

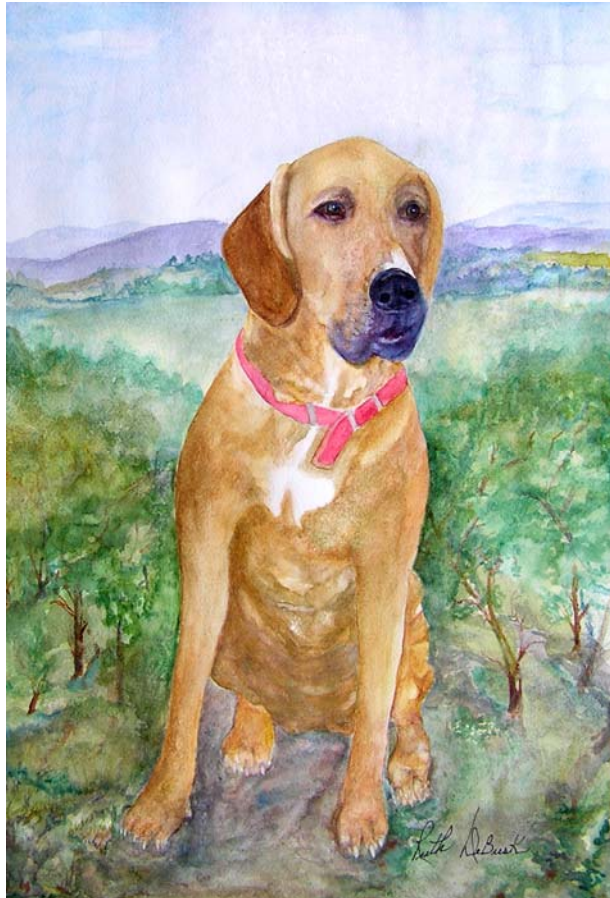


Brush Strokes



By Mary Baumgartner

February 2018 Vol. 11 No. 2



BERTIE'S WORLD

Does this painting of Bertie make you feel like he is totally in control of the whole world? Well, he is. Ruth DeBusk might be able to call him her granddog since she painted it for her son's wife.

The name completely fits the dog and his surroundings. Notice the eyes and how they speak to you. And then notice the nose and mouth. Ruth is one of my most advanced students and when she accepted this project, her experience in watercolor shows she knew what she was doing and knew the dog as well.

When painting a person or animal, be sure to get the eyes right. Remember the eye begins with a marble-shaped orb which is set back into the skeleton face in the eye socket. Therefore it must be placed accurately in your drawing.

What color are your model's or pet's eyes? Is the face turned straight into the camera or is it a sideways view? Where is the light coming from?

Check the color of the basic wash and remember the white space around the colored area. If the eyes are brown, start with a Burnt Sienna wash

and then add the dark pupil as in the case of the dog and cat.

Before painting further, check out where the lightest spot will appear. It will be a better painting if the highlight (a white dot) is created by leaving the paint from that area. However, if you feel insecure with this, use masking fluid for the highlight, and remember to place it inside the pupil as well. There may be an outline around the darkest part of the pupil but break into that outline as well, since it helps to reflect the light. Study the eyes carefully before starting.

Check eye colors and shapes of the colored area. Looking at these paintings, the eyes have another darker circle around the colored area as liners. Study family members' eyes if you decide to do a portrait. When painting the eye, be sure to remember where the shadows are and how they create the look of the eye being back in the orbit. There are shadows of the eyelid at the top of the eye, as well as pinkish or whitish membranes at each corner of the eye.

Another point to remember is how far up the face do the eyes need to be placed. In the cat painting "Charlotte" which I painted you can see the eyes are pretty far away from the ears.

