

Thanks again for joining me for Wednesday night's demo on Mood Lighting, Tonalist Landscape painting.

Pictured below is the final painting, Afterglow, 12x16.

Deciding what finishing touches to make to any painting almost always requires a little time and space away from a piece in order to see with fresh eyes and assess what else the piece needs. For a tonalist piece like this one, the questions I needed to consider were: What areas needed quieting down (edges softened, values darkened, or colors neutralized) and where I needed to heighten attention to strengthen composition and sharpen the focus.

Here's what I did for this piece:

1. I spent a little more time on the lighthouse (a natural focal point), correcting drawing edges while taking care not to exaggerate color or value contrasts.
2. I decided to heighten the angle of the trees up and away from the lighthouse, to create a more dramatic line leading in—I noticed that my thumbnail sketch had a more diagonal line there and I preferred that shape even though it wasn't really in the reference.
3. I added more light, warm peachy highlights in the water, to draw attention there and distinguish it from the sky (I didn't want them to appear exactly the same value, and wanted to create a more interesting place to lead the eye.
4. I added suggestions of detail along the land mass where the lighthouse sits. These diagonal rocks and fissures diagonally connect the lighthouse to the water and keep the eye moving.
5. I layered the rock formation colors in the foreground with just enough value shifts to suggest plane changes without breaking up the shapes visually.
6. I softly redefined the back trees as they approach the lighthouse—both by lightly brushing off some of the extra sky color I had covered them with, and by adding a bit of grey green closest to the lighthouse. This helps to calibrate the focus and atmosphere subtly—creating a little more depth.

One final comment: the reference photo I chose for this demo is stunning on its own, and was an easy choice for a painting foregrounding mood lighting. That made it easy to show how light can affect mood. My hope is that this demo might have gotten you interested in

exploring Tonalism and all of the expressive possibilities it offers. Here's a link to the most recent Shades of Grey exhibition with the American Tonalist Society if you'd like to take a closer look: <https://www.americantonalistsociety.com/shades-of-gray-iii>









Thank you so much!

Jeanne