AN OLD BUILDING
The Sam Sidders way !

A composition including an old house, shed or barn can produce and interesting painting and stir feelings of nostalgia. They afford the artist an opportunity to experiment with many colors and textures.

Prior to starting the painting, the reference photo was selected and a simplified, thumbnail sketch was made.

Step 1: The composition was then lightly drawn onto the watercolor paper in pencil. This drawing should be only a few simple lines to act as a guide for the brush work.

Before painting, I rubbed candle wax over the wooden wall panels and the fence posts to encourage speckles of highlights. Areas of white paper were masked out with masking fluid to preserve highlights on the roof, stove pipes, fence posts and large dead tree.

Step 2: The sky area and upper background were painted in with a wash of French Ultramarine, leaving white areas to represent clouds. While this was still wet the background trees were introduced, softening at the edges as the colors mixed into the sky.

Step 3: The foreground was painted in a warm Yellow and Raw Sienna to give a warm base color: could now start to slowly build up the foreground, brushing in Raw Sienna and French Ultramarine.

When the sky had dried I painted in the base color for the roof - French Ultramarine with a touch of Alizarin Crimson.

Step 4: Burnt Sienna, French Ultramarine and Sap Green were brushed into the foreground to describe the dense undergrowth. I flicked the brush upwards at varying angles to give the impression of grass stems.

The side of the shed was brushed in roughly with a mix of Raw Sienna and French Ultramarine. Before this was dry, I scratched in the grain lines with the corner of a razor blade. Then, while this was drying; I painted in the darkest sections, such as the shadow underneath the eaves and the doorway.

Step 5: I now started to lightly indicate and define the dead tree and fence posts using a small round brush and a rigger brush. Next, I added more textures on the shed wall, using Sap Green and Raw Sienna. *The* panels were given detail by painting in cracks, joints and shadows. I tried to work with economy so that this area would not become overworked. When dry, the masking fluid was removed.

Step 6: Color was added to roof, mixing Burnt Sienna with touches of red and yellows. The paint was applied sparingly leaving several whites. The paint was transferred in a broken, irregular fashion roughly following the pencil lines I had drawn in earlier.

The foreground was enhanced with dark areas and by adding more detail. Much of the foreground was painted using a small round brush and a rigger brush, which is ideal for creating very thin lines like grass stems.
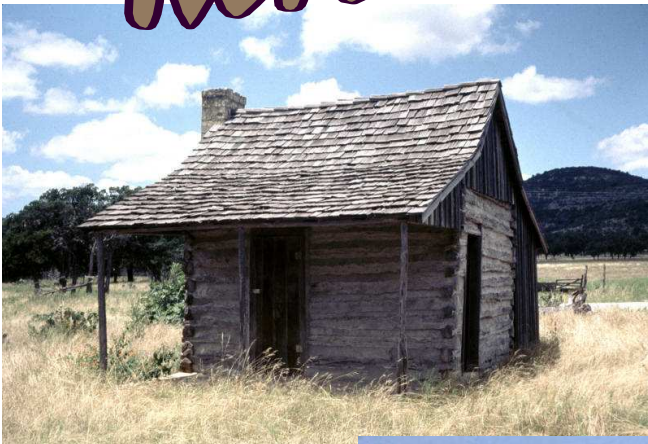
Step 7: Next, details including the fence wire and birds were added. The foreground was "spattered" to indicate undergrowth and also as a way to soften the areas of grass. (If desired, lighter colors, for spattering, can be made by using a white with yellows, reds, etc.) **Sign it and the painting is complete.**

Reference Photos

Here are a few reference photos for painting old houses and barns. Most of the photos were taken in Northwest Oklahoma, but old shacks are everywhere . Good photos can be found by doing an image search on the internet. Thousands of reference can be found online.

Basic supplies that I use on a regular basis!

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Watercolor paper :

COLD PRESS 300#, handmade paper such as Arches or Saunders-Waterford
I highly recommend the use of 300 # paper to eliminate the need for stretching

Paint: I recommend tubes of the following 10 colors that I use regularly:

Raw Umber, Alizarin Crimson, Burnt Sienna, Raw Sienna, Yellow Ochre, Thalo Green (Phthalo Green), Ultramarine Blue, Cobalt Blue, Cadmium Red Lt., Cadmium Yellow Light.

Other watercolor paints that you may wish to add:

Cadmium Orange, Burnt Umber, Sap Green, Indigo, Cerulean Blue, Sepia, Hookers Green., Payne's Gray, Davies Gray, Lemon Yellow, New Gamboage and a small tube or bottle of white watercolor or Gouache.

Brushes:
I personally feel that the quality of brushes used in watercolor painting is a large factor in the quality of the completed painting and I suggest that you do NOT purchase the absolute cheapest brushes that you can buy,
#8 Pointed Round , #6 Pointed Round, #2 Pointed Round, #0 Pointed Round,
#1 or #2 Rigger (Script Liner), ¾" or 1" Flat Wash brush (these brushes should be of the "Soft" hair type)
1 ½" to 2" Hake Flat (for wetting the paper and can be of the house painting variety)

Other Items that are used regularly:
Eraser (Vinyl), Paper Towels, Pencil (2B), Spray Bottle, **white** watercolor palette with mixing area, Liquid Frisket (Masking fluid - I prefer "Masque Pen" or "Incredible White Mask"), Masking Tape (¾" or 1"), Razor Blade (Single Edge), Water container, Liquid Detergent,
Table salt, Natural sponge, Small hair dryer, Frisket remover, Old or very inexpensive small artist brushes for use with Frisket

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