

# DIGITAL PAINT MAGAZINE

September 2010

“Watercolor”  
painting of a  
ballerina

Readers' Gallery

Color Expression



# DIGITAL PAINT MAGAZINE



You are going to enjoy this issue! There are some really fun tutorials available and our Readers' Gallery has picked up also. Fall is one of my favorite seasons for a variety of reasons. Fall color, cool days, workshops all over the place, art shows pick up and best of all...hot cider.

There is a ton going on with [Digital Art Academy](#) and the Magazine. Classes at the Academy started last week and registration for the next session is open now. We also just finished up with our [Summer Digital Art Summit](#) and we had a blast. We had a variety of artists present webinars, some free and others at a price anyone could afford. We are already into the planning stage for the next Summit which will be late Jan or early Feb before studios begin to pick up for the season. The plan is to have a single webinar each month

and the Summer and Winter Summits in addition to that.

The first single webinar coming your way is [Richard Ramsey](#) on September 23 at 4 PM CST.

See ya there,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim".

Tim

PS-If you know anyone who is interested in contributing a tutorial or article have them contact us at [tim@digitalpaintmagazine.com](mailto:tim@digitalpaintmagazine.com)



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Cover

“Watercolor” painting  
of a ballerina

By Heather Michelle Bjoershol

# "Watercolor" painting of a Ballerina

Beginner to Intermediate

About an hour

Heather Michelle Bjoershol

Corel Painter Master

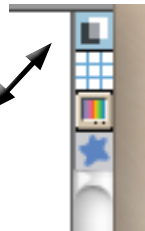
Before you start in Painter, I highly recommend making any color adjustments, retouching, sizing, and color space profiling in Photoshop or similar photo editing program. I've saved my final image as a jpg.

Open up Painter, and the jpg image.

I'll be working from a clone source, so go to FILE>Quick Clone.

Now working from the quick clone, you can see your canvas (right now it's white) or your clone source as a ghost image by clicking CTL + T (tracing paper toggle).

OR you can find this by clicking



the top right of the image on the icon with two papers. This allows me to use only one layer (thus keeping my file size relatively low) but being able to see the original image.

Before I start, I'd like to change my paper texture to ARTIST CANVAS. The paper texture box can be found on your tools palette on the bottom left side. Its default is set to a smooth paper. This will allow some canvas to "show" through.

\*\*\*NOTE on the brushes. I will use brushes in both CLONER (Painting with an image) and COLOR (painting with pigment, or blending) settings. To change this



simply look at your color wheel. If it's grayed out, that means your brush is set to CLONER mode. If it's in full color you are painting in COLOR mode. To toggle, click on the clone stamp icon in the color wheel box. When working in detailed areas, it's easier to paint in CLONE mode. Then I add color on top of the areas free hand in COLOR mode. If you want to change any brush into a blender, simply dial your resat to 0. This means 0% color is being laid down = blending.\*\*\*

Using the brush CLONER>WET OILS CLONER 10> as a CLONER set to:

Opacity 100  
Resat 100  
Bleed 0  
Feature 3 or more

\*\*\*NOTE for Painter 11 users: this brush has a "vortex" issue meaning when you stipple the brush (lightly dabbing versus long strokes) it creates a vortex stroke. To fix this simply open up your brush preferences by going to WINDOW>BRUSH

CONTROLS>GENERAL.

On the Size, and Well tabs, make sure both Expressions are set to NONE and unchecked. Voila! No more vortex!

I will paint and stipple in all of the image detail. This brush removes the photographic pixels because of it's brush attributes. So I don't have to worry about any original photographic pixels showing through. Leave the edges messy as this will be a watercolor.

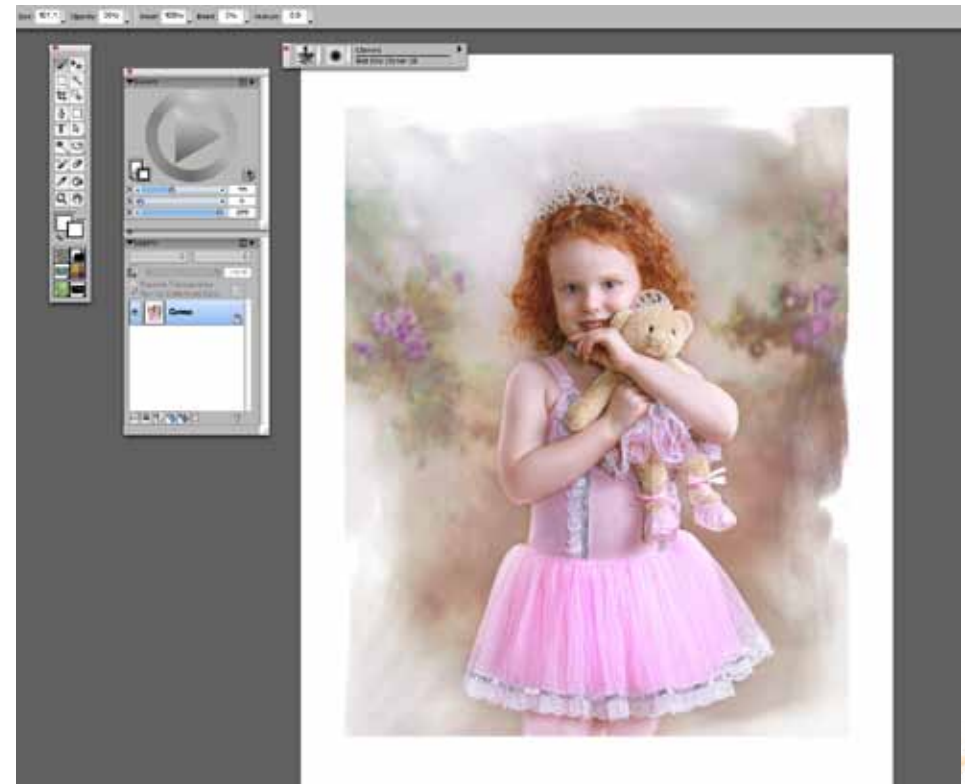
This brush is excellent if you ever overdo an area and just want to return it back to its original

(without photographic pixels) state. Think of this as your eraser.

\*\*\*NOTE - if you'd like to save your brush simply click on the arrow on your brush palette, and SAVE VARIANT.

My workflow is simple: background space, clothing & props, arms, neck, face, eyes, hair, finishing edges.

So let's start with the background. Since this is a watercolor I'm going to give it the pretty "hand painted" edges. For this I will use BLENDER>WATER RAKE as a NON CLONING brush set to:



Opacity 10  
Grain 10  
Resat 0  
Bleed 30  
Jitter 0

This is an excellent blender brush but it must be kept small, under 5! Or else it turns into a nasty monster brush.

I'm going to start dragging white space into my edges painting in various directions from the wrist. Feel free to change the opacity. I go from 10-40.

