

THE ART SHERPA™

# HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



## CORAL

BY: THE ART SHERPA

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON TERRI BEGHTOL


STEPS: 13 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 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).

Bare 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.

Coral is a beautiful mermaid, maybe she's Kevin's girlfriend, maybe she's not, I don't want to start any rumors, but the gnomes are gossiping. I tend to pay no attention to them, they are, afterall, just gnomes and rarely correct. Coral is not an extremely difficult one and the hoot rating is based on how difficult painting her hair represents.

If you are a beginning painter and want to attempt this, I do provide you with all the necessary resources to assist you in your goal. There is a traceable, this mini book with step by step instructions with photographs of each step, a gridding reference, as well as instructions on transferring an image. You also have access to review the video to your heart's content. 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:

- Cad Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Dioxazine Purple = DP
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Naples Yellow Light = NYL
- Fluid White Paint = FWP
- Golden's Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid = AGL

### BRUSHES:

- #4 TAS Round
- #1 Monogram Liner
- TAS #1 Detail Brush
- #26 Bright
- TAS #4 Fan
- ½" Angle Brush
- Small Bright Brush
- TAS Dotting Tool (Galaxy Set)

### 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
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Sea Foam
- Color Theory
- Perspective of Waves
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing
- Dynamic Light on Water
- 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	4:28	BACKGROUND
STEP 2	12:03	LIGHT RAYS
STEP 3	18:45	TRANSFER IMAGE
STEP 4	24:52	BLOCKING IN MERMAID
STEP 5	40:05	FACE
STEP 6	48:36	HAND
STEP 7	52:37	TAIL
STEP 8	59:39	TAIL GLOW
STEP 9	1:03:58	HAIR, FIRST LAYER
STEP 10	1:13:48	HAIR DRAMA
STEP 11	1:37:47	TAIL FIN
STEP 12	1:43:52	FIN DETAILS AND SPARKLES
STEP 13	1:56:44	STAR SHIMMER SIGN



## 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.





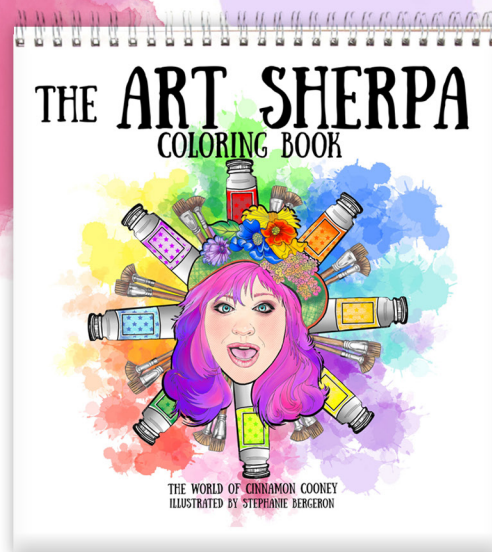


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# STEP 1 - BACKGROUND

## “THE OCEAN WEARS A SMILE”

### PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Titanium White = TW

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

- Dry.

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#26 Bright

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Put PB, PG, CYM, TW and AGL on your palette
- We are going to block the ocean area in. Because it is dry where I am, I dampened a big Bright brush, and started adding TW + AGL to the canvas.
- Then, mix PB + PG + CYM + AGL to a light green-blue color and start adding this at the top using a curved side to side stroke.
- Mix these colors again to get a slightly darker color. Apply this under the first color and gradually bring it down, still in a side to side, smile motion.
- Add more PB to the mix making it darker and darker as you do down the canvas. Work down the entire surface of the canvas, brushing in a big smile using graduated colors of the green-blue ocean.





