

THE ART SHERPA™

# HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



## METAMORPHOSIS

BY: THE ART SHERPA

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON BRITTANY FAGAN-STEELE

STEPS: 7 | DIFFICULTY: BEGINNER | 1 HOOT



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# SHERPA FORWARD:

I am resolved in 2021 to do more to help teach art than demonstrate how to paint art. To that end, you will see changes being made through the year. This document may be the first change that you see, and I hope you will know that everything I do is to help teach you how to paint.

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 art journey. The document is best viewed in outline format to allow for ease in navigation between sections. Once all of the tutorials of any given month have been recorded and have an accompanying mini book, The Art Sherpa will prepare a printed version of all of those documents 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).

I provide you with the specific brush I use, but bear in mind that brush sizes are not standard across the art brush industry. The most important thing to look for is not the brand of brush I use, but the shape of the brush head, it is a bright, or a filbert, or a hog. Brushes get bigger as the numbers get bigger, and it is not uncommon for beginners to fear using too big of a brush. Use what you have, what is most comfortable for you, explore your options, don't fix what isn't broken, and learn what works for you.

This tutorial is not an extremely difficult one but introduces you to skills and techniques used painting in the abstract fashion and features misted acrylic paint drips on three primary color horses.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy your experience with The Art Sherpa 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 Official group at and please post your paintings there:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TheArtSherpa>.

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
- Dioxazine Purple = DP
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES:

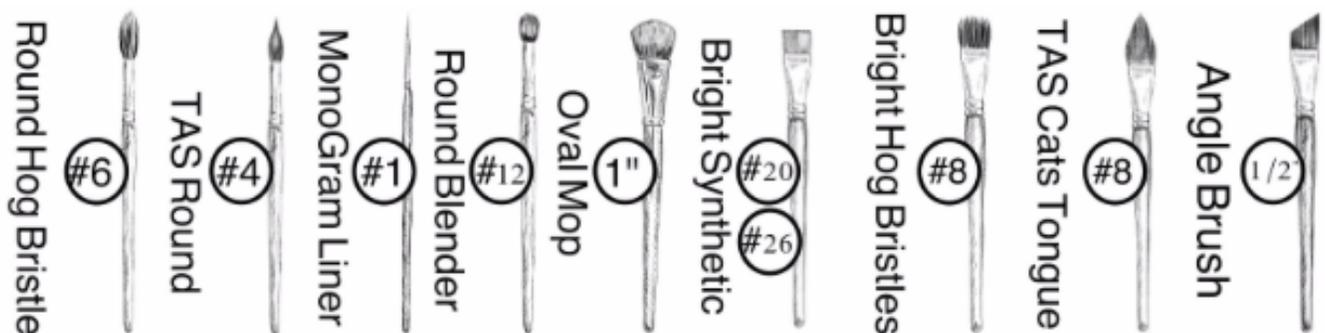
- #4 TAS Round
- #1 Monogram Liner
- #26 Bright
- #8 TAS Cats Tongue
- Hog Fan Brush

### TOOLS:

- T-Square Ruler
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- 16 x 20 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:

- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Finding Value
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing
- Hair



## VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE:

Below are the timestamps chapters we inserted in the tutorial video so that you can easily coordinate using the book and the tutorial video simultaneously. The actual timestamps will be provided after the tutorial goes live on YouTube. A revised version will be made available after it is revised.

