



Incense - 11 x 14"

With large chunks of stone temple now holding down the four corners of my painting, I prepare myself to paint. By this time, however, I have attracted a small crowd of guards who are now kneeling and standing around watching. For the life of me I cannot determine if they are pleased or perplexed at what they are watching. Assuming that I am doing nothing wrong, I begin blocking in parts of the painting. With a wide, long-handled brush, I roughly lay out the structure of the temple. In so doing, I stretch from my seated position on one of the stone steps so that I can reach the far ends of the canvas. As I paint, the guards watch in silence.

A quarter of an hour passes, and I'm becoming increasingly frustrated trying to cope with this large, unwieldy canvas. From my perch on the stone step, it's becoming more and more difficult to reach the far ends without disturbing the fresh paint.



Then a sudden flash of inspiration! After stretching to paint the far right corner of the painting, I reload the brush with paint and hand it to the guard who is kneeling just beside the painting. Without a word, he grasps the brush and completes his corner of the painting just as I would have. The other guards erupt in laughter! We have made a connection, and we are off to a grand working relationship. For the next two hours, as tourists and guards come and go, I work feverishly on the painting with the occasional assistance of my new apprentice. Finally, it is too dark to see anymore and I pack up and return to my hotel.