



APRIL 19, 2022

Acrylic  
April

ACRYLIC APRIL 2022

BY: THE ART SHERPA



www.TheArtSherpa.com



# FLIGHTLESS PARADISE

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON JENNA BUG

Steps: 7 | Difficulty: Intermediate | 2 Hoots



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## THE GOLDBLOCKS ZONE

In painting, every technique or process has what I call a "Goldilocks Zone". As an artist, you will constantly seek this space to achieve maximum results from any project you're doing. Much like Goldilocks, you will go into each technique and try to find a space just right for you. When you're loading your brush, sometimes you will have too much water, sometimes you will have too little water, and sometimes you will find the amount of water is just right. When applying strokes to the canvas, you may find that you have too much brush pressure, too little brush pressure, or that your brush pressure is just right. The Goldilocks zone changes for every technique and every process. You will know you have found it when something that seemed difficult suddenly becomes much easier. A little goal I'd like to set for you is notice when you have found yourself in the Goldilocks Zone so you can locate it again easier the next time you come across a particular technique.





## THE ACRYLIC APRIL PAINT CHALLENGE EXPLAINED

The Acrylic April Painting Challenge begins April 1st 2022 and ends April 30. Thirty powerful little painting tutorials that challenge global artists to participate by completing one small acrylic painting every day for an entire month.

### PARTICIPATE BY COMPLETING ONE SMALL ACRYLIC PAINTING EVERY DAY FOR AN ENTIRE MONTH!

This year's Acrylic April Challenge is designed around the "Bloom...A Story of Flowers" and every painting will embrace that theme and every tutorial will teach skills that will be built upon in subsequent lessons. If you engage in this unbelievable art journey for 30 days, you will gain a greater understanding of the nature of flowers...how they engage with nature, how they behave, and how to successfully illustrate them.

This document is a step by step written description of brushes, colors and mixes, techniques and explanations taken directly from the tutorial. It is provided to you as a resource to assist you in your Acrylic Art Journey and is best viewed in outline format to allow for ease in navigation between sections. Once all of the tutorials have been recorded and have an accompanying mini book, The Art Sherpa hopes to prepare a printed version of all of Acrylic April that you will be able to purchase. That expanded book will include technical resources not available to you at this time about color mixes, techniques, brushes, materials, and all things art.

Traceables for this tutorial can be found at [theartsherpa.com](http://theartsherpa.com).

We sincerely hope that you enjoy your experience with Acrylic April and look forward to seeing your completed paintings. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [support@theartsherpa.com](mailto:support@theartsherpa.com) if you require assistance.

You can join the The Art Sherpa Facebook Acrylic April group at: [www.facebook.com/groups/AcrylicApril](https://www.facebook.com/groups/AcrylicApril)



### DAY 19: APRIL 19, 2022

I've actually learned a lot about flowers during the Acrylic April "Bloom" journey and I hope that you have too. Did you know that the flower Bird of Paradise is native to South Africa, is named after UK's Queen Charlotte, and because its petals resemble the feathers of the actual bird, Bird of Paradise.

GET YOURSELF SOME SIPPY SIPPY, FLEX THOSE SHOULDERS, AND LET'S PAINT A LITTLE BIT OF PARADISE.



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## PAINT COLOR & MIXING LEGEND:

Use this paint legend below to understand the symbols that I use to give you important painting information.

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW

## BRUSHES:

- Large Synthetic Angle
- Medium Hog Round
- Medium Synthetic Filbert
- Small Synthetic Round

## TOOLS:

- 8x8 Canvas  
(If you notice that your canvas started to warp, as sometimes happens, just turn the canvas over and put it back side forward

on your easel, then mist the back of the canvas. It usually resolves itself. Let it dry before you proceed.)

