

# ***En Plein Air* at Mono Lake**

## **Beginning Oil Painting**



*Mono Lake Cottonwoods by Penny Otwell*

**August 9–11, 2019 • Penny Otwell**

\$192 per person / \$177 for Mono Lake Committee members  
enrollment limited to 12 participants

Painting outdoors allows an instant connection with landscape, and oil paint has juicy properties and a fantastic covering quality that allow students to portray their own unique feelings in their work. This field seminar is designed to be an introduction to the sometimes-intimidating subject of oil painting for students who may or may not have experience painting but who want to learn oil painting outdoors. The class will be both fun and instructive.

Oil paint can be manipulated into forms, depth, and varying textures. Subtle desert colors or bold color and design can result in your own unique visual language. With demonstrations, individual instruction, group discussions, and plenty of humor, the group will discover the tools, techniques, and some of the challenges of the outdoor oil painter. Learn to transfer the feeling of where you are into what you want to say.

The group size is limited to offer individual attention. Students should have enough stamina to work outdoors in sun and wind most of the day. There will be some easy walking, but not hauling

supplies. Essential gear is listed below under the “outdoor supplies,” “art supply list,” and “paint supply list” headings.

Instructor Penny Otwell has painted in oil in the Sierra Nevada for over 20 years. She will share her thoughts on choosing a painting design, color mixing, different kinds of brushwork, and using a palette knife. She will also help students choose a subject within the overwhelming 360-degree view of the Mono Basin’s beauty. Penny’s work has been influenced by the work of Chiura Obata, Maynard Dixon, Edgar Payne, and Wayne Thiebaud. She is best known for her Yosemite work; however, she particularly loves painting the Eastern Sierra. Her distinctive style has evolved as a self-taught painter. You can see her work at [pennyotwell.com](http://pennyotwell.com).

## **ITINERARY**

**Friday, August 9, 3:30pm:** Meet at the Lee Vining Community Center (296 Mattly Avenue) in Lee Vining. Bring your painting gear (see “art supply list” and “paint supply list” below). After introductions Penny will do a painting demonstration and the group will paint practice exercises to experience brushwork, value studies, and general oil painting techniques.

**We will break for dinner at 5:30pm and re-group at 7:00pm at the Community Center.** We will talk about our goals for the class and what you expect to learn. Penny will present some samples of her work for discussion.

**Saturday, August 10, 9:00am:** We will meet again at the Lee Vining Community Center. Penny will do a short demonstration and focus on several basic composition and design concepts. The group will paint outdoors while Penny works with each student individually until we break for lunch at noon. The group will reconvene at 3:30pm at the Community Center to see and work with the beautiful evening light. We will work until 7:00pm or later; as long as people wish as the light fades. If you want to paint longer, bring a bag dinner.

**Sunday, August 11, 9:00am:** Meet at Lee Vining Community Center once again and then we will carpool to an outdoor painting location determined the previous day. We will work until 2:00pm, then do a final group discussion and wrap-up. The seminar will end at about 3:00pm so that students can start the drive home. Bring a bag lunch and plenty of water.

*The itinerary may change due to weather or other conditions.*

***Altitude and Dehydration Cautions:*** Although this seminar does not require strenuous hiking, participants should be in reasonably good physical shape. Standing and the sun and concentrating will tire you out! Remember to bring (and drink!) lots of water because your body loses more water at the higher altitudes of the Mono Basin. Also, the sun is rather fierce at high elevations, capable of burning even on cool and cloudy days, so be sure to protect yourself thoroughly using sunscreen, sunglasses, and hat. Rain will bring us indoors so we can continue painting.

## **LODGING**

The town of Lee Vining has several motels, all of which can be booked full well in advance. *Please make your lodging reservations as soon as you register for this class; otherwise, you may not be able to reserve a room in town.* For Lee Vining motels, visit [leevining.com](http://leevining.com). Other accommodations

are located in the town of June Lake, approximately 15 miles south of Lee Vining. Campsites may also be available in nearby campgrounds.

## MEALS

Please bring a bag dinner to eat at the Lee Vining Community Center on Saturday night, and a lunch to eat in the field on Sunday. There are several restaurants and coffee shops in Lee Vining. Make sure you have plenty of water and snacks each day.

## OUTDOOR SUPPLIES

- \_\_\_ notebook and pen/pencil for sketching and notes during class
- \_\_\_ camera or phone camera
- \_\_\_ appropriate layered clothing: warm layers, rain jacket, etc.
- \_\_\_ hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, insect repellent
- \_\_\_ pack or box to carry art supplies and plenty of water, food, sunscreen, insect repellent, etc.
- \_\_\_ snacks and drinking water

## ART SUPPLY LIST

- portable easel (French easel, half easel, pochade box, or something appropriate for outdoor use—borrow one if you can!)
- a jar with a leak-proof lid for washing brushes (nothing fancy)
- good brushes—at least 2 each of: #4, #6, #8 Natural Bristle filberts or flats; synthetic (soft) Badger; and one small round liner or rigger for detail
- panels: stretched canvas or panels sized from 8x6" to 16x20" (about 6–8 total)
  - Think about how you will transport wet paintings in your car. Bring newspapers to lay wet paintings on or consider panel carriers. I like working on panels outdoors because they are lightweight.
- small palette knife for mixing and painting
- portable palette or paper palette (12x16") with a lid to keep paint from getting on your stuff. I use a Masterson box with lid.
- Gamsol odorless mineral spirits or Turpenoid for cleaning brushes (***absolutely no turpentine***)
- paper towels and small trash bags for each day
- small pocket mirror
- canvas bag, tool box, or something to carry all your gear

## PAINT SUPPLY LIST

Paint tips:

- **buy good paints** (good brands/sources are Gamblin, Utrecht, Dick Blick, Jerry's Artarama)
- **buy paints in small tubes**
- **please DO NOT bring old dried paint**

Recommended colors:

- Cad Yellow Light
- Cad Orange
- Yellow Ochre

- Cadmium Red Light
- Alizarin Crimson
- Dioxazine Purple (or similar)
- Ultramarine Blue
- Cerulean Blue Hue
- Viridian
- Raw Umber
- Any specialty colors you like, like Payne's Gray or Mars Black. If you prefer certain colors than those above, this is fine. I recommend a range of colors rather than just a limited palette.
- Titanium White (**large tube 150 mil**)

## RESOURCES

- website: *pennyotwell.com*
- Facebook: Penny Otwell
- Twitter: otwellpainter
- Instagram: psoart
- Questions? Email Penny at *penny@pennyotwell.com*.



## Mono Lake Committee Field Seminars

P.O. Box 29 • Lee Vining, CA 93541 • (760) 647-6595 • [monolake.org/seminars](http://monolake.org/seminars)