

Digital Painting

With Corel Painter & Adobe Photoshop

By Brad Grigor

What is Digital Painting / Art?

- ▶ Digital Painting – the emerging art form in which traditional painting techniques such as watercolor, oils, impasto, etc. are applied using digital tools by means of a computer, a digitizing tablet and stylus, and software.
- ▶ Digital Art – an umbrella term for a range of artistic works and practices that utilize digital technology

Digital Painting – Pros

- ▶ No mess
- ▶ Less waste
 - You consume materials only when you print
- ▶ Virtually unlimited flexibility & options
 - Can do things not achievable with traditional media
- ▶ Direct workflow for prints, web sites, books, publications, merchandizing, etc.
 - Reproduction costs are much lower
- ▶ No physical storage of “originals”
- ▶ Can “Undo”

Digital Painting – Cons

- ▶ “The Art World” doesn’t get it (yet)
 - Still hung up that the “Original” is a computer file, not a tangible entity
 - Still hung up that the work is easily reproduced
 - Still hung up on misconception that “it’s too easy, just push a button and the computer does it all”
- ▶ Steep learning curve
 - Heavy on technology
- ▶ High cost of entry

Cost of Entry

▶ Computer	\$1500+
▶ Tablet	300+
▶ Software	500+
▶ Printer	1000+
▶ -----	
▶ TOTAL	\$3300+

TIPS:

1. You might already have a suitable computer.
2. You can “farm out” the printing
3. Many inexpensive and free software options exist. E.g. Adobe Photoshop Elements and Corel Painter Essentials are bundled with cameras and tablets.

The Computer – Don't Get Too Religious



TIPS:

1. PC or Mac – they both work fine.
2. Get as much power as you can afford. Digital Painting is fairly demanding.
3. Don't be overly swayed by Apple's clever "I'm a Mac" ads.

The Tablet



Wacom
Tablet

TIPS:

1. I recommend getting a genuine Wacom tablet.
2. Intuos is the “pro” series, but the “Bamboo” or “Graphire” will also work (with somewhat less functionality).

The Software



Corel
Painter



Adobe
Photoshop

TIPS:

1. The software is your focal point. Painter and Photoshop have the greatest industry support.
2. On a budget? Consider Corel Painter Essentials, ArtRage Deluxe or Adobe Photoshop Elements. However, these programs have less power and fewer features.

The Printer



13" x 19"
\$700 - \$1000



17" x 22", Rolls
\$1500 - \$3000



Wide/Large Format
24" and larger
\$2800 and up

TIPS:

1. Art printing needs something larger than letter or legal size.
2. Look for at least 6 "colours" in separate ink cartridges.
3. Consider "farming out" your printing to a qualified shop.

Photoshop or Painter?