- Optional: StayWet Palette

## SYMBOL GUIDE:

- > Less than previous amount
- < More than previous amount
- + Equal amount

## TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE:

- Implying Foliage
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing



## VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE:

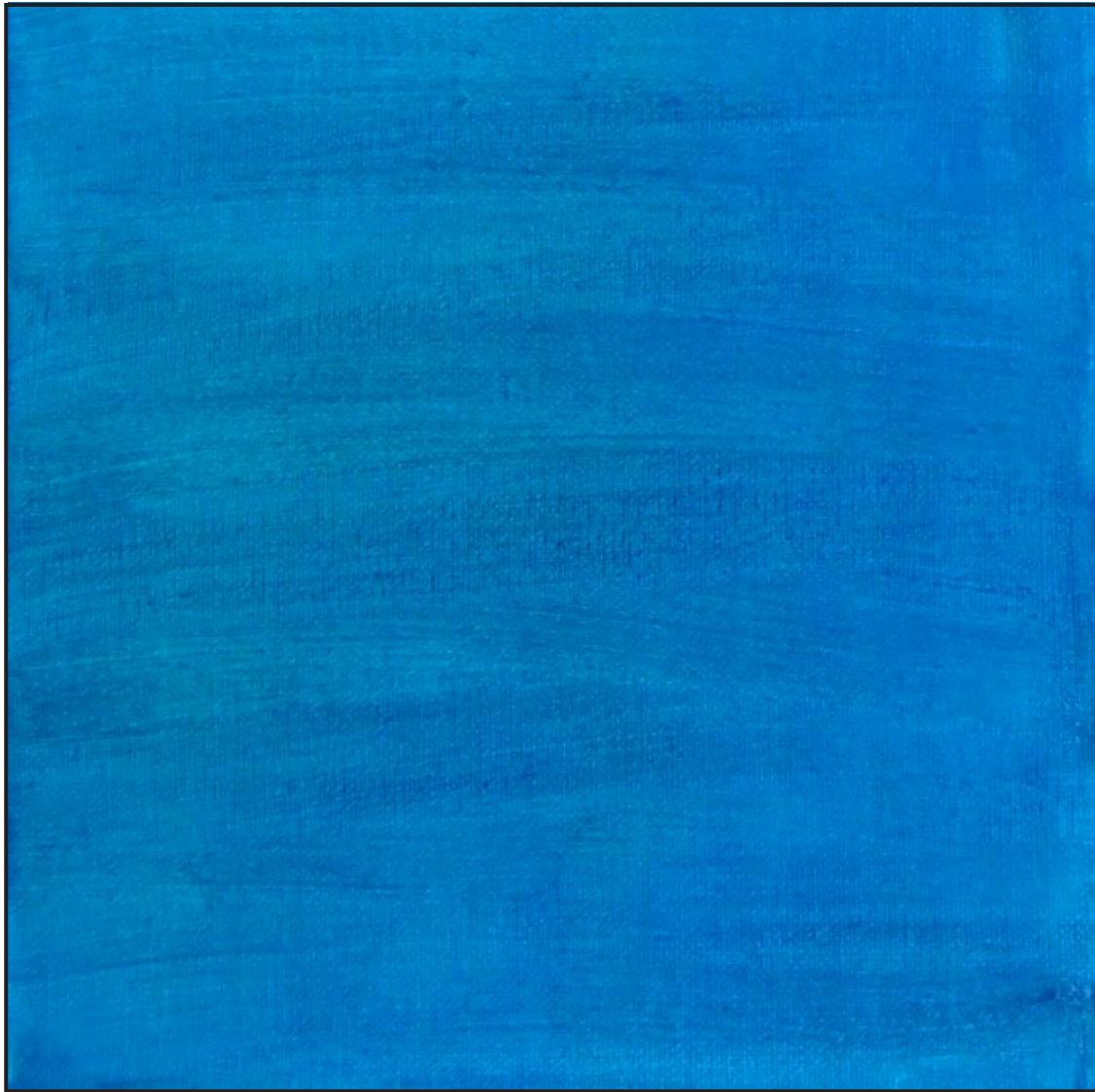
Below are the timestamps we inserted in the tutorial video so that you can easily coordinate using the book and the tutorial video simultaneously.

STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	1:07	COLORED BACKGROUND
STEP 2	3:42	STEMS AND LARGE LEAVES
STEP 3	7:18	LEAF STRUCTURES
STEP 4	9:44	TROPICAL LEAVES
STEP 5	15:28	BLOCK IN FLOWER
STEP 6	19:06	FIRST LAYER OF PETALS
STEP 7	24:42	BLUE SPIKES
STEP 8	29:35	COLORFUL BRACT
STEP 9	33:19	FINAL DETAILS
	36:01	SIGN



# STEP 1 - COLORED BACKGROUND

## "FINDING PARADISE"



### PAINT:

- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Large Synthetic Angle

### COLOR MIXES:

- Dark Teal = UB + PG



### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Loosely cover the entire canvas with the **Dark Teal mix**. This first layer does not need to be precious. Once the canvas is completely covered, smooth it out slightly by applying long, smooth brush strokes, horizontally and vertically. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



## STEP 2 - STEMS AND LARGE LEAVES

### "X" MARKS THE SPOT



#### PAINT:

- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM

#### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Large Synthetic Angle

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Dark Green = PG + BS
- Medium Green = PG + CYM > BS



#### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Using the **Dark Green mix** and the edge of the brush, create the stem of the first leaf by slightly arcing a long line across the canvas. It begins about 3 inches from the bottom, left side of the canvas and arcs to the upper right corner. The spine for the second leaf begins at about the middle, bottom of the canvas but it arcs to the upper left corner. These lines intersect about 3 inches from the bottom of the canvas, forming a large "X" that almost covers the entire space.
- Loosely sketch the outer edges of a leaf that arcs to the right, giving it a bit of a divot at the top where it was torn. Fill it in from the outer edges into the spine, applying a curved stroke while still using the **Dark Green mix**. Use this same method to create the second leaf that is behind.
- Loosely paint around the leaves using the **Medium Green mix**. Add some of the **Dark Green mix** in a few places, here and there, creating an abstracted background. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

## STEP 3 - LEAF STRUCTURES

“LOOSE LEAF, LOOSE LEAF, ROOSE FEEF”



### PAINT:

- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Burnt Sienna = BS

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Medium Hog Round

### COLOR MIXES:

- Deep Gray = BS + UB



### STEP DISCUSSION:

- On the front leaf, paint two lines on either side of the center stem, using the **Deep Gray mix**. Create the leaf veins with slightly curved lines, about a fingers width apart. Paint the leaf behind in the same manner. Rinse.





## STEP 4 - TROPICAL LEAVES

"NOW DON'T TAKE OVER THE WORLD"



### PAINT:

- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Medium Hog Round

### COLOR MIXES:

- Bright Green = PG + BS + CYM



### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the center stem of the forward leaf with the **Bright Green mix**. Then paint between the veins.
- The leaf in the back is painted in the same manner.
- Outline the leaves then, defuse the darker lines by dry brushing this color loosely over them.
- Add Phthalo Green to the dirty brush and apply it loosely, around the outside area. Roughly add some of the **Bright Green mix** to this area, creating a loose, abstract background.
- Add a bit more **Bright Green mix** to the stem and veins of the forward leaf, then push the second leaf back by dry brushing and blending it into the background. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

## STEP 5 - BLOCK IN FLOWER

"THEY ALL FAN OUT"



### PAINT:

- Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Medium Synthetic Filbert
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil

### SHERPA TIP:

For a more visible image on video, I use paint to sketch this image onto the canvas. You should use a Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil.