<b>STEPS:</b>	<b>TIME:</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>
<b>INTRO</b>	<b>00:00</b>	<b>INTRO</b>
<b>STEP 1</b>	<b>2:50</b>	<b>MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES</b>
<b>STEP 2</b>	<b>5:26</b>	<b>TRANSFER IMAGE, GRID METHOD</b>
<b>STEP 3</b>	<b>12:04</b>	<b>SKETCH IN LINES</b>
<b>STEP 4</b>	<b>20:22</b>	<b>BILLOWING HAIR</b>
<b>STEP 5</b>	<b>31:44</b>	<b>GRAY WINGTIPS, DEFINING SHADOWS</b>
<b>STEP 6</b>	<b>45:35</b>	<b>NOSE AND MOUTH</b>
<b>STEP 7</b>	<b>58:20</b>	<b>COLORFUL WINGS</b>
	<b>1:10:00</b>	<b>FINAL DETAILS AND HIGHLIGHTS</b>
	<b>1:16:40</b>	<b>SIGN</b>



## THE GOLDILOCKS ZONE

In painting, every technique or process has what I call a "Goldilocks Zone". As an artist, you will be constantly seeking 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 that is 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 to notice when you have found yourself in the Goldilocks Zone so that you can locate it again easier the next time you come across a particular technique.



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# STEP 1 - TRANSFER IMAGE, GRID METHOD

