

A SENSE OF REALISM

Dear Eric

Eric, why do you like to paint your objects flat, or with no volume, when blocking in the painting? *Chris from Tucson*

Chris,

Think of it this way: with every object we paint, the natural tendency is to want to make it look real. We are driven by the world we view as the goal to emulate in our paintings. Unfortunately, nature doesn't do a very good job of designing itself; we as creative individuals need to do that. One important aspect of a good design is limiting the number of shapes in a painting: too many shapes lead to visual confusion.

The error in showing a sense of realism is that we may need to show too many value changes. For an example, a cube, being one object, may require four shifts in value from front, top, side, and shadow in order to show depth, or realism. Each one of these value changes create a new shape within the one object - the cube - and there is our dilemma: we want to show realism, but all the value shifts required can create too many shapes and a confusing design.

My suggestion is to block in the painting with sweeping flat patterns, and then reserve the rendering of form for the Area of Dominance. This will simplify the number of shapes. The periphery of the painting is "flat", but by its association with the Area of Dominance the viewer will mentally force a sense of volume into those areas. In essence, the viewer completes the sense of realism- without all the shapes.

I hope this helps,

Keep your brush wet!

Eric



AWS 2012 Gold Medal of Honor Award