



Robin St. Louis Workshop

October 19-21, 2018



Here's some information about Robin St. Louis' workshops: She likes to start her working relationship with her students by email a month or so in advance of the workshop. When painting from photographs, she thinks that choosing an exciting photograph to begin with and then (usually) altering it in Photoshop to increase the contrast and saturation, among other things, makes a huge difference in the excitement with which one begins and also in the quality of the finished painting. She encourages each student to send her a few photographs that they are considering painting and then has an email dialogue about which of their photos would probably yield the best painting, and why.

Then she sends each student some simple Photoshop instructions that work for her. If her students don't have the program, she is willing to alter their photo or photos for them and send several improved versions for them to choose from. She asks them to get an 8x10 photo printed of their favorite, and 4x6 versions of all the others to bring to the workshop.

She also asks that they do their drawing on tracing paper before they arrive at the workshop. Drawing can take a lot of time, and she would rather that her students spend their time painting. She encourages students to do a full-sheet painting, or as close to that as they can.

At the workshop, students will cover the paper with a random light layer of four pigments – a red, a yellow and two blues – and let it dry. There is a demo of this on Robin's website: www.robinstlouis.com. Then students transfer their drawings to the watercolor paper using homemade carbon paper that Robin provides.

Each student does a small value study using gray scale markers, and thinks about their color choices for the painting in advance. Then the students begin.

Robin does at least one demo each day. Topics include mixing strong darks, painting by wetting an area and dropping color in, painting skin tones and fabrics, and using dynamic color.

Robin doesn't like to do group critiques, because she thinks it causes too much pressure. She will walk around constantly and work with students individually, and believes that offering gentle suggestions and encouragement are the best way to teach. Her students tend to laugh a lot and seem to enjoy the atmosphere in the workshops. They also comment that they feel the workshop makes them "braver" about working larger, trying more unusual and dynamic compositions, and getting juicy color and strong contrast in their paintings.

Robin's bio and other information are on her web site.