


THE ART SHERPA PRESENTS:

Acrylic April 2021



A STORY OF WATER: SERENITY COVE


NAME CREDITED TO PATRONS: SHARON O'BRIEN & KENDRA SMITH

STEPS: 7 | DIFFICULTY: BEGINNER | 2 HOOTS



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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.

**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.

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 if you require assistance.

You can join the The Art Sherpa Facebook Acrylic April group at:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AcrylicApril>



DAY 20: APRIL 20, 2021

A Story of Water Acrylic April 2021 began with a dawn. Our painting today is another dawn, a quiet morning with an awakening sky that is reflected in a mirror of water, surrounded by an awakening landscape silhouette. The principles and techniques we will touch upon today are true for any painting that contains both sky and water.

Today's subject are barren sea cliffs that are met by a beautiful body of water on a beautiful day. A stark landscape, a churning sea and a beautiful sky. What more could you want in a painting? Naming rights are credited to Patron Sharon O'Brien and Patron Kendra Smith, who submitted the same name at virtually the same time and each got the same number of votes.

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:

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Naples Yellow Light = NYL

BRUSHES:

- #6 Round Hog Bristle
- #4 TAS Round
- #1 Monogram Liner
- #26 Bright
- ½" Angle Brush

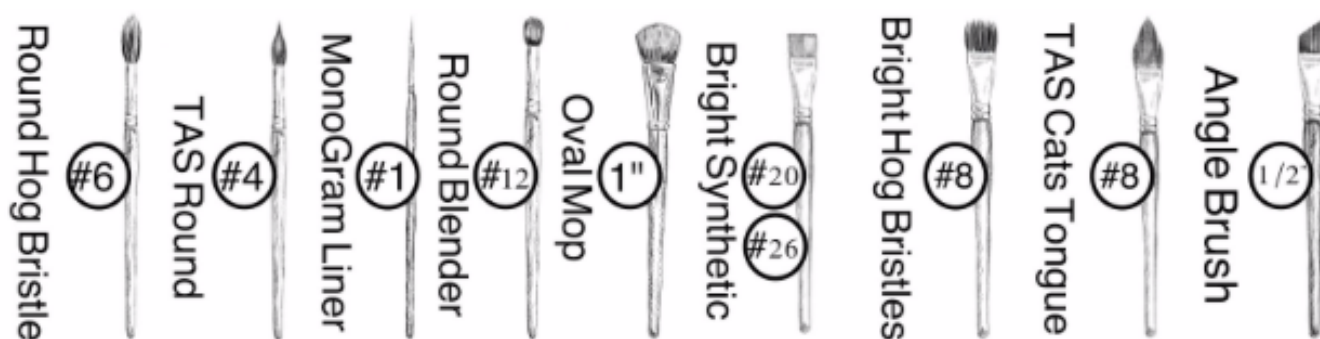
TOOLS:

- 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 Silhouette Landscape
- Implying Foliage
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Sea Foam
- Color Theory
- Perspective of Waves

- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Clouds
- Mirroring Sky in Water
- Setting a Horizon Line
- 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	3:30	SKETCH IN LANDSCAPE
STEP 2	8:08	RADIANT SKY
STEP 3	12:50	SKY FLARE AND CLOUDS
STEP 4	25:45	BLOCK IN LANDSCAPE
STEP 5	32:20	REFINING CLIFFS
STEP 6	39:35	SHORELINE AND SEAFOAM
STEP 7	52:05	OCEAN WAVES AND SEAFOAM





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 noticed, I left a kind of white area at the horizon in Step 1 to help me identify the sky from water. We will paint over that as we progress through the tutorial, but this helps me for now.

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.

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.



