

Thank you for asking for the first chapter of my ebook. It is just a taster of what is to come, and introduces you to what I hope to share with you.

I hope you enjoy it, and find it intriguing enough to want to obtain the rest of the book



ABSTRACT ART SECRETS

by Tim Seaward

An ebook filled with both philosophical and practical insights into the enigmatic riddle of abstract painting.

By the end of the book I hope to have enabled you to acquire the confidence in pursuing this powerful form of self-expression - either personally or professionally. And the way I will do that is to encourage specific practices, and using my own personal journey as some of the examples.

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CHAPTER ONE

Writing may be seen as one of the most exciting, if not slightly surprising, forms of abstract and surreal expression, and there is an acutely vital clue here to the relevancy of words to picture making ... write it down - always! Never be without paper and pencil.

So ... read carefully, and let the following words paint a picture for you:

***I envy those scurrying animals who leave their noise laden touches,
although I smell and see your exciting wild flower aroma,
and with the screaming fire - a sailor's yearning sex.
I gaze, singing , shouting, crying at the flowing strength,***

**at unbelievable sensuality and attractiveness,
as you, so granite seriously guide your caring, loving lines
- ageless wisdom - fearless,
down, down upon the sumptuous lanes.
Well, are we, you and I, so blessed - my dwelling of richness?
Why such head throbbing sadness?
Why such flooring lowness at your supposed position?
No, look my golden little one,
look at the petal strewn road ahead.
Just one step is needed
and maybe only the certainty of it
- for it IS certain.
And you WILL find your truly enriched dream.
All I ask is this - let me see you when you are set free.
Let me be devoured by your presence and excitement.
Already my crumbling path has become - glowing,
an all embracing fire of riches I never knew existed.
- And that is all because of you.
Will you see those many hilltop fired beacons
- all lit by you?
So loud - so vast!
Will you follow their tremulous paths?
They lead to those romantic sights,
sights you have never, NEVER sensed before.
Will you go, oh Wiltheis Felinus Feles,
Will you go?**

Committing pencil to paper and writing words is a worthy discipline that unlocks the ability to "understand" anything abstract. For to write words that describe a visual scene is in fact practicing abstract work ... only in reverse! The visual is the abstract - the words bring the ability to reason, desire, calculate, formulate, imagine ... the list goes on. And all this is formulated by the very best and most powerful piece of equipment you will ever need to produce an abstract painting ... your brain.

For it is in there that great and wondrous adventures begin. Even if you intend to produce something spontaneous you will still need to exercise the parts that pertain to the abstract - I will deal with that in more detail later.

You will need to arm yourself with an idea ... something new, fresh and personal. Many books teach about how to do something practically ... but they do not offer the serious student a chance to find out exactly HOW to come up with an abstract idea from the point of having no idea at all. It will probably be the most challenging and most interesting part of your work, and in some cases may well take up the major portion of your time. Some of the artists I have met have actually ended up using concepts as works of art in themselves. It is certainly the most important, and, ironically, it is the one subject that is least taught in schools and colleges - again, I will be explaining this underlying quest of the abstract artist ... to create a pure innovative concept!

As you make manifest your amazing piece of avante garde, teasing it from the security of your futile imagination, you will also need to gather the necessary ways and means of executing it ... but how? What with? Where? When? These decisions are made whilst the concept is being born. Media, tools, environment ... all help to establish your style of working ... they will be the physical tools of your trade whereby you will, once you have established your own working practice, be able to work much more efficiently, much more specifically ... almost without thinking (but not quite). When an idea comes to you you will have the mental knowledge and physical wherewithall to complete the project within an appropriate time ... and if necessary prolifically.

I intend to assist your thinking by offering some exercises to loosen your soul, gather your confidence, and make

the art begin to "flow" out of you. Not only will you learn the rudiments of colour theory (whilst practising outdoor exercises), you will also hear about the different marks to be made using a variety of inspirational (and sometimes surreal) elements. We will even delve into the almost spiritual dimension of visualizing and contemplating.

Having painted an abundance of colour, shape, and texture, you will then want to show them to ... the world! Yet again, this poses so many questions. Where? to whom? In what way? And I hope to answer some of them for you, and perhaps enable you to not only show your work ... but to sell it as well. And it is at this point that comes even greater queries - some of which can be seen as moral dilemma's ... or not. From that point on you are on your own ... and you should be in the position to know exactly where you want to be ... and how you want to be. But for now ...

Let us begin with a simple question ...

Why?

... That is ... Why do you want to produce an abstract painting?