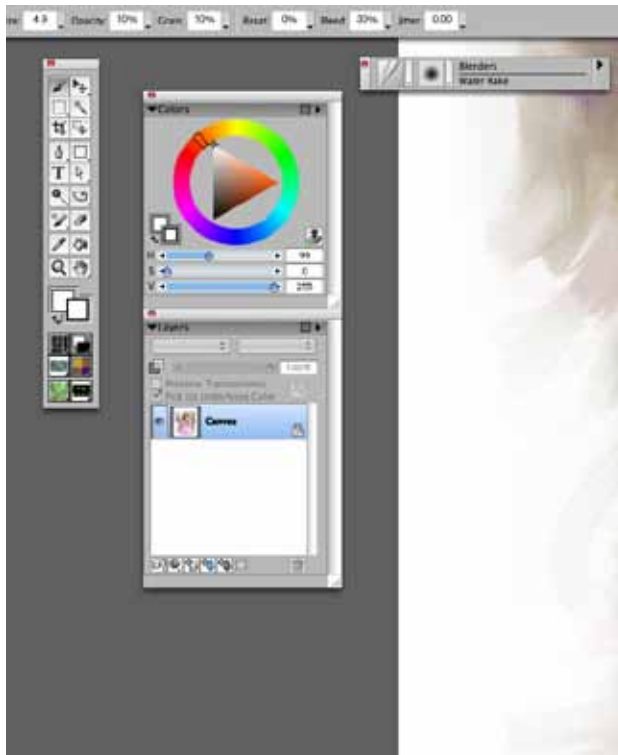


To add a bit of color to the background space, simply add 40 to the resat of your Water Rake brush. Then block in large areas of color. I'm selecting light pastel greens, blues, and lavenders to compliment her skin tones, and outfit. You can also add extra white space to the edges if you'd like.

You'll find when working on the background you will have to blend, lay down color, blend some more, and change brushes to achieve an interesting look.

To blend the background areas a bit more I've used the ACRYLIC>THICK ACRYLIC ROUND brush as a color brush set to:

Opacity 90  
Resat 20  
Bleed 30  
Feature around 7





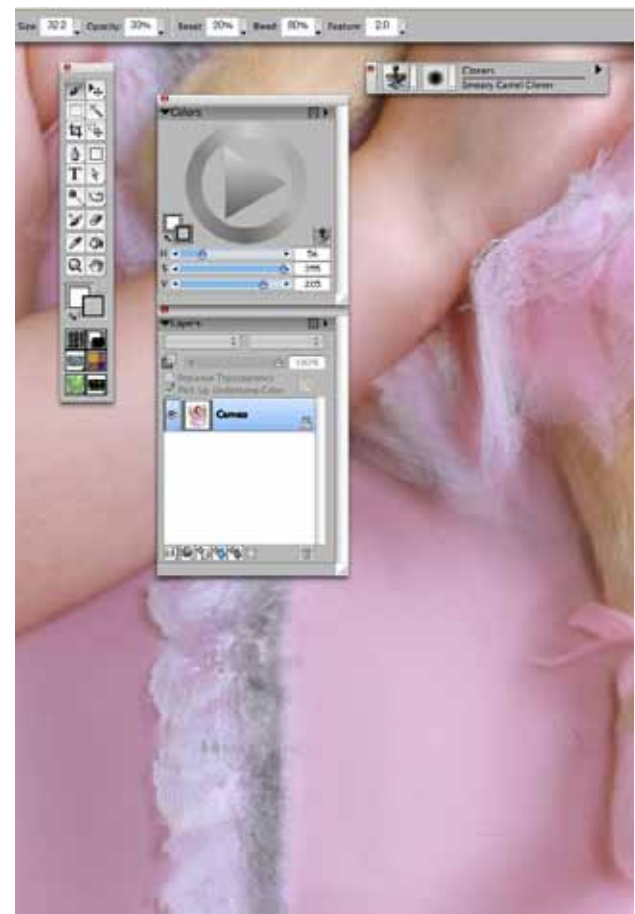
### On to the dress.



First I will rough in large areas lightly with my WATER RAKE brush.

I will use the brush ACRYLIC>THICK ACRYLIC ROUND as a CLONER. My settings are:

- Opacity 100
- Resat 0
- Bleed 20
- Feature 7 (this will change depending on the size area you're painting).



This is important. We need to disable the IMPASTO setting on this brush. So open up your brush controls again> WINDOW>BRUSH CONTROLS> SHOW GENERAL and go to the IMPASTO tab. Now change it so it's only painting to COLOR.

We'll use this brush to blend the dress areas by following the direction of the folds.

I will also use this to paint in color into the dress to make it pop. Simply change it from CLONER to COLOR (click on the clone stamp icon in the color wheel) and add 20-40% to the resat.



Another brush that's excellent to use here is the CLONER>SMEARY CAMEL CLONER set as a CLONER brush:

Size around 31  
Opacity 20-60  
Resat 25  
Bleed 0  
Feature start at 2.5



OR changing your Resat to 0, and Bleed to 80 will make an excellent, smooth, non CLONER BLENDER.

To finish the edges use the non CLONER WATER RAKE brush to blend into the background.

I'm roughing in areas of the teddy bear and the top part of her dress with the WATER RAKE brush. Then to pull out details I will use the Smearly Camel Cloner brush as a CLONER set to:

Opacity 30  
Resat 20  
Bleed 40-80 (higher number = more smooth)  
Feature 2



Use a brush slightly smaller than the area or plane you're painting. I'm following the direction of the hair, and lightly painting the edges.

To add color, I love using CHALK>SQUARE CHALK as a COLOR brush set to:

Opacity 10  
Grain 12  
Resat 10  
Bleed 10  
Jitter 0

To lightly smooth out my newly added color I use this awesome brush: DISTORTION>DIFFUSER as a COLOR brush set to:

Strength 25 (can go higher if you'd like)  
Grain 21  
Jitter 0

This brush looks like you've taken water to your canvas, and blended the existing color. It's also excellent on areas that have too much "bristling" or scratchy areas.

On the skin I will select the CLONER brush CLONER>SMEARY CAMEL CLONER set to:

Opacity 20  
Resat 20  
Bleed 80  
Feature 2-4 (depending on area: smaller feature for smaller areas)



Using a fairly large brush I will follow the direction of the arms. Feel free to take the opacity down to 10. Light brush strokes will make this look realistic. I take a smaller brush and feature to work with the hands. Follow the lines of the hands, and mimic the shapes and planes the light/shadow create.



hitting it. The counter catchlight (the area exact opposite of the catchlight) is the second hottest part of the iris. I'm building up highlight upon highlight here to create depth. Simply sample the color of her eyes (use the dropper tool, or select D on your keyboard) and then making it lighter on the color wheel. Don't forget to hit B to return to brush after sampling the color.