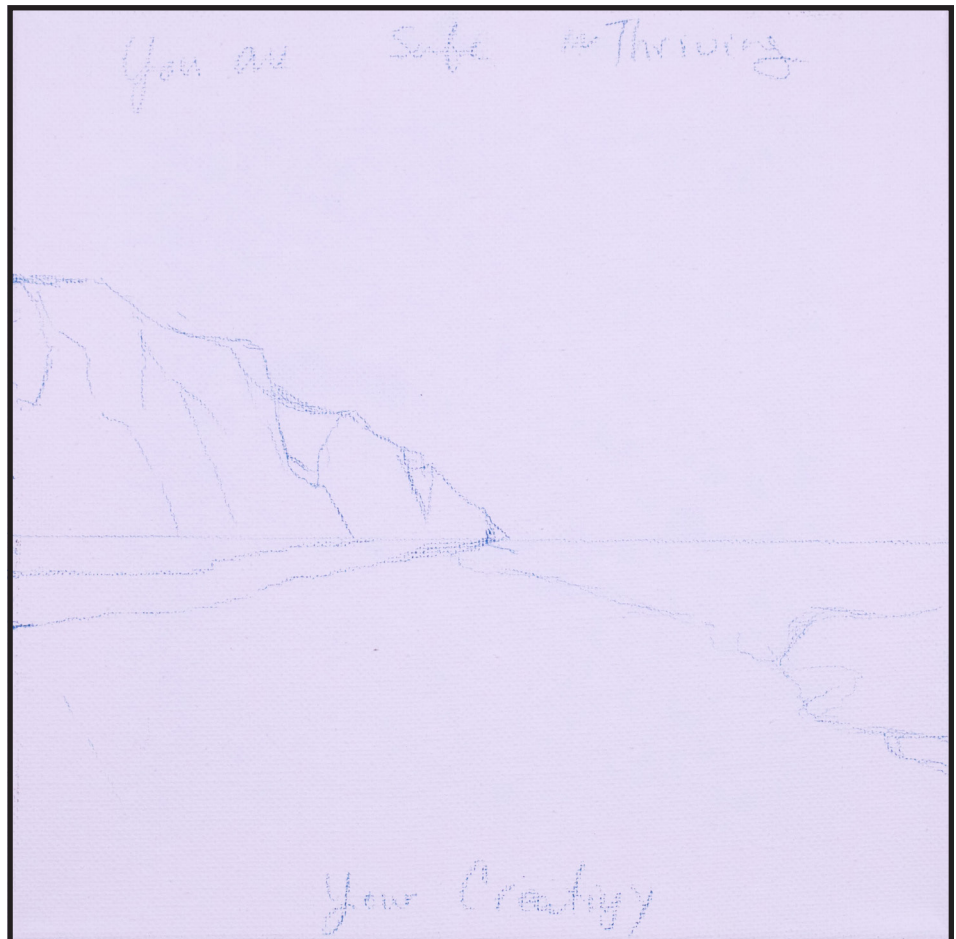
STEP 1 - SKETCH IN LANDSCAPE

"ICONIC NAMELESS CLIFFS"

MATERIALS FOR STEP:

T-SQUARE RULER CHALK PENCIL OR - WATERCOLOR PENCIL

- We need to lay out our major landscape zones so come down from the top to about the halfway mark and draw a light line with a watercolor pencil. Next, come down to just below the 6" mark from the top, on the right edge of the canvas, and mark it. Divide the horizon line in half and mark there, as well. This will give us the marks that we need to freehand in the elements we need to draw. Now just because I chose to freehand this image does not mean that you have to freehand the image. I have also provided a transfer if you prefer to use that method and a grid reference if you prefer that method. Even if you do choose to freehand this simple image, you might want to use both of those images to assist you if you'd like. There is no right or wrong way, you can grid, transfer, or freehand, whatever makes you the most comfortable.
- First, the seascape, so draw an irregular line from the center mark on the horizon to the 6" mark on the right side of the canvas. There is also an angled wave that you should draw in that comes in at the right side of the water line, there are also little inlets of water.
- This is actually a pretty well known cliff base, iconic, and known. I'm not positive but I believe they might be the Cliffs of Moher in the Republic of Ireland which are located at the southwestern edge of the Burren region in County Clare, Ireland. They run for about 14 kilometres and I have actually had the pleasure of visiting the Burren.
- To make the sketch of said cliffs, come on the left side of the canvas, about half way through the sky part and start drawing in the architectural elements of the cliffs. This would be a good time to refer to the traceable if you are freehanding. There are erosions at some of the tops and I find it helpful to draw those in. We won't catch every single one but the bigger ones for sure. There is a dry sand run in front of the cliffs and a dark sand run behind that run but still in front of the cliffs.
- Dry.



