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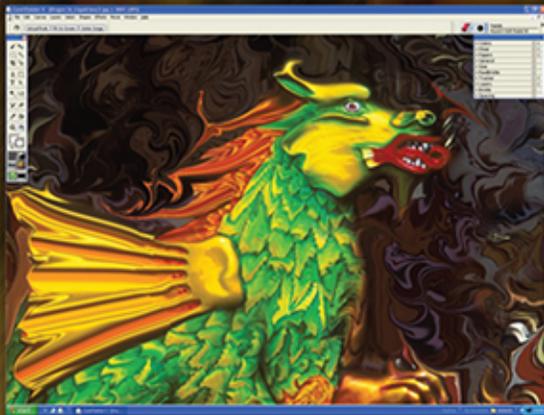
**COREL**

Reviewed by Corel

*'This book is a wealth of ideas, information and inspiration.'*  
Jim Zuckerman, world-renowned photographer and instructor of  
*Making Masterpieces with Corel Painter at BetterPhoto.com*

# Painter X for Photographers

Over  
2 hours  
of movie  
tutorials  
on DVD



**Martin Addison**

**DVD**  
INCLUDED





# 1

# Getting started in Painter

The Painter X workspace

Setting up preferences

Painter X – Photoshop

The first part of this chapter is intended for complete beginners to Painter and contains simple exercises to guide the user in identifying the key areas of the workspace prior to first using Painter. If you have previously used Painter you may wish to skim this section or just pick up on the newer features.

The second part of the chapter contains information to enable you to customize the program to your own requirements and covers the use of Graphic Tablets and setting Preferences to make the work process smoother and quicker.

Both sections can be used as a quick reference guide to the key elements as you work through the step-by-step examples in later chapters.

Information on printing and color management can be found in Chapter 14.

Many readers will have already used and be very familiar with Adobe Photoshop and for them I have included a section highlighting the differences between the two programs, sometimes the naming of techniques differs and of course where to find particular commands. There are also tables of file compatibility, tools and keyboard shortcuts.

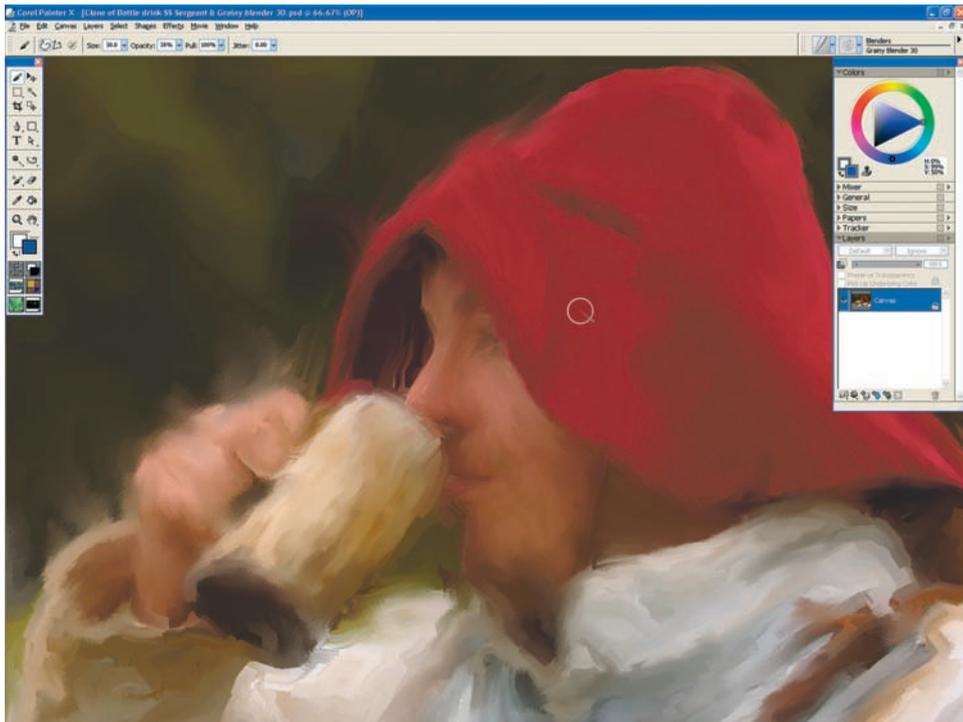
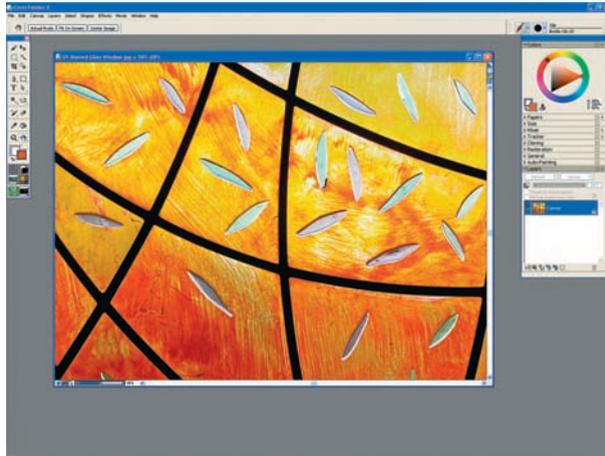


