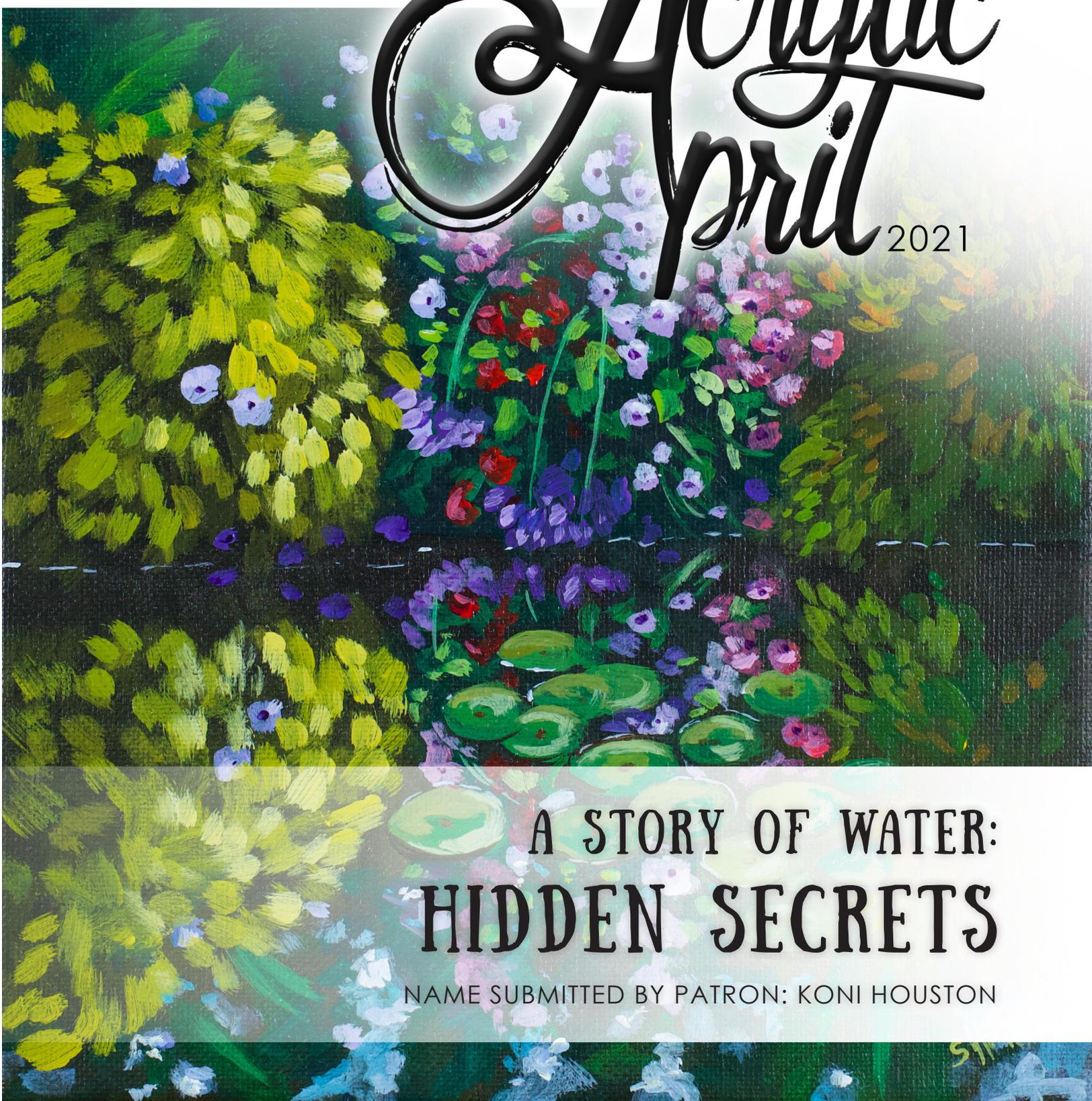


THE ART SHERPA PRESENTS:

# *Acrylic April* 2021



## A STORY OF WATER: HIDDEN SECRETS

NAME SUBMITTED BY PATRON: KONI HOUSTON

STEPS: 10 | DIFFICULTY: BEGINNER | 1 HOOT



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# THE ACRYLIC APRIL PAINT CHALLENGE EXPLAINED

The Acrylic April Painting Challenge begins April 1st 2021 and ends April 30. 30 powerful little painting tutorials that challenge global artists to participate by completing one small acrylic painting every day for an entire month.

