

CONCEPT MASTER VOL.1



NATURE

PRODUCTION BRUSHES FOR AFFINITY APPS

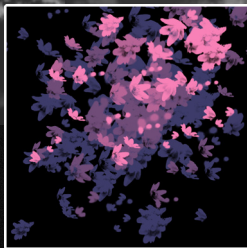
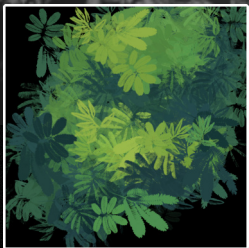
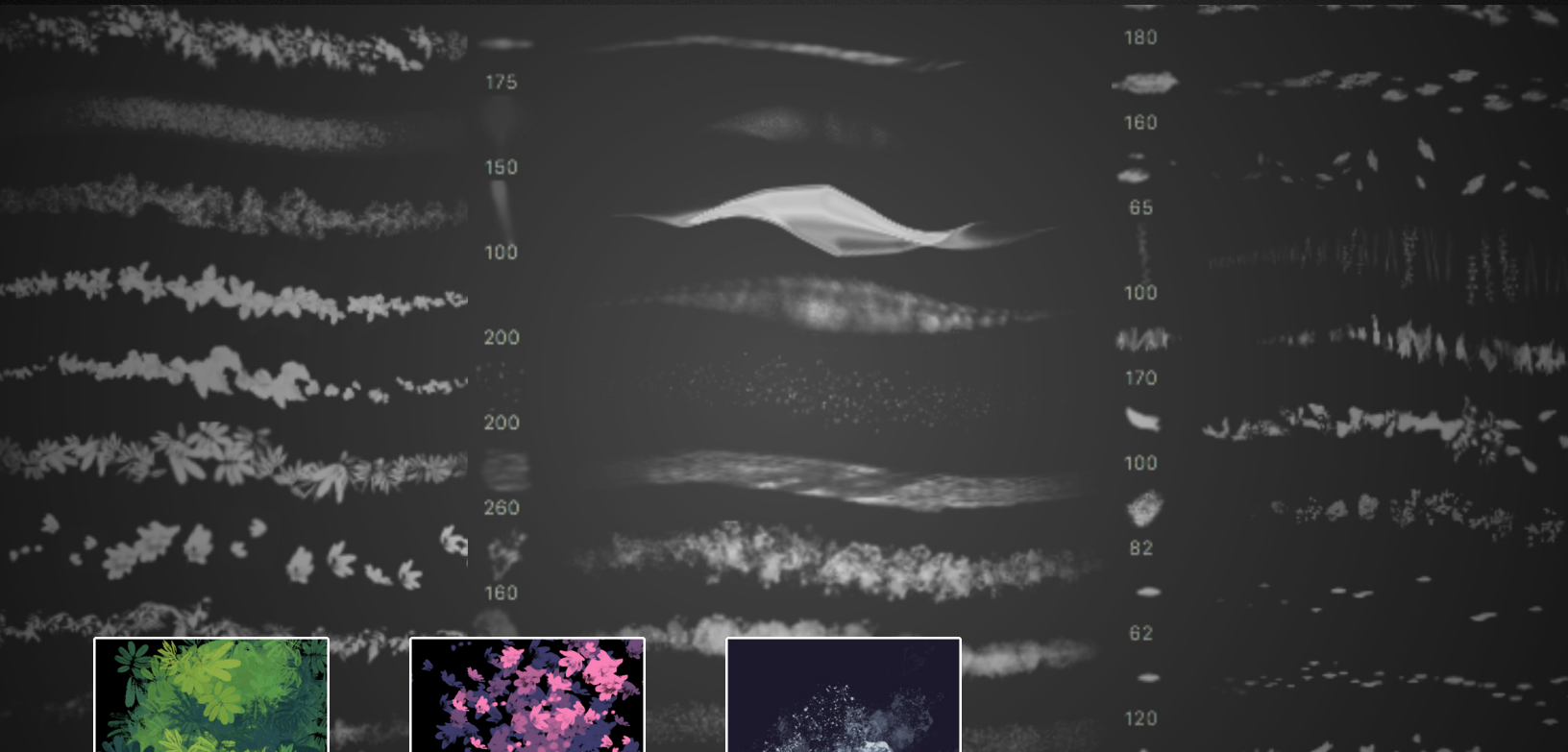


USER'S GUIDE



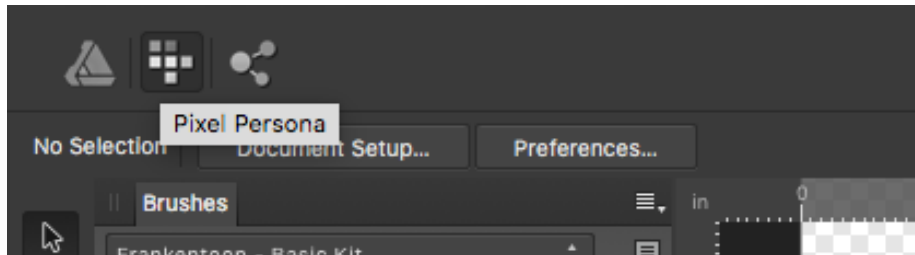
CONCEPT MASTER: NATURE - USER'S GUIDE

+ INSTALLATION ▶▶

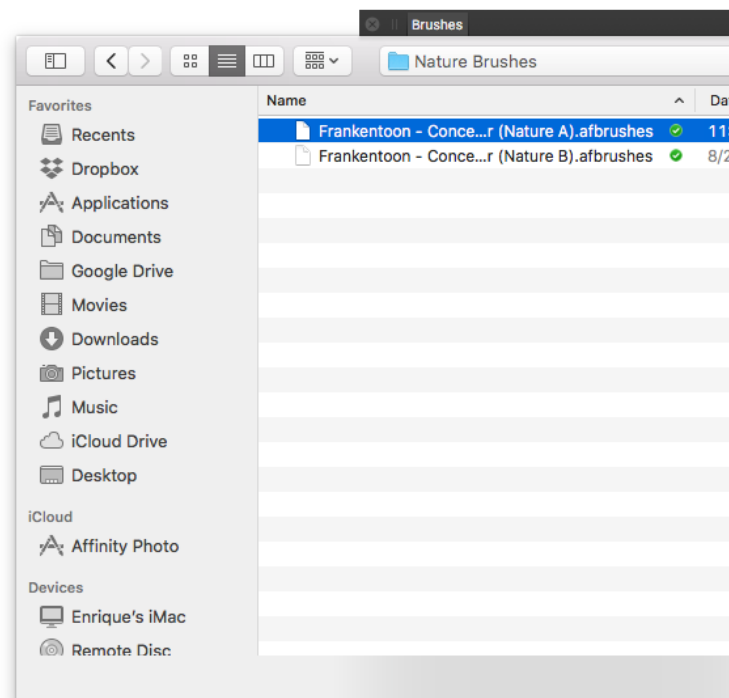
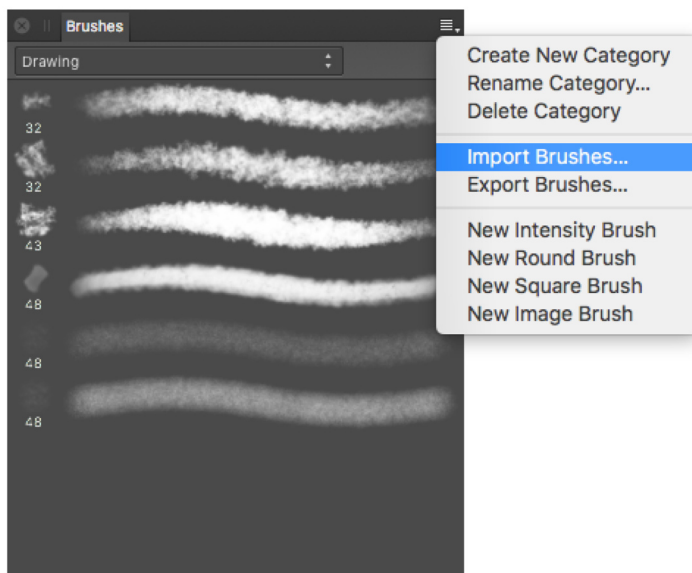




AFFINITY PHOTO AND AFFINITY DESIGNER (MAC AND WINDOWS)



Note to Affinity Designer users: to install and use **Concept Master: Nature** brushes you'll need to **Switch to Pixel Persona** first. Affinity Photo users bypass this step.

