



WHAT SHAPE ARE YOU?

Never mind **YOU**.....the question is this, what shape are your **BRUSHES** in?

Out of all the equipment and tools we need to paint a picture, I believe BRUSHES are the most important.

Of course, it took me a long time to realise this, me being a bit slow and all. I used to paint pictures that had a sort of 'furry' look about them. Just furry enough to make your eyes go funny. Just 'blurry' enough to make you go and clean your glasses. It wasn't good.

Those brushes were long past their use by date, they were cheap and had bristles that were dry, prickly, uneven and scratchy. And did I mention cheap?! But, even after I changed to more expensive brands, I realise that NO brush will last forever, no matter how much you pay. They need changing as soon as they start producing 'furry' paintings. And if you treat them as roughly as I do, that won't take long.

A good brush should cover the board with clean flat strokes and then turned on its side, should be able to produce the finest lines with its

sharp chisel edge. In other words, no fur. ***A ragged, dry, stiff brush will take more paint off the board than it puts on.***

Invest in just ONE good one to try the difference. You will be hooked.

One good brush is capable of creating several different brushstrokes on the board. A large area can be scrubbed in with the brush on its flat. Cross hatching and moving quickly with a loaded brush will have the surface covered in no time. Then again, when a more gentle mark is needed, the brush can be used softly with less paint and a 'feathering' motion can be used. The finest lines can be made with a flat brush on its side, applying gentle pressure and dragging the brush quickly upwards. And a clean and sparkling highlight can be made with a loaded brush applied confidently ONCE where it is needed.

A beginner painter doesn't always realise when their equipment is not up to scratch and ragged, stiff, worn down brushes often escape the blame when a painting isn't as wonderful as it should be.

Well, it is time for them to wake up to themselves. When they don't give you the results you deserve, then it's off to brush heaven with them. Be brutal.