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

---

This year's Acrylic April Challenge is designed around the "Story of Water" 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 water, how it engages with nature, how it behaves, how to successfully illustrate it.

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. The document 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 will 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 and grid resources 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: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AcrylicApril>



# DAY 15: APRIL 15, 2021

A Story of Water Acrylic April 2021 began with a dawn and a theme building upon skills, techniques and concepts of light source, time of day, wind and water throughout the 30 days of this journey. Today's subject is a sweet little pond with a riot of pretty flowers. Just the perfect hidden environment to grab some wine, a little cheese, a comfy blanket and a good book.

You are at the mid point of our 30 days. You have been introduced to the techniques and concepts and you should start to feel more familiar with the colors and palette mixes, as well as the tools designed to assist you. You are "in the groove", so to speak, and now the fun part starts where I will see more self-expression in your submissions, more vibrancy in your colors, and more pride in your posts. I can't tell you how much I love seeing it when that happens. It's why I created Acrylic April to begin with.

Grab your paint, get your brushes and let's go!



## PAINT AND TOOL GUIDE

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

### PAINT:

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

### BRUSHES:

- #6 Round Hog Bristle
- #4 TAS Round

- #1 Monogram Liner
- #26 Bright
- #8 Bright Hog Bristle

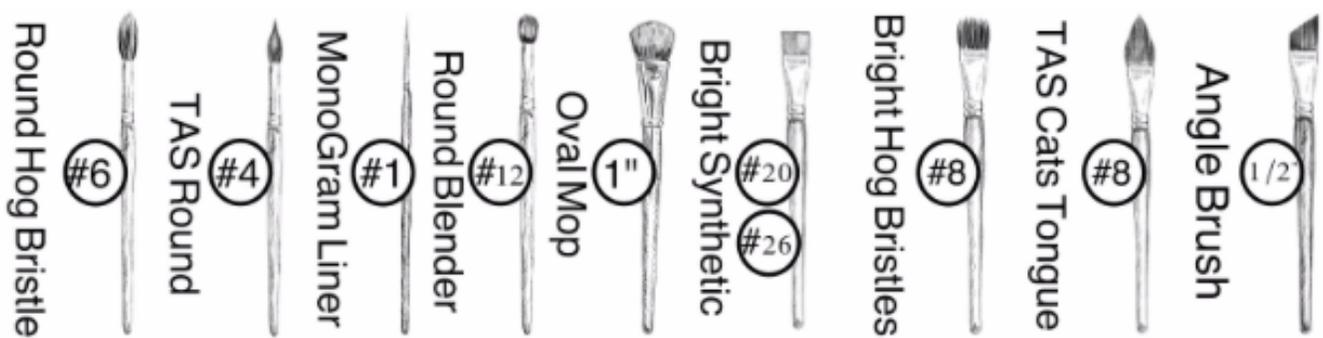
### TOOLS:

- T-Square Ruler
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- 8 x 8 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 dry before you proceed.)
- Optional: StayWet Palette

### TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Painting a Landscape
- Implying Foliage
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing

- Sea Foam
- Color theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Mirroring Sky in Water
- Color Mixing
- Dynamic Light on Water



## 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	
STEP 1	4:10	COLORED GROUND
STEP 2	7:10	SKETCH IN ZONES
STEP 3	9:05	BLOCK IN ZONES BY VALUE
STEP 4	13:50	LIGHTER VALUES, BACKGROUND FOLIAGE
STEP 5	19:05	NEXT LAYER OF GREEN FOLIAGE
STEP 6	26:00	LILY PADS
STEP 7	35:10	CLUSTERS OF FLOWERS
STEP 8	44:45	MORE FLOWERS
STEP 9	53:08	BRIGHTER SURROUNDING FOLIAGE
STEP 10	1:04:50	GLITTERING LIGHT REFLECTIONS SIGN





# SHERPA FORWARD:

Water as a mirror; one of the concepts to succeed at painting water is that water is a mirror, it is reflective but it is also transparent. On a calm day, you can see what is above the water reflected like a reverse image.

A great thought for the day is, "as above, so below". Remember that water colors will be a bit darker than the sky - it is a value darker, in general.

We will be working with a water mirror, and capturing details on both sides of the horizon at the same time. You want to rinse out your brush between the two sections and wipe with cloth to control the amount of water you retain in the brush.