Figure 1.2 The Painter X workspace.

# The Painter X workspace

## The default view

Figure 1.3 shows the default view of Painter X with the File bar at the top of the screen, the Properties bar just beneath, leading to the Brush Selector on the right. The Tools are on the left and a selection of palettes on the right.



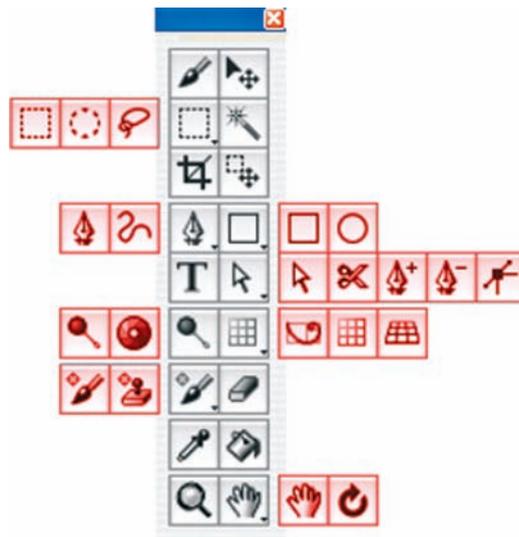
**Figure 1.3** The default view of Painter X.

## Toolbox

The Toolbox is where all the tools are stored (no surprise there then) and Figure 1.4 shows the Painter X Toolbox with all the hidden tools revealed and shown in red.

To access the hidden tools click and hold the visible tool and the other options will appear to the side, just click the one required.

Some of the important tools which are being used in this book are detailed in this chapter, but most are very obvious by their icons.



**Figure 1.4** The Toolbox with hidden tools shown in red.

Keyboard shortcuts are set up for many of the regularly used tools and others can be customized in the Preferences menu.

A full explanation of all the tools can be found in the Painter program under Help > Help Topics.

## Opening a picture in Painter

Painter is able to use several different types of pictures. If you are bringing in pictures from a digital camera, the most common file types are JPEG or TIFF format. If you are importing a picture that has been saved in Adobe Photoshop the file type is likely to be PSD. Painter will happily use all these file types and several others. Painter does have its own file type called RIFF, however when using photographs it is not necessary to use this in the majority of cases.

It is generally desirable not to use very large image files as they will slow the program down and some of the complex brushes in particular can be very slow.

If the image is to be printed then a resolution between 150 and 300 dpi is preferable which means a file size of between 10 and 20 Mb. For web use a much smaller file size can be used, in most cases around 1 Mb. More information on file sizes and printing can be found in Chapter 14.