## “NO RIGHT OR WRONG WAY TO TRANSFER”

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

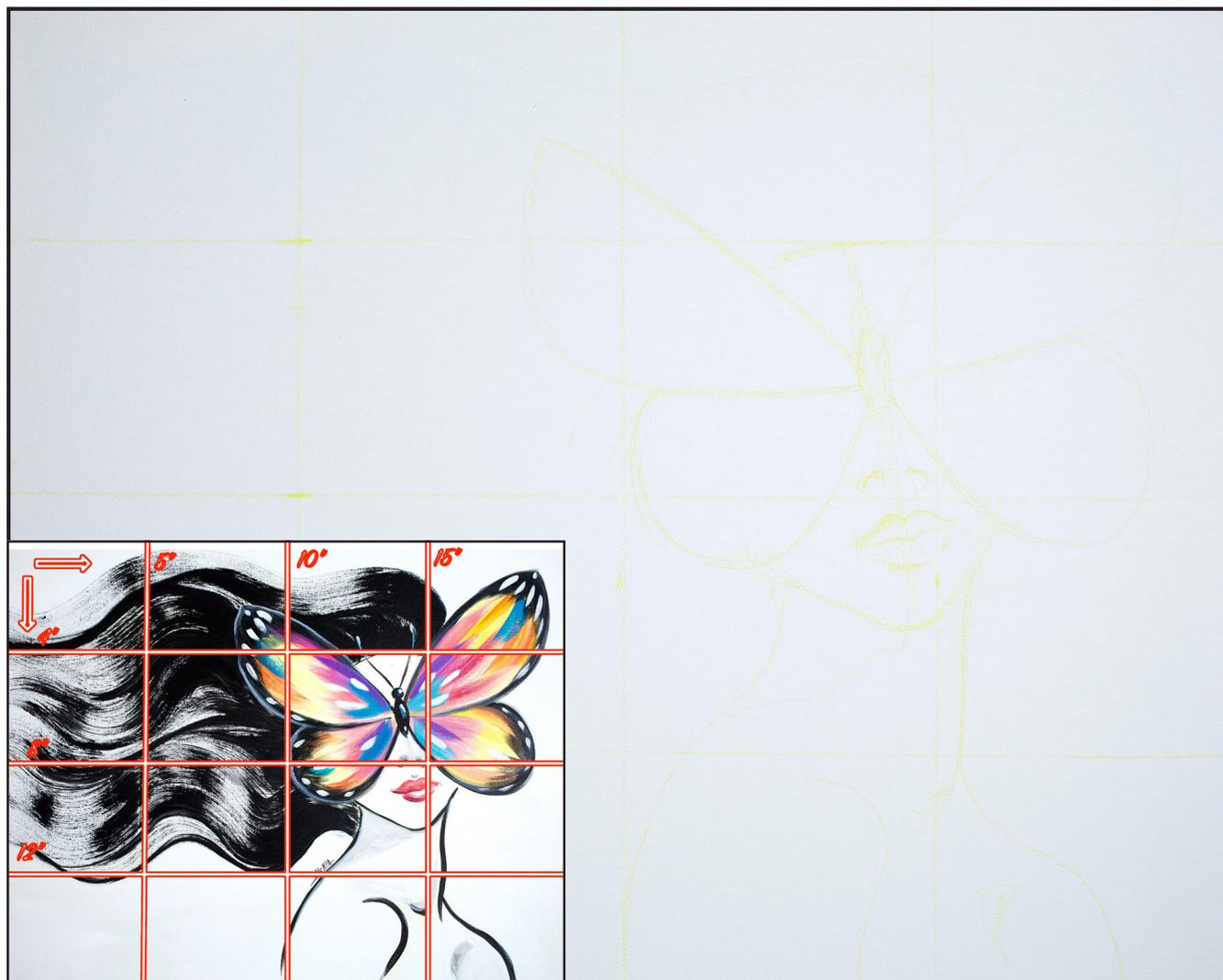
T-Square Ruler  
Chalk Pencil

canvas at those marks and then use the grid reference to help you with image placement. You are drawing in the major objects and note that the chalk will be very removable with a damp brush.

### STEP DISCUSSION

- With a T-square, make chalk marks at 5", 10", and 15" on the long side of your canvas and 4", 8", and 12" on the short side. Draw lines across the

- I chose to grid this image with yellow chalk but I have also provided a transfer 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 are included in this document, as well.



# STEP 2 - SKETCH IN LINES

## “WE DON'T PAINT GRIDLINES”

### PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

### STEP DISCUSSION

- We are going to create some elegant line work using a TAS #8 Cat's Tongue loaded with MB, so start at the chin and draw in the subject lines with the brush. Do not paint in the grid lines. You can paint the butterfly body entirely with the black. As the brush finishes the butterfly wing linework, allow the paint to fade into the end of the stroke.
- I use a TAS #4 Round Brush for the nose area of the face.

**Sherpa Tip:** I got my hand into the paint on the neck and had to show how to repair that, don't worry it will be fine. I removed the paint using a clean brush and water. Alternatively, if it is too dry to remove with water you can fix it by painting over it with TW.

- After I stepped back and reviewed my work, I also had to adjust the left wing to be a little bit bigger using black paint.
- Once the nostrils are in, get the TAS #8 Cat's Tongue and paint in the totally black portions of the wing on the top butterfly wings.
- Step back and review your painting and when you are happy, dry it.



# STEP 3 - BILLOWING HAIR

## “CREATING THE HALO”

### PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Hog Fan Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

- We will work on her halo of her beautiful hair. I chose to use a hog fan brush, you can use a synthetic, you would just need to load it more. Dampen the brush and load it with MB, then start the hair at her forehead and continue towards the left edge of the canvas. Waving and twisting the fan brush to make it appear that the hair is flowing. It is heavy in some areas and light in others, creating a natural look. You can bring this color to the edge of the left side of black butterfly wing and leave a touch of white betwixt them to show where the wing ends. Come down under the bottom left wing and add more flowing hair. Sometimes you are on the edge of the brush for the thick lines and sometimes on the flat of the brush for the larger sweeping portions.
- If your grid lines are bothering you, you can

blend them out with a damp brush if the canvas is dry.

- I also allow the canvas to dry between the layers of the hair. Come back and add the second layer of hair under the sections you just put in. You don't have to entirely cover the canvas with hair, the separation of black from the white of the canvas will lead to the belief that it is blowing hair.

*Sherpa Tip: If you are attempting to do this painting from the mini book without watching the tutorial, I recommend you watch the tutorial for at least this step to help you get your hair to the same stage that mine is before going to the next step.*

- Dry.



