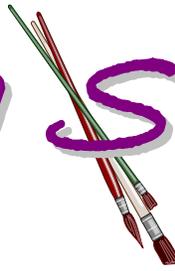




Brush Strokes



By Mary Baumgartner

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“Not a Creature was Stirring..” by Terry McCoy

darkest dark against your whitest white. Think about backgrounds before you begin your painting. Work out how the background will enhance the painting. Try to remember what colors you can blend without causing “mud” in your painting. For example you can go from yellow to red (creating orange) to more red to blue (creating purple) to more blue to yellow (creating green) and back to more yellow. If you add a pigment of red that contains blue (Alizarin Crimson) to the yellow, you’ll have mud. (A better color would be Winsor Red or Cadmium Red). The same holds true if you add a blue that contains red (Ultramarine) to the yellow which will create mud. You must select a neutral blue (Cobalt) so that your green will be pure and fresh and then your yellow must be a clear, cool yellow.

Your subject should be placed near the center but not on the dead center mark unless it is a portrait of a person, building, animal, etc. Direct the viewer through the painting by use of white and dark patterns in your painting. The first color the eye sees is the lack of color—*white*. Be sure your whites are in a good starting place for the viewer. It has been proven that the eye moves in a counter clockwise circle through the painting, so make sure the whites are planned accordingly. Do not have objects that lead the viewer out of the painting, such as a river or line of telephone poles or a strong color that points to a corner of your painting. Capture your viewer inside the painting with no way out.

If your foreground is interesting and has lots of activity, keep the background simple. Let the viewer know where to look. Don’t end up with a boring painting—each square inch of the painting should be entertaining.

Constantly be thinking about where the light is coming from. What time of day is it? Is there other reflected light? Create a “mood” piece making it catch the eye of the viewer with lots of vivid primary colors or a somber gloomy piece using cold gray colors. Keep in mind that grays can be like cement so make sure your grays are interesting and full of color.

All painting media consists of pigments in combination with a binder. Pigments are transparent particles of matter which assume color by means absorption of the component colors of white light.

How to Enhance Your Paintings

To keep your viewers interested choose a common subject such as a pet or a vase of flowers. Have a few “lost” edges in the painting. Use both warm and cool colors and in a flower be sure to change the colors of the petals.

To make a one dimensional painting seem three dimensional be sure to adhere to perspective rules as your painting goes back into space. Also include the warm in front and the cool in back to produce dimension. Make objects turn by placing cool colors near the edge of the subject and at the edges of the paper.

To enhance your whites be sure to place your