

Poppies in watercolor — where pigment and water find their own rhythm.

The Heart and Soul of Watercolor

Watercolor has a way of feeling both deliberate and wonderfully alive. A brush lays down color, then the water carries it—softening an edge, gathering pigment, or opening a pale space that becomes part of the painting.

Watercolor has the heart and soul of pigment

A medium shaped by water

- Unlike a medium that stays exactly where it is placed, watercolor moves. Water pulls pigment across the paper in translucent veils, letting the page glow through the color. As one wash meets another, the meeting can be smooth and quiet—or leave a lively edge that gives the painting its character.
- That movement asks for attention, but also a little trust. An artist can guide the flow and choose where to add detail, while allowing the water to contribute its own subtle surprises. The result is a balance between intention and discovery.

The beauty of a layered wash

Many watercolor paintings begin with a light touch. Transparent washes establish a sense of light and atmosphere before smaller marks bring definition. Each layer lets earlier colors remain present, so depth comes from what is built up as well as from what is left open.

The paper is part of the painting, too. Its brightness can become a sunlit feather, a glint in an eye, or the airy space around a flower. Leaving a passage unpainted is not an unfinished thought; it can be the clearest way to let light in.

Finding inspiration in nature

Animals, birds, and plants offer endless invitations to look closely. A bird’s bright markings, the curved reach of a stem, or the changing colors in a petal can each suggest a different way to use a brush. Observing these small details helps a painting feel connected to the life that inspired it.

For me, time spent traveling and studying animals, nature, and local cultures continues to feed that curiosity. Watercolor suits these subjects beautifully: it can hold a fine detail, then open into a soft wash that leaves room for the viewer to imagine.

A little room for wonder

That is the heart of watercolor for me: pigment, water, and paper working together to make something expressive and individual. If you enjoy animals and nature in art, I invite you to explore the original paintings and prints at DA DeLaney Art.