



A DAY IN THE ARTS

Making art accessible to all

March 2, 2009 ADA0016 www.dayinthearts.com

IT'S ALL A BIT SKETCHY

Most professional artists will tell you that the best habit one can have is to keep and use a sketchbook. There are plenty of books out there that explain how to do this, and we will review more. But today we are focusing on Michael Wood's **How To Keep A Sketchbook**.

The book is divided into several sections, including Sketchbooks and Papers, Drawing Materials, Examples, Technical Notes, Glossary and Suppliers. The first two chapters on books and materials is helpful for the beginning artist but doesn't shed new light on the medium for the more experienced. The Examples section, which fills most of the book, takes a look at dozens and dozens of Wood's sketches, in all mediums, with an adjoining paragraph or two that explains where the sketch was done, what the circumstances were when he sketched it and why he drew it and used the materials that he did.



Something that I enjoyed in particular was his wide variety of sketching tools. For example, here are two sketches that he did of beaches in Hastings, England. The first was done using pencil, wax stick and watercolor on 200lb paper. The author explains that he was drawn to this site because of the breaking foam that ran up the beach. He explains how he found a good location to observe the action and then how he proceeded with the sketch. In the Technical Notes section, he discloses how he creates his wax sticks.

On the second sketch of Hastings beach, Wood's used completely different materials. He began with gray paper and used black and white ink to draft the landscape. He chose this particular sketchbook because the paper size fit the size of his view, so to speak. Woods began with the black ink and then finished with the white. But then he states that this type of drawing can actually be a bit of a problem since it doesn't always deliver as much information as you may need for a future painting. While it is a charming sketch, it doesn't show the changing tones in the sky from the horizon to above the clouds,



Above: "Hastings Beach", England, 2000

Below: "Hastings Towards Beachy Head", England, 2000



Right: Pink
flamingoes.
Below:
Whooper swan.
Opposite:
Princess Leva,
the pet hen.



only one chance for each line. I changed to watercolour and from general observations applied the colours equally directly.

WHOOOPER SWAN, c.1996

• BOTH 10 x 10cm/4 x 4in • BLACK WATER-SOLUBLE INK ON BOCKINGFORD 425g/m²/200lb PAPER • 30 SECONDS EACH

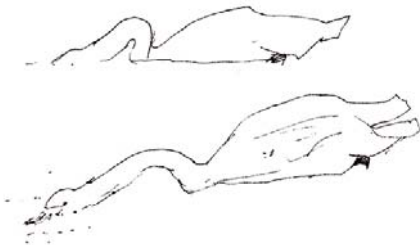
These three little drawings were made in a wild life park. I had never before drawn a Whooper Swan with the yellow patch on its bill. Swans are good subjects because their movements are quite calm and they tend to stay doing one thing long enough to get a drawing completed.

PRINCESS LEVA, 1995

• 36 x 25cm/14 x 10in • WATER-SOLUBLE BLACK INK AND SPIT ON HAND-MADE INDIAN PAPER • 5 MINUTES EACH

These studies were made indoors of a family pet who was allowed to roam free on special occasions.

Making more than one study on the same sheet of paper has the advantage of reducing the chance of frightening the bird with the noise of rustling pages.



30-second studies of cranes as well as 2-minute studies of flamingos. Taking time to add a touch of color and a few more details can really brighten a picture. Yet the 30-second studies no doubt helped to sharpen his drawing skills, as well as his observation skills.

All in all, this is a useful book to add to your art library. By example, Woods is able to encourage each of us to pull out our sketchbooks more often. And by showing the different styles used, we see that we can be free and use the materials we have at hand, instead of always feeling like we have to have our watercolor field set or any number of other excuses

nor does it fully demonstrate the action of the sea. But if you're only recording it for the sketch itself, not for use in future paintings, this may say everything you really want to convey.

Further into the book, Woods talks about other subjects, such as people, trees, bridges, buildings and animals. Here we see

we tend to use. If nothing else, it is an enjoyable book to ponder over and enjoy. ➤

How to Keep a Sketchbook
By Michael Woods
128 pages \$27.95 US
ISBN: 0-7134-8747-X
Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.
<http://www.sterlingpublishing.com/>
Order from Amazon

CULINARY ART (or not)

Blog Review - **Cake Wrecks**

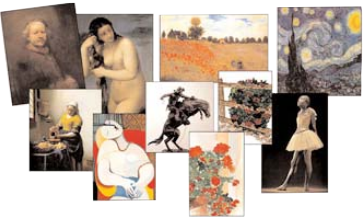
When professional cakes go horribly, hilariously wrong.

