

THE ART SHERPA™

# HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC

## POLLY WANT A TULIP?

BY: THE ART SHERPA  
NAME CREDIT TO PATRON ROCKY VANCE


STEPS: 10 | DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING | 3 HOOTS





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# SHERPA FORWARD:

I am resolved in 2021 to do more to help teach art than demonstrate how to paint art and 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. It is best viewed in outline format to allow for ease in navigation between sections. We hope to prepare a printed version of all of those documents that you will be able to purchase which 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).

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.

Our painting today is a Parrot Tulip which is a cup-shaped, fringed, twisted, and ruffled tulip decorated with vivid, flame-like splashes, stripes, and/or feathery markings. They first appeared in France and found their way to the Netherlands in the 18th century where they remain highly prized and extremely expensive. This tutorial is complicated as far as layering goes, but not an extremely difficult one. The most important thing to remember in this tutorial is to create the sections in the order that the layers of the flower dictate. We will start with the furthest back layers first because we will probably be painting others layers over them. Take your time, follow the steps, and use all of your resources to assist you.

It is a fairly neutral still life which is the most commercially successful subject for painting. A still life is a work of art depicting mostly inanimate subject matter. You would commonly see natural subjects, including food, flowers, plants, rocks, shells, or man-made subjects, like drinking glasses, books, vases, jewelry, coins, and pipes. 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](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 Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Dioxazine Purple = DP
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Fluid White Paint = FWP
- Golden's Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid = AGL

### BRUSHES:

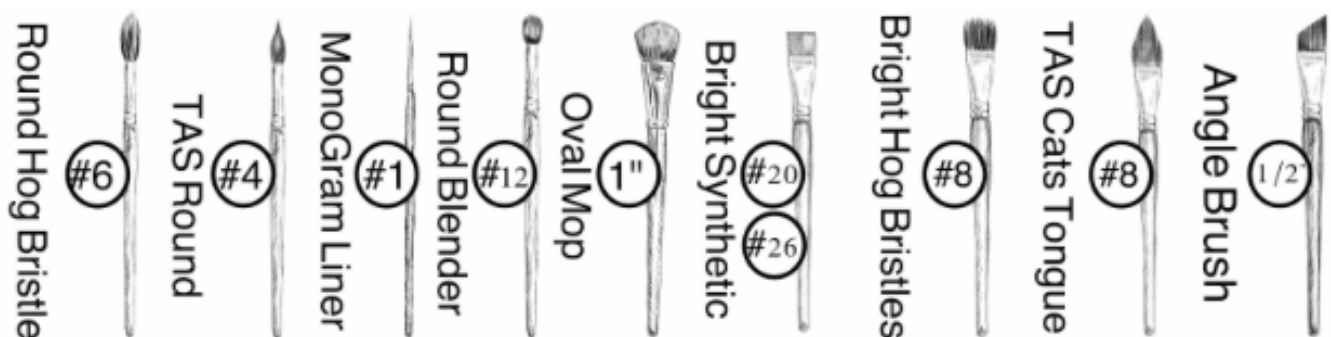
- #24 Bright Brush
- #4 TAS Round
- #1 Monogram Liner
- TAS #8 Cats Tongue

## TOOLS:

- 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.)
- Saral Paper
- Artist Tape
- Optional: StayWet Palette

## TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

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





## 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	6:24	COLORED GROUND
STEP 2	12:08	TRANSFER IMAGE
STEP 3	18:51	STEM
STEP 4	24:45	FIRST LAYER OF WHITE PETALS
STEP 5	30:42	FIRST LAYER OF RED PETALS
STEP 6	34:01	THE FRILL
STEP 7	42:45	MORE FRILL
STEP 8	57:03	LAYERS OF PETALS
STEP 9	1:06:45	MORE PETAL LAYERS
STEP 10	1:17:27	REFINE/FINISH LOWER PETAL 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.





