

## The Five (5) Consistencies

The watercolour artist soon learns that varying pigment to water ratios allows for a range of transparencies from very transparent to opacity. In my workshops I use the analogy of dairy products to best describe when and why I use particular consistencies



### Skim Milk

The first consistency that I use in my initial *loose wash* stage is a very dilute pigment to water ration that I refer to as Skim Milk. It tends to be very transparent and in a light tonal value range of 1 to 3. In this stage the shapes are abstract.



### 2% Milk

The next application or glaze following the loose wash stage tends to be a slightly thicker consistency and I refer this as 2% Milk. The tonal value range of this application can approach a mid range of tonal values, say 2 to 4. This consistency also tends to be still fairly abstract in nature.



### Homogenized Milk

This consistency is again thicker than the previous two and is used for a wider range of tonal values; say 4 to 6. This consistency helps to define the shapes in the painting thus moving the painting from abstract to representational. Such consistency suggests many of the mid range tonal value shapes that one sees in a painting.



### Buttermilk

As I near the end on my painting I look to this consistency, it's now becoming very thick and approaching opacity depending on the hue in your brush. The tonal value range of this consistency can achieve a greater tonal value range of 4 to 9, again depending on the hue being used.



### Butter

This consistency often represents my final brushstrokes and tends to be the darkest values in the composition. These brushstrokes are primarily 8 or 9 in the tonal value range.