



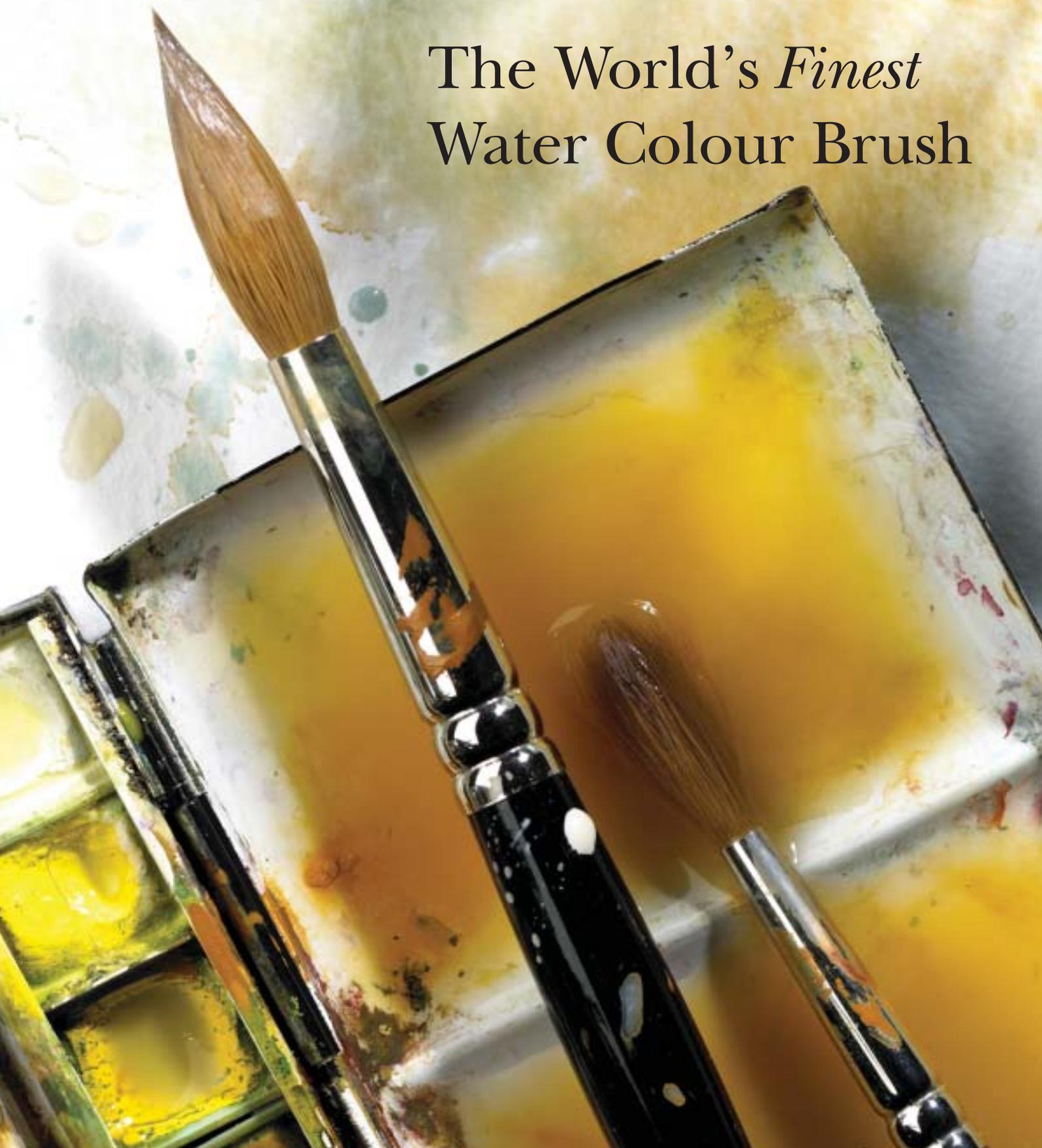
By Appointment to  
HRH The Prince of Wales  
Manufacturers of Artists' Materials  
Winsor & Newton  
London

WINSOR & NEWTON™

Series 7™

**FINEST QUALITY KOLINSKY SABLE BRUSHES  
DES PINCEAUX FINS EXCLUSIVEMENT EN POIL DE KOLINSKY**

The World's *Finest*  
Water Colour Brush



## *Introduction*

More than any other tool, the brush is a direct and fluid extension of the artist's hand, eye, and expressive vision. It is with that principle in mind that *Winsor & Newton™* has crafted fine artists' brushes for over 150 years, earning a reputation for making the world's finest from the very best raw materials.



