



Debby's Touch

by Debby Forshey-Choma

Whitefish Point Lighthouse



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First lit in 1849, the Whitefish Point Light shares honors with the lighthouse at Copper Harbor for being the first lights on Lake Superior. It stands guard over the entrance to Whitefish Bay, sometimes the only shelter to be found for a ship trying to escape the fury of the lake, and is the oldest active light on Lake Superior.

Whitefish Point is known as the Graveyard of Ships as more vessels have been lost here than in any other part of the lake. Hundreds of vessels, including the famed Edmund Fitzgerald, lie on the bottom of the bay and the approaches. The lighthouse marks the end of an 80 mile stretch of shoreline known as Lake Superior's Shipwreck Coast. This light has shined onto the big lake unflinching for almost 150 years except for the night when the Edmund Fitzgerald went down.

At 4:30 pm on November 10, 1975, as the Edmund Fitzgerald struggled towards Whitefish Bay, forty-eight miles to the south, the light and the radio beacon at the remote navigational station at Whitefish Point suddenly clicked off. The Fitzgerald, already crippled by non-functioning storm damaged radar, was now without homing capability from the automated system at Whitefish. The Fitzgerald was left to fend for itself in unbelievable weather conditions.

Captain McSorley, a 44 year veteran of the sea, described it: "We are taking heavy seas over our decks; it's the worst sea I've ever been in". At approximately 7:15 P.M., November 10, 1975, the 729-foot ore freighter Edmund Fitzgerald and her crew of 29 sailed into history.

Each year on November 10th, there is a Memorial Service at the Whitefish Point Light Station for the crew of the Edmund Fitzgerald. The ship's bell is rung 30 times, once for each member of the crew and one time for all mariners who have been lost at sea. This service is open to the public.

The original Whitefish Point Light Station was built in the fall of 1848 and the light was first lit early in 1849 using Winslow and Lewis lamps and reflectors. These were replaced with a Third Order Fresnel Lens in 1857.

The Whitefish Point Light Station, hard hit by the fierce Lake Superior winds and weather, was replaced in 1861 with a steel cylinder some eighty feet tall, supported by a skeletal steel framework.

Automated by the Coast Guard in 1971, the Light Station no longer has a resident keeper, however the light is still burning brightly guiding sailors as they sail the treacherous shores of Lake Superior. Although ships now have modern navigational devices, they still look for the welcoming beacon at Whitefish Point as they pass by on a dark night.

Royal Brushes available through www.RoyalBrushes.com

#1360 – med & lge Debby's Texture Brush

#3160 – 5/8 Fusion angular

#3150 – 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 Fusion shaders

#3250 – 3, 5 Fusion rounds

#3585 – 5/0, 0 Majestic liners

DecoArt Americana Acrylics available through www.DecoArt.com

Deep Midnight Blue 166

Graphite 161

Lamp Black 067

Lavender 34

Neutral Grey 095

Payne's Grey 167

Violet Haze 197

Snow White 01

Teal Green 107

Fabric Painting Medium DAS10

Surface – suitcase (20" w x 30" t over-all); design area (20" w x 16" t)

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Misc Supplies

white chalk pencil

C-Thru Graph ruler

Prep and Transferring Design

1. Trace the line drawing with a #2 pencil onto tracing paper. Use the graph ruler to trace the straight lines. Now flip the tracing paper, re-trace the backside with the white chalk pencil (creating homemade graphite); note – use the white chalk pencil, because the background to the surface is dark.

Position the tracing paper onto the area to be painted; be sure to lay the correct side of the tracing down onto the surface. Secure with tape if needed. Using a wooden stick, firmly scrap over the tracing, transferring the design to the surface.

Basecoating in Design

2. When basecoating the areas of the design, I double load my brush -picking up the appropriate color + Fabric Painting Medium each time.
Or pre-mix the Fabric Painting Medium into the appropriate color 1:1.
Use the appropriate size shaders to basecoat the areas.

Each area will need two coats, wait for first coat to set up (become tacky), apply the second coat without Fabric Medium. If shading is required, corner load the angle with shade color, pat and blend while the second coat is still wet (blending wet into wet).

Note – any addition of water, could cause the paint to bleed out past design lines. After rinsing brushes, pinch dry in paper towel to remove as much moisture as possible.

Background Pines

3. With the white chalk pencil and graph ruler, transfer the center line for each pine.
Using the 8 shader, load Graphite mixture across the chisel edge, horizontally tap in the boughs.

Up on the chisel edge, slightly pull the top of the pine. Tapping from left to right for the boughs, slowly and slightly widening as you work towards the base of the pine.

Allow a bit of the background to show through; so the tree doesn't look like a triangle.

Repeat the same steps with the remaining pines.

Now load the chisel edge of the 8 shader with Violet Haze, up on the chisel edge, tap highlight on the boughs of the pines.

Buildings

4. With the appropriate size shader and Payne's Grey mixture, basecoat the walls and roofs.
Leave a hair line crack of the black material background between each section for shade and separation.

Now walk over each roof and wall section with Lavender.

Corner load the angle with Teal Green (+ Fabric Medium, if necessary for blending); blend highlight across each roof's edge and down some of the wall sides.

With the appropriate size shaders and Graphite, pull the windows and doors.

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5. With the 10 shader and Payne's Grey mixture, basecoat the steel cylinder of the lighthouse structure, watch room and roof.
Now walk over with Lavender.
Corner load the angle with Teal Green, blend highlighting down the right side.

