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Experiments in Painting

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EXPERIMENTS IN PAINTING

A Report

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

Fort Hays Kansas State College

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Art Education

by

Glen Howerton

July 1958

This report is a summation of an experiment to find the most creative approach for the writer, in painting with watercolor. The research comes entirely from actual experiences and through experiments with the medium. Several approaches or methods of beginning a watercolor have been tried and analyzed following their completion.

Creativity, to the writer, is the bringing into being a thought or image and through the use of good design, make it into a visual image. Through creativity in painting man can communicate his thoughts, feelings and ideas to others.

The writer feels that a variety of approaches should be used in the teaching of art, because one needs to learn the vocabulary of a medium before one is able to communicate his thoughts effectively.

RETAINER WALL

An ink sketch was made at a location situated in a negroid district. The colors were applied directly from memory as the painting was being completed in the studio.

In this approach one adheres too closely to minute detail rather than expressing his interpretation of the subject, which tends to inhibit freedom in painting. This evolves into a painting which is almost an exact copy of what is there in the beginning. This method does away with almost all creativity and is dominantly illustrative, which is a superficial painting rather than one of feeling and personal interpretation.





ICE DOCK

This painting began with a very small, quick sketch of a railway ice dock. The sketch was put aside for about one year before the painting was completed.

In this approach much of the detail had been forgotten and therefore enabled the writer to more freely express his feelings of the subject. This method seems to involve a little more thinking, but is lacking in complete fulfillment of the creative act.



ACROSS RIVER

A small color sketch was made of an industrial area located near the Kaw River and the final painting was completed in the studio.

In this approach one becomes so concerned with the detail that it still blocks out freedom of expression. The writer has found very little creativity in this method.