Figure 1.3 shows the first picture on the DVD which is opened from the file bar by going to File> Open> DVD> Step-by-step files> '01 Stained glass window'. You can use this or if you prefer use your own photograph.

## Brush Selector

The Brush Selector is where the type of brush is chosen, brushes are at the heart of everything in Painter and are dealt within a lot more depth in Chapters 3 and 4.

On the right of the Properties bar is the Brush Selector. Click the brush icon on the left and the drop down menu will reveal the extensive range of brush categories that are available.

Click and drag down the right bottom corner of the menu to see the full list of brush categories. Select the Oils category.



Figure 1.5 The Brush Selector.

Click on the right hand icon to reveal another drop down menu that shows the list of variants for the Oils brush category. Once again you will need to drag down the list to reveal all the variants. This is a very large category and will give some idea of the huge number of brushes available. Click on the Bristle Oils 30 brush as illustrated in Figure 1.5.

## Picking a color from the Colors palette

To choose a color to paint with go to the Colors palette, which should be visible on the right of the screen. If this is not the case go to Window> Color Palettes> Show Colors and it will appear.

Figure 1.6 shows the Colors palette. Click in the outer colored circle to choose the hue or color. The inner section defines the brightness of the color, the pure color is on the right, the darker colors bottom left and lighter at the top, click within the triangle to choose the tone. The blue square (bottom left in Figure 1.6) is the Main color and confirms which color has been chosen. The Colors palette is explained in more detail in Chapter 10.

Draw some lines on the picture to get a feel for the brush. If you are using a graphic tablet you will see that the brush responds differently depending on the angle used, this is common to many of the brushes. I recommend that you use a graphic tablet as it is essential for getting the most out of the program. At the end of this chapter there are some tips on setting up your graphics tablet for Painter.

Now try a brush from the Chalk brush category, click on Square Chalk 30 which is very different to the Oil brush. Try some of the other brush categories yourself but for the moment avoid the Watercolor and Liquid Ink categories as they need a special layer to work on and will be explained in more detail in Chapter 8.



Figure 1.6 The Colors palette

### Properties bar

Figure 1.7 shows the Properties Bar, this is a context sensitive bar and changes to whatever tool is currently active. In the example shown it is relevant to the Brush and this is where the brush size is usually changed. Alongside this is the Opacity setting that adjusts the density of color being put onto the paper. The other settings will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 4.

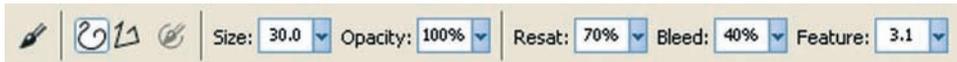


Figure 1.7 The Properties bar.

### Correcting mistakes

Your image will now be covered with paint strokes so this is a good point to show how to correct mistakes and if necessary return a picture back to its original state.

The very valuable Undo command is found in the Edit menu and as we have been using a brush the line will read Undo Brush Stroke. Click on this and the last brush stroke will be undone, click on it again and the previous brush stroke will also be

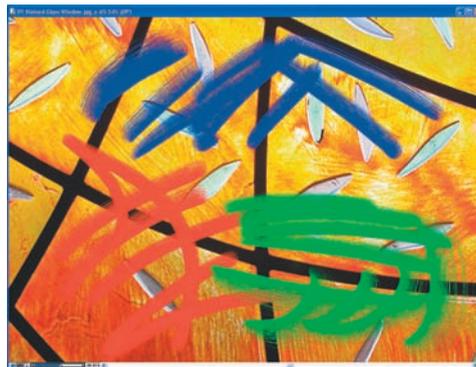


Figure 1.8 Correcting mistakes.

undone. As you can see, the command works backwards and continues to remove the last action taken until you reach the maximum numbers of Undo, which is 32 steps. This number can be changed in the Preferences menu which is covered later on in this chapter.