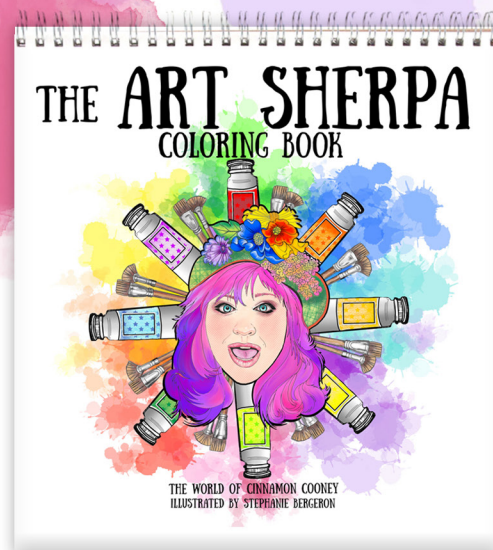


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# STEP 1 - COLORED GROUND

## "THE NUMBERS MEAN NOTHING"

### PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#24 Bright Brush

Sara Paper

Chalk Pencil or Watercolor

Pencil

Artist Tape

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Using a big stiff bright brush and MB, completely paint the entire canvas.
- If you are going to frame this you can paint the sides if you wish, but it is purely optional. Although, if you want to hang without a frame you should paint the sides.
- Dry and repeat John's "color Shift" warnings in your head at least once to allow it time to cool.

*John - The darkness is in, now, just paint the light.*

**Sherpa Tip:** You must remember that the numbers mean nothing across the industry, they are not standard.





# STEP 2 - TRANSFER IMAGE

## “YOU ARE ALREADY AN ARTIST”

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Chalk Pencil or Watercolor  
Pencil  
Sara Paper  
Transfer Image  
Artist Tape

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Your canvas must be cool to the touch if you dried it with a hair dryer.
- I chose to transfer this image using sara paper. I have 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 drew in only the major objects.

*John - Tracing is not cheating and has been used through the ages by the masters, who referred to traceables as “cartoons”. All of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles used the cartoon method to transfer images...Leonardo, Donatello, Raphael, and Michelangelo.*

**Sherpa Tip:** If you are working flat, be very mindful of your posture. You can cause issues if you are not mindful.

*Don't use your phone as your reference, it strains your eyes; get a bigger device.*

*Breathe, relax, take breaks when you need to and take your time. This is a relay not a race.*



# STEP 3 – STEM

## “COOKING WITH FIRE”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Put out QM, CRM, CYM, BS, PG, and TW on your palette.
- Start with a Round Brush and PG + BS and paint in the stem. This is very dark, and might even be almost black, very hard to see.
- Add a little CYM to your mix. Use this slightly lighter version for the underside of the stem keeping the deep shadow in the middle.
- Now, add much more CYM and a little TW for the top side of the stem.







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# STEP 4 - 1ST LAYER OF WHITE PETALS

## "A BUSY LITTLE TULIP"

### PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

Phthalo Green = PG

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Mix TW, with a touch of PG, to a very, very light green-white.
- On the toe of a Cat's Tongue, start to lightly brush in this color, painting in the direction that the little frills grow.
- You will use some "S" strokes and curved strokes, and your pressure should be very light on the brush. I moved around the entire tulip adding this color in small sections.
- It would be impossible to direct you space by space because of the complexity of the flower structure so, use the reference below to help you with this color placement.
- You do want to vary the amount of green that is in your white so that you create dimension. You are just painting the curl.

**Sherpa Tip:** I am using a heavy body paint for this blocking section and my paint is covering very well. If you are not using a heavy body paint, you may have to add several layers to cover the black. You can notice that as I release my pressure on the strokes, the white allows some of the black to peek through and that is what I want.





# STEP 5 - 1ST LAYER OF RED PETALS

“WE ARE GOING TO BE AMAZING TODAY”

## PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

## STEP DISCUSSION

- We are going to continue blocking in with one of my favorite colors, the beautiful QM + CRM mix.
- Initially, even with heavy body paint, you will see a lot of black showing through because both reds are very transparent but there will be more layers to come. So for now, just block in the spaces where this beautiful red lives.
- You do want to go over some of the white, because the flower, much like the painting, has many, many layers.

**Sherpa Tip:** If you are left handed, you might want to start working from the right side to the left because you want to paint to your strong side.



# STEP 6 - THE FRILL

## “ONE SECTION AT A TIME”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Refresh your water frequently so that you keep your colors bright.
- Get some of your white-green glaze from earlier on the brush and start detailing some of the white color shifts in the center section of the flower.
- We will try to work the entire flower in sections with all colors before moving to the next section.
- Next get some of the red mix and highlight a few places with that color.
- Mix QM + PG to a purple shadow color for the flower rather than using black in that same section that you have been working on
- Get CYM + QM to an off white-yellowish color and add that in that section.
- Now, move to the bottom red section, near the stem, and enhance the outer

layer of that section with the deep reds and purples.

