

Digital “Painting”

As I told you, I don’t own paints. I am not an artist in the sense that I can draw or really paint. Basically, I may do some coloring using a digital paint set, then I apply various “filters” to what I start with. Quite often, I use a photo as the base and then proceed. Either way...

Definitions

Digital Painting:
Using a software environment to create an image.

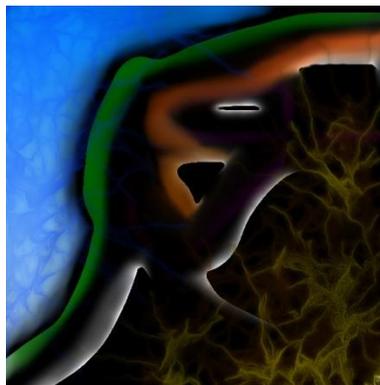
Filter:
A software program or element that has various effects on an image.

Example of Process

Beginning image created in TwistedBrush



Final image



Starting from a photo:



Original photograph is from an unknown source.

Final, after adding effects:



Here, brushstrokes were added by software. A bit of blue ground color was also added.

Most often, there are several steps between the beginning and the end. If I were a real traditional artist I would probably constrain myself to the base paint set and not use filters, as that would be unpainterly.

There are really only three requirements:

- 1) Understand filters
- 2) Squint
- 3) Know when you have satisfied the potential of what you started out with.

Digital Paint Sets

A paint set mimes the use of paint, watercolor, oil, but the sets most often include pencils, pastels, charcoal and others. With these sets, you can use a graphics tablet. A graphics tablet hooks into your PC and allows you to draw on it, similarly to a canvas or paper. In this case, you use something like a pen to do the drawing or painting.

The Wacom tablet and pen are probably the most popular.

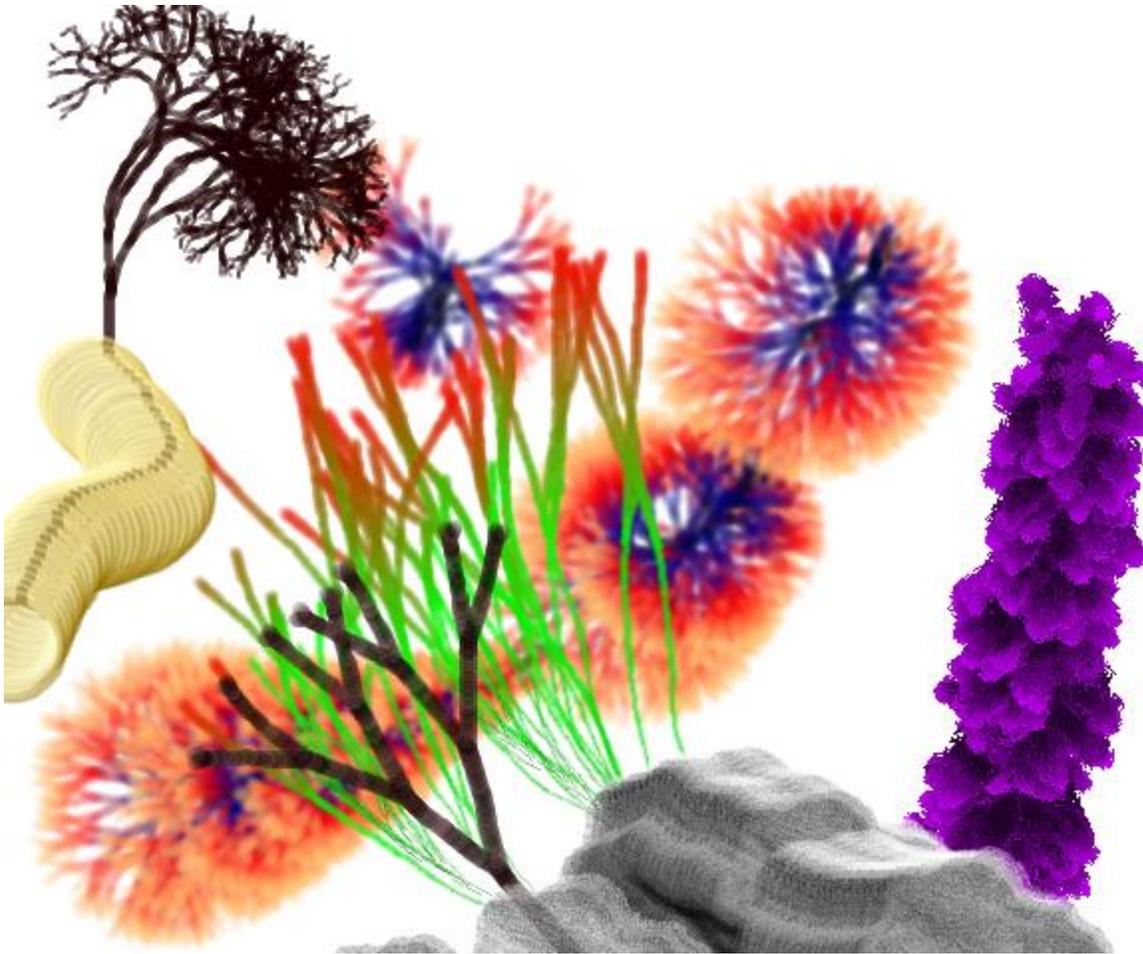


They come in various sizes and prices, starting around \$80 to \$3,000 (27").

Or you can just use a mouse, which is what I do. I tried one of the low end tablets and didn't get much out of it and gave up. Trouble and clutter. Others will differ with my assessment. The more they like a brush the more they will like the tablet. So much for applying line and color.

The paint set will then contain:

- "Brushes", which may include any of the software versions of actual brushes, or pencil, chalk, etc.
- "Image brushes", which contain images. When you "paint" you get images.
- Example of image brush work:



All this was done with simple “image” brushes.

- Paint, in various textures, such as air brush, dry, glossy, matt, brushy (strokes are built in), and many more.
- Background textures, such as canvas, brick wall, canvas, and many more.
- Effects, such as shading, erasing, blending, darkening, lightening, and many more.
- Whole image manipulation:
 - Tone controls
 - Saturation/Hue
 - Light, including artificial light
 - Rotation
 - Distortion (conic, cylindrical, spherical, kaleidoscope, and many more)
 - Crop

So this is the sort of tool you use to start your own image. If you are a “real artist” you can just use this.

Caveat: I suspect that people who are used to working with paint would not be satisfied with any of this.

Paint sets

- Twisted Brush \$99 (but you can get outdated versions for free from the seller)
- Corel Draw \$500

There are several inexpensive iPad-based programs, but I'll cut to the quick here: Use Twisted Brush. It has everything and more.

Digital Filter Sets

Most fun is the use of filters to give the base image brand new possibilities through:

- Distortion
- (re)Coloring
- Brush strokes
- Lighting and focus effects
- Surface conversion and texture

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Here too Twisted Brush has many features, but there are many others you will want to get to know. Other products are those made for photography, such as Photoshop or Photopaint, but my favorites are:

- Impressions (Topaz), \$80
- PhotoWizard (iPad)
- Photostudio(iPad)
- Waterlogue (iPad)
- Fingerpaint (iPad)
- ArtEffect (iPad)

The iPad applications are all under \$5 and are remarkably good. I'm addicted to Impressions.

Topaz has a complete suite of tools, but they are about \$450. Highly recommended if you really get into it.

The challenge, beyond the natural challenges of are in general, is mostly knowing what you can do with different filters in different software products. The same file can be passed from environment to environment on its jpg base.

I hope this helps. Feel free to ask questions.

