

Dear Eric,

I have a hard time getting my values exactly as I want them on my paintings. When I paint in an aggressive way as you do, I do not always “nail them”. If I am more careful on getting my values correct, then I miss out on the aggressive application of paint required for rich color. What do you recommend? *John from Vermont*

John,

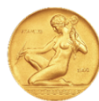
Good question! Those who paint very carefully in order to ensure their values are correct seem to miss out on the aggressiveness that a watercolor could be.

Watercolor can rival any medium in brilliant, bold application of expressive color, but we can't play it safe like we can with other mediums. However, I would much rather have expressive, rich color at the expense of exacting values. Consequently, many times some degree of later adjustment of my values may be necessary for a better design. As you know, this is all ok if all I need to do is darken a few areas, but it can be problematic to lighten some areas because of the nature of the medium. This may require some lifting or using opaque white; however, I would still rather look for an area I can darken to avoid the lifting.

I think the risk of missing on some of my values for the benefit of rich color is worth it.

Keep your brush wet!

Eric



*AWS Gold Medal of Honor Award*