

Let's Make a Landscape

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Viewed correctly, nature is an inexhaustible storehouse of clichés. A successful landscape is their pleasing rearrangement.

You can imagine nature as an accumulation of things either as you find them in front of you in your journeys around the picture world or as organized by size, shape or age on shelving units as in a museum. To make pleasing rearrangements, you should be able to switch back and forth between these types of organization. This will give you flexibility. Try it. Just be sure to remove the little explanatory labels.

Next, you need a frame. Place yourself in a natural setting. Select an area within that setting. Draw a rectangle around it. Now you have a frame.

Remember that drawing the rectangle cuts the area out of where it was. It will fall off. So be sure to remove it. And be careful about getting stuck looking into the blank space left behind. Nothing good comes of that.

Carry your scene out with you. Under your arm will do. Bring it to your new studio and place it on your new easel. The gear arrives automatically when you become an artist.

When you look at what is inside your rectangle, you'll notice that everything is the same size. So your next task is to give your landscape depth by figuring out how big the objects should be.

Perspective is hard work. It is important to have an assistant who can procure for you a beverage so you can recover from your exertions.

We're almost out of time.

For next week, make a landscape with a lighthouse. Remember where they grow and respect their natural habitats. Once you have drawn a frame and taken your lighthouse home, try changing your proximity to the scene and adjust the sizes of things and their settings accordingly. Then alter the time of day. We haven't talked about lighting, so with that you're on your own. Experiment. Decide which configuration best suits you. Then memorize it. We'll see what you come up with.

And remember that it doesn't have to be perfect. This art business gets easier as you go.

So now that you know what to do...Let's make a landscape.

