

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



TWIX

BY: THE ART SHERPA
IN TRIBUTE TO OUR BELOVED STUDIO ASSISTANTS


STEPS: 13 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 HOOTS

SHERPA



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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:

www.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 and although it is rated as a 2 hoot, all of my tutorials are beginner friendly, especially when all of the free resources I make available to you are utilized. While I kept referring to the subject matter as "he", when it came time to suggest a name for this lesson, only naming it after my own beloved studio assistant seemed right; so, it is entitled "Twix" and it is dedicated to all of the non-human studio assistants who frequent our studios. Whether they keep us company, drink our sippy sippy and eat our munchy munchies when we aren't looking, rearrange our desks, or just sleep at our feet, we love and adore them and our studios would not be complete without them.

Today's lesson is a continuation of my 2021 Big Art Quest which has "Gone To The Dogs". Today's subject will introduce the community to white fur. If your pet is the center of your world, you are going to love this year's series in The Big Art Quest. You can get more information at www.theartsherpa.com, in the Facebook The Art Sherpa Official Group, and on Facebook in The Big Art Quest Group.

The link for the blue-black fur tip video is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nniah7pP3Tg&t=31s>

If you are a beginning painter and want to attempt this, I recommend that you choose one or two of the objects in the setting and concentrate on those and build up to the entire setting. I have done several smaller still life tutorials which can be found on my website if you would like to start with a less difficult painting. If there is something you don't like in the reference, you won't like it in the painting. Remove it or change it.

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 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:

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

BRUSHES:

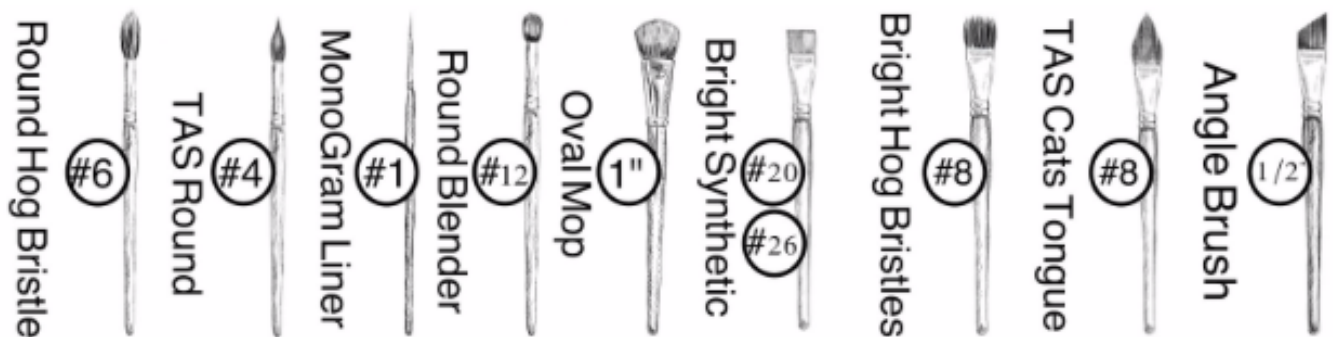
- #6 Round Hog Bristle
- #4 TAS Round
- #1 Monogram Liner
- #12 Round Blender
- #26 Bright
- Grass Comb or Grainer Brush
- #8 TAS Cats Tongue

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:

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



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.

STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	5:30	SKETCH IN BEGINNING
STEP 2	8:06	SKETCH IN FIRST GREEN LAYER
STEP 3	13:00	DIFFUSED BACKGROUND
STEP 4	22:50	BACKGROUND FLOWERS
STEP 5	30:36	BLOCKING IN FIRST FURRY LAYER
STEP 6	41:10	DEFINE NOSE AND MOUTH, TEETH
STEP 7	52:12	MORE BODY FUR
STEP 8	1:01:45	DETAIL FUR WITH GRASS/GRAINER BRUSH
STEP 9	1:11:38	HIGHLIGHTS AND MUZZLE
STEP 10	1:19:14	FORWARD GREENERY
STEP 11	1:27:21	FORWARD FLOWERS
STEP 12	1:32:50	FLOWER DETAILS
STEP 13	1:39:10	WHITE LINING FLOWER POP SIGN



THE GOLDBLOCKS 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.