If you want to, paint the edges of the canvas, but you just be you.

Relax with yourself, if you are having trouble with techniques, I offer videos on most of them and you can always practice on paper before you come to the canvas.

You can always go back to rewatch the tutorial if you want to. It is on YouTube as well as at [www.theartsherpa.com](http://www.theartsherpa.com).

It is perfectly acceptable to use a watercolor pencil or chalk to draw in elements, like clouds or landscape, before you paint them in. This is a wonderful tool for new artists and cleans up with a damp brush if you make a mistake.

The techniques you work with today will hold true in all landscapes that involve water in creating an illusion of reflection.



# STEP 1 - COLORED BACKGROUND

## "GOLDEN GREEN ACRYLIC GROUND"

### COLORS FOR STEP:

**CMY**  
**MB**

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#### #26 BRIGHT

- We will begin by painting an acrylic ground on the canvas. Use a #26 bright brush and a mix of CYM + MB to get a green gold, and cover the entire canvas. It's ok if it is scruffy, and that the color varies, but you want more black than yellow to give the pond some depth. When you are finished covering the canvas, come back and make sure that all of your brush strokes go in one direction.
- Dry your canvas.



# STEP 2 - SKETCH IN ZONES

## “FREEHAND IMAGE”

### COLORS FOR STEP:

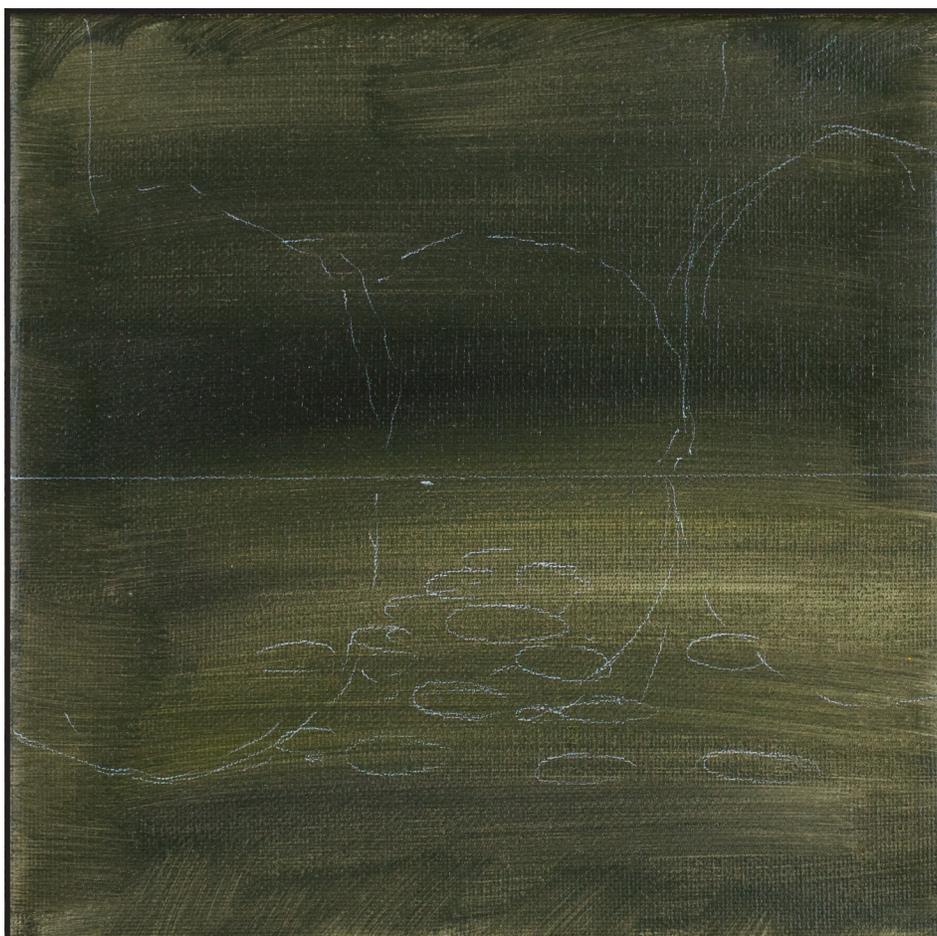
QM  
TW  
NYL  
AGL

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

T-SQUARE RULER  
CHALK PENCIL OR -  
WATERCOLOR PENCIL

- I am going to freehand in my image today. In the Art Sherpa world, there is no right or wrong way to get your image transferred to your canvas. You can use saral paper or graphite pencil to transfer my free traceable image, or you can grid it, or you can draw it. I have included both the traceable and some basic grid instructions along with a grid image at the back of this document. You do what works best for you.
- With a chalk pencil or a watercolor pencil, come down from the top about halfway and draw a line across. Identify where some of the lilies might live in the water, just so you don't put in a ton of work where you don't need it. Above the line, you want three forms, kind of rock

