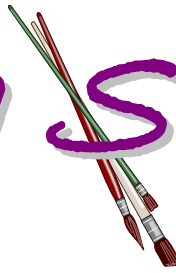




Brush Strokes



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FLY AWAY HOME

That was the name of a song somewhere in time. However, I'm sure that never occurred to this artist when she decided to paint this most beautiful painting!

The motivation for this painting like many of our paintings comes from a glance, a sound, a color or instant recognition of a composition for a painting. Terry McCoy has a lot of these inspirations and is able to continue to make exciting new paintings and different themes. This one is titled *Time Flies*.

For all the new painters in my class this year, the most thrilling part for me and for them is the composition they might create. But first you have to know what that means as well as being prepared to fulfill your vision of speaking to the viewer.

In my list of the topmost items needed to create a successful painting, **composition** remains number one. After that of course you have to learn your paint colors, what they will mix with, your goal for the painting and so much more.

Having taught for over forty years, it is easy for me to recognize the possibility for a great painting. Talking this through with a student who has never painted begins with supplies, how to use them and then what to leave out of the finished work. Now we are back to a PLAN. That plan begins with a size the painting will end up becoming; then there's the sketch which portrays an idea of what the finished painting will become. This of course does not include the colors.

I always encourage my students to begin putting their ideas on paper and I mean sketch paper—not the expensive and fragile watercolor paper. Then start thinking of something you ALWAYS wanted to see a painting of. This may cross many boundaries. For example, a student brought me a beautiful bottle that was cut glass that had a stopper on top also of cut glass. From that moment on I wanted to paint it, but then I had to figure out how it would fit into a composition. Maybe next month's issue of "Brush Strokes" will feature that finished work.

If you have a drawing problem when making your sketch, start thinking in shapes. Since there are five basic shapes—round, square, rectangle, triangle and oval—you have a lot of choices in stretching these shapes or changing them into the subject matter you see in your mind's eye. Then, of course, there's the straight lines which could divide your paper into thirds so that you can place the subject in the third that matters. If it's a portrait, the center would be important. However, if it is scenery or any other composition, think about the vanishing point (eye level) which could be concealed by a range of mountains or by a group of trees or behind the subject you wish us to see first.

There are a great number of subjects out there for the artist to interpret, so go for it!