



Watercolour by Jake Mol CSPWC, TWS, ECOAA, COAA

watercolours. It is a varnish that is very inert and not prone to chemical reactions of any sort. The purpose is to form a continuous film over the watercolours and paper, thus sealing it and reducing potential damage from contact with water or other chemicals, while also offering some degree of UV protection.

FRAMING: When watercolour societies set framing rules for their shows, the standards should not be detrimental to the creative processes. Creativity should be allowed within boundaries. Some shows look sterilized, and artistic individualism is put into straitjackets and rules of sameness. A frame is not the essence on display. Continue to control, sizes,

weights and proper hanging materials. As for the rest, I am a proponent of leaving it alone.

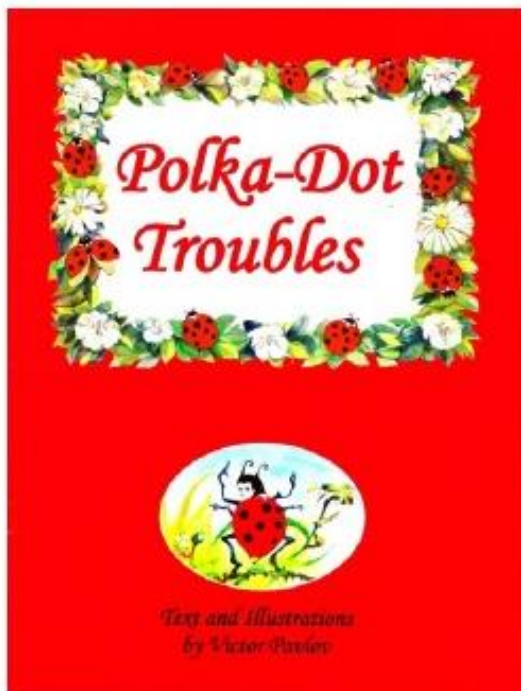
MATTING: The present rule requiring mat board to border a watercolour painting is stifling the creative growth of the medium. Mat board provides no protection, in damp conditions, and on cold outside walls. They are the first to buckle and make the watercolour medium look below par as compared to oils. I cannot understand societies' rules demanding mat-board-only borders to offset paintings for show purposes. What about synthetic borders; vinyl, fake linen, fake wood, or other material borders; or

no borders or frames at all and as long as they are protected and have proper hanging wires?

PROTECTION: Though everyone should do his or her utmost to have watercolours protected, one cannot force everyone to do so. The general public for the most part does not know how to protect a painting. It is therefore essential that societies encourage their members to make themselves aware on how to best provide that possibility. There should be a close and thorough examination of modern techniques, included among them the use of varnishes.

CONSERVATION: Protecting a watercolour painting is the responsibility of the painter. What the conservationists do is after the fact, and often because little or no protection was provided in the beginning. Today's common framing habits by framers, it can be argued, are antiquated and it is suggested in some quarters should change to include varnishing. Past watercolourists never had the opportunity to use modern varnishes that are guaranteed never to yellow or crack and hold the promise of giving a substantial degree of ultraviolet and normal light ray protection for 100 years or more with less than a 0.4% change of colours in that time. Yes, glass would provide extra protection on top of it but would also bring in the nuisance of reflections; which turns many patrons away from watercolours to oils and other media. I maintain that glass is no longer necessary to protect varnished watercolours than it is for varnished oils or acrylics, as long as the watercolours have backing for support.

CONCLUSION: It has become increasingly clear that many watercolour societies and watercolourists keep on producing an inferior product or are switching to other available mediums but they are never as beautiful, spontaneous, or as transparent as watercolour can be! Why?



OWS Fellow publishes Children's Book

"I always wanted to make books for kids," said Victor Pavlov, an OWS Fellow, who is recognized by many within the art community as an artist but not necessarily as a writer, an author capable of capturing the imagination of children.

His latest book, *Polka-Dot Troubles*, contains numerous colourful illustrations that complement the fascinating story of a ladybug as she calls on other creatures in the insect world to overcome her "troubles".

A bonus for young readers is a full page on "Amazing Facts about Ladybugs", and two more pages about "Ladybug Anatomy" and common ladybugs in North America.

Pavlov, in a recent interview, revealed that he actually has been writing all his life, even as a school child in Bulgaria where he grew up. It was one of those old manuscripts from 25 years ago that fell out of a book he happened to pull from a bookcase when he was back visiting in Bulgaria.

Now, obviously, the ladybug story is done but in addition he has completed the transcript of two more stories for which he is busy doing the illustrations.

He laughs about the project as he recalls the words of a guest speaker who, at one of the Ottawa Independent Writers' meetings, said, "If you're a self-publisher, you're not a writer." She quickly added, "You're everything."

As a self-publisher, Pavlov, has quickly learned how true that statement can be. He readily admits to learning about being a 'publicist', a 'distributor', 'bookkeeper' and the many other jobs associated with running one's own business. He nodded in agreement when the task was described as being close to what all individual fine artists have to do.