



Young Keepsake Designers on Watercolors and Sketching: “Phuket, A Watercolor Painting Book”

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ABSTRACT

This paper embarks on a captivating journey exploring the sentimental value of keepsakes and their diverse significance to individuals. It celebrates the innovative art form of watercolor sketching, which serves as a mesmerizing mode of souvenir presentation, capturing the essence of cities with breathtaking beauty, heritage, and contemporary traditions. Its aim is to inspire young designers to express their artistic language, captivating both travelers and keepsake collectors alike. Through their creative expressions, these designers have the power to preserve cultural heritage and foster deeper connections between people and their surroundings. A shining exemplar of this artistic endeavor is found in 'Phuket: A Watercolor Painting Book' by Dr. Taveepong Limmakorn, masterfully crafted with a profound connection to Phuket, reflecting the island's splendor and charm. The vivid watercolor pictorials breathe life into captivating scenes, from historic landmarks to vibrant festivals, evoking emotions and cherished memories. The paper also emphasizes the importance of aesthetic understanding and visual thinking in creating exceptional keepsakes that resonate with viewers. Furthermore, it highlights the significance of practice in honing artistic skills and enhancing the creative process. In conclusion, the transformative power of watercolor art becomes a conduit for young designers to craft soulful souvenirs that transcend boundaries, celebrating cultures, and leaving a profound and lasting legacy of cherished memories.

1. Introduction

A keepsake holds sentimental value and varies in significance for each person. Presenting a city through innovative art forms, such as watercolor sketching, can be an exciting mode of souvenir. It can beautifully capture the city's natural beauty, heritage, and contemporary traditions. Young designers can express their unique artistic language, captivating travelers and keepsake collectors alike. This paper aims to inspire them to represent their locality through this artistic method, reflecting the essence of their home or even an entire

country. Through their creative expressions, these young designers can capture the soul of a place, preserving its cultural heritage and inspiring a deeper connection between people and their surroundings.

'Phuket A Watercolour Painting Book' (Taveepong Limmakorn, 2015) (Fig 01) is an exquisite collection of watercolor paintings masterfully crafted by the internationally acclaimed artist, Dr. Taveepong Limmakorn (Fig 02), with Phuket as the captivating focal point. This fascinating book serves as a cherished souvenir, offering a delightful glimpse into the island's allure through intricately detailed and vivid watercolor pictorials.

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Published in 2015, this artistic treasure reflects the artist's profound connection to Phuket as a native, as they skillfully capture the island's physical, cultural, and anthropological splendor. With great passion for his native land, the artist skillfully brings forth the island's physical, cultural, and anthropological beauty and attributes.

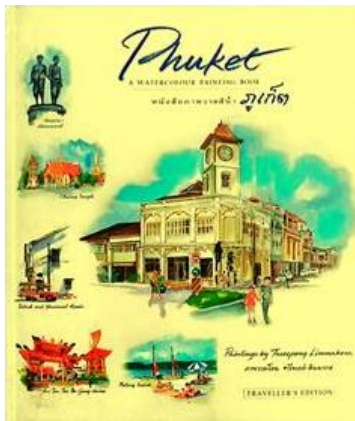


Figure 01: Title: *Phuket A Watercolour Painting Book*
 Website: *Bookworm Hanoi*
 URL: <https://www.bookwormhanoi.com/phuket-a-watercolour-painting-book>



Figure 02: *Dr. LIMMAKORN, TAVEEPONG*
 Channel Name: *Taveepong Limmakorn*
 URL: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWx30apXnUg_9gkCpiDwR-Q?app=desktop

“Having lived in Phuket for three decades, I am proud to call myself a native of Phuket and will always be in awe of the beautiful people that inhabit this special place and natural beauty on the land beneath my feet”. -Taveepong Limmakorn

Dr. Taveepong holds a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts and Design from Kansas University in the USA, and an Honorary Doctorate in Art and Design from Rajamangala University of Technology, Thanyaburi. Among his crowning achievements is a collection of commemorative paintings created for His Majesty the King of Thailand's

72nd birthday anniversary in 1999. Within the book, the artist explores various aspects of Phuket in vivid detail through his paintings, including old buildings, colorful cultural festivals, and tourist attractions in and around the area.

