

# Foundations of Watercolor Week Two

## Painting Light: Lemons, Oranges & Complementary Color

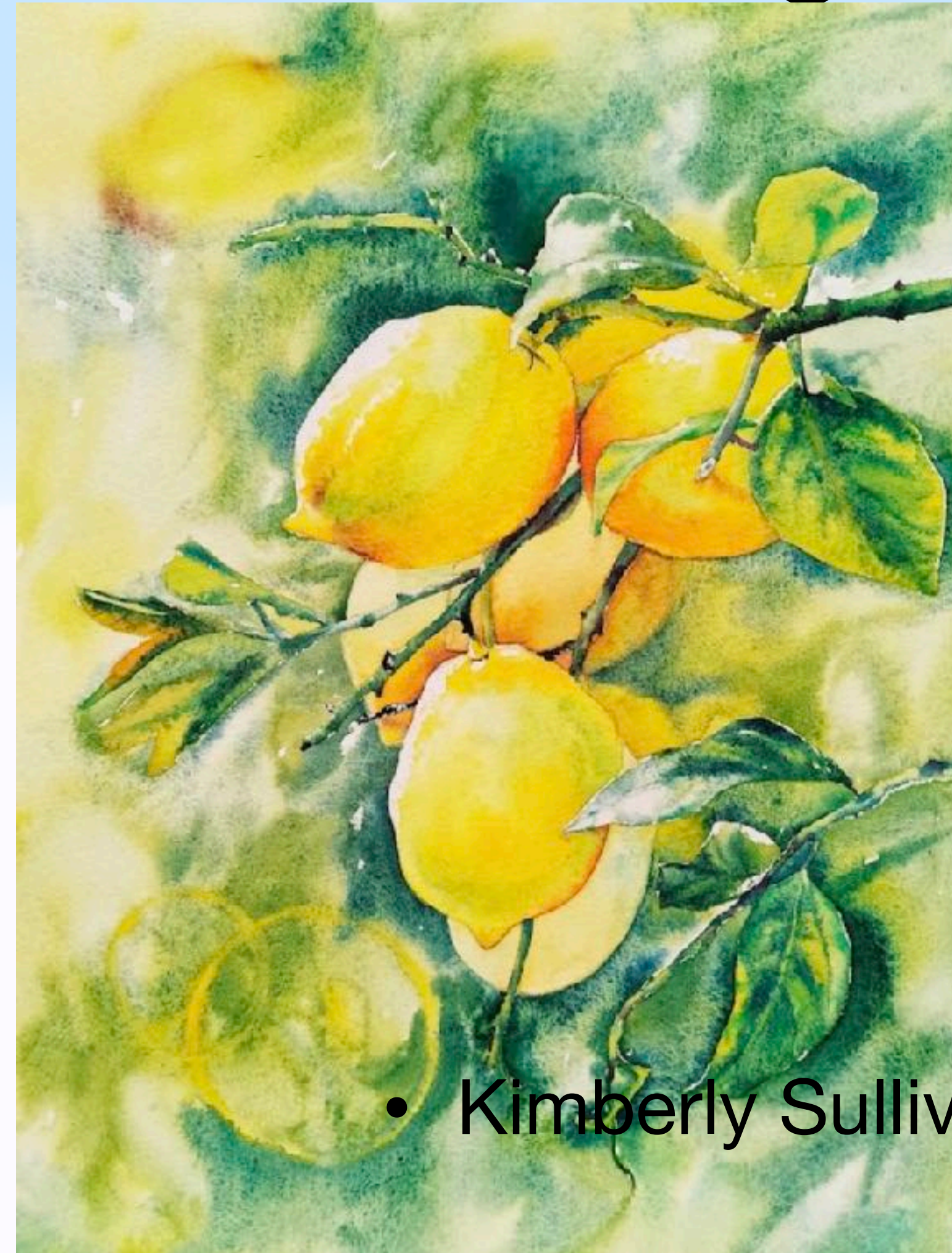
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# Painting Light with Complementary Color

## Still Life Study-Lemons and Oranges

Today we will explore:

- Complementary colors
- Natural shadows
- Layering washes
- Painting simple still life forms



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# Water Still Leads the Way

Quick reminders:

- ✓ Control your water
- ✓ Work from light to dark
- ✓ Let washes dry before layering
- ✓ Allow watercolor to do some of the work

“Watercolor rewards patience.”

- Kimberly Sullivan Studio

# The Color Secret of Natural Shadows

## Shadows Are Rarely Gray

In nature, shadows often contain complementary color.

Yellow lemon → shadow may contain purple

Orange → shadow may contain blue

This creates rich, natural color instead of dull gray.

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A collection of watercolor circles in various colors: yellow, orange, green, blue, red, and purple, arranged in a circular pattern around the text.

# Complementary Colors

Complementary colors sit opposite each other.

Yellow ↔ Purple

Red ↔ Green

Blue ↔ Orange

When mixed carefully, they create beautiful neutral tones.

This is how painters create earthy realism.

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# Lemon Study

Look for Three Things

When painting the lemon:

Lightest highlight

Main body color

Shadow area



The shadow may include a touch of purple or blue.

# Orange Study

Observe Temperature

Oranges are warm, but shadows cool the form.