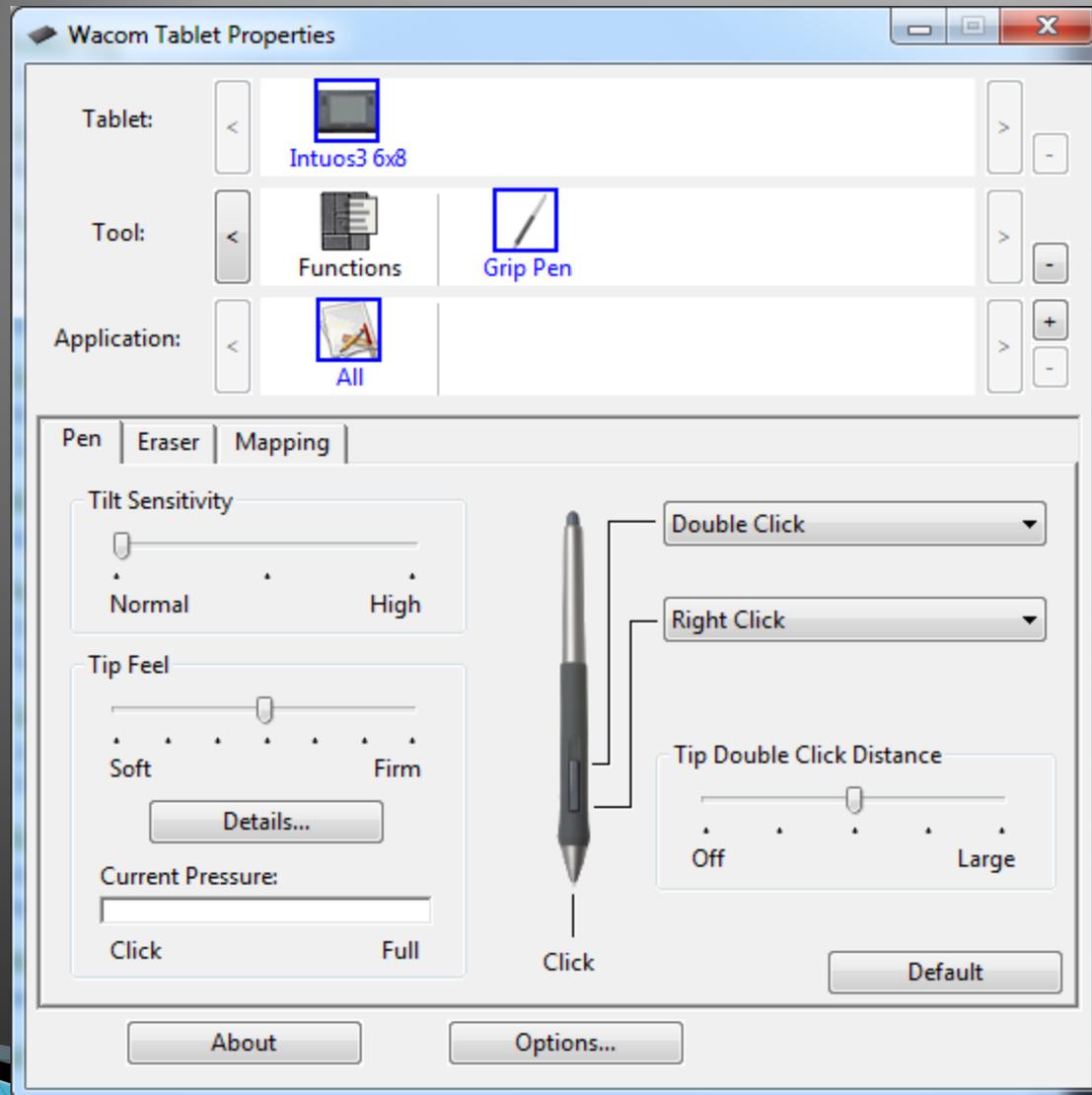
- ▶ More powerful selection features
- ▶ Better masking
- ▶ Better layer features
- ▶ Many more filters available
- ▶ 3D features*
- ▶ Prepress features
- ▶ Automation, scripting features
- ▶ Integration with Adobe Creative Suite



- ▶ Superior brush “engine”
- ▶ Larger brush library
- ▶ Nicer colour picker
- ▶ Mixing palette
- ▶ Blenders
- ▶ Wet paint and impasto effects
- ▶ Surface texture
- ▶ Generally more “expressive”

*Extended edition

Tablet Settings – Control Panel



Digital Painting with Photoshop

Basic Painting Techniques



- ▶ File > New: 600x600 pixels
- ▶ Swatches Panel: Choose a colour
- ▶ Brush Tool (B)
- ▶ Brushes Panel (F5): Choose brush style
- ▶ Apply brush stroke to canvas
- ▶ Vary pressure and tilt to see effects
- ▶ Adjust brush settings in Brush Panel
- ▶ Brush Presets to try:
 - Airbrush Pen Opacity Flow
 - Spatter
 - Rough Round Bristle
 - Watercolor Loaded Wet Flat Tip
 - Chalk
 - Charcoal Large Smear
 - Scatter Leaves
- ▶ Layers
 - Make a new layer
 - Layer Blend Modes
- ▶ Keyboard shortcuts:
 - Change brush size: []
 - Zoom: Ctrl-Space
 - Pan: Space
 - Rotate Canvas: R

Digital Painting with Painter

Basic Brush Techniques



- ▶ File>New: 600x600, Paper Color White
- ▶ Color Panel: Choose a color.
 - Note the Hue wheel, Sat/Value triangle system
 - Make sure the “Clone Color” stamp is off!
- ▶ Brush Tool (B)
- ▶ Choose a brush style: Brush Category + Variant
- ▶ Apply brush stroke to canvas
 - Note the brush “ghost” shows shape and orientation of stylus
- ▶ Vary pressure and tilt to see effects
- ▶ Adjust brush settings on Property Bar
 - Resat vs. Bleed
- ▶ Brush styles to try:
 - Pencils, Grainy Variable Pencil
 - Pastels, Square Hard Pastel
 - Oil Pastels, Variable Oil Pastel
 - Digital Watercolor, Soft Broad Brush
 - Oils, Flat Oils
 - Blenders: Soft Blender Stump
- ▶ Mixing Palette
 - Apply colours
 - Pickup colours
- ▶ Layers
 - Make a new layer
 - Layer Composition Methods
 - Gel vs. Normal
- ▶ Keyboard shortcuts:
 - Change brush size: []
 - Zoom: Ctrl-Space
 - Pan: Space
 - Rotate Canvas: E