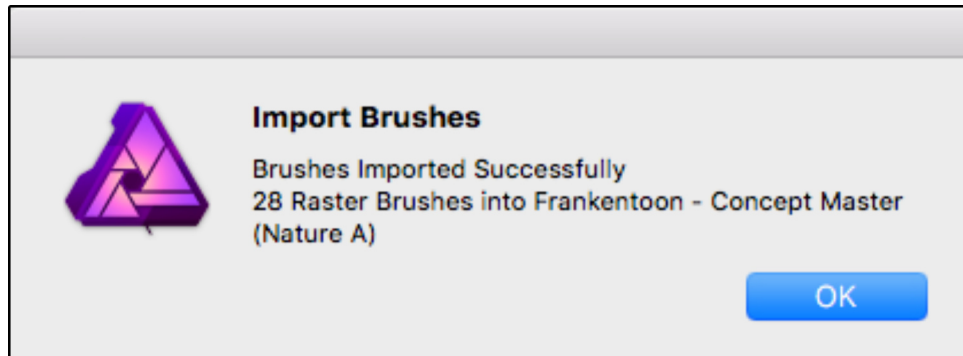


After unzipping your files, open the **Brushes Panel** and from the tiny top-right menu select **Import Brushes...**

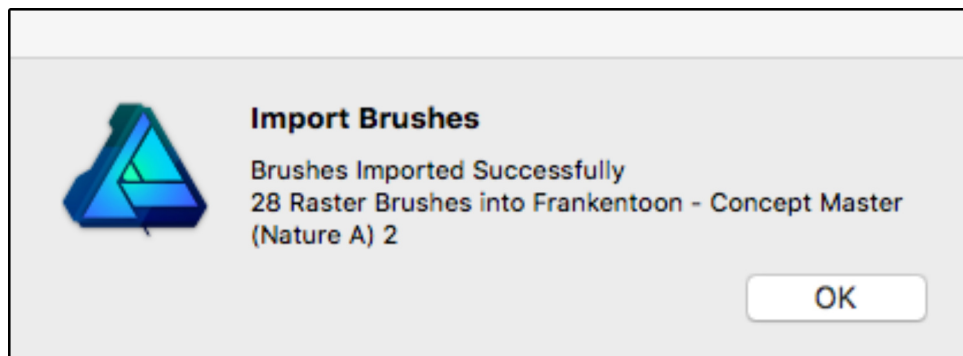
Finally, look for the folders **Nature Brushes** and **Nature Stamps** and import the files: Frankentoon - Concept Master (Nature A, Frankentoon - Concept Master (Nature B), Frankentoon - Concept Master (Stamps)



AFFINITY PHOTO AND AFFINITY DESIGNER (MAC AND WINDOWS)



Affinity Photo Installation Confirmation



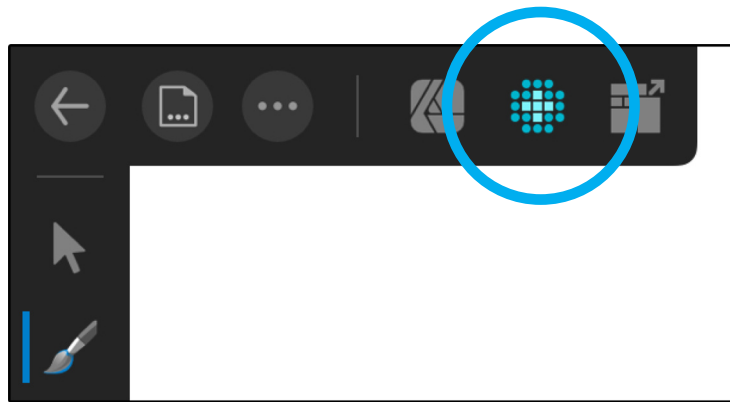
Affinity Designer Installation Confirmation

Finally, wait a couple of seconds for the installation confirmation. Remember you have to install each brush set separately and wait for their respective confirmation.

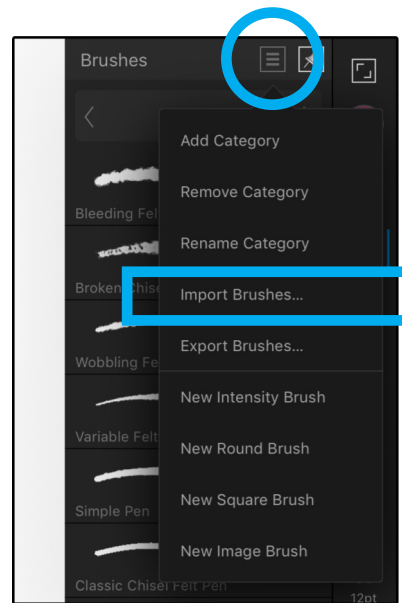
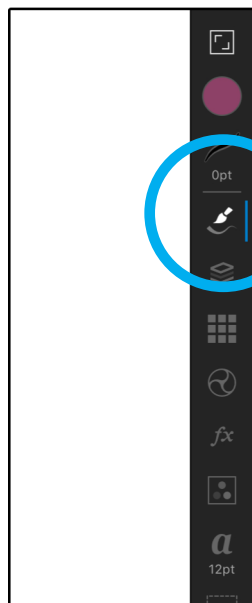


AFFINITY PHOTO AND AFFINITY DESIGNER (iPAD)

First, unzip your files on your desktop and copy them to your **Dropbox** folder. You can also use Win-zip or any similar app on your iPad to accomplish this. If you don't have **Dropbox** we recommend you to download it, because it's the most Affinity-friendly file browser for the iPad to date.



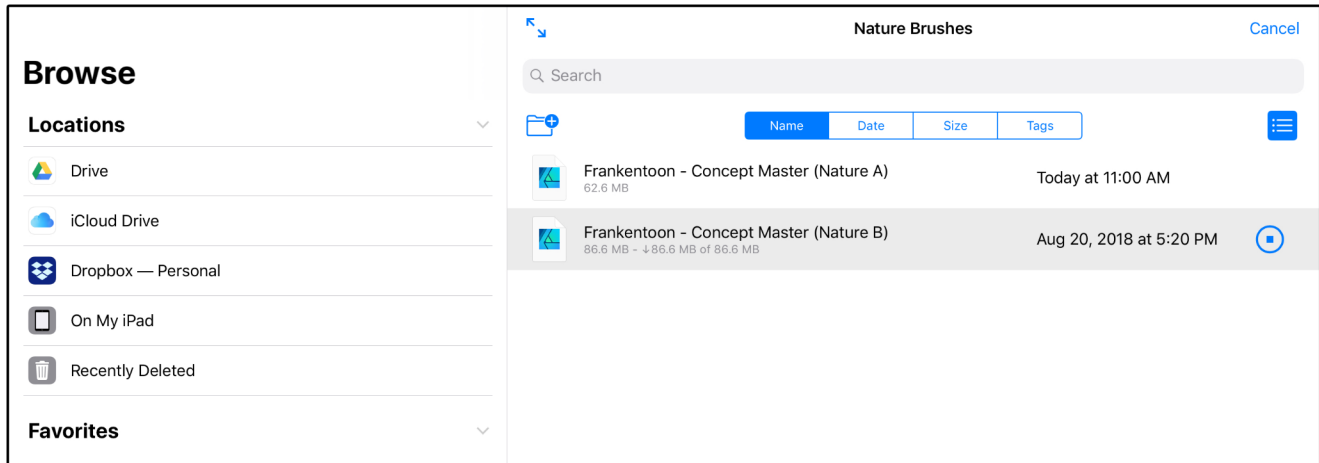
Note to Affinity Designer for iPad users: to install and use **Concept Master: Nature** brushes you'll need to **Switch to Pixel Persona** first. **Affinity Photo** for iPad users bypass this step.



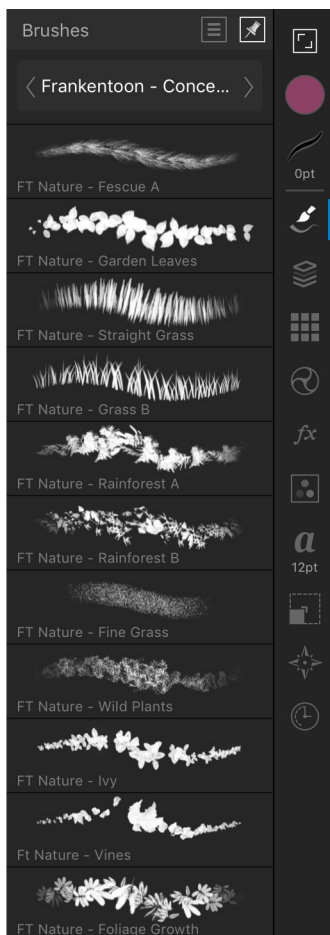
From the right menu [FIG.1], open the **Brushes Panel** and select **Import Brushes** [FIG.2].



AFFINITY PHOTO AND AFFINITY DESIGNER (iPAD)



Then, look for the files contained inside the folders **Nature Brushes** and **Nature Stamps**. Wait for the files to download and a few more seconds to get them loaded into the app.



Finally, wait about 15 to 30 seconds until brushes load and show up on your Brushes Panel.



+ TIPS & TRICKS ▶▶

Instead of being an ordered step-by-step manual, this guide is packed with a handful of neat tricks that will help you understand this unique brush pack a little better and therefore, use it more efficiently in your artwork.

So, feel free to go about its pages in any order you prefer, I'm sure you'll gonna find a useful tip wherever you look at.



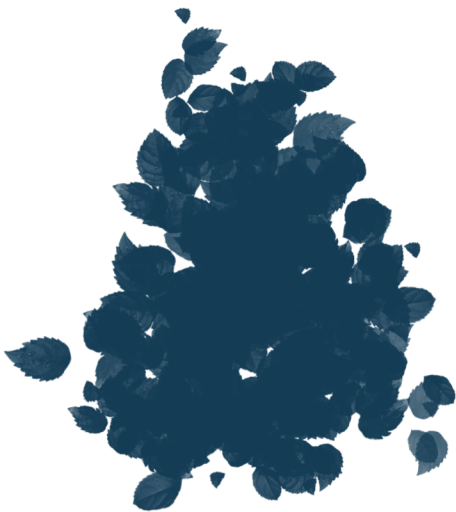


TIP 1: THREE-COLORS NATURE

Despite its apparent difficulty, painting nature it's not that different from painting any other tridimensional object; we still approach our trees and plants thinking about shape and volume.

By using **Concept Master: Nature** brushes, you'd be able to tackle this task with more ease than using regular painting brushes. By picking up three color shades, you'll have more than enough material to define your nature elements.

