



TWS BULLETIN

February 5, 2021

2021 The Opportunity to Interpret

“Opportunity to Interpret”. Did you ever think there could be an upside to the pandemic isolation? Turns out there is for TWS members! We’ve discovered that Zoom technology has enabled us to interact in new ways.

One of them is the painting critique circle, as chaired recently by Jan Nolan. Another exciting pilot project has been an “Opportunity to Interpret,” launched by our President, Doug Geldart. At Doug’s invitation, four members got together online to share their approaches to interpreting a single subject over a two week session, using the Zoom app to review their artwork and discuss their techniques and styles.

The participants were: George Eadie (GE), Doug Geldart (DG), Patrick Donohue (PD) and Miriam Melamed (MM) This document illustrates the stages of the process and the insights from the artists.

The takeaway of initiative is to encourage other members of the TWS to participate in the next round(s) in which each artist engages in a mutual journey to understand how others see the same image source. Hopefully, each artist will thus become energized to try another variation of their painting. The artists might agree to focus on some technical or stylistic aspect of a painting and do an interpretation of that, then sharing and delighting in the nuances of those versions. This is what musicians do when one person plays a unique phrase or theme and the others play it back with some slight variation – a riffing on the point of interest. Think of this, then, as a shared exercise that does not attempt to make a masterpiece, but seeks to discover new ways to interpret, along with an understanding of how each approaches the same challenge.

Who knows, this adventure could inspire you to take your art a few steps further than you’ve gone before!

In our group, each submitted a photograph to be shared. During the first half hour Zoom session, we chatted about the photos and then selected one to be the source image for all of us to interpret. We decided to go with George Eadie’s intriguing image of a canoe trip he took in Algonquin Park.



All four members painted their interpretations over the following week, then submitted photos of them to Doug, who hosted an hour Zoom session to review the paintings. The artists described their methods and what they were satisfied with. We all received compliments and constructive observations.



GE 1



DG 1



PD 1



MM 1

Additional first round interpretations were shown and discussed.



GE 1 B



DG 1 B



PD 1 B



PD 1 C

After the group review of paintings, George and Miriam re-interpreted their work.



GE 2



MM 2

As a process, this would be the logical conclusion to the Opportunity to Interpret, but in the spirit of riffing, we chose to continue with the exploration by interpreting a common point of interest.

We chose PD's semi-abstract image PD 1 B as the source for riffing with its muted washes and tree scraping technique. The goal of the riff, by each participant, was to try their hand with these two techniques.



GE 3



DG 3



MM 3

About his image, George said: "I enjoyed Patrick's dark muted forest with the trees emerging and leading up to the light morning or evening sky. I decided to mix things up by changing the sky to midday, brightening the forest colours and hardening the sunny edges of the branches. " Doug explained that his image used the linear trees of the photograph against an early misty morning forest backdrop as seen through the foreground screen of leaves. For the leaves, Doug used a technique demonstrated by Margaret Roseman- crinkling cellophane and dipping it into the paint and dabbing it randomly onto the page, and subsequently alluding to branches. Miriam explained that she was inspired by the white trees and muted greens and blues in Patrick's painting. I wanted to both scrape and sketch trees in the foreground using a juxtaposition of light and shadow. The whole process was a wonderful learning curve for me as an artist!

Since the three other artists were riffing on one of Patrick's paintings, he was inspired to riff on their original paintings and produced the following images. Patrick explained briefly what inspired him and what he was riffing on in each of the other artists' paintings:



PD 3 riff on DG
the elegant, graceful way that the trees reached for the sky



PD 3 riff on GE
reacted to the luscious, juicy greens with the jewel-like daubs of other colours



PD 3 riff on GE
the many different shades of blue, grey and purple with touches of other colours



PD 3 riff on MM
the transparent brush strokes, the very cool greens with the dab of orange, and the black and white trees

As the final step in the journey of discovery, Patrick cut up his largest painting (PD 1 C) into several small abstracts that he happened to find within the larger work .



Any TWS members who are fascinated by the prospect of getting involved in an adventure like this can contact Doug (tradleg@sympatico.ca, 416-266-4234) and he will provide further advice on when the next session will be.