

NON - OBJECTIVE PAINTING / COLLAGE : The John Salminen Method

Demo by Jim Dees

I DRAWING

1. Fill your page with lines , creating random , unexpected shapes .
2. Avoid recognizable shapes , circles and exact repetition . Break shapes up ; change their scale .
3. Establish dominance of either geometric or curvilinear lines , but try to have some of each .
4. Go for more , rather than fewer , shapes . They can be combined with subtle value changes to create greater interest than large flat shapes .
5. Make shapes intrude into each other .

II CREATE WHITE SPACE

1. With masking tape , cover about 30 % of the shapes on your paper . (Optional)
2. Have white space go off the paper on 3 sides . (1 of these will become the center of interest)
3. Define white space with a light yellow wash around it .

III WATERCOLOR PAINTING

1. Begin painting your shapes in colors of your choice but using some unexpected combinations .
2. Create passages subtly stepping up the gray scale . You'll be making some of the edge shapes black , so surround them with 7's and 8's on the gray scale .
3. Establish a dominance of cool or warm colors .
4. As you decide on a center of interest , create bold whitest white / darkest dark contrasts .
5. Find ways to unify your painting by repeating colors , balancing intensity and creating harmonizing or high contrast passages .

IV ACRYLIC PAINTING

Using existing shapes , boldly " go dark " on parts of 3 or 4 borders with black acrylic paint . Let black extend into light spaces and vice versa .

V COLLAGE

1. " Bejewel your elephants " with collage materials . You can use existing shapes or create new ones . This is a great way to add interest to " uneventful " shapes .
2. Heighten colors .
3. Add texture . (Salminen says to go easy , texture can quickly overwhelm .)
4. Make awkward shapes elegant .
5. Punch up your center of interest .

VI ATOMIZING (as needed)

Tone down or tint up sections to balance the composition and enhance your focal point .