



Landscape watercolor course

Lesson 1: Snowy landscape



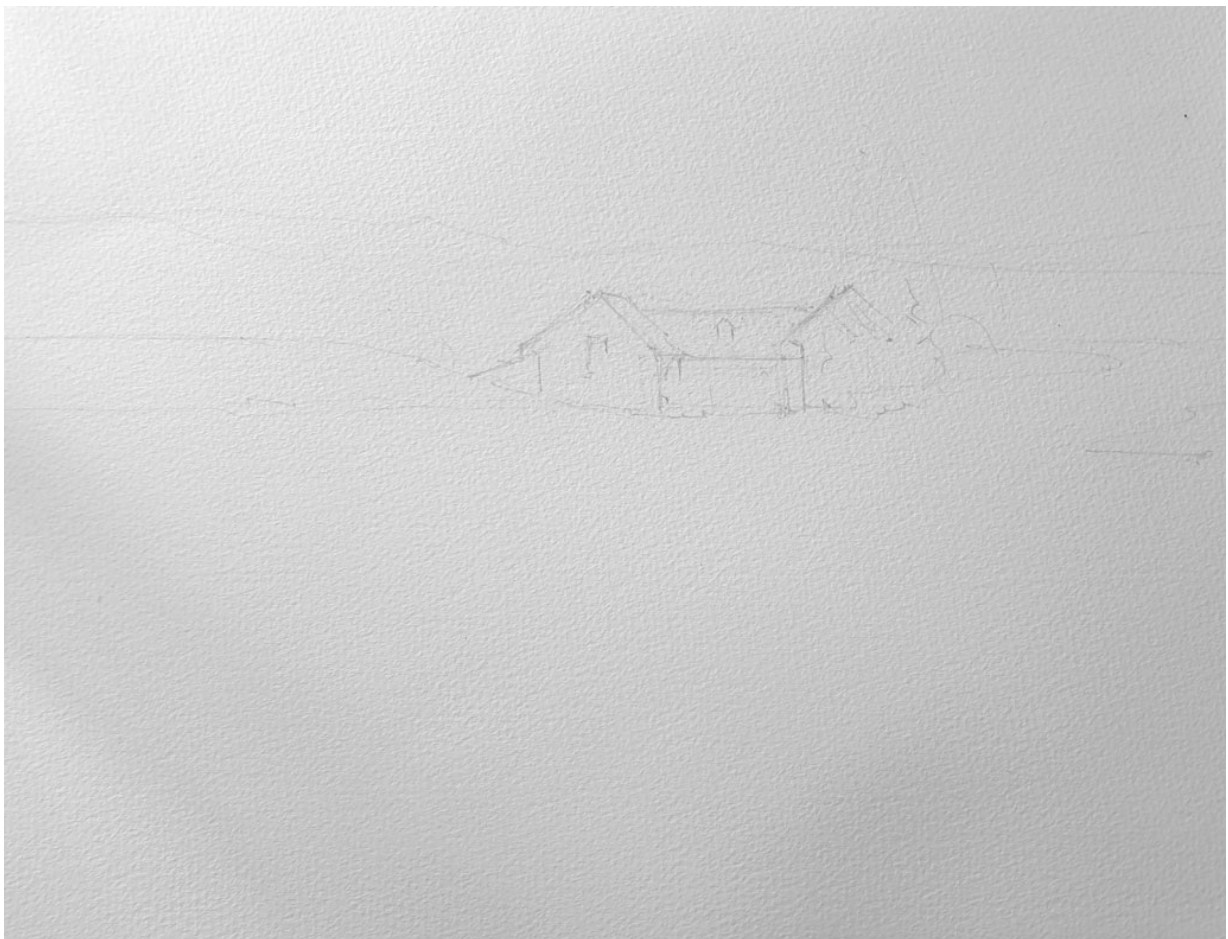
This snowy landscape will be the subject of our first lesson of this unit. I chose this image because of its interesting luminous effect. The foreground in shadows and the background illuminated with a warm light. It's also interesting to reflect about how the incidence of the light modifies our perception of colors.

If we think of snow, we automatically get white into our heads... But as you can see, in this landscape, the snow isn't white...

Stage 1: Fitting the drawing

In this image, I have the drawing already organized (Image 2). I've decided to go with a format of 28cm x 38cm. The key thing is to situate the horizon line above the middle of the paper, or below it if you want to make more sky than ground (but never draw it in the middle). It's also important that the ensemble formed by the house and the fir tree isn't in the center of the paper.

The reference photograph itself is very well balanced. The clouds are heavier on the right side and the perspective lines on the snow converge on the focal point.



Stage 2: The sky

Once the drawing is done and the paper has been wet on both sides (and we've waited a bit so that there are no puddles on the paper), we start painting. We begin with the sky. As the blue of the sky will "cut" the clouds, we work with these in warm tones, like orange and shell pink. As we work in this section, the paper starts drying on the surface. When we see that the paper is not overly wet on the surface anymore, we cut the clouds in negative with cobalt turquoise light and cobalt blue. The paper must be neither too wet, nor too dry.