So much so that in 1866, Her Majesty Queen Victoria gave orders that *Winsor & Newton*, holders of the Royal Warrant, be commanded to produce the very finest water colour brushes in her favourite size: the No. 7. The

resulting brush known as the *Series 7*<sup>™</sup> and the standards of quality set in 1866 are the same today – although we have since moved away from the original ivory handles and sterling silver ferrules made for her Majesty!



During salvage expeditions from the Titanic – a *Series 7* was recovered; the lacquer and brush head still looked as though it had been bought yesterday!

There are three essential qualities that define the finest water colour brush:

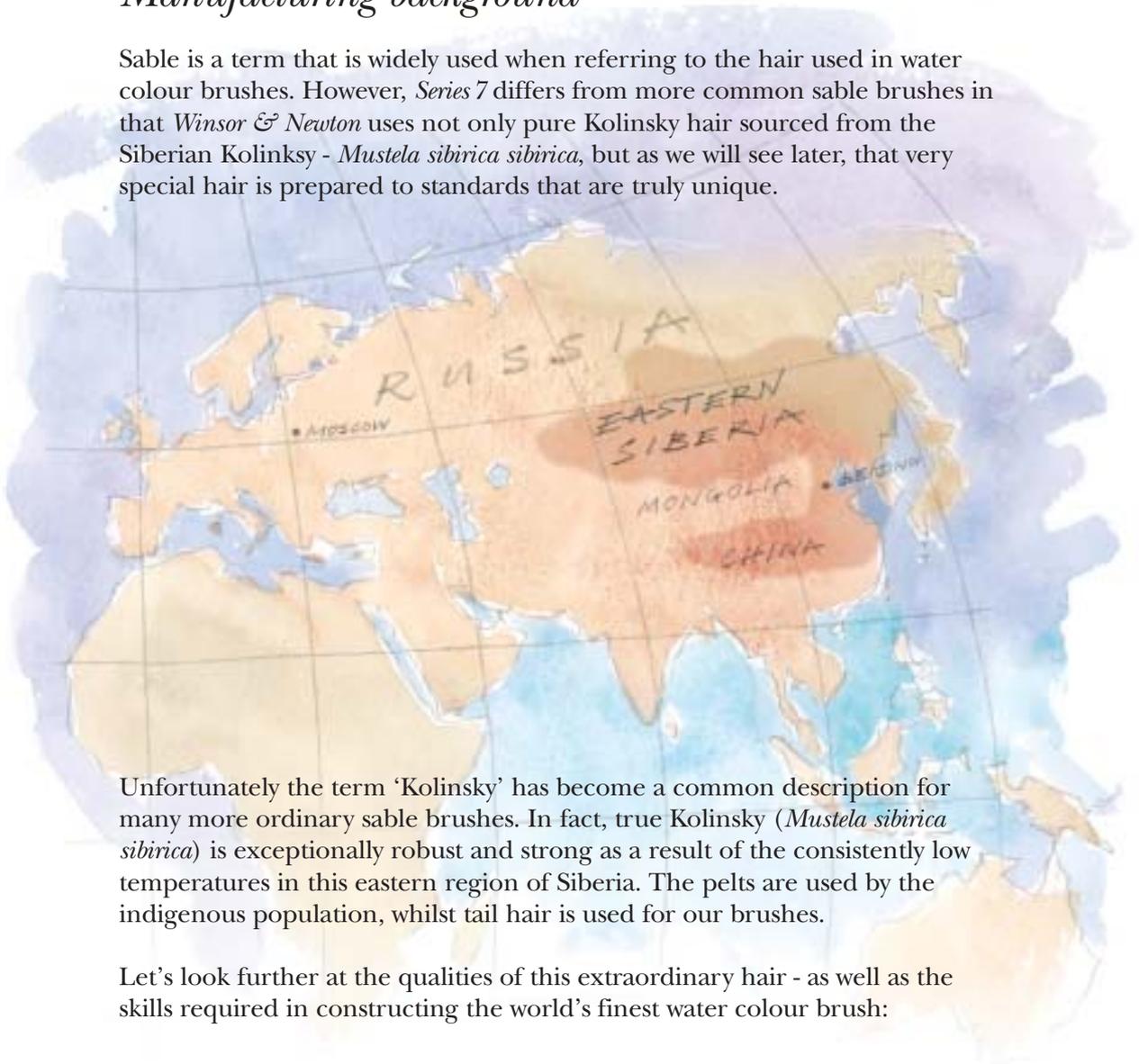
- **Point** – it should come to a crisp point and maintain that point during use.
- **Snap & Spring** – the brush snaps crisply back into shape with the right degree of spring to allow the artist superior control with a degree of ‘give and take’ between the brush and the painting surface.
- **Flow Control** – the colour flows evenly and consistently from the point with enough capacity within the ‘belly’ of the brush to allow the artist to lay down flowing gestural strokes of colour.

