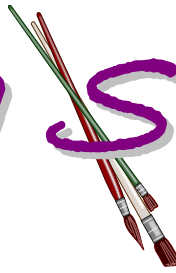




Brush Strokes



By Mary Baumgartner

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How Do I Know When I'm Finished?

This is extremely important to learn! Here are three recent paintings by three different artists in my classes. As you can see they each are painted in the artist's style and color choice.

The top one is painted by Ruth DeBusk and the title is *Prowling for Rose Hips*" and was inspired by years of her life in Alaska. I stopped her just in time as she wanted more detail on the bear in the front chest area. Think about this! More detail would just fracture the bear and help lose its gentle curves and the continuous hair on the body. Why didn't she know this? Because it is hard to quit a painting when you already know you'll have to make a decision on selecting the next one to paint!

The painting with the little bunny is by Susan Hale and titled *Alone and Unafraid*. This painting was an actual scene Susan photographed when the sun finally came out in Tennessee.

She captured the feeling of alone and unafraid, but really didn't know whether she was through or not. It was very complex but successful in its simplicity. Remember that as you decide if it is finished: Does it work? Do the colors flow? Is the message there that you wanted to portray? If you did anything else would it improve the work?

This third painting is by JoAnn Cooper and titled *Fred and Ethel*. This one was even harder to know when it was finished but if you lay a piece of blue glass over it to check the values, they are all correct. And it works because on the color wheel the deep greens, yellows and purples are tertiary colors and practically across from each other but produced by an equal mixture of primary and secondary colors adjacent on the color wheel. Also there are enough "cools" in the back with the warms coming forward where the sun is hitting in the lower third of the painting.

Look at your painting in a mirror which flips the painting, and lastly, look at it upside-down. Now you should realize that you are FINISHED! Congratulations!

