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My Work Day: What I Do And How I Do It



"The winds of March are caressing the lawn and garden and daffodils have begun to bloom. Crocus and tulips poke their shy heads out of the wintry ground. It's time to think flowers, my friends. I am itching to get out and scratch in the dirt, but until this next shower passes, I will be in my studio 'nurturing' the latest watercolor painting of spring flowers.

Next issue I will be describing my studio and how long it takes to 'do a painting'."

Being a painter/artist is a discipline not unlike a regular 9-5 job for me. Except that my day generally starts at 8 am, when I climb the stairs to my loft, sit down at my easel and begin painting. I work in four major media, at different times. I paint seascapes in oil using brush and palette knife on stretched canvas. My studio has a good supply of ready canvases stacked against a wall. The oil paint may be already laid out, or I may start fresh with a limited range of colors.

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I listen to music as I paint. Around noon I take a lunch break and then resume painting until 3:30 or 4 pm, at which point I am "creatively" spent. The rest of the afternoon/evening is dedicated to computer work.

The same routine applies to the work I do in watercolor, gouache, or pastel, with subtle variations (In summer, I paint out doors as often as the weather allows). The plein aire work is especially suited to pastel.

Pastel is made with a fine clay

"binder" to hold the dry pigment together and in the process of painting dust is released into the air. Inside or out, I wear surgical gloves (to protect my hands and keep them clean) and mask (to avoid getting fine dust particles in my lungs).

Watercolor is my media of choice for flowers. The delicate nature of the nearly translucent

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petals can best be captured with this media. The other water-based paint I use is gouache (say "GWASH"). It is opaque watercolor. I use it thick and paste like for a rich textured look.

The gouache paintings I do are generally more impressionistic. However, gouache can be used in such fine detail as airbrushed illustrations.

I'm never quite sure when I go to my loft which of the painting types will fill my day. But doing what I have always wanted to do, and choosing the hours I want to do it, is the best job in the world. Wouldn't you agree?

Carol Thompson

Featured Artwork

King Alfred And Scilla



"Two delightful flowers signal the beginning of Spring. Bright yellow daffodils and deep blue scilla combine in this garden as if to greet you each day and cheer you on your way."

Blue Crocus



"The 'blue crocus' in a shady spot in your garden, quietly say, 'hello spring'. Daffodils may nod and glow and tulips may dance and shine, but my favorites are the shy, quiet crocus, calmly announcing the end of cold days."

Peach And Green



"Tulips come up in a variety of colors, from white to nearly black; but it is difficult to resist the combination of 'Peach And Green'."