shapes, and you want to mirror those three structures in the water. Another great trick is to go to the traceable or the grid reference and use it to help you draw in your images.



# STEP 3 – BLOCK IN ZONES BY VALUE

## “A VERY DARK PLACE”

### COLORS FOR STEP:

CYM  
UB  
PG  
BS

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#### #8 BRIGHT HOG BRISTLE

- With the #8 hog bright, get PG and come above those 3 structures and paint this shadow value up above them. This is another green on green on green painting, and I've come to understand why Monet used this in his ponds. Add some BS to your PG and put in the right side structure above the horizon. Rinse your brush and wipe it out. Add UB to that mix and paint in the center bush. Rinse and wipe your brush. Add more CYM to the gold green mix that we painted the canvas with, but add a bit more yellow, and paint in the third structure. Come under the horizon line to paint in a dark line to represent the shadow. Take some of your yellow green color and pull them straight down the canvas in the water area. We can

come back and add the lily pads back in a bit. Can you see the yellowish streaks coming down the water to the foreground?

- Don't turn your head when I turn my turntable. Print out the mini book and use that to help your orientation rather than turning your head, which can hurt you. This is probably the darkest underpainting we will ever have.
- Dry.



# STEP 4 - LIGHTER VALUES, BACKGROUND FOLIAGE

## “GETTING INTO THE LIGHT”

### COLORS FOR STEP:

QM  
CYM  
PG  
TW  
NYL

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#### #6 ROUND HOG BRISTLE

- Let's get into the light using a #6 round hog brush and some PG + CYM, then put in little brush strokes in the shadow above the structures to represent out of focus foliage. Just precious little marks. Not too bright into the yellow, because that will pull this area forward and we need it to stay back. Add a bit more yellow to get a mid green, and stay on the toe in places with a longer blade type stroke, something is back there, we just don't know what it is. Mix PG + TW to get a mint, which is another great color for this area. You can add QM into your mixes for a touch of purple, which is great back here. Just play with your mixes and when you think this area is where

you want it, bring those color mixes into the water. Turn your canvas to help you, but remember that water is a mirror so these colors should be at the bottom of the canvas. Reflections come back further on water than you might realize and depending on where the viewer is viewing from. Very loose, not being too particular. We're just being chill today, we are going to just paint our little water.

- Dry.





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# STEP 5 - NEXT LAYER OF GREEN FOLIAGE

## "THE FOLIAGE EMERGES FROM THE DARKNESS"

### COLORS FOR STEP:

CYM  
UB  
PG  
BS  
TW

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#### #6 ROUND HOG BRISTLE

- Start with the #6 hog brush and your green gold mix, and add some dark strokes under the embankment up into the bush. Come up the bottom of the bush and move up, remembering to curve the brush strokes to imply a roundness to the bush. Add UB + CYM to the mix then put that color on this bush in places, just tapping the brush, engaging and releasing.

*John - the foliage emerges from the darkness. I just love that.*

- You can only paint looser when you understand how things are constructed in the world, and the same holds true for water. You

can't be loose with it until you understand that it is a mirror and how the reflections work, ERGO, the reason for the theme of Acrylic April this year.

- Come down into the water in front of that bush and add reflections. Rinse and wipe your brush.
- Mix UB + BS + TW to a grayish blue, and add a few spots where we see the light from the sky coming through the trees above the pond. It will help us identify the pond as a reflection.
- Rinse and wipe your brush.
- Use a BS + PG + CYM mix and start stippling the paint on to imply the growth of leaves on the right hand bush.
- Sherpa Tip: Remember that a hog brush holds water. You must wipe it every time you rinse to get the excess water out or it does not apply paint correctly.
- Bring that color into the water as a reflection for that bush.
- We are building up the depth, not highlights.
- Now mix PG + CYM + UB and work on the middle bush. Things are just dark here. We must have dark to have light. We are just having a moment. Bring these colors into the pond as a reflection.
- Remember that every painting has an ugly stage, this might be it.