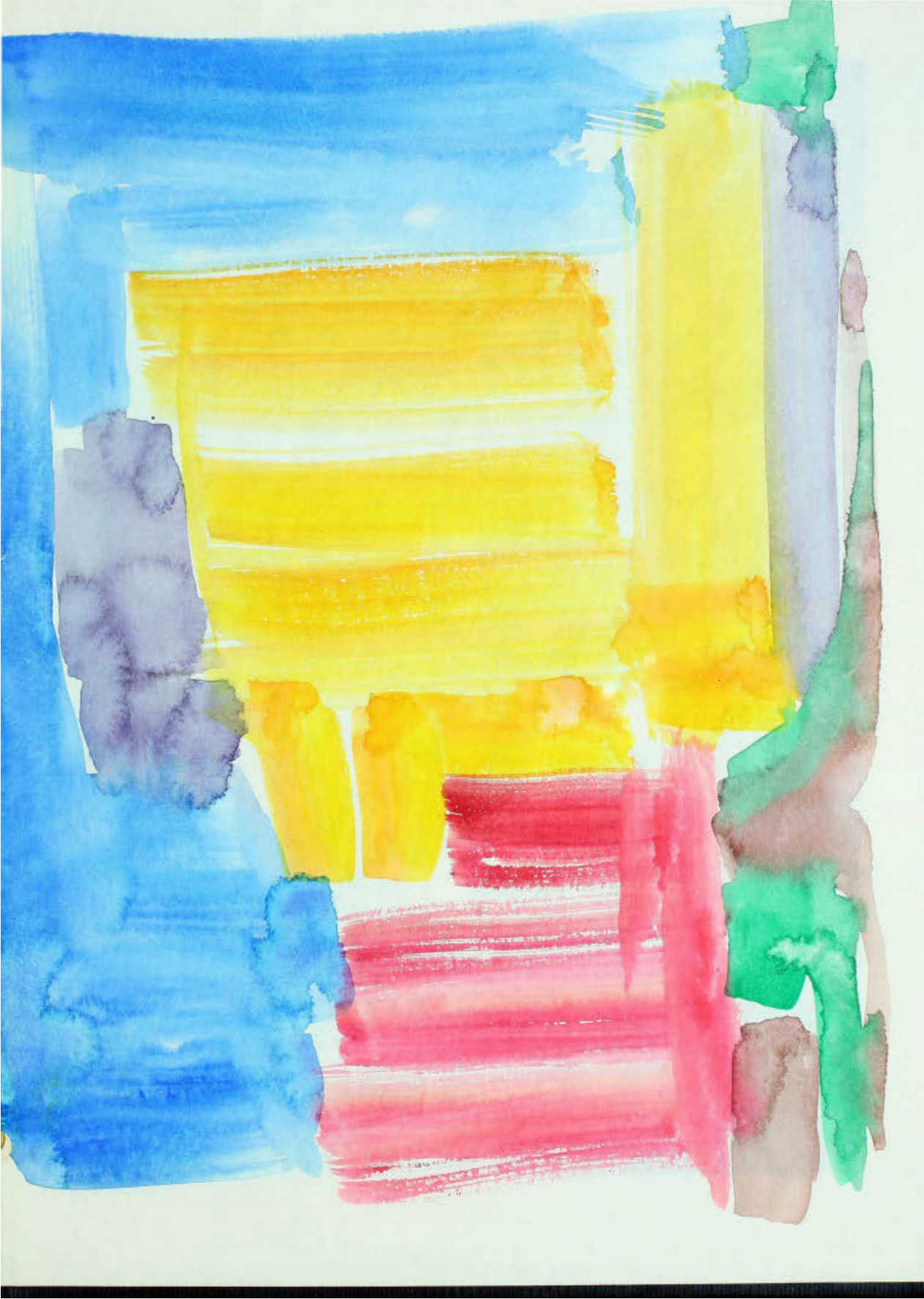


OWER ON

OLD MILL

This painting was direct, without making a preliminary sketch. The complete painting was made at the site of an old grain mill. The colors were first blocked in then the subject was applied in more complete detail. As the painting progressed ideas were added or taken away depending on how the writer felt about how the design should be.

Through the elimination and addition of detail the writer has experienced and used the creative process more than before. It is felt that creativity could be developed completely in this method.