2. The exhaustive subjects Artist depicted

The artist's mesmerizing talent is eloquently showcased through a breathtaking array of subjects depicted in his exquisite watercolor paintings (Fig 03 and 04). Each stroke of his brush breathes life into a myriad of captivating scenes, from the humble street rickshaw pullers, their faces reflecting stories untold, to the regal presence of monarchs and statues of revered personalities. Not stopping there, his keen eye and skilled hand captured the essence of the most famous ladies of Phuket, their beauty immortalized on paper. Venturing into the realm of history and nostalgia, he ventured into the older neighborhoods, where the charm of ancient streets and bustling bazaars comes alive with vibrant hues. His paintings reveal the grandeur of Portuguese Marion's glorious buildings and the preserved elegance of colonial-style mansions, with each mosaic and floor finish meticulously rendered.

The artist's brush dances across the canvas, illuminating the rich tapestry of Phuket's cultural heritage. Vivid portrayals of joyous wedding festivals, the grace of wedding dresses and carriages, and the splendor of Chinese New Year celebrations add a kaleidoscope of colors to his masterpieces. The sanctity of shrines, the grandeur of festival processions, and the wonder of the Tortoises Releasing Festival on Thai New Years are intricately captured.



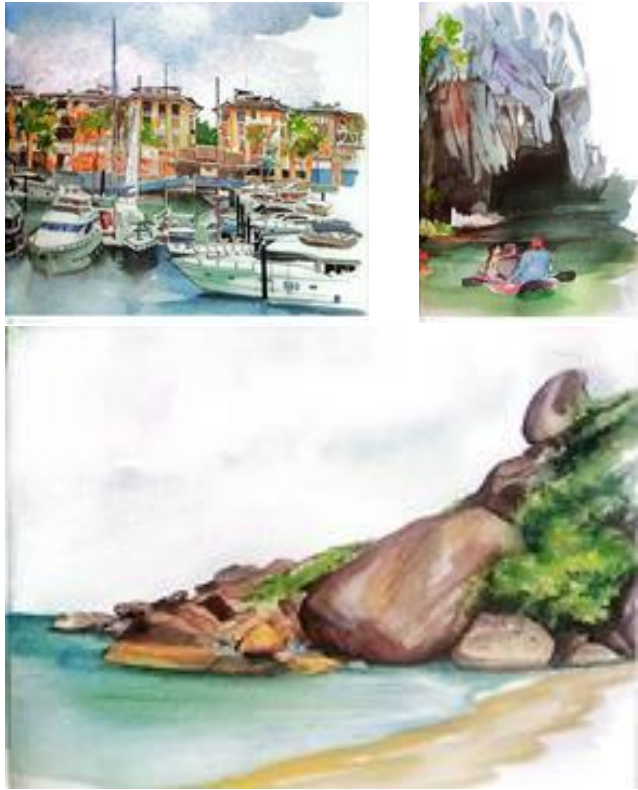


Figure 03 (top from left) Baba wedding rickshaw puller. 'Tin Triumph' factory, Street view; (bottom from left) Royal Phuket Marina, Baba style dress, Tham load cave, Island (Source: Author)

Venturing further, he sets sail with sailors on the King's Cup Regatta, their boats adorned with pride and the sun-kissed Patong Beach celebrating the end of years with lively and colorful carnivals. His profound mastery of perspective breathes life into Phuket's tourist attractions and picturesque beaches, showcased in mesmerizing birds' eye views that leave the beholder in awe.

