



# ODIHAM ART GROUP DEMONSTRATION REPORT

## Mark Warner – Seascape in Acrylic, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2019

Mark started by giving a short history of his background, growing up on the west coast of Wales and painting and drawing all his life. He now runs workshops and courses from his studio in Shropshire and also hosts painting holidays in Italy and France.



He stressed that his paintings were all about colour but drawing was also important and we should all try and sketch every day, recommending Seawhite sketchbooks as good quality and not expensive. He uses pencil, conte, watercolour and acrylic for sketching and will use black conte in a lot of his acrylic paintings. He showed us the subject image on his iPad of a lonely beach with the tide out – a very atmospheric seascape. This time he used just the one image but he often amalgamates several photos together for the subject matter. He sometimes works on big commissions and he said it helps to think of the subject as a series of abstract shapes, as it stops you getting caught up in detail too early.



Mark paints on pastel paper with clear gesso on top to stop the paint soaking through (particularly important if painting with oils) as he likes the coloured ground, and the paper he used for the demo was a strong deep blue - there's lots of blue in his work. He uses any make of paint, being led by the colour rather than the brand.

To start he drew a line across the paper about a third of the way down, to use as a marker for the horizon and (this is a very good tip) he also cut a narrow strip of the same blue paper and pinned it onto the edge of the easel so he could test his colours on that before committing them to the painting.

He uses very little if any water when painting, preferring to paint with solid colour although this does get diluted if he's washed a brush out before going back to his palette. He started with Titanium White for the clouds, rolling his brush across the paper so the shapes became fractured and jagged. He added Ultramarine Blue to parts of the clouds but also left lots of the paper visible. Cadmium Yellow was added to the clouds on the horizon to make them glow.



Moving to the foreground Buff Titanium, Naples Yellow and Burgundy were all streaked onto the paper straight from the tubes, allowing any mixing to happen on the painting itself. These became the 'under colours' for the foreground. However Mark did mix Prussian Blue with Buff Titanium and Naples Yellow to give a deeper shade for the foreground. By this time the sky had dried so he added Prussian Blue and a little Burgundy to the Titanium White here, rolling the mop head brush



across the paper to get rough ragged edges. He used pure paint, no water added, to get texture.

Moving to the water he slashed Cobalt Turquoise down the paper, adding a touch of Prussian Blue. Then using a rigger brush he outlined the horizon and also 'drew' some darks into the sands. He added orange to the dark mix for warmth and picked some of the same mix to add to the sky, keeping the colours linked across the painting. When using acrylics Mark says it is important to work from darker areas first then put lights and highlights in at the end.

At this point Mark moved to black Conte, using the flat edge of the stick on the beach, then went back to add orange, Cadmium Red, Turquoise and white as highlights across the image as well as Hookers Green and Sap Green, commenting that an artist should be brave and not be afraid to use strong colours to bring areas forward in a painting. Using a credit card he moved paint around to create more texture, then a rigger brush which he twisted into the paint. Finally he added some light pink highlights to make the scene sing. By the end of the demo Mark had painted a dramatic seascape and shown us some interesting and useful techniques to improve our own paintings. He was given a round of applause and we intend to ask Mark to come back in our 2020/2021 season to run a workshop for us – much to look forward to



Christine Sharp  
November 2019