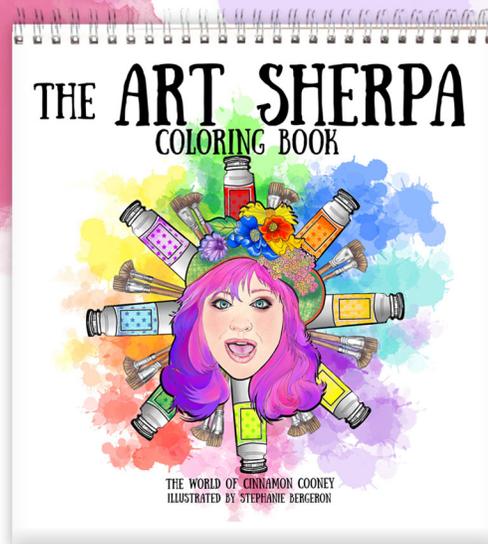


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# STEP 4 - GRAY WINGTIPS, DEFINING SHADOWS

## “YOU DO YOU”

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#26 Bright

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

### STEP DISCUSSION

- We will make sure her background is really white and clean and that the wings are separate from the hair. So start with some clean water.
- Get a large bright brush, dampened, and remove all your chalk lines while the canvas is dry.
- Notice that we have not put in the mouth yet, it is still yellow chalk.
- Get TW on this big brush and come in next to the hair and make sure that the entire canvas is pure white. Some canvases may require that you paint the entire background white, depending on the tint of the canvas you are using. You don't have to do this part of the painting if your background is clean and you are happy with all of your lines so far. Don't forget

the forehead and inside the wings and the arms and chest and neck.

- I used the TAS #8 Cat's Tongue to paint in the nose and mouth area of the lower face, leaving the mouth chalk lines intact.
- And, not for nothing, but maybe your background is a different color than white. You do you.
- We will be doing a blended stained glass effect on the wings, so we really want a good white on the inside of the wings.
- Add TW + MB to light gray color and paint in the tips and the upper black portions of both of the upper butterfly wings to pull it out and away from the hair. After the upper wings are done, do the bottom wings, you don't have to cover all the black, it can peek through a little. Add more TW to this light gray for an off white and add it under the chin and down the neck on the left side as a shadow. Over the throat dimple and at the right shoulder over to the left shoulder.
- Rinse your brush, then with the damp brush come back and soften any of these shadows that you need to.



# STEP 5 - NOSE AND MOUTH

“YES, IT’S BEAUTIFUL BUT DON’T SIGN YET”

## PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

## STEP DISCUSSION

- The rest of the nose and mouth need a little consideration and concentration so I chose to make it a separate step from the rest of the face. With the TAS #4 Round, get into your light gray and create an interesting shadow over the left nostril, a downward scoop and then up over the right nostril. Next add a line from the bottom of the butterfly body into the tip of the nose to create that shadow. Get TW on the dirty brush and add that to the right of that shadow and at the tip of the nose above the divet. Come back with MB and define the nostrils if you need to.
- I do recommend standing back and observing the face from time to time.
- You can clean up the black and gray with TW if

you need to.

- Get the light gray and define above the cupid bow on the upper lip and dimples at the edges of the mouth.
- Mix CRM + TW and outline the shape where the upper and lower lips meet. Then define the lower lip and fill in the upper lip. You can add DP to this mix and outline the lower area of both lips making sure the place where they meet is a little darker. The bottom lip has a lot of white still showing near where the two lips close.
- Get TW and define that white space between the upper lip and the divet above it. Clean up and refine any places you don't love. Don't just let it sit.