Since 1866, the handmade *Winsor & Newton Series 7* has proven itself to be the standard-bearer in all of these qualities, offering a rapier-like point, perfectly balanced spring with extraordinary capacity, and flow control.

The world’s finest doesn’t come easily or without cost. But for artists who appreciate exquisite quality and longevity, there is no other brush than the *Series 7*. Today, just as in 1866, the *Series 7* is made for those who understand that the quality of the brush will be reflected in the quality of their work.

## *Manufacturing background*

Sable is a term that is widely used when referring to the hair used in water colour brushes. However, *Series 7* differs from more common sable brushes in that *Winsor & Newton* uses not only pure Kolinsky hair sourced from the Siberian Kolinsky - *Mustela sibirica sibirica*, but as we will see later, that very special hair is prepared to standards that are truly unique.



Unfortunately the term 'Kolinsky' has become a common description for many more ordinary sable brushes. In fact, true Kolinsky (*Mustela sibirica sibirica*) is exceptionally robust and strong as a result of the consistently low temperatures in this eastern region of Siberia. The pelts are used by the indigenous population, whilst tail hair is used for our brushes.

Let's look further at the qualities of this extraordinary hair - as well as the skills required in constructing the world's finest water colour brush:



- < Individual hair showing scales which keep the animal dry and warm in the extreme winters of this region. Each hair is covered in tiny overlapping scales. These increase the surface area, trapping any moisture. For painting, this unique large surface area is the first characteristic which makes sable the perfect brush hair. When grouped within the brush head, these millions of scales draw up copious amounts of water colour, resulting in the large 'carrying capacity' unique to sable.

Rather than relying upon a supplier to select hair for us, at *Winsor & Newton* we still prepare the hair entirely by hand at our brush factory in Lowestoft, England. Our brush making factory moved to this site in 1946. We chose Lowestoft because of its long history as a fishing village. Here were generations of individuals with unique skills, dexterity and years of experience mending fishing nets - skills perfect to meet the exacting demands required to hand make brushes.

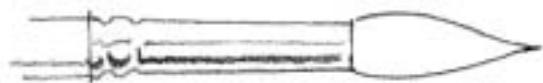
Whether selecting hair, dressing, making or testing, experience is the key which will turn an average brush maker into an expert. Most of our workforce spend their working lives at *Winsor & Newton*; in fact in the last 60 years the three people in charge of *Series 7* have a combined 134 years experience!





## The Series 7™ range

The unique features of a *Series 7* brush are its wider belly coupled with a long tapered point.



This is achieved by our exclusive hair selection, preparation and method of manufacture.

Standard *Series 7* brushes are larger than the conventional British brush sizes and also differ to the numbering systems used in different countries. To help you see the range and make any comparisons, we have printed actual size images of the heads above and below.

Within the standard *Series 7* range there are 13 sizes from 000 up to number 10. As and when raw materials are available we also make a limited number of sizes 11, 12 and 14. It's worth noting that we make these sizes only when we can obtain hair of sufficient length and quality to match standards set nearly 150 years ago. For availability please contact *Winsor & Newton* directly. (\* Sizes 11, 12 & 14 not available in the USA)

As an additional part of the range, we also provide *Series 7* Miniatures. These are available in 9 sizes, from 000 up to number 6 and are made from the same quality hair as our standard brushes. The length of hair used in these brushes is much shorter to allow the point only to meet the paper surface when working on very small pictures.



△ (i) Position of standard *Series 7* brush in use.

△ (ii) Position of *Series 7* Miniature brush in use.



A Field Set is also available with three *Series 7* reversible pocket brushes in sizes 00, 3 and 5. They are accompanied by a variety of accessories in a case. (Not available in the USA)

## Making *Series 7*<sup>™</sup> brushes

### Selection & Cleaning

The first stage in making the world's finest quality Kolinsky sable brush is to select the finest hair available, and we believe our selection technique is the most rigorous of all. Before any work begins only the strongest hair with the most spring is selected. The hair is then cleaned thoroughly without the use of chemicals or detergents. This is achieved by a series of processes, including tumbling the hair.