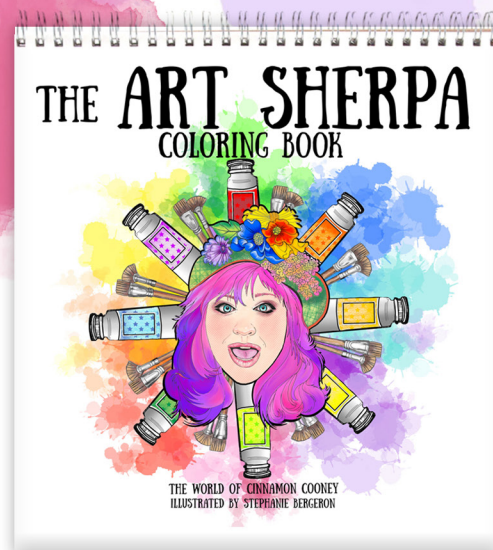


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STEP 1 - SKETCH IN BEGINNING

"A WEIRD SQUISHY SHAPE"

PAINT:

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

Chalk Pencil or

Watercolor Pencil

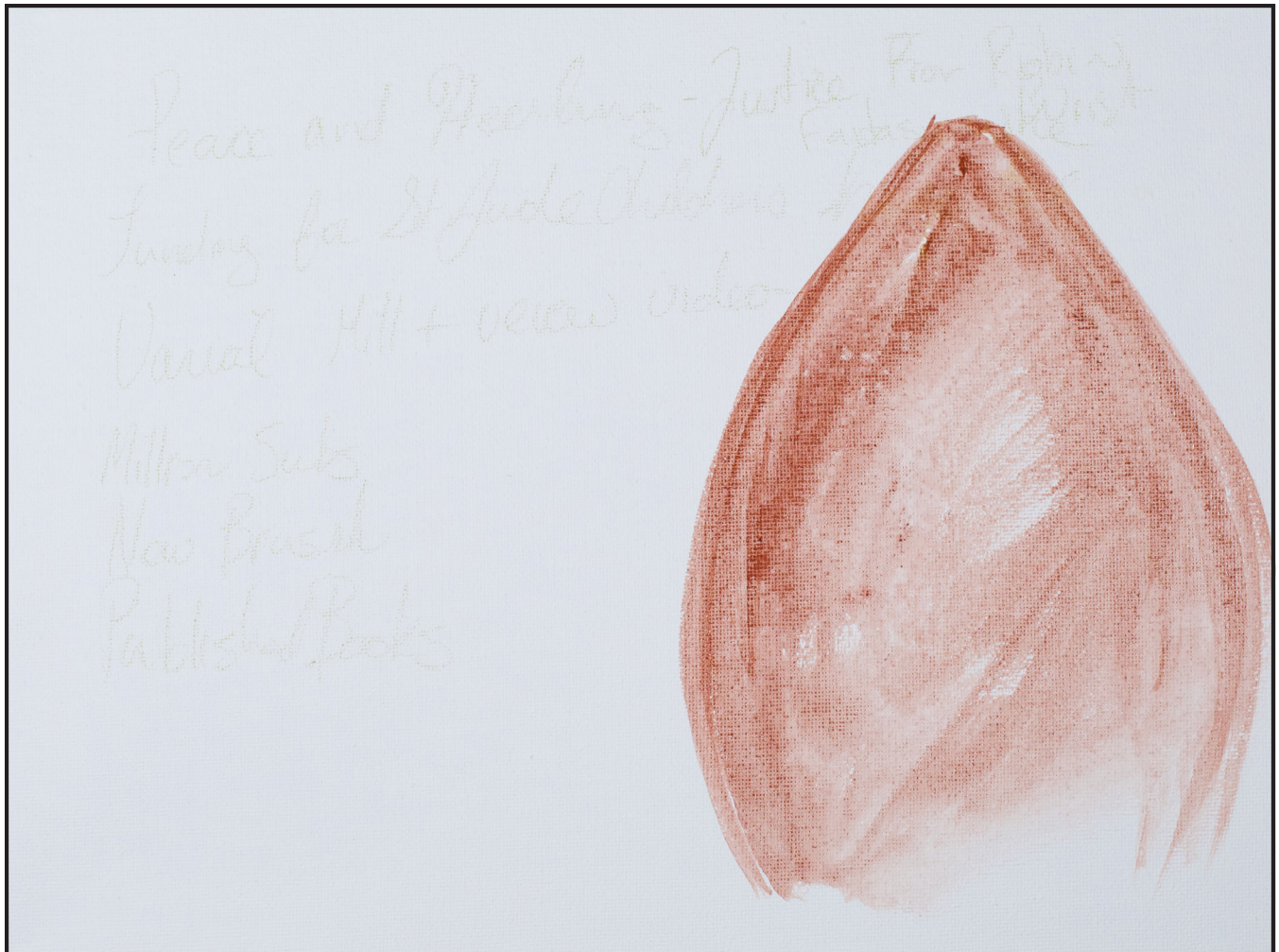
STEP DISCUSSION

- I chose to freehand this image 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. I draw in only the major objects.

