

How to Paint like a Professional Artist

So you love to paint, but your finished product never quite looks like what you had in your head?

You need to think like a professional

Let me tell you a secret to starting out, unless your a professional Artist who has been painting for years you need to plan your work. That means do a little research on the topic that interests you.

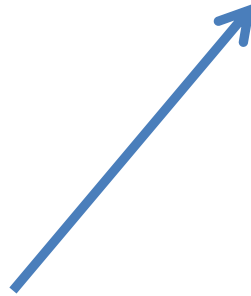
If you like fish, research their colours, & shapes. Fish as you know are not all the same, but it's easy to remember a fish shape and draw it over and over again, but that's going to be a very lonely ocean painting of fish unless your depicting a school of fish that happen to be the same species, and thus shape.



HAVE A WRITTEN RANT – YEP THAT’S RIGHT

So you’ve decided on a topic and that’s about as far as you got, it’s hard to go from that initial idea to designing a complete artwork. So the best idea is to have a little rant, write whatever comes into your mind, get angry, happy or sad about it. See it from different perspectives.

HERE’S MINE



It doesn’t have to be an essay

A few paragraphs will do.....

When your done use a highlighter to highlight your descriptive words through out. Then read your words, you may just get the design concept of your whole work from a few written words about your topic.

This is just one source of how **humans interfere** with the **eco system** of the ocean, our **irresponsibility on boats** and on land sends this matter into our oceans. Yes boaties, especially professional boats men would like to think themselves responsible and I’m sure take care to minimize their footprint on marine life, however what about that gust of wind that comes and takes off with the plastic bag, the small piece of glad wrap, do they turn the boat around and fish it out or do they keep going thinking its in the to hard basket, food for thought! This got me thinking with boats of this type, there certainly is room for this to happen by having such open decks. So what if there was **more then one boat**, in fact there was hundreds of them, its lunch time, the wind is high, numerous plastics enter the water in one area, what happens to that mass concentration of plastics, and more to the point what happens to our **marine life**. To a turtle a piece of floating glad wrap looks like a tasty jelly fish, a turtles favourite, and unfortunately a major cause of turtle deaths.

Boats are no doubt responsible for **environmental damage**, even the wash by boats cause erosion when close to land, but what do they cause **when grouped together on mass**, I would think it like a giant tumble dryer, for the ocean beneath, everything **being thrashed about**, sediment lifted, fish schools swimming for their lives from one boat only to change direction for another then another and another, **getting stressed**, where to go to escape hundreds. Boy my imagination just runs sometimes, but its a what if scenario and there’s a work in there.

Next step get a little more complex in your think.

Many professional artist's will do mind maps, stretching out their vision so they can get a well informed well rounded vision of what to produce. It is much easier to produce work when you have a clear picture of your design from the get go.

Draw illustrations and doodles of parts of your work and what those parts will represent, the clearer your concept the clearer it will be to your viewers also.


Here's mine



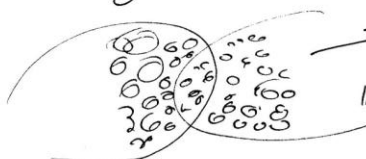
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Human Destruction In the Ocean.


- Scuba Divers Kill coral - Coral Dies upon touching
- Scuba Divers break coral with flippers or break coral deliberately as keep stakes.
- Boats stress out fish, pollute water, create Rough Water around calm protected Bays causing erosion to the Reefs.
- How to portray it - ~~Boats Work~~
 - fish out of control
 - Jumping fish out of the water
 - large Underwater bubble brewing as if to say the Ocean is getting Mad. & is ready to blow



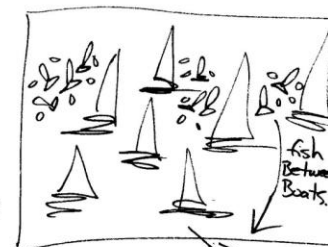
Girl watching on from Beach, "outside the painting".



Two bubbles joined with loads of small bubbles inside (the ocean is brewing) Ready to explode!