*John - it's so beautiful that you could just sign it right now and it would be a monochromatic painting.*



# STEP 6 - COLORFUL WINGS

## “DON'T GO GETTING MUDDY”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM  
Quinacridone Magenta = QM  
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM  
Dioxazine Purple = DP  
Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

### STEP DISCUSSION

- We will start the fantasy wings but remember, you can use any colors that you want for your fantasy wings. Although you don't want to use opposite colors on the color wheel or they will gray out.
- Start with fresh water because these wings are going to be very bright.
- Then with the #8 Cat's Tongue and your brightest colors, in this case CYM + TW for a light yellow, go up into the gray of the wings on the left side. Add CRM + CYM for a bright orange color. The sides are not uniform here. Another lovely color to make is QM + TW for a pink. We are blending wet into wet. We do want it streaky and playful. Mix DP + QM + TW for a soft purple to add in, you don't want a strong purple on there.
- Rinse out and go to the wings on the right side. Do remember to rinse out when you need to so the mixes don't get too muddy. You want the streaking to be on the canvas and from the colors you mixed, not unknown mixes created on a dirty brush.
- Dry.
- Rinse your brush.
- Continue with the TAS #8 Cat's Tongue and PB + TW, mixed to a very light blue, sometimes even with a touch of CYM, added to it. You are looking for that pop of blue. I wanted more purple next, maybe you do, maybe you don't; maybe you want more pink.
- You want it to be colorful and dramatic and enjoyable.
- Dry.



# STEP 7 - FINAL DETAILS AND HIGHLIGHTS

## “THE ZHUZH ZHUZH”

### PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

Mars Black = MB

Phthalo Blue = PB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

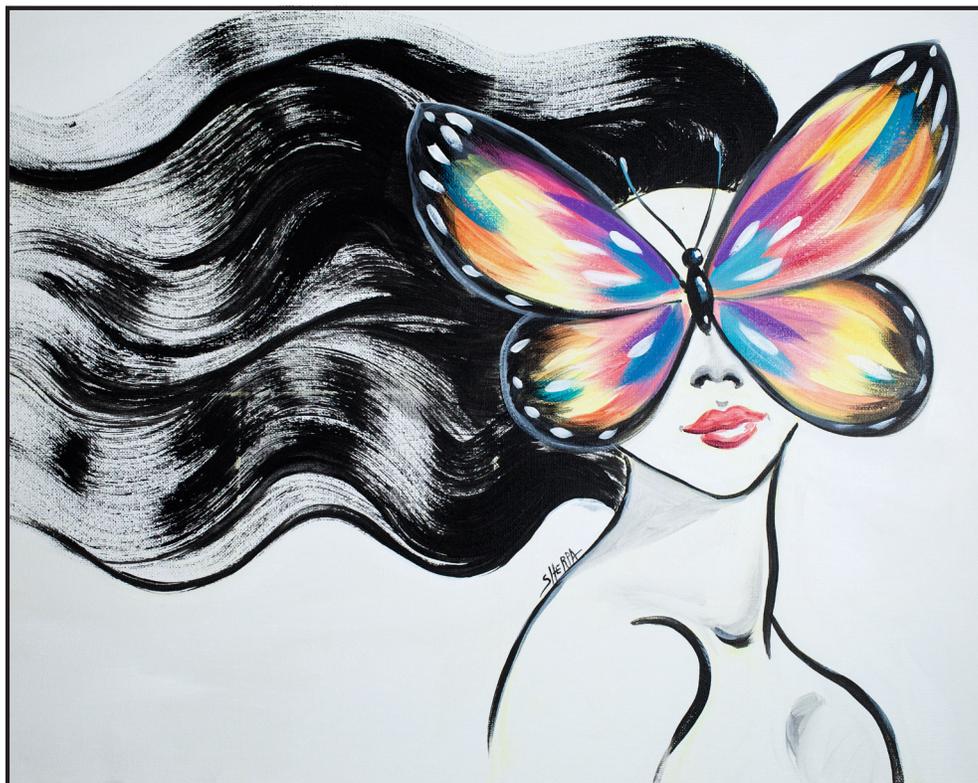
#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Just a few finishing touches to push it over the edge; don't get too stuck in a single element, like the nose or the mouth. Breathe through it and bring the piece together.
- We are going to zhuzh zhuzh out the wing using a TAS #4 Round and TW. Outline the outer edge of the wings on the left with broken lines, just pushing it out from the hair. Define the body of the butterfly with MB. Add a little head to Monsieur Papillon with MB and then the little antennae.
- Next get PB +TW and highlight the tips of the antennae that goes in front of the hair, and also on the butterfly body and head.
- With the TAS #8 Cat's Tongue, and the gray-black, dry brush in some strokes of darkness along

the edges of the wings but, not covering all the gray, just giving us a basis for the white dots.

