



Technique is Unimportant, by Leigh Hyams

Technique is unimportant. It takes care of itself without any help from you. Just concentrate fearlessly on whatever you and the canvas are saying to each other. Technique comes into existence from your moment to moment passionate need to speak in a certain way. If you don't block this process, your brush will do the rest. Concentrate on what you are painting, not how, and the how will happen.

Step back and listen to your painting. Then don't block that impulse to scrape the whole left side or to add a streak of cerulean blue with your fingers. Listen to the painting with your whole body and the painting will tell you what to do. It will happen in a split second, this body "knowing", and you'll miss it if your everyday brain is in there scrambling everything up with opinions, judgements and learned solutions. It's hard to believe in this and harder still to act on it consistently, but it's the only way to stay on the risk-taking edge of your own creativeness and to experience the act of painting in all its simplicity and complexity. It's also the only way to make a good painting.

Every component of a painting, every dot, shape, color, empty space, line, value, thought, idea and emotion on that two-dimensional support is intricately and necessarily connected to every other one. Like the eco-system in the Amazon. You handle the whole universe when you paint, a parallel universe at least, tidying up the chaos and then seeing what will happen by exploding it again. SPACE. Penetrate it, build it up, agitate it, smooth it out, question it, interrupt it, hate it, seduce it. Let color surprise you. Then get out of the way and let the painting sing. Work with the spirit of an explorer, not an accountant.

--Leigh Hyams