STEP 2 - RADIANT SKY

"PARODY ALERT"

COLORS FOR STEP:

PB
UB
TW

MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#26 BRIGHT

- This is a very moody coastline which we have not done before. I want to cover these techniques because they are probably new to most of you.
- With the #26 bright, brush out your wishes and we'll start in the sky. I want to paint a keyhole of light color, so get TW on the brush and take the paint from the horizon up to the right on an angle. Then come back with UB and add a band of that color and transition down into the white. Wipe your brush before you blend into the white area.

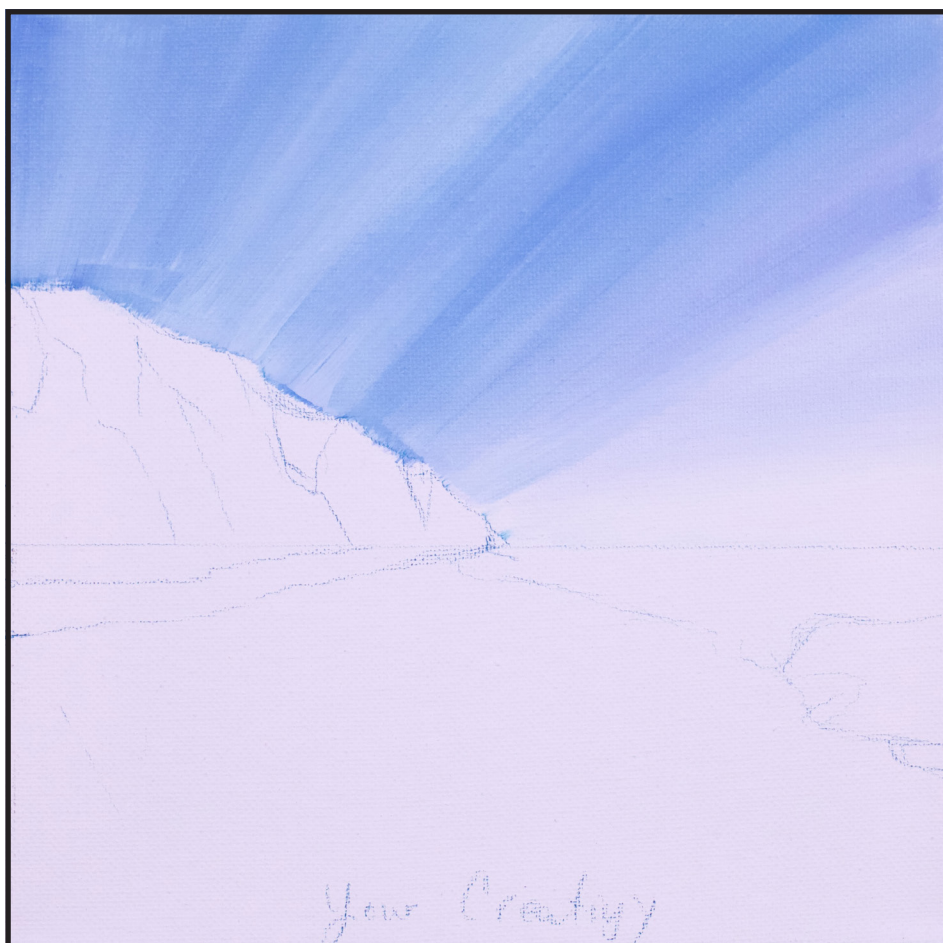
We have "a coat of fanning", that is.

John - Parody !!!!!

Ms. Dakota Fanning

John - It doesn't stop the lawsuit, we might win, but it does not stop the lawsuit.

- Take UB + PB for a neutral blue and add some personality above the UB band, add more TW if it is too dark. You should not be almost fanning out from the top of the cliffs to the top of the canvas. Make sure all your strokes are going in the same direction. Get some TW on the brush and allow the viewers to see some white rays through the blue rays.
- Dry.



