

## Episode 2 - The Problems with Using Photographs

We want to use photos as a tool. We don't want it to have such an influence on our paintings that they just become a reproduction of the photo.

Photography has only been around for a small amount of time in comparison to Fine Art. Great art has been produced for hundreds and hundreds of years prior to photography. How did they do it? The human mind and eye are the main players here. Artists used direct observation before there were cameras, something we don't do enough of if we rely on photos too much.

Painting from life helps us learn. Painting outdoors, observing or sketching to learn. Mixing colors, putting them down next to each other to see how they relate.

Painting from life can also mean setting up a still life indoors, or a model, could be your pet, or a friend.

We understand that some artists want to paint tighter, and there no problem with that. The important issue is to make sure the fundamentals are still a part of your work. You will not find the fundamentals of art in the photograph. You will set yourself up for failure, or you're really slowing down your growth. Your paintings will look like a photograph, it will not have "life" and it will not have your "DNA". It will have the "DNA" of the camera, and the images are generally over or under exposed. Photos are just a starting point.

The color is dull in most photographs and lacks subtle color changes, direct observation will help with both of those things.

Think about the colors that will suggest the light you're trying to achieve.

Artists discussed in this episode:

Ansel Adams - Artistic photographer  
Richard Estes - Photographic painter

Our critique group on Facebook is a great place for getting feedback. Join our Private Facebook Group, "Easel Insight In-Depth" on and post some work to get feedback. This group is a safe place to gain knowledge from others as well as from Phil Starke and Gabor Svagrik.

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