## STEP 2 - LIGHT RAYS

### “STEP 2 FOR ALL OF YOU”

#### PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

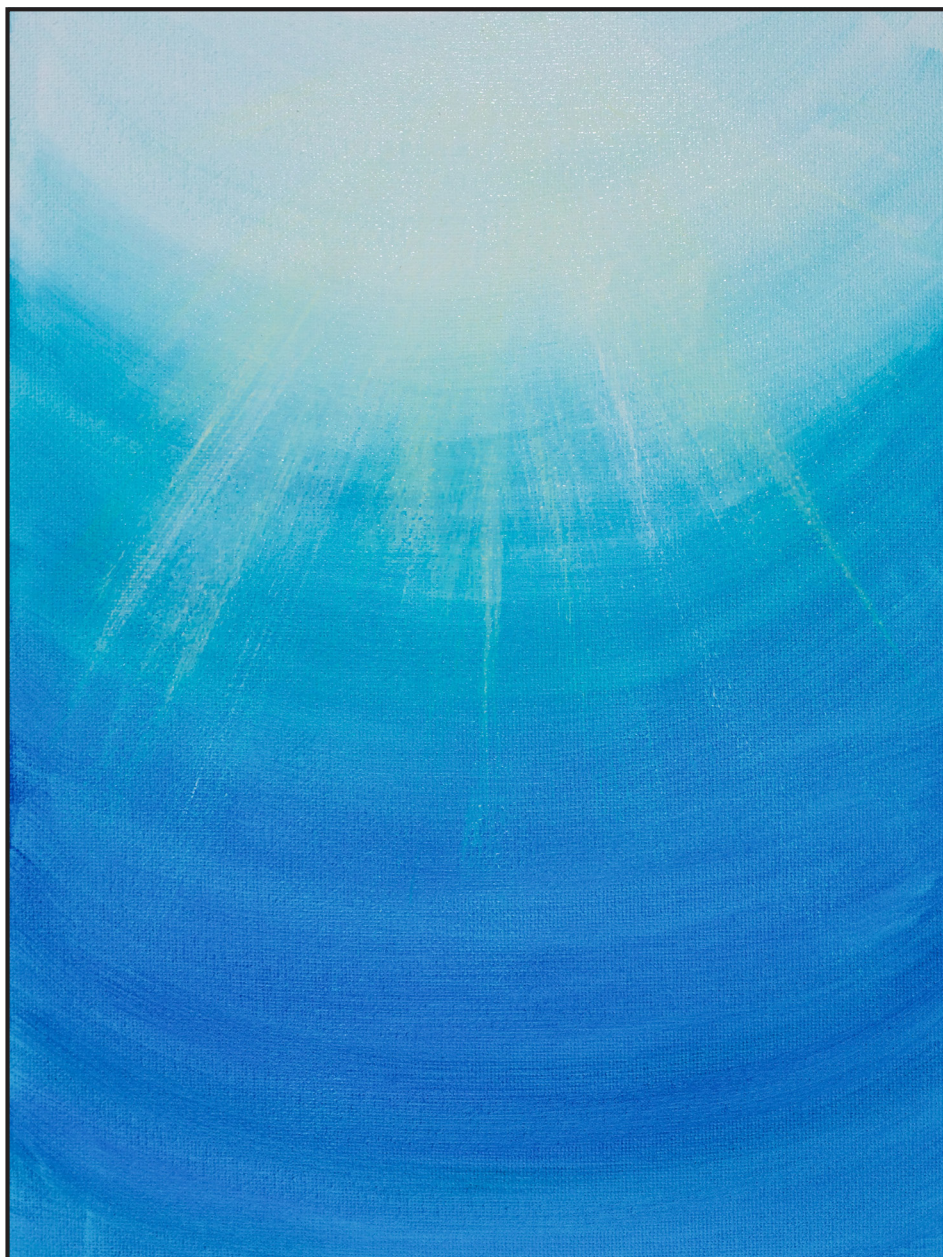
Glazing Liquid = AGL

#### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

TAS #4 Fan

#### STEP DISCUSSION

- Grab a Fan Brush to make some radial bands. This step is entirely optional, but I wanted to add some light dimensionality in the ocean from the sun.
- Load TW + AGL then add a touch of CYM, to make a very light off white yellow. On the edge of the brush, paint some radials where the sun is sending some light ray reflections in the water. You could dry brush this, but I wanted to demo it with a fan brush.
- Dry.