- Put some PG + BS on your palette.
- Load BS on a Cat's Tongue and outline a triangular shape for the dog, about 1" down front the top, to about the halfway point and very close to the left side of the canvas,
- When you have this space defined, loosely paint in that area with the BS.

This weird squishy shape is the beginning concept of how I plan my painting, it's very loose.



STEP 2 - SKETCH IN FIRST GREEN LAYER

“PAINT EVERYTHING GREEN”

PAINT:

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

and have depth. You want to vary your mix value, because grass is not a uniform color. This underpainting should look loose and painterly.

- Dry.

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#26 Bright

A white dog in green fields. It does not look like the reference, but it will, and it will be glorious.

STEP DISCUSSION

- Using a bright brush, about 1" wide, mix a dark dark green with the BS + PG and paint in the rest of the background. We want the grass to look rich and full



STEP 3 - DIFFUSED BACKGROUND

“STOP, IN THE NAME OF ART”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

STEP DISCUSSION

- Add CYM, QM and TW to the palette.
- Get the Cat's Tongue loaded with your green-brown mix and add CYM, to get a muted green color.
- Start adding in distant, out-of-focus, random, loose, strokes that represent blades of grass. Change directions and vary the color and length of the blades.
- Add more CYM + PG to the mix and load this onto the dirty brush, then add some brighter leaf marks randomly but selectively, here and there.
- You can add more CYM in places and add TW to the mix for really bright highlights.
- Dry.

John - I got pre-buttoned when I introduced the last step, but I'm correcting it now, this upcoming step is not 3, it is 4. I miss-buttoned and I'm sorry, I'm a bad person. Please forgive me.

The flowers were identified in chat, they are Night Blooming Pink Primrose, a Texas wildflower.

***Sherpa Tip:** STOP IN THE NAME OF ART and be random. If you are new, your brain might be fighting you on this, but trust me. Be random.*

I've been told I paint pretty fast, so never forget that I put out a free minibook for every 2021 acrylic painting and they are available on the Art Sherpa website. You do have to register to access them, but they are free. www.theartsherpa.com





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STEP 4 – BACKGROUND FLOWERS

“FLOOFY DOG BACKGROUND”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

TAS #4 Round Brush

#12 Round Blender

STEP DISCUSSION

- Add UB to your palette.
- Dampen a round dome blender, and load TW with just a touch of QM and UB, to get a slightly purple cast.
- Start adding in the shapes of the flowers. They are distant and out of focus in the background of our floofy dog. Do not come too far down past the center of the canvas with these flowers.
- Rinse the brush.
- With a Round brush and add a toned down yellow-green, start adding the centers of the flowers and part of the flower cup that attaches to the stem.



STEP 5 - BLOCKING IN FIRST FURRY LAYER

"PAINTING IS MEDICINAL"

