

“Mary is a dedicated pastel plein air painter. Her work captures the **spirit of the south Louisiana landscape** in a poetic way.” —ALAN FLATTMANN

mary monk

Mary Monk (marymonk.com) is inspired by wetlands, specifically the marshes, rivers, lakes and bayous that she encounters in the Louisiana landscape she calls home. Of *Marsh Trees, Evening Light*, which depicts Big Branch Marsh, Monk says, “I loved the contrast between the stillness of the reflections in the water and the algae floating on top. It drew me in instantly.”

The artist, who took first place in the Shadows on the Teche Plein Air Competition in 2015, likes to work en plein air from start to finish, revisiting a scene as needed until a piece is complete. “I usually have several paintings in various stages of completion and depicting differing weather conditions in my car on any given day,” she says. Monk keeps the car packed at all times with mounted supports and a stash of pastels. “I like to drive until I see a scene I like,” she says. “Then I choose the panel size and shape that best fits the composition.”

Monk says she used to push herself to complete a painting in one sitting. “This year I’ve forced myself to let that idea go,” she says. “Now, standing in front of a scene, I allow myself to take the time I need to really look and achieve what I want for the end product. I believe observation is the most important step in depicting the truth of a scene.”



Marsh Trees, Evening Light (18x12)

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