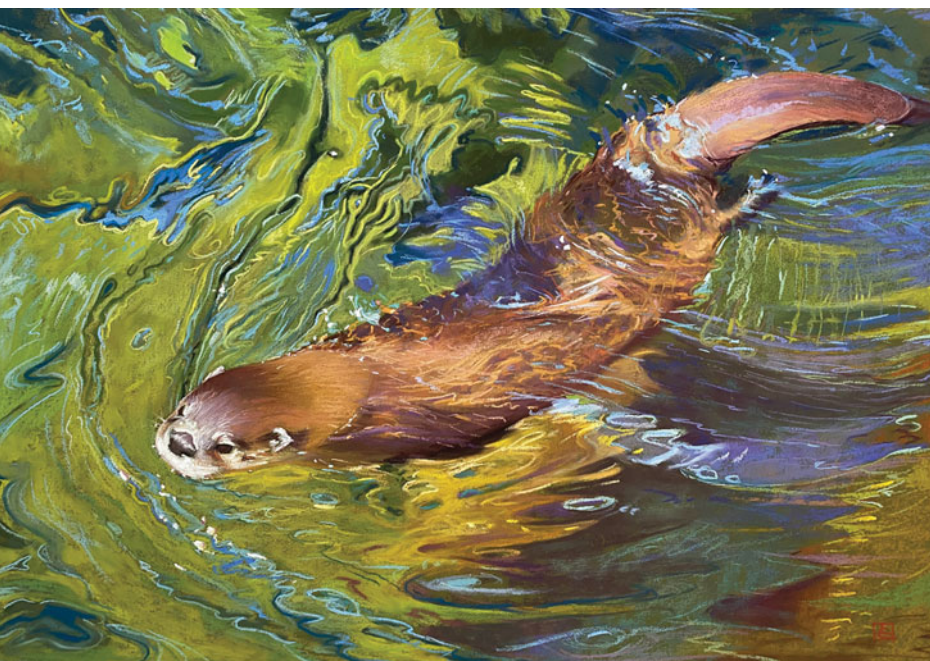
PATH TO PASTEL

From early childhood through high school art classes, Gleim drew, rather than painted. She did so with Crayolas and color pencils, also dabbling with watercolor sets. Oils were foreign to her.

“I’ll never forget my first day at Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA),” says Gleim. “It started with a figure-painting class. I literally said to the instructor, ‘I don’t know what to do!’ Acting on her suggestion, I plunged in and started moving paint around the canvas. I felt as if I was jumping into the deep end of water with an anchor! During my first two years of training at PAFA, I did advance from drawing to painting. My favorite classes, however, were figure drawing and cast drawing, so I still worked in my original media. My plan after graduation was to paint full-time as a portrait artist working in oils.”

Discovering pastels was a fluke for Gleim. A classmate offered her a small student-grade set of sticks left over from a class on materials and techniques. Gleim began experimenting with the medium and immediately fell in love with it. “I was quickly fascinated by its smoothness; the broader marks it allowed, compared to colored pencils; the layering I could create; and the richness of the pure pigments.

Her collection grew exponentially from that starter set. “Mixing paint colors to achieve the color I want isn’t one of my strengths,” says Gleim. “This is why I have thousands of pastel sticks. Generally, I can instinctively pick out the color match I want. If it isn’t spot on, I can create it through layering and mark-making, beginning with harsher strokes and building it up.”



SIGNATURE SUBJECT

The body of Gleim’s artwork covers many genres, including portraiture,

landscape and animals. The subjects that most inspire her involve all three of these, but the merging of these interests in her work occurred over time. For several years after graduating, Gleim studied portraiture with Cedric and Joannette Egeli, in Maryland. Although the workshops focused on charcoal drawing and oil painting, Gleim was immediately drawn to Joannette's pastel portraits of children, and it was that artist's approach to pastels that significantly influenced the direction Gleim took in portraying her subjects. Like her mentor, she specialized in children's portraits but eventually added depictions of pets to her commissioned work.

When the artist began taking on portrait commissions, they were done in a style of minimalist realism. She didn't include surroundings or other objects, but focused on the subject alone. That approach changed when she accepted a commission to paint a swimming dog, based on a photograph provided by the client. "Wow! I found myself in heaven!" says Gleim. "By adding landscapes and water, I could greatly expand the work I created to include the other elements I'd always enjoyed painting. Water

OPPOSITE
That Was Fun (10x14)

BELOW
**Sand Piper and Sea
Foam** (8x27)

BOTTOM
Egret in Fall Marsh
(20x29)





in particular was exciting for me to work with because of the way varying light and atmosphere affect the subject. A seascape on a sunny day is very different from the same view on a gray day. There's such movement and so many streaks of colors in the water reflections. I think a sense of motion gives a two-dimensional work added depth."

After painting portraits for more than 15 years, Gleim began shifting her work to landscapes and the creatures that inhabit natural spaces. She now believes that she has finally found her muses: water and wildlife. She paints on location as often as possible, her destinations of choice being the East Coast and the Montana mountains.

The water Gleim depicts might be a smooth glasslike surface reflecting the still presence of an egret, or it might convey the ripples and swirls around a smoothly gliding otter or the sunlit droplets of a dog or bear shaking itself dry (see the painting demonstration *Cold Shower*, page 58). In each case, the artist gets the interaction of water, light and animals right. The viewer senses this, is drawn in and contemplates the scene. The artist's mission is accomplished.

Tracey Norvell is a lifelong art collector and the principle of the consulting firm Arts Society.



