

How to Critique Your Own Work

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- 1. What is the best thing in the picture?**
Is it an area of color? A special shape in the painting that appeals? Certain texture? Is there an area of especially good contrast? Is the area of darkest/lightest contrast your focal point? Is there a special subject/object in the painting? Literally...What is the "best thing" in the picture?
- 2. Is the value key working?**
Do you have a balance with light/mid/dark tones?
- 3. Is the color expressing the subject and what you want to say?**
- 4. Can you simplify the shapes?**
Is the painting too busy? Is there a sense of confusion with the shapes in the painting?
- 5. Is there rhythm, tension and energy in the painting?**
Is there push-pull movement? In other words, do things come forward? Do things recede into the background? Is your eye invited or encouraged to move around the throughout the painting? Or does the eye go off the edge(s)? Is it balanced?
- 6. Is the painting as a whole saying what you want to say?**
- 7. Give the work time to grow.**
If you're having difficulties resolving or finishing your painting, put it away for a few days...a week...a month. Let your preconceptions rest. Later, bring the painting back out and re-ask yourself the above questions.
- 8. Appreciate your best effort.**
We are our own worst critics. Don't be overly hard on yourself. Strive for your best work whenever you pick up your brushes. And recognize that you've given the painting your best.
- 9. Trust your instincts and yourself.**
No matter how long you've been painting, there's always more to learn. But as long as you continue to paint, you continue to learn. Trust what you've learned about both your skill as an artist and your SELF as an artist.
- 10. Take risks.**
Continually push yourself to learn; to try new things. The absolute worst thing that could possibly happen is that you have a foundation (paper or whatever) that you can recycle into a potential masterpiece.
- 11. MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL...Have fun and enjoy the journey!**
Anything created from your heart, soul and hand is a joy. You're creating a gift for others to see and share. Take pleasure in the process and have fun!

N.M. Grigsby Studios

Nancy M. Grigsby, WPW

Watercolor & Acrylic/Mixed Media

For information about Nancy, her artwork, classes & workshops:

www.NMGrigsbyStudios.com

Email: NMGrigsbyStudios@comcast.net