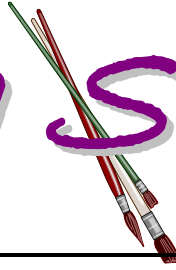




Brush Strokes



By Mary Baumgartner

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COLORFUL AND DISTINCTIVE

This painting is one you can't ignore. The basics are all here: good composition, good use of the medium, but a style and perception that belong to the artist.

How and why did the artist paint the giraffe in this position and with these colors? You'd have to ask her, but the bottom line is that it is successful. The reasons for the success from the standpoint of a teacher are basic: good use of complementary colors; good placement of the center of interest excellent drawing; intricate design because of the warm and cool colors of the foliage and good execution.



Many artists try to avoid being this liberal in their approach to a subject—especially an animal or nature itself. JoAnn Cameron with her painting above titled “*Regina the Debutante*” has created a striking painting repeating the intricacies of the giraffe’s pattern into the intricacies of her leaves and colors.

Setting the stage for a painting of this type must begin with a separation of reality and fantasy. We are offered an entire palette of delicate and bold colors as well as a complete repertoire of animals to capture in paintings. Why not make them distinctive by using varied and unique colors along with your imagination and see what you can come up with.

Becoming a slave to photographs can be a deadly habit and a deadly environment for growth. Analyze how a photograph becomes visible, and you will immediately realize that it too is only a reproduction of the true thing. The processes a photo goes through before becoming something you can hold in your hand or you can print on your printer will enable you to see how many changes occur in the translation of color before you get the end product. This is especially true in digital photography and later the print version of the pixels. Even the best of the Giclee’ prints only capture about 95% of the true color of a painting or print. Without them, however, many artists’ paintings may never evolve into the “print” category of sales.

Think about the painting above and observe the color, movement of the leaves and the animal itself, and how carefully and lovingly it was painted. Make this type of unusual event a part of your future paintings and always watch for opportunities where these factors can apply. Good composition begins here! The final painting will depend on your imagination and skill.