Recently I was in an engaging conversation with one of my virtual critique students and I struggled with how to push him into a more aggressive color statement. Rather than furthering a discussion of technique that is outlined in my books and videos, I thought of a different approach:

I suggested that he paint in two values only. Shove everything into a dark or light value. Naturally, if something is in shadow- even a white object- it would be relegated to the dark value. (This is not an elementary exercise; for the most part this is the way I think when I do my paintings. I then will tease in a few additional values within the two large value masses to "round out" the painting.)

By working in two values it only stands to reason that the shapes will be larger- a dark car will be joined to a dark bush, a white house shape will be joined to a light sky.

Aggressive color is much easier to attain with larger shapes- it encourages a boldness with a saturated large brush that can be difficult while executing smaller separated shapes.

So, for aggressive color statements, try limiting your values to only two. I think you might be surprised at the results.

Keep your brush wet!

Eric

AWS Gold Medal of Honor Award