

Tip #56

Drawing and Painting our Canine Friends

I live with cats, at the moment, but I often say I was raised by beagles! I spent a lot of time with my hounds growing up, and some of my first drawings were of these long-eared creatures.

Dogs really are loyal and protective and loving; I miss having one, but until that time comes again, I enjoy drawing and painting them every chance I get! Dogs of all kinds make wonderful models, whether they're large or small, short-haired or long.

These two belonged to a dear friend of mine, and I wanted to share the process of making their portrait with you. I used acrylics in both an opaque and transparent manner.

Art 56-1, Preliminary sketches...

First, try some preliminary sketches to firm up your thoughts on composition and value-at top, a quick gestural sketch just to capture the pose, then, below, a value study to place the lights and darks. I wanted to zero in on the animals to capture that loving embrace.



Art 56-1



Art 56-2

Art 56-2, Color samples

You may want to experiment with colors and plan out what you want to use, as I did, here.



Art 56-3, The eyes have it!

It's important to get the eyes right, so I paid most attention to that, at first. These two were looking up with such soulful expressions, if I had missed that it would be a shame!

I watched where I placed the highlights to suggest the roundness of the eyeball, and tried to be sure to catch that hint of moisture.



Art 56-3

Art 56-4, The final painting

Finally, I adjusted the color with a soft, warm glaze and allowed it to dry. I was glad for the chance to paint these lovely animals!

For more on this subject, please see my newest North Light book, Drawing and Painting Animals, <http://cathyjohnson.info/bookpages/animals-pop.html>.

Be sure to look for my NEW CDs for artists in my Cafepress store, http://www.cafepress.com/cathy_johnson., and watch for my fine arts auctions weekly on eBay, <http://members.ebay.com/aboutme/cathyjohnsonart>.



Art 56-4