

## *Iain Stewart: Building a Roadmap for Your Watercolors*



In this workshop, Iain Stewart's focus will be on bringing your creativity to light along with dispelling the myths of the difficulties of painting in watercolor. He'll show you why watercolor is the perfect artistic medium, unmatched for its ease of use, cost of materials, and enjoyment of personal expression.

Through individual instruction and thoughtful critiques, Iain will help you prepare for and anticipate the challenges that watercolor painting presents. His process relies on simplification of the subject through both exploratory sketching and value studies; this is a “road map” that will greatly improve your painting skills and provide you with a **repeatable process** that you can use both in the studio or en plein air.

Iain plans to have students follow him in group demonstrations from his photographs or from outdoor sketches. More experienced painters are encouraged to work from their own photographic references. The class setting will be relaxed and accommodating for all skill levels, and he will spend as much time as possible for one on one instruction. Iain believes that a workshop should focus on the student, not on how well the instructor can paint; it's about you and your experience as you continue on your artistic journey.

*“Behind all good paintings there is the initial spark of inspiration and excitement. Every artist has a different approach to working from that idea to something tangible. At times that vision is realized and, sadly, quite often it is not. Not to fear. Our mistakes teach us more about where that vision was lost and how to fix it than any piece that is successful. There is a simple tool, that if used with regularity, will begin habits that will change the way you approach your work and see the world in ways you cannot imagine. It's often overlooked and underused. In short your **sketchbook**. There is no other tool at your disposal better suited to allow you to explore your ideas with abandon and a carefree attitude than a sketch.”*

## ***The Sketchbook***

When on location your sketchbook not only serves as a place to record your surroundings, it also becomes a time capsule, taking you back to the location, with its sounds, smells, experiences. Whether you spend five minutes or an hour sketching you will know a place so much better than the tourist with a camera collecting images.

## ***Materials List***

- A sketchbook. I use a Stillman & Birn Alpha Series 9" x 11" hardbound sketchbook. If you already have a sketchbook it will be suitable as long as the paper is 100% cotton rag and is at least 70lb.
- I use Arches or Saunders Waterford 140lb Cold Press or rough paper in addition to loose sheets of Stillman & Birn Beta series papers. Bring twice as much paper as you expect to use. We will typically work at 1/4 sheet and do at least one demo a day.
- A stretching board. I use masonite, or gator board and (Scotch brand) masking tape to affix the paper to the board.
- Drafting or masking tape 1" size
- A water holder and small spray bottle.
- A watercolor palette. I use a folding metal travel palette by Craig Young or the Shy Artist Palette
- Paper towels- I use Viva, it's extremely absorbent and works well. Do not use dyed or patterned towels

## **Paint and Brushes**

- Brushes- you will need a small, medium, and large watercolor brush. I recommend the Escoda Perla and Versatil series short handled rounds No's 14 and a Versatil 3/4" flat. A squirrel or synthetic mop brush is a very useful tool as well. I also have a small Perla No 4 that I occasionally use. Be sure not to purchase low quality brushes at discount retailers. I also, at times, use an Escoda Ultimo mop No.14. I also use a palette knife on occasion.
- a brush carrier. I use a japanese bamboo carrier but anything that protects your brushes while in a bag will work.
- Paint- I use primarily Daniel Smith Artist's watercolors. I do not suggest using student grade paint. The only difference is the amount of pigment used and your work will look

much more washed out than mine. There are many manufacturers out there and I have tried most of them. Daniel Smith (DS), Winsor and Newton, Holbein, M. Graham, Rembrandt, are all suitable. Do not buy cake or block colors.

**Full Palette (only as a suggestion- we can typically make your colors work. I do use the Quinacridone Orange and Cobalt blue quite a bit)**

New Gamboge  
Lemon Yellow  
Raw Sienna  
Quinacridone Burnt Orange  
Quinacridone Scarlet  
Sedona (DS)- or another terra cotta red  
Permanent Alizarin Crimson  
Cadmium Scarlet  
Imperial Purple (DS)  
Neutral Tint  
Cobalt Blue  
French Ultramarine  
Undersea Green (DS)  
Greenish Yellow- Holbein  
Zinc White (gouache)  
Naples Yellow (gouache)

Additional colors:

cobalt turquoise  
phthalo turquoise  
raw umber  
burnt umber

Any other watercolor materials you generally use. In most cases the materials you already own will work. I would, however, suggest that you have at least one large wash brush and use artists' quality pigments and 100% cotton rag paper.



Boats at Low Tide-Elie, Scotland

*Iain Stewart is a signature member of both the American and National Watercolor Societies amongst many others. His work has received top awards in international competition. In addition to working as a fine artist and workshop instructor, Iain is an architectural illustrator with an international clientele and is an Adjunct Professor at the School of Architecture at Auburn University in Montgomery, AL.*