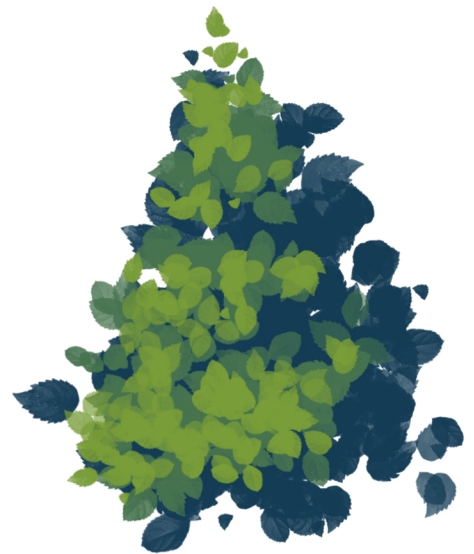
Brush: FT Nature - Garden Leaves



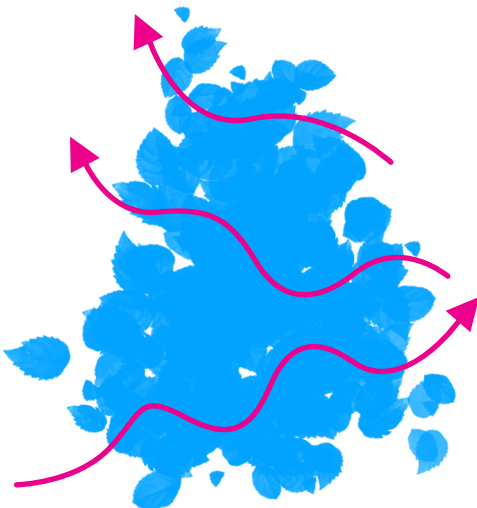
Overall Shape



Add Volume



Finish with Highlights



GET LOOSE!

One useful advice when using these brushes is to break the traditional approach of drawing even strokes. To get more organic and aleatory results, imagine you're painting with a piece of sponge instead of a regular brush.

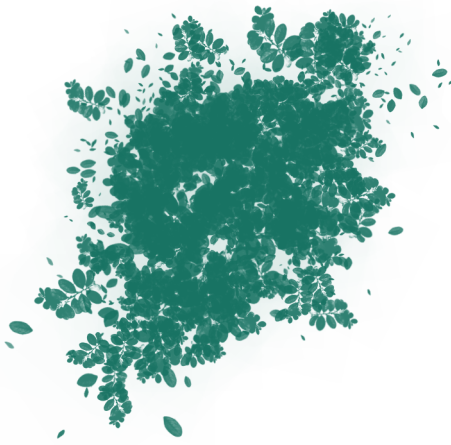


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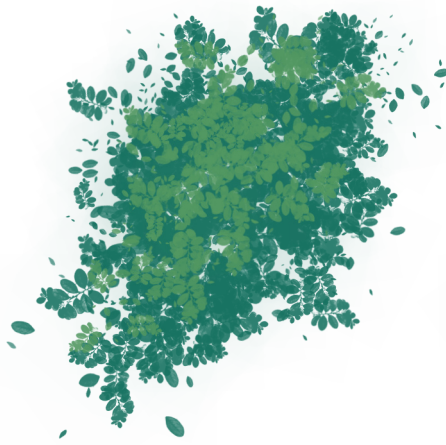
TIP 1: MORE EXAMPLES

On these examples we'll be only using one brush at a time to show you their unique versatility; however, the more brushes you add to the equation following this same formula, the more natural your illustration/painting will look.

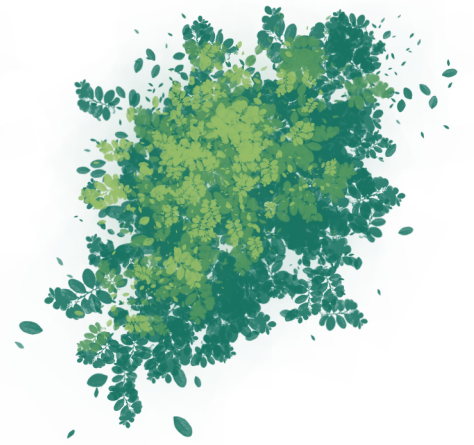
Brush: FT Nature - Concept Foliage 01



Overall Shape



Add Volume

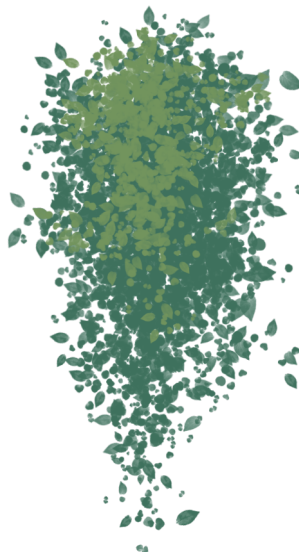


Finish with Highlights

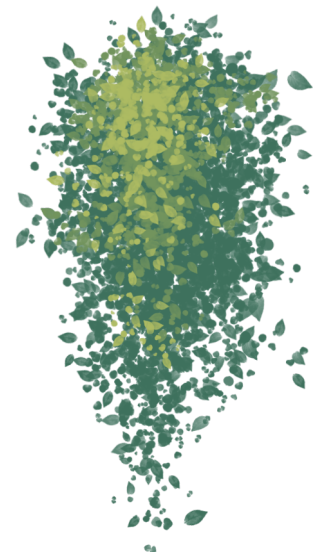
Brush: FT Nature - Bushy Leaves



Overall Shape



Add Volume



Finish with Highlights



TIP 2: USING SHAPES, THEN TEXTURES

If you aren't sure about your overall composition, you should begin working with solid shapes to define visual weights and balance. For this task you can use any solid brush you want, like the default round one that comes packed in any Affinity app (they're located in the *Basic* category).

Brush: FT Nature - Concept Foliage 01



FIG. 1

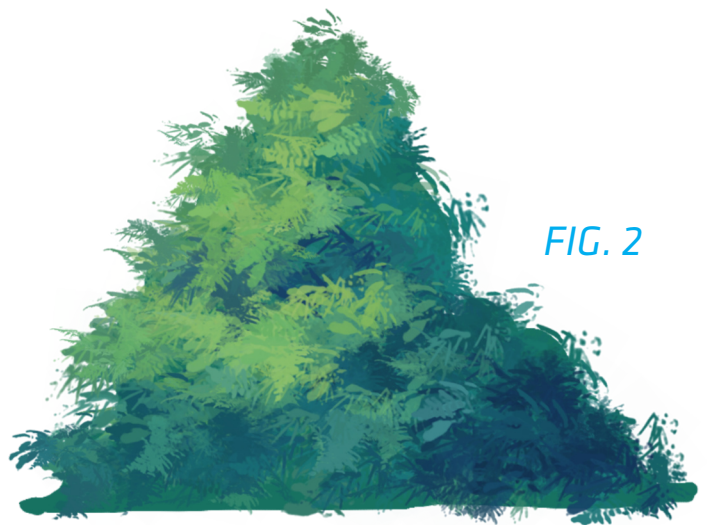
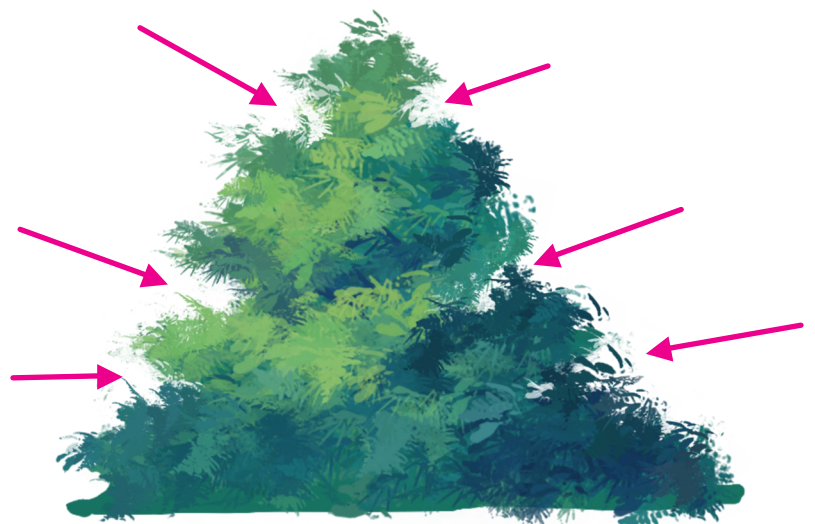


FIG. 2

In **FIG.1** you can see how I used the round brush to sketch a simple tropical forest bush. Doing it this way can be very useful when planning out larger scenes, where you need to concentrate on the big picture first and then, add life and a natural feel with our Nature brushes **FIG.2**.

Then you may want to use the **Eraser Tool** on certain areas to add some grooves to your main shape and take away the bulky look.





TIP 3: PAINTING BY 'UNDOING'

Concept Master Nature brushes will bring randomness to your paintings, because nature behaves, well, very random. This behavior is way cool because you'll be running into lots of happy accidents when using the pack. But certainly, not every accident is a happy one.

When I'm sketching my trees, foliage, bushes, stones, grounds, grass fields, etc.; I've found that having the Undo command (*CMD+Z*, *CTRL+Z*) at hand can be quite useful, as if it was another illustration tool. Finding that perfect leaf shape or position can be just a matter of undoing and redrawing. Let's see some examples.

