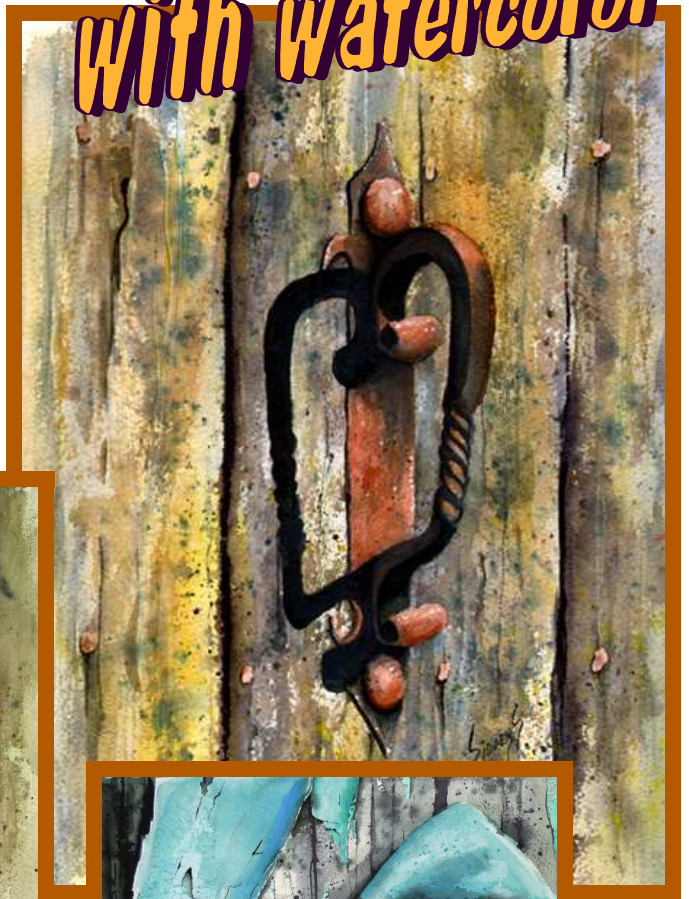
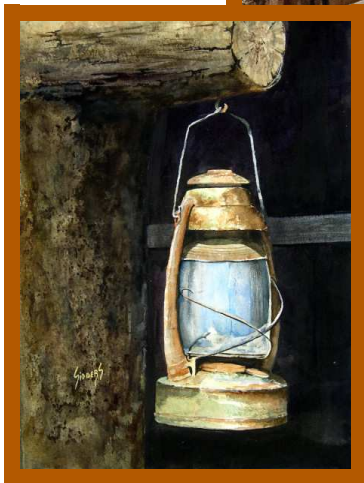


Painting DISTRESSED WOOD & METAL with watercolor



**The
Sam Sidders
way !**

A simple, rusty or distressed piece of hardware or other metallic object, combined with rough, distressed wood can make a very interesting painting in it's own right. Or it can add interest as an accent area to a larger composition. As part of a larger composition, it can set the mood of the entire painting.

For this demonstration, we will paint a simple metallic door handle on a section of an old distressed wooden door. The composition is simple and only basic techniques are required to complete a very nice painting.

This painting will be done using mostly the “Wet on Wet” technique, but will also incorporate the use of “Dry Brush” painting and other techniques to add texture and details.

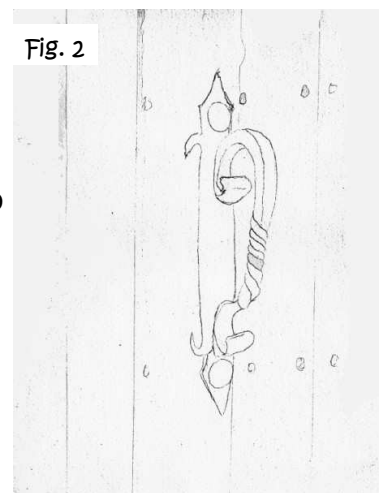
MATERIALS: The watercolor paper should be about ¼ sheet size 11”x15” or 12”x16” with a “Rough” surface for best results. However a “Cold Pressed” will also produce a nice painting. I prefer #300 paper, but #140 or #200 are acceptable substitutes. If using less than #300, the paper will need to be taped or stapled to a rigid board to prevent buckling when wetting the paper. Using a watercolor “Block” would eliminate the need for stretching. The colors that you choose for the background of this painting are actually fairly unimportant. You will want to keep the colors light and use a limited range of colors in the beginning stages. I usually begin with a light yellow such as Cadmium Yellow Light or Lemon Yellow. I then add a medium blue such as Cobalt or Cerulean to some areas. A bit of Raw Umber will add some earth tones. Other colors that you will need are Burnt Sienna, a light red like Cadmium Red Light, a dark blue such as Ultramarine Blue. You will also need a small bottle of “masking fluid”. There are several types and brands of this, but the one that I recommend is a product called “Bish’s Tear Mender”. It is actually a fabric glue, but it works great as a masking fluid. Other brands that I like are “Masque Pen” and “Incredible White Mask”. Additional colors that you may wish to have available are: a medium yellow like Yellow Ochre, A dark green like Thalo Green and a dark red such as Alizarin Crimson. These 3 colors are used primarily to darken your other colors and substitutions can be made for them. A small container of table salt may also come in handy in this painting.