- At the outer edge near the top, add TW to the mix for a highlight where it might be catching light.
- Add the red or purple mix where it is more in shadow.
- Add TW to the dirty brush for a brighter highlight near the stem where it might be catching light. We are still working on the first section of the flower, slightly to the left. You want to be mindful that you are painting in the directionality of growth.
- Then bring a red petal over the white to connect this section to the next white section that is to the right and slightly below.
- Dry.

**Sherpa Tip:** When you plan a painting, you want to ask yourself some questions before you begin, like: Where are the layers of the flower? How do they layer? Always paint from the furthest away to the nearest.





# STEP 7 - MORE FRILL

## "THE FRILL IS NOT GONE"

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Mix PG + CYM on your brush and add that color over the outer deep red that we put in during the last step. Also add some of this through the white section where you need to.
- Add TW on the dirty brush to brighten the color at the base near the stem.
- Use the purple mix as a shadow color in that red section that you added earlier, connecting the two sections.
- Make orange with CRM + CYM and use that on the tip of that red section. Add more QM near the base.
- Under the section we have been working on, add your white-green glaze on the extreme left of it.
- Add shadows and highlights to that outer layer of petal to show light and darkness.
- Get the white-green and paint that near the stem coming up onto the outer petals.
- In the white area of that little section, add some TW to the dirty brush and accentuate it with this greenish-white.
- Get your white-yellow color and add that in the white fluffy section and to the fringey area down the center of the outer layer of petal.
- With a pinkish-purple, (QM + PG + TW) use curved strokes to move from the outer edge into the center area.
- Get a purple color with QM + PG and put in a deep shadow between this section and the section we previously worked on. It pulls that petal out away from the other section of the flowers.
- Get more TW on the dirty brush for a brighter highlight. If you overpaint a color, you can always add more of the red, or purple, or green back in, where you need to.
- Then, with the red mix, build up the outer petal of that section and add white to the dirty brush for the highlight.
- Play with all your colors in this step until you are happy with how your tulip looks so far. I added more pink to my first section, then more red on top of it. Then I moved to that red division section and added more pink.
- You can always come back with MB and recapture the outer edge of these petals.
- Get fresh water.
- Next, We are going to paint a frill area. The reason this is moving around is because some areas of the flower layer over other areas, so they have to be painted in this order to make sense.
- On the white area, at the top of the flower that is slightly right of center, add your white-green glaze color, your purple shadows, and your pops of red and pink where you see them.
- Use my reference below to help you with color placement.

*Be the cultivator of your tulip.*

*Sherpa Tip: If you are using a lazy susan, you can rotate the canvas so that it works for your body instead of your body having to work for your art.*

## STEP 7: CONTINUED





# STEP 8 - LAYERS OF PETALS

## "MORE FRILLS"

### **PAINT:**

Titanium White = TW

### **BRUSHES & TOOLS:**

#4 TAS Round

### **STEP DISCUSSION**

- Work on the forward-facing center petal, and start layering in whitish frilly shoots over the previous section using the off white-green and off white-yellow color.
- Again, it's hard to direct each single brush stroke here, but know that you are now working to the right of the previous two sections.
- Use your reds to accentuate the outside area of the petals and the dark purple shadows at the base, nearest the stem.
- Add TW to the red mixes to get pink colors to brighten the shadows as they come more into the light.
- Add more TW to the dirty brush for the brightest sections to create drama on the flowers.
- Near the bottom right of the flower, by the stem, add a little purple color.
- Then come back with the dark reds and paint in that

outer layer of petal. Turning your canvas so that you can easily address an area rather than contort your body. Define that outer layer of red and tell the story of this beautiful tulip as you go.

- Rinse your brush when you need to.
- With TW add that bright highlight at the base, near the stem, under the main part of the flower. You really want to curl these strokes.



# STEP 9 – MORE PETAL LAYERS

## “THE PHOENIX FIRE CHICKEN OF FLOWERS”

### PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Continue in the same section, using the white-green mix to accentuate this bottom section's upper frills.
- Then with the pink curl up some movement at the bottom just to the right of the stem.
- Change out your water if you need to.
- In the section that has fallen apart from the rest of the flower, start defining it using the red mix.
- Add some fire here with orange near the tip of the fringes.
- Paint this red section down over the white petals and all the way to the base of the flower.
- Get some TW on the dirty brush and highlight some tips near the top of this petal.
- While you have pure TW on the brush, you can highlight this bright white in the frilly area of any

previously painted section.