Rather than go to the menu every time you want to use the Undo, it is much quicker to use the keyboard shortcut which is Ctrl/Command + Z. If you are a Photoshop user you will need to be aware that the Undo command in Painter works differently and is not a toggle action.

To ReDo an action, go to Edit > ReDo or use the shortcut Ctrl/Command + Y.

If you want to get back to the original, go to File> Revert. Confirm you want to do this by clicking Revert in the pop up dialog box and the picture will return to its original state. This will work provided the original picture is still in the same place from which it was loaded, either on your computer or on the DVD.

### Moving around the picture

One of the great advantages with all graphic programs is the ability to enlarge the picture to work at a more detailed level. The quickest way of doing this is to use the keyboard shortcuts, but I will give the Toolbox method as well.

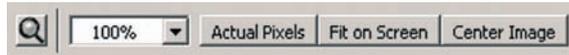


Figure 1.9 Magnifier options on the Properties bar.

Click on the Magnifier in the Toolbox and click in the picture, this will enlarge the picture by 25% each time you click. To reduce the magnification, hold down the Opt/Alt key and click in the picture again. When the Magnifier tool is active there are three buttons on the Properties bar that give pre-set views.

Actual Pixels show the image at 100% enlargement, which is very useful for checking detail.

Fit on Screen will show the whole picture on the screen as large as possible without being hidden by anything else.

Centre Image will return the image to the centre when it has been magnified.

Another way to change the magnification is to use the slider at the base of the document window (Figure 1.10). The percentage number shown on the right of the bar is the current magnification of the picture. Type in an amount and press enter to go to a specific magnification. Increase the magnification significantly then click on the binoculars icon shown in Figure 1.10 to the left of the slider, this will show you which part of the image is being magnified.



Figure 1.10 Using the slider to magnify the picture.

The screen is shown in Figure 1.11 with the full picture in the small rectangle bottom left and a red rectangle showing the part of the picture that is being shown on screen. Click and drag inside the rectangle to move the point of magnification.

Click the Grabber (hand icon) in the Toolbox and the cursor will change to a hand, click and drag in the window to move the image. Double click on the Grabber icon in the Toolbox and the picture will change from a magnified view to the full picture being visible on screen.



Figure 1.11 Using the Navigator.

### Rotating the canvas

The Grabber is one of several tools that have alternative options in the Toolbox. Click and hold the Grabber and select the second icon with a circular arrow. This is the Rotate Page tool and allows the picture to be rotated to make it easier to paint with certain brushes. Don't get this confused with the Rotate Canvas command in the Canvas menu, this tool simply turns the picture around in the same way a traditional artist might move a canvas around to get a better angle.

Click and drag in the document window to see the image rotate, to return to the original position click once on the canvas or double click on the Rotate Page icon in the Toolbox.

Figure 1.12 shows the rotated canvas.

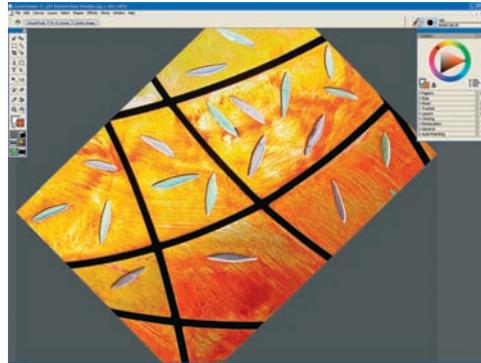


Figure 1.12 Rotating the canvas.

### Normal view

The Normal view is shown in Figure 1.13 and the picture is contained within its document window. The Full Screen option frees the image from the confines of the document box and fills the entire screen including behind the palettes and Toolbox. This is a good way to work as it allows more freedom to move the image around on screen and removes much of the clutter.