The recommended tools and brushes are: A 1½” wide wash brush, a #10 or larger pointed round brush, a #4 pointed round brush, a #1 pointed round brush or “Rigger” script brush, a brush for splattering texture areas (I prefer an old, worn out, bristle type fan blender brush), a stick or knife for scraping highlights into the wet paint. The 1½” wide wash brush (or sponge) is used to wet the paper. The wide flat brush will also be used to apply broad strokes of base colors for the wood. The other tools will be used for applying details as the painting progresses. An inexpensive small brush will also be helpful in applying masking fluid. **(DO NOT USE YOUR GOOD BRUSHES WITH MASKING FLUID)!**

If, for some reason, you must use good brushes, you can reduce the risk of damage to them by dipping them into liquid detergent and wiping them with a paper towel prior to putting the brush into the masking fluid. Wash your mask brushes often while using them. Also, it is a good idea to wear old clothing when working with masking fluid.

When planning a painting, it is always a good idea to do a small thumbnail reference sketch of the subject showing the value changes and the general light-direction (Fig. 1). A sketch is a good idea even if you are working from a photo. It will help you see the correct placement of the “lights & darks”. **DO NOT TRY TO DUPLICATE EVERYTHING IN THE PHOTO!**

VERY LIGHTLY draw the subject onto your watercolor paper (Fig. 2). **DO NOT DRAW DETAILS.** This drawing is only a guide! It should only be a “LIGHT” line drawing with no shading! Once the line drawing has been completed on the paper you are ready to begin painting.





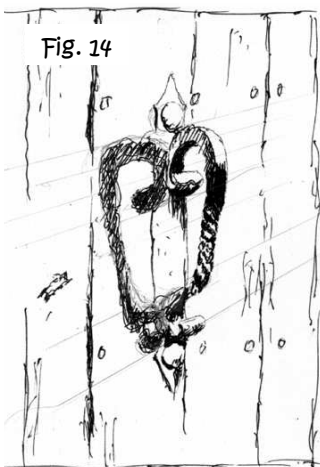
Using an old or very inexpensive brush, apply the masking fluid to the area of the drawing that will eventually be the door handle or hardware item you wish to depict in the painting. Apply the masking fluid to anything that you wish to appear metallic or rusty in the finished work (fig 3). When the masking fluid is completely dry, brush clean water onto the entire sheet of paper, using the wide wash brush or sponge. Allow the paper to dry until the sheen is almost gone from the surface and brush in some large areas of color followed by a few “splatters” of stronger mixtures of the same colors (fig 4). Using a mixture of dark color, add a few of the vertical lines that will represent the spaces and cracks in the wood. As the paper continues to dry, continue to add more splatters of different colors and pigment intensity at different stages of drying (fig 5) & (fig 6). **DO NOT OVER DO IT !** Again, allow the paper to dry completely. For the next step, turn your painting sideways and,



using a small pointed round brush, apply some very strong, dark color to **SOME** of the lines that represent the gaps between the wooden planks of the old door (fig 7). For this purpose, I use a mixture of Ultramarine Blue, Thalo Green and Alizarin Crimson to make a “near black” color. However any very dark mixture will work equally well. Do this step quickly and while the paint is still wet, drag a large pointed round brush, filled with clean water, along the bottom edge of the wet paint, allowing the tip of the brush to drag through the wet paint. This will let the paint flow down into the clear water and create a value variation in the two wooden planks. If the variation is stronger than you like, a facial tissue can be used to blot areas of the wash. Now is also a good time to scrape some vertical lines into the damp paper to enhance the grain of the wood. When you are satisfied with the values of the washes, again allow the painting to dry completely. It is now time to completely remove the masking fluid from your painting (Fig 8).

