

# MESSAGE FROM ERIC

## - September -

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF BRUSH CARE**

*After a deep dive into the brain's role in painting, I thought a practical look at brush care would be nice. A good brush is designed to take some abuse, but achieving the texture and scumbling on the paper that I find attractive is quite hard on my brushes. A good brush is designed to take abuse and still retain its shape, don't be afraid to use it for scumbling and texture. There are a few things we can do to encourage the longevity of our brushes so that they remain responsive and in the best condition possible.*

*Here are some tips to help preserve you brushes:*

*1. Do not store your brushes in water. This is a common occurrence while one is painting with a different brush. Brushes should be rinsed out in cool or room temperature water and placed sideways on the table when not in use. When I'm done painting I also set the brushes down sideways on the table. Do not store wet brushes in a container with the bristles facing up.*

*2. Be careful not to store damp brushes in an airtight container for an extended period. Mold may develop. If the bristles dry in a distorted way, simply re-wet the bristles and shape them on the sponge.*

*3. When rinsing the color out of the Kolinsky, I gently tap the brush on the side of the water container. I may use a watercolor brush soap as it helps to restore the natural oils. My Kolinsky is a fine tool, like a dental instrument. I want to keep the integrity of the tip as long as possible. With other brushes I use a more vigorous rinsing against the bottom of the container.*

*4. I have found that an excellent natural hair brush will have occasional hair loss and is not a need for concern. This is especially true when it is new.*

*5. The soft hair brushes, such as squirrel and Kolinsky, are not effective for lifting and scumbling, so don't wear them out doing so. I use my 1 ¼ inch flat, which has stiffer hairs, or an inexpensive trimmed oil brush for such techniques.*

*6. Keep your fingers off the bristles! Don't be tempted to shape the brush or feel the softness of the hairs. Hand oils and lotions on your hands can be transferred to the brush, decreasing its water carrying capabilities. Rather, shape the bristles by gently pulling it along a sponge.*

*This month I challenge you to make brush care a priority. Implement these changes to keep your favorite brushes in excellent condition for as long as possible.*

*Finally, don't leave your coffee cup near your water container. It's too easy to ruin your coffee with a paint filled brush!*

**Keep your brush wet!**

**Eric**



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