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#6 Round Hog Bristle

#4 TAS Round

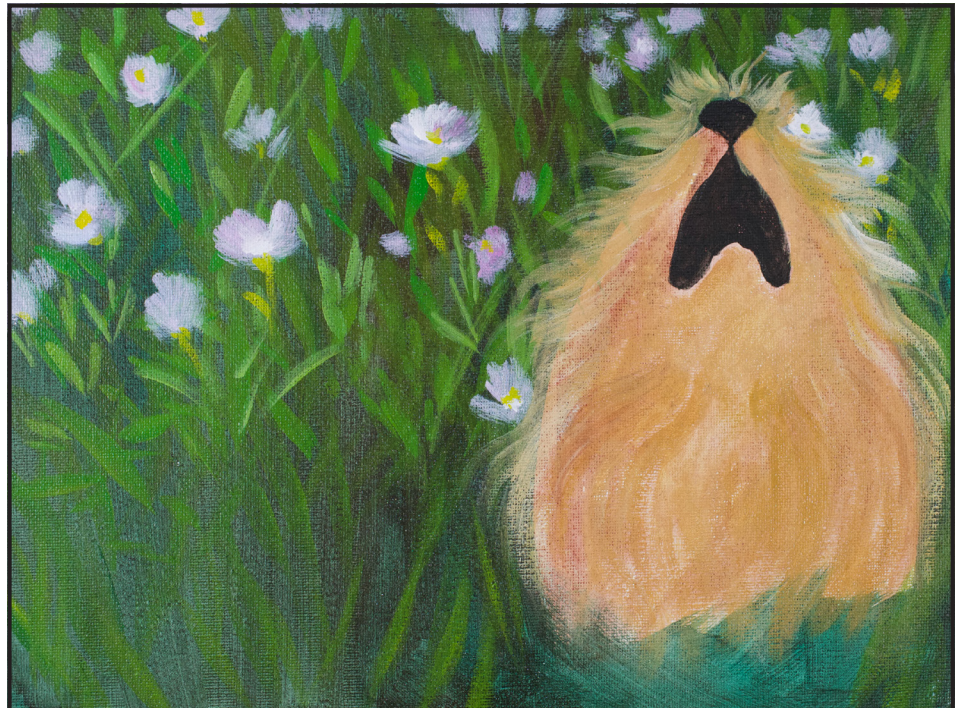
STEP DISCUSSION

- Put MB on your palette.
- With a Round brush and MB, paint in a diamond shape for the nose because the dog is looking up at the sky.
- Sketch in the cleft of the nose and then add a little mountain with a curve on each side to represent the mouth, then add a curved line to connect the cleft to the little mountain.
- Fill it in with MB.
- Get a round hog and mix BS + CYM to make a yellow ochre, or you could just use yellow ochre if you have it. This is the base mix for the undergrowth hair.
- Start adding this color at the tip of the nose, going up into the green grass.
- Then start adding swirls of hair along the entire outline of the floofy dog. These should vary in color, length, and direction.
- Add TW to this mix to get a lighter color. We are building up from the deeper shadows. In this stage for our white chest fur, the brush strokes should also vary in direction, color and length.

Breathe out the stress. Breathe in creativity.

Medical studies believe that painting and creativity keeps your brain happy and healthy so it does not get rigid or atrophy.

Painting is, therefore, medicinal.



STEP 6 - DEFINE NOSE AND MOUTH, TEETH

“STUNT HANDS TAUNTS”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

#1 Monogram Liner

STEP DISCUSSION

- On a Round Brush mix MB + TW to a mid-gray color, and paint in that mountain part of the mouth. Then about ½" on either side of the cleft under his nose that goes to the mouth.
- Outline the open mouth with this color.
- Redefine the black in the open mouth if you need to.
- Take the gray to the top of the nose and outline it.
- Tap a little down in the center of the nose and then add the two little nostrils.
- Add more MB to the mix and paint on the underside of the nose making sure you allow the line between the nostrils, down to the clef to show.
- Add more TW to the mix and highlight above the nostrils on the top of the nose.
- Get MB on the brush and redefine the black of the nostrils, the lines of the nose, the centerline “V” and cleft to the mouth.
- Add more TW to make a light gray, and add a reflection on the underside of the left nostril.
- Dry the nose. We want it upward, recognizable, and defined.
- Mix TW to your light brown fur color, for an off white color and add in his teeth at the top of the chin.
- Mix QM + TW to a pink and add a curved tongue peeking out over the teeth.
- If you paint over a tooth, you can add it back in.
- Switch to a Monogram Liner loaded with MB and define the black area between the tongue and the teeth.
- Dry.
- You could add a little of the beige and TW to color the teeth a little more because rarely do dogs have pure white teeth.

Cinnamon - Sometimes when you are painting. Sometimes when you are painting. Sometimes when you are painting...

John - what?