Eyes, to add details, use this COLOR brush:  
OILS>DETAIL OILS 5 set to:

Opacity 10  
Resat 20  
Bleed 0  
Jitter 0

Be aware of the natural light pattern in the eye. The easiest way to make it look realistic is to remember the catchlight is the HOTTEST point in the eye. This is where the light is



On the face I'll use the same brush. You'll have to play with the feature to see where you're comfortable. A larger area will require a larger feature. Follow the planes of the face. I work out from the nose like applying makeup (sorry, guys) and pull it out into the cheek area. As you go into smaller areas, remember to take your feature to a smaller number as well.





Eyelashes. Using the same brush sample a dark color near her lashline, and then from the inside of the eyelid, swoop up and lift the pen. These should be feathery and light. Don't overdo the lashes for spider eyes. The bottom lashes will more than likely be lighter as the light is hitting it and she is fair skinned/hair. I've added some highlights to the tear duct, lower lash lid (where the light hits) and added some eyebrows.

For the hair I'm using the CLONER>SMEARY CAMEL CLONER brush set as a CLONER to:

Opacity 50-70  
Resat 20  
Bleed 80  
Feature 3-5

Using a fairly large brush (larger than the section of hair you'll paint) follow the direction of the curls. Start from the roots and paint outward. Feel free to go light on the edges where the hair meets the background space. Then if you'd like you can take the DETAIL OILS BRUSH 5 to add some light hair strands. Keep in mind where the light is naturally hitting it.



I used the SMEAR CAMEL CLONER as a small brush with a small feature to finish the crowns and voila!!

Enjoy!

#### BIO:

Heather Michelle Bjoershol was born with a paintbrush in hand. From early on she would paint anything with any medium she could find.

In 2004 Heather's work won her top honors in her PPA state convention and a Loan Collection print later that Summer. In December, 2005, two of her portraits, "Little Miss" and "Not a Girl, Not Yet a Woman," were chosen for Ballistic Publishing's "Painter" book. Among thousands of entrants only a 135 artists were chosen to represent the world's most talented digital painters. In 2006 Corel has used Heather's image "Little Miss" in their photography magazine ads in North America and Europe. In February of 2007, Corel named Heather as one of their Painter Masters and has included several of Heather's paintings in their advertising for Painter X. Her painting, "Blue" was featured

on the back of the Painter X packaging and can be seen in various magazines as their ad image all around the world. Several of her paintings are featured in Painter 11's advertising and within the program's revolving gallery. Heather has been interviewed and featured in various magazines such as After Capture, The Official Corel Painter Magazine, and Digital Photo Pro UK. Many paintings of Heather's are featured in PPA Loan Collection books over the last 6 years. In 2011 she will be teaching an all day seminar at Imaging USA in San Antonio, TX on how to utilize Painter to create Impressions of John Singer Sargent. Heather has been teaching Corel Painter at workshops and PPA affiliate schools for the last five years. Her thorough and easy-to-follow Corel Painter tutorial DVDs series "Breaking Out of the Box" have received rave reviews and are available at [www.HeatherThePainter.com](http://www.HeatherThePainter.com).

*"Heather was a wonderful student, and her work is equally wonderful - creative, original, and a credit to her background in photography."*

Helen Yancy, PPA Certified, API

M.Photos, M.Artist, MEI, Cr. Hon.M.Photos. F--ASP,  
Hon.F-ASP, A-ASP,

F-BIPP

Past President, Professional Photographers of  
America

Corel Painter Master

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[http://www.digitalartacademy.com/courses/old\\_masters\\_style\\_painting/](http://www.digitalartacademy.com/courses/old_masters_style_painting/)

# Readers' Gallery

## Marty Hannon

Here are a couple of my recent paintings done with Painter 11.

Morticia was done with chalk brushes

Montana fire call was done with a variety of oil painting brushes.



Montana fire call, by Marty Hannon



Morticia, by Marty Hannon



## Cristie Lechlitner

a creation from her auto painting class at DAA.



## **R. Geary Hoffman**

Suttons Bay, MI

Website:

[www.GHPhotoArt.com](http://www.GHPhotoArt.com)

E-Mail:

[GHPhotoArt@Me.com](mailto:GHPhotoArt@Me.com)





Flower Girl, by Judith Phares

## Judith Phares

<http://www.pbase.com/judithp>

[http://www.pbase.com/davepharesphotography/our\\_new\\_website](http://www.pbase.com/davepharesphotography/our_new_website)



Akera  
Julie

# Marco Bucci

## Webinar August 26, 2010 Questions and Answers

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## Q&A from Marco Bucci's August 26, 2010 Webinar

### Q: Kari Nanstad: What size do you like to begin with?

It depends on my intended output. If the painting is for print, I will typically start around half the resolution that I intend to end up with. I start smaller than my intended size simply because I want the software to move as fast as possible in the early stages of the painting. As I work, I will slowly up-res the painting until eventually I arrive at my final size. However, if the painting is just for study purposes, or for web, I usually will paint around 1000 pixels wide or less.

### Q: Diana Sparks: Have you tried painting with the new CS5 brushes?

Yes, and I think they're great. Finally Photoshop has some tools that compare to Painter (but nothing will ever match Painter's natural brush engine). But to be honest, despite the new CS5 brushes, I still use my ol' trusty custom brushes that I made back in CS3. I can achieve images just as painterly with those as I can with the new brushes. I find that the approach will make your image painterly or not, rather than the brushes.

### Q: Deb DesMarteau: Did you just flip the scene?

Yes, I flip the canvas often. The reason I do this is because as I work on a painting, my brain gets 'used' to it, and it becomes difficult to judge it objectively. Flipping the canvas momentarily fools your brain into thinking it's a new picture and you're seeing it for the first time. In that critical moment, mistakes and little things will all come forward, and you can use that snap judgement to help evaluate your work. I even flip the painting upside down for this reason.

### Q: Marg Scott: What colours are you spraying on to make it lighter?

I think Marg was referring to the airbrush here. I had just selected a big airbrush, sampled the sky color, and subtly brushed in that sky/atmospheric color to 'push back' some of the landscape into the distance.

### Q: Kari Nanstad: What part of Italy were you visiting Marco?

I was in Cinque Terre. Which is really a place so exotic that it looks like something out of a Tolkien novel or something. Being there was the inspiration for the painting in this webinar.

### Q: Marg Scott: What did you say about "when red meets blue"?

I believe what I was talking about was how atmosphere affects color. During a sunlit day, atmosphere will make distant shadows lighter and more blue, while making the light areas darker and more red.

### Q: Deb DesMarteau: Does your brush lay down multiple shades of one color or only one color at a time?

Only one color at a time. I do have a scatter brush which lays down subtly different hues. But 95% of the time, I am just painting with one color.

### Q: Diana Sparks: Do you normally work in layers?

No. I prefer to work on just one layer. I find that having more than one layer makes me too tentative with painting, and I start to 'fall in love' with the layers. It's actually more natural for me to paint on one layer, because of my traditional training. I don't have layers when I paint in oil, so I don't feel like I want/need them digitally. This is a personal preference though, and I don't think using layers is bad!