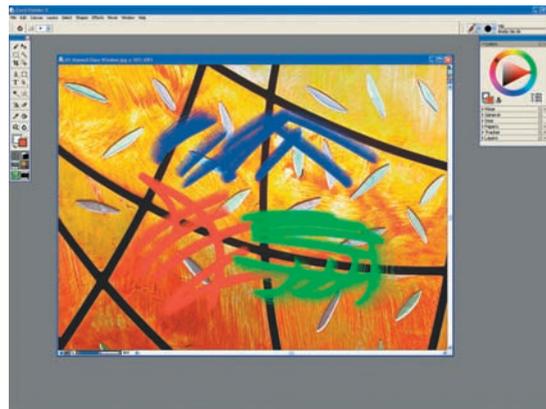


Figure 1.13 Normal view.

### Full screen view

Figure 1.14 shows the Full Screen View, to use this mode either go to the Window menu and click on Screen Mode Toggle or use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl/Cmd + M. This is a toggle action so pressing the keys again will revert to the normal view.

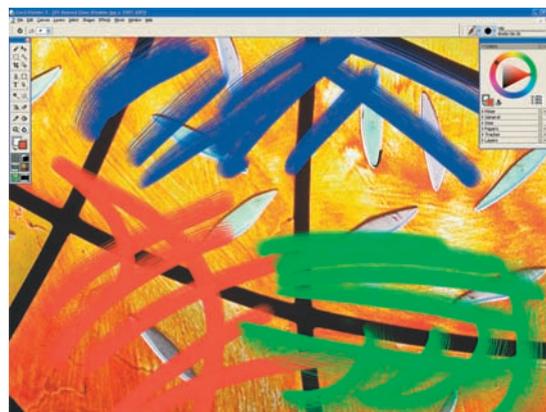


Figure 1.14 Full screen view.

## Keyboard shortcuts for the screen

Ctrl/Cmd ++ will magnify the image.

Ctrl/Cmd +- will reduce the magnification.

Ctrl/Cmd + Alt/Opt + 0 will show the picture at 100% (Actual pixels).

Ctrl/Cmd + 0 will make the image fit on the screen.

Pressing the Spacebar while painting will activate the Grabber to enable the image to be moved.

## Using and organizing palettes

There are over 30 palettes in Painter X and even though they will collapse and stack very neatly they do take up room on the screen that could be used for the image. Many of them are not usually needed when using photographs so fortunately they are easy to organize and unwanted ones can be removed.

To remove a palette from the screen, click on the cross in a square on the palette header. To show palettes not visible on the screen, go to the Window menu and click on the name of the palette you want, some of the palettes are arranged in groups for convenience.

To expand or close a palette, click either on the triangle on the left or on the name of the palette itself. To move and link palettes together click on the blank area to the right of the palette name and drag the palette over another palette and they will dock together.

Figure 1.15 shows the palettes that I keep on the screen and use regularly, they are usually kept collapsed as shown and opened when required.

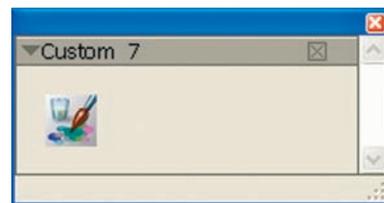


**Figure 1.15** Useful palettes to keep on screen.

## Creating custom palettes

It is often very useful to create custom palettes, some to use on a regular basis and others just for a particular picture or project. Here is a quick guide to creating a custom palette with a variety of shortcuts.

Select a brush variant from the brush selector, click on the variant icon and drag it out into the main workspace. A custom menu will be immediately created as in Figure 1.16; you can now add further items to the palette. Select a brush from another brush category, drag that onto your new custom palette, and position it to the right of the original icon.



**Figure 1.16** Custom palette.

The icon can be positioned anywhere on the custom palette, alongside or below. If you want to re-arrange the icons hold down the shift key and drag the icon to where you want it to be. To delete an icon hold down the Shift key and drag the icon off the palette.

Now add a paper texture, open the Papers palette or use the quick icons in the Toolbox and drag the paper icon from the palette onto the Custom palette.

