

Bigger, Faster, Fresher, Looser

I use the title Bigger, Faster, Fresher, Looser for my workshops and my book because it fully describes in four words my approach to painting. I also know that this is how many artists want to learn to paint. So many artists (maybe even you!) are so tight when they paint that they have lost the joy of painting – I hear this from students at every workshop I teach. Maybe you are tired of small brushes and lots of detail. Maybe you are tired of realism. Maybe you want to explore something new. Maybe you have newly found freedom in your life and are ready for your painting to be an expression of that new found freedom. I have heard all of these things from students and that is why I have specifically developed teaching methods to alleviate these pain points for students and help them rediscover their love of painting. Painting Bigger, Faster, Fresher and Looser will change the way you paint!

In order to paint Bigger, Faster, Fresher, Looser you have to equip yourself with the tools that allow you the opportunity to be successful – or put you in a better position to be successful. If your goal is to paint in a Bigger, Faster, Fresher, Looser method, you would not choose a small rigger brush to paint a 48x48” canvas would you? Of course not, you would choose a 3” wide flat brush for the task. In the same manner you would not put out a dime sized dollop of paint on your palette and expect that to cover the same size canvas. Of course not, you would use more paint. It is essential then that your tools and equipment support the way you want to paint.

Bigger: To Paint Bigger, You Have To Go Bigger:

- **Bigger Brushes:** Use 2”-3” brushes only. Big brushes make you focus on big shapes in your painting and forget about the details. You can’t paint details with a 2” brush! A 3” flat brush really helps you move the paint around on a canvas.
- **Bigger Amounts of Paint:** I only buy paint in jars, either 16 or 32 oz. sizes. Why? Because I can scoop huge amounts of paint out on my palette and not worry about waste. Whatever I don’t use, I can scoop back into the container for the next painting. You **MUST** use lots of paint to be a loose painter. The more paint you use, the easier it is to move around and with acrylics, large amounts of paint don’t dry as quickly. Too many students buy tubes of paint and don’t want to squeeze enough out of the tube to use because it is so expensive. Do yourself a favor and never buy paint in tubes again.
- **Bigger Palettes:** What good are copious amounts of paint if you are using a small palette on which to place the paint? When I travel to teach I use wax paper, because it isn’t reasonable to take my three-foot square glass palette with me. Wax paper is inexpensive and you can put multiple pieces side by side to create a large palette area. Once your painting is complete, just throw it away. Make plenty of room for your luscious paint!

Faster: Painting Faster Keeps You From Thinking While You Paint:

- I cannot stress enough how important it is to paint faster. Painting faster keeps you from analyzing your work during the painting process. You want to analyze once the painting is nearly complete, not during the process of creation. Thinking while painting only leads to fear, tightness and tentativeness. Keep your painting sessions free of analytical intrusion.
- Painting faster helps you create more work in a shorter amount of time. This is good if you have lots of demand for your work and your painting time is limited.
- Painting faster taps into your spontaneity and intuition and really helps you paint from your heart rather than your head.

Fresher: You Want Fresh Color:

- Use a separate brush for each color or clean your brush between each color. This keeps you from making muddy color.
- Put your color in and then get out. Don't mix complementary colors together equally– this makes mud! Put one color in, then another color, then another. Then work on the edges between the colors. Don't go crazy mixing everything together until you understand how color works. • Use professional quality paints that are 100% pigment for fresh color.
- Don't use earth tones. Here is why: they are made from dirt!
- Use a simple color combination from the color wheel to simplify your palette.

Looser: Bigger, Faster, Fresher = Looser:

- If you paint Bigger, Faster and Fresher as outlined above, you will paint Looser guaranteed.
- Use your big brush loaded with rich, juicy paint and slosh it onto your big painting surface. Now you are feeling looser.
- Stand at arm's length from your painting surface using your shoulder movement to put paint on the canvas. Now you are painting looser.
- Remove any limiting or distracting thoughts or expectations.
- Give yourself permission to loosen-up and let go! You can do it!