△ Bob is currently in charge of *Series 7* and has been working at *Winsor & Newton* for 37 years.

### Grading, combing and straightening

The hair is graded again for good spring (the strongest filaments give good control of the brush head and ensure the point continually reforms), and any broken hairs (blunts) are also removed at this stage.

The hair is then combed and separated into individual hair lengths by our skilled 'Dressers'. More cleaning occurs and the hair is then straightened and rested to ensure the hair maintains its spring and point in the brush. These processes have remained unchanged for well over 100 years; everything is carried out by hand in as gentle a way as possible to prevent damage to the hair.

The dressers continue to comb and grade the hair, again removing any blunt, damaged or turned hairs until they have groups of hair at different lengths. Depending on the brush size, up to seven different hair lengths are mixed together. This is called 'taper-dressing' and is the culmination of our very unique hair preparation. These mixtures of hair are then wrapped into small packets using acid free paper ready for use by the brush maker.

The hair packets are moved to the brush makers in the *Series 7* room.

As a result of our dressing on site and scrupulous grading techniques, only 5% of the available hair is selected for use in *Series 7*. We believe that makes *Series 7* a pretty special brush!



## Making the brush heads

Firstly the brush maker selects the right amount of hair for the size of brush they are making and ties the hair using a piece of linen thread. The tied tuft of hair is then gently twisted and rolled between the fingers of the brush maker with great skill to obtain the perfect 'domed' shape. This dome is critical to the performance of the brush and has to be just right. Too flat or too rounded and the brush will not point properly.

Our dedicated *Series 7* brush makers work here in the *Series 7* room at Lowestoft.



< *Series 7* brush makers must have many years of experience before learning to make the very best brushes: Glennys is making a No.10 *Series 7*.

The combination of the 'taper-dressed' hair and the doming results in the elongated tip and the wide belly of *Series 7* brushes.

Other sable brushes are usually 'solid' dressed – using hair of a single length per brush size. This makes for a stubbier tip and therefore less control and accuracy.

< Their predecessors in 1951.

## Assembling the brush and testing

### Fitting

The tied head is then fitted into the seamless nickel ferrule and glued into place.

### Testing

The brush is then inspected yet again for blunts, which is a laborious process done by hand. Every hair in the brush head is checked under a magnifying glass. A brush made using perfect unbroken hair will show the finest of tips when splayed and held to the light.



^ Wet Point testing

### Wet Point Testing

After the handle has been crimped into place, the brush is then given to the most experienced brush maker who is charged with the final quality test – the 'Wet Point' test. Every *Series 7* brush is carefully tested by hand in water, on water colour paper, to ensure that the brush has an excellent point and retains this point and shape in use. Wet testing takes time and expertise, but it is the only way to ensure the performance of these exceptionally high quality brushes.

The brush is then lightly gummed and a brush head protector is applied, to protect the brush head during transit. For larger sizes a tag is placed into the box with the brush, indicating the name of *Series 7* brush maker who has made that particular brush. It is then packed away ready for sale.

Making fine brushes requires generations of skill, a thorough understanding of which hairs have been proven to provide the greatest expressive control and an exacting and uncompromising eye in selecting the finest materials. We believe this is the only way to make a brush that measures up to our standards – and yours.