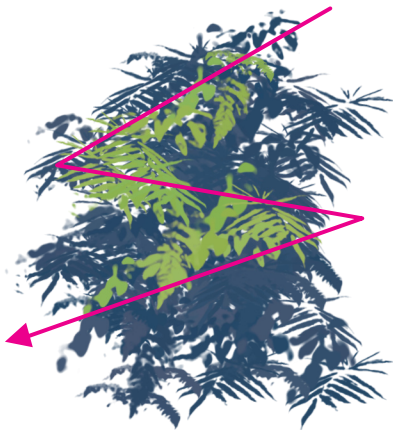


FIG. 1

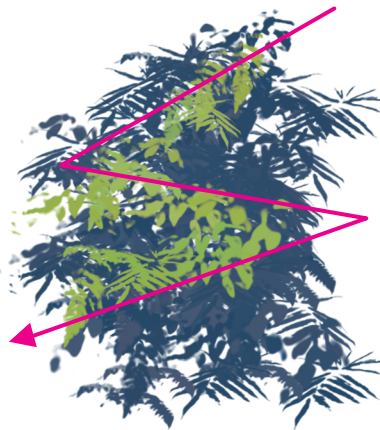


FIG. 2

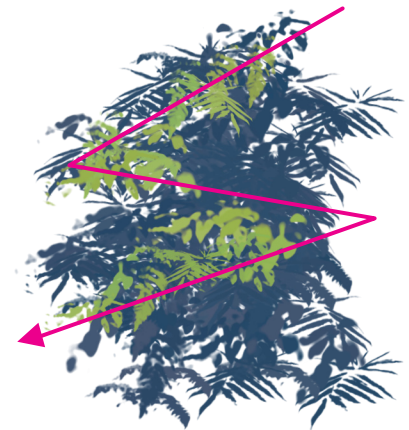


FIG. 3

I made a quick silhouette using the brush *FT Nature - Riverside* and this color ■. Then I used a light tone of green ■ to create the volume of my shape. I didn't like how the first attempt looked (Fig.1), so I undone that and tried again, using the exact same zig-zag motion. Although the result is different (Fig.2), I was going after a more 'scattered' look, so I undone that once more and did the same zig-zag motion a third time and, at last, (Fig.3) is exactly what I was looking for.

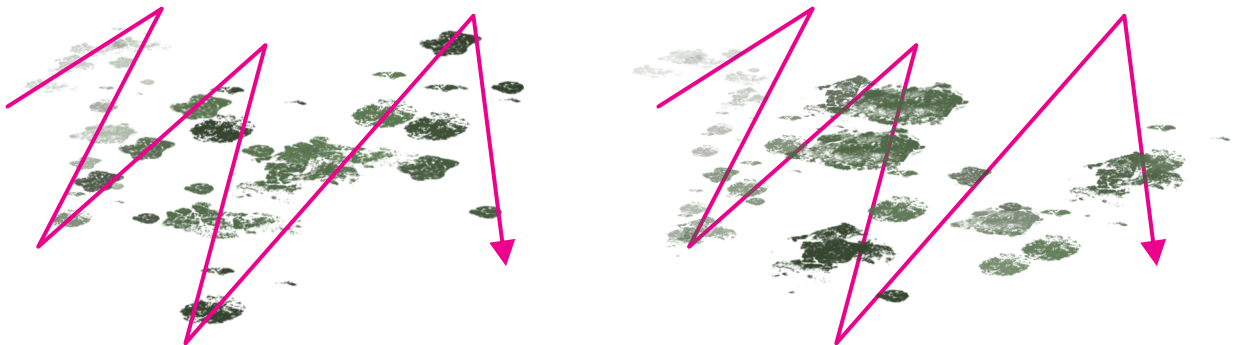
This tip might seem quite obvious, but the truth is that not everyone sees the Undo function as an experimentation tool. Since not every stroke will look the same when using this pack, your possibilities with just a single brush are plenty.



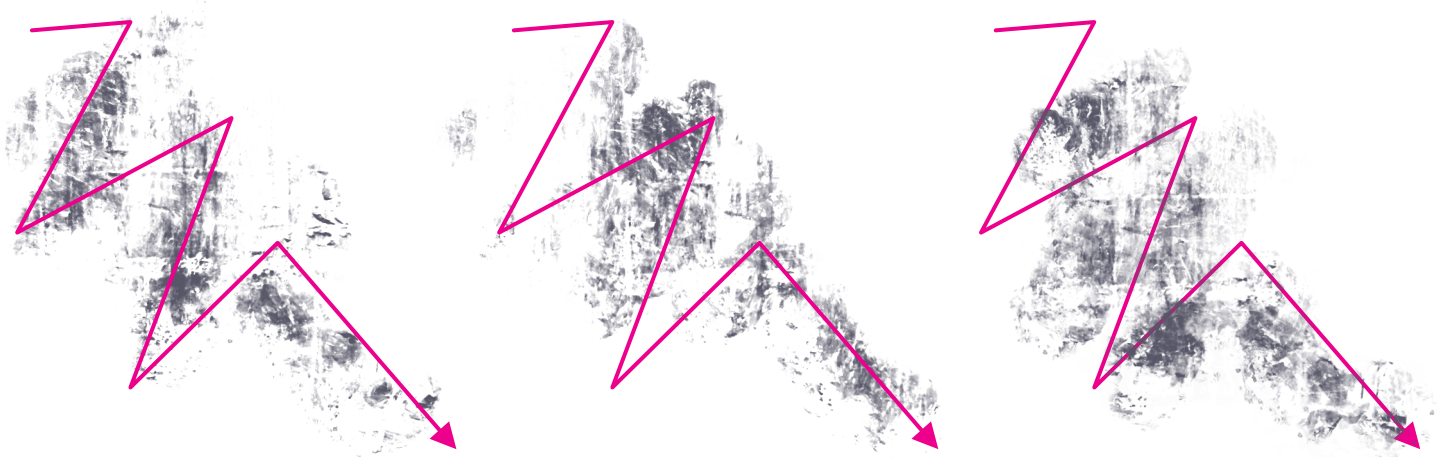
TIP 3: MORE EXAMPLES



Notice how different results came up, applying the same painting direction for every stroke. *Brush used above: FT Nature - Vines.*



I strongly recommend you to try several directions on each brush, to **find different patterns**. *Brush used above: FT Nature - Dirt/Mud (Ground).*



Brush used above: FT Nature - Stone Wall Finish A.



TIP 4: CREATING FIRE

Concept Master Nature contains a handful of specialized brushes, which have been designed to be used together to recreate more believable natural elements.



FT Nature - Fire (Step 1)



FT Nature - Fire (Step 2)



Using these brushes is super easy. Select the brush *FT Nature - Fire (Step 1)* and draw some strokes from top to bottom in a wavy manner. If you pick up a regular orange color, the light of the brush will build up itself as you create new strokes.



TIP 4: MIXING FIRE



FIG. 1



FIG. 2

Pick an orange color and use the brush *FT Nature - Fire (Step 1)* to lay down the primary structure (FIG.1), then, select the next brush of the list *FT Nature - Fire (Step 2)* to smooth out and define its contours.

You don't have to worry about changing colors; whenever you lift your Tablet's Pen or *Apple Pencil* from the surface and start drawing again, the brightness of the fire will intensify automatically.

Use *FT Nature - Fire (Step 4)* to paint small particles of burnout wood flowing with the wind.

Finally, select *FT Nature - Fire (Step 3)* to simulate the small pieces of firewood burning up from the ground.

