

MESSAGE FROM ERIC

- JANUARY -

WHAT IS AERIAL PERSPECTIVE?

Aerial perspective is a natural phenomena — something that happens in nature. Even though a painting isn't entirely dependent upon natural effects, in fact, it is preferable that it does not mimic nature, we artists draw upon principles of natural phenomena.

As objects recede from our vantage point, they become lighter in value and bluer in color. I believe it is because the yellow light spectrum drops out first with the blue rays remaining. This is most evident when standing on an elevated plane and viewing successive hillsides as they recede from our vantage point. Of course, this is easy to do in the Pacific Northwest.

As in all painting, we artist draw from nature for inspiration, but we are not beholden to it. I've seen many beautiful paintings where aerial perspective is not taken into consideration.

The only exception that I know of where this principle does not apply is in clouds. The white of the cloud tends to get warmer as it recedes from the viewer. The same probably applies to snow, but not having been around that much snow, I'm not sure. Nature always throws in some funny twists.

I was asked in a recent class if aerial perspective applies to other than landscapes, such as a still life set up. I am not aware of it being considered in such a way, but I don't see anything wrong with it, and possibly it could work.

Keep your brush wet!

ERIC



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