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- I chose to freehand this image but I have also provided a traceable if you prefer to use that method. There is no right or wrong way, you can grid, transfer, or freehand, whatever makes you the most comfortable. If you are free handing, you have numerous references to assist you. There is the picture that follows this step, the traceable, and the grid reference. I drew in only the major objects.
- Sketch the flower using Titanium White. The stem starts 1 inch from the bottom, left corner. Paint this stem upward then, at about 2 inches, curve it sharply to the right and carry it to the edge of the canvas. Curve a second line below that, joining it to the stem. Adjust the size and fill in with paint.
- Paint the first curved petal, starting at the center of the bract. It grows on a slightly upward angle to the right. Between that petal and the bract, paint a spike that goes toward the right edge of the canvas, it has a small hump on the top of it. Paint a second, similar spike on the other side of the petal, that angles up towards the top, right corner. Just to the left of that, paint a second petal. It is a double petal that grows upward from the center of the bract and splits into sort of a "V" shape. The last spike grows from the center, towards the upper left corner. Then paint the final double petal curving to the left. Add a small leaf curving left off of the stem. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



## STEP 6 - FIRST LAYER OF PETALS

### "DUELING CADS"



#### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Titanium White = TW

#### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Orange = CYM + CRM
- Light Yellow = CYM + TW



#### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the tips of the first petal on the left with Cadmium Yellow Medium then add a little Titanium White to the brush to shape them slightly. Paint the bottom of this petal with the Cadmium Yellow Medium
- Add the **Orange mix** to the middle of each side of this double petal and blend it, wet into wet, into the yellow areas. Vary the mix on the petals that are a little darker by adding more Cadmium Red Medium. Use the Cadmium Yellow Medium to transition between the blends if needed. Add the **Light Yellow mix** to the tips and base of the petal and blend a little Cadmium Red Medium where some darkness is needed. Rinse.
- Paint the other two petals by repeating this method and adjusting the colors as required. Blend more of the Titanium White to the base of these two petals. Rinse.

## STEP 7 - BLUE SPIKES

### "THE PARADISE BLUES"



#### PAINT:

- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Titanium White = TW

#### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Light Blue = TW + PB
- Dark Green = PG + BS
- Medium Green = CYM + PG + BS
- Light Green = CYM + PG + TW



#### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Prime the base and define the point of the center spike with Titanium White. Paint the top third of the spike with the **Light Blue mix**, then add Titanium White to the very tip. Add pure Phthalo Blue to the bottom of the painted area and blend it in, to create an ombre effect.
- Paint the **Light Blue mix** on the middle area, at the base of the spike, then blend Titanium White into it from the bottom.
- Paint the very middle of the spike using Ultramarine Blue. Blend it into the tip and the base of the spike. Curve the brush stroke, directionally on either side of the top hump, creating small spikes. Then tip those with Titanium White and adjust the Ultramarine Blue blended area. Line the bottom using the **Light Blue mix**. Rinse. Exaggerate the tip with Titanium White.
- Repeat this process for the remaining two spikes, adjusting as needed. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



## STEP 8 - COLORFUL BRACT

"THIS IS HOW THEY LOOK"



### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

- Bright Pink = QM > CYM > TW
- Purple = QM + UB > TW
- Yellow Green = CYM > PG
- Orange = CYM + CRM
- Dark Teal = UB + PG
- Light Blue = TW + PB

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- This step requires blending wet in wet throughout. Use the **Bright Pink mix** to paint the top of the Bract. Rinse.
- Paint the base area with the **Purple mix**, blending in Ultramarine Blue, along the bottom of this structure. Rinse.
- Blend the **Orange mix** along the very top and a bit down the back, curving it into the front of the stem.
- Use the **Yellow Green mix** to add a pop of color that runs from the very tip and under the pink area. Add this to the right side of the stem as well.

- Blend the **Dark Teal mix** below the lighter green area in the Bract structure. Then paint the **Light Blue mix** from the tip and blending it into the dark teal area. Rinse.
- Use Titanium White to blend the tip and the underside of the structure back in. Rinse.

### SHERPA TIP:

You can use Acrylic Glazing liquid mixed to the paint to extend drying time if you are having difficulties with the paint drying to quicking while you are trying to blend wet into wet.



