

# California Gold Coast Watercolor Society:

*Encouraging Interest and Excellence in the  
Media of Watercolor*

On Saturday, February 1, we held our Spring General Meeting at All Saints Episcopal Church in Oxnard. Don Fay, treated us to an energetic and informative demonstration, interspersed with many highly amusing anecdotes.

Don paints very fast, using a broad brush to cover the paper quickly. In this way he is able to produce quality work in a short amount of time.

He does not do much drawing. Instead he uses a "dot" method, placing marks on the paper to locate the placement of important items, such as the top of a mountain or edge of the water, plus a few lines to remind him of special areas.



Don covered the paper with broad strokes of light colors, saving some white areas. Within ten minutes he had covered the page. Then he added some darks because he often likes to establish how dark the painting will go very early on in the painting. He also took the opportunity to add in some details while the paint was still wet. All this time he worked with a 2" wash brush from Windsor & Newton.



Don told us how he delights in breaking rules all over the place. He will put light paint into dark paint which he said works if you use enough water to push the paint aside.

He talked about his mentor, Robert Wood, and how Wood grew tired of people asking him about his tools. Wood said, "Tools aren't precious, techniques must be violated, and the painting is not precious." To illustrate this, Wood one day threw a painting on the floor, covered it with pine needles, walked around on it, and then took a spray bottle and proceeded to turn it into a marvelous painting.



**DON FAY DEMONSTRATION for  
California Gold Coast Watercolor Society**  
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All the while Don was telling us these great stories, he was dancing around his painting, playing with shapes, experimenting, and breaking rules.

It was pointed out that Don manages to get a good feeling of depth in his paintings without fading things in the background.

In an amazingly short space of time the painting neared completion as Don worked on his middle values and added final calligraphy touches using a round brush.

He was asked about his color scheme which somebody said bore no resemblance to the colors she had observed in the area he was painting. Don replied that he does not wait for nature to inspire him, nature is too big and disorganized. Instead he gets the inspiration for his color schemes from fabrics, catalogs, and other people's paintings.

He quoted Picasso who said: "Good artists borrow, great artists steal. "

Don will often set himself an exercise to paint in a different way using certain colors and lines.

In this way he challenges himself and keeps the process fun and interesting.