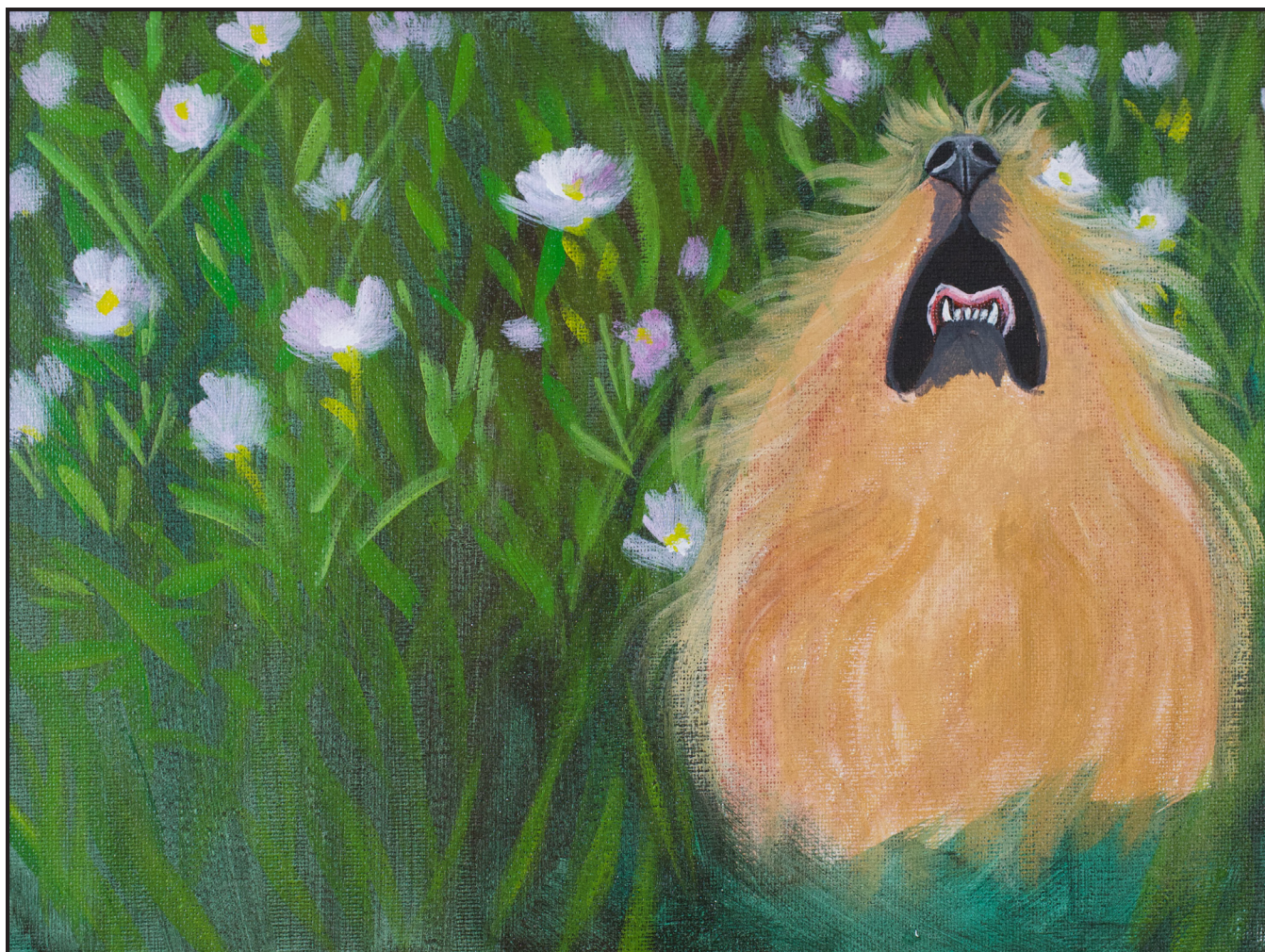
Cinnamon - When things aren't dry enough...

John - Do we get Quinten Tarrantino to write it

Cinnamon - If we do, I get to star in it.

Cinnamon - ...it may not catch the dark color.

STEP 6: CONTINUED



STEP 7 - MORE BODY FUR

"HOW FLOOFY IS YOUR PUPPER?"

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

Chalk Pencil

STEP DISCUSSION

- Start with very light gray on a Round brush and define any highlights on the nose.
- With a chalk pencil, draw in the area around the muzzle and the chin area.
- Mix BS + CYM to a cream color, then add TW, to get a light light fur color.
- Start at the nose and loosely wiggle in some hairs at the top of his head. Take your time and use the sketch you just drew in around the muzzle, to help you with placement.
- You can add more BS to the mix for a darker fur color, more CYM for a yellowey tint, and more TW to lighten.
- Don't hesitate to paint over part of the background flowers, our friend is joyfully unaware or caring whether or not his joy covers up the flowers behind him. Wiggle little "S" strokes and change directions with the hair movement.
- The hair under the chin is more in shade, so mix MB + BS to your base fur color to get that shadow fur color. Most dogs do have fur that builds up to white, but is darker underneath.



