

Some months ago a dear friend (and client) confided to me that she was going to pass up the next iteration of Corel *Painter* because, after all, what could it add? Then she purchased Corel *Painter* 2015 the first week it was available. What changed her mind?

Particle Brushes!

No, I'd never heard of such a thing either. But now I would fight anyone trying to take them away. This upgrade added features I didn't know I wanted, never mind could have.

So what are Particle Brushes? First, what's Corel *Painter* 2015? It's a digital version of the most complete artist's studio anyone could want. Brushes, canvases, textures, patterns, the ability to clone (copy pixels from one image to another selectively)... you get the idea.

Since a brush is how you achieve results, I suppose it isn't surprising that there are more brushes than anything else in the program. On the right side is a screen shot of just the brush types. Each brush has multiple (in the dozens, in many cases) variants, or a brush with slightly different presets. For instance, one may resist the paper's texture, while another will emphasise it.

The Brush category *Particles* is highlighted so the number and assortment of its variants is visible. The bottom of this panel is a preview of how the currently selected brush (Flow Water Effect) will paint.

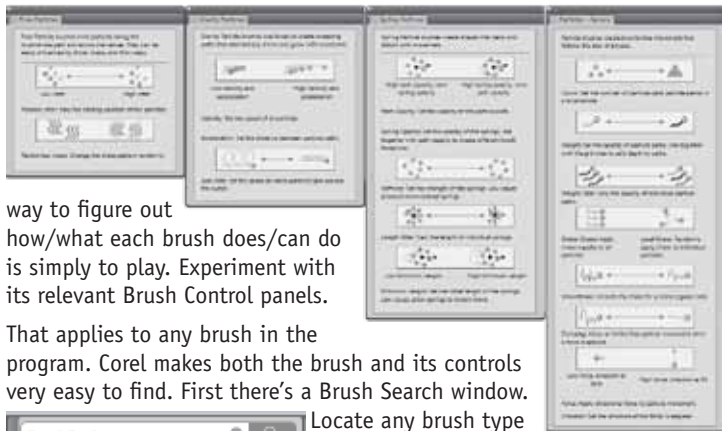


The variety is incredible, and each variant can itself be modified to a near-infinite level. They're much more than pretty. In an artist's hands (my client, for instance) they can create incredible art. The hammock holding flowers in the image below was created using Particle brushes.



All Particle brushes fall into one of four categories: General, Spring, Gravity or Flow. It's the "Particle" part of the name that does the magic. Tiny elements follow the brush as you paint or draw and their actions dictate how the stroke appears. Particle numbers and actions can be adjusted, just as *any* brush can be personalized to suit the user's needs (or whims).

Complex? Oh boy – in the best possible way! Corel provides Information panels explaining how each variety operates. But the best (and most fun)



way to figure out how/what each brush does/can do is simply to play. Experiment with its relevant Brush Control panels.

That applies to any brush in the program. Corel makes both the brush and its controls very easy to find. First there's a Brush Search window.



Locate any brush type or variant by typing in a brush characteristic like "Pen" or "Bristle."



This button on the Properties bar opens only those Brush Control panels directly relevant to the currently active brush. Considering how many Brush control panels there are (shown at right), not having to check every one saves a lot of time.

Your vision is conveyed using the brushes, but not all of them paint just with color. Pattern pens lay down (what else?) patterns, the Image Hose "sprays" images, and Gradients and Weaves are available. When you get just what you want, save it all as a "Look" you can recall for later use much like any brush.

Add Text to your creation as easily as in a word processor or layout program. Adjust



size, tracking, leading, bold, italic, drop shadows and more. The Pen tool is available for precise selections or image contours, with all the usual controls. Given that, why not combine the two and have your text follow a curve? You can edit that curve like any other vector shape or line while the text itself remains editable.

What type of canvas will you choose? How do you want the paint to flow? Multiple surfaces await your strokes. You control how dominant the texture is. Flow Maps provide patterns for the paint to fill.

You aren't limited to what comes with the program, either. You can create just about anything (brush, paper, pattern) to suit yourself. But do you *have* to create your own? Only if you want to – and some day you probably will.

Truth to tell, just what's on offer out of the box is enough to keep anyone busy well into the next decade. Use what Corel has provided as your starting point and who knows the heights you'll reach!

Whether you're an artist or not, learning how to use it isn't that hard. Not only Corel but many others have generously posted multiple video and other tutorials covering the many aspects of *Painter 2015* (think *YouTube*).

Have fun learning and creating. This is the right program for it!

About: Corel Painter 2015

Publisher: Corel
<http://www.painterartist.com/us/product/paint-program/?hptrack=mmpttr>

Price: \$429 Download or box
 30-day Free Trial available (use the URL above and click the Trial tab)