# STEP 3 – TRANSFER IMAGE

## “DRYING NOT REQUIRED”

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

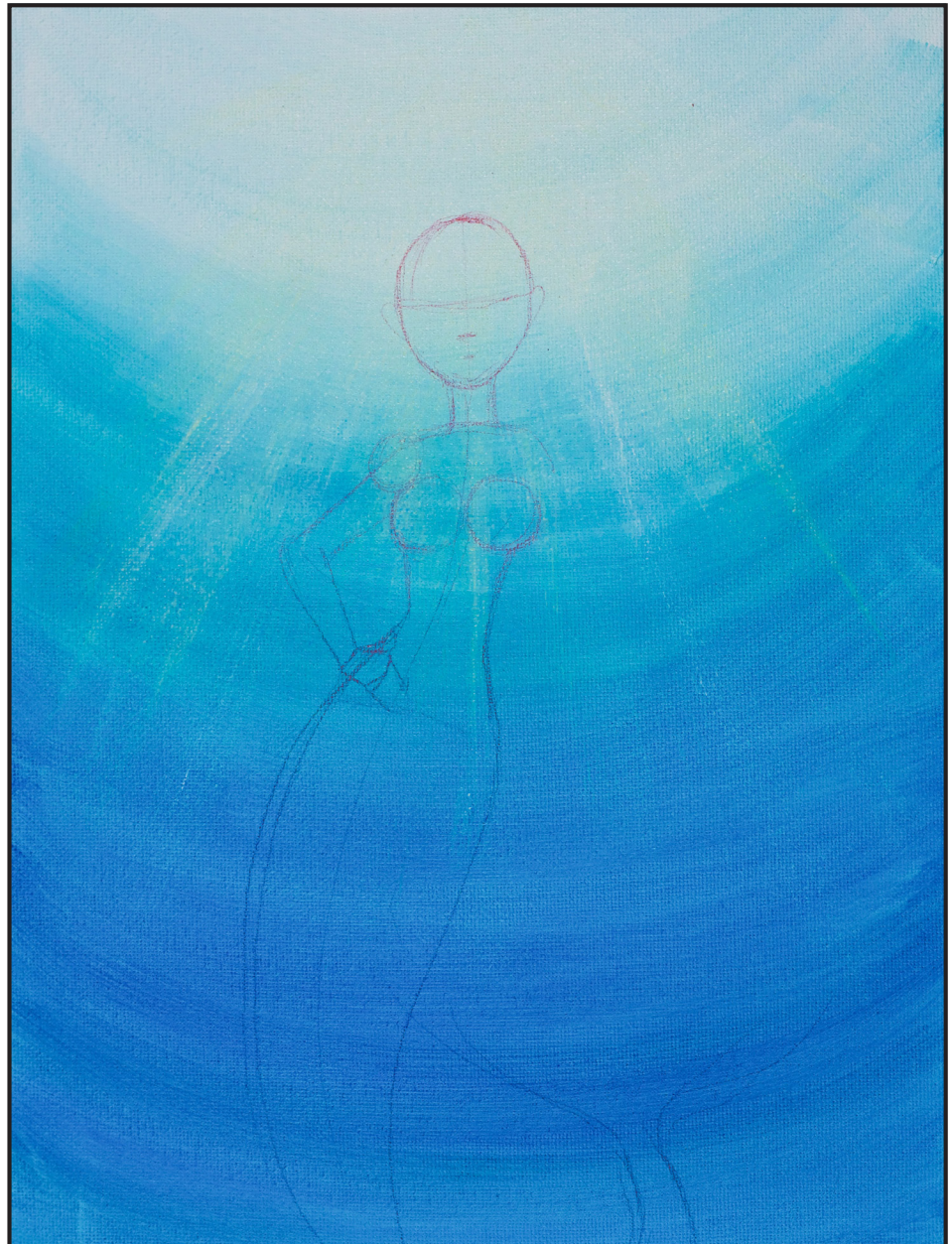
Chalk Pencil or  
Watercolor Pencil

### STEP DISCUSSION

- With a chalk pencil, I chose to freehand this image but have provided a transfer in this document 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.
- If you choose to free hand, decide how big you want your mermaid to be and mark a corresponding break line at the top.
- To draw the face, divide the head in half lengthwise. Then divide the head again but horizontally this time, and that is where the eyes go. Halfway between the eyes and chin draw the nose and halfway between the nose and the chin draw the mouth. You can use the grid reference to help you, you can also use the

step reference below to help you if you are freehanding the image.

- You could hide the appendages in her hair if you wanted to.
- Her tail curves up and in front of her body.
- The elbow bends in line with the hip.
- This step doesn't even need to be dried.







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# STEP 4 – BLOCKING IN MERMAID

## “YES, THE TAIL GOES OFF THE CANVAS”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

#1 Monogram Liner

½" Angle Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Put out CRM, QM, BS, + MB. Then with a dampened Round Brush, mix TW + CRM to make a simple skin tone for our mermaid.
- Start to paint the first layer of her face. If you are not using a heavy body or pro acrylic, it may require more coats to cover the blue. Paint in all of her skin that would be showing, arms, neck, bosom and down the torso to the hips.
- Add QM +CRM to this mix then starting at the hips, block in the tail section. Brush up over the skin a little and allow it to blend. She looks a little different because the tail section goes off the canvas at the bottom and the fins of the tail are not drawn yet. This will come later.

- Dry.

- Add BS to the skin tone mix and enhance the bosoms by shading. Apply this shade under the arm, the upper forearm, the knuckles and thumb and wrist. As well as, under the jawline and on the right side of the neck then, rinse out.

- Mix a skin tone with CRM + TW and add another layer to the face and skin areas.

- Use a Monogram Liner to mix MB to the darker skin tone. Add these darker shadows to the hand details, above the thumb, at the wrist, knuckles and fingers.

- Get a ½" angle brush to mix the red tail color and TW and use this to enhance the tail.

- Dry.

**Sherpa Tip:** *I do have videos on skin tones on my website if you'd like to review them.*



## STEP 4: CONTINUED





# STEP 5 - FACE

## “PURPLE FRECKLES”

### PAINT:

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

TAS #1 Detail Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Get a detail brush loaded with MB and start adding in her closed eyes. Put in a little nose with a little tiny curved stroke.
- Use your double red tail color and add the upper lip. Add TW to this color for the lower lip.
- Add DP to your palette and mix it with TW, then give her some eyeshadow on the closed lids.
- It's a good time to review your painting so far and redefine or fix anything that you need to.
- With a color whiter than the skin tone, highlight the tip and sides of the nose.
- Then add a slightly darker skin tone above the eye shadow for the upper lid.
- Get your light purple on the brush to add freckles, if you want them.
- Add TW for a slight reflection to the lower lip.
- Load MB on your brush and reline the eye with a curved stroke put in the eyelashes beneath the eyes. .
- Rinse out your brush and get DP on the brush to add her eyebrows, a correct eyebrow lines up with the inside edge of the eye socket.
- Dry.





## STEP 6 - HAND

“A MANICURE PLEASE, NO PEDICURE NEEDED”

### PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