STEP 8 – DEFINE FUR WITH GRASS/GRAINER BRUSH

“THE SECRET WEAPONS”

PAINT:

Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Grass Comb or Grainer Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Put FWP on your palette and get a grass comb, or grainer and paint this over the strokes you put in on the last step.
- Rinse your brush out when you need to.
- Play with your grass comb and your FWP to your heart's content to make that hair come to life.
- Work from the outside silhouette of the dog inward to the chest and not the other way around. Also work from the chin area down to the paws, and not the other way around.
- Use the reference below to help you with white hair highlight placement. Try to get to this stage before you move on.

Please know that a puppy will emerge. If you are painting your own studio assistant, I hope you are making these little changes that will show his markings.



STEP 9 - HIGHLIGHTS AND MUZZLE

“LOTS OF HAIRS, SHE’S HAIRY NOT FURRY”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

Naples Yellow Light = NYL

Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Grass Comb or Grainer Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Mist your paint if you need to.

- Continue with the grass comb and BS + CYM + TW and start inputting hairs in the reserved chin area. Work up from the bottom so that the hairs are on top of other layers as you move up.
- Vary your color, and add the shadow colors first so that the light will show against them. Variety and irregularity of everything is key to his loofiness.
- With FWP and a very light touch to the nose and start adding in the short muzzle hairs on each side. They are short and curl down over the mouth opening. FWP will show very well in this very visible area.



STEP 10 – FORWARD GREENERY

“CUTENESS OVERLOAD”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#8 TAS Cats Tongue

STEP DISCUSSION

- Get the Cat's Tongue loaded with CYM + PG + BS and water, and add some brightness to that forward grass, setting the stage for some more flowers.
- Vary the representation of these bits of grass and weeds as you did before.
- Bring several structures in front of the dog to dimensionally incorporate her into his environment.
- Get the mix darker to add depth to the space and vary the color where it might be more in shadow.
- Add TW for the bright minty green.
- Dry.
- Get fresh water.

Now is the time for all good grass combs and fur colors to gather and create the floofy drama. Redefine and reshape, add light and darkness, capture the joy with your brush.



STEP 11 - FORWARD FLOWERS

“BEAUTIFUL & BELOVED”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

STEP DISCUSSION

- The forward flowers have more detail than the ones we did before, but they are still loose, because the dog is our focal point.
- Start with a Round brush and QM with a touch of TW. Start inputting the shape of flowers. Some are facing the viewer, some are looking the other direction, some are a side view. It's all very loose, but darker, because it is closer.
- It's ok to exaggerate size on these, it is your world. You can also have as many flowers in YOUR field as YOU want.
- When you get in front of the dog, you want more QM in your flower color.
- Dry.



STEP 12 - FLOWER DETAILS

“USE THE PAINTS YOU HAVE, WHAT COULD GO WRONG”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Titanium White = TW

- Add QM + UB + TW into the mix to place on the edge of the petals for some definition.
- Get TW on the dirty brush for highlights.
- Then add QM for definition.

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

STEP DISCUSSION

- On the same brush add TW with a touch of CYM and pop in the center details of these primroses.



STEP 13 – WHITE LINING FLOWER POP

“TWIX HAS ZHUZH ZHUZH”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round
#1 Monogram Liner

