

# BLUFF Strokes

Affiliate of Dubuque County Fine Arts Society

Historic Dubuque, IA, on the Mississippi River

June 27-30, 2024

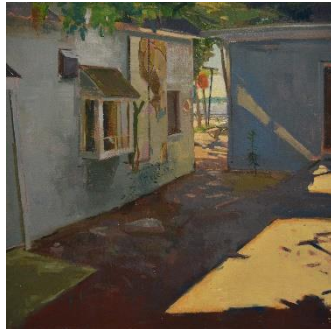
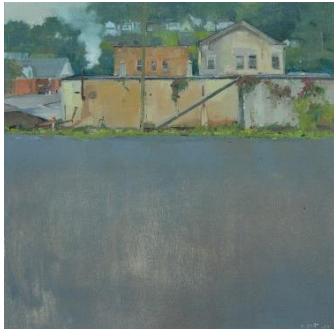
## Observational Painting: Studio and Plein Air



### INSTRUCTOR: Hector Acuna

[www.acunaarts.com](http://www.acunaarts.com)

Hector holds a BFA from UW Stevens Point and an MFA from Michigan State. Working primarily in oil, Hector's outdoor work is very organic, allowing shapes, colors, and textures of time to inspire his paintings. In the studio, his images drift toward surreal and imaginative compositions, pulling visual references from life. Hector has taught drawing, painting, and sculpture privately, in workshops, and at the university level. He has recently won awards at several prestigious events, including Best of Show at the 2022 Door County Plein Air Festival. At the 2023 Plein Air Convention & Expo he was named the M. Stephen Doherty Breakthrough Artist of the Year. He was featured in the 2023 Oct/Nov issue of Plein Air Magazine in an article titled "Age of Exploration," and has been invited onto the faculty for PACE24.



### WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION:

Observational painting centers on the notion that we must paint what we see, not what we know. Learning to see the ways that light describes form and space is as important as learning to mix the right color or compose with dynamic principles of design. Students will be led through an in-depth series of slideshow presentations, live demonstrations, recommended homework assignments, and group critiques covering various observational painting methods to evolve their ability to see their subjects as a mark, color, shape, etc. We will begin our study with non-objective still life arrangements to simplify the fundamentals and prepare our compositional lens for outdoor painting. Over the next few days, students will have time to paint en plein air following live demonstrations from the instructor. We will have opportunities to paint together before meeting for group critiques. This workshop is designed to provide supportive resources and habits to sustain an inspired approach for both the beginner and experienced painter.

**Cost: \$440 Minimum 8 / Maximum 15 students**

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## Hector Acuna

### Recommended Materials List

#### Required Materials:

Opaque Paint (I use Oils, Casein, and Gouache): These are the colors I use most of the time. \*Minimum colors that are highly recommended.

- Titanium White \*
- Cadmium Yellow Light / Hue / Hansa Yellow Light
- Cadmium Yellow Medium / Hue / Bismuth Yellow\*
- Yellow Ochre
- Burnt Sienna
- Cadmium Red Light
- Alizarin Permanent/Crimson\*
- Ultramarine Blue\*
- Phthalo Blue
- Raw Umber

Painting Medium for Oil Paint. I prefer to use solvent-free mediums called Oleo Gel and Velazquez Medium, both made by Rublev Colors. Gamblin also makes solvent-free gel mediums that work well. One solvent based medium I've used and like is Neo Megilp. Liquin works well too. I prefer mediums that have a higher viscosity when painting en plein air. You can use additional fluid mediums so long as you have containers for them.

Gamsol odorless mineral spirits. The use of odorless mineral spirits is required for this workshop.

Brushes 5-10 varying in shape and size. I prefer to use a mix of flat bristle brushes, soft synthetics that vary in shape and size, and a few round sable hair brushes. Bring whatever style and hair types you'd like; I recommend having at least one or two large brushes (cheap house painting brushes or "chip" brushes work well for blocking in!)

Palette Knife of medium size and standard triangular shape is recommended.

Portable Easel and Contained Palette or Tripod Mounted Pochade Box. I use a camera tripod and a wooden mast to hold my panels. For my palette I have a folding box that attaches to the tripod. The most important requirements are that your easel is comfortable and stable enough to make your work in a variety of wind conditions and terrain.

Painting Supports or Surfaces: I like to paint on canvas or linen mounted to archival foam board or ¼" - ½" plywood. You can also paint on primed stretched canvas, mounted paper, masonite, or plywood. I recommend bringing a variety of sizes from 6" x 8" up to 16" x 20". You're welcome to bring nontraditional sizes or ratios if you have them too. In terms of quantity, it's better to have more options than to run out or feel limited. Most of our paintings will be single session paintings up to 4 hours per session. I would plan to have 6 to 12 painting supports of varying size.

Brush Cleaning Container. I use a 20oz stainless steel brush cleaner made by Artists Loft.

Small lidded container for your medium. (optional if you plan to use a gel medium)

Paper Towels (preferred) or Rags.

Sketchbook - I recommend one between 5.5" x 8" to 9" x 12".

Graphite Pencils. Minimum HB, 2B, and 6B pencil.

**Optional Materials:**

Hat

Bug Spray

Sunscreen

Bag for garbage

Folding Chair or Stool

Phone

Water Bottle

Umbrella

Wet Panel Carrier to transport wet paintings

Clips

Tape

Pencil Sharpener

Gloves. I use blue nitrile latex-free gloves when painting with cadmium colors and mineral spirits.

**Reminders:**

Wear comfortable shoes or bring a cushion mat to stand on. I've made temporary ones that work well enough from taped pieces of cardboard.

Apron or Smock

Sweater

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June 27-30, 2024

### REGISTRATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

This workshop is open to all skill levels from experienced beginner to advanced. Experienced beginner means you are somewhat familiar with the media you will be working with.

Skill level: Experienced Beginner \_\_\_\_\_ Intermediate \_\_\_\_\_ Advanced \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Bluff Strokes, PO Box 3405, Dubuque, IA 52004

Workshop Cost: \$440

Registration fee: \$110 (include check payable to Bluff Strokes)  
Remaining cost payable at beginning of workshop

#### Location:

This workshop will be taught en plein air around the Dubuque area and in the painting studio at Clarke University, Dubuque, Iowa. Logistics will be provided prior to the beginning of the workshop.

#### Physical requirements:

This workshop will require participants to be able to walk short distances (up to 200 yards) and carry materials across paved or sloped grassy areas.

#### Registration policy:

While we understand that circumstances arise causing changes in your plans, we also need to secure our workshops financially and contractually.

- We will begin depositing checks and confirming registrations once our minimum class size is reached. If we don't secure a minimum participant list by May 27, the workshop will be cancelled and we will refund you.
- Registration in workshops will be in the order of checks received.
- If we exceed our workshop maximum, a waiting list will be established. If we can fill your spot from the waiting list, we will refund your deposit upon request.

#### Recording:

There will be no recording of this workshop.

**Registration questions:** Wes Heitzman 563-845-1801 [info@bluffstrokes.org](mailto:info@bluffstrokes.org)

**Instructor questions:** Hector Acuna 262-705-1641 [H.acuna45@gmail.com](mailto:H.acuna45@gmail.com)