

# SIMPLIFY, EXPRESS, PAINT

# Watercolor with Keiko Tanabe

## RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

All levels are welcome! To benefit fully from the workshop, it's helpful to have some basic knowledge of drawing and previous experience working with watercolor.

## WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

Do you paint everything you see or do you paint what you feel? In this workshop, you'll learn to see the world with fresh eyes and begin to transform what's in front of you into expressive watercolor paintings that capture mood and atmosphere. You don't need to be an expert - just come with curiosity and a willingness to explore. The focus isn't on painting every detail, but on finding the essence of your subject.

Keiko will gently guide you from that first spark of inspiration through a clear, step-by-step process - helping you simplify what you see and create paintings that are strong in design and rich in feeling. We'll start with the basics: getting to know our materials, building confidence in drawing, and learning to see like an artist.

In this class, you'll learn:

- How to begin with a strong but simple drawing and composition
- Fundamental watercolor techniques and brush handling
- What makes a strong design (and how to spot it)
- How to use light and dark values to make your painting come alive
- Ways to balance planning with playful intuition
- Tips for editing and simplifying complex scenes

Each day includes a live demonstration by Keiko, filled with helpful tips you can try right away. For studio workshops, reference photos will be provided, and there will be plenty of personal feedback, individual help, and time to ask questions.

Please bring all the materials described on the attached list.

Whether you're just starting out or looking to build more confidence in your watercolor journey, this workshop offers a supportive, encouraging space to grow and enjoy the creative process.

## ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Keiko Tanabe, AWS, NWS, AIS, SDWS-MA, is known for her atmospheric watercolors that beautifully capture a sense of time and place. Often working en plein air, she uses expressive brushwork, rich textures, and harmonious color to convey both the exotic and the everyday moments of her travels. A largely self-taught artist, Keiko began painting in 2005. With only one formal drawing class and a brief watercolor course in San Diego, she quickly committed to painting full-time. From there, she immersed herself in watercolor with the same dedication as learning a new language through daily practice and personal exploration. Her subjects range from landscapes and cityscapes to waterscapes and interior scenes, which she presents in representational and impressionistic styles. These themes will be featured in her workshop demonstrations. Since 2011, Keiko has led numerous successful workshops and live demonstrations around the world. Her work has been featured in many art magazines, and she has produced four instructional DVDs and several books showcasing her art.

## SUPPLY LIST FOR KEIKO TANABE

**Paints:** professional quality brands. My basic palette consists of cobalt blue, phthalo blue, alizarin crimson, orange, cadmium red, burnt sienna, raw sienna, quinacridone gold, lemon yellow, Dioxazine purple, viridian or phthalo green, turquoise, transparent brown, titanium white (all Sennelier). Feel free to bring your own favorites too. Include one suitable for a monochromatic painting such as neutral tint or sepia.

**Palette:** any kind, plenty of mixing area is useful

**Brushes:** One large round brush size 12 or bigger (such as Escoda Ultimo which is squirrel imitation or something similar such as Raphael Softaqua, Princeton Neptune). One medium-sized round brush similar to the above. One brush for details size 14 or smaller (such as Escoda Perla, Raphael Precision or something similar). Other brushes that are useful: liner, rigger, dagger, flat (hake), oriental brush, etc. Bring your own favorites.

**Paper:** rough or cold-pressed: 140 lb (300gsm) or heavier, cotton, professional quality such as Fabriano Artístico, Arches and Saunders/Waterford. Please plan on using 2 sheets per day. Also some paper to test colors (old or lesser quality paper will be fine). Paper Size - 1/4 sheet 11"x15" or 12" x 16" up to half sheet 15"x22", depending on your comfort level

**Other required:** Drawing board, gatorboard or foamcore to support paper (if you are using a block this is not needed), Masking tape, clips, or stapler to secure paper to board, Pencil and eraser, Sketchbook or drawing pad for thumbnail sketches and small studies, container for washing brushes, towels or sponge.

*Any questions about materials? Please email me [ktanabeart@gmail.com](mailto:ktanabeart@gmail.com)*