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With the Snow White mixture and an appropriate size shader, basecoat the lens room and rays.
Apply a second coat of Snow White; refer to photo – the lens room is brighter than the rays.

Double load the 3 round with Lavender + Teal Green + Fabric Medium mixture; pull the skeletal steel frame work of the lighthouse tower. Apply a second coat.

Now double load the 0 liner with Lavender + Teal Green + Fabric Medium; pull the lens room panes, walkway base, rails and supports. Apply a second coat.

Place a dip dot of Lavender + Teal Green + Fabric Medium mixture at the top of the lighthouse roof for the ventilator ball.
With the same mixture and the 0 liner, pull a line up from the ball for the lightning rod. Apply a second coat.

Moon

6. With the 8 shader and Snow White mixture, basecoat the moon.
Apply a second coat with Snow White.

Shrubs (on left and right)

7. With the Ige Texture Brush and Graphite mixture, dance in the shrubs.
For highlight and separation, dance Violet Haze across the top of each shrub.

For proper use of the Texture brush, use the following method.

Dampen the bristles with water to start the separation of bristles; pinch the bristles in a paper towel to remove as much moisture as possible.

Tap bristles into the paint on your palette, hold it perpendicular to your palette, dance it up and down to get some of the paint off – keeping the paint sparse on the brush. Note – this brush can be used on the whole foot or just the toe.

Tap lightly on the surface, dance with the brush up and down, rolling the brush in different directions in between your fingers when it is up in the air (like dancing the twist, light on your feet). Allow some drying time in between dances so the paint sets up and you don't end up with a gloppy or muddy look.

Groundwork

8. Load the angle brush across the chisel edge with Neutral Grey + Deep Midnight Blue (2:1) + Fabric Medium.
Blend under the shrubs, buildings and lighthouse for groundwork.
Repeat with Neutral Grey + Deep Midnight Blue mixture.

Ground Foliage

9. With the med Texture brush and Violet Haze, dance ground foliage under buildings and lighthouse.

Water (foreground)

10. The remaining area in the foreground (the black suitcase material) is the water area, blend motion/highlights in the water area.
Load the angle brush across the chisel edge with Lavender mixture, randomly blend motion in the water.

Repeat step with Teal Green mixture.

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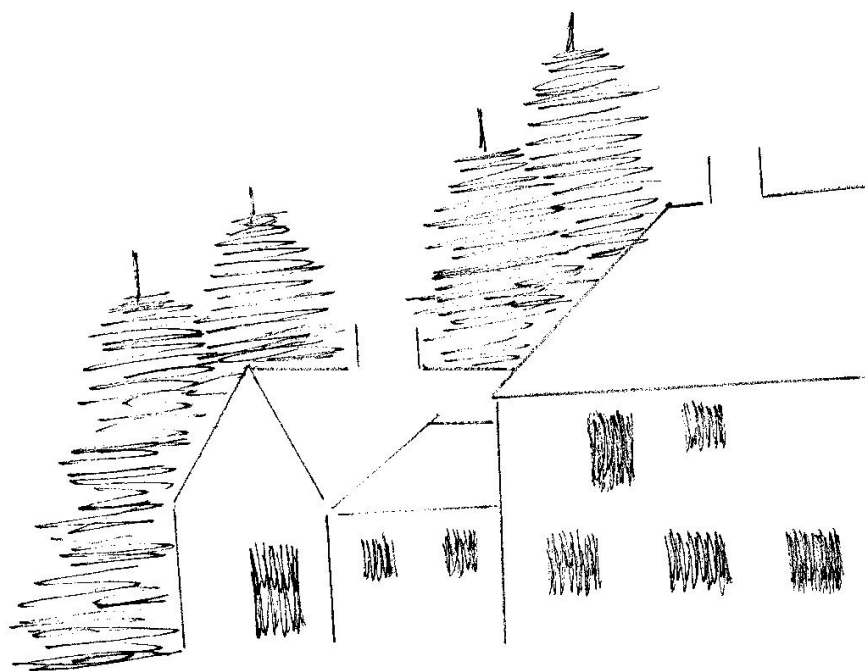
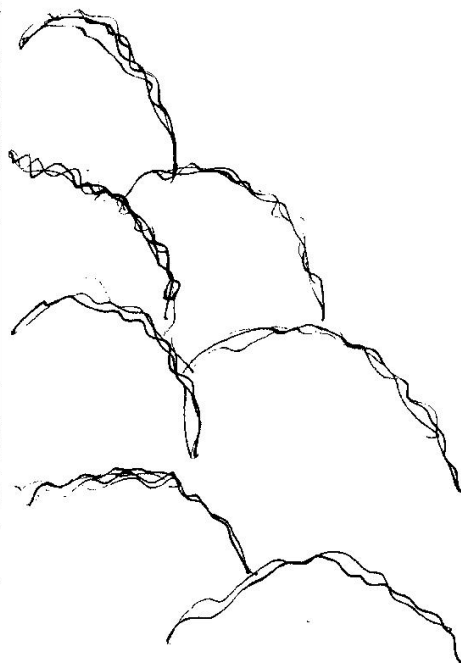
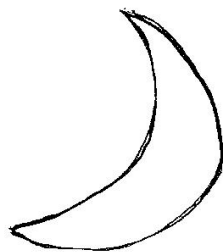
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