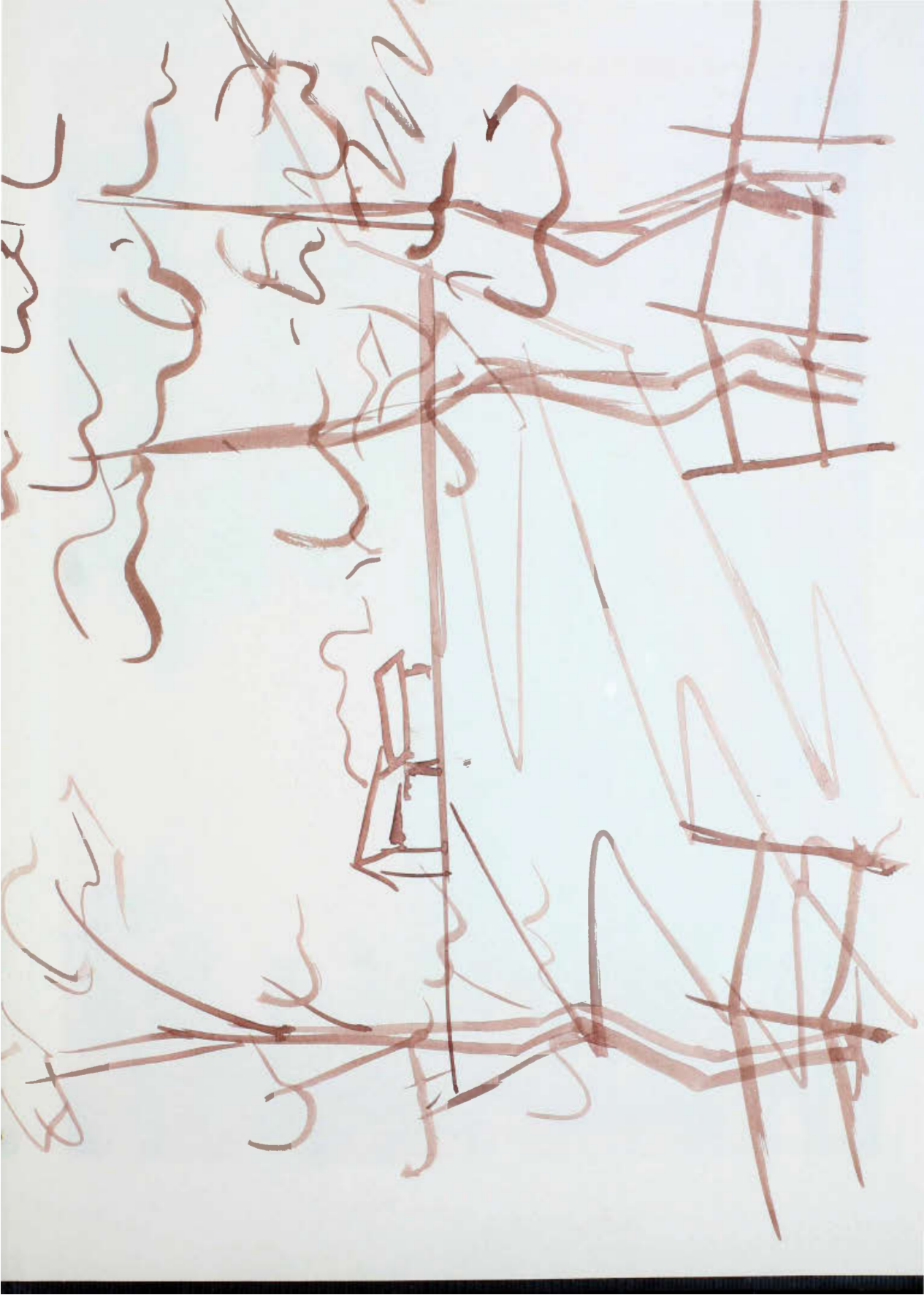


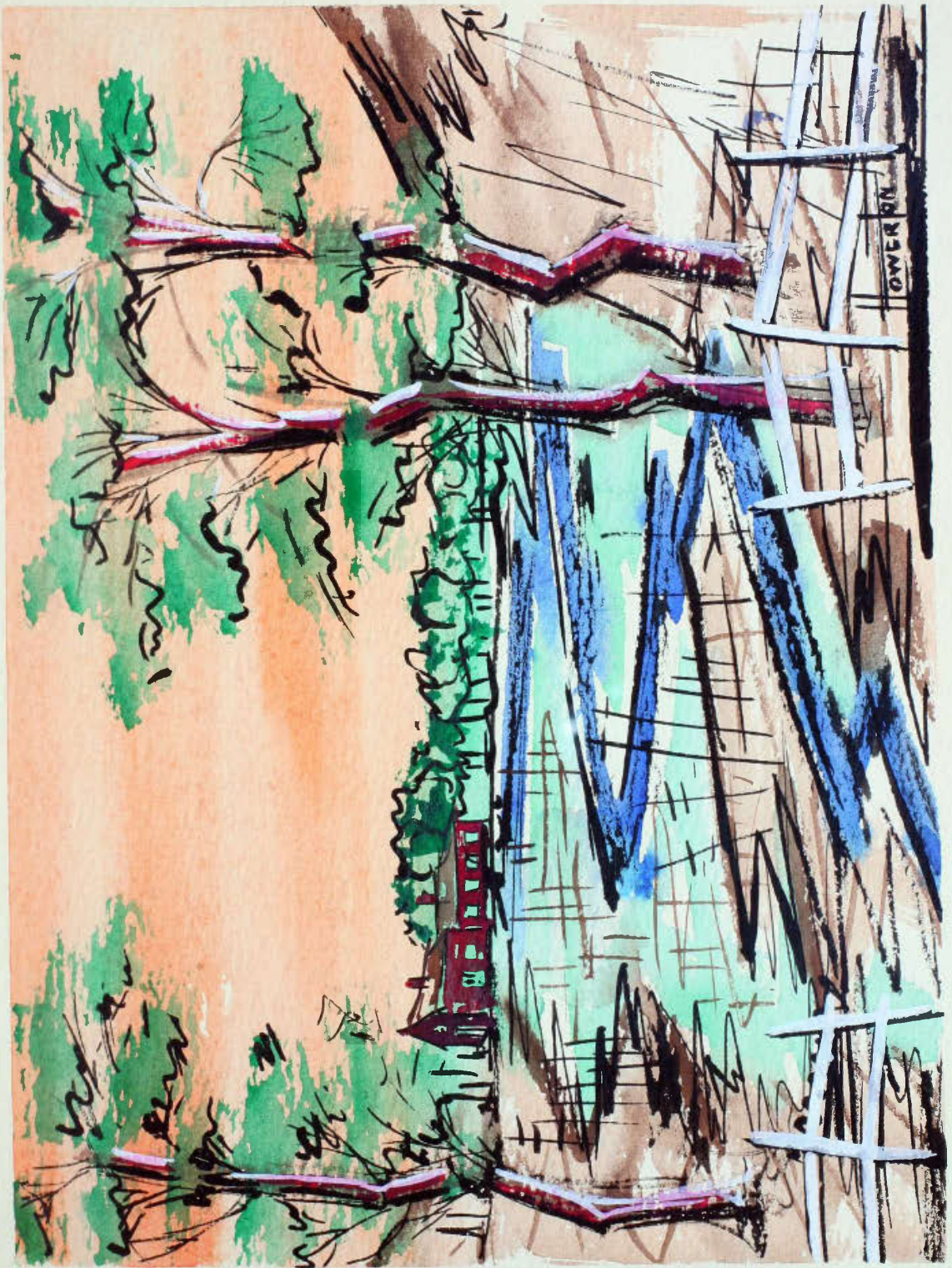


CROOKED CREEK

This painting began by placing only the necessary detail of subject matter extracted from a photograph on the paper. From then on the photograph was forgotten and the painting developed according to the feelings and interpretations suggested to the writer by the subject matter involved.

It is found that this method is very good for gaining an idea, but to the writer was not complete creative thinking. The mind was still guided too much by the remembrance of what was in the photograph thereby inhibiting the writer in expressing himself completely.