STEP DISCUSSION

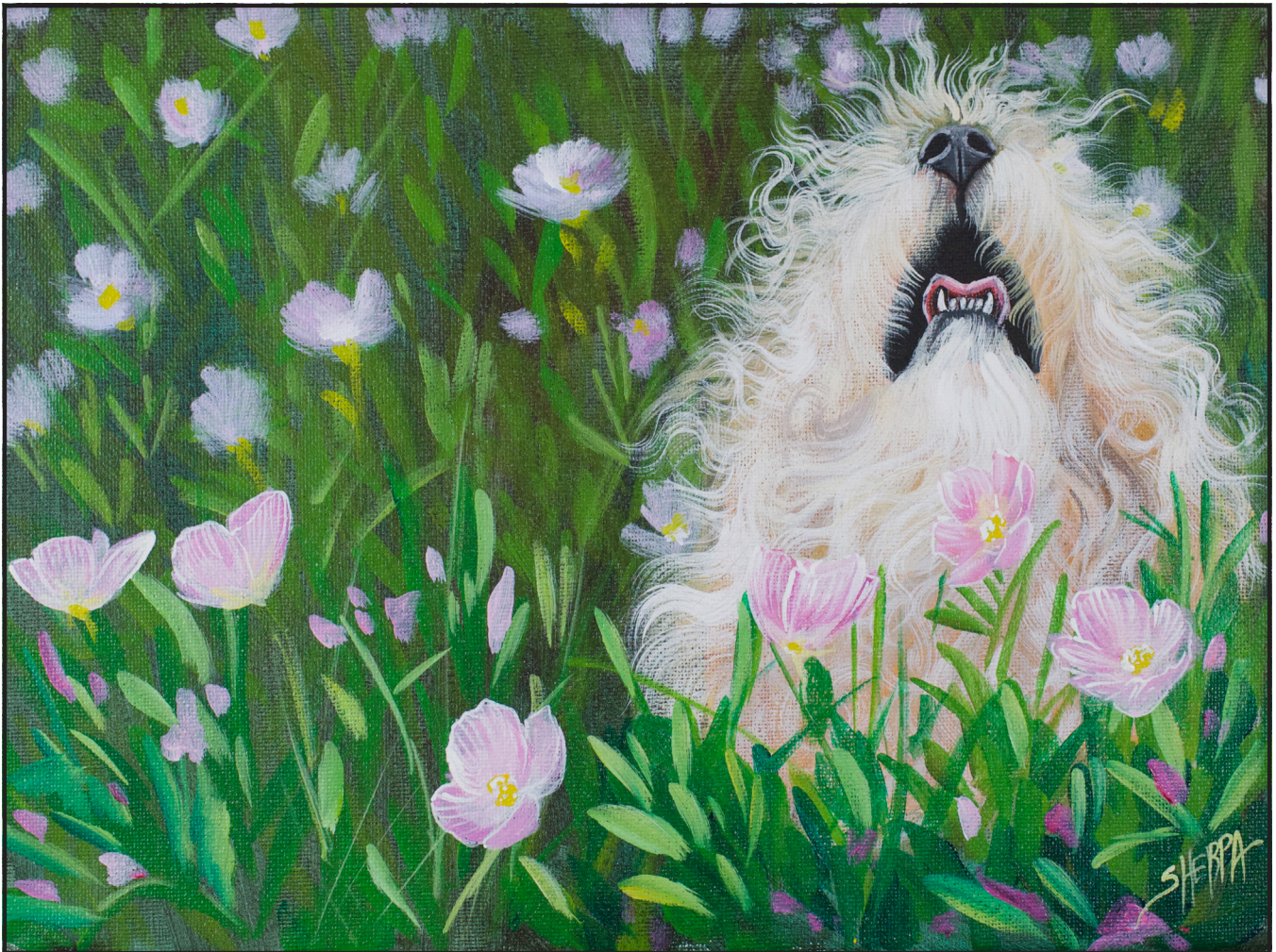
- Continue using the Round brush.
- Add CYM (OK if it has a

touch of green) to where there is a center showing in the flower.

- Get the Monogram Liner and FWP to outline the edges of some of the petals. Lining is one of those techniques I love that pops elements out of the background and speaks to the viewer.

- Sign.

I was going to try to make one more step out of this, but she is perfect so I'm going to stop here.



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.