Lisa Gleim (lisagleimfineart.com and lisagleim.com) is the recipient of the Audubon Artists 2012 and 2016 Gold Medal of Honor for Pastel and the Audubon Artists 2019 Art Spirit Foundation's Silver Medal Award for Pastel. Among her many professional memberships, she's a Master Circle Member of the International Association of Pastel Societies; a Signature Member and Board Member of the American Women Artists; a Member of Excellence, Signature Member and past President

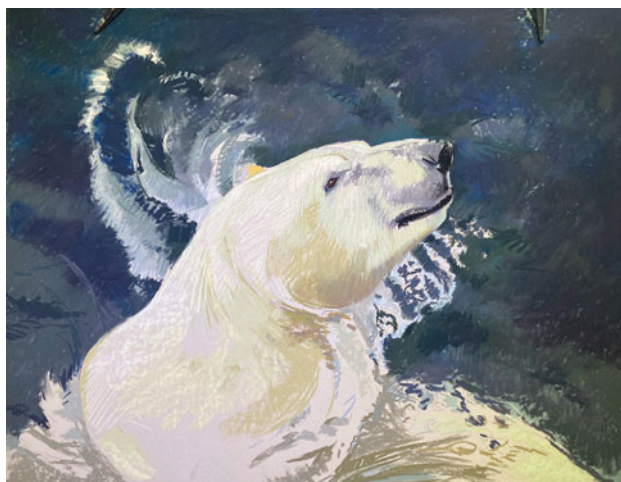
of the Southeastern Pastel Society; and a Signature Member of the American Society of Marine Artists., Artists for Conservation and the Pastel Society of America.

Turn the page for a demonstration 

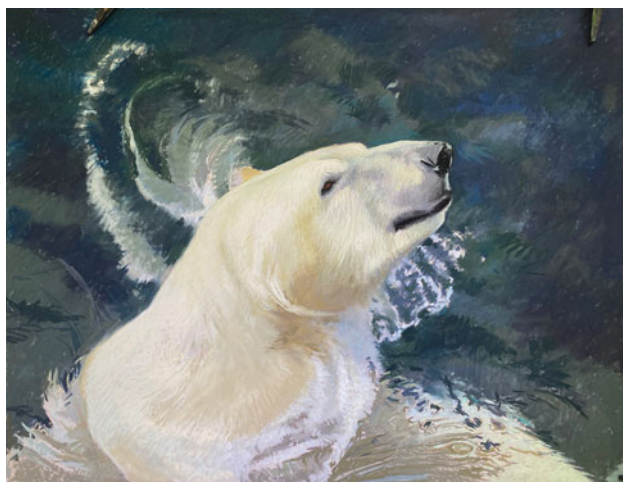
demonstration Cold Shower



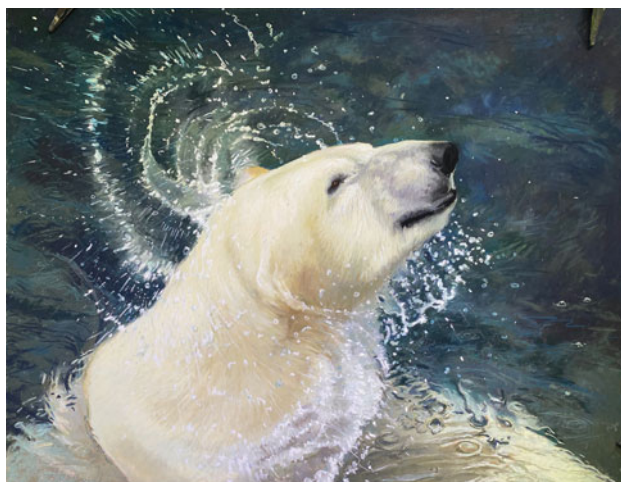
Step 1: When using a light-colored surface, I begin with an underpainting to block in the lights and the dark masses. This step can be done with either water-based ink or watercolor (adding rubbing alcohol for faster drying) or with pastel.



Step 2: Next I start building the large color masses, using pastel. I find that blocking in the entire painting to cover the panel's color is important because it helps me select the values and temperatures of my colors.



Step 3: Still blocking in the lights and the dark areas, I begin refining the shapes by working all over the painting. Making large strokes following the angles of the animal's skull, I begin to build up layers of color, which helps create the form as well as the thickness of the animal's fur. With animals, the skeleton beneath the fur is key. An understanding of basic anatomy of the species you're painting is especially beneficial when the lighting is subdued and light and shadow aren't obvious.



Step 4: At this point in the painting, I begin refining the details and focusing on the patterns of the water. I find this very exciting. To achieve the feel of submerged fur, I keep the values a little darker than the areas above water.

“I want my work to elicit the awe of nature, to engage multiple senses and emotions beyond the moment frozen in a picture frame.” — LISA GLEIM



Step 5: In the last stage my goal is to convey a sense of wet fur.

Final painting: Even though the water is clear, there are reflections of the bear's color within the droplets and in the areas below the water's surface. Here you see the completed painting, *Come On In. The Water Is Fine* (24x31½). *PJ*

MATERIALS

SURFACES: Gleim uses 400-grit UART paper dry-mounted to a ridged surface, such as Gator board or Rhino board. She also uses Ampersand Pastelbord. For larger works, she creates her own surfaces by applying Golden Pumice Gel to board.

PASTELS: When drawing animals, Gleim begins with hard pastel, then moves on to medium-hard and eventually finishes with softs. She prefers the following brands:

- **Unison Colour:** Gleim is an Associate Artist for this line, which offers the bright light values, rich warm tones and vivid blues that she uses frequently.
- **Girault:** Gleim says these pastels are finely crafted to provide a unique consistency suitable for covering large areas as well as for finishing details.
- **Terry Ludwig:** The square-shaped pastels especially appeal to Gleim for mark-making.

