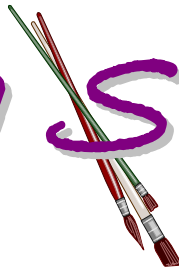




# Brush Strokes



By Mary Baumgartner

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## Telling a Story Through the Eyes of a Dog

This painting was completed in Baumgartner's class a month ago. Crystal Conger was the artist and she has totally captured so much about the dog with her sensitive painting.

The title of the painting is "O Captain! My Captain" and she was inspired by Walt Whitman and his writing about President Lincoln's assassination.

Paying attention to the eyes of the dog, the viewer can almost feel the loss of a famous man. The tenderness and mellowness of the painting allows the viewer to feel the sentiment and age of the dog as he looks at the wielder of the brush.

This was a "commission" piece for Crystal and the members of the class were as enchanted with it as the person whose dog it was. The dog has now joined with so many others in "Dog Heaven."

The dangers of accepting a work of this nature are many and varied. Having painted for so many years and also painted many pieces for sale I know the disappointment from the viewer's side as well as the painter's side. Never accept a commission piece for a portrait unless you are

well known as a portrait painter and know how to cheat a little to make the person look better than they really are. The same holds true for painting animals or anything dear to the heart of the buyer. However, since we all know how to make changes in watercolor, give it a try.

Leslie McDonough painted this picture after a recent trip to Ireland. Her dog shows interaction with the cows, and not only is the composition fascinating, it leaves the viewer wondering if the dog is trying to lead the cows in a different direction.

The man on the bicycle is calling the shots though and he has no intent of changing his mind. Leslie titled her painting "Udderly Ireland." This is a very appropriate title for a very interesting painting.

As a teacher I am always enchanted when one of my students bites off a sophisticated subject like the two shown here. My advice—keep it up!

