

Oils

Just Add Water

By Michael Braden

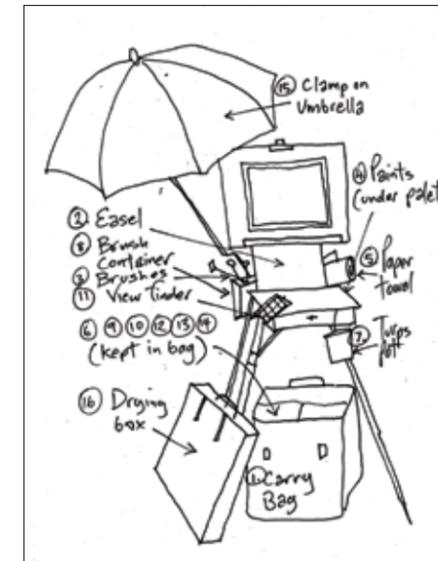
Backlit scenes like this are very much a study in grey tones rather than colour. Some backlit scenes are more subtle and less intense than others. Scenes such as sun reflecting off water can at times have too much glare, and not worth taking on.



MATERIALS

Custom made carry bag which contains everything below.

- French easel
- Flat (brights) brushes sizes ranging from 2 to 12
- Palette knife
- A couple of riggers
- Paints
 - Titanium White
 - Cadmium Yellow Light
 - Cadmium Yellow Deep
 - Cadmium Red Light
 - Alizarin Crimson
 - French Ultramarine Blue
 - Colbalt Blue
 - Viridian
- Paper towel
- Gum turps bottle
- Turps pot
- Brush container
- Plastic rubbish bags
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- View finder
- Water bottle (for drinking and clean up)
- Rubber gloves
- Small container of dishwashing liquid for cleaning hands
- Clamp on umbrella.
- Drying box for wet paintings (carried separately)



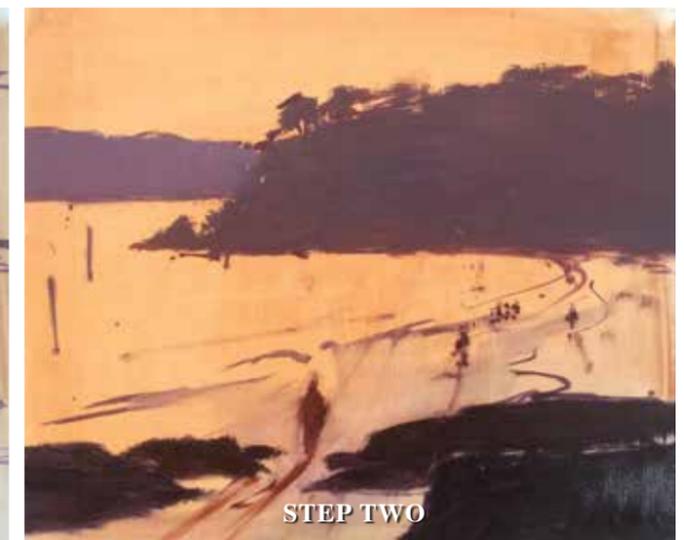
STEP ONE

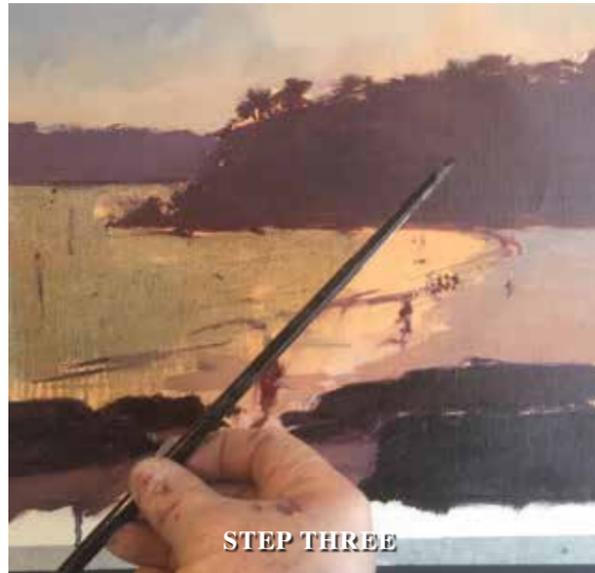
I start with a 10" x 12" linen stained with a dry wash of Cadmium Yellow and Alizarin. With a turpsy wash of Ultramarine Blue and Alizarin Crimson, I sketch a composition comprising the main shapes of rocks, headland et cetera, with particular emphasis on the shape and position of the sunlit area on the water and shore.