The artist's visionary brushwork extends to the minute details of Phuket's wonders, from the enchanting Dog Conch Shell to the scuttling crabs and magnificent lobsters, even to the opulence of luxury yachts moored at the Royal Phuket Marina's five-star marinas. With boundless creativity and unwavering dedication, the artist captures the spiritual essence of temple complexes, the serenity of Half Buddha Prathong, and the magnificence of the Big Buddha and the Phuket Mining Museum. Taking the viewer on a breathtaking journey, his brush transports them to different islands, mystical caves, and awe-inspiring rocky cliffs. Even the humble abodes of the Muslim Community in Phang Nga Bay find their place in his art, as do the enigmatic Simon Island and its surroundings.

In the minutest of details, his artistry finds expression, from the textured vine roots to the ancient trees' weathered roots and the colossal boulders, each line etched with utmost care and love. Even the joyous spectacles of Phuket Fantasee, Siemens Niramit, and Simon Cabarets come alive with vivid colors and animated characters.

Nature's wonders become his canvas, from the fierce elephants in Phuket Zoos' captivating shows to the playful antics of the monkeys, immortalized in every detail. And not forgetting the native cashewnuts, each lovingly depicted in their natural glory, reflecting the essence of Phuket's bounty.

In each stroke, the artist weaves a tale, taking the viewer on a visual odyssey through the enchanting landscape of Phuket's culture, history, and natural beauty. A true virtuoso of watercolor, his artistry leaves an indelible mark on the soul, creating an enchanting symphony of colors that resonates long after the last brush has been laid to rest.



Figure 04 (from left) King's Cup Regatta, Shrine gates, Carnivals (Source: Author)

3. Artist's Nature of Deep Involvement

The artist's deep obsession with Phuket is evident in every stroke of the brush, capturing the wealth of diversity, culture, and traditional values. As a native of Phuket, he intimately understands the land and its people, living amidst the enchantment of the Pearl of the Andamans for over four decades. The labor of love resulted in 160 breathtaking watercolor illustrations, a heartfelt souvenir that embodies Phuket's soul. The paper beautifully expresses the artist's journey, revealing the emotional depth and mental toil behind this seminal book. The keepsake becomes a gateway to experiencing and understanding Phuket's essence, a treasured reminder of

one's journey and appreciation for life's richness.

4. Keepsake or Souvenir

A Souvenir or Keepsake is a cherished memento, serving as a tangible reminder that someone has visited a particular place. Souvenirs often serve as symbolic representations of a culture's identity and image, providing tangible evidence of its history, heritage, and geographical significance (Love & Sheldon, 1998). It holds sentimental value, evoking memories of the journey and the experiences encountered there. Roland Orzabal and Nicky Holland wrote "Love is a promise, love is a souvenir, once given never forgotten, never let it disappear" ("Advice for the Young at Heart," 1989). Of course, here Souvenir refers to a feeling, but more often it refers to something tangible, like a memento, gift or trophy. First recorded in 1775 as meaning "a remembrance or memory," the noun souvenir stems from the French souvenir "to remember, come to mind." A few years later, it took on the sense of "a token" of an event or experience ("Souvenir," n.d.).

However, the term "souvenir" has its origins in the Old French language, which, in turn, derived from the classical Latin word "subvenire," signifying "come to mind." (Vaver, 2022). He has also mentioned that the word "souvenir" initially referred to memory without any association with physical objects. It was only later, during the emergence of modern tourism in the late 18th century, that it became closely connected to material objects linked to memories of travel. The earliest known souvenirs were ampullae, small flasks used by pilgrims to carry holy water or oil from religious shrines. Dating back to the Roman era, soldiers traveling across the empire would worship at Christian martyr sites and bring back these sacred mementos ("The Art of the Souvenir," 2022). The history of travel souvenirs can be traced back to ancient times, such as in the case of Prince Harkhuf during around 2,200 BC in Ancient Egypt. He traveled to Sudan and returned with leopard skins, ivory, and incense, which he offered as gifts to the pharaoh. This illustrates one of the earliest recorded instances of travel souvenirs (Fenwick Elliott, 2019).