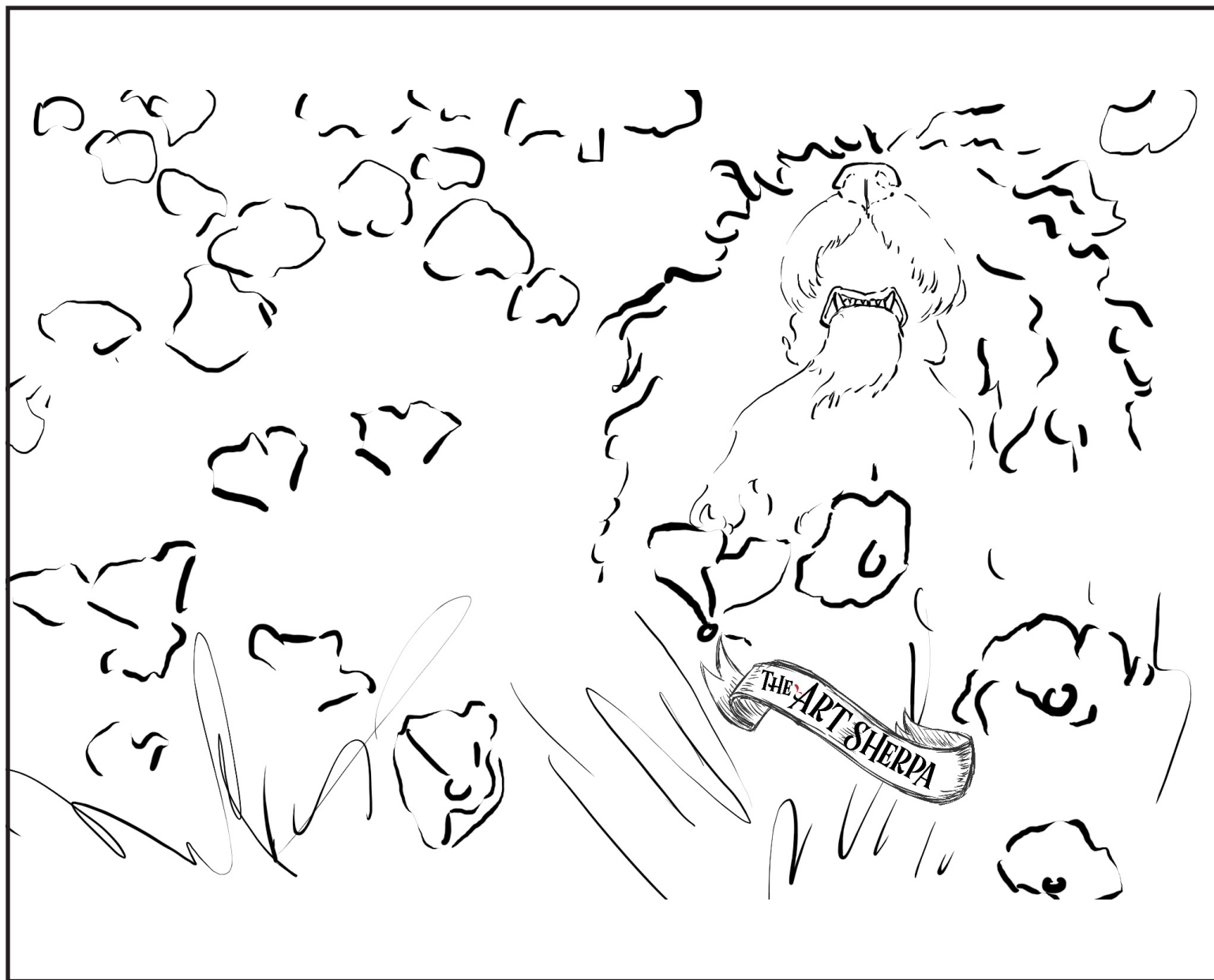
see that your transfer is happening. If not check if your rubbing is too thin or that your pressure is not too light. After you are done tracing the lines, remove your traceable and you should have a copy of the line art on your canvas.



- 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.

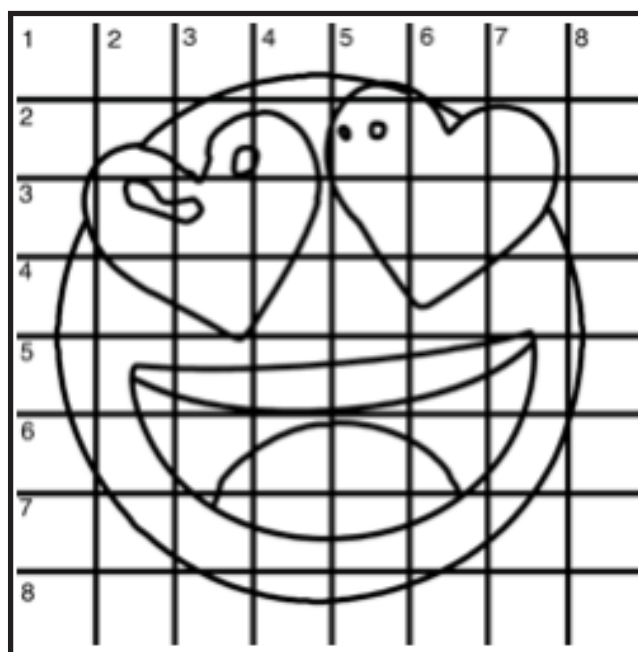
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could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