

How to Paint Looser and Juicier by Becky Joy



Featured Painting: [Cry Me a River](#) mixed media 10"x12"

I receive emails from artists telling me they want to learn to paint looser and with more paint. We all start painting tight, detailed paintings, painting what we see. I thought would make a list of things to help you move in that direction.

- First squint, paint only what you see when you squint, blocking out detail
- Use a large brush. I regularly use a #12 or #10 on a 6×6" painting. The larger the painting, the larger the brush.

- Don't end up with a small brush. Use the big one right up to the end. Use a side or the tip of the brush in different ways for different strokes.
- Mix lots of paint. I will often paint thin in the color and value that I want, then mix more paint and pile the paint on.
- Use strokes to define shape and movement, paint the contours of things.
- To lay paint on the canvas, load the brush. Then hold the brush so that it is parallel with the canvas like a palette knife rather than perpendicular to the canvas. This will create a bolder stroke.
- Don't use thick paint all over the canvas. Keep it thin in the darker areas and build up with thicker paint.
- Use more paint in the foreground, keeping it thinner in the background.
- When you lay a nice thick, juicy stroke down, leave it alone.
- Use larger brushstrokes in the foreground, smaller in the background.
- Keep detail only in the focal point, that will bring your attention right to it.
- Learn to leave the painting alone before you get too many details.
- Lose some edges, make them soft. Take the brush and swish through an edge.
- Keep working on it. The more you paint, the more confident you will become with your strokes.

And most important of all, have fun with the paint. Use it!