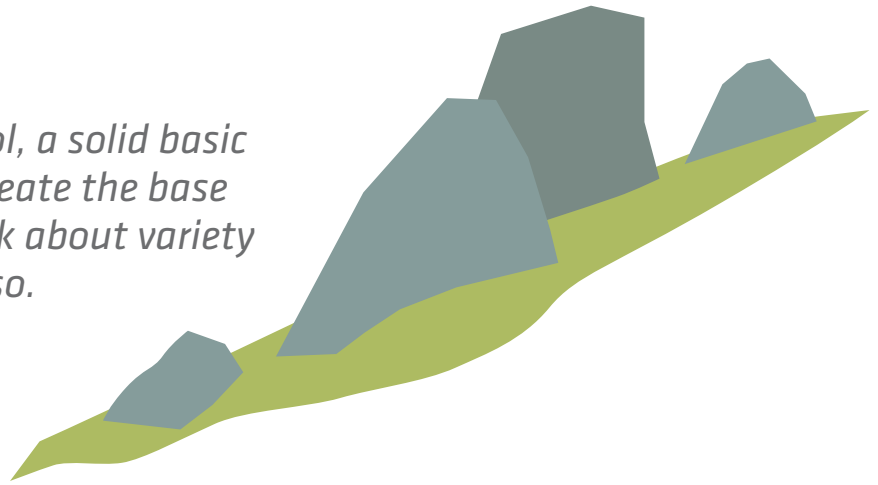




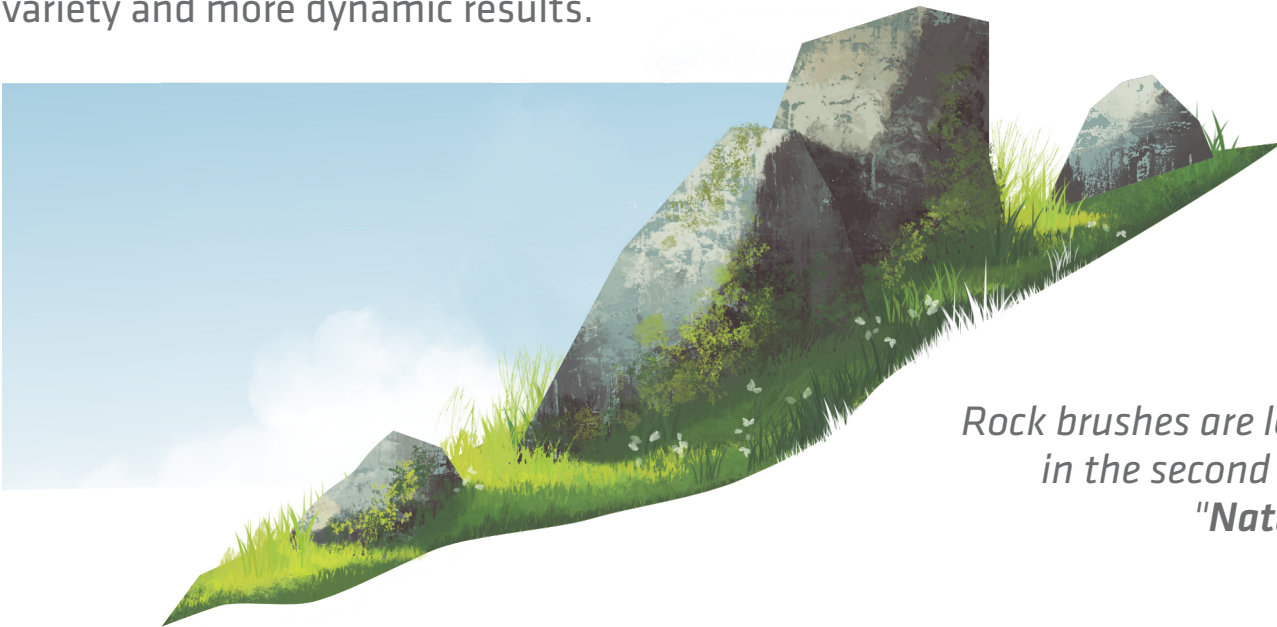
TIP 5: ROCKS

Rocks can be a beautiful part of your composition. We've included a couple of rock textures in our pack; however, these brushes aren't meant to be used to fill-in *shapes*, but to add a *realistic texture* to solid shapes.

Using either the Pencil Tool, a solid basic brush or the Lasso Tool, create the base shapes of your rocks. Think about variety and contrast when doing so.



Then, you can use these shapes as clipping masks to paint inside them. Pick a light source and using the brushes [FT Nature - Stonewall Finish A](#) and [B](#), in combination to create the shading and details. Change brush size as you paint, to add extra variety and more dynamic results.



Rock brushes are located in the second group, "Nature B".

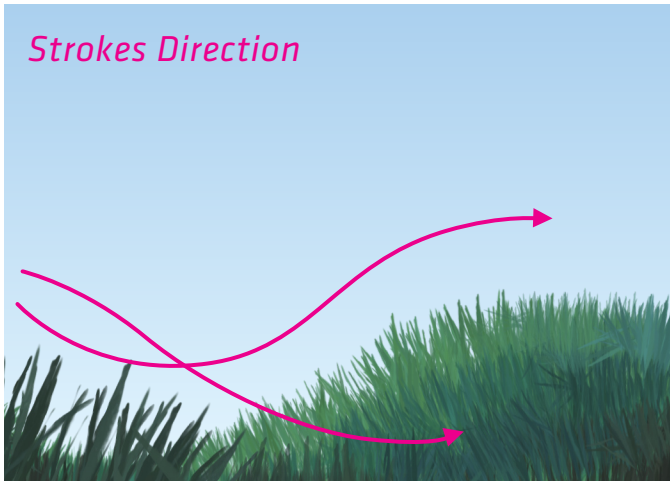
[FT Nature - Rocky Surface B](#) is also a very useful brush for painting extra details and highlights to your rocks. Complement your rocks's surroundings using a couple of grass brushes from the "Nature A" group. [FT Nature - Uneven Grass](#), [FT Nature - Grass B](#), [FT Nature - Stone Mold](#); are some nice examples.



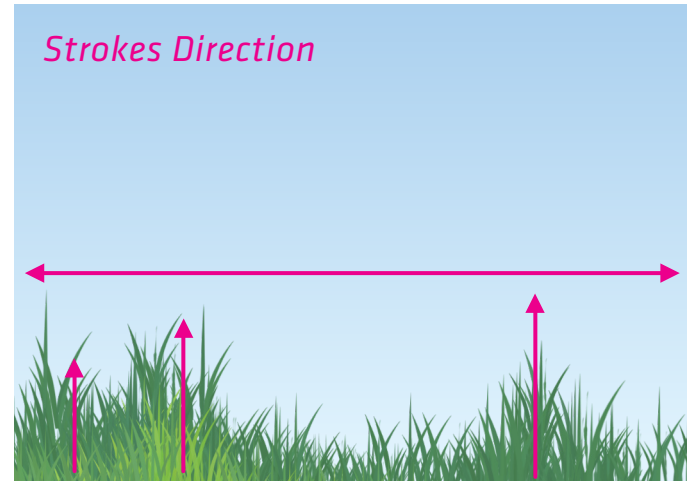
CONCEPT MASTER: NATURE - USER'S GUIDE

TIP 6: GRASS

Concept Master: Nature, includes a nice arrangement of brushes to create wild grass fields and lawns in general. Let's break down these brushes group so you can get to know them better.



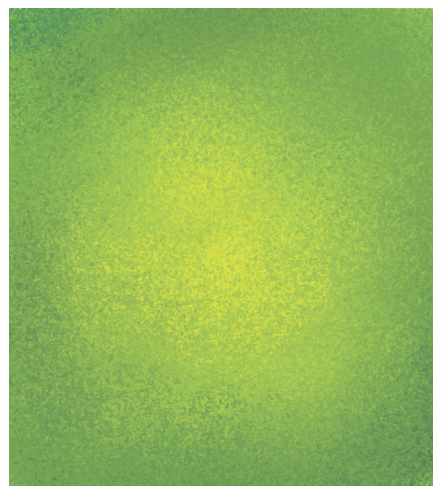
FT Nature - Straight Grass, will follow along the direction of your strokes, ideal for irregular surfaces.



FT Nature - Grass B, is a standard side-view grass. Alternate horizontal and vertical strokes to create uneven wild surfaces.



FT Nature - Wild Plants, ideal for covering big areas and combine grass and weeds on top.



FT Nature - Fine Grass, this one works great as base for top-view outdoor scenes.



FT Nature - Uneven Grass, perfect for grass details in perspective view.

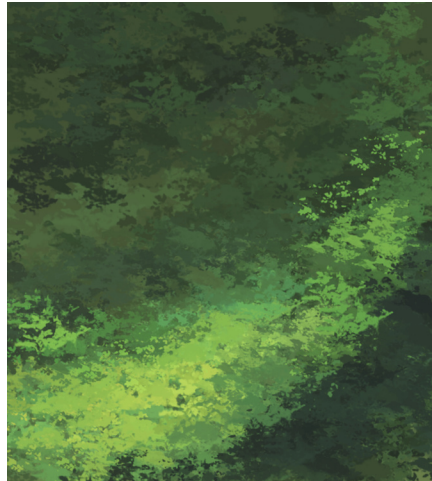


TIP 7: WEEDS AND OTHERS

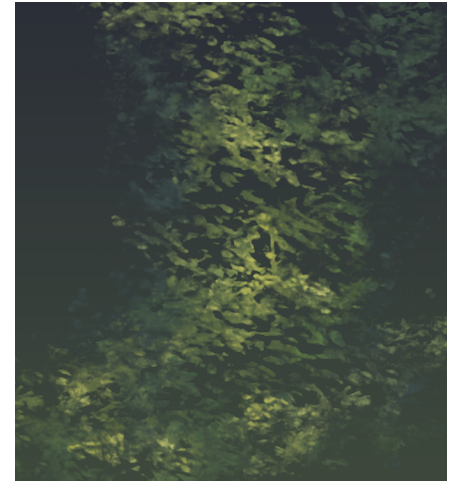
These ones are like 'companion' brushes, that will add more realism to grass, rocks and natural surfaces in general. These are their suggested uses, but you can experiment and apply them on everything you may think of.



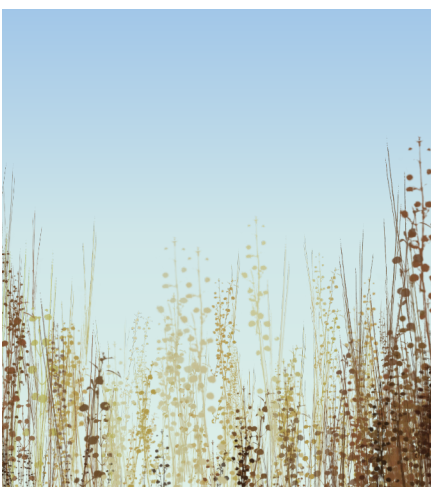
FT Nature - Fescue A, use vertical movements and different brush sizes to get better results with this one.



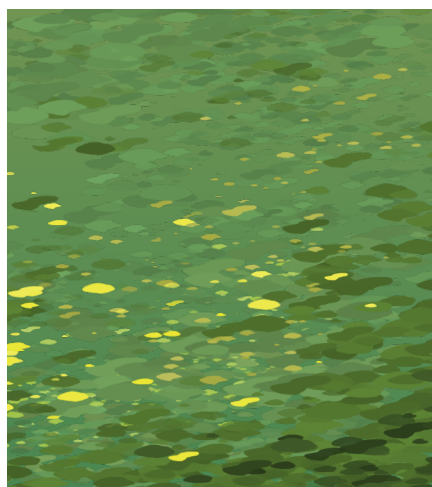
FT Nature - River Moss, use it like a 'sponge' to paint the type of plants lying next to rivers.