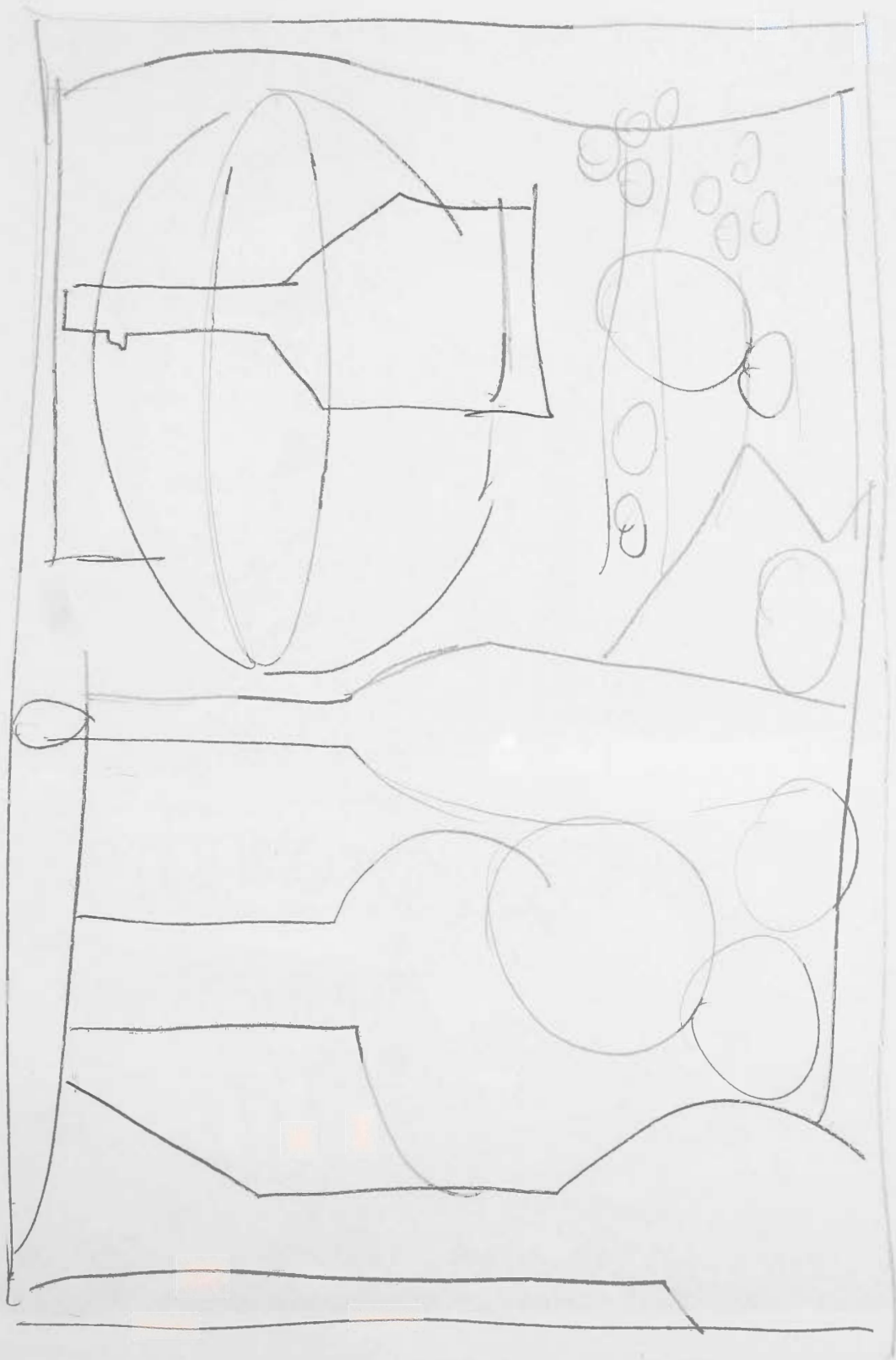




BOTTLES

This painting originated with a very simple sketch from imagination. The painting was then developed from this rough sketch.

A painting developing from the imagination or the subconscious mind tends to be much stronger in design quality . This evolves from a better use of the principles which govern good design. This approach does not inhibit free thinking and to the writer is complete creativity.