Menu commands can also be added, go to Window > Custom Palette > Add Command and the dialog box shown in Figure 1.17 appears, select the name of the palette you are working on. To add the Tracing Paper command, go to Canvas > Tracing Paper then return to the Add Command palette and click OK, the shortcut will appear on the new palette.

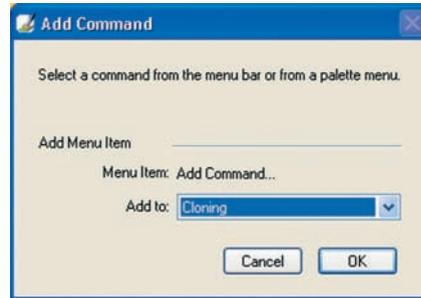


Figure 1.17 Add command to custom palette.

To delete or rename custom palettes go to Window > Custom Palettes > Organizer, highlight the palette you want to change and click the relevant button. Painter will remember this palette each time you open the program but to save a really useful palette permanently it can be saved as a file by pressing Export. The Import button will add palettes previously saved. Figure 1.18 shows an example of a Custom palette fully created.

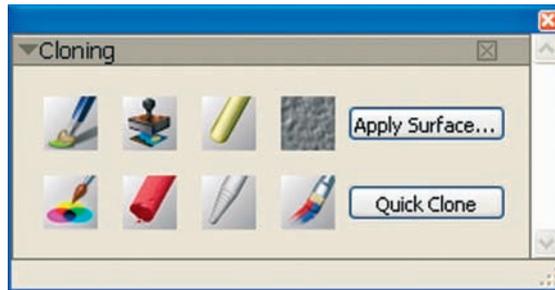


Figure 1.18 A custom palette for cloning.

### Palette menu

One further note regarding palettes: on the right side of the palette name is a small triangle (circled in Figure 1.19) that indicates the palette contains a Palette menu. This is a further selection of options relevant to that particular palette, click and hold on the triangle to see the drop down menu. The various palettes will be looked at in more detail as you work through the step-by-step examples in the book.

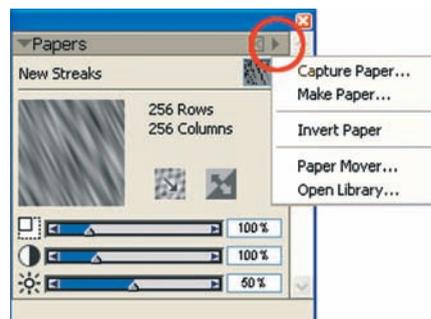


Figure 1.19 The palette menu extended.

### Brush Creator

The Brush Creator is covered in some detail in Chapter 4, but gets a quick mention here as it is used in a few step-by-step examples in earlier chapters.

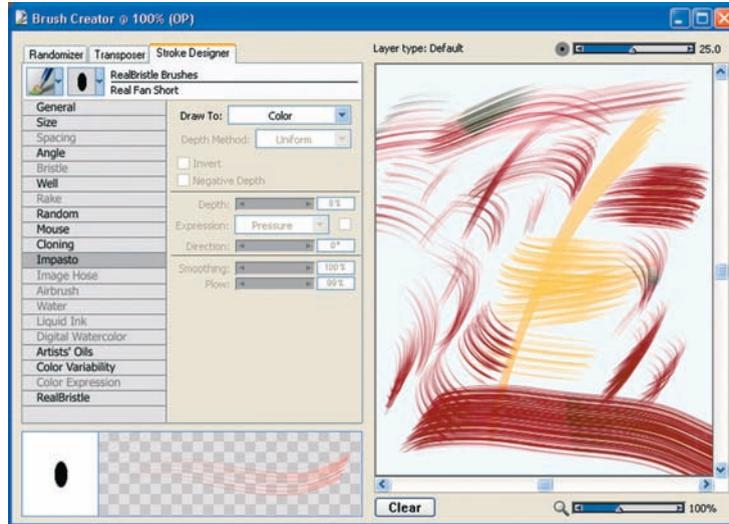


Figure 1.20 The Brush Creator.

