







Left: The globe artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*) is a member of the *Asteraceae* family, related to the *heliolepis* daisy. This magnificent specimen, which measured 22cm (8 7/8 in) across, came from a friend's allotment and caused enormous interest among the other gardeners. It is a good example of fresh coloring, colour blending and fine detail.

16. How to Make your Picture Work

It can be difficult to admit that composition, taking into account the trial and error involved and time spent, is a necessary part of the process of learning the craft of botanical painting. Knowing what is a good composition and what is not so good is usually an acquired skill, as is the knowledge of how to make a mediocre composition better.

Understanding the importance of composition and knowing how to go about it is half the battle. You must know what to look out for and have a few guidelines to use. The great masters such as Leonardo, Rembrandt and Rubens spent considerable time composing their paintings and made many changes at the preliminary sketch stage. This shows the value of taking time to think and evaluate.

Composition in a picture is one of the major elements that make it work for you. It can make or break a painting. A good composition can carry a mediocre painting technique, but a bad composition cannot necessarily carry a good painting technique.