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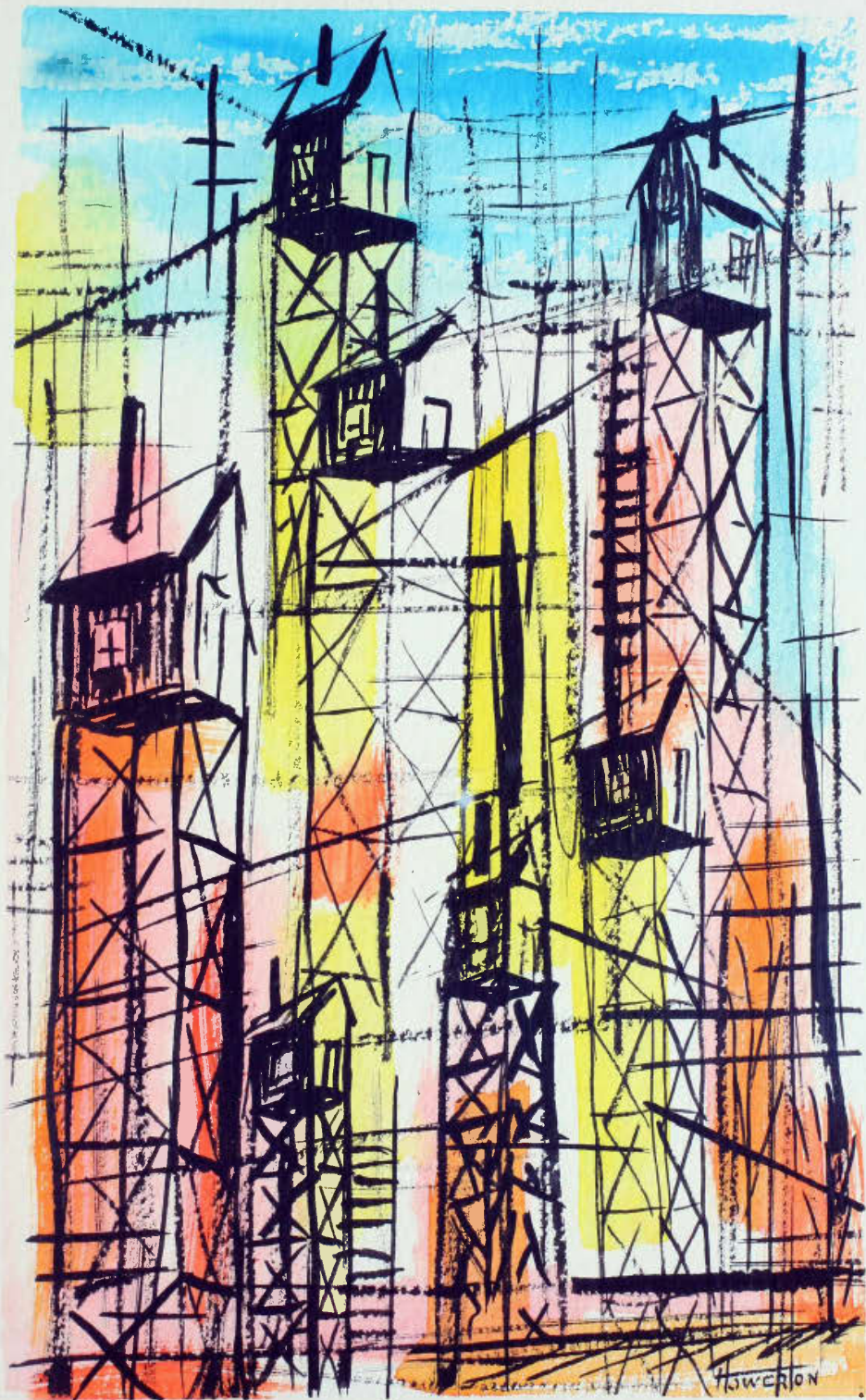


TIPPLES

The idea was partially developed in the mind before starting, but most of the subject matter was developed as the painting progressed. The idea then grew until it seemed to be completely expressive of the writers inner feelings toward the subject.

This is a very free and creative method of painting, by drawing from the minds past experiences and adding to them according to how one feels things should be organized. Very strong design quality can be gained by this approach.





