

## **DYNAMIC PAINTINGS - SIMPLIFIED**

**DECEMBER 8 2012**

a workshop with Mark Waller

We had a lovely intimate group at Sarah Hollier's house in Lennox. There was an exhibition in the Artspace, so we moved to Sarah's.

We started off discussing the value of understanding the difference between your conceptual and perception skills, and your technical skills. This is a nice strategy to help you discover what it is about a particular piece that may or may not be stopping you.

It was put to a vote, and all the participants decided that they wanted to understand how to paint water.

We then looked at developing our skills with gradation of colour, and again my favourite, the rolling brush technique. We investigated the possibility of using this same technique to paint trees and all sorts of other things. This is a difficult technique which requires a lot of practice (and homework, ladies!). But once mastered, opens up a world of possibilities.

Particularly, allowing you to turn off your brain and abdicate responsibility to your paintbrush. After all, some of us spent a whole \$2.50 on them!

We then worked on developing some skills around dry brushing technique. This is a wonderful way of building a little bit of "grain" and increments of colour into a work in a fairly non-committal way. These were hidden in exercises designed to develop an understanding of what makes up the appearance of water. We touched on the four elements that go to make up the appearance of water: substrate, the colour of the water, the surface of the water, and the light.

We painted a series of exercises designed to illustrate the versatility of that approach. We did a gradation of colour on a canvas, and then sprayed it with a toothbrush to create the illusion of shells and grit, and then applied the principles of my approach to painting water, over the top.

The result was a very lovely, simple little image. All of this was designed to show how simple the construction of a dynamic painting can be. Less is often more.