FT Nature - Stone Moss, the perfect companion for adding details to rocks. Another 'sponge' like brush.



FT Nature - Cereal Field, use it alongside regular grass, to get more natural results.



FT Nature - Speckles A and B, use them to simulate wild flowers and dirt particles.



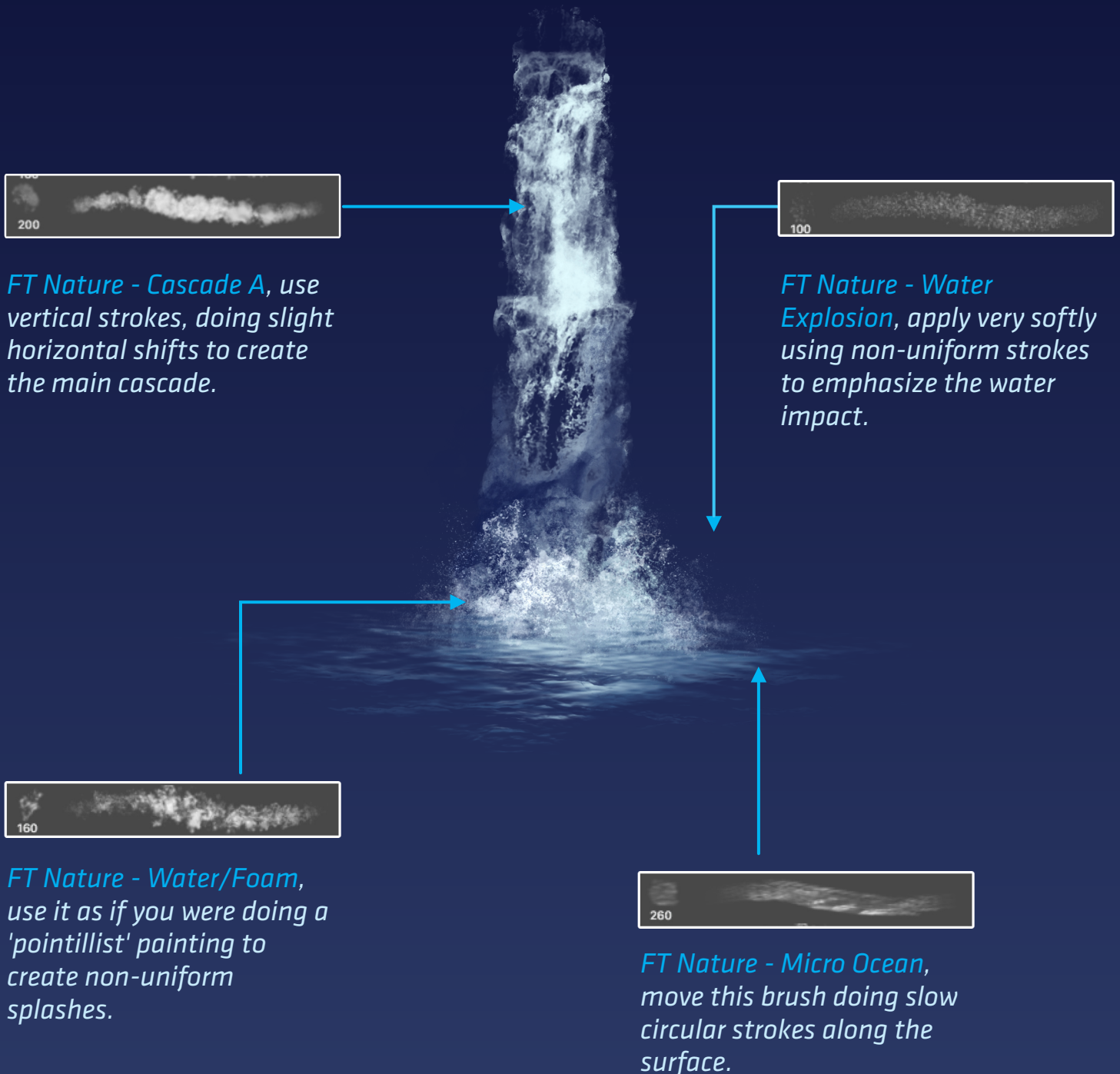
FT Nature - Random Leaves, use it on grass or trees to break uniformity.



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TIP 8: WATER

Another group of specialized brushes present in *Concept Master: Nature*, are water brushes. These set of four brushes can be used together to create a massive waterfall scene in just minutes, or separately to paint breaking waves, calm waters, splashes, pouring water and many more cool effects.



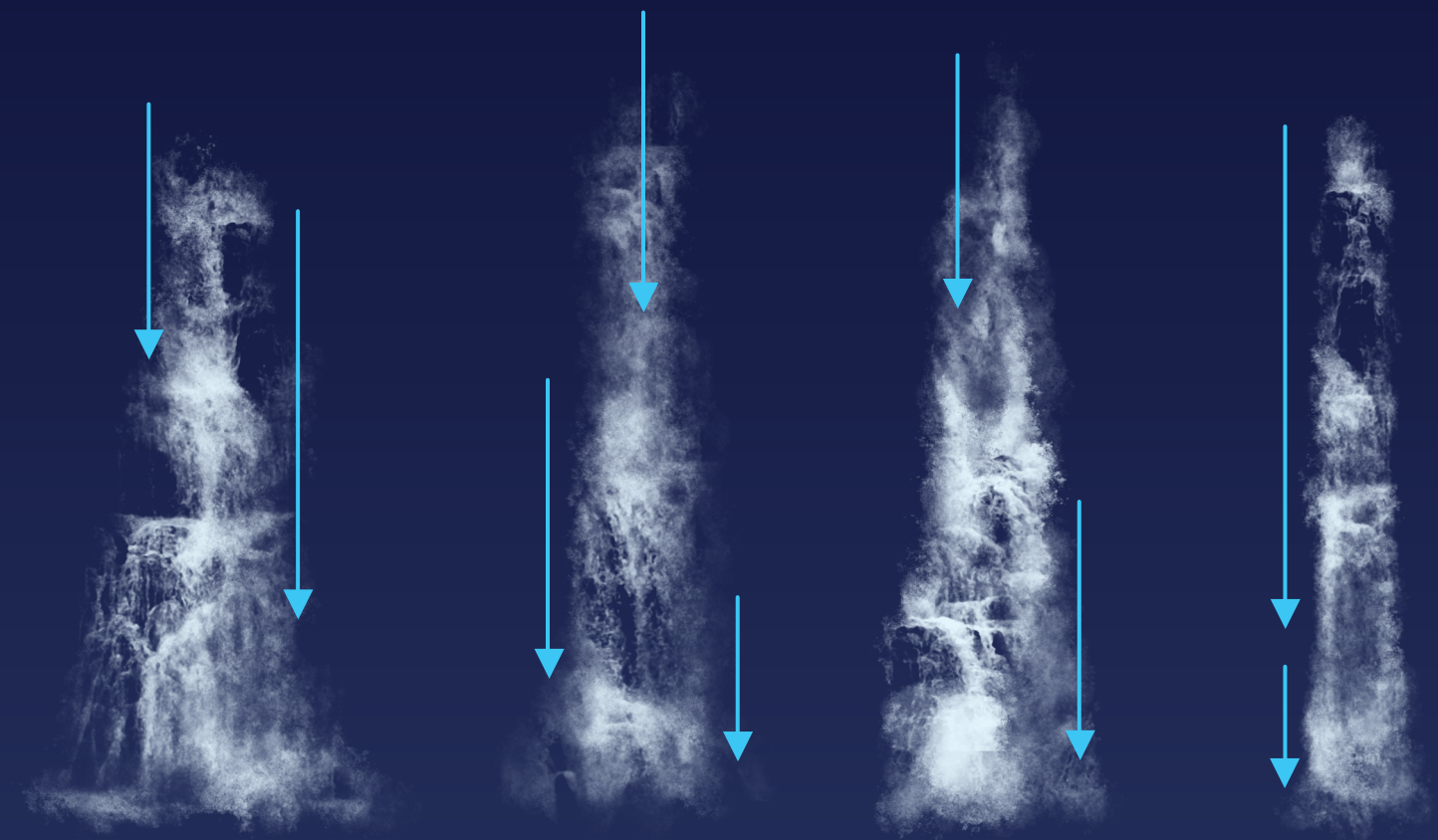


TIP 9: CASCADE BRUSH



Like other brushes of this pack; *FT Nature - Cascade A*, has been designed to behave quite unpredictable.

This brush will draw a different water pattern for you every time, so you don't have even think about it. Cool, isn't it?



In the image above you can see four different waterfalls that have been created with this brush using the same vertical strokes each time. However, I've managed to create a different water pattern for each one, by starting each one on a different position of the Artboard.

I also recommend you using this brush in **Erase** mode, to create extra variation to your water pattern.