### Q: Kari Nanstad: Is there a special tool you like to use to

crisp up the edges? palette knife or? Not really. I just have some brushes that have naturally harder edges and some that are softer. I use them accordingly to orchestrate my edges throughout the painting. If I'm desperate, I will sometimes employ the sharpen tool. But that's kind of a trick and I don't like to use it often.

### Q: Dianne Matecki: Do you print your digital or sent it to a lab?

When printing, I get it done by a lab. I don't own a printer, and doing most of my work in film, I rarely ever print my work.

### Q: Kari Nanstad: Do you use the histogram a lot?

Not really. I prefer to evaluate my paintings visually, rather than reading histograms or other statistics from the software. The histogram did just pop up on the screen as I did a quick 'levels' adjustment. But I was looking at the effects it had on the painting rather than the histogram

itself.

**Q: Darcy Young: Do you do portraits? If so, how do you get the light in those paintings?**

Yes, I love portraiture, and continue to study it. In fact, my favourite painter ever was a portrait painter: John Singer Sargent! The light in a portrait painting is exactly the same theory as the light in a landscape. It's all about knowing the temperature of the light source vs the temperature in the shadows, and being able to simplify and organize your values.

**Q: Diana Sparks: How do you decide the shapes and sizes of the lassos?**

Diana is referring to me using the lasso tool to 'cut out' shapes in the landscape and using those shapes to paint within. The shapes that I cut out were decided upon with a eye for being as random and unpredictable as I could. Nature's beauty is in its unpredictable shapes, and it seems to be human nature to over-organize things. So when painting (with lasso or not), my goal is to try and mimic the randomness of nature, but also making sure it's serving an overall compositional idea that I control.

**Q: Gary Silber: Since you can paint with oils and other original media, what makes you also want to paint digitally?**

Good question. Digital painting for me is the fastest way I know of to get my ideas out. Not only that, but I can use the exact same techniques digitally as I can traditionally. So digital is excellent practice, requires no set up, no clean up, and it's fun on top of all that! For me, my traditional painting influences my digital painting, and vice versa.

**Q: Darcy Young: Did you make all your brushes?**

Yes and no. I often start with a Photoshop default brush (I love to look in the Dry Media presets), and then modify that brush in the Brushes window. I'll add a texture to it, or adjust the spacing, or maybe add some shape jitter, or something to make it more custom. Other brushes, like my airbrush and round brush, are straight out of the box.

**Q: Marg Scott: Could we see what type of hue?**

Marg was asking what color I was painting with. My answer was that

yes, I can show you what color I'm painting with, but that really is not important. What is important is the relationships of color you are putting down. Half the time I don't even know what color I'm picking or mixing. What I do know is whether or not it is warmer or cooler than the colors next to it. In my class with DAA I break this down considerably.

**Comment from Paula Jo Nyman: Your class scares me because I just am not a painter from imagination!**

Yes it can be scary to abandon all reference and try to paint from imagination. Do you know how many times I've failed at doing that? Lots. Especially in my earlier days, where I simply did not have the mental library of light built up enough to pull from. But I think the most important 'step' I ever took in my art was acquiring the bravery and ability to break free of reference. I should state here that I still enjoy painting from reference too. I don't know how everything looks and occasionally I need to pull up a photo, or google something before I paint. But even when I do use reference, I can look at it with a critical eye, with the authority to change it where needed. Reference is never perfect, and I do believe that if you need reference 100% of the time, that is an unfortunate limitation. But the good news is it's possible to break beyond it, and my class will give you the tools to eventually get there!

**Response from Tim:** Paula, I get that. It has been 30 years since I painted or drew from my imagination and I never really developed the skill. It is terrifying, that is one of the reasons I am going to love this class. I know if I am afraid of something that I am standing on the brink of breaking through to a new level when I begin to embrace that which I am afraid of in my art. I believe that is one of the secrets to continued growth and now I am to the point where I look for areas that I am afraid of. One of the things I learned as a combat photographer that has served me well in creative development and in fact my life in general....Action conquers fear. So it's a good thing. My guess is that many people are in the same boat with that so we won't be alone.

YES! I completely agree. I used to be scared senseless of it too. Even before this webinar, I felt a bit of fear knowing that I was about to present to 30+ people, without any idea of what I was going to paint.

But I know myself enough to know that once I start, I will find my element and get through it. I'm sure you are like that too. Also, in my class I will be there to help you, not judge you. So now is the time to start :)

**Q: Pat DeMars: Marco, will you be painting human portraits during your class?**

Probably not. I find landscapes to be a more effective tool to demonstrate foundations like light, color, value, edge, etc. Anything I say in my class does apply to portraits as well...I just will not be using them for my examples.

**Comment from Deb DesMarteau:** So many of us work from photographs and the atmospheric perspective and cool-warm relationships don't appear. It's an unfortunate truth that a regular camera doesn't really capture what your eyes see. Not even close, actually. This is why I am a big proponent for painting from life. That is where the true information lies. Having said that, photographs are fantastic for other types of reference...like drawing.

**Comment from Diana Sparks:** Tim, sign Marco up for a portrait class!

**Tim O'Neill:** yep - we need to work on Marco for a portrait series

**Darcy Young:** I'm in [for the portrait class]!!

Well, Tim and I have not yet talked about a portrait class at the time that I write this, but that could definitely happen in the future!

**Q: Louise Rapoza 2:** What program are you using?

I am using Adobe Photoshop CS3. But the ideas and tool used in my webinar apply to every software, and even traditional media.

**Q: Diana Sparks:** Do you sell prints of your work?

I do have a book published, which is available to order from my website: [www.marcoBUCCI.com](http://www.marcoBUCCI.com). Individual prints are not available yet, but due to a higher demand I've been getting for them recently, expect that to come soon! Thank you everybody for attending/purchasing the webinar.

Please feel free to visit my website at: [www.marcoBUCCI.com](http://www.marcoBUCCI.com)

You can find Marco's previous webinar from June of 2010 at:

<http://www.digitalpaintmagazine.com/blog/404/digital-painting-with-marco-bucci/>

<http://www.digitalartacademy.com/courses/from-traditional-to-digital-paintingfundamentals/>