Try adding:

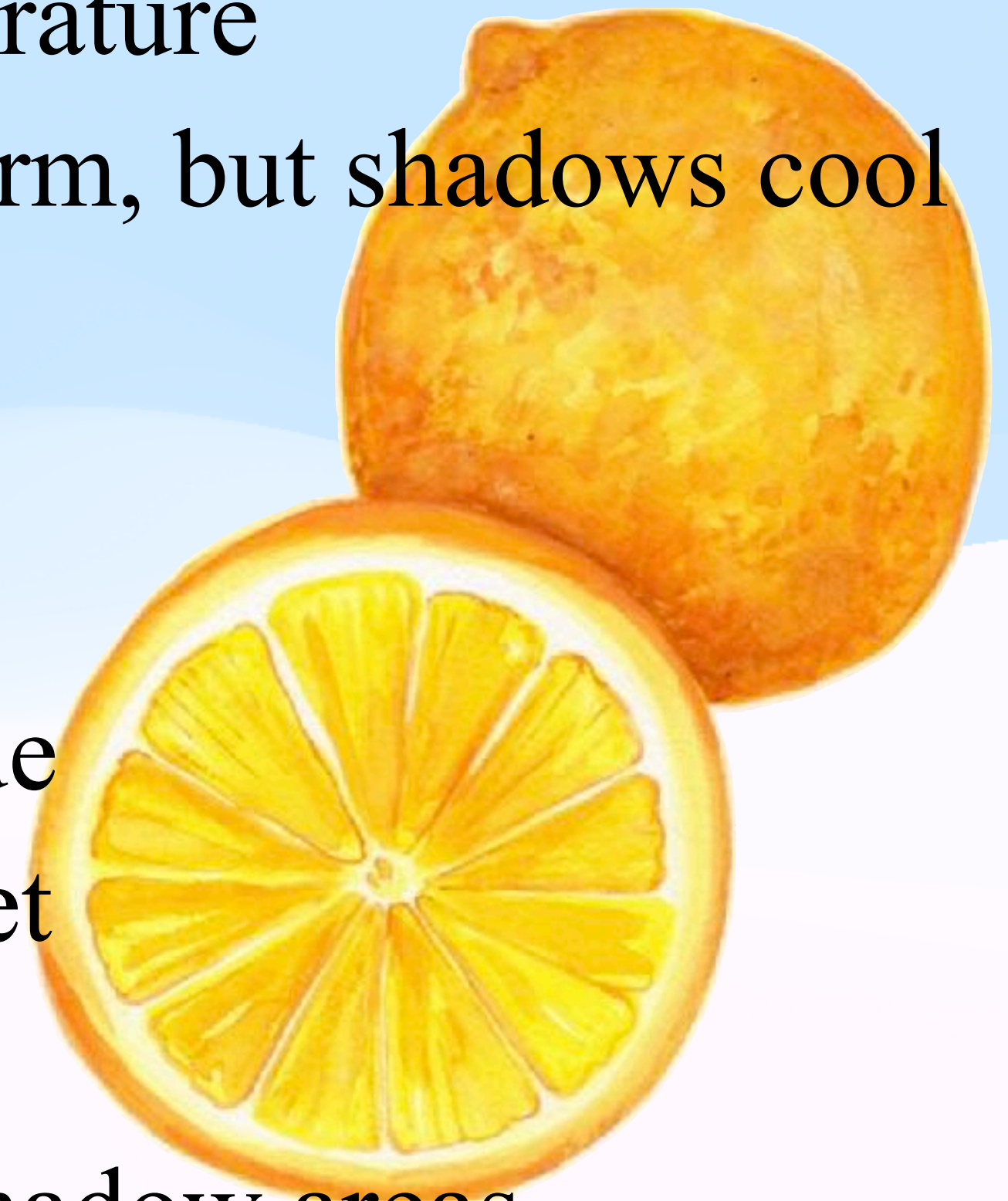
Ultramarine blue

A touch of violet

to deepen the shadow areas.

This helps the orange feel round and dimensional.

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# Building the Painting

## Simple Watercolor Process

- 1 Light wash for base color
- 2 Let dry
- 3 Add shadow layer
- 4 Strengthen dark areas
- 5 Suggest texture



Work slowly and lightly.

Let the watercolor stay loose and expressive.

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Before we paint the full still life, let's experiment.

Create a few small color studies.

- A lemon with a touch of violet in the shadow
- An orange with a hint of blue in the shadow
- Let colors softly blend on the paper

Think of this as testing color, not making a finished painting.





# Still Life Composition

Keep It Simple

Today's still life:

- Lemons
- Oranges
- Simple table surface
- Single light direction

Focus on:

- ✓ Color relationships
- ✓ Light and shadow
- ✓ Loose watercolor marks



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# Studio Time

Create a Still Life Set-up with your neighbor. To make it more interesting, consider cutting/slicing a fruit.

Photograph using your cell phone. Look at composition and layout of still-life

## Goals for Today

- Mix complementary shadows
- Create rounded form
- Practice layering washes

“Watercolor grows stronger with every layer.”

• Kimberly Sullivan Studio

# Closing Reflection

A watercolor painting of lemons and leaves. The background is a light, pale blue. In the foreground, there are several lemons. One is sliced in half, showing the yellow segments and white pith. The lemons are rendered with soft, blended washes of yellow and green, giving them a natural, slightly textured appearance. Green leaves of various shades are scattered around the lemons, some overlapping them. The overall style is soft and artistic, typical of watercolor.

What Did the Fruit Teach You?  
Questions to consider:

Where did color surprise you?

Did complementary color improve the shadows?

What happened when you layered washes?

“Nature is the best color teacher.”

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