

Crafters' Corner - Articles & Tips

Brushstroke Bonanza Part 4

by Bill Thompson



This colorful floral design was adapted from a portion of the pattern on a piece of antique Meissen porcelain. The painting of these fantasy-type flowers originated in Germany in the early eighteenth century, where they were combined into elaborate designs to decorate porcelain items of every sort.

The pattern [given here](#) in the original size can be enlarged or reduced to fit the item you have selected to decorate. If you are working with underglaze colors or non-firing stains, apply the dark colors first, then add the lighter modeling tones and highlights. If you use china paints, apply the light colors and wipe out highlights. Fire the china, then model the design with the darker tones. Whichever medium you choose, apply details such as flower stamens as the final step. Fire the piece as appropriate for the medium being used.

When painting a cluster of flowers such as the large pink blossoms of this design, work from background to foreground, so they will appear to overlap one another in a natural manner. In the same way, paint the leaves surrounding a bud first, then add the bud itself.

Use round brushes to block in the various areas of the design, then use a corner loaded shader brush to add shading. Paint all details with a liner brush.

Make a copy of [the pattern](#), enlarging or reducing it as needed, then transfer the design to the selected ware. Do not trace on details such as flower stamens indicated by dotted lines, since they are best added freehand. Use clay carbon to transfer the design to greenware or bisque and graphite paper to apply it to china.

Block in the petals of the large partial flower with a dark pink color, then model them with a lighter tone. Add the buds that overlap the petals of the flower, using a dark pink and a deep almost ruby color for the bud centers.

Paint the next flower of this group with the same colors, taking care to make the petal edges paler to set it off from the first flower.

Use a pale pink color for the full blossom, allowing the foremost petals to be very pale.

Load a round brush with a medium green color and tip it in a darker tone. Use the brush loaded in this way to paint the leaves around the buds. Paint each bud with a pressure stroke of dark pink and accent with the ruby tone.

Use small round brushes to add the sprays of tiny flowers, painting each petal with a pressure-pull stroke. Paint some of these flowers yellow and dot the centers with a darker tone. For the remaining small flower, use blue and a mixture of blue and purple for petals and dots of blue for the centers.

Use the yellow tones for the stem and the fern-like spray at the top of the design.

Complete the design by adding the flower stamens and accents of dark color throughout as needed.

Editor's Note: If you have painting questions that have been plaguing you or have some painting technique that has been giving you trouble, drop us a line.

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