



COLD WAX
Academy

START HERE

How to get the most out of your Cold Wax Academy Membership!



Jerry McLaughlin & Rebecca Crowell

Welcome to CWA. You have just made a commitment to yourself to develop and grow your skills and your art. CONGRATULATIONS!

Our content at Cold Wax Academy covers an important and wide breadth of education through 4 components:

1. LIVE Sessions - every other week (roughly) we host a LIVE online session where our members can watch and participate live. These sessions are live-streamed to our private Member Classroom group on Facebook. We do these sessions on Wednesdays at 11am ET (NYC). These LIVE Sessions consist of a combination of:

- ◆ **Lessons** taught by our founders, Rebecca Crowell and Jerry McLaughlin
- ◆ **Guest Artists** who talk about their work and process and answer questions
- ◆ **Other guests** with relevant experience such as professional development, creativity coaching, gallerists, Gamblin technical specialists, and more
- ◆ **Painting Clinics:** Our members submit images of work in-process that they are struggling with. Jerry and Rebecca review the work and then share the pieces during the LIVE Session. They discuss issues they see with selected works and possible ways the artists can improve and move forward with the piece. Members are encouraged to ask questions and make comments.
- ◆ **Member Critiques:** At the end of each quarter, members submit work. Jerry and Rebecca review the work and select pieces that offer educational opportunities. They share the pieces during the session and offer a LIVE Critique of the works. Members are encouraged to ask questions and make comments.

You can access these LIVE Sessions by going to the group page and clicking on the video link. That link should be at the top of the page and/or in the 'Featured' link on the menu bar. We start promptly on the hour. If you do not see the link, refresh the page.

These sessions are all recorded and access is available to our members 24/7 in the Member Library on our website. Simply log into your account on our website and click on the Member Library button. Current quarter sessions are at the top and previous LIVE Session recordings are grouped by subject. You can review the list of sessions in the Content Guide at the end of this document.

If you have not already joined the Member Classroom, you can do so here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/cwamemberclassroom> Please note: Because this is a private group for paying members only, you must request access and answer questions about your membership and email. It can take 1-2 days for your request to be reviewed, so please do this as soon as possible.

2. Recorded Sessions - We have been doing LIVE Sessions since fall of 2020. There are now over 115 sessions. They have all been recorded and are in the Member Library. Our members have 24/7 access to all of these recordings in the Member Library on our website. Simply log into your account on our website and click on the Member Library button. Current quarter sessions are at the top and previous LIVE Session recordings are grouped by subject. You can review the list of sessions in the Content Guide at the end of this document. Keep reading for information on how to best use these valuable recorded sessions to maximize your learning and growth.

3. Jerry's 12 Essential Lessons and 6 Mentoring Messages - Our co-founder, Jerry, has a certificate in adult education from the University of Washington. He also studied creativity coaching with Eric Maisel, PhD (author of over 30 books, including: *Coaching the Artist Within*, *The Power of Daily Practice*, *Fearless Creating*, and more). Jerry has taught nearly 1,000 students in in-person and online cold wax workshops and classes and has successfully mentored dozens of artists. During that time he noticed recurrent problems that artists struggled with and behaviors that got in the way of their learning. In his 12 Essential Lessons and 6 Mentoring Messages he helps artists break through those barriers using demonstrations,

exercises, and techniques adapted from Cognitive Behavioral Psychology. These recorded sessions are available to our members 24/7 on our website.

4. Cold Wax Video Workshop - Our video workshop is the next best thing to an in-person workshop. This nearly 7-hour course was professionally filmed over 5 days using a crew of 3 videographers with professional lighting and sound. The editors spent over 130 hours putting everything together. In this video series Rebecca and Jerry teach and demonstrate all the techniques they cover in one of their combined 5-day in-person workshops. They also discuss materials and tools, studio setup and safety, studio lighting, framing and presentation, and much, much more. In addition, they each have a 45-minute segment in which they take a large painting from beginning to end, giving artists exclusive insight into their process.

‘WHERE DO I START? HOW DO I BEGIN?’

Now that you’re here and see all that’s available, you may be asking yourself, ‘*Where do I start? How do I begin?*’ They are important questions.

The answer depends mostly on two things: 1) where you are in your cold wax journey and 2) what you feel is important to your learning. Learning art is not linear. It can feel quite erratic and confusing at times, but over time it will begin to coalesce into a bigger picture. Ultimately, it is up to you to evaluate your own needs and create a structure that works for you. However, based on our experience working with many, many artists learning to work with CWM, we offer some guidance through our 4 modules.