STEP 5 - NEXT LAYER OF GREEN FOLIAGE



# STEP 6 - LILY PADS

## "LILY PADS"

### COLORS FOR STEP:

**CYM**  
**PB**  
**PG**  
**BS**  
**MB**  
**TW**

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#### #4 TAS ROUND

- Switch to the TAS #4 Round, for control. We will use PG + CYM + BS to paint in the lily pads with ellipses of color. Creating a bright green. They are connected by an infrastructure under the water so they do tend to cluster in groups. Vary the sizes and create them in a pleasing arrangement; if nature does not give you a pleasing arrangement, you give nature a pleasing arrangement. You are an artist and you have the skill and power to do that. As you do. A little community of lily pads and they do sometimes grow above each other; not to be confused with lotus blossoms. They are not the same. Lilly pads clean the water in the pond, but they can also overgrow it rather quickly; you need a plan.

- Mix PB + TW to get a light color, and tap little bits of sparkle in the water.

*John - the sky is starting to appear.*

- Even with a little bit of sunlight, it is a corridor of light that will pull the viewer in.
- Use BS + CYM + TW to highlight the tops of the lily pads. Adding dimensionality. I did end up adding some PG to the mix for a darker color. Just giving them lots and lots of personality. You can come in with BS + MB to add some spots or a "center" to them. Use a little of your white yellow mix to add the brightest highlight in a little curve on the pad.



# STEP 7 – CLUSTERS OF FLOWERS

## “MONSIEUR MONET’S GARDEN”

### COLORS FOR STEP:

CRM  
QM  
CYM  
UB  
PG  
TW

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#### #4 TAS ROUND

- This painting is actually an image from “Monet’s Garden”. Get UB + QM on the TAS #4 Round Brush and tuck in some dark purple flowers underneath the foliage of these bushes. I make sure that where I add color, I also add a reflection as I go. I brought this color out into the water. With PG + CYM I start speaking to different textures, lines, foliage that live in those bushes. Adding reflections in the water where they might be, containing this within the center bush area. You can add some blades that might be bending over the pond. Rinse and wipe.
- The first fun flower is QM + CRM, one of my favorite reds, and it will absolutely pop on the canvas. Start adding little shapes, not

petals, in this same area and in the water. As above, so below, varied in size, and color value. Add some TW to a pink for highlights, not all of them, don’t overdo. Add TW to your purple mix with just a touch of UB, to get a light lavender. Then add flower shapes in that shadow area over the bushes; not forgetting that the reflections in the water will be toward the bottom of the canvas. Add a little pink to that mix in places on land and in the water. Staying cohesive.

- It is doubtful that your canvas is identical to my painting, but you can refer to my reference below to help you identify basic placement of elements in your painting.



# STEP 8 – MORE FLOWERS

## “CLUSTERS OF COLOR”

### COLORS FOR STEP:

QM  
CYM  
UB  
PG  
TW

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#### #4 TAS ROUND

- Guess what? More flowers. Continue with the TAS #4 Round brush and mix some QM + CYM to get a bright pink and start adding these flower shapes in clusters on your canvas. Take more TW to your purple color, and highlight the purple flower structures you put in both places. Add TW, to the bright pink mix and put in those highlights.

*John - water has kind of a “develop in front of your eyes”.*

- Grab some of the dark purple you mixed earlier and add little centers to some of your flower structures. The center really does help the viewer to identify that the element is a flower. Take time to smell the roses

or at least look for the center of the flower to identify it. Use TW for pure highlights in some places.

- With DP + UB + QM add more color clusters near the water's edge, along with their accompanying reflection. Then highlight everything by adding TW to that mix.
- Rinse and wipe.
- Mix CYM + PG and add leaf like structures in and amongst these flowers. These leaves just suck the viewer in to the flowers. Go ahead and add these to the water as well. I came back and started adding stalk type structures at the extreme right and left of the pond.