- Dry.

*I provide you with numerous resources that you should not be afraid to use. There is the step reference with every step, there is the finished painting after the last step, there is a grid reference, there is a traceable and you can rewatch the tutorial any time you want to. I'm on Instagram and Pinterest and have numerous Facebook groups. I broadcast on both YouTube and Facebook. This is all free. Take advantage of me, please.*

**Sherpa Tip:** You can always choose to play with any section of your painting as you realize that something needs to be addressed. That's what I do when I want to allow a section to dry. You might want to wait until the end and go refresh your sippy sippy instead. You be you.





## STEP 10 – REFINE/FINISH LOWER PETAL

“AAAAAAAAAAAAH!”

### PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

#1 Monogram Liner

### STEP DISCUSSION

- As we continue to work on the last little complicated petal, get a light yellow-green (PG + CYM + TW) on the brush and start adding frills at the base of the petal. You are covering the red a lot, but you need this in here for the light to show.
- Dry.
- Get white-green and start adding fringe petals over the top of the red outer layer, up toward the main body of the flower using light pressure and curved strokes.
- Use some red and pink at the tip of these and along the outside edge at the top.
- Add more off white fringes along the upper outer section of this petal.
- Use the white-green and add a layer of fringe below the first section, then add some pink and red on that fringe.

- Get CYM + TW to paint over the green at the base of that petal.
- Curl in some pink and then TW in that section. Use the reference below to help you with color placement in this petal. It is different and apart from the rest of the flower, and therefore, the eye will be drawn to it.
- When you are happy with your Parrot Tulip, sign it with the #1 Monogram Liner.

*I said it, but I could not spell it.*

**Sherpa Tip:** We spent a lot of time talking about varnish, but I have a tutorial on varnish at [www.theartsherpa.com](http://www.theartsherpa.com) that you can watch and then, if you have any questions, send them to [support@theartsherpa.com](mailto:support@theartsherpa.com) and we'll be happy to get back with you.



## THE TRACING METHOD

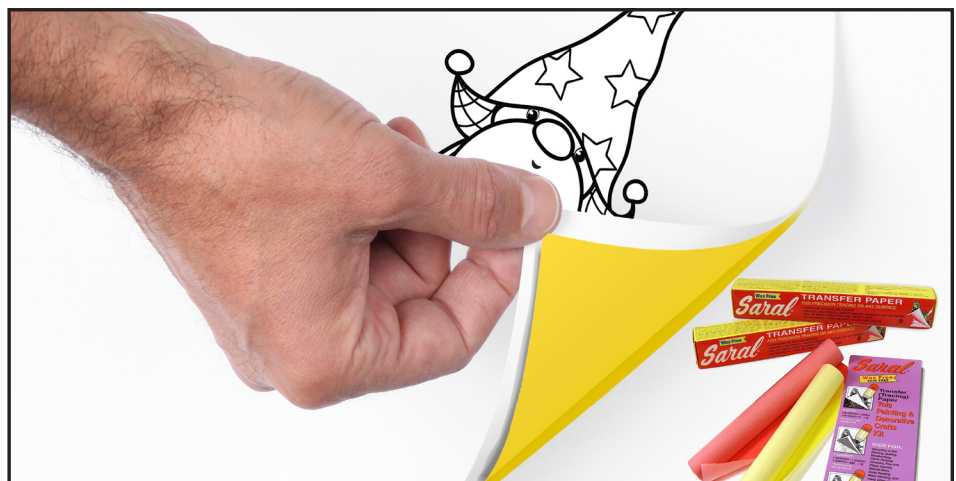
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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.

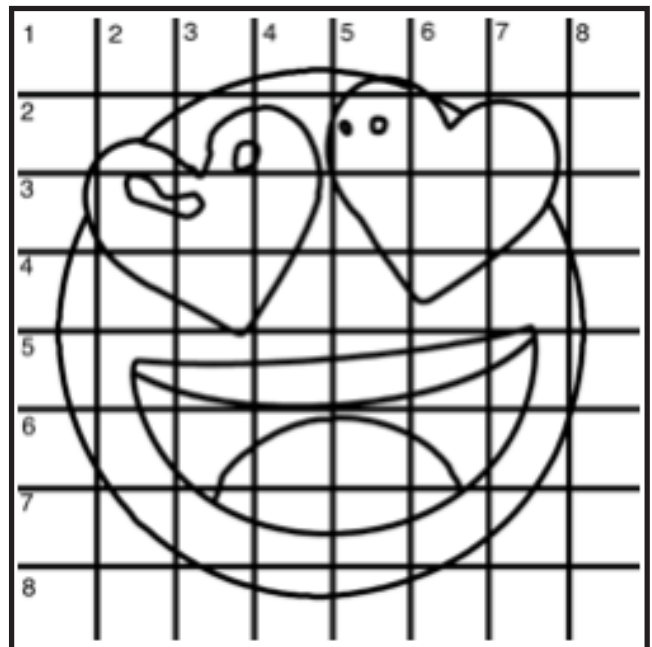
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could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





