

Room With a View

I love to look at landscapes framed by a window. When I lived in China, one of my special pleasures was riding on trains and viewing the passing landscape enclosed by the window and the ubiquitous white embroidered curtains. Hotel rooms, restaurants, portholes, my own home, friend's homes, they all provide unexpected opportunities for the landscape painter. For a new twist on the theme, draw everything inside the room with pen, adding watercolor only to the scenery outside the window. This fresh technique gives the viewer a sense of being in the room with the artist, while letting the landscape outside the window take center stage.



Ink the Interior, Paint the Exterior

I love to make room-with-a-view paintings of each of my hotel rooms when I'm traveling. I am always intrigued with the view, no matter what it is. In this case, my Istanbul hotel room offered an architectural and atmospheric treasure. I used pen to draw in the outlines of the window and the elaborate drapery. I went over some of the pen lines to emphasize the folds and edges of the fabric. Before painting the towers and domes of the Blue Mosque, I underpainted the entire area of the exterior landscape with soft pastel colors suggesting the golden glow of the rising sun. I wet the whole window area first with clean water, then dropped diluted mixtures of the full-spectrum triad onto the damp paper. After this soft underpainting dried, I completed the painting by adding architectural details of the mosque and the trees in the foreground.