# STEP 9 – BRIGHTER SURROUNDING FOLIAGE

## “ORANGE GETS AN INVITATION TO ATTEND”

### COLORS FOR STEP:

CRM  
CYM  
UB  
BS  
MB  
TW

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#### #6 ROUND HOG BRISTLE

- With the #6 round hog and a mix of bright green gold (MB + CYM), start adding foliage and reflections to the left bush and in the water. This is a 1 hoot and a simple introduction to working with water. Once you are happy, get UB + CYM to make a brighter green color and add that in both places, as well. Get a lot more CYM + TW into the mix for an almost chartreuse color and add that beautiful color in the bush and in its reflection space. Add more CYM + TW for those spaces where light might be hitting. Not too much though. Rinse and wipe.
- Move to the right bush, which is more green and orange, so mix CYM + CRM to get orange and then

mix PG + BS + CYM on the brush and start adding little dashes of this mid green color to the body of the bush. Little groupings of leaves. Add more CYM to the mix and make clusters of that color in the bush and in the reflection. You can also start grabbing some of the orange on the brush to pop that color in. The bottom center of this bush is more in shadow so will be darker.



# STEP 10 – GLITTERING LIGHT REFLECTIONS

## “WELCOME TO THE FLOWER PARTY”

### COLORS FOR STEP:

UB  
TW

### MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#### #1 MONOGRAM LINER

- Zhuzh Zhuzh is needed. Mix TW + UB to get an off white and with the monogram liner brush, dash in some water surface under the growth at the edge of the pond. Just a bit of shoreline. You can also use this color to brighten up any of the flower reflections that you feel like you need to.
- If you're like me, you can add and doodle all day with something as pretty as this is, but today is a chill day, so get to the point where you are happy, and call it done.
- True to form, I came back with the green gold color on the monogram liner, and highlighted some of the edges of the lily pads by creating a shadow on the water under them. You can also come back with your off white and highlight the part of the pad that might be in light. Water sparkles happen.

- THEN, I signed.



## THE 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.



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.



- 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



## GRIDDING:

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

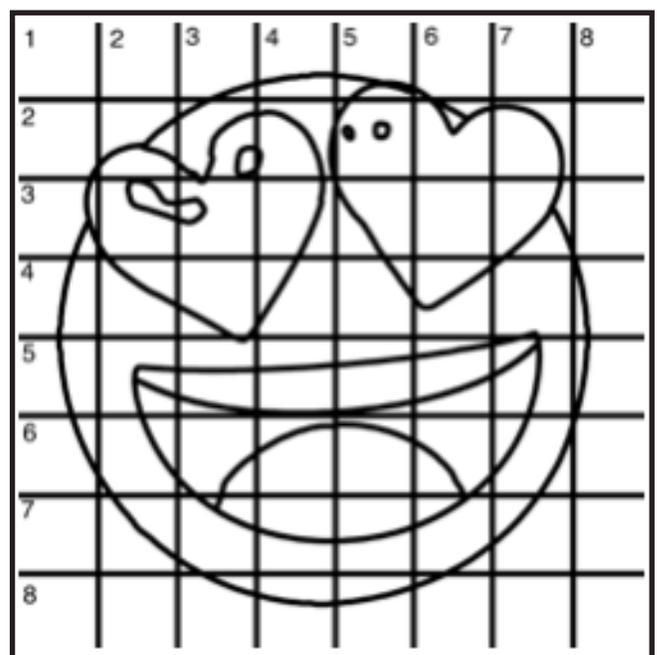
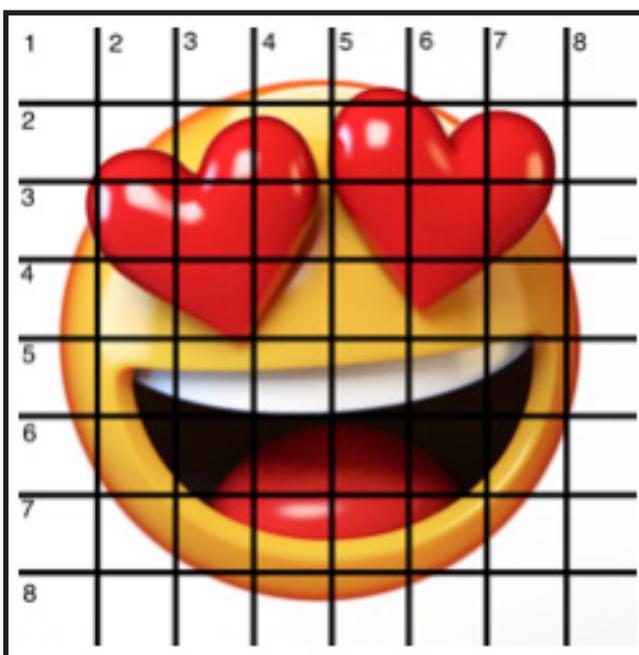
cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could use chalkboard chalk. While I will always share with you the tools and equipment 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.