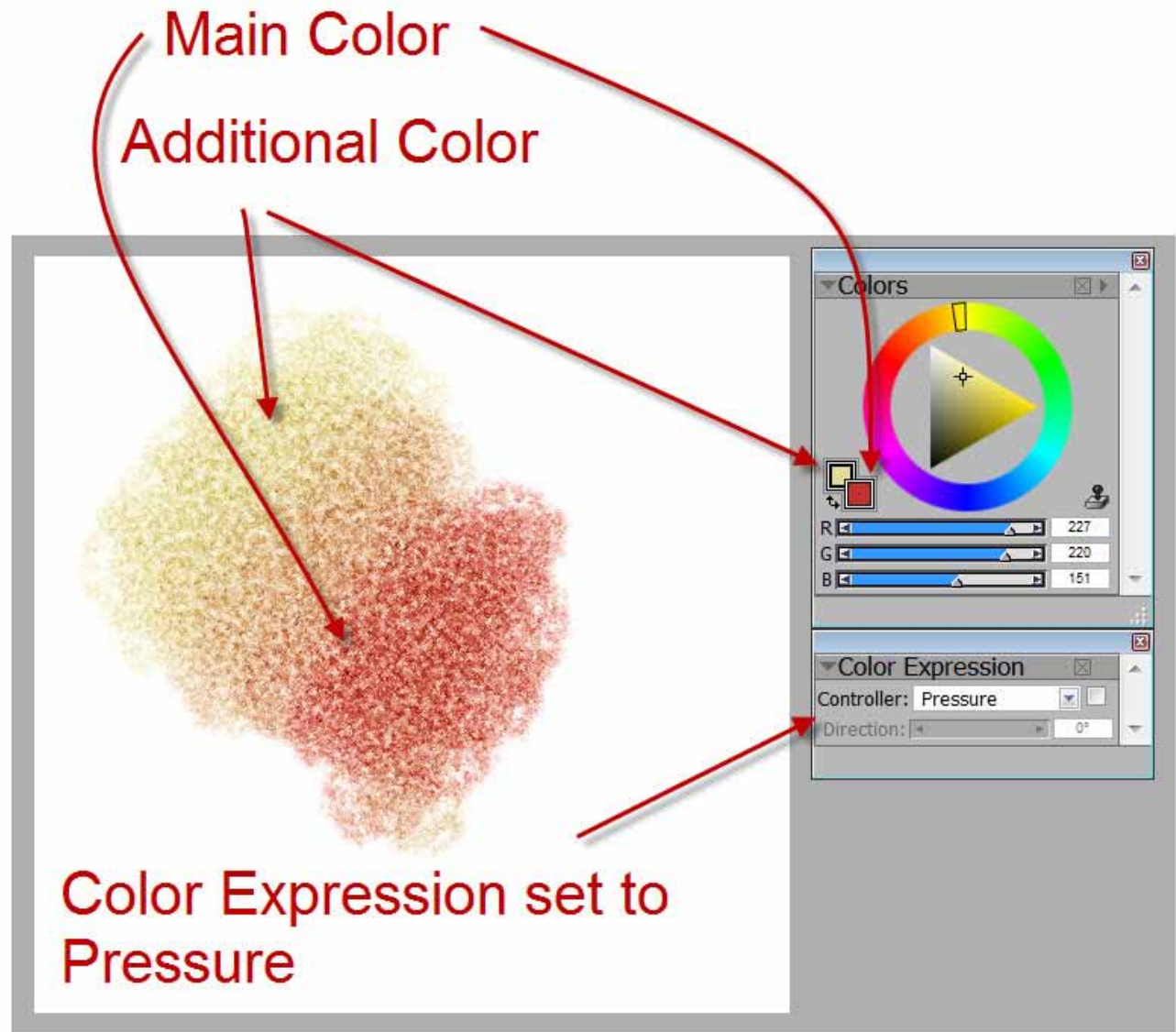
If you have a favorite teacher or artist that you would like to see in a webinar let us know at [tim@digitalartacedmy.com](mailto:tim@digitalartacedmy.com).

We are planning one webinar a month and another Summit in the late winter.



# Color Expression

Color Expression is one of those little used but very useful color palettes in Painter. In a nutshell, Color Expression allows certain variants to paint with two colors instead of one. For instance setting the Color Expression Palette to Pressure, the variant paints with the Additional Color with light pressure, the Main color with heavy pressure, and a mix of the Additional Color and Main Color with medium pressure.

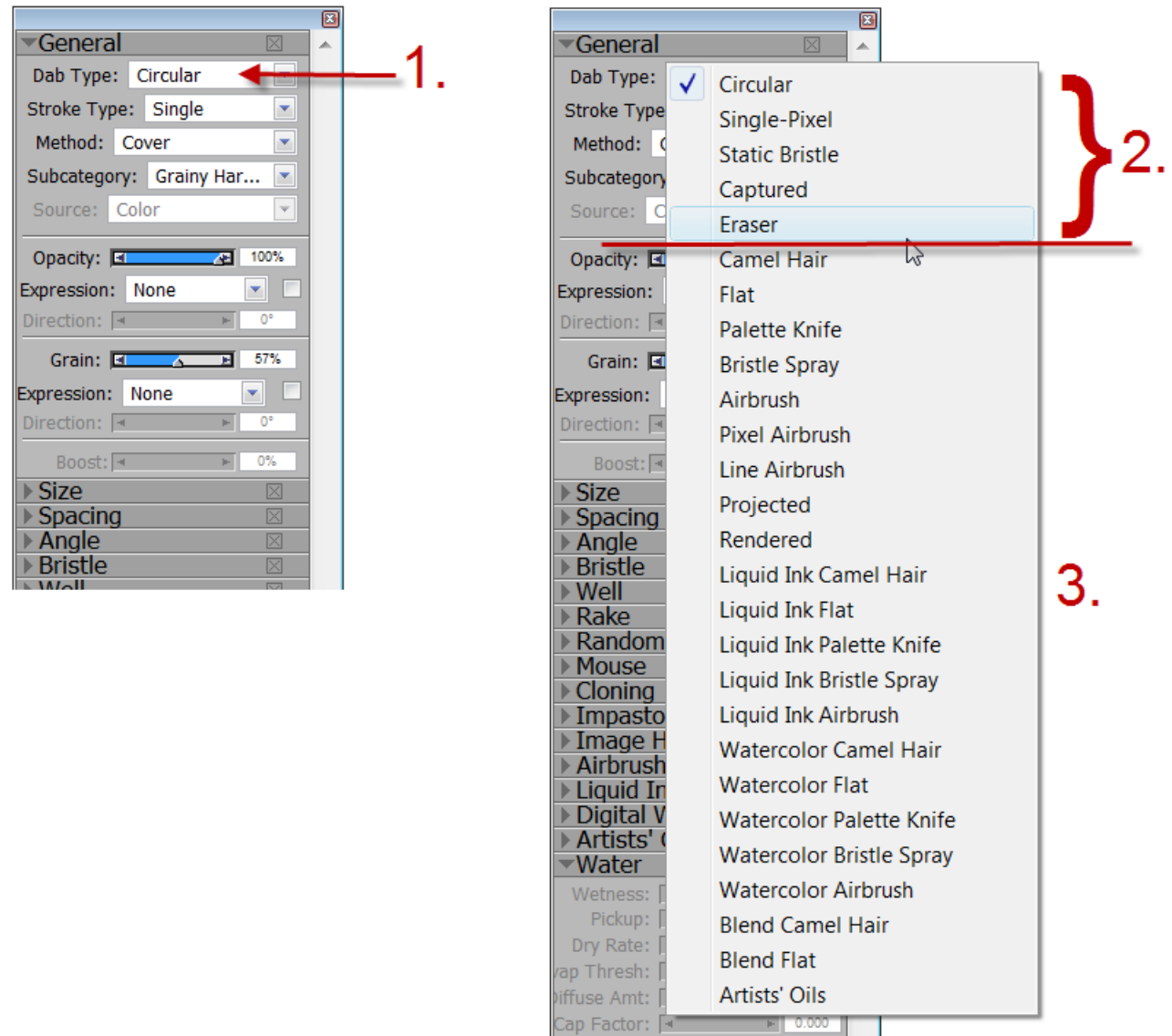


**RIGHT CLICK**  
Skip Allen

Let's start at the beginning. To follow along in Painter 11 with this tutorial, open the Color Expression Palette (Window > Color Palettes > Color Expression) and the General Palette from the Brush Control Group Palette (Window > Brush Controls > General).