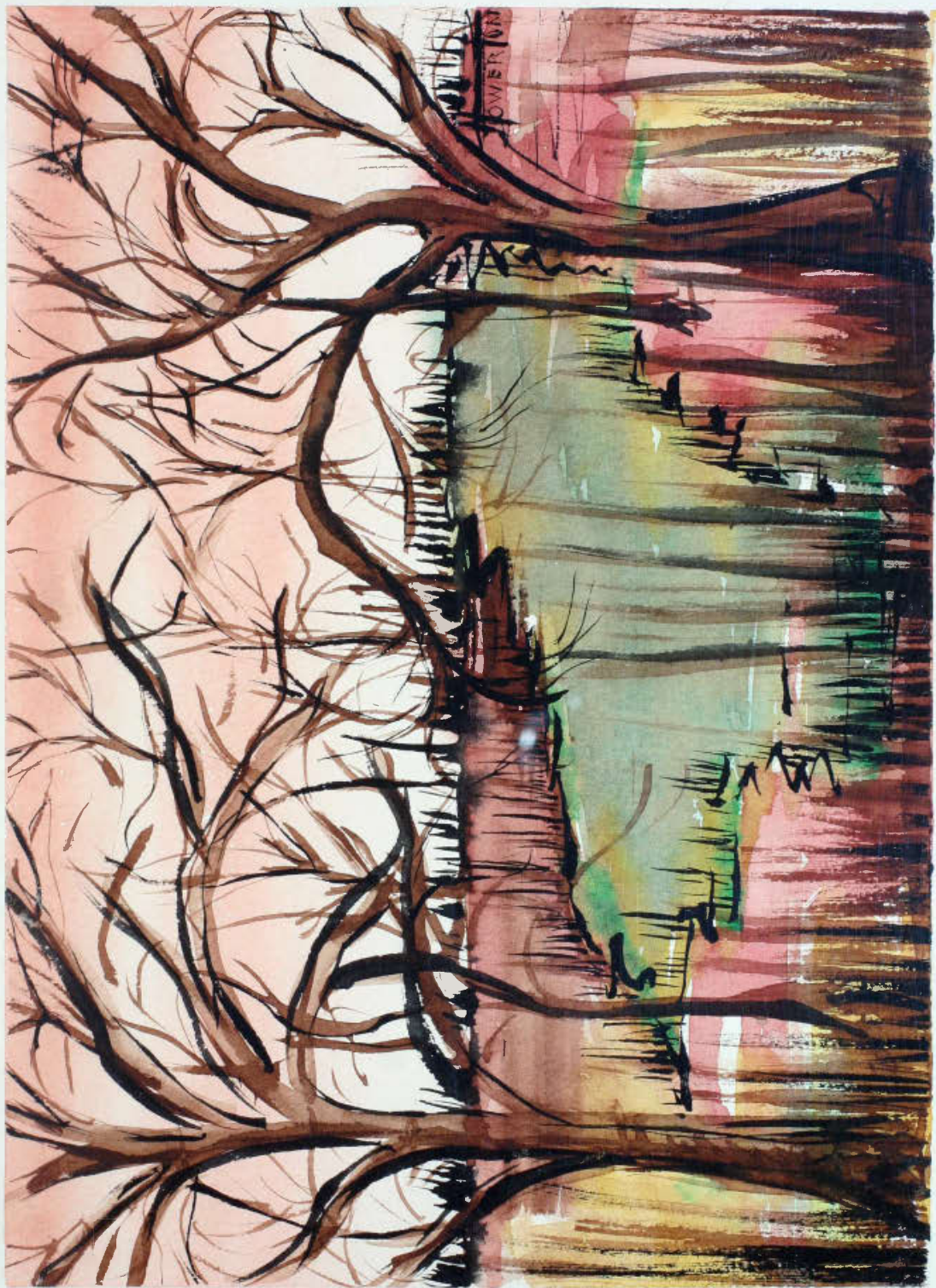
HOWERTON

TREES

The composition was started with the only known idea being the color and only brown or greyed colors were selected. After the color application was made the content of the painting was mentally visualized before anything was drawn. The painting was then made exactly like the mental image without deviation or experimentation on the part of the writer.

This approach causes the composition to be a good pictorial representation, but is very weak in design. It also inhibits the artist in freely expressing his complete interpretation of the subject.