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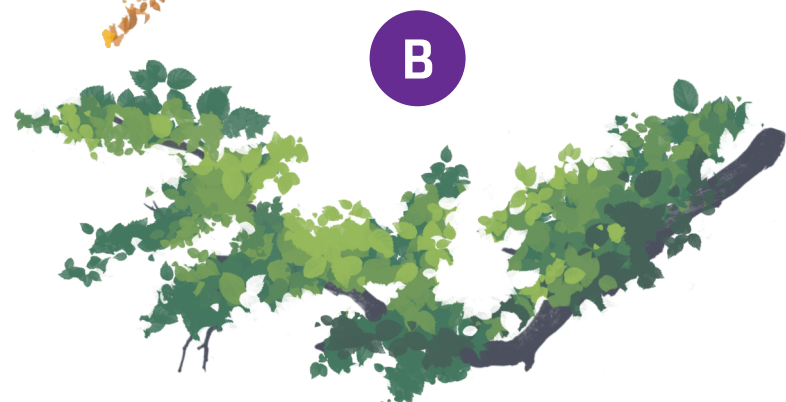
TIP 10: ERASER AS A DRAWING TOOL

Applying general lights to irregular elements such as branches, bushes, shrubs, climbing plants, etc. can be quite challenging. This **Eraser** technique may help you paint *believable* and *tridimensional* wild plants with more confidence.

Tones first, shapes later

You need to see natural elements as a solid object with lights, shadows, and volume. Begin by concentrating on these three elements first, not worrying too much about your overall shape yet. Just think about the whole mass of it.

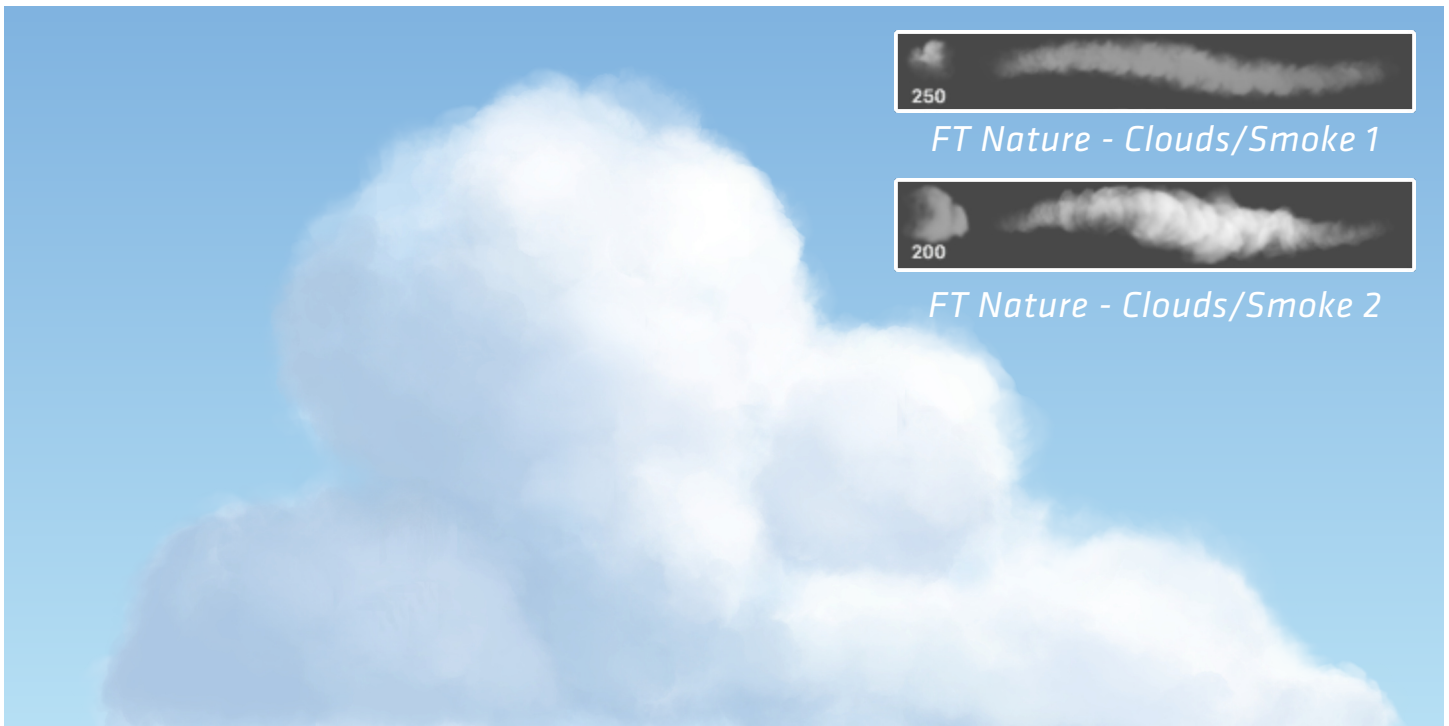
After you've set the lighting of your object, pick the **Eraser Tool** and, start trimming away to find a shape you like. Doing it this way, you make sure, your lighting will keep *consistent* and *realistic* across your plants.



Above you can see how I made a blobby shape (A) to figure out the lights and shadows. As I said before, it's easier when you see it like a solid object. Then I used the same brush with the **Eraser Tool** to re-shape my branch (B).



TIP 11: CLOUDS



Painting good clouds is probably one of the holy grails of environment design. Despite of their undefinable shape, clouds are kind of difficult to pull out correctly.

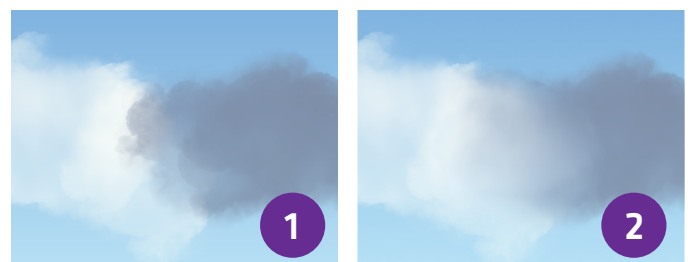


Imagine clouds as solid objects too

As intangible as they are, clouds get also affected by light; so what I use to do, is to imagine clouds as small groups of boxes in different sizes piled up together. This way you'll see how easy is to find their volume and values.

Extra tip: Use the Smudge Tool

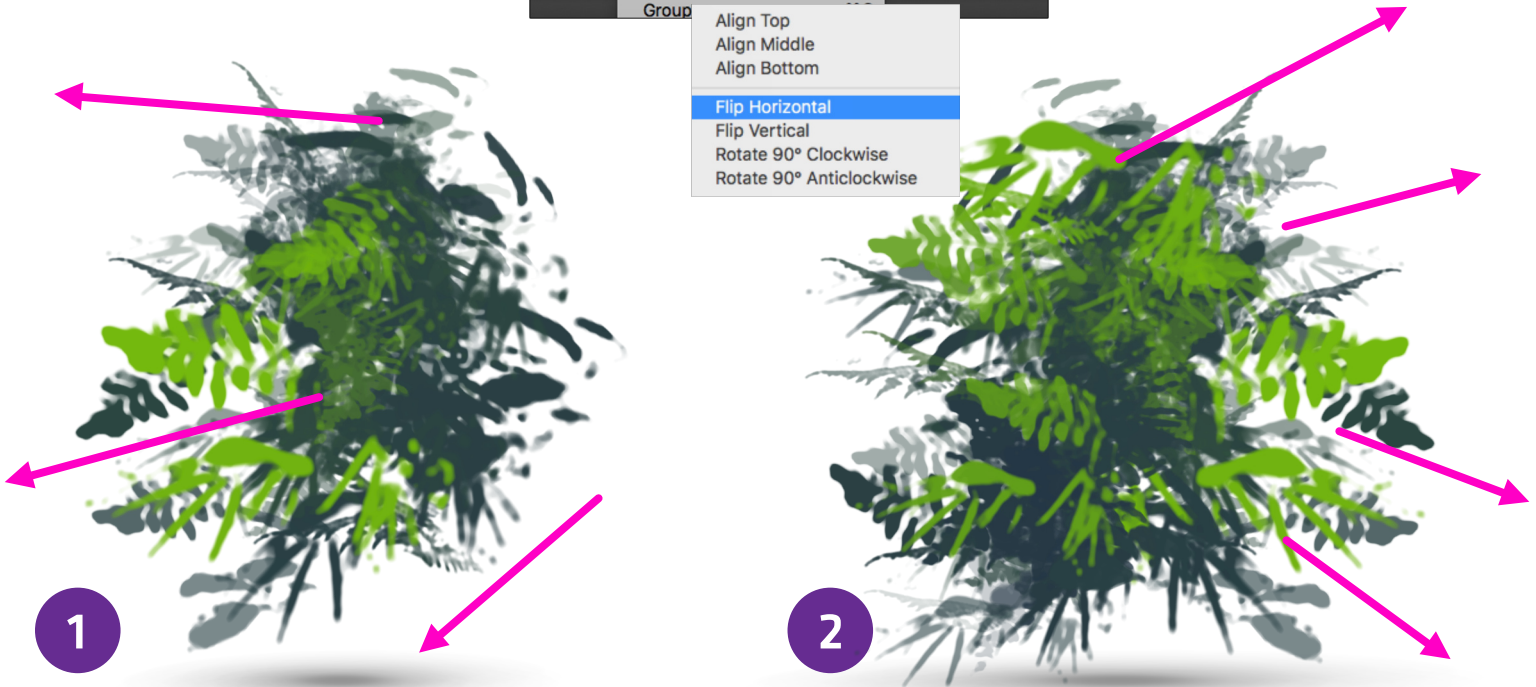
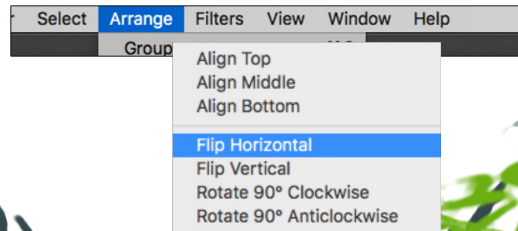
Using cloud/smoke brushes with the **Smudge Tool** may help you to smoothen out clouds surfaces and make them appear more natural and soft.



