

## DEAR ERIC COLUMN - AUGUST

### PROS AND CONS OF WATERCOLOR ART BOARD

#### Dear Eric

I was wondering about the pros and cons of using watercolor art board. I'm referring to the watercolor paper that is laminated to a board backing. For one, it eliminates the step of applying a backing to a watercolor painting when complete. However, do you think it absorbs water sufficiently to do big "juicy" washes? Arches and Canson make this product. *Robin from Ocean Park*

Robin,

I think the overriding marketing push for providing a surface such as watercolor board is the elimination of glass. Unfortunately, many galleries, especially in the higher end markets, do not want to display a glazed image. There are several marketing reasons, along with practical ones such as no glass glare and transport and storage. Recently there has been an interest by watercolorists and art materials manufacturers to circumvent glass by trying such products as watercolor board. I am not impressed with the product I have seen so far. I don't care for the even weave of the texture, the paint seems to sit on top of the paper, and I have been told glazing of layered color can be difficult. I still prefer a traditional top quality watercolor paper.

However, I have enjoyed a different approach to offer watercolor paintings framed without glass. I glue the watercolor paper on a 1/4" foam board product called Gatorboard and follow up with a varnish. They are quite attractive, and are especially helpful in reducing the weight of paintings larger than a full sheet that otherwise would have been framed in glass.

Keep your brush wet!

Eric



*AWS 2012 Gold Medal of Honor Award*