- Dry.
- Get the TAS #4 Round and TW and start adding interesting and irregular dots and strokes over the black background you just put in. You also want to add a few in the colorful body of the wings, here and there. Then add a couple of bright reflections on the tips of the antennae, the head, and the body of the butterfly.
- Sign with gray on a monogram liner. I signed at the shoulder.

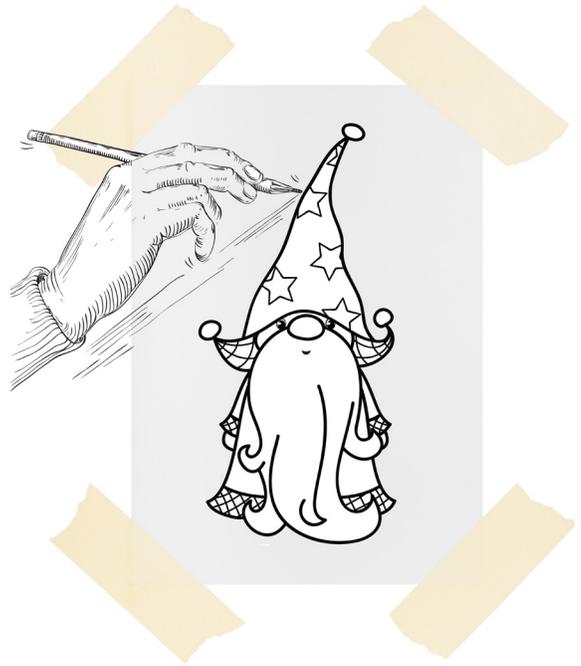


## THE TRACING METHOD

- 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.