## STEP 9 - FINAL DETAILS

"IT'S DOING IT'S POP, POP, POP"



### PAINT:

- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

- Yellow Green = CYM > PG
- Dark Green = PG + BS
- Orange = CYM + CRM



### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the small bottom leaf on the left with the **Yellow Green mix**. Blend the **Dark Green mix** up from the bottom of the stem, into that leaf.
- Add Titanium White to the **Yellow Green mix** and blend that on the leaf tip and along the left side of the stem. Adjust the darker areas of this leaf with the **Dark Green mix**. Rinse.
- Add Titanium White to the **Yellow Green mix** and line the bottom of the Bract, allowing it to stand out from the background.
- Add Titanium White to the **Orange mix** and apply it to the center area of the stem and to the very tip of the Bract. Rinse.
- Sign.



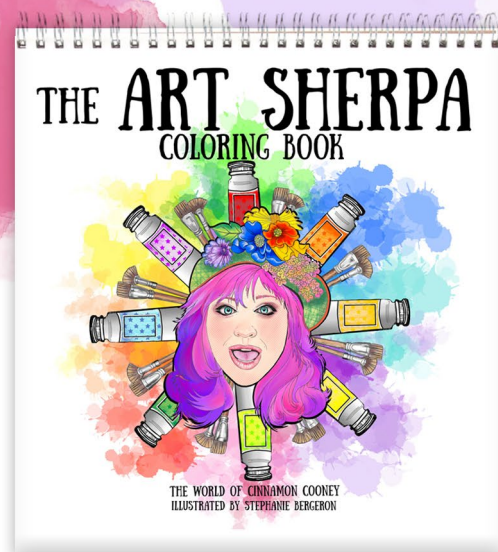


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## TRACING METHOD

- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



- Rub the back with graphite or use Saral paper and skip this step.



- Be sure to rub the back of your paper on the side without the lines drawing using a HB pencil.
- Hold up to window light to make sure graphite covers all the lines of the subject drawing.
- Test your Saral paper to make sure the color you are using is going to show on the canvas.
- Tape your paper on your surface to transfer with tape to keep it from moving. If you are using saral paper make sure you have both sheets taped down and the transfer side of the Saral paper will be facing your surface. Carefully, with medium pressure, redraw over every line. You can lift one corner of paper to see that your transfer is happening. If not check if your rubbing is too thin or that your pressure is not too light. After you are done tracing the lines, remove your traceable and you should have a copy of the line art on your canvas.





TRACEABLE:



## GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS:

The gridding method allows you to dip your toe into drawing without being in the deep end of the drawing pool on day one. For our purposes, the gridding method has been worked out for you. In this example, we have an 8 x 8 canvas and the example is based on a one-inch square grid with everything of equal ratio. On your 8 x 8 canvas, you will make a mark using your chalk tool and a T-square ruler at every 1 inch point both horizontally and vertically. The T-square will help ensure that your lines are straight.

To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could use chalkboard chalk. While I will always share with you the tools and equipment that I am using, you are welcome to deviate from that any time you feel something else is best for you.

Something that I have learned especially with complex images is that it can be easy to get lost in the grid. If you find yourself unsure, go back and check to make sure that the square you are marking on matches the square in your reference. After you master this method, you will be able to

use gridding to transfer any image from a reference to your canvas.

