

Oregon Outback Plein Air Workshop Information and Agenda

Instructor: Jordan Walker

Dates: Friday, September 5, 2025 - Friday, September 12, 2025

Arrival: Friday, September 5, 2025

Departure: Friday, September 12, 2025

Skill Level: All skill levels welcome. Prior painting experience is preferred but beginners are welcome.

Mobility Level: Most locations will require a short, easy walk on uneven terrain up to 1/8th of a mile from a parking lot or trailhead. Further exploration of these locations is encouraged but not required.

See below the agenda for important information about what art supplies to bring with you!

Description

During this intensive 7-night workshop we will explore the principles of landscape painting; including composition, value, depth, and color. We will paint directly from life in the incredible wild spaces around Summer Lake and the Lake County region. This workshop will immerse students in the incredible natural spaces around PLAYA and Lake County, and encourage diligent observation in order to portray the grandeur and nuance of the high desert. The goal of Plein Air painting is not only to create a painting, but to truly understand the way that color and light interact with the landscape in ways that only the human eye and intellect working in direct synchronicity can detect.

Depending on weather conditions, additional class painting locations may include Fremont point, Picture Rock, Fort Rock, or other incredible natural spaces within an hour drive from the PLAYA campus. We will carpool to these various sites. Travel to these locations will be flexible and determined by the interests of the class group.

We will paint together through 5 days of exciting demonstration and instruction, and the final class day will be open to exploration. We'll spend our first day on the PLAYA campus, concentrating on fundamentals with thumbnail drawings and monochromatic paintings. During the following days, we'll work with a split primary palette and learn to record some of the subtleties of nature while altering what we see to create compelling images. This class will also touch on essential techniques of oil painting such as paint application, edge control, and color mixing.

Why paint in Plein Air? Instructor Jordan Walker says, “As an instructor, my passion for natural history, geology, and ecology always bleeds through while I teach, and I will discuss the species that surround us while we work, as well as the geological forces that shaped the ground we stand on. It is my belief that an understanding of these topics strengthens one's connection to the features they are painting in a landscape, and leads to a greater appreciation for the landscape and a more interesting concept for the painting.”

By the end of this workshop, students will have gained a greater understanding of the fundamentals of composition, value, depth, and color. They will have spent time becoming more comfortable with painting outdoors, and appreciate the benefits of working from direct observation versus photo reference. Students will learn new techniques for paint application, edge control, and color mixing, which they can adapt to their own practice. Students receive tailored advice which are recommended ways to improve their work beyond the scope of the workshop going forward.

Instructor Bio

Jordan K. Walker is an award winning landscape painter, illustrator, and teacher based in Eugene, Oregon. He graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design with a BFA in 2016. His work has been shown in galleries and museums across the United States, including the Maryhill Museum of Art, National Museum of Wildlife Art, and Bowers Museum. With painting gear in hand, Jordan hikes through the wild spaces of western North America and creates Plein Air studies to better understand his surroundings. Intense examples of light and atmosphere, as well as a sense of the geological timescale of his favorite subjects are important elements in his work. Increasingly, he has found inspiration in the arid steppe of the Great Basin region, where incredible rock spires emerge from blankets of sage and juniper. www.jordankwalkerart.com

Agenda

Day 1 – Arrival Day // Friday, September 5

1:00 - 4:00 pm: Arrival

6:00 pm: Meet and Greet (BYOB and snacks)

Day 2 // Saturday, September 6 - Fundamentals at PLAYA (Sandhill Studio)

9:00 - 11:00 am: Indoor session with demos and working time for fundamentals and thumbnail drawings - based on photo reference

11:00 - 11:30 am: short break and transition to outdoor location

11:30 am - 1:00 pm: Outdoor instructor demo for monochrome painting

1:00 - 3:00 pm: Siesta break

3:00 - 5:00 pm: Participants work on monochrome painting

Day 3 // Sunday, September 7 - Split Primary Color Swatches (On the PLAYA Campus);
Mixing Color from Life

9:00 am: meet in Sandhill Studio and walk to painting location at the edge of the playa

9:10 - 11:00 am: Instructor demo split primary and how to accurately mix color swatches from life (light, mid-tone, shadow of every object in a composition) (lighter/darker? warmer/cooler? More saturated/less saturated)