STEP TWO

I then block in the shapes. The foreground rocks are roughed in

with an Ultramarine Blue, Cadmium Red mix with a touch of Viridian. The closest headland is similarly blocked in with Ultramarine Blue, Cadmium Red, a touch of Cadmium Yellow Light and Titanium White. With close observation, I was able to determine that this 'grey' headland area was leaning towards a red/grey. I simply added White and Ultramarine Blue to this mix to cool and 'set back' the far headland. A few people are positioned using Cadmium Red and Ultramarine Blue to be 'cut around' at a later stage.

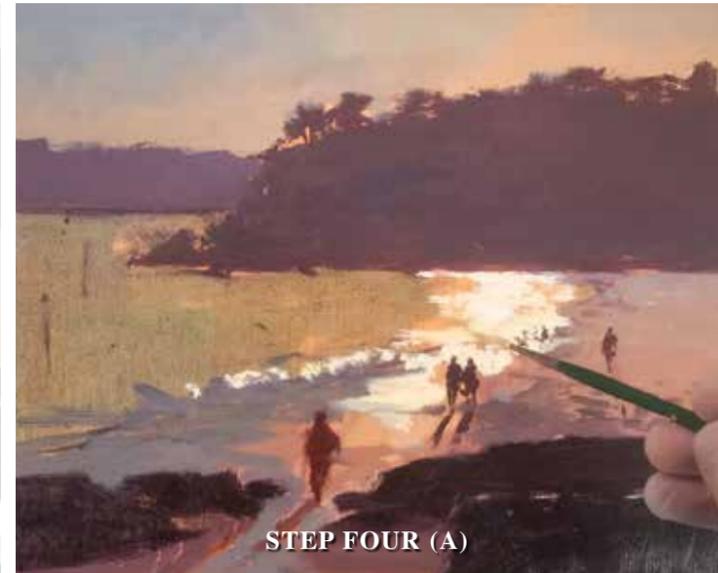




STEP THREE

STEP THREE

At this stage I like to fill the canvas, so as not to lose rhythm, and to see tones more easily. The sky is Titanium White, Cadmium Yellow Light, and Alizarin Crimson with a touch of Cobalt Blue nearest the sun, then I gradually darken the mix with more Alizarin and Cobalt Blue as I work further away from the source of light. A quick wash of Viridian and Ultramarine Blue is applied to all water areas except where the sun strikes it, as I need that area to be clean and dry. I use my brush handle here to judge the angle of cast shadows in relation to the sun's position.



STEP FOUR (A)

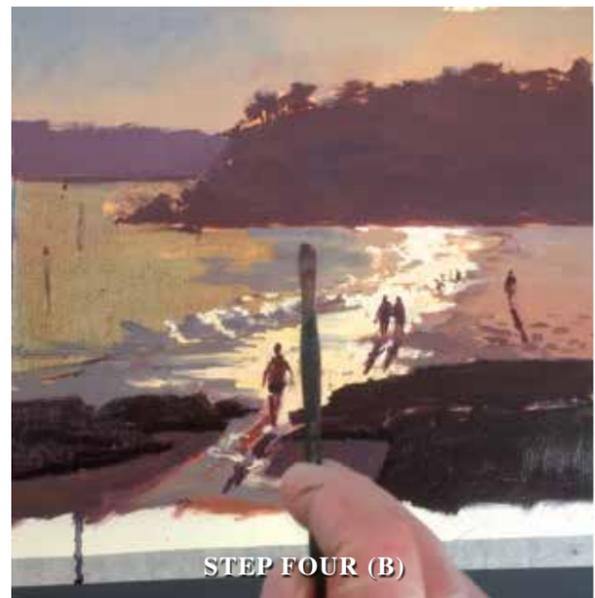
STEP FOUR

A variation of greys is used for the sand, the shadow area of the wave and cast shadows of foreground rocks. I then proceed with the sunlit area of water using Titanium White, Cadmium Yellow Light and a touch of Alizarin, just enough to warm the White without 'colouring' it. I then work the sunlit area forward using the same mix but with a little Cadmium Yellow Deep, cutting around the figures with 'crinkle cut' edges to capture the effect of light wrapping around the people. Once again, not too much colour, (we're not after an Hawaiian sunset here).