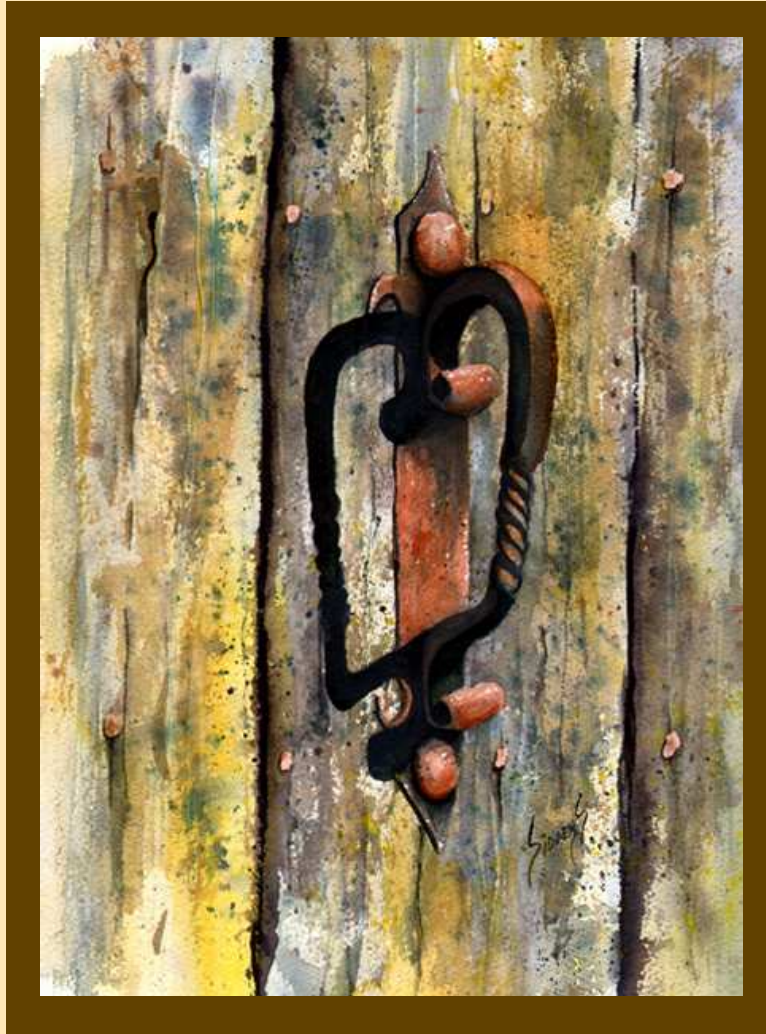


Apply a very thin mixture of Burnt Sienna and light red to the door handle, nail heads, etc. to give the appearance of rust. I added a bit of table salt to the damp wash to give a textured look (Fig. 9). When this wash is dry, it may be helpful to restate some of the pencil guide lines on the hardware (Fig. 10). Continue working on the hardware to create the illusion of it being 3 dimensional by applying dark areas to enhance the lighter areas (Fig.11,12,13).

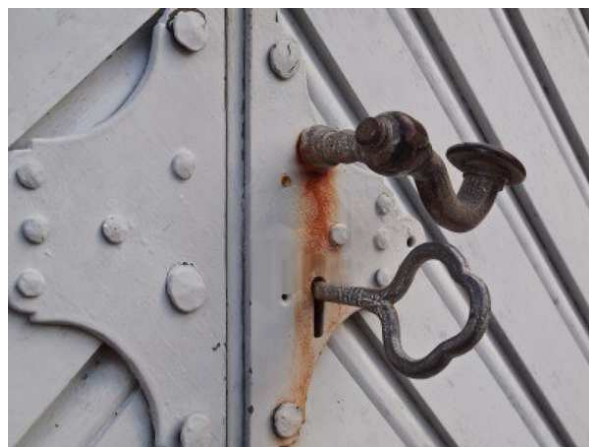


It is now time to take a good look at your painting to see if any changes need to be made to correct or enhance the composition. Check to see if any areas of the wood planks need attention and look at the hardware to see the light source direction and determine the placement of the shadows of the hardware. You can now return to your original sketch and add or alter the placement of the shadows (Fig. 14). **Keep in mind that the it is more important to your painting that the shadow placement is interesting and helps balance the composition, than it is that the placement is exact !** Shadow placement is difficult and it varies from moment to moment. I usually do not place shadows in my early sketch. This allows the progression of the painting to help me in determining where they should be. I sometimes make photocopies of the original sketch to allow me to try different options in shadow placement. Once you have decided where you want them, lightly draw an outline for them on your painting (Fig.15). Mix a “near black” color and paint in the shadow area that you have drawn, trying to keep the value as uniform as possible (Fig.16). Spend some time working with shadow and tying it into the darks of the handle to enhance the 3 dimensional effect of the handle (Fig.16).

When you have the handle the way you like it, add more darks area and lines, as needed to the planks and nail heads. If necessary, you can also add more areas of color to enhance the planks. Even more splatters can be added if you wish. If there are areas that need more whites, you can use a sharp knife or the corner of a razor blade to scrape highlights or scratch in some white lines.



**When you get it all the way you want it,
put a mat on it, pour yourself a cup of coffee,
sit back and enjoy what you have done !**



A few reference photos for painting distressed doors & hardware. These photos were found by doing an image search on the internet. Many more are available online.