STEP 3 - SKY FLARE AND CLOUDS

"FLOWERS ON BUSHES AND CLOUDS IN THE SKY"

COLORS FOR STEP:

QM
TW
NYL

MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#6 ROUND HOG BRISTLE

- As we go further into the sky, get the #6 hog bristle brush with a mix of TW + NYL and come along the horizon of the sky area and add a bit of a glow, brushing up into the white area. Take QM + TW to get a peach color and add that near the cliffs and up into the white and light blue area of the fanning sky. Widen the strokes as you move up towards the edge of the canvas. UB + TW is used if you need to reinforce some of the blue this area that you might have painted out. You want the sky to be super light, and the canvas must be dry under this step for this dry brushing to be effective. We do want a lot of the blue sky to be showing.

Clouds - don't sigh, I heard you.

- Take a little pink + TW + NYL on the brush and start to push out some irregular clouds over the cliffs. Please remember to turn your surface in order to help you paint it. You can always rewatch the tutorial and use my reference below, which will always be up in portrait mode, to help you with placement on your canvas. These clouds are here but they are not particularly strong. My handle is angled back and I am only engaging from mid-brush to the toe. Irregular shapes, wispy in nature, and varied in color values. The more delicate part should be facing the light. You can always add more pink in the center. This is just one of those pieces that is just fun to play with. Your lush sky will be in contrast to the starkness of the cliffs. These clouds also convey a bit of a rainy element.

- Come back into your TW and use that to add light areas to the cloud formations.

John - A lot of the community have said that the two areas they struggle with are flowers on bushes and clouds in the sky. Specifically, once you have conquered the flower and the cloud structure, it's hard to find the stopping point of how many to add. The best advice I've seen, is stop when you think you should add one more and sleep on it. The painting is not going to go anywhere.

That's a great thing to remember, you can always iterate.

- The sky is so soft that it's really hard to see so if you have a lot of glare in your studio, be sure to tilt it upright to review it as you go.
- Add more TW in the areas closer to the light source, and don't go all the way up the cloud area. You should also still be working wet into wet.
- Review your piece, what do you need to do?
- Dry.

STEP 3 - SKY FLARE AND CLOUDS



STEP 4 – BLOCK IN LANDSCAPE

**“THIS LADY IS
SO MESSY”**

COLORS FOR STEP:

**PB
UB
PG
BS
MB
TW
NYL**

MATERIALS FOR STEP:

½” ANGLE BRUSH

- Let's block in some things on the landscape. So get the ½” angle brush and load UB + PG to get a cold morning sea color. Then draw in a straight line for the horizon. Play with the blue and green mixes to vary the color then paint in the water and shoreline. Make sure your distant shore line is more UB and transitions more into the greens as it comes forward. Rinse out your brush and wipe.
- There is a bit of greenery at the top of the hill, so get PG + BS on the brush and just kiss a bit of that color at the top of the cliffs and maybe into that big eroded crevice. Add more BS where you see more brown as you refer

to my reference below. Add a bit of that on the sides of the cliff faces. Get BS + NYL + MB to make our basic sandy cliff color and start blocking in the cliff faces. You do want to vary the colors of this, more MB where it needs to be darker, like at the top, and bottom, and lighter where you see lighter cliffs. This is the starting point. Add more NYL + TW to the mix for the dry sand area in front of the cliffs and paint that in. It really is quite light here and there should be a white part of the canvas still showing between this area and the base of the cliffs.

- Get UB + BS to a dark color and paint the beach this color. If you've never seen my channel before, you might be saying “this lady is so messy”, please understand that I'm covering the canvas and wait until the next step before you leave en masse. You will also bring this color back into that strip of remaining canvas in front of the cliffs.
- Dry.





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STEP 5 – REFINING CLIFFS

“DON'T OVERLOOK THE PRACTICE PAGE”

COLORS FOR STEP:

BS
MB
TW
NYL

MATERIALS FOR STEP:

½" ANGLE BRUSH

- All of the canvas is covered at this point, so let's refine it with value and color and light and reflections. With the brown-blue mix, add some TW to get a gray, then add a bit of NYL, just before it goes green, you get some cool expression color for our cliffs. Start at the bottom of the cliffline and brush this up onto the face of the cliffs with the ½" angle brush. This is a brush I grew up with; it's my Mother's favorite brush. But if you've visited her channel before, you already know this.
- Mix NYL + BS and on the edge of the brush, paint this at the extreme base of the cliff and in ridges that might exist on the surface of these rocks. Use MB to create the dark shadows, remembering you can use

my reference below to help you with placement.

