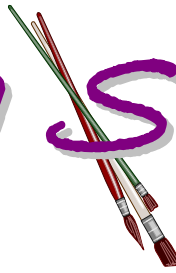




# Brush Strokes



By Mary Baumgartner

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## COMPOSITION, COLOR, CENTER OF INTEREST

Seems like this is again one of those subjects I can't let go of. So many painters just take a photograph of some subject that catches their fancy, get the photo printed, and start copying. When you think of leading the viewer into your painting, there's much more to it than that.

In this painting I encouraged the student to begin by focusing on what was to be the center of interest. She drew at least four sketches of this subject and had several photos to go by. The flowers and garden were her backyard and the bench a neighbor's. But I asked her to think of a foreground, middle ground and background to give the picture dimension and depth.

Terry needed to also think about the three subjects in the title of this article and not go by whatever the photograph revealed. She very effectively placed her items in the proper places and brings your eye into the subject by leaving a lot of whites in the flagstones leading into the painting.



*"Come Sit With Me," by Terry McCoy*

The background is pushed way back with the blues and purples of what appears to be a forest, and the middle ground has enough interest by showing the backs of the bench. The foreground is warm and colorful and feels like you can touch it. She has more details in the foreground and middle ground.

Here's another painter's interpretation of composition, color and center of interest. Penny Reasor painted "Nature Overflows" from a scene she saw in the mountains. She has captured the waterfall and natural vegetation in such a way as once again leading the viewer right into the center of interest. She is a master of negative painting as you will see in her identification of tree trunks, plants and rocks around the waterfall.

Next time when you start to paint ask yourself if you have planned for a foreground, middle ground, and background. Again, sketch at least four line drawings on your sketch pad adjusting the center of interest each time, and then select the best of these compositions to paint.