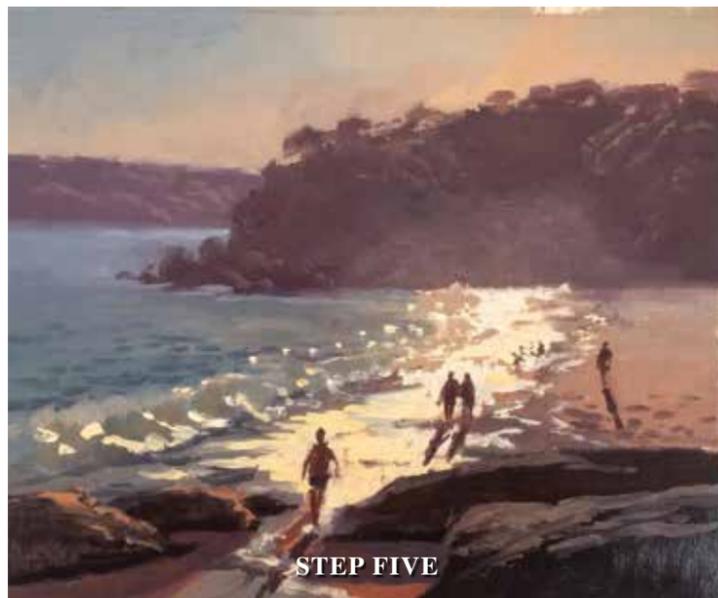
As I work away from the edge of the sunlit water, I observe a grey mustard colour, which I use White with some Cadmium Yellow Deep and Alizarin, then add a little more Viridian and Ultramarine Blue as I work my way into the ocean, lightening the mix with pure White as it recedes into the distance.

STEP FIVE

I notice the sunlit water bounces light into the foreground headland, which I lighten with the original mix with a touch of White, and a smaller touch of Alizarin and Cadmium



STEP FOUR (B)



STEP FIVE

ARTIST'S HINTS AND TIPS

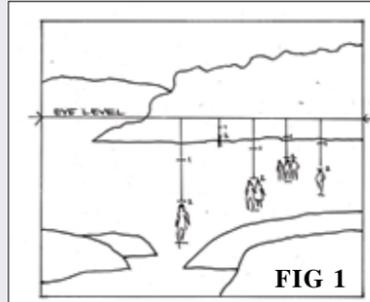


FIG 1

I painted this scene from a slightly elevated position, therefore all the heads are not level with the horizon (eye level) as if I were painting it on the sand level with the bathers. So I now think in terms of 'people units' where the tops of heads and the horizon are equal in units in relation to the height of the person. This proportion can vary as to the height of elevation. 2, 3, 4 unit (Fig 1).

Cast shadows are determined by the position of the sun. In this case I draw an imaginary line from the sun vertically down to the horizon. Another imaginary line is drawn from that point through to the base of any object or person casting a shadow, as this determines the angle of the cast shadow (Fig 2).