- When you paint famous places, you have to assume that someone who looks at it will be able to identify it, so you want to stay as close as possible to the reference. Use these various shades of black, to gray, to light gray and start painting in the cliff faces and crags, shadows and highlights.
- This would be an excellent step for predetermining your mix color formulas on the practice page before you start painting it.
- You don't want a lot of water on the brush. Just take your time, use the toe of the brush and all the resources available to you. Maybe you live by cliffs that you want to paint instead of mine.
- Get into your peach color and add in some of the cliff highlights, perhaps the pink in the sky is kissing the face of the cliffs.
- Dry.



STEP 6 – SHORELINE AND SEAFOAM

“BEACH WAVE MEMORIES”

COLORS FOR STEP:

PB
UB
BS
DP
TW
NYL

MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#4 TAS ROUND
½” ANGLE BRUSH
T-SQUARE RULER

- Let's speak to the shoreline and beach, we want the sand to seem dark and wet, it also gets pretty reflective. Get the ½” angle brush and alternate between the BS + MB, and the UB + BS. Just paint in the beach area much darker. You alternate the dominant color in these blends. Get UB + BS + TW, and the trick will be to use the t-square to draw in a horizontal faint line to help you. Then begin painting small reflections of light onto the dark beach area, irregular areas to imply that they are wet. The color behind this should still be damp in order to allow for blending. The reflections are formed by the brushing side to side

with the angle brush, almost a dry brush in some areas.

- Wipe your brush and where the surface is dryer, take UB + PB and start dry brushing reflections of this light blue color onto the sand in places. Definitely more of this color in the distance of this near bottom beach area. Get some of the peach color, and brushing right to left, put these colors nearest that rolling in water. We need to reflect the pink in the sky and brush it back into the water. We also need to allow for adding some sea foam very soon.
- With the TAS #4 Round, get BS + NYL for the super light sand color and come in and reinforce that light gray strip of dry sand between the shore and the cliff base. You do want your strokes here to be streaky.
- Get TW with a touch of UB, to make an off white, then thin with water, and start adding droplets and rivlets of water and sea foam to the shore, implying the wave that has just exited.

John - The memory of the wave on the beach.

- Little bubbles, debris, wet bits of rock and shells. You can use my reference below to help you with placement. The darker lines nearer the shore are the remnants of the most recent wave, it was there just before you blinked. You missed it, but it left you a reminder that it was there. It also has open signs of seafoam in it.
- Reflections are needed. So get UB + TW and brush some of them in, vertically. I used my finger to pull them out into the beach area. Use your dark colors to add bits of shadow to the highlights you just put in. This step is as important as the highlight is. Something has broken the light there.

STEP 6 - SHORELINE AND SEAFOAM



STEP 7 – OCEAN WAVES AND SEAFOAM

“FAIRY UNICORNS”

COLORS FOR STEP:

CRM
QM
CYM
PB
UB
PG
BS
DP
MB
TW
NYL
FWP
AGL

MATERIALS FOR STEP:

#4 TAS ROUND #1 MONOGRAM LINER

- Time to rush in the ocean, so start with PB + PG on the TAS #4 Round and reinforce the horizon, then add more PG and TW as you come forward, kind of a “smoke on the water” effect. Little dashes of UB in places to reflect a deeper bottom or maybe a school of fish. Use UB + TW to begin sea foaming the sea foam. This should be off white, almost totally white, but start in the distance with the bluest white and come forward. Less is more in that background and just follow that shoreline. Waves and sea foam is how this little piece comes together. Tap

in some little wave crashes if you'd like them. Start your bottom wave with an outline of this color and increase the width of the line by tapping toward the center. Ideally, the surface is still wet so it will be blending together. You have not filled in the wave, you are just capturing the sea foam part of it. Allow bits of green to show through this part, but be thoughtful about not painting out all the magic of the water color.

John - Fairy unicorns come out of the sea foam, they have to come from somewhere.

I'm going to have to paint unicorns coming out of sea foam and that's not a searchable metric on YouTube.

