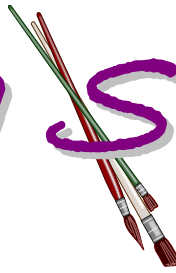




Brush Strokes



By Mary Baumgartner

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THE MANY FACETS OF DESIGN, CREATIVITY AND PAINT

If someone had told me I'd be painting with acrylics on the front of a door in the summer heat and mosquitoes, I'd have laughed, and that's what I did—laugh a lot.

My friend Edna called me one day and said she was painting her “Hen House” (that's former hen house) blue and needed a design for the door. I asked her what she wanted on it. She told me it was up to me. That's what we painters do--create!

The creative side of my brain began to twitch and I thought of the location (in the middle of her flower garden and halfway between her house and the creek with many plants beginning to bloom. She earlier told me that she was going to have to place a porta potty in there because her creek and hammock were not close enough to the house in case she needed one. This gave me a clear idea of the design for the top half of the Hen House door.



She had failed to tell me that the door was in need of repair but we didn't let that stop us. I designed the painting on a sheet of computer paper after getting the measurements and then transferred the design to a piece of clear mylar. Next I projected the painting onto a piece of paper the size of the door which was pretty much the size of my inside doors. Now I had a drawing which was the proper size.

Edna had gone to Hobby Lobby and purchased the five or six containers of acrylic that I needed, and I met her there at 8:00 on a Monday morning. We set up a couple of small tables for the supplies and I distributed the work. After I had transferred the design I began painting the moon orange, and pointed at the various leaves of ivy and just said “paint that” and then pointed to the color. Edna is a skilled ceramics artist and has glazed and painted many pieces of pottery but admitted she'd never painted on a surface with acrylic. I haven't done much of it either as I'm a transparent watercolor painter. But some of my background was spent in designing and building stained glass windows, panels and sidelights. So this was a natural for me.

I'm much taller than Edna so while I was painting the moon, she was painting leaves. Four hours later after the leaves were finished and I had completed the basket holding the plant, we painted in the three chains the basket was suspended from and called it quits. We had laughed a lot, scratched a lot (28 bug bites on my left leg and 18 on my right), and decided to have lunch. The painting was sprayed with an acrylic clear finish, and she has had many praises about the stunning look of the Hen House.