

Making a Refracted Watercolor

I've started with a regular watercolor. In painting this I've used a variety of techniques – wet in wet, wet on dry, and a yupo technique.

I've painted this on 24"x18" paper.



Sometimes I cut geometrically on the back and let the pieces contain what they will. Other times I cut random shapes from the front – then I am more likely to cut shapes that make for interesting colors.

I'm going to cut this one in hexagons. I'm sure glad I paid attention in geometry class, but I wish it hadn't been so long ago...



Lots of little pieces.



I'm going to make a collage to fit a 16x20 frame. I've cut the foam core, and have marked out a window using an old mat. It's a standard size mat though, so I know I will get one that fits perfectly when I go to frame it.

I place them on the foam core in their desired positions. You can see on the right that I sorted them out into sky, foreground, middleground. I have actually used a piece of 'river' in the sky - just because it was interesting. I was thinking I might also use a piece of sky in the river, but it didn't look right.

It's really fiddly to move one piece to adjust a position without moving other pieces, so this is one of the longest stages. Tweezers are involved too.

Usually at this stage I will put glass over it to check the fit, but this time I was confident.



I pick them off one by one, starting with ones that lie on top, and mark and number each position and each piece. Sometimes if I jiggle them when I'm picking them up, I have to go back and reposition them to make sure I don't have any gaps.

All marked out. Stacked up and ready to start gluing.



It looks so scientific, doesn't it? I enhanced the contrast on this photo so you can more easily see the faint outline of the 'window' that I marked from the mat. The pieces have to overlap this mark all the way round.

Partially glued. I use a Websters Dictionary (hardback) to hold the pieces down. Sometimes if they're a little reticent to stick, I'll also be leaning one elbow on it while I apply the glue to the next piece.



All glued down.

I added some special pieces to this one ~ extra snowflakes cut from leftover hexagons, to give it that extra wintry feel.



I've also painted a tree with bare branches on the top. Here it is with the old mat over it.

I will probably go back later and do more work on that tree, and possibly add some other foreground elements.