Souvenirs possess the ability to entertain, educate, and inspire those who collect them. They also facilitate cultural exchanges and offer a swift glimpse into the art and cultural practices of a city. This experience often prompts travelers to reconsider the cultural background of the place they have visited. Moreover, souvenirs evoke emotions, reviving cherished memories and igniting positive emotional responses in the beholder. Also, Souvenirs play a significant role in enhancing the mental and visual experiences of the collectors.

Acquiring travel mementos or souvenirs has been a longstanding custom, encompassing intricate psychological, sociological, anthropological, and marketing aspects. The act of purchasing or collecting souvenirs has been recognized as a significant element of a traveler's overall journey (Schibik, 2017). A less commonly used definition defines a souvenir as "tourist art" (Lasusa, 2007).

5. City Watercolors, Sketches as Souvenirs

Watercolors, a versatile type of paint that can be diluted with water to produce translucent layers of color on paper, are believed to have existed since Paleolithic cave paintings. However, it was during the Renaissance period that watercolors saw a surge in popularity as a recognized and valued artistic medium ("Watercolor," n.d.). Inspired by the vibrancy, clamor, and vastness of the rapidly growing modern city, American artist John Marin (1870-1953) pushed the boundaries of color and line in his watercolor paintings, creating works that bordered on abstraction (Kane, 2022) (Figure 05).



Figure 05: John Marin, "Manhattan Skyline from the River," 1909-12, watercolor over graphite on paper, 11 1/2 x 12 3/4 inches, Arkansas Art Center

Urban scenes present captivating contrasts with dynamic horizontals and verticals, grand compositions, and striking lights and darks. The featured watercolor paintings invite us to savor the intricate beauty amidst the city's hustle and bustle.
(Kane, 2022)

When a passionate and devoted artist meticulously captures various layers and intricate details of their city through sketching and painting, they may choose to transform these artistic creations into souvenirs. Across the world, numerous artists and art enthusiasts are actively involved in creating souvenirs based on their location-specific artworks. We can witness a plethora of impressive souvenirs crafted from city sketches, watercolors, and city photography. We encounter 10 books of this kind.

1. The Ultimate Book of Cities (Anne-Sophie Baumann & Didier Balicevic, 2017)
The Ultimate Book of Cities is an engaging and informative children's book authored by Anne-Sophie Baumann and illustrated by Didier Balicevic. It offers a comprehensive exploration of urban life, architecture, landmarks, and daily activities in various cities around