Cake Wrecks isn't normally considered an art blog but we'll pretend it is today. On Sundays, Jen, the author of *Cake Wrecks*, highlights truly spectacular works of cake art. These are not to be missed. But the rest of the week Jen takes shows us professionally decorated cakes that may be artistic, but are often "horribly, hilariously wrong".

Today's post (<http://tinyurl.com/bpqbpw>) is titled Nah, These Won't Traumatize the Kids at ALL and features several cakes that were created for children's parties. Cakes include the ever-popular



dead elephants, the headless, poodle-skirt wearing girl and, my favorite, the big, bad wolf and dead pigs. Now remember, these were all created by professional cake bakers! Professional! Go ahead and take a look at *Cake Wrecks*. You'll laugh for hours . . . or, possibly cry. Jen is always entertaining though! ➤
<http://tinyurl.com/bpqbpw>



ART NEWS

Poster Art Unveiled for 2009 Kentucky Derby

Atlanta artist **Jeff Williams** was honored with being selected as the Official Artists of the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks. Williams' distinctive Art Deco style lends the air of a vintage illustration. The poster can be seen below.

<http://tinyurl.com/asuwzc>
www.jeffwilliamsartist.com

Large Modern Collection Sold For a Song
Collector and former gallery owner, **Anthony D'Offay**, has sold his huge collection to **National Galleries of Scotland** and the **Tate**, jointly. The price tag was £26.5 million, but the estimated value of the collection is five times that amount. Works by Andy Warhol, Gilbert & George, Lucian Freud, Willem de Kooning and Georg Baselitz are included. Mr. D'Offay chose a selling price that represents his original investment, despite the great appreciation in value of many of the pieces. Anthony D'Offay in Conversation with Keith Hartley, will present a program at the museum on March 14th. <http://tinyurl.com/b49wtd>

NYC Artists Showing in Uncommon Places

Stephanie Simon, arts reporter for NY1, takes viewers to various location showing the longstanding grass-roots tradition displaying work in public venues. See video here: <http://tinyurl.com/cxsxxxq>

Debut of "Biennial of the Americas" in Denver, 2010

The Office of Cultural Affairs in Denver is planning a seven-week, city-wide to celebrate art and invention from Alaska to Argentina. The focus of the event will go beyond traditional artistic boundaries. The sub-theme is "In Good We Trust" and



emphasis will be placed on forward thinking visionaries who are planning the future.
<http://tinyurl.com/chuvmz>

Sobering Tale of Over-Expansion



The Museum of Contemporary Crafts (above) has served Portland, Oregon for seven decades. It is said to have been the oldest art institution in the state. It is gone. It had moved to high profile location in 2007. The organization may be taken over by the Northwest College of Art.
<http://tinyurl.com/aaadtq>

Carefree Art & Wine

The town of Carefree, Arizona is holding its **14th Annual Fine Art & Wine Festival** this weekend March 6-8. Oils, bronzes, pottery and more will be on display along with live music and wine tasting.
www.thunderbirdartists.com

ART AEROBICS

Practice you drawing skills



Make any piece of origami you like. (Hint: do a Google search for "origami pdf".) Then do a pencil sketch of it. Twelve minutes drawing time.

Thank you for reading A Day In The Arts!

If you are interested in contributing an article or would like to have your work shown, please contact the editor.
(editor@adayinthearts.com)

If you are looking for art related books, we invite you to visit our Amazon store.
(<http://tinyurl.com/acu9la>)

WORD OF THE DAY

DOCUMENTARY ART

Any artwork the purpose of which is to present facts objectively, without inserting fictional matter, recording and/or commenting on some content, often political or social, by accumulating factual detail. Many conceptual art installations of the 1970s were overtly documentary — e.g., the various Reading Rooms by Joseph Kosuth (American, 1945-), Guggenheim Trustees by Hans Haacke (German, 1936-). More common examples: documentary films. Not to be confused with documentation. (Source: <http://www.artlex.com/>)



To any artist, worthy of the name, all in nature is beautiful, because his eyes, fearlessly accepting all exterior truth, read there, as in an open book, all the inner truth. -Auguste Rodin