



from the president California Watercolor Association

"If I could say it in words there would be no reason to paint."

E. Hopper

How many "reference" photos do you have?

I'm not even willing to say, but I'm hoping it's not so astronomical that it's totally embarrassing! How about I guess over twenty thousand, and leave it at that! I've actually gone into nurseries and asked if I could take photos of the various plants, fountains, flowers... you get my drift. They said "sure!" I've got close-up photos of bees, preying mantises, pollen, leaves, thorns, thistles... you get my point. And, yes, I refer to them. I used a film camera, then a digital camera and now I use my phone. It's almost too easy to record a slice of life.

I return to those photos over and over again. I may not use that photo for years, then suddenly it attracts my attention and I create a painting from it. It never ceases to amaze me how much enjoyment I feel looking at the reference photo and drawing from it.

What does this all have to do with Edward Hopper's quote? A lot!

If I could say or write everything I feel about the flowers, the people, Paris... I would have volumes of journals stacked on shelves getting dusty. Who's going to read those journals? But when I draw and paint I'm creating a deep memory of a place and time that I can look at over and over again, sharing with others as I move through life.

Carol Husslein
CWA President