Not all variants can use Color Expression; it depends on the variant's Dab Type.

## Dab Types and Color Expression



**Brush Dab Type** can be found in the **Brush Control Palette Group > General Palette**.

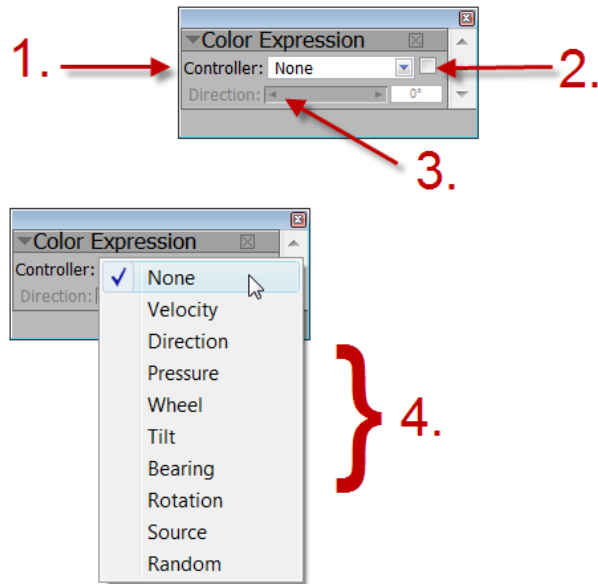
1. When you click on the **Dab Type** drop down menu, you will see a variety of named **Dabs**.

2. The first five are based on **Dabs** and will work with **Color Expression**.

3. The rest of the **Dab Types** are based on **Rendered Dabs** and cannot be used with **Color Expression**.

Let's take a look at the **Color Expression Palette**:

## Color Expression Palette

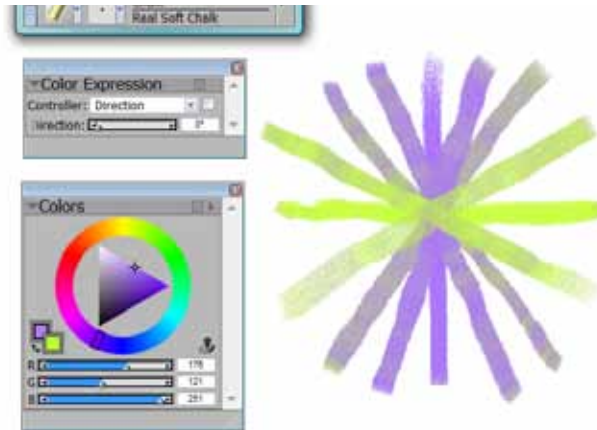


**1.** The **Color Expression Palette** at first glance looks pretty simple, but don't be fooled. This little baby is extremely powerful and offers lots of tricks. The **Controller** is the main control for this palette. It has a drop down menu shown in item #4.

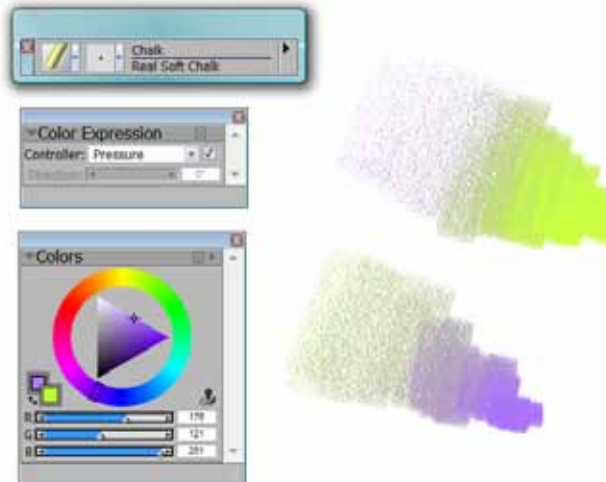
**2.** This small box is the **Invert** box. When checked, Painter reverses the paint application order.

**3.** When the **Controller** is set to **Direction**, the **Direction Slider** will become active. With it, you can adjust the direction to the degree, The angle that is set will be the starting point for the **Main/Alternative Color** stroke.

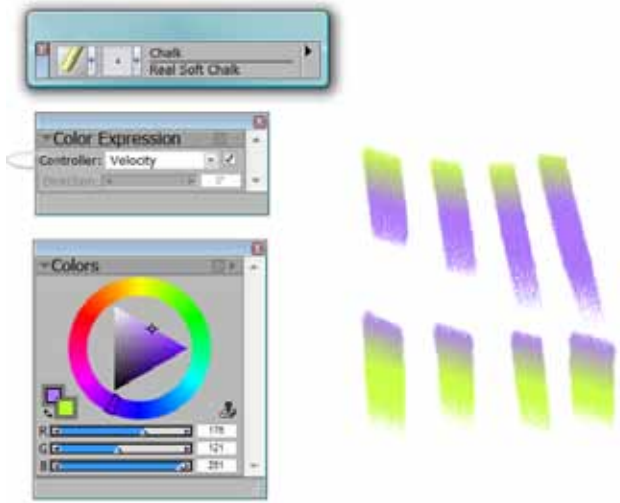
**4.** The list of **Expressions** that will alter the color on the brush.



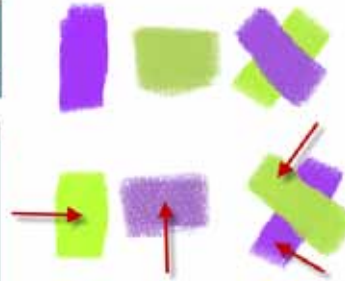
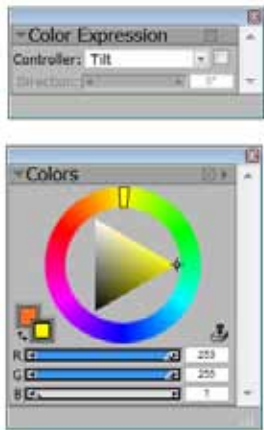
With direction selected as the Controller, a horizontal stroke uses **Main Color**, vertical uses **Additional Color**.



