

Tip #96

Exploring the basics -- round brushes



Ever since the first artist tied a bunch of hairs to the end of a stick, we've used round brushes to express ourselves-and they *still* work great! Some artists will use nothing else ...you'll be in great company. And of course for many years, that's all that was available! I'm old enough that I still remember when watercolorists started using lettering brushes - what we now call flats!

Art 96-1, Test drive your brushes



Round brushes can come to a needle point while holding a lot of paint and water in the belly of the brush, allowing you to paint fine details or cover broad areas with a good, flat wash with the same brush. But of course you can buy them in large or small sizes - whatever you get, give them a good test drive and see what kinds of marks you can make with them!

Art 96-2, Brush comparisons

Some people will tell you you MUST buy Kolinsky sable brushes ... they're the only thing the serious painter should use. Well, fine ... if you want, and can afford them. But the manmade or manmade and natural hair blends have come a LONG way! They hold a lot of water, they come to a good point, they've got good snap to them - and I can *afford* them, and won't feel like cutting my wrists if I lose a #10 out in the woods! Try out several brands and see what you think...



Size is relative, by the way, as you can see here! The big white one is a Loew-Cornell 8-and the smaller one on the right is a Grumbacher 8. Just buy what suits your fancy, and don't worry about what a book or teacher tells you is The Perfect Brush or the size you simply must have. (But DO try to use as large a brush as you can to avoid niggling and running out of color before you run out of the area you want to paint.

Art 96-3, "Missouri Deep Woods"



I used round brushes almost exclusively on this little painting in my journal...with the exception of a rounded stick to apply maskoid! Worked like a charm for both broad areas and details. If I could *only* have one brush, I'd definitely choose a round...

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