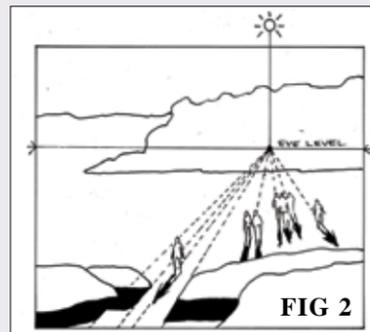
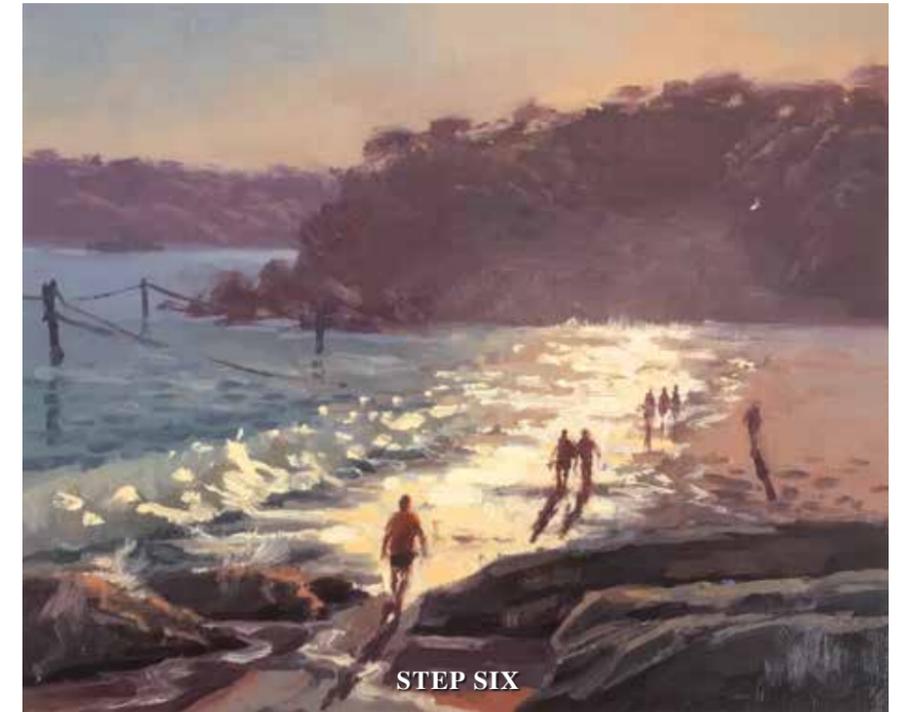


FIG 2

- Use a limited palette of colours, and use only artist quality pigment.
- Try not to be disappointed with 'unsuccessful' paintings - they will happen, not just for the novice but with experienced professionals as well.



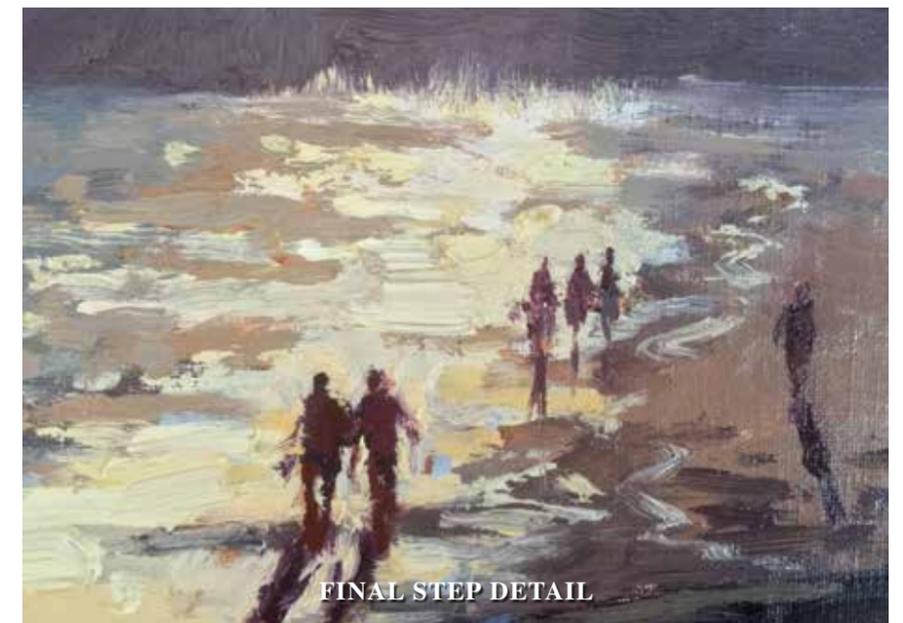
STEP SIX

STEP SIX AND FINAL STEP

With this study reaching its conclusion, I add a few dark accents here and there, add the nets, a gull and a boat in the distance. I try not to fiddle with a plain air study, as I feel I have enough information for a studio piece down the road.

Yellow Light, blending it up into the original colour, adding some subtle highlights on the trees and rocks to suggest 'form' in the headland. Now it's time to rework and soften some edges, in particular where the headland meets the sky, and also where it meets the water and sand. The foreground rocks are then highlighted with light skimming the tops, plus some reflected light bouncing back on the sides.

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FINAL STEP DETAIL