

DESERT INSTITUTE

Fall Session
2022

at Joshua Tree National Park

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Discovering Your Creative Vision Using Acrylics in Joshua Tree National Park

Information

Date/ Time: Saturday, September 24, 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Meet at: [Black Rock Canyon Nature Center \(click on link for meeting location\)](#)

9800 Black Rock Canyon Rd, Yucca Valley, CA

Instructor: Janis Commentz, Artist, Instructor

Itinerary

Have you ever watched an outdoor painter at work and wondered “How do they do that?” Would you enjoy learning how to take your inner artist out “into the wild?” Let us help you streamline the process of “plein air” painting in Joshua Tree National Park using dramatic and vibrant acrylics to facilitate your creative vision. You’ll learn how to frame a composition capture challenging and ever-changing color and light conditions, mix and apply vibrant color, and use methods customized for working in the arid Mojave Desert. Whether you’re a beginner or an experienced artist you’ll increase your ability to produce memorable work while enjoying the camaraderie of fellow artists in a beautiful desert setting.

The desert is a fragile environment and eco painting techniques will be used. Please note that the class will follow Leave No Trace

Itinerary

Saturday, Saturday 24, 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Black Rock Canyon Nature Center

- Introduction
- Field class
- Lunch break, **bring your own food**

- Field class

What to Bring to the Course

Required Class Materials

(If you have questions please contact the instructor at janiscommentz@gmail.com)

Acrylic Paint Colors:

- Magenta
- Cadmium Yellow
- Cadmium Orange
- Cadmium Red Light
- Ultramarine Blue
- Cobalt Blue
- Phthalo Blue
- Yellow Ochre
- Titanium White

Optional Paint Colors:

- Cerulean Blue
- Phthalo Green
- Personal Favorites

Painting Surfaces:

- 1-2 painting surfaces: canvas board, clayboard or gessoed Masonite panels – 8" x 10" and/or 11" x 14"
- Small Sketchbook 5"x7" or 8" x 10"
- Graphite Pencils - soft drawing pencils (4B, 6B) or inexpensive mechanical pencils
- Eraser - white or kneaded
- Pastel pencils, one or two - bright color such as green, blue, red orange or rust brown
- Brushes – Brite or Flat sizes #4, #6, #8 and larger brushes you like
- Acrylic matte medium (recommended Liquitex Matte Medium)
- *Water container filled with water with lid (a plastic juice jar 52-59 oz. works well)*

- Open water container- large mouth plastic such as a large yogurt or other plastic container
- Paper towels
- Palette (Not required, but highly recommended in our dry climate) – *small* (8 ½ x 7”) or *large* (12” x 16”) Masterson’s Sta-wet Palette + Sta-Wet acrylic palette paper+cellulose sponge-prepared/bathed in hot water day before
- Drawing board with clips, plain air easel, or pochade box with tripod
- *Bag or backpack to carry supplies*

NOTE-although these are recommended materials, I am very flexible. Bring the acrylic paint you have, brushes, palette, and painting surface

The 10 Essentials: Everyday in the Desert

- Day pack
- 4 quarts of water
- Hiking boots with traction soles
- Lunch and snacks
- Clothing layers
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Notebook and pencil/pen
- Whistle

Fitness Requirements

Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

Hike Level

Easy

Guidelines

- You are responsible for your safety.
- Park your car in designated areas only. Parking along the side of the road is dangerous to you and the environment.
- Rattlesnakes are present in the desert. Avoid contact with wildlife. Put your hands and feet only where you can see them.
- Stay with the group. If you get lost, stay put.

- Drink plenty of water. If you run out, notify the instructor or the Desert Institute Representative.
- Before leaving the class, check out with Desert Institute Representative.

Instructor Biography

Janis Commentz is a painter living in the Mojave Desert. She has taught high school art, classes at the 29 Palms Art Gallery, summer art camp, life drawing and Desert Institute painting workshops. She has a B.A. in art and British Literature from the University of Redlands and an M.A. in Education from California State University at San Bernardino.

She exhibits in Southern California and has participated in the Hwy 62 Open Studio Art Tours, Joshua Tree National Park Juried Art Exposition, Joshua Tree National Park Spring Art Festival, Art Faire at California State University at San Bernardo and Art For Heaven's Sake, Redlands. Commentz has served as Gallery Director for Gallery 62 in Joshua Tree. She has been the featured artist at Gallery 62, Glass Outhouse Art Gallery in Twentynine Palms and the 29 Palms Art Gallery.

Color and light are an important part of her impressionistic landscapes. Although Commentz grew up near the coast, she believes desert beauty is an acquired taste and enjoys plein air painting in the Southwest.