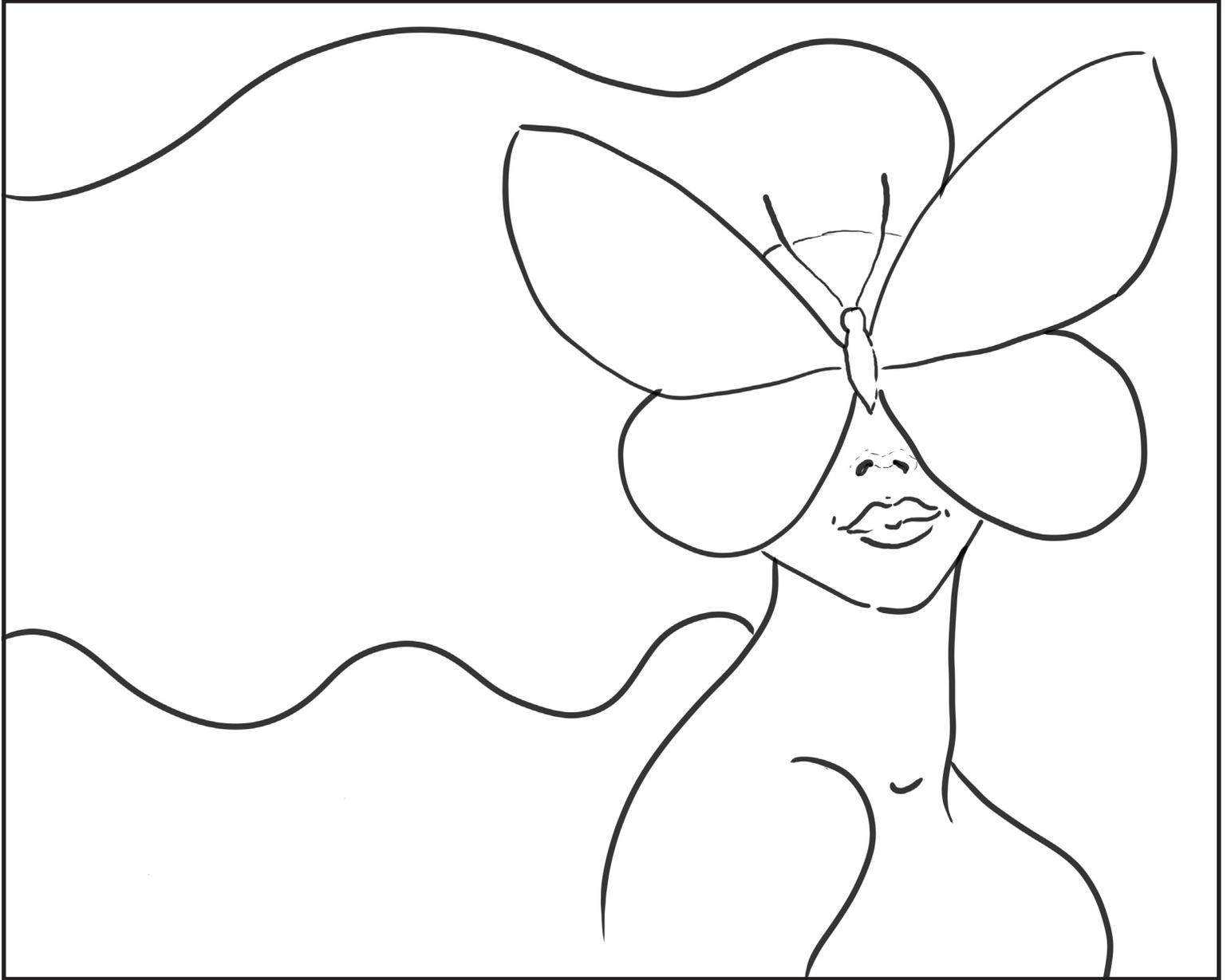
see that your transfer is happening. If not check if your rubbing is too thin or that your pressure is not too light. After you are done tracing the lines, remove your traceable and you should have a copy of the line art on your canvas.



- 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



TRACEABLE:



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## 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.

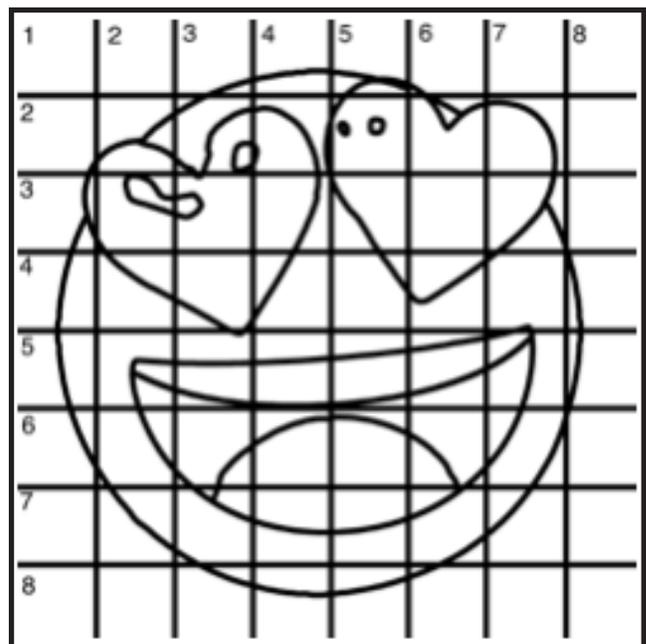
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could 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.