This palette, which is accessed by the Ctrl/Cmd + B shortcut or from Window>Show Brush Creator, houses the controls for customizing brushes. Clicking on a category from the list on the left opens the relevant sub palette and reveals the sliders and options available. On the right is the Scratch Pad where brushes can be tried out prior to use.

In Painter X all the sub palettes are also available as separate palettes that can be brought on the screen individually which is very useful as many of the palettes are rarely used. One palette I recommend you keep on screen is the General palette and this is available from Window> Brush Controls> General.

In some earlier versions of Painter this is not available separately but it can be accessed from the Brush Creator.

### Using a graphic tablet

A graphic tablet with a pressure sensitive stylus is a must to obtain the Painter brushes' full potential. Wacom are the leading brand of tablets and have a large range from small to very large sizes. I personally find the A5 (6 × 8 inch) size ideal, it is large enough to have ample room for brush strokes yet not take up too much space on the desktop.

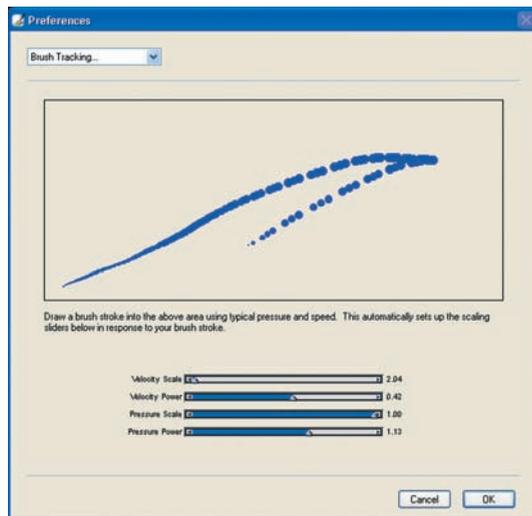


Figure 1.21 Brush tracking in the Preferences menu.

How you set up the button configuration for your pressure sensitive pen is a matter of personal preference, once the software has been installed on your computer the controls can be accessed via the Control Panel for Windows or in Applications on Mac OS X.

All the brush and opacity settings used throughout the book are for use with a graphic tablet. If you are using a mouse you will need to reduce the specified opacities quite considerably.

Brush Tracking is a control within Painter to adjust the sensitivity of the pen to suit your own hand. In the Edit menu go to Preferences and select Brush Tracking in the dialog box.

Make a few sample strokes pressing at various intensities in the Scratch Pad as in Figure 1.21 and Painter will automatically adjust the pen sensitivity to your own hand pressure.

### **Saving images**

There are three options for saving images available from the File menu.

Save, will save the image, overwriting the original file.

Save As, will save a copy under a different name if required.

Iterative Save, is very useful when you need to keep interim versions of the image showing different stages of completion. Each time the image is saved Painter adds an incremental number to the file, 001 then 002 and so on. This is a very useful option for returning to an earlier stage, usually these interim saves are deleted when the image is completed.

Painter will save images in several file formats, but generally it should be saved in the same file type in which it was originally opened. In the case of photographs this will usually be PSD if it has come via Photoshop or JPEG if from a digital camera.

Images that started as JPEGs should be saved as a PSD, or RIFF (see below) while being worked on in Painter, as continually saving in JPEG format will degrade the image quality.

The native file format for Painter is RIFF which would be chosen were the program being used for original painting rather than working from photographs.

It is however advantageous to use RIFF when particular brush categories are used, these are mainly Watercolor and Liquid Ink, in RIFF file format these can be saved and re-opened at a later date and brush strokes can be edited. Mosaics are another case where it is useful for RIFF to be used for the same reason. If you are a Photoshop user it is easy to think of these as adjustment layers which are permanently editable until the file is flattened. Dynamic Plug-in layers which are available from the bottom of the Layers palette are also very similar to Photoshop adjustment layers and are not editable once the file is saved in any format other than RIFF.