Washing Over a Sketch in Painter

- ▶ File>Open: Choose appropriate size for painting, Paper Color White
- ▶ Make a new layer for the sketch (Sketch)
- ▶ Select a dark gray colour
 - Ensure “Clone Color” stamp is off
- ▶ Select Brush Tool (B)
- ▶ Select Grainy Variable Pencil
- ▶ Make an outline or gesture sketch on the Sketch layer
- ▶ Enhance with Square Hard Pastel brush
- ▶ Gradient Tool
- ▶ Gradient Selector: Orange Flame
- ▶ Apply gradient to Canvas layer
- ▶ Make new layer and position it below the Sketch, name it Wash
 - Ensure Composition Method is Gel
- ▶ Select Digital Watercolor, Soft Broad Brush
- ▶ Select suitable colors and paint on the Wash layer
 - Adjust brush size to stay within sketch lines
 - Apply multiple strokes to build up color
 - Increase Opacity on Property Bar to increase the colour intensity
- ▶ Make new layer and position it below Wash, name is Salt
- ▶ Select interesting complementary colour
- ▶ Use Digital Watercolor to wash paint over the Salt layer
- ▶ Select Digital Watercolor, Salt brush
- ▶ Paint with Salt on Salt layer to make a nice “cloudy” background

Painting Over a Photo

How to Cheat in Painter!

- ▶ File>Open: Choose a photo to
- ▶ File>Quick Clone
 - Creates a duplicate of the photo with “Tracing Paper” turned on
- ▶ Brush Tool (B)
 - Ensure “Clone Color” stamp is enabled
- ▶ Choose appropriate brush category, variant, e.g. Chunky Oil Pastel
- ▶ Paint over the Tracing Paper
- ▶ Toggle Tracing Paper (Ctrl-T) to see progress
- ▶ Use large brush size to “rough” in the painting
- ▶ Use smaller brush size to bring out details
- ▶ Choose a Blender, e.g. Soft Blender Stump
- ▶ Work with Blender to smooth out the painting
- ▶ Can apply different brush styles, e.g. Charcoal, Pastels or Chalk
- ▶ Then use Blender to smooth the brush strokes together

Set Text on Fire in Photoshop

- ▶ File>New: 600x600 pixels
- ▶ Edit>Fill: Black
- ▶ Text (T): add some White text
- ▶ Stamp Visible (Alt-Shift-Ctrl-E)
- ▶ Edit>Transform>Rotate 90° CCW
- ▶ Filter>Stylize>Wind: Wind From the Right
- ▶ Apply filter 2 more times (Ctrl-F, Ctrl-F)
- ▶ Edit>Transform>Rotate 90° CW
- ▶ Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur: 5px
- ▶ Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation: Colorize, Hue 40, Saturation 100
- ▶ Duplicate (Ctrl-J)
- ▶ Image>Adjustment>Hue/Saturation: Hue -40
- ▶ Set layer Blend Mode to Color Dodge
- ▶ Merge Down (Ctrl-E)
- ▶ Filter>Liquify: Use Forward Warp (W) to create flames by dragging and wiggling the text upward
- ▶ Move text layer to top, set text color to Black
- ▶ Layer>Rasterize>Type
- ▶ Erase (E): large soft brush, top portion of letters

Create Reflections in Photoshop

- ▶ With Rectangular Marquis (M): select bottom half of “FIRE”
- ▶ Edit>Copy Merged
- ▶ Edit>Paste (becomes new layer)
- ▶ Edit>Transform>Flip Vertical
- ▶ Move (V) to slide the reflection layer down
- ▶ Edit>Transform>Perspective: drag bottom corners to spread out the reflection
- ▶ Set layer Opacity to 20%
- ▶ Erase (E): with large soft brush, remove bottom