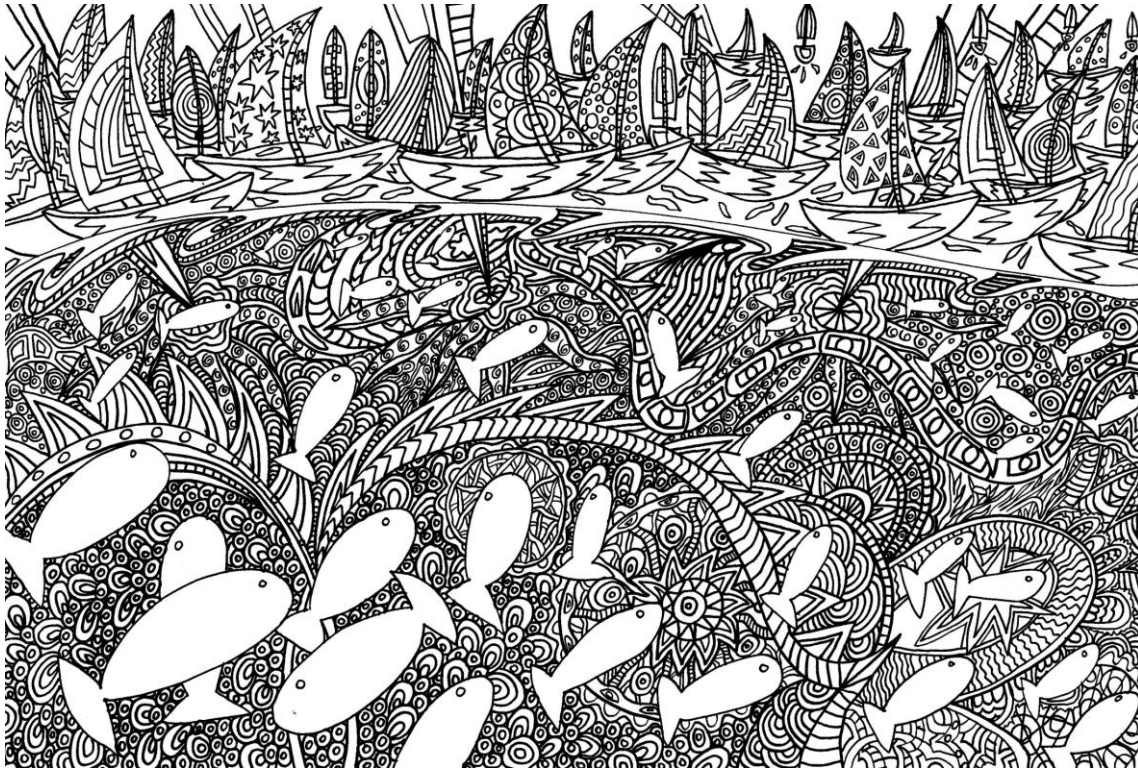
- Jagged edges coming from the Water Surface to below
- The feeling of Intruding
- Jagged edges
- Riddle effect
- Something cutting through the water
- Intimidating look



fish jumping out of the water stressed.

fish Between Boats.

Get busy drawing



If you have a clear vision for your work drawing it should be easy....

When you go to the supermarket and you are not after anything in particular you can be there for ages, not to mention spend a small fortune, but if you have a list you v-line straight for those items and your gone.

The same applies to designing artwork. Have your got the right ingredients to do your work quickly, effectively and without driving yourself insane.

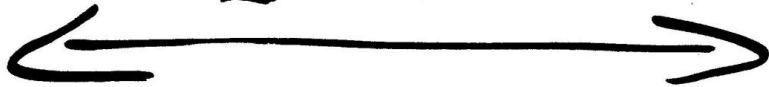
You may choose to do numerous drawings to see which you prefer the most, it's always good to have choice.



Here's mine

How is too big?

Total Size .
210cm Very large scale in size



Another thing to remember when drawing your work is how big is your artwork going to be



extension on original.

Yachts coming around the corner



Fish jumping clean out of the painting

4D Dimensional fish

How to transfer your artwork to canvas

So how to take your perfectly designed artwork and reproduce that fine drawing to a canvas maybe 20 times it's size. Hmmm

That's tricky.....