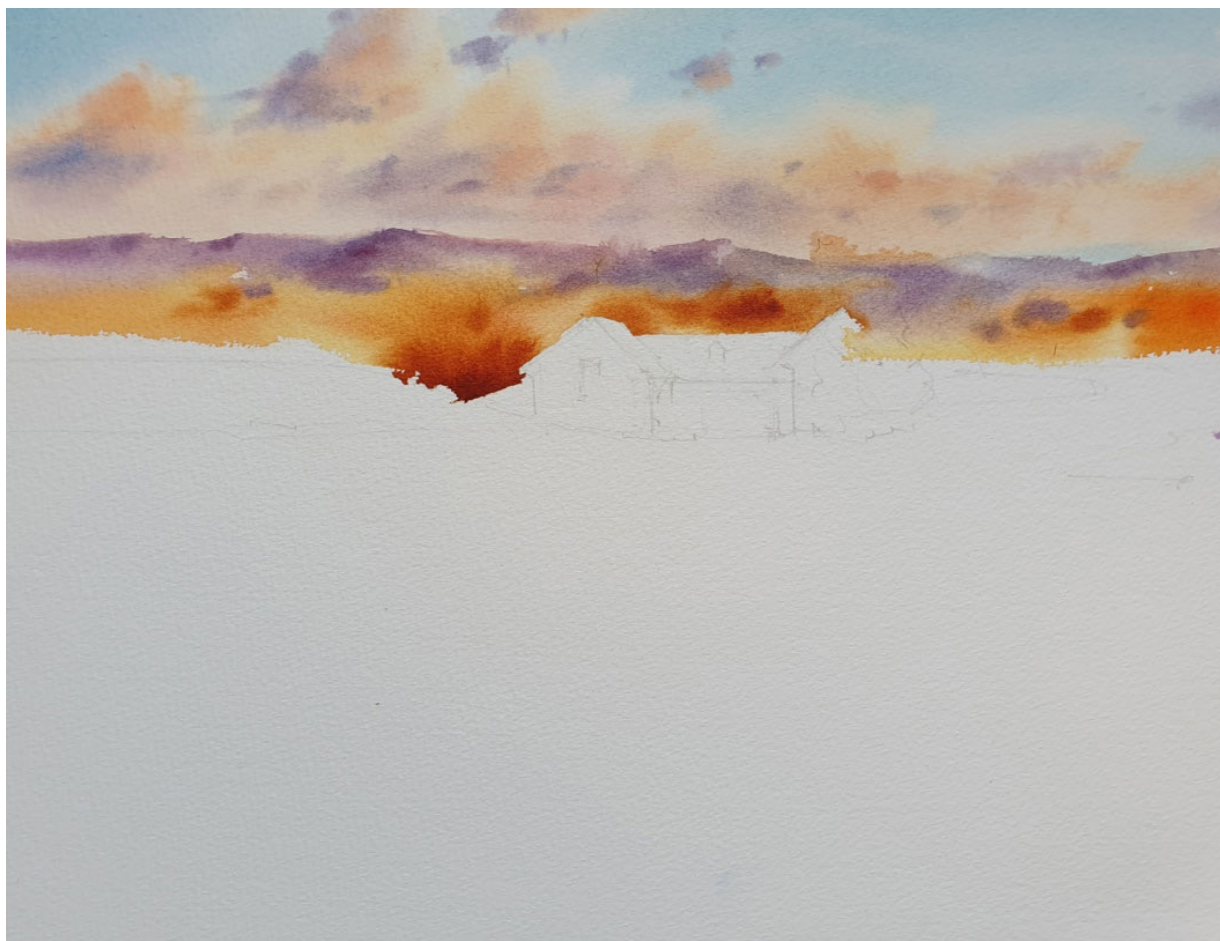
Another option is to wait for the clouds to dry completely and then re-wetting the paper to paint the sky.



Stage 3: Far-away landscape

Now we paint the landscape on the background. It's important that the far-off mountains aren't too dark, so that they look distant.

In wet, we add warm colors, such as burnt sienna and orange, that will represent the remote woods illuminated by the sun.



Stage 4: the snow

While we give some time for the background to dry, so we can later work on the trees and the house, we can paint the snow.

If the paper is dry, we can wet the area in which we'll work.

For the snow, I've used royal blue and Prussian blue, and on the lower portion, I've added perylene violet to the mixture to darken the foreground and create depth.

Now that the snow is done, we can paint the trees and the house.



Stage 5: Lines on the snow

To make the lines on the snow, we can work in two ways. One is to make them on wet, together with the first layer of colors that we talked about in the previous paragraph. Another is to wait for the entire area to dry, and then re-wet that part.



Stage 6: The trees and final details

Now the background is dry, we can paint the remaining trees. We add the last details, such as birds, cables, details on the snow and on the house, etc.

