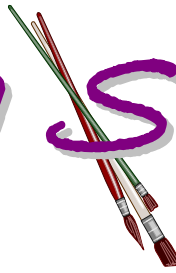




Brush Strokes



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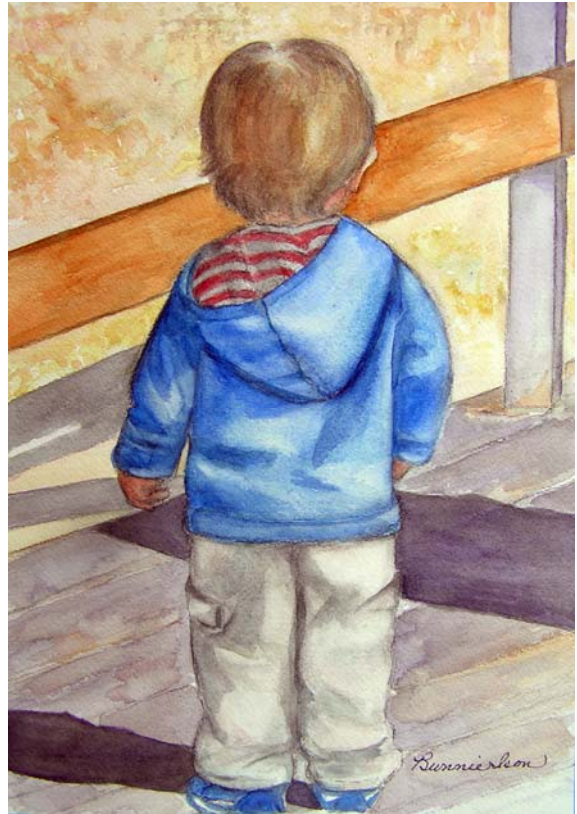
GETTING READY FOR PORTRAIT PAINTING

Thinking about painting someone's portrait? Well, there's good news and bad news. The good news is that it can be done and become a very effective painting. The bad news is that it's a tough job, and few painters are capable of making it happen.

This newsletter showed a figure in the snow in the May issue, and now showing is the little grandson of Bunnie Ison. The May painting and the one to the right captured the essence of the character from the back which is a safe way to plan. Below I'm showing this same little boy from the front and it too is a successful painting. They both had potential problems, but the artist was very successful in getting her grandson painted the way she saw him. And the one below is named "Future Artist."

One thing to remember is the age of your subject. The other thing is remembering to leave some "hard lines" in the clothing since the folds of the fabric need to be an integral part of the design.

A re-occurring mistake for most portrait painters is



painting the skin color too light so the person portrayed looks like a cadaver. I'm constantly telling my students to first mix a skin color from Raw Sienna, Cad Red, and a tiny dollop of Cobalt Blue. Inevitably this first color application is applied too weak and makes the subject look "washed out." Then it becomes a correction issue and can usually be solved by adding a layer of Rose Madder—especially with children.

The best way to judge is to paint the first color combination right on **your** skin to see if it is close in color. I learned this from a student I taught who came to CA from Bombay, India. She decided to paint portraits of her two sons, and she got the color exactly right. I asked her how she did that and she said she matched her own skin and knew her mixture would work.

Painting ethnic skin needs a different color combination. Adding Winsor Blue instead of Cobalt makes just about any brown or black skin, and many variations of those colors. Try it sometime and see how successful you are.

