

ARTventures ... at home!

Ink Wash Painting: Abstract Landscape

Paint an abstract landscape inspired by [Bukang Y. Kim's Journey to the East](#) focus exhibition using ink wash painting techniques.



Materials Needed:

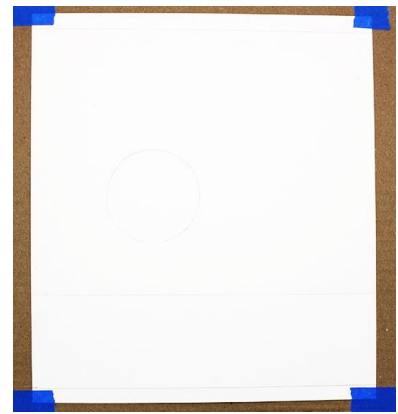
- watercolor paper (140lb.)—2 sheets, 9 x 12" (one piece is practice sheet)
- bamboo brush (or watercolor brush)
- 2 small water bowls
- sumi ink (or India ink)
- masking tape (optional)
- paper towels



Image: Bukang Y. Kim (American, born in South Korea, b. 1943), *Journey to the East #7*, 1999 (detail), oil paint and charcoal on mulberry paper. Gift of Bukang Yu Kim, Dr. Young Ghon Kim and Children, 2020.16.7 (Photograph by Brad Smith)

Step 1

Tape the top and bottom of the paper down if desired to prevent curling.



Step 2

Practice painting thin and thick lines with a bamboo brush on a spare piece of paper before adding to the painting. This will help you to make grasses or branches. Then, water down your brush and try to make the same lines. This will help you vary the tonal values with areas that are lighter or darker.

Helpful hint: hold bamboo brush perpendicular to the paper. Allow only the pointed tip to make contact with the paper. Keep hand steady and draw lines with slow motions. To create thick or thin lines, lower or raise arm while painting.

Helpful hint: to help create lines with a smooth point, start at the point/tip and pull ink away. For lines that finish with a rougher texture, dab off your brush on paper towel so it is drier, and it will help the bristles separate.



Step 3

Practice painting with water. Paint a light horizon line. Then, press the brush down, bristles to tip, to make a teardrop shape above the horizon line. This helps to create a treeline. If you'd like to suggest a reflection, add another teardrop shape, this time point down below the horizon line. Dip your brush into the ink and touch it to the water marks you've made on the paper. The ink will spread through the shape you have made. Add details with ink once dry.

Helpful hint: to have more control over how the ink spreads, draw part of the outline of your shape with ink. Then, draw the remainder of a shape with water only and drag the water to meet the ink.



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Step 4

Picture yourself inside a landscape. Do you notice how the individual blades of grass are different while seemingly the same? Are you drawn to how a reflection is mirrored yet distorted on the surface of water? Or, are you interested in the sense of an open, distant expanse? Apply the techniques you've learned to explore how you feel about those elements.

Helpful hint: if you feel stuck, try painting with your non-dominant hand or use the blind-contour technique to open your mind to abstraction. Listen to instrumental or experimental music or utilize these techniques to turn a traditional landscape more abstract.



Resources

[Watch this video tutorial on ink techniques for beginners](#)

[Explore works by artist Bukang Y. Kim online](#)

[Get inspired by the sounds of a record player that plays pieces of wood](#)

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Questions about or ideas for ARTventures? Email edu@daytonart.org

ARTventures is supported by a generous gift from Rosie and Marvin

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