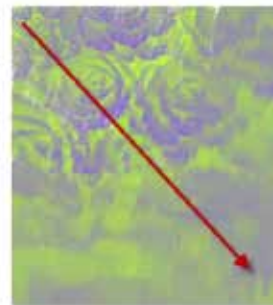
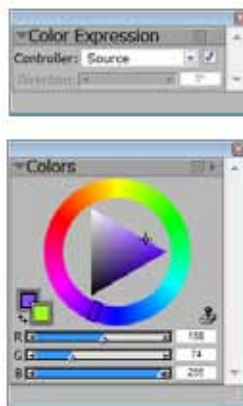
The above example is using pressure and the first brush stroke from light to dark uses **Additional to Main**. The next brush stroke was made with the **Invert** box checked therefore the order of the color is reversed.



**Velocity** is the **Expression** used here and like in the previous example, the first set of marks were done without the **Invert** box checked, but it was checked with the second set. **Velocity** is the speed used to make the stroke.

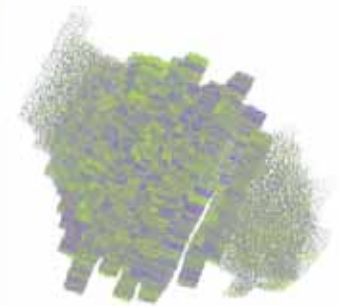


The best way I know how to describe **Bearing** is that it is the direction the top of the stylus or pen is pointing. The arrows above are showing the direction the stylus is pointing. The first set of marks did not have the **Invert** box checked. I found it difficult to manipulate the stylus to create shading with **Bearing**, but with most Painter functions, practice develops good skills. But then I am not very disciplined, which means I don't practice enough.



**Source** could be really fun. The **Source** is whatever you have selected as the **Clone Source**; if no **Clone Source** is selected,

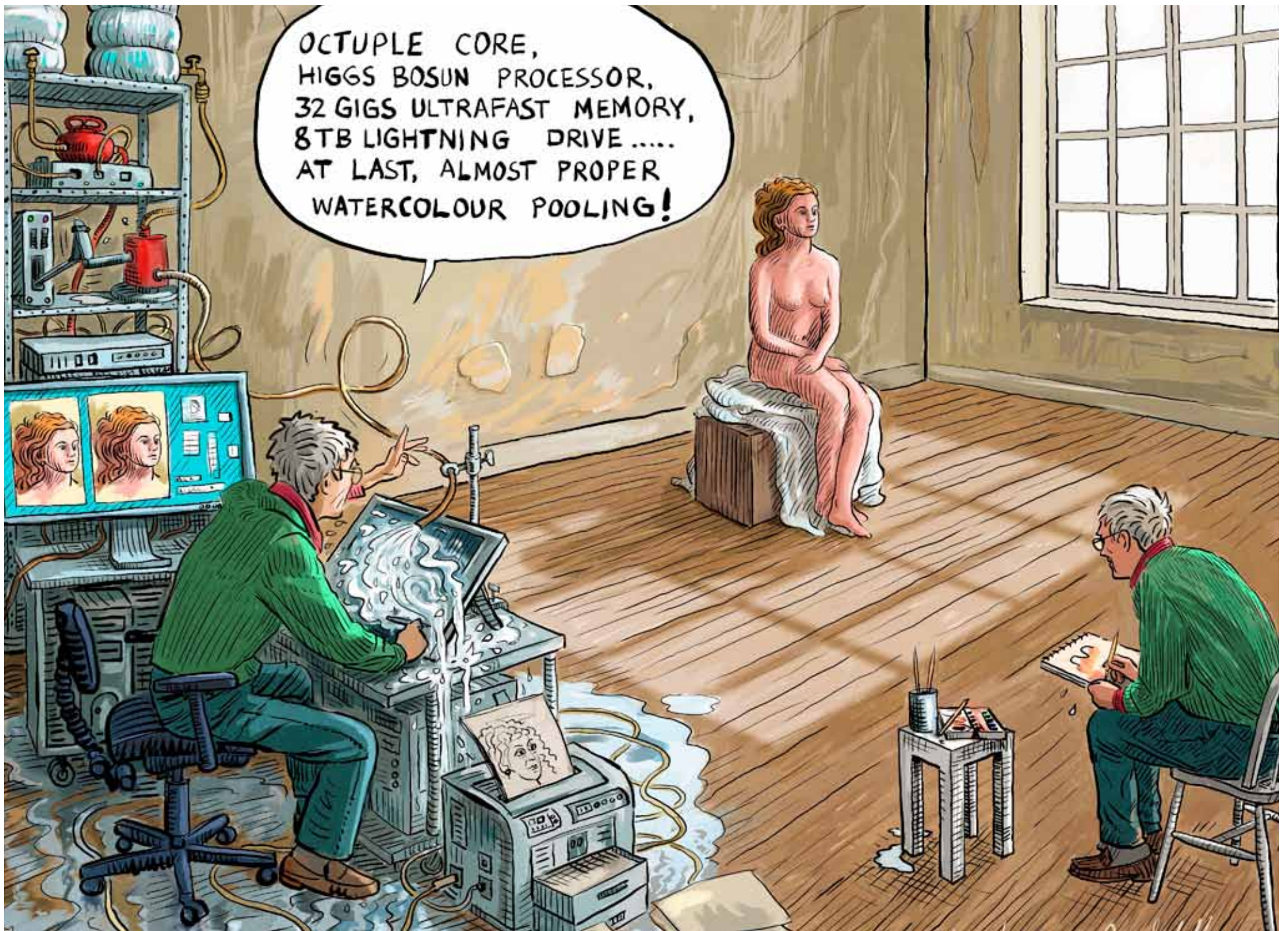
the default is the pattern called **Hens and Chickens**. In the illustration above, I started with the Real Chalk Variant at a small size and gradually increased the size in the direction of the arrow. You essentially get a grey scale drawing of the Hens and Chickens, but the **Main and Additional Colors** are being used. The current pattern in the Pattern Palette will be used as the source.



**Random Expression** works as you expect. It seemed the harder pressure created striated marks and lower pressure blended the colors better.

**Rotation** and **Wheel** are used with specific Wacom pens, the art pen and airbrush respectively.

For my money, Pressure is the best expression to use with Color Expression. But that is a personal preference. Give Color expression a try and decide which expression you might like best.