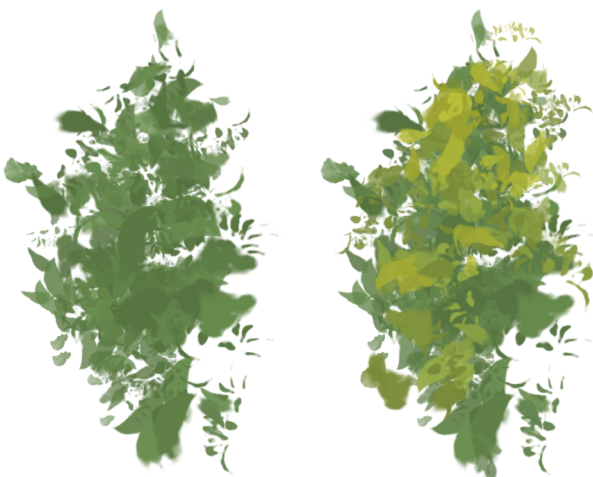


TIP 12: FLIP AND PAINT

All of the brushes included in **Concept Master: Nature**, are based on photographs; most of them taken by ourselves. To respect their original facing position, some of the brushes such as *FT Nature - Rainforest B* are pointing either left or right.



[FIG.1] This is our original pattern; it looks good, but if I want this to be a bush in the middle of a park rather than a bush placed next to a wall as it appears now, you can start painting as normal and then flip this shape horizontally to get the leaves cover the other side [FIG.2].



Sometimes the effect will be very subtle, but these kind of subtleties, are going to inject a lot of energy and randomness to your illustrations.

I recommend you test by yourself which brushes work better with this technique, experimentation is the key to get to know your brushes thoroughly.



TIP 13: STAMPS AS STARTING POINT

Stamp Brushes can be amazing time-savers. Not only because they are already finished elements to drop all over your scenes, but also they can serve as the base for new ideas. Stamp Brushes are located in the category *Frankentoon - Concept Master (Stamps)*.

**A**

FT Nature - Tree 02

Variation 1

Variation 2

Above you can see how the original stamp brush (**FIG.A**), has been transformed beyond recognition, when combined with brushes from the *Nature A* category.

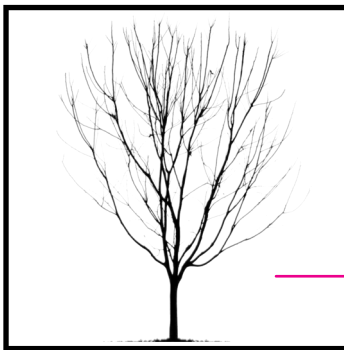
**1****2**

Seeing stamps as the medium and not the goal, opens up for endless possibilities.



TIP 14: BUTCHERING STAMPS

While on the subject of **Stamp Brushes**, which we find truly fascinating; another technique we love is to create new shapes by combining two or more stamp brushes.



FT Nature - Tree 06



FT Nature - Tree 04



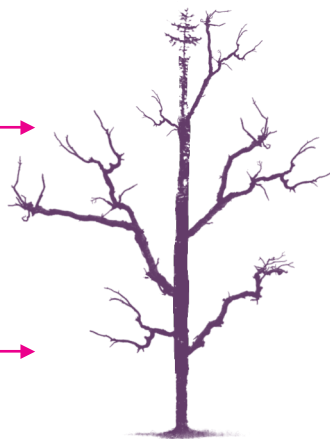
Using either the **Lasso** or **Eraser** tools, you can cut away the parts you won't be needing and then combine the results until you find a new design that fit your needs.



FT Nature - Branch 02



FT Nature - Tree 09



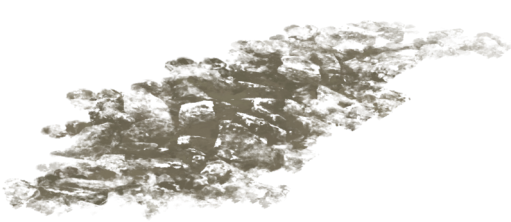
A simple branch and a common pine tree can make up for a nice scary halloween tree.

Don't be afraid of upscaling your stamp brushes, all of them have a maximum size of **4096 px**.



TIP 15: DESIGNING GROUND

Ground is something shouldn't be overlooked when designing backgrounds and environment paintings. Ground can add a lot of depth to your scenes. This pack includes 8 brushes for non-grass based ground design:



FT Nature - Rocky Surface A



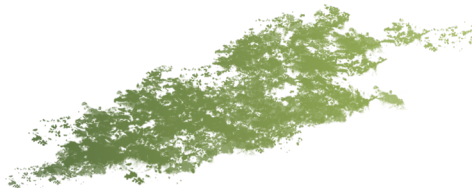
FT Nature - Rocky Surface B



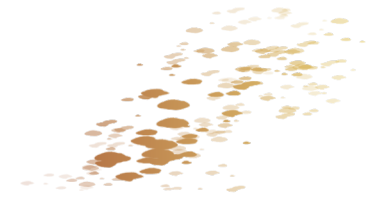
FT Nature - Mud



FT Nature - Dirt/Mud (Ground)



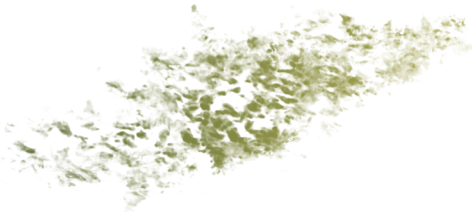
Ft Nature - River Moss (Ground)



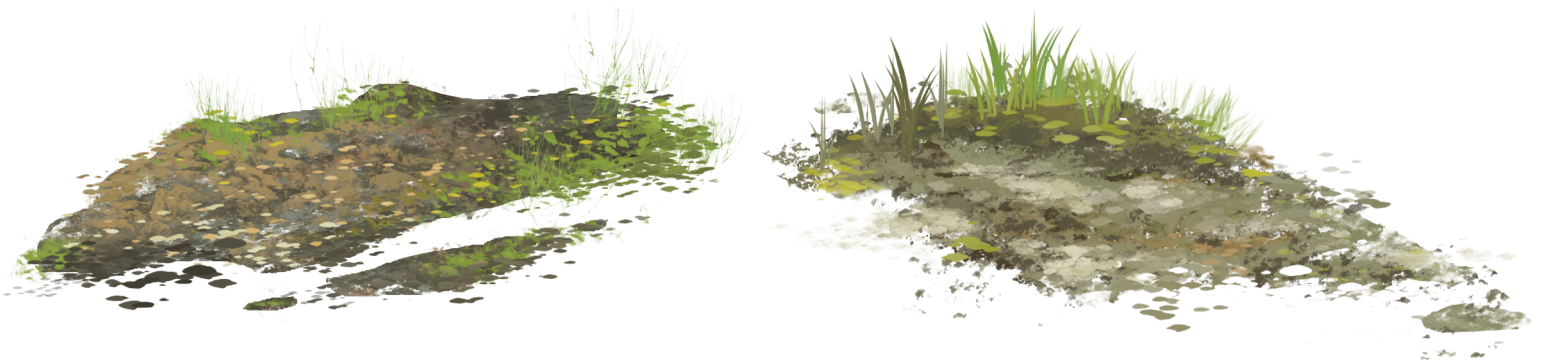
FT Nature - Speckles A



FT Nature - Speckles B



FT Nature - Stone Moss



Like other natural elements, the way you mix these ground brushes will give a different personality to each type of environment you're creating. I love to add a handful of weeds and grass all over to enhance my grounds realism.



TIP 16: SHARPENING

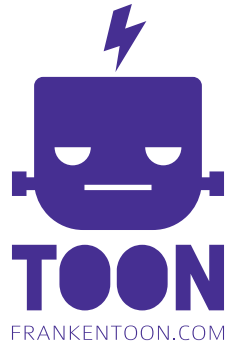
(AFFINITY PHOTO ONLY)

This is a simple and effective trick we use in almost 90% of Frankentoon's raster illustrations. Adding an **Unsharp Mask Filter** on top of your illustration, will make your details really stand out

The image is a composite illustrating the sharpening process in Affinity Photo. It features four main elements:

- Top Left:** A landscape illustration of a grassy hill with yellow flowers and a blue sky. A purple circle with the number '2' is next to it.
- Top Center:** A filter menu with three options: 'Clarity Filter', 'Unsharp Mask Filter' (highlighted in blue), and 'High Pass Filter'. A purple circle with the number '1' is below it.
- Top Right:** The same landscape illustration, but with a pink arrow pointing to a specific area of the plants. A purple circle with the number '3' is next to it.
- Bottom Center:** A close-up detail of the plants from the illustration, showing significantly increased sharpness. A pink arrow points from the 'Live Unsharp Mask' dialog box to this detail.
- Bottom Right:** A 'Live Unsharp Mask' dialog box with the following settings:
 - Radius: 2 px
 - Factor: 2.25 (highlighted with a blue box)
 - Threshold: 0 %
 - Opacity: 100 %
 - Blend Mode: Normal

You can use either a **Live Filter** above all layers or a regular filter (top menu, Filter) over a flattened image (Document > Flatten). These settings look great most of the times: Radius=2px, Factor=2.25 and 0% for Threshold.



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