John - Fairy unicorns come out of sea foam, not all unicorns.

- Let this dry, then get UB + MB and come into the edges of your shore foam to exaggerate the shadow that lives under the foam. Get your light gray reflection color and add some reflections on the sand near the water, little sky reflections.
- With TW on the brush, and it's ok if it has the tiniest bit of UB in places, start adding the highlight to the crests of some of the waves coming onto the shore. Go into the water a bit, but do not overpaint all of the others highlight colors because we need that color too in order for our brain to register that it is sea foam.
- Sign. I did get cheeky with my signature and I signed in a light gray color. It's a Sherpa sea foam signature.
- Dry.

STEP 7 - OCEAN WAVES AND SEAFOAM



THE TRACING METHOD

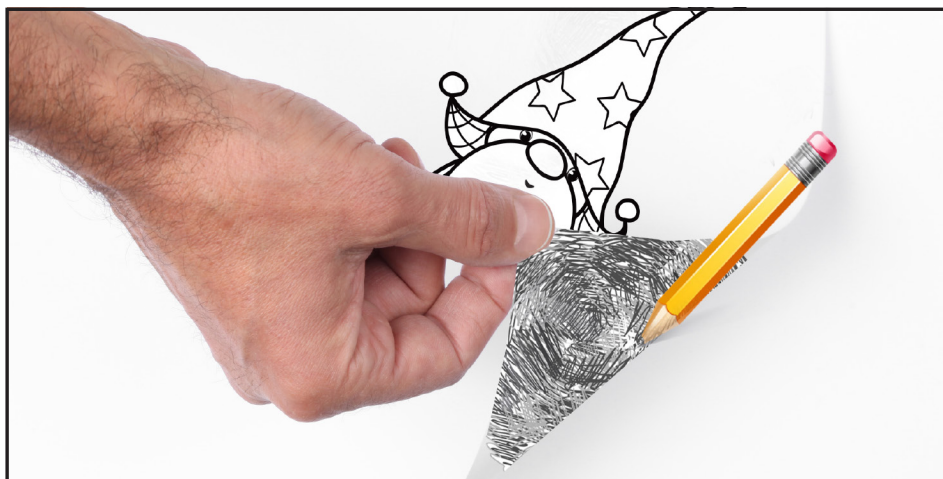
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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

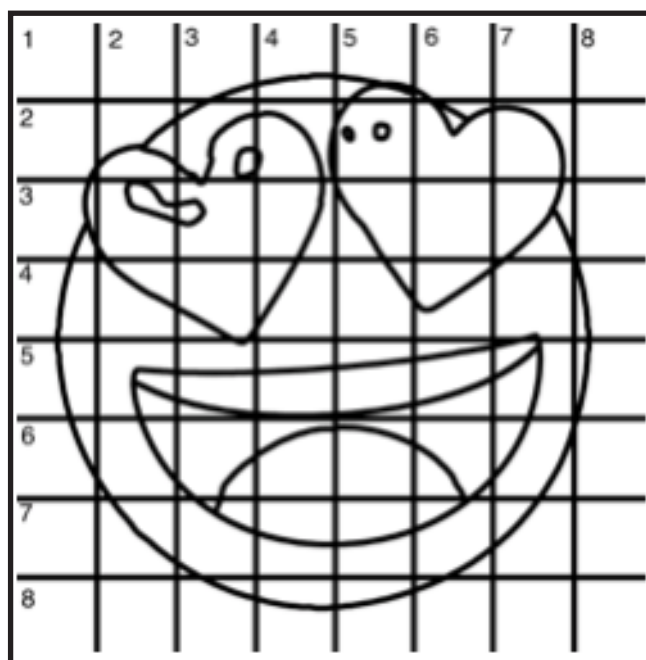
cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could use chalkboard chalk. While I will always share with you the tools and equipment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