Well some artist's will take their canvas to printers and have the design printed onto their canvas (expensive). I knew an artist who did this and it used to cost her hundred's of dollars even before she had even painted the picture.

Another way is to purchase a projector, but unless your willing to pay upwards of a thousand bucks then the cheaper ones just don't cut the mustard especially doing XL canvas, they are okay for very small canvas sizes though.



Another option is to grid your canvas and your design and fill in what you see in the corresponding squares.

Or take a leap of faith in your eye to canvas accuracy and free draw it. I do a bit of everything according to what the size of my canvas is.



Start painting and very slowly make your way across your blank canvas

Depending on how professional you want your painted finish to be will depend on what sort of paint you use. The most popular paint would have to be acrylic paint, it's very easy to use and water based so it's a very easy clean up of both brushes and fingers

Let's get *PAINTING*



Brands like Atelier and Liquitex are my preferred brands, and I will only ever use opaque paint for this style of painting. Both have a real buttery consistency and are easy to work with. Liquitex is my favourite though.



Paintings can take weeks to do



Keep your strokes flat, no height is required in flat style painting, it will make your final result much easier to define between colours if you do.



Just the first coast took me 2 weeks of straight days to do, it's a slow process but the final result is always worth it.

Why the blank spaces....I hear you say



In my investigation and earlier drawings, you'll remember I decided to add a 3D element to this work, 3D fish to be exact.

So I don't need to paint where the fish will be placed, but what I do need to do is

VERY IMPORTANT

You must must must paint your work twice, yes I know your looking at thinking no it's okay , it doesn't really need it, but yes it does. Not only does it look more professional, it is more professional. The colours will pop so much more, your paint will be 100% opaque (non see through), the finish will have sheen not look grainy and you will love it soooooo much more. Believe me it is so worth the extra time and effort.



Adding a 3D element



The fish I kept simple, a simple shape and I cut them from MDF Wood



The fish were then sanded and rounded so the surface was circular.

It's always intriguing to potential buyers to have something interesting about an artwork, and adding a 3D element will always do it.

Let's go fishing



The next stage was to paint the fish with two coats of undercoat, being MDF paint generally has a tendency to be swallowed by the wood, so to prevent a wishy washy paint finish, an undercoat is necessary. 2 coats.

And finish our second coat of paint on our canvas.....

The final stage is to paint the fish in a style completely different to the background painting so they stand out. I wanted a flicked approach to painting the fish, firstly the paint was added using just my fingers, then blue paint was flicked on, then pressed to squash the flicked paint. So far so good on the MDF fish.

Let's rough up the sails



I wanted to rough up the boat sails, to make them look less perfect, more busy, more edgier. First I used dimensional paint which was applied through a small tube, I found the opening to small though, so I decided on using a cake decorator piping bag and nozzle, but still it looked to perfect, so then I tried using a pallet knife to scrape the paint around, it worked okay, it's all about trial and error and keep going until you find a process that works perfectly.

Dimensional MDF fish work in progress

If your planning on adding MDF elements to your canvas you will need to add a piece of ply wood to your frame when stretching your canvas to it. I paint flat on a table, that's my preference, I like that because I prefer a gallery wrap finish (where the art is on the side of the painting also) so I stretch the canvas later.

If your planning to work this way make sure to use good quality paint and canvas, or your paint will crack when stretched (BOOHOO) .



Adding your MDF to the canvas -

You want to use a good heavy duty glue, I use 'no nails' (bunnings) or hardware stores. Make sure to only put it near the centre or it will stretch out the side and ruin your painting with blobs of greyish glue, blah. When it is totally dry and give it overnight, then add some screws from the other side of your plywood through your canvas and into your 3D elements. They will not go anywhere now.

Well here is the finished painting.



I hope you are very happy with your work also.

I hope you enjoyed this Fine Art Presentation based on my artwork process.

And learnt a little about how to get inspiration for further artworks.

This has been another presentation by Karen Elzinga for Elzinga Collective



elzinga  *collective*



** Eccentric Fashion & Accessories * Original Art * Eclectic Oddities **

Karen Elzinga (Bachelor Degree Art –Double major Fine Art & Visual Culture)