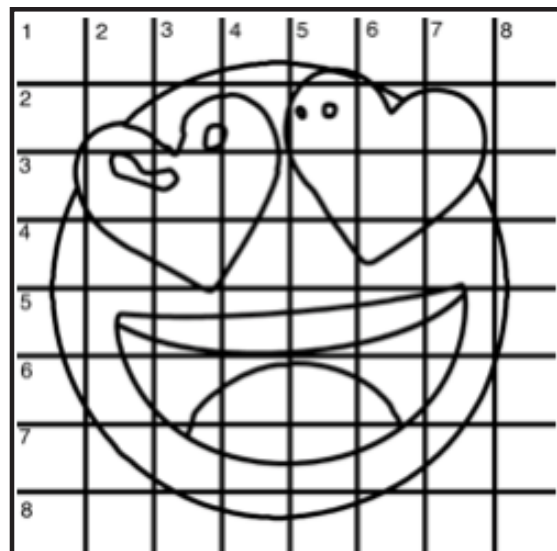
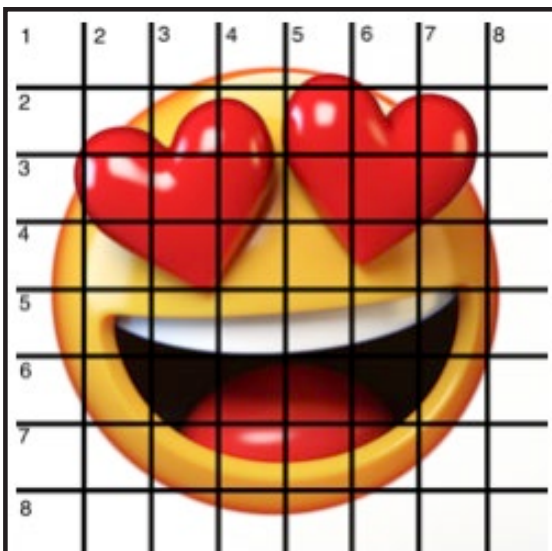
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

Find the first row that the contour line of your image enters and exits and duplicate only what you see in that one single square. Continue through the entire image square by square transferring, the contour lines of the subject with chalk on your canvas. When you have duplicated the subject from your reference to your canvas, you will be done.

You can remove chalk easily by taking a soft brush and getting it damp with clean water. Gently brush over the lines you wish to remove and they will lift.

If you prefer a different size there are many great resources out there that involve math about how to scale. I do not teach math for many good reasons and I could count them all for you, but that would be doing math. The resources out there for that information and those mathematical formulas exist online in copious amounts. Explained beautifully and if you are choosing to paint different sizes than we are utilizing in this mini book, I highly recommend finding one of those formulas and mastering it. Short of that, buy a 8 x 8 canvas to match the instructions above.

**HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A 8 X 8 CANVAS; YOU CAN DO A 1" GRID ON ANY SIZE CANVAS.**





## TECHNIQUE REFERENCES:

### BLENDING WET INTO WET

Another way to create transitions from one color to another, or one value to another, in acrylic painting, is by blending colors together with the brush on the canvas while both are still wet. Mastering a blend like this is also essential for acrylic painting. In general, blending requires a soft pressure with a bit of urgency because it must be accomplished before the paint is dry. If you are in very dry studio conditions, such as air conditioning or dry heating in winter, your paint may dry out faster than you can blend it. No worries...there are mediums called retarders that you can add to the paint to slow the drying time.

### BLOCKING IN

Paint in the shape with a color, no detail is required.

### CONTOUR

Following the outer lines of an object or subject with your brush or tool.

### COOL COLOR

Colors on the cool side of a color wheel. Blues, greens and purples. These colors shouldn't visually feel cool to the eye. They often make up objects in our real world that are cool like ice or the green in nature. These colors tend to recede visually and give a sense of distance.

### CONTOUR PAINTING

Use the brushstroke to define the outline of the form. The brushstrokes are long and smooth and help us express the form and line of the object.

### FEATHERED BLENDING

Create a softened edge by gently brushing on the toe of the head of the brush allowing the bristles to feather out visually defusing the stroke.

### FINE LINE WORK

Taking paint that is made more fluid and a fine line brush to create brush Strokes that are delicate and elegant in nature. This is often used for hair, delicate grasses or natural elements, edged highlights.

### GLAZING

Glazing is taking thin transparent coats of paint over another coat of dry paint. The transparency of the paint allows the color from the paint underneath to affect the paint on top. This is another way for artists to make transitions with acrylic paint. Some paint is naturally transparent because of how pigmented it is. Colors like quinacridone magenta or phthalo blue are very transparent. Opaque pigments can be made transparent using a medium for glazing.