Create Star Fields in Photoshop

- ▶ File>New: 600x600 pixels
- ▶ Edit>Fill: Black
- ▶ Filter>Noise>Add Noise: Gaussian, Monochromatic, Amount 15
- ▶ Image>Adjustments>Brightness/Contrast: Brightness 44, Contrast 100
- ▶ Make a new Layer (Layer 1)
- ▶ Edit>Fill: Black
- ▶ Filter>Noise>Add Noise: Gaussian, Monochromatic, Amount 15
- ▶ Image>Adjustments>Brightness/Contrast: Brightness 44, Contrast 100
- ▶ Set Layer Blend Mode to Screen
- ▶ On Layer 1, Erase (E) with medium soft brush, Opacity 30, Flow 30, Airbrush, remove some areas to make stars more diverse
- ▶ Merge Down (Ctrl-E)
- ▶ Can repeat above steps with lower Brightness settings until desired effect is achieved
- ▶ Image>Adjustments>Levels : set black point slider to 80

Enhance the Star Field

- ▶ Make a new Layer
- ▶ Edit>Fill: Use Black
- ▶ Filter>Render>Lens Flare: 105mm Prime. Create a small lens flare and resize it to be slightly larger than the others stars.
- ▶ Desaturate (Shift-Ctrl-U)
- ▶ Set Layer Blend Mode to Screen
- ▶ Move (V) to position the bright star where desired.
- ▶ Duplicate (Ctrl-J)
- ▶ Free Transform (Ctrl-T) to resize and move a copy of the bright star
- ▶ Repeat under desired number of bright start are created
- ▶ Select all bright star layers and Merge (Ctrl-E)
- ▶ Set Layer Blend Mode to Screen
- ▶ Layer>Flatten Image
- ▶ Make a new Layer
- ▶ Set foreground colour to Blue
- ▶ Edit>Fill: Use Foreground Color
- ▶ Set Layer Blend Mode to Overlay
- ▶ Set Layer Opacity to 15%
- ▶ Layer>Flatten Image

Create Water Droplets in Photoshop

- ▶ File>New: 600x600 pixel image
- ▶ Edit>Fill: Use 50% Gray
- ▶ Make new Layer (Drop)
- ▶ Draw large selection with Elliptical Marquis tool (M)
- ▶ Edit>Fill: Use White
- ▶ Deselect (Ctrl-D)
- ▶ Reset colors (D)
- ▶ Layer>Layer Style>Drop Shadow: Opacity 70, Angle 90, Distance 15, Size 20
- ▶ Select Gradient Overlay: Opacity 60, Foreground to Transparent gradient, Angle -90, Scale 120
- ▶ Select Inner Glow: Blend Mode Normal, Opacity 20, Color Black, Size 20
- ▶ Make a new Layer (Highlight)
- ▶ Switch colors (X)
- ▶ Brush (B): small, soft, paint a white daub as highlight
- ▶ Free Transform (Ctrl-T): rotate and stretch the highlight, use Warp to curve it
- ▶ Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur: 10 px
- ▶ Select Drop and Highlight layers, right-click, Duplicate Layers (Reflection)
- ▶ Position Reflection layer below Drop layer
- ▶ Move (V) to nudge reflection down
- ▶ Set Fill to 30%
- ▶ Select Reflection, Drop, Highlight layers and Merge (Ctrl-E)
- ▶ Can now free transform and duplicate to create drops on an image

Add Water Droplets to an Image

- ▶ File > Open: Choose the other image
- ▶ Copy a water drop to the image
- ▶ Set Layer Blend Mode to
 - Luminosity
 - Hard Light
 - Linear Light (depending on the background)
- ▶ Reduce Opacity until background texture looks realistic
- ▶ Duplicate and resize as required

Add Fiber Effect to Image in Photoshop

- ▶ Open image in Photoshop
- ▶ Reset colors (D)
- ▶ Make new layer
- ▶ Edit>Fill: Use Black
- ▶ Filter>Render>Fibers: Adjust Variance and Strength
- ▶ Set Layer Blend Mode to Overlay
- ▶ Make new layer
- ▶ Edit>Fill: Use Black
- ▶ Filter>Render>Fibers: Adjust Variance and Strength
- ▶ Free Transform (Ctrl-T): Rotate 90° (hold Shift) and reshape to fit image
- ▶ Set Layer Blend Mode to Overlay
- ▶ Can vary the foreground/background colours to generate different effects
- ▶ Experiment with different Layer Blend Modes

Resources

- ▶ *The Photoshop and Painter Artist Tablet Book*
 - By Cher Threinen-Pendarvis
- ▶ Photoshop User TV
 - www.photoshopusertv.com
- ▶ Virtual Training Company
 - www.vtc.com
- ▶ Worldwide Web
 - There are thousands of tutorials online
 - Just Google for “corel painter tutorials” or “photoshop tutorials”

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