THE WATERCOLOR SKIES & CLOUDS TECHNIQUES OF 23 international artists

ARNO ARRAK
DAVID BAND
SIDNEY CARDEW
JOE CIBERE
ELIZABETH COCHRANE
JON CRAWLEY
JEANE DUFFEY
GERALD GREEN
PAUL JACKSON
TONY LEWIS
MARTIN LUTZ
ANGUS McEWAN
TERRY McKIVRAGAN
BEN MANCHIPP
BRUCE NEVILLE
HERMAN PEKEL
VIVIENNE POOLEY
JACK REID
XAVIER SWOLFS
DAVID TAYLOR
LOIS SALMON TOOLE
PIERRE TOUGAS
MANUS WALSH









TURNING POINT

I studied at a technical school specializing in shipbuilding and graduated as a technical designer. For four years, I designed illustrations for magazines and poster firms. I also created illustrations for encyclopedias and other books.

This gave me perfect practice for the use of watercolor and gouache.

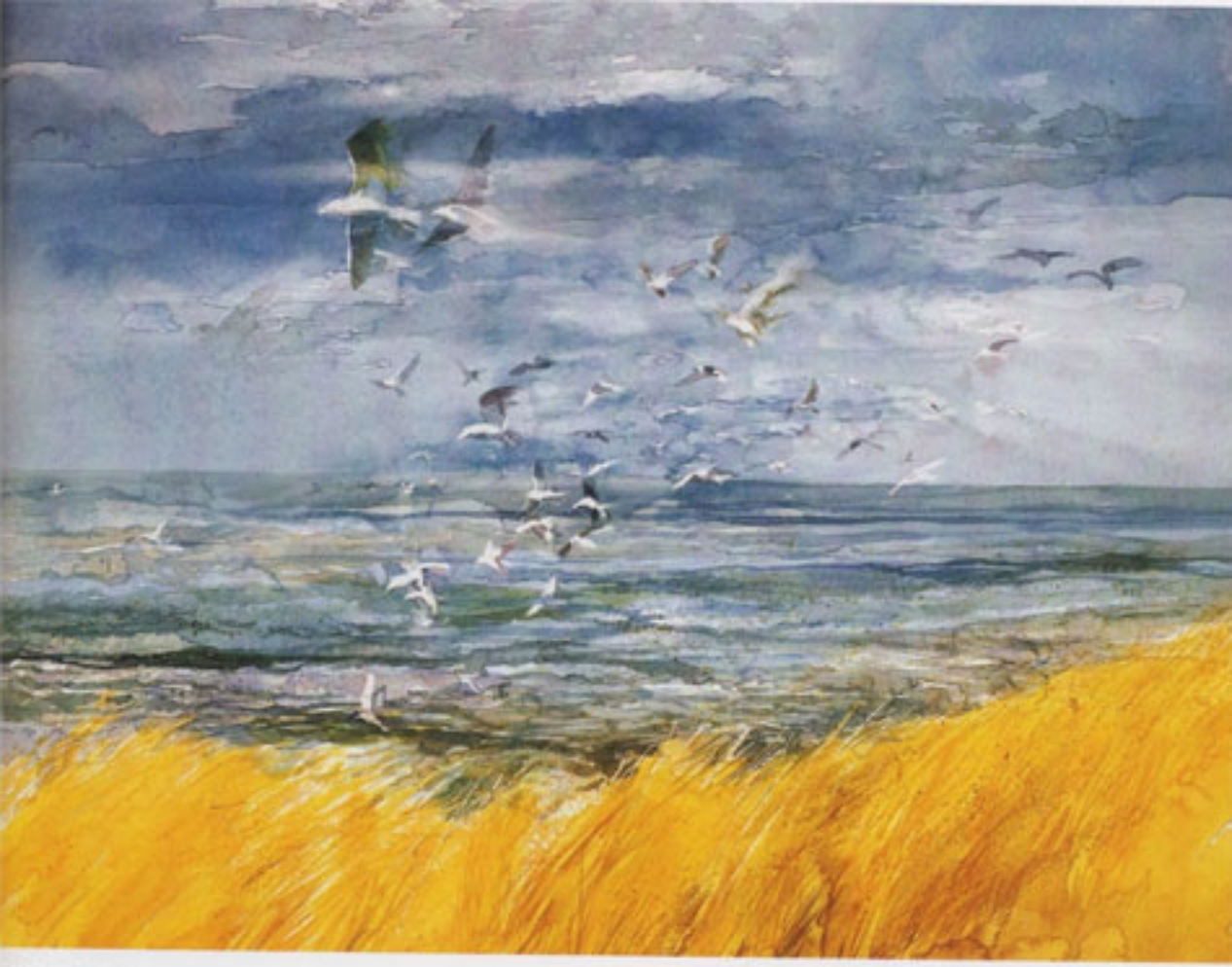
At the age of 35, I started painting in oils, and later, exclusively in watercolors. After the strictly realistic approach in my years as a technical designer, I started to express my feelings with much greater spontaneity.

During the Eighties, I discovered the achievements of the great watercolorists. The European Institute for Watercolour brought me in contact with like-minded artists and I discovered the works of Turner in the Tate Gallery in London. I felt that Turner's mastery and the lasting freshness of the colors was a real revelation. The Austrian artists Gotttried Salzmann and Bernhard Vogel revealed to me a new technique and other possibilities: how to evoke a specific atmosphere and render a feeling of motion with a few energetic strokes and striking color combinations.

NORTH SEA,
22 x 30" (56 x 76cm), WATERCOLOR
To make beautiful skies, the texture of the paper is very important. I use thick paper of top quality with a high degree of absorbency. The special surface guarantees pure color absorption. If I want to make clouds the focal point of the composition, I give them ample room. The horizon line is dropped well below the middle mark of the painting surface.

The movement of the clouds depends upon the amount of water that is used to depict the atmosphere in the painting. During the entire process, I use a passé-partout to get a better view of the landscape, the colors and the contrasts. It makes it easier to judge the work.





SEAGULLS OVER THE DUNES, 30 x 22" (76 x 56cm), WATERCOLOR

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Xavier Swolfs was born in Brasschaat, Belgium, in 1942. After studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, he began exhibiting his artwork in Belgium and abroad. In addition, his watercolors have often been published in magazine articles and in art books.

Xavier is the co-founder of the Belgium Watercolour Institute and of the European Confederation of Watercolour Societies.

He will be the coordinator of the International Watercolor Festival in Antwerp in 2005.

Xavier's artwork can be seen on the Internet at: http://users.pandora.be/swolfs.