### LAYERING

This is a very important part of acrylic painting. It can be hard for new artists to understand because it's used in so many different ways. You can layer wet paint over wet paint. You can layer dry paint over dry paint. You can glaze over dry paint to layer also. Layering can help you build texture and depth in a painting. Understanding that techniques are built up in layers will help you move away from the magical brush thinking. What I mean by that is you remember seeing cartoons paint a tunnel in one stroke with a single brush? As regular humans we can't do that to get these effects, We need to layer the paint. Once you embrace this thinking the depth of your painting will improve greatly.

### LOOSE, EXPRESSIVE AND PAINTERLY

This is when you paint showing the brush stroke. The painting has a freshly captured feel. This technique gives the impression of capturing a moment in time. It has qualities where the color stroke in texture defines the artwork instead of line.

### LOOSELY MIXED

Taking two colors and mixing them together we're both colors are still evident in the mix and brush stroke.

### PAINTERLY

Brush strokes that are free flowing and expressive. A painterly expression of art generally allows the medium and the brush strokes to show instead of hiding them through blending and careful placement.

## S STROKES

Being able to create compound curves as strokes is a very important technique in painting. Most of the natural world will require your ability to execute it as a stroke. It's a good idea to practice making bold S strokes and delicate S Strokes.

## SCUMBLING

Scumbling certainly has some dry brushing to it but involves a more randomized circular brush stroke. Be careful not to press so hard that you break the heel of the brush. In scumbling, just like in dry brushing, we won't be using a lot of water in the brush. We are going to want to move the brush around in a random and circular motion creating no sense of a particular line or direction.

## SMOOTHLY BLENDED OR TIGHT PAINTING

Smooth the paint and try to hide the brush Strokes and transitions. When you hear an artist talking about a particular painter being tight, what they're speaking of is the way that this artist is able to hide the medium method of the painting. Acrylic blending is one of the more frustrating techniques for new artists.

## THOROUGHLY MIXED

Taking two colors and thoroughly incorporating them so they make a smooth even secondary color with no sign of the two colors used to create it.

## TRANSITIONAL MIXING

There are many ways to blend acrylic paint creating tonal and value transitions through the hues. When you have two very different colors you can create hues that are half shades by mixing them together and biasing the mix to create a subtle transition. This is always useful.

## UNDERPAINTING

Loose large fields of color that future layers of painting will build on.

## WARM COLOR

These colors are on the warm side of the wheel such as red, yellow and orange. Warm colors remind us of things like fire and sunlight. They tend to come forward visually and pull the viewer in.

## RESOURCES

- The best resource for this book is to use it with the YouTube video. Additionally, I have many resources to help new painters achieve their dreams of being creative. I've made over a thousand videos and chances are I have a video that will help you with your specific challenges.
- Be sure to check out the "Where to Start Acrylic Painting with the Art Sherpa" playlist on Youtube.
- Search for videos on the website.
- Use the traceable - it is NOT cheating.
- Join the Art Sherpa Official Facebook group for support.
- Come to live streams and ask questions.

## WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR FINISHED PIECE

As an artist, and, yes, you are an artist, because you have created a painting. But there's still a lot to think about.

Do you varnish? Believe it or not, varnishing is optional with acrylic painting. In my opinion it's best only to do so in good weather in a dust free space following the instructions of the specific varnish for acrylic painting exactly. Varnish is good because it does protect and unify the finish of a painting. But it is not required.

Allow your painting a few days to cure and harden. Acrylic paintings do dry quickly but they still continue to cure a few days after you're finished even with thin applications of paint. Taking the time to allow your paintings to cure will help them be more resilient through the framing and hanging process. These days you don't need to be a professional to frame or hang your paintings. Frames and ready to hang options are available at your local craft and art store.







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