



Brush Strokes



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OBSERVING DETAILS!

When you are painting or drawing a picture to be painted, instead of looking at the picture for just a second and then beginning to paint or draw, change your habits to *looking* for at least 10 seconds and then dropping your head to the drawing for only 5 seconds—then back to the subject to give an even longer look.

The painting here is titled “Flying Nuns” and is the closest interpretation I could get to the beautiful and unique blossoms on the Cyclamen plant. The first observation I made when looking at the actual plant in bloom was how and where the stems

connected to the blossoms. This in itself became an obsession with me since it was the most important characteristic I had become aware of. The colors and shapes of the entire flower, including the ones that had not fully opened their petals then made up the composition. There are some *lost edges* which are important to a painting, along with various colors that run the gamut of the color palette. This is one of my favorite paintings and it teaches a good lesson to students who do flower paintings. Remember your white pattern throughout the painting, leaving the whitest white closest to the darkest dark and toward the center of the painting.

Here’s another one that I didn’t look long enough before painting which meant a lot of scrubbing and redrawing. This painting is called “Everything But the Kitchen Sink” and when I had it finished, a student in my class told me I had the old-fashioned telephone painted upside-down. Wow! What a revelation that was. I would never have caught that, but I worked and worked and finally painted it correctly without wrecking the painting.

My purpose in this painting was to bring in a number of antiques (except the rooster) from memories stored someplace in my past—perhaps a photograph in my album of the stove, and once I had that drawn, I added the other comforting things that some of us might remember from our early childhood.

The best thing to do is “LOOK before you draw.” And realist or abstract—get your facts and feelings correct.