- the world. With vivid illustrations and interactive elements, it inspires curiosity and discovery about different cities, making it an ideal resource for young readers.
2. **Sketch City: Tips and Inspiration for Drawing on Location** ("Sketch City," 2015)
"Sketch City: Tips and Inspiration for Drawing on Location" is a valuable guide for creative travelers and urban sketchers. It features insights from 50 artists worldwide, offering techniques for capturing urban scenes and providing ample encouragement to inspire artists to take their sketches to the streets.
 3. **Dalbey's Souvenir Pictorial History of the City of Richmond, Indiana** (Anonymous, 2021)
Scholars have recognized the cultural significance of this work and consider it an integral part of our civilization's knowledge base. They share the belief that preserving, reproducing, and making it widely accessible to the public is crucial.
 4. **Artist's sketchbook** (Pat Perry, n.d.)
Pat Perry's sketches revolve around themes of home and place, reflecting both toughness and nostalgia. Constantly on the move, hitch-hiking across America and Europe, his sketchbooks capture a searching imagery. Perry's deep curiosity about global society is evident in his illustration work, which often centers on activist causes like climate justice and class inequality. From local concerns to broader American experiences, any subject he explores is worth closer attention (Trek Lexington, 2017)
 5. **The Happiness of a Dog with a Ball in Its Mouth** (Handy & Yum, 2021)
This is a heartwarming picture book written by Bruce Handy and illustrated by Hyewon Yum. It captures the pure joy and happiness of a dog playing with a ball in its mouth, celebrating the simple pleasures of life and the bond between humans and animals. The book's 56 pages are filled with vivid illustrations and engaging storytelling that remind readers of the beauty of finding happiness in everyday moments. Illustrator makes impeccable images, carefully and uncomplicatedly, with pencil and watercolor, bringing each moment to life, always adding a touch of humor.
 6. **The Urban Sketcher: Techniques for Seeing and Drawing on Location** (Holmes, 2014)
This book is a practical and inspiring guide for aspiring urban sketchers. It offers valuable tips, step-by-step demonstrations, and techniques to capture the dynamic city scenes and develop a unique artistic style. With this book, artists can enhance their sketching skills and embrace the urban environment as their creative inspiration.
 7. **The Art of Travel with a Sketchbook** (Le Glatin-Keis, 2007)
In this book, Mari gives six simple but effective tips to help launch you into the wonderful world of sketching. Explorers described their expeditions with detailed illustrated maps, commentaries and notebooks. In this fast-paced world, we need to slow down, see and record what's happening around us. (Fox Chapel Publishing, n.d.)
 8. **50 Artists You Should Know** (Koester & Roeper, 2016)
The book features 160 pages and showcases a diverse collection of artists from various backgrounds and styles. It aims to introduce readers to 50 influential artists from different periods of art history, providing insights into their lives, artistic techniques, and significant contributions to the art world. The book serves as a comprehensive and accessible guide for art enthusiasts and anyone interested in exploring the works of renowned artists throughout history.
 9. **Japanese Ink Painting: The Art of Sumi-e** (Okamoto, 1996)
The book delves into the techniques and principles behind Sumi-e, which involves using black ink and brushstrokes to create beautiful and expressive paintings. It offers a comprehensive guide for both beginners and experienced artists, covering various subjects such as materials, brushwork, composition, and traditional motifs. With 96 pages of valuable insights and instructions, the book serves as an excellent resource for anyone interested in learning and mastering the art of Sumi-e.
 10. **Sketcher** (Watson-Grant, 2015)
In the novel "Sketcher" by Roland Watson-Grant, nine-year-old Skid Beaumont's family faces challenges after his father's ill-conceived plan to build a new home in Louisiana based on a drunken vision. The family finds themselves in a swampy area, hoping for New Orleans' expansion, but the dream fails to materialize. As Skid grows up, he becomes convinced that his elder brother Frico possesses the gift of fixing things through sketching. Skid embarks on a mission to persuade Frico to use his talent to change their family's luck and the world they live in, leading to a captivating tale of mystery and drama. The novel explores themes of family, magic, and the resilience of life, even in broken circumstances.
- These books inspire young artists to create souvenirs from their artistic pursuits like sketching, painting, watercolors, or photography. They offer techniques and principles to enhance creativity and capture memories and emotions through art, leaving a lasting impact on viewers.

6. Strength for the young designers Unveiling the Beauty Within

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder"- (Margaret Wolfe Hungerford, 1878)

It essentially means that the perception of beauty is subjective and varies from person to person based on their individual preferences, experiences, and perspectives. The appreciation and success of creating souvenirs from city watercolors or sketches, such as the exemplary work of 'Phuket' and other global pieces, are evident. Exploring the

essence of 'Souvenir' or 'Keepsake' definitions is essential, but the true impact comes when creative individuals are genuinely inspired and engaged with the subject. Only then will these efforts truly come to life. The process of creating a souvenir begins with the individual's *curiosity* and dedication. They must be willing to invest time and effort into developing their mental models and frameworks. The interest in producing a souvenir or keepsake arises solely from the beholder.

7. Infusing Emotions through Aesthetic Understanding

Aesthetic understanding is crucial in shaping the meaning and impact of a keepsake. It involves appreciating and comprehending the artistic essence of the subject, whether it be a city, a landscape, or a cultural heritage. For young keepsake designers, having an extraordinary visual thinking ability is paramount. This enables them to infuse their creations with unique perspectives, artistic flair, and imaginative interpretations, making their keepsakes truly exceptional and captivating. By nurturing their aesthetic understanding and honing their visual thinking skills, young designers can create keepsakes that evoke emotions, preserve memories, and leave a lasting impression on those who encounter their art.

