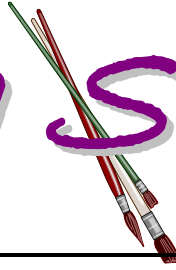




# Brush Strokes



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## MAKE YOUR HORIZON LINE CONVEY YOUR MESSAGE



It's movable! It's up to you! However, there is power in the placement. Think of a painting in terms of foreground, middle ground, and background. The place the earth meets the sky is the horizon line, and the placement of your subject is elemental to capture the interest of your viewer.

In the painting to the left, Steve Anderson decided to downplay the background and emphasize his subject. First he gave the painting an enchanting name: "For Sale, As Is." This alone could sell the painting.

Secondly Steve located the position of the sun in order to identify the planes of the wagon and especially the pattern of the shadow the wagon cast. This wagon is the oldest known dump truck, and it is on exhibit in Ventura, CA in a park there, but of course it could be located in any part of the country with the background he chose.

Artists and photographers have an obligation to understand the levels of a painting or a photograph that make it appear 3-D. And they also need to preserve the integrity of the scene by deciding what they wish a viewer to see first. In the case of the wagon, it is apparent that the intricacies of this wagon will appeal to anyone viewing the scene. The bottom right of the painting is enclosed and doesn't allow the viewer to leave by the corner. Placing the end of a fence there was a stroke of genius by the artist.

Note that the colors themselves create a 3-D look to this piece of paper. The warm colors are in front as they should be; the medium/warms start receding about the middle of the painting, and all the cool colors are in the background. The top right corner of the wagon melds into the sky and a possible cloud cover or setting sun is in the top right of the sky. The beautiful glow of a hill with a soft, lavender mountain conveys the distance between the object and its surroundings and links them together.

To quote from an article by Patti Andre titled "Where Earth Meets Sky," she advises the artist to be deliberate. She says, "You can solve many problems before you start painting by deliberately placing the horizon. Don't just divide your work into thirds—foreground, middle ground, background. Rather, decide what you're most interested in and place the horizon to support your choice. If you don't make a conscious decision, you'll end up with a weak painting."