^ Each brush is checked under a magnifying glass

Point

Hand tied with  
linen cord

Tuft deep into  
ferrule to ensure  
balance and spring

Ideal position of  
ferrule for best  
belly and point

Nickel Plated  
Brass Ferrule –  
non corroding

Deep Double  
Crimp for security

## Technical Anatomy of a *Series 7*<sup>TM</sup> brush



(i) swirl the brush

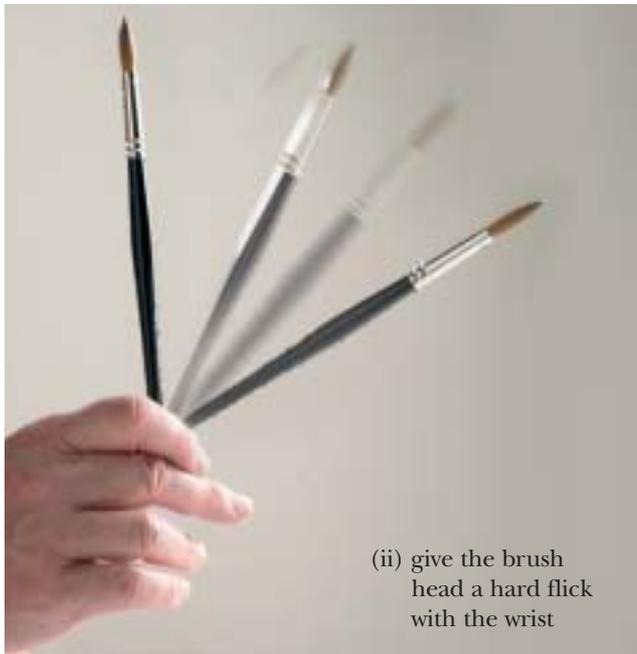
## Using *Series 7™* brushes

### Pointing your brush – without Colour

If you want to test the point of your brush or re-shape it, use a jar of clean water.

Dip the brush in and swirl it around ensuring it is thoroughly wet. Especially with large brushes, look inside the brush head to check it is wet. Dip the brush again and drain a little of the water back into the jar using the rim.

Ensure you are away from furniture and carpets.



(ii) give the brush head a hard flick with the wrist



(iii) pointed wet brush.



### < Pointing your brush – when painting

When you have mixed your colour and drained any excess back into the palette, twist your brush head gently to get the perfect point. You may have to drain more colour from the tuft with the larger size brushes.



### Choosing a water colour brush

For your first *Series 7* purchase we recommend around a Size 5. This gives you good colour carrying with a very fine point.

If you are going to have three *Series 7* brushes then we suggest No.'s 3, 5 and 8 which give you a good spread for different size washes and as fine a point as you'll need.



### Speed and control of painting

The larger belly of the *Series 7* brush holds more colour than other sable brushes and this makes applying washes so much easier. Even on a full size Imperial sheet (30" x 22") a No. 10 can complete a whole sky with one brush load of colour!

The great colour carrying capacity of *Series 7* is all the more marvellous when considering that it comes with such a fine point too. You can achieve as fine a line with a *Series 7* No. 10 as you can with a No. 0, the reason for the larger brush is when you want a reservoir of colour.

Once you're used to a Size 8, you'll really appreciate a No. 9 or No. 10. For those doing lots of painting with plenty of large washes, the luxury of having two No. 10's allows you to apply washes wet in wet without having to wash a brush in between, achieving a faster, more controlled and mastered result within the painting.

### Using *Series 7*<sup>™</sup> Miniatures

The miniature shape of these brush heads allow for the more angled 'pen' position of the brush, which is required when working on very small works.



### Length of Service

*Series 7* can quite literally last a lifetime, but they must be washed and dried carefully after use and avoid exposure to moths! When in constant use, this lifetime is obviously lessened. Even so, because the point is so tapered, a worn *Series 7* will still out perform many solid dressed brushes.





## *Cleaning and Care*

A *Series 7* brush will offer many years of service, even with daily use if the following simple points are followed:

1. Always clean your brush at the end of your painting session.
2. Do not leave brushes soaking in water.
3. Never leave them resting on their heads or tufts.
4. Shape the head after cleaning (do not point in your mouth).

### **Cleaning Instructions**

1. Brushes should be wiped clean on a lint-free rag and then rinsed under running water.
2. Clean brushes gently with cool water and mild soap or *Winsor & Newton Artgel™* or Brush Cleaner if you have used oils on your brushes. Wear protective gloves and gently swirl the soapy brush in the palm of your hand.
3. Repeat washing and rinsing the brush until the water runs clear. You'll be amazed how much colour comes from the brush head. Take particular care to ensure that the base of the brush head is clean.
4. Some pigments may stain the brush slightly, but this will not affect the performance or life of the hair. Remove excess water from the brush head. Dry the handle and ferrule.
5. Gently reshape the head and stand head up to allow drying.

### **Care of your *Series 7™* Brushes**

- Wash your brush as described. The most common cause of a brush no longer pointing is the build up of pigment particles in the base of the brush. If they are allowed to build up they simply push the hairs apart and prevent the point from forming.
- Avoid storage in direct sunlight.
- If you are storing brushes for any length of time, make sure they are clean and perfectly dry before putting them away in an airtight box.
- Moth repellents are recommended when storing the brush, but cannot be relied upon as a sure preventative against moth damage.
- *Series 7* brushes used for oil or acrylic are likely to wear more quickly if used on a coarser surface.



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[www.winsornewton.com](http://www.winsornewton.com)

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