8. The Kinesthetic Connection

The adjective *kinesthetic* comes from the noun *kinesthesia*, which means the sensory perception of movement. Kinesthesia happens when the brain gets feedback from muscles and ligaments about how the body is moving. Dancing is a kinesthetic art form ("Kinesthetic," n.d.). In painting, kinesthetics pertains to the physical and sensory aspect of the artistic process, involving the use of bodily movements to control brush strokes, apply pressure, and manipulate paint on the canvas. This tactile engagement allows artists to feel the canvas's texture and the paint's flow, infusing their artwork with a vibrant and expressive essence.

9. Enhancing Artistic Skills Through Dedication

Practice is essential for improving artworks as it involves coordinated movements that develop kinesthesia or muscle memory. Through repeated performance, young keepsake designers can perfect their skills over time, allowing the body's muscles and senses to work together and provide valuable information to the brain for skill enhancement. Regular practice not only helps develop technical skills but also fosters creativity, builds confidence, enhances innovative abilities, promotes consistency in workflow, facilitates artistic growth and evolution, and allows designers to refine and polish their pieces. This dedication to practice enables designers to express their

ideas with greater precision, creativity, and impact in the field of souvenir-making.

10. The Power of Visual Thinking

As the beholder decides to delve into the creation of artistic souvenirs, they embark on developing a mental framework. *Mental frameworks* or mental models serve as foundational structures that aid in proper thinking and understanding of reality. These implicit explanations act as mental software, facilitating analysis and comprehension. Deep mental pre or re-structuring is crucial before preparing the toolbox or tool-kits for clear thinking. In essence, the mental framework is the backbone of their creative journey in souvenir-making. As the beholder embarks on honing their artistic abilities, they lay the foundation by creating a mental framework. Within this framework, 'Visual Thinking' takes center stage as a vital tool. Psychologists who study 'Visual Thinking' emphasize its ability to integrate various meanings from images, culminating in a comprehensive and visible picture. A significant aspect of this process is 'Visual Literacy,' an ontological language or subject developed by psychologists Abigail Housen and Philip Yennwine through their research at 'Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS).' Visual Thinking also plays a crucial role in giving tangible form to the outcomes of abstract 'Verbal Thinking,' transforming abstract ideas into intellectually visible representations. This integration of visual and verbal thinking enhances the beholder's ability to express their artistic vision with depth and clarity.

11. Conclusion

In conclusion, the journey of creating artistic souvenirs is a profound and rewarding endeavor, fueled by curiosity, dedication, and aesthetic understanding. Young designers, as beholders of this creative path, must develop their mental frameworks and harness the power of visual thinking to create captivating keepsakes that hold sentimental value and inspire personal connections. The practice is a key element in honing their artistic skills, as it allows them to develop muscle memory and refine their craft over time. The paper serves as a source of inspiration, guiding these budding artists to embrace watercolor sketching and innovative art forms as modes of expression for their souvenirs. By capturing the essence of a city's natural beauty, heritage, and contemporary traditions, these keepsakes become tangible reflections of the unique cultural identity of a place. Through their creative expressions, young designers have the opportunity to preserve and celebrate their locality, bridging the gap between people and their surroundings.

The example of 'Phuket: A Watercolor Painting Book' stands as a testament to the profound impact that this artistic approach can achieve. Dr. Taveepong Limmakorn's breathtaking watercolor illustrations beautifully portray the splendor of his native island, capturing the soul of

Phuket with intricate detail and passionate brushwork. His artistry exemplifies the power of visual thinking and kinesthetics, as he brings the city to life on paper, evoking emotions and fond memories for those who encounter his masterpieces.

In the end, the journey of inspiring young keepsake designers on watercolor sketching and artistic expression is a celebration of creativity and humanity. Their imaginative interpretations and dedication to their craft serve as a bridge between cultures and a testament to the power of art in preserving memories and emotions. As they continue to refine their skills and deepen their understanding, these young designers will undoubtedly shape the landscape of souvenir-making, leaving a legacy of beauty and meaning for generations to come.

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