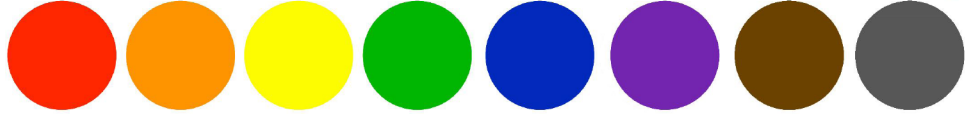


ACRYLIC APRIL PREP

LET'S PLAY—Print and Practice



COLOR FAMILY



THE PAINT COLORS: _____

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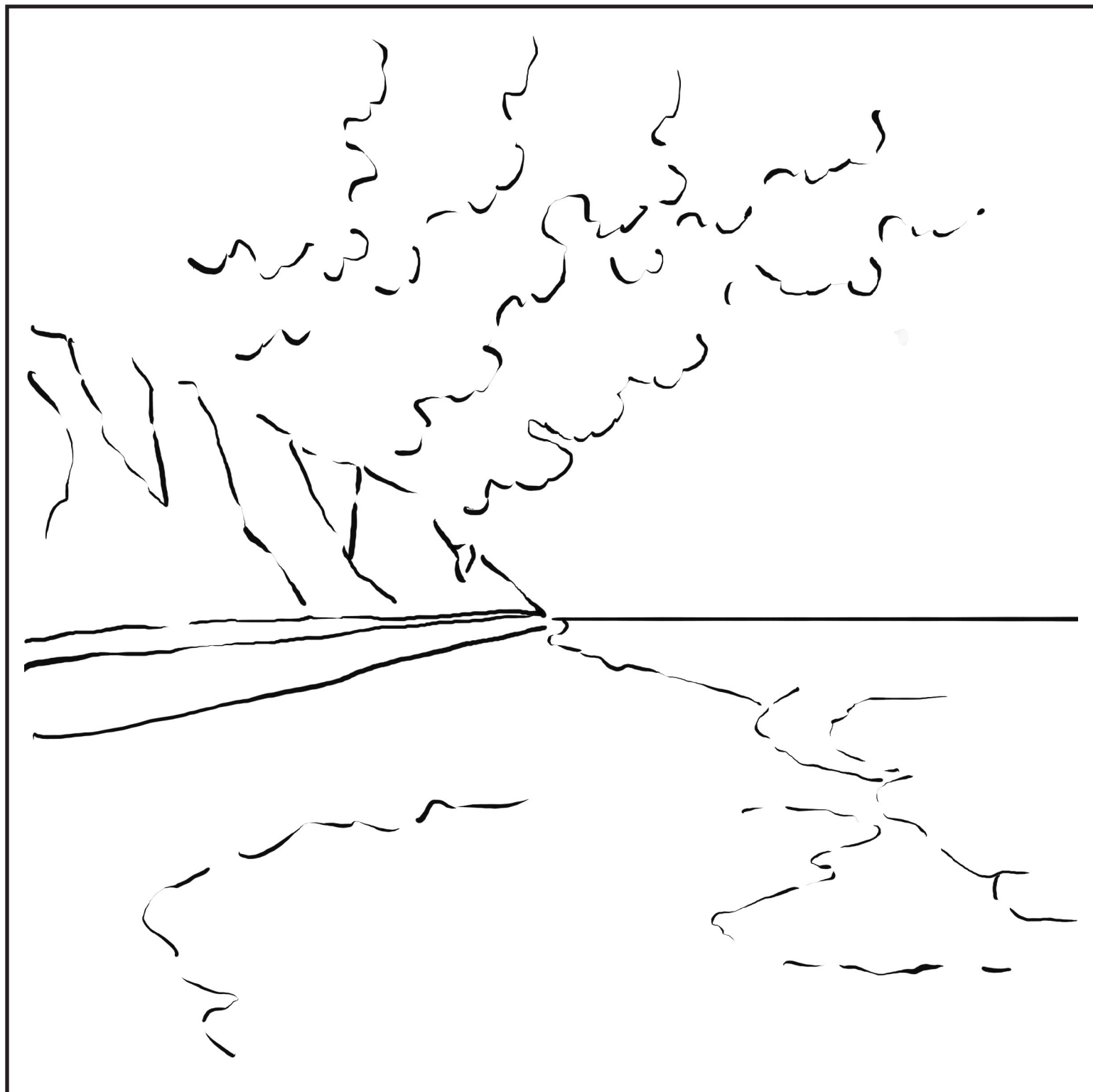
X



NOTES:



TRACEABLE:



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