

Syllabus - Weekend Botanical Painting
Orchids
Spring 2015

Using the live orchid specimens provided for us by the US Botanical Garden, we will spend the weekend doing a large painting of an orchid, one of the most unusual plants around, yet found on every continent in the world except Antarctica. We will learn about the history of the orchid, and how it has been hybridized to create many different forms and color combinations. We will hear about the orchid hunters, and how the orchid is a huge international industry.

Sketches in a sketchbook to start:

During the beginning of class, please do several quick sketches, either in pencil, colored pencil or watercolor in your sketchbook. Label the parts of the plant. Try to make your sketch fairly big, at least 6" x 6" and work out what your final piece will look like in terms of composition. By doing quick sketches, you can try out different compositions and choose the best one for your project. I will show some samples of interesting botanical illustrations during the class to give you some ideas.

You can go online and research your orchid briefly. Be a scientist as well as an artist and find out what the habitat is, how the plant reproduces and which insects pollinate it if there are any.

Please complete one drawing or painting in full color of a plant by the afternoon of Sunday's class. We will reserve a little bit of time to critique the work and talk about how we approached the project and what we learned. The finished work should be very refined; while working, keep the entire paper clean and neat for a good professional presentation. Decide if you want to label the painting, and if so, label the different elements such as flowers, root system, the life cycle of the plant, and its correct name. It can contain any insect that assists with pollination or is a pest to the plant or in some way has a relationship to the plant.

You may draw using prismacolor pencils or watercolor or a combination of both. The finished piece should fit nicely in an 11 x 14 or 8 x 10 vertically formatted space, or a larger space. If you use a standard size, you will be able to find a standard frame and mat if you decide to frame it later. By using good quality watercolor paper or illustration board, your finished work will last long and look better.

Suggested Pigments to Use for Painting:

Red	Red Oxide Cadmium Red Medium
Green	Hookers' Green Winsor Green
Blue	Ultramarine Blue Cerulean Blue
Yellow	Yellow Ochre Cadmium Yellow Permanent Yellow Deep
Brown	Burnt Umber Burnt Sienna Sepia
Pinks	Quinacridone Red Permanent Magenta or Quinacridone Violet Rose Madder
Titanium White	
Payne's Grey	