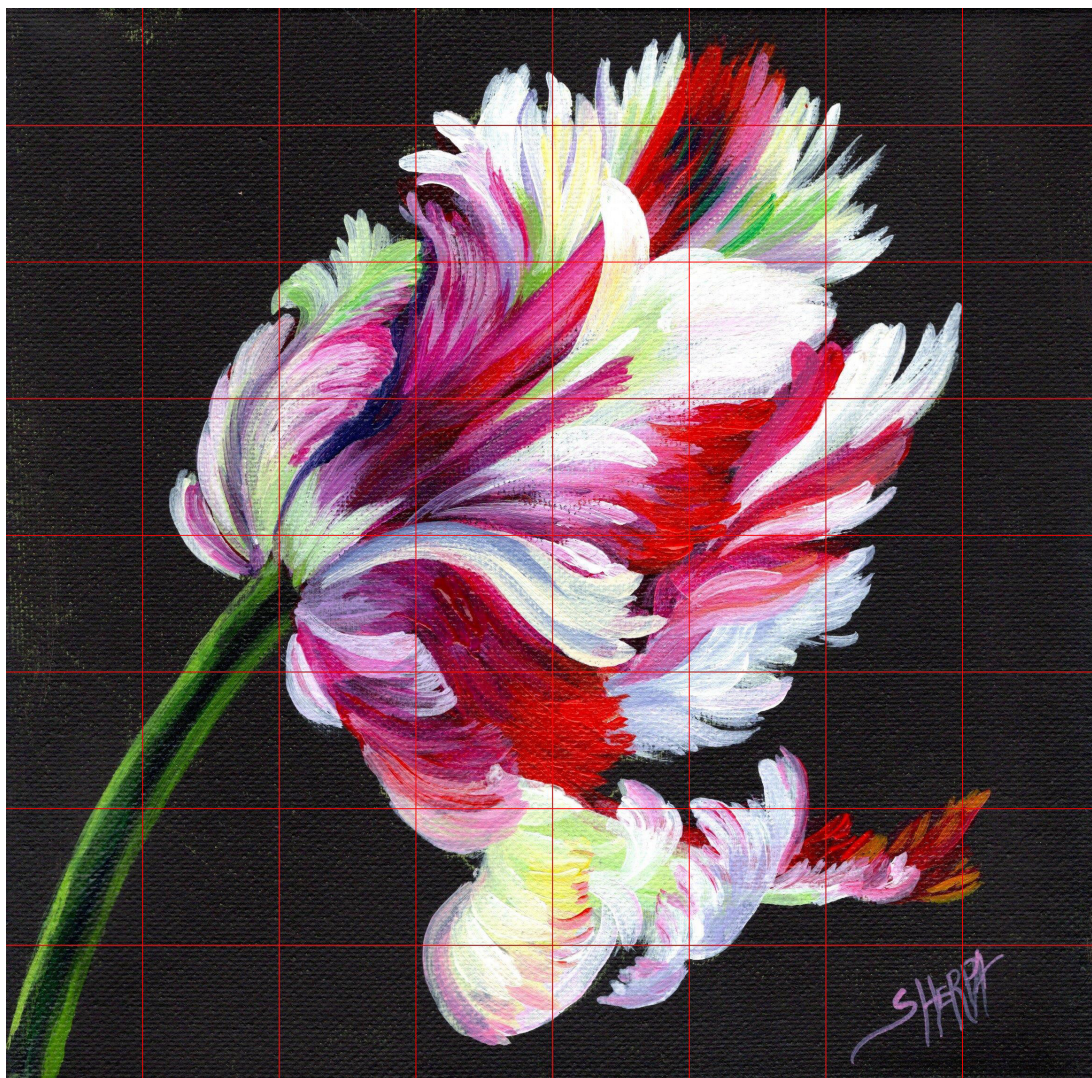
## GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

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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