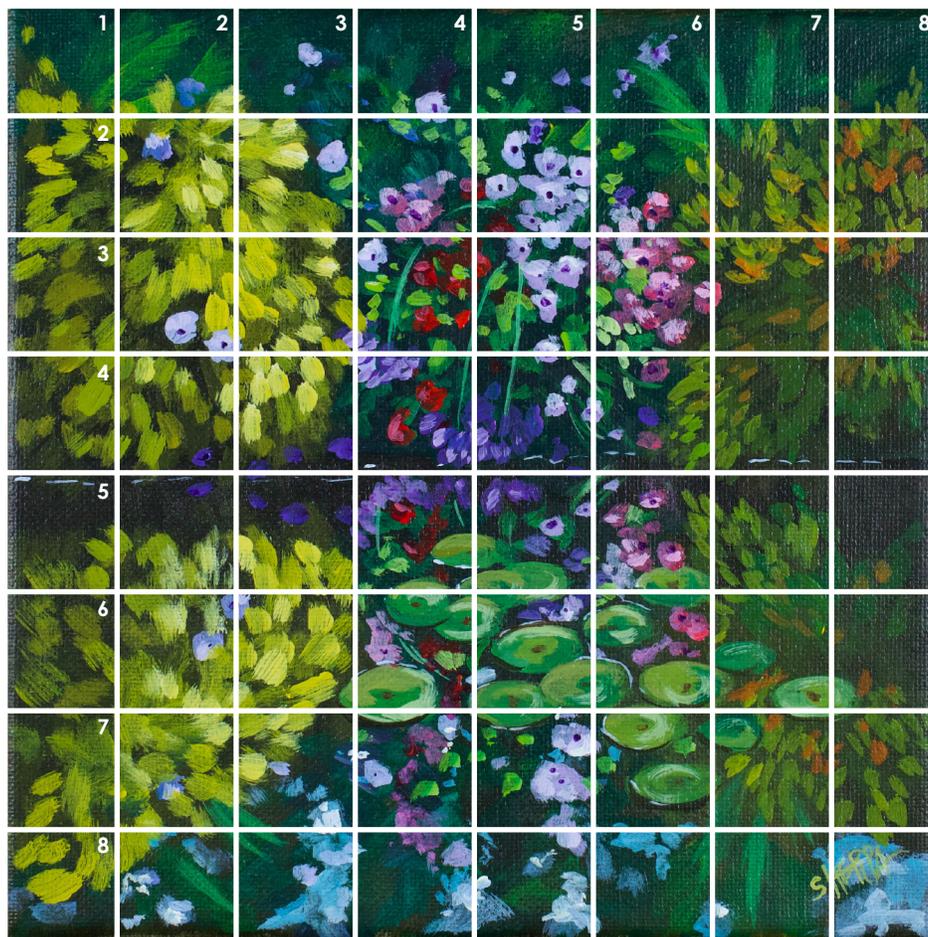
Find the first row that the contour line of your image enters and exits and duplicate only what you see in that one single square. Continue through the entire image square by square transferring, the contour lines of the subject with chalk on your canvas. When you have duplicated the subject from your 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 free grid for this project.