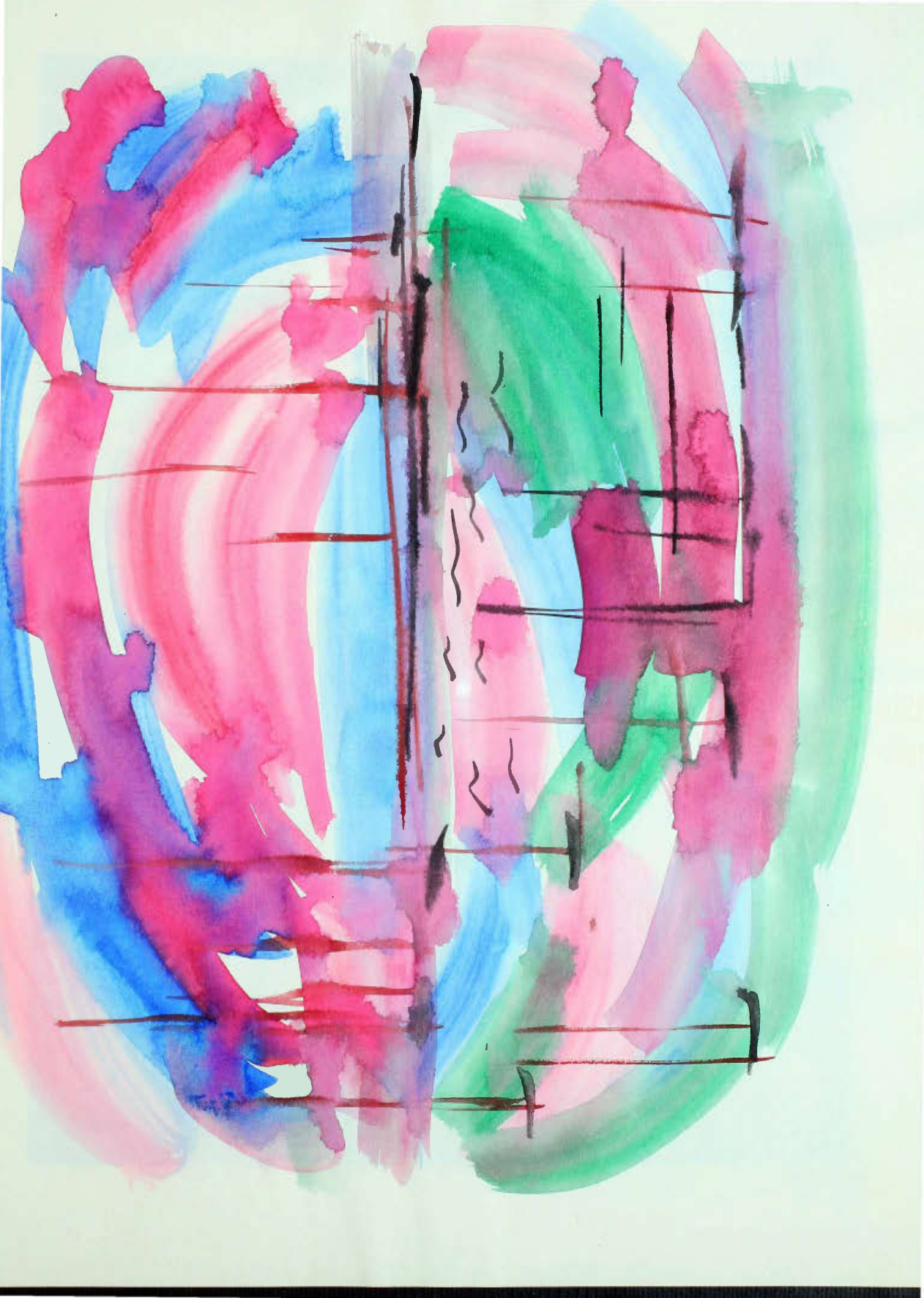




SHIPS

The content of this painting originated from placing paint on the paper in a haphazard manner without a preconceived notion of what would be the end result. This content grew as the painting developed and after the idea was conceived a few of the details were refined.

This is an excellent way to approach creative painting except it is felt the design in this particular painting is very weak. The approach keeps one from becoming involved with a lot of unnecessary detail and enables the artist to more freely express his emotions about the subject involved.





Howerton

It is realized by the writer that more time and research could be made on each of the approaches illustrated. It is also realized that each approach could be explored and developed until they would all be excellent examples of creativity. But this was not the purpose of the report and therefore was excluded. The primary purpose of the paper was to find the most creative method at the present time for the writer and it is felt that this purpose has been accomplished. The most creative approach was found to be when the image was partially developed in the mind and then letting the image grow until the feeling of completeness is culminated. This was achieved in "Ripples" and also closely related examples as in "Bottles" and "Ships".