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



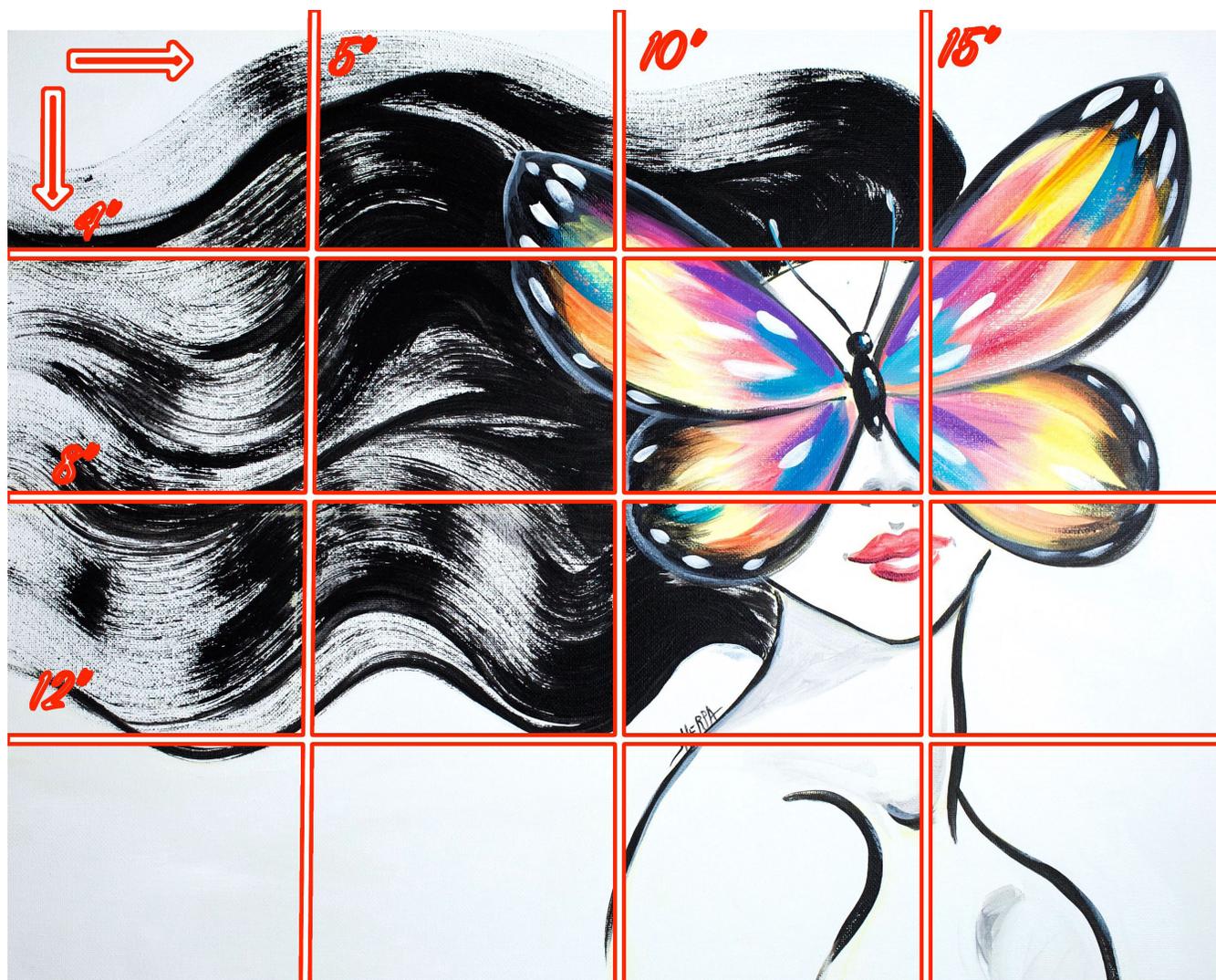
## GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

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.

## GRID REFERENCE:





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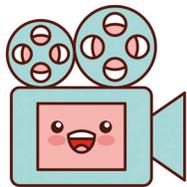
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