

Fun & Joy

Newsletter from YongChen.com

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Demonstration

Painting a Home Portrait

Here is one example of the way this artist would approach the process of painting a home portrait.

Preparation and Drawings

The first step in the process was to visit the house. After I learn the stories of what has happened there, the house becomes a home - a home with memories, a home that each family member wants to remember through the painting I am about to create.

This first step is very important. It helps me to establish the emotional connection with my subject. Now is the time to choose the angle and composition for the painting.

Next, I made several sketches of the location. See the top sketch for the composition I selected as the basis for the painting. I then took digital photos to capture the details for reference later as I work in my studio.

Using the sketch and the digital photos, I made a detailed pencil drawing.

After I had finished with the drawing, I mixed paint colors and made small paint samples on another sheet of paper to determine the colors I wanted to use for the portrait.

Starting with the Sky

To begin the painting, I stretched the paper on a wood board. I used a big flat brush to wet the upper portion of the paper (behind the house) with pure water, for the sky and the tree area on the left. While the area was still wet, I took a round Chinese brush, dipped some blue mixed with water and brushed the paint into the sky area.

I then applied yellow for the tree. Notice that I did not cover the entire area with yellow, but left some spots untouched. These are the spaces where the sky will show through.

First Wash on the House

When the sky area was dry, I started painting the front of the house. First, I applied some yellow color to the left side of the house, and continuously washed the rest of the wall with a mixture of blue and burnt sienna. For the other side of the house next to the red maple tree, I started from the left upper corner with yellow and added more and more red towards the lower right corner of the wall.

Continue to the Ground

Before I moved my attention away from the house, I touched the dormer in the roof. There I used a mixture of burnt sienna and blue.

I then mixed yellow with blue for the grass and worked blue into the bushes around the house and the driveway. Notice, I laid one color next to another, so that they would naturally merge into each other.

I then introduced the first layer of color to the green trees and the red maple tree behind and to the right of the house.

Next, I painted the shutters on the front of the house and the reflection in the windows on the right.

I used a mixture of blue and burnt sienna to paint the shadows on the driveway and the roof, and a mixture of blue, yellow with a bit of red for the area on the left under the yellow trees.

Finish with Details

I then proceeded to shape and add details to the bushes. Using a thin layer of glaze, I created the details on the ground, the driveway, trees, the front door area and the siding. Finally, I used a mid-size brush to lift some pigment from the front yard area to create a soft effect for the shadows.

■ This demonstration is provided by Yong Chen. For more painting technique demonstrations, please visit our [online learning center](#).



Suggestions



Original painting by Kenrick Tsang
Suggestions by Yong Chen

Here are what I consider to be the issues for this oil landscape painting:

- 1) There is not enough depth of space between foreground and the background.
- 2) There is no focal point.
- 3) There is a lack of motion within the painting.

This is how I would modify this painting:

Push back the background

One of the techniques to create more space is to lighten up the colors of the objects in the background so they are closer to the sky's color and value. In addition, I would tone down the details and contrast in the background, making this area appear to recede even farther.

Pull the foreground closer

I would brighten up the color in the foreground. This creates more of a difference between the foreground and the background.

At this time, the painting still looks a bit too static, lacks motion and a point of interest.

Add an interesting object

To relieve the stillness, I have added a flying bird to the foreground, which becomes the point of interest of the painting.

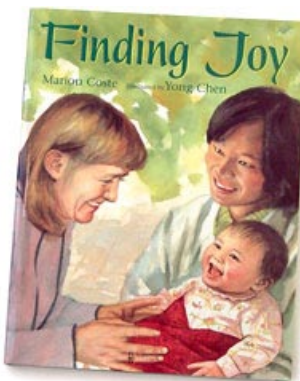
One last touch

Adding brushstrokes on the water gives the effect of movement.

■ For the full version of this critique, visit: www.yongchen.com/suggestions



What's New



Yong Chen's new children's picture book – "Finding Joy" is available online and in your local bookstores now! This new children's book is written by Marion Coste. Yong brings the story to life with 13 full-color watercolor paintings. Illustrating this picture book has been an adventure for Yong, requiring a trip to China to trace the steps of the story. "Finding Joy" is published by Boyd's Mills Press.

Where can you buy this children's book?

You can buy this book from your local bookstore or from one of these online websites:
www.amazon.com, www.barnesandnoble.com

■ Be sure to visit YongChen.com/findingjoy.htm to view the illustrations.

Instructions to Submit Materials for Critique

Send an email to:
critique@yongchen.com

In your email, please state clearly your name, your age, and the medium of your art work. You must attach a digital picture of your artwork in JPG format (no smaller than 300 pixels by 200 pixels). The image you submit must be of an original work of art created solely by yourself.

We thank you in advance for your interest in our critique service, but we must also apologize because we simply can't critique every entry submitted. We do reserve the right to display all submitted works on our site without compensation or notification; however, you as the artist will receive full credit for works used on our site.

About the Artist: Yong Chen

Born in China, Yong Chen developed an interest in art at the early age of 4. A natural artist with a superb eye for beauty, Yong has been teaching painting techniques since the age of 13.

After graduating from college in China and teaching high school art for five years, Yong moved to Boston and studied illustration at the Massachusetts College of Art. Starting soon after his graduation until 1998, Yong taught Watercolor Painting, Watercolor Portraiture classes and workshops at the Massachusetts College of Art and Rivier College. Since then, Yong has been a successful graphic artist and corporate branding expert as well as a children's book illustrator. His published works include *Finding Joy*, *Miz Fannie Mae's Fine New Easter Hat*, *Starfish Summer*, *Swimming with Sharks*, and *Maria's Loose Tooth*.

Yong has also had several solo exhibits of his original artwork in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

In addition to painting and teaching, Yong works with fellow artists to promote their works in the global marketplace through www.worldgalleryonline.com.

To learn more about Yong Chen, we invite you to visit www.yongchen.com/chen