

Stephen Foster – Acrylic and Oil with a Palette Knife – 9 Oct 2017

Stephen said he is really an abstract painter and uses abstract ideas in his landscapes.

He uses a No6 Palette Knife from Hobbycraft with colours; Van Dyke Brown, Prussian Blue, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna and Magenta.

He likes to use a simple approach therefore uses a loose immediate effect. Putting darks in first gives a good base for tones in the rest of the painting. He loves Grey as there are so many variations to be had.

He had prepared a board with White Jesso and Burnt Sienna, making a Pink on the top half, and Van Dyke Brown at the bottom.



He then sketched with chalk and started with White acrylic for the sky.



He then added a small quantity of Prussian Blue and Burnt Sienna; this is much easier to control with the white on first. He put the horizon in and using smudging, wanted to create ambiguity so the viewer has to look and decide for themselves what is the horizon.

If he wants to darken it down later, he will use oils.



He uses some warm colours in the foreground but doesn't commit to too much structure to early in the painting.



The best way to anchor a painting is to use darks and therefore he put in some more Van Dyke Brown, applied some water and commenced smudging.

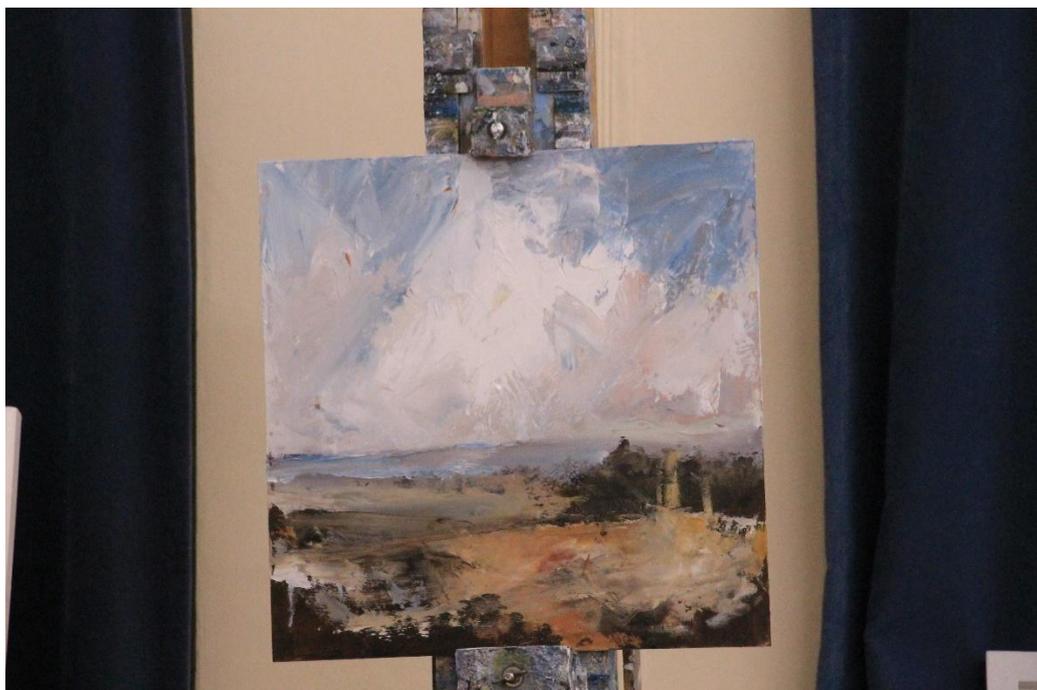
This was an intermediate stage between the sketch and the painting and he then put the painting in a practice frame to give himself an idea of where he needed to change it.



The oil paints that Stephen uses are Lukas German paints as used by Vincent Van Gogh, they have a buttery texture and are available from GreatArts.co.uk.

Putting Oils over Acrylics is ok but not the other way round.

He then wanted to darken the trees on the right and then put some more Prussian Blue in the sky but only a very small quantity.



He said he was unhappy with the mid-ground contrast of light and dark; he does not worry about where the light is coming from but the contrast between light and dark areas.



He said for the foreground, take a simple idea and simplify it.

With the trees, if you paint the crown of the trees it leaves the rest to the imagination. At present he thought the painting lacked mid-tones. He felt the top right-hand corner needed darkening to contrast with the dark trees. This he could do as he was now using oils and they would go ok over acrylics, as mentioned earlier.

He likes to take risks, as you learn more from failures than successes; he'd rather it failed than be a dull success.

Jon Wright – October 2017