... here is a list of answers which I would like you to read and then decide which, if any, loosely fit your reason for wanting to do it:

1. No reason ... I just want to.
2. It looks so easy ... and it would be nice for something to go with the decor.
3. In order to make money ... lots of it!
4. I feel compelled to ... like I really need to.
5. I have visions; dreams; day dreams; thoughts; I hear voices; I am being told to by an inner something ... and these need to be brought into the material world.
6. Therapy ... this is an opportunity for venting my aggression; bolstering my lack of self confidence; visualising my inner turmoil.
7. I want to express myself ... in a strictly personal way.

This is by no means a complete list ... you may well have totally different reasons, but this is a start.

So ... which one did you tick?

Lets have a look at them in a bit more detail:

1. This is the answer of the anarchist. A very valid reason for wanting to work abstractly ... you already have within you a seething cauldron, and the potential to produce truly opposing and dramatically random works. However, this requires brute strength of will, and the blinding power of obstinacy for it to work for you.
2. One of the most common misconceptions. It is NOT easy to produce an abstract work ... it IS easy to produce a mess! This will only lead to frustration, depression, and bitterness ...then, ironically, you will be in a far better position to produce something like a true abstract work.
3. There are literally millions of people producing the most amazing pieces ... and none of them are rich, famous ... even earning any money at all. I stand by my belief that what I paint is not about money - it can never be. It is about how I relate to this world - on my terms. Try again.
4. An interesting answer ... the driven attitude. Dangerous yet compelling. You are destined to succeed ... but success will have no meaning or interest for you and will not help you. Yet the compulsion will take you deep into darkness (not scary darkness but mysterious darkness) where you will find more questions ... not answers.

5. The surrealist. Abstraction will not be too difficult for you ... as long as you relax a little. Do not allow the explicitness of sights blind you to the potential, and more appropriate imagery, of the arbitrary joining of coincidences.

6. Here is the answer for the purist abstract producer. Inner tensions, inexplicable fears, and blinding mental flashes all contribute to a truly innovative palette.

7. The fearless explorer ... well, that is what you will expect of yourself, but you had better tread carefully. Are you prepared to hear people telling you how much they hate your work ... so much so that they want to destroy it? ... even then are you still willing to carry on?

How do you feel? Still want to press ahead and produce that masterpiece? Yes?

If you are serious about this adventure then one of the most desirable attitudes to cultivate and perfect is ... dedication (backed up by stubborn determination). An old Polish artist I met back in 1973 gave me this exhortation: "The true artist will paint ... and paint again. When they do not feel like painting ... they must paint. When they are ill ... they must paint. Even if they are sick of painting - they must paint. When they feel they cannot paint any more - they must paint. Whatever their circumstances - THEY MUST PAINT. They must paint until ... they CANNOT stop painting. Everything in their life is seen from a painting point of view. Madness will not even stop them painting. ... Then ... then the true artist is revealed ..."

It is worthwhile here to take a break from such cerebral acrobatics (although we have not really started yet!). Lets relax a little and gather some observations and, perhaps, inspiration from other artists. The simplest way to be introduced to them is by finding a book in your local library that has an illustrated history of art. It should include the earliest artists - that is ... the cave artists. For these people art had a totally different meaning than we do today. And I do not think that we should ignore them just because they were of an almost totally alien world to us. In fact, I believe that many of the cave paintings I have seen are as much relevant today as a Rothko, Spencer, or Baselitz.

Spend a little time looking at each presentation, and make a note of anything that grabs your attention. The main idea of this little exercise is to find a number of styles, periods, or specific artists that you can look at and gather a positive sense from them. It will mean finding out as much as you can about them - their history ... but more especially their way of working. What media did they use? Did they produce "periods" or "series" of works? Why do you like them? Take note of the colours they use, the media they use, their subject matter, their style, textures, any oddities ... Once you have found someone worthy of your admiration then try copying details of their work ... using the same equipment ... and then using equipment of your choice.

This is the first gathering of many bricks ... and these bricks are the fundamental, individual, intrinsic pieces to an acutely personal jig-saw puzzle. The more you gather now the more pieces you will have to work with ... until you decide which ones fit together best to reach an agreeable conclusion.

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I hope these words have tantalized you enough for you to want to buy the rest of the book ... it is full of theoretical and practical tips and information on creating a concept; finding your very own style of working; producing your own pigments - and getting the most out of the ones you already have; a layman's explanation of colour theory ... and practice; reason's to paint - way's to paint; and the various ways to promote yourself ... and sell your work ... in fact practically EVERYTHING you need to set yourself up as a professional abstract artist. All this - and more ... for 5 GB pounds.

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