

TL and JLs Honeymoon.

We started with three of the six photos the client sent me:



I then made a suggested composite of the three. This was to serve as a rough guide for the final painting:



Then I painted the background lots of times – 15 times in all – in watercolor on watercolor paper. They were in slightly different colors each time, and because they’re “wet in wet” (I get the paper surfaces wet and then drop the color in), they always come out a little different. Also, the client mentioned they both like stronger colors so I bumped up the colors quite a bit.





I ended up using #s 2, 4 and 9-15 and drew out hexagons on the back and cut them up. While I was getting the painting and cutting parts done, I also ordered the panel, double primed and wired it.

Then I arranged all the pieces so that the picture as a whole is reformed from the sum of multiple sets of parts. There are some differences in the proportions because I was working from a 'landscape' format photo and creating a square artwork. This is one of the trickiest parts – as I'm working with laying them out, it's easy to wiggle the ones next to where you're working and then you end up with little blank spaces in between them. At this point I'm not gluing them down, because I need to be able to make changes until I'm happy with the result. And then of course there's always more wiggling them back into position as I check that there are no gaps.



Then I pick the pieces up in order, mark their position and number them. I didn't use the entire of all the paintings, I effectively had about one and a half paintings left.

Gluing them down is 'interesting' – I did the edges first as this requires gluing in two and three directions at once – a heavy book on top and stir sticks and clamps on the side.



I love watching it come together as I glue the pieces down. More adjustments also happen at this stage as I found a couple tiny white spaces. Blissfully there was enough overlap for wiggle room.



This is definitely one of the TahDah! moments, (even if it is a little out of focus..):



Now comes the foreground going in:



And the final:



But.... There are still a few more stages. I have to spray an acrylic glaze on the front, and then put on three brushed layers of acrylic. For this painting I actually put six sprayed layers over the huts and trees – black can sometimes smear if I didn't get enough spray on, or any color can smear if not thoroughly dried. The palms are actually dark brown and dark green. The brushed on layers of glaze each need several hours to dry. But in the summer heat, that worked out at about 6 hours, not overnight for the first one, (my usual timeline) which was critical in helping me to deliver the commission on time.