<http://cargocollective.com/victorlunnroc>

Victor Lunn-Rockliffe

# Marketing Buzz

By Tim O'Neill

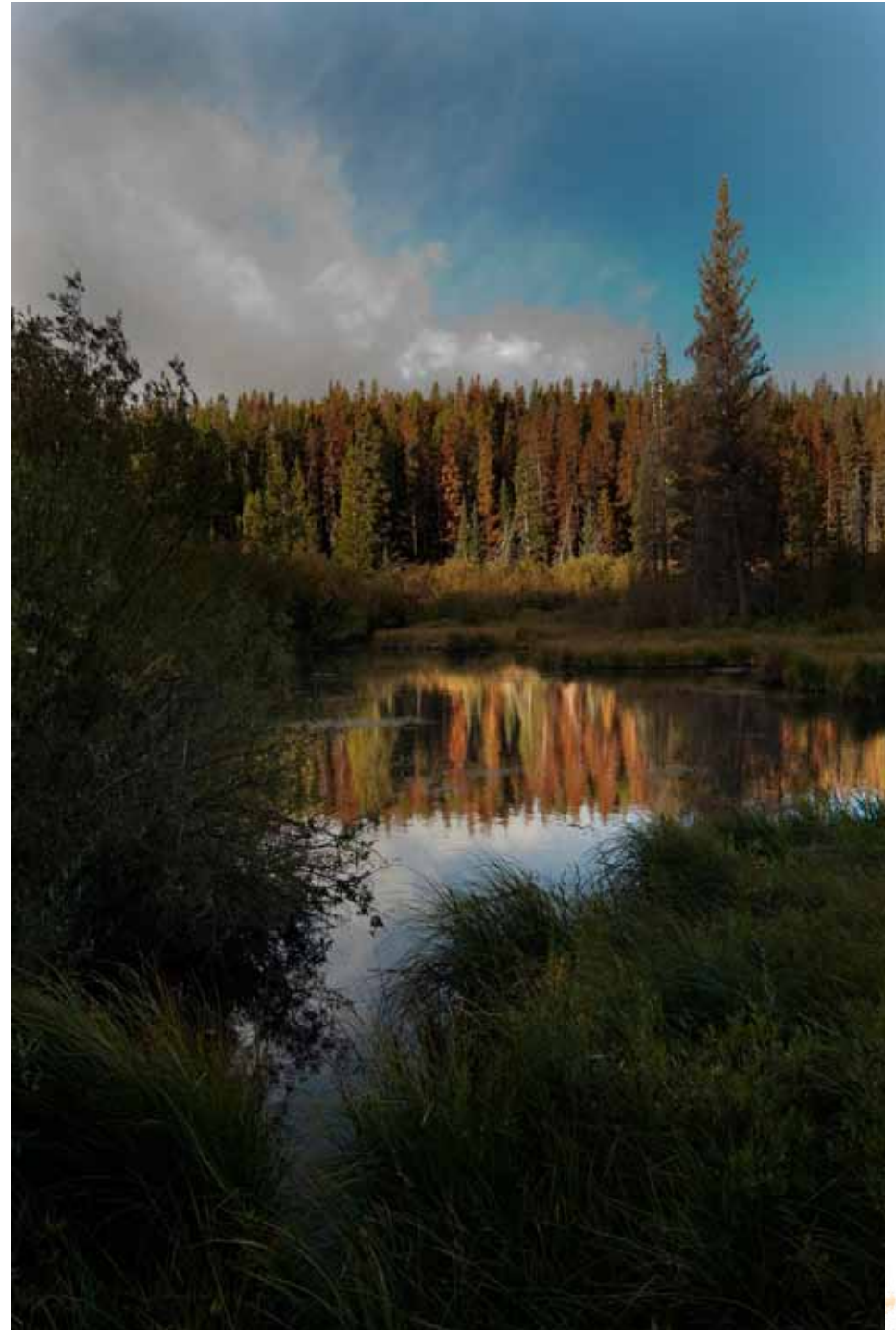
## Finding your Passion

Labor day weekend is a big deal in my family. For over forty years family and friends get together and camp in the mountains of Wyoming. For a work-a-holic it is sometimes a trying weekend not being able to work for an entire three days. It is always a blast and very restful. This year was no different.

As I sat amongst the pines listening to the river babble on its journey toward the ocean I was able to reflect on the many blessings in my life. Of course my family and the people in my life are the biggest blessing but I also find myself giving thanks for being able to pursue my passion. To actually do something for a living that was thought out and pursued with vigor. It wasn't always that way. In fact just a few short years ago I was stuck in an office in the corporate world of high finance and investment brokering. Not that there is anything wrong with that at all....it just isn't what I wanted to do.

From a young age I wanted to be an artist. Directly from high school I went to the US Navy to pursue my dream of being a professional photographer. It was a great start and the fundamentals I learned during that time still serve me today. Somewhere along the line things changed. I grew older and more mature and began listening to "them".

As a third year fine art student with a family to support the conventional wisdom was that fine art was not a "good living". I listened and changed my major from fine art to finance and accounting and for the next 20 years only pursued my art "part-time". That one little change has been the biggest "wrong" decision in my life. Not that finance and accounting were bad, but because they were not a fit for me. While I made a decent living and was truly thankful for the entrepreneurial skills that came as a by-product of pursuing that path, I realized the pursuit of passion is what really would drive happiness in my life. So enter the change. I reworked my business plan several



years ago with an eye towards what my true passion and dreams were. I wanted to control what my vision of success was so my business plan was much different to the hundreds of plans I had written or read as a part of my other business pursuits. The key focus was on happiness and giving rather than revenue production. I decided that the dollar part of things would be there anyway so that part of the plan was loosely structured and certainly would not have passed muster in the investment and finance game.

Following your passion brings personal power and awakens yourself to a part of the world that most folks never get to see. It leads you to the heart of spiritual journey as it changes your thoughts, perceptions, and feelings. Finding your passion does not promise an easy life of riches but rather a rich life open to hopes and possibilities. So I want to share with you a few things that might set someone down the path of pursuing your passion. It's never too late.

1. Speak your truths clearly - To find your passion you must speak your truths and ready yourself to new adventures. Do you know what really matters to you? What truly makes you happy? Know the things you do best and that make you feel complete.
2. Be open for support - You must also keep in mind that you are not an



isolated being – you need the support of family, friends and positive-minded social circle that will help you reach your goals. Be sure and listen to the right people. The right people are the ones that hear what you want to do and instead of trying to talk you out of “another crazy idea” they support you with ways that it can happen, not reasons why it wont happen.

3. Give yourself a time for pleasure – Imagine waking up in the morning away from busy schedules and having the freedom to do the things that bring you pleasure. To find your passion you must allow yourself a time for pleasure. For many people, allowing pleasures induces guilt as it is not productive and hinders you from getting important things accomplished. But this view of pleasure is actually a matter of opinion. Gentle pleasures are good for your health and are productive. By allowing yourself time for pleasure you become more focused and passionate in your job or business.

4. Liberate yourself - A person who finds their passion is a truly wise person. Doing a work that reflects your personality and values promises you lifelong happiness and contentment. It is easier and liberating when we accept who we are and we allow other people to accept us too. The human psyche is a holistic system, to numb one part of our being is

to numb the rest and create constant struggle.

5. Feed yourself with affirmations - Affirmations are important in finding your passion in life as it makes you feel secure and optimistic about reaching your goals. A lot of people don't get to their destinations because of the fear of failure. Embrace failure as part of the process. As far as fear goes that is normal but just remember, "action conquers fear". Daily affirmations help stem the tide of naysayers, fear and other negative attributes that are sure to seek you out as you start your journey.

Finding your passion is an endless song. When you do the things that you are passionate about you allow your life to flourish. You let yourself connect to everything you are – in mind, in heart, and in spirit. You are stronger at facing challenges because you are reinforced by being able to do the things you love. You feel more alive, positive, self-respecting, and determined. You live your life with confidence, purpose and high morale.



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Richard Ramsey