1:00 - 2:00 pm: Siesta break

2:00 - 5:00 pm: Participants work on mixing color swatches with feedback from instructor

Day 4 // Monday, September 8 - Split Primary Plein Air (Location TBD); Focus on distance

9:00 am: meet at location (somewhere directly around the playa or other large open expanse)

9:10 - 11:00 am: Instructor demo split primary and atmospheric perspective

11:00 am - 2:00 pm: Siesta break (during this time students may relax, explore the location, return to campus, or work on an additional painting if they wish)

2:00 - 5:00 pm: Students work on a painting featuring atmospheric perspective with feedback from the instructor

6:00 pm: Group dinner provided by PLAYA

Day 5 // Tuesday, September 9 - Focus on Closer Elements in a Scene (Location TBD)

9:00 am: Meet at location

9:10 - 11:00 am: Instructor demo painting trees/rocks - emphasis on reflected light and solid form vs soft elements

11:00 am - 2:00 pm: Siesta break (during this time students may relax, explore the location, return to campus, or work on an additional painting if they wish)

2:00 - 5:00 pm: Participants paint trees/rocks with feedback from the instructor

Day 6 // Wednesday, September 10 - Putting It All Together (Location TBD)

9:00 am: Meet at location

9:10 - 11:00 am: Instructor demo painting a complex scene with many elements

11:00 am - 2:00 pm: Siesta break (during this time students may relax, explore the location, return to campus, or work on an additional painting if they wish)

2:00 - 5:00 pm: Participants paint a complex scene with feedback from the instructor

Day 7 // Thursday, September 11 - Open Exploration; Participants work to create at least 1 painting in a location of their choice.

5:00 pm: Group share to review all the work made during the week

6:00 pm: Group dinner provided by PLAYA

Day 8 – Departure Day // Friday, September 12

Depart by 12:00 pm

Materials List to Bring:

- Sketchbook – Inexpensive sketchbook or drawing pad 6” x 8” or larger (feel free to bring a sketchbook you’ve already started)
- Drawing Pencil – HB (I recommend Tombow Mono pencils, but any brand will do! You may also want to bring a portable pencil sharpener)
- Oil Paint Essentials- I prefer M. Graham brand Paint, but feel free to bring paint you may have in other brands. This is a split primary palette of colors that will allow you to mix nearly every color in nature.
- Titanium White
- Azo Yellow
- Indian Yellow
- Pyrrol Red
- Alizarin Crimson
- Burnt Umber
- Ultramarine Blue
- Prussian Blue
- Palette – Paper or glass Palette (9” x 12” or larger)
- Palette Knife – Either RGM #1, #24, #22, or similar
- Brushes – synthetic or hog bristle (Rosemary Ivory extra long flats or Princeton Aspen brand recommended) Flat #0, Flat #6 or #8, and Flat #10. Please feel free to bring any brushes you may already have.
- Solvent – Gamsol (4 oz bottle or more), Silicoil jar, or other container with lid.
- Rags – Soft Polishing cloths (found in many hardware stores) or paper towels. Old t-shirts also work .
- Panels – (Ampersand gessoboard, Oil or Acrylic primed linen panels, or hardboard that you’ve gessoed yourself) 10 or more panels, 6” x 8”, 8” x 10”, or 9” x 12”. Oil paper is also a good portable option that is easy to cut and resize (just ensure you have a good way to attach it to your easel/pochade box)
- Easel – Portable standing easel or pochade box. (a google search for ‘plein air setup’ will give you a good idea of some available options.)
- Chair (Optional) – you may want to bring a lightweight folding chair if you’re not using a standing easel. This would also be good for sitting to watch instructor demos, or during break time on location.

- Table (Optional) – if your easel or pochade box does not have resting space for your paint and palette, you may want to bring a small collapsible table to set up beside you that can hold these.
- Gloves (Optional) - I like to use Nitrile gloves to keep paint off my hands.
- Cleanup – Masters Brush Cleaner and Preserver – plastic zip-lock or trash bags to hold used paint rags and other trash - baby wipes to clean hands in the field if not using gloves
- Food – These class sessions will be long, and you may want to bring lunch or snacks to eat during breaks.