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



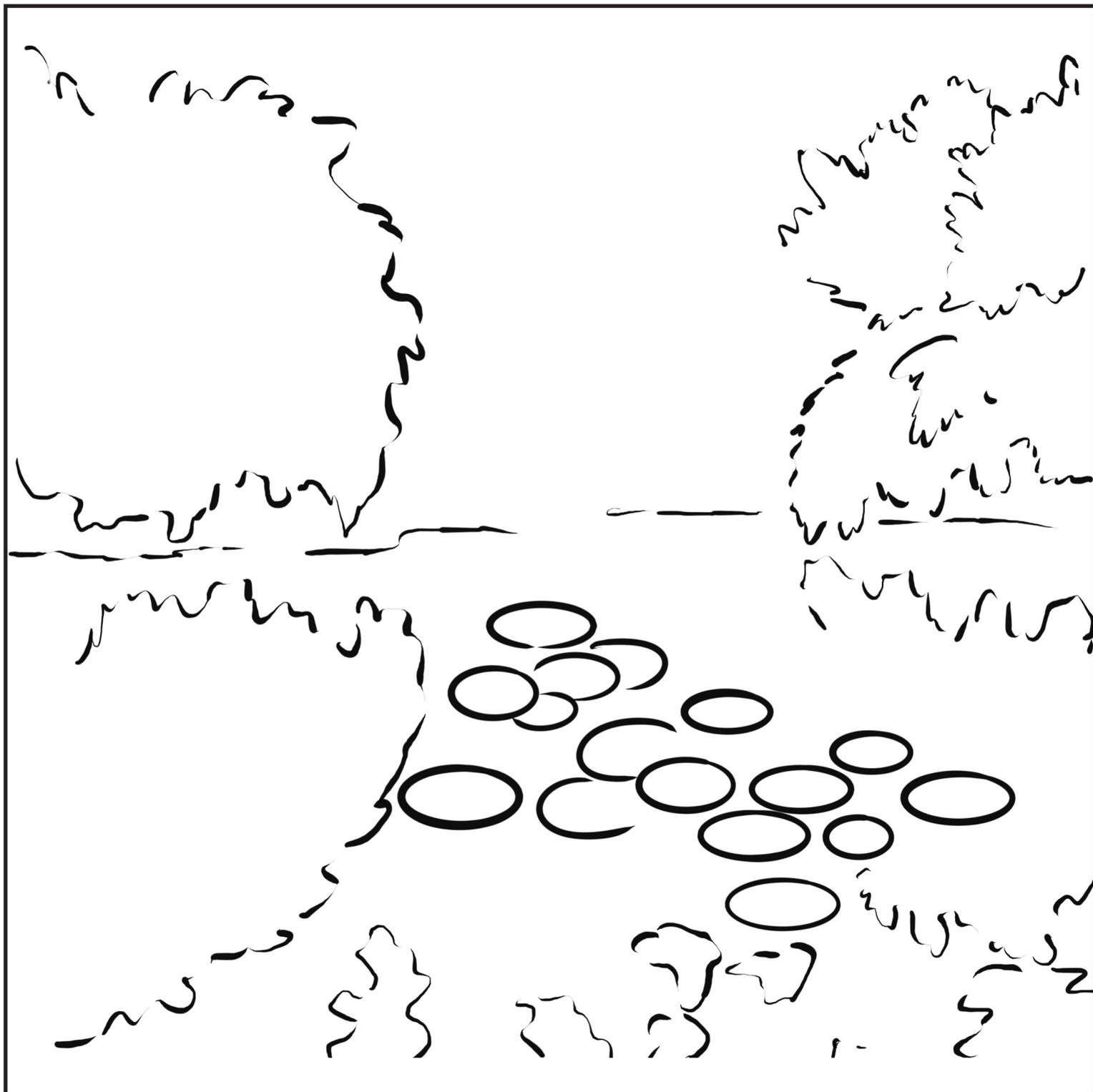
## PRACTICE PAGE:

The practice page matches the Facebook pre-show events for Acrylic April. During the pre-show we will do a page by Page walkthrough of this mini book and a small demo of how to use the practice page to get confident in your color and value mixes.

### STEPS OF THE PRACTICE PAGE

1. Looking at the reference select the color families you think are present in the painting.
2. Write down the paint colors you use
3. Mix the main colors you see in the painting.
4. Place the color near the closest value using the Grey scale bar on the side of sandbox
5. Be sure to test mix colors you think could be harder to correctly get
6. Use the steps of the mini book to help you guess what palette colors you need
7. Optional practice brush strokes in the sandbox
8. Use the note section to write down any thought you have about the painting

TRACEABLE:



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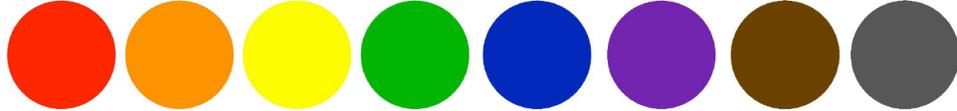


# ACRYLIC APRIL PREP

LET'S PLAY—Print and Practice



COLOR FAMILY



THE PAINT COLORS: \_\_\_\_\_

C  
O  
L  
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R  
  
M  
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X  
I  
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G

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A  
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D  
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O  
X



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