You can work on one module at a time, or you can bounce back and forth. It is really about what your needs are and what works for you. Also, you do not have to complete every lesson in a Module. Choose the ones that you feel are most relevant to your learning, and work through

those. However, because technical mastery is at the core of all artistic expression, we do recommend that all artists find time to work through all of Module 1. The deepest learning will come from working through all the lessons over time. Also, this process is not fast. We estimate it will take most artists 1-2 years to work through all of this material. Learning to paint is not just about reading, listening, and watching. Hours and hours of practice must accompany these lessons. Be patient with yourself. This is a long, challenging, and satisfying journey you are on. (Jerry addresses this frustration artists have about 'The Gap', where they are versus where they want to be, in his Mentoring Message 1. You might want to watch that now, to help give you some perspective and help minimize any frustration or sense of feeling overwhelmed)

Here are our four MODULES.

MODULE 1 - Technical Mastery

This module is focused on growing your technical skills. It is perfect if you're early in your journey, new or relatively new to cold wax, or an artist experienced in other media but new to CWM. (Imagine a professional pianist who decides to take up the trumpet. They understand music but still need to learn the techniques and foundations of playing this new instrument.)

- Read our book **Cold Wax Medium: Techniques, Concepts & Conversations**. If you do not have our book, it is essential that you have it. It is a comprehensive reference and guide for working with CWM. It is an investment in your art and yourself.
- Then, start by watching the **COLD WAX VIDEO WORKSHOP**. The workshop explains everything about your tools and materials and covers all the basic techniques to get started. Learning the basic techniques and understanding your tools and materials provides you with a strong foundation upon which to build the rest of your learning. Consider watching the video more than once, particularly the technique segments, and consider watching them in your studio so that you can practice while you watch.

- After watching the video workshop, we recommend that you watch the following videos. They go in depth into using your tools, developing good learning habits (or undoing bad ones you've already developed), the importance of practice, and learning to understand and accept 'the gap' between where you are and where you want to be. All of these will help you progress faster and develop good momentum in your learning.
 - **Jerry's Essential Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 12**
 - **Jerry's Mentoring Message 1**
- After watching and working through the previously recommended videos, consider taking some time just to practice using your materials and tools and develop your basic skills. Mastery of your technical skills is an absolute must if you want to successfully be able to translate and express your ideas in your paintings.
- At this stage, you can continue to advance your technical expertise and your understanding of spontaneity and control through the following groups of lessons:
 - **Techniques - Layering - Process**
 - **Spontaneity & Control**

MODULE 2 - The Foundations of Art and Painting

In this module you grow your understanding of paintings themselves, what they are made of and how they are composed. You learn to look at paintings and better understand them.

- Begin with the Elements of Art. They are the building blocks of all paintings. There is no particular order to the elements, but for most people COLOR, SHAPE, AND TEXTURE will be the best starting points. If you prefer, line and/or value that is fine, too.
 - **Color**
 - **Shape - Scale - Proportion**
 - **Texture**
 - **Value/Contrast**
 - **Line/Mark-making**
 - **Contrast**
- Once you have spent time with the Elements of Art you could start into the following lessons:
 - **Composition & Principles of Design**
- Depending on your subject and way of working, these lessons will help you approach abstraction and representational work:
 - **Abstraction**
 - **Working Representationally**
- Throughout the process of painting we must evaluate the work and make changes that resolve the piece. We must also be able to edit and recognize when a work is finished (and when it's not).
 - **Critique - Self Critique - Editing - Finishing**

MODULE 3 - Making Your Work Personal and Expressive

In this module you will gain a better understanding of how an artist develops their own style (or personal voice), ways of expressing yourself in your own work, and the importance of *FORM and CONTENT*. Work through the following groups of lessons:

- **Form & Content**
- **Developing and Working with Intentions**
- **Working in Series and Setting Limits**
- **Personal Voice**

MODULE 4 - Everything Else

Everything in MODULES 1-3 follows a relatively logical structure. However, much of art doesn't. This module contains important concepts that don't fit neatly into the structure we have used in this guide. Pick and choose from them based on your own personal needs. You may find yourself bouncing around in this module, even while you are working on a different topic. That is fine. Remember, learning to be an artist is not a linear process.

- Like any field, art has its own vocabulary. Talking about art requires that you develop that vocabulary.
 - **Art Vocabulary**
- Learning to critique your work is critical to making good paintings. This skill is often more easily acquired by initially critiquing the work of others. In these sessions we look at a lot of finished work and work in progress.
 - **Member Critiques (finished work)**
 - **Painting Clinics (works in progress)**
- Artists face personal issues and challenges along their journey that go beyond the technical and conceptual aspects of making their work. In these lessons we tackle those personal issues.
 - **Coaching, Self-Coaching, and Mentoring Issues - Daily Practice**

- Perhaps you want to work with materials other than just oil and wax. That's exciting! In these lessons we explore other ways of working.
 - **Other Ways of Working with CWM (collage, acrylics, encaustic, photography, plein air, drawing, printmaking)**
- Many artists want to have a website, show their work, sell their work, and more. These are aspect of professional development.
 - **Professional Development**
 - **Artist Statement**
- Miscellaneous...here are 10 sessions that don't fit into other categories but provide valuable info (technical information, photographing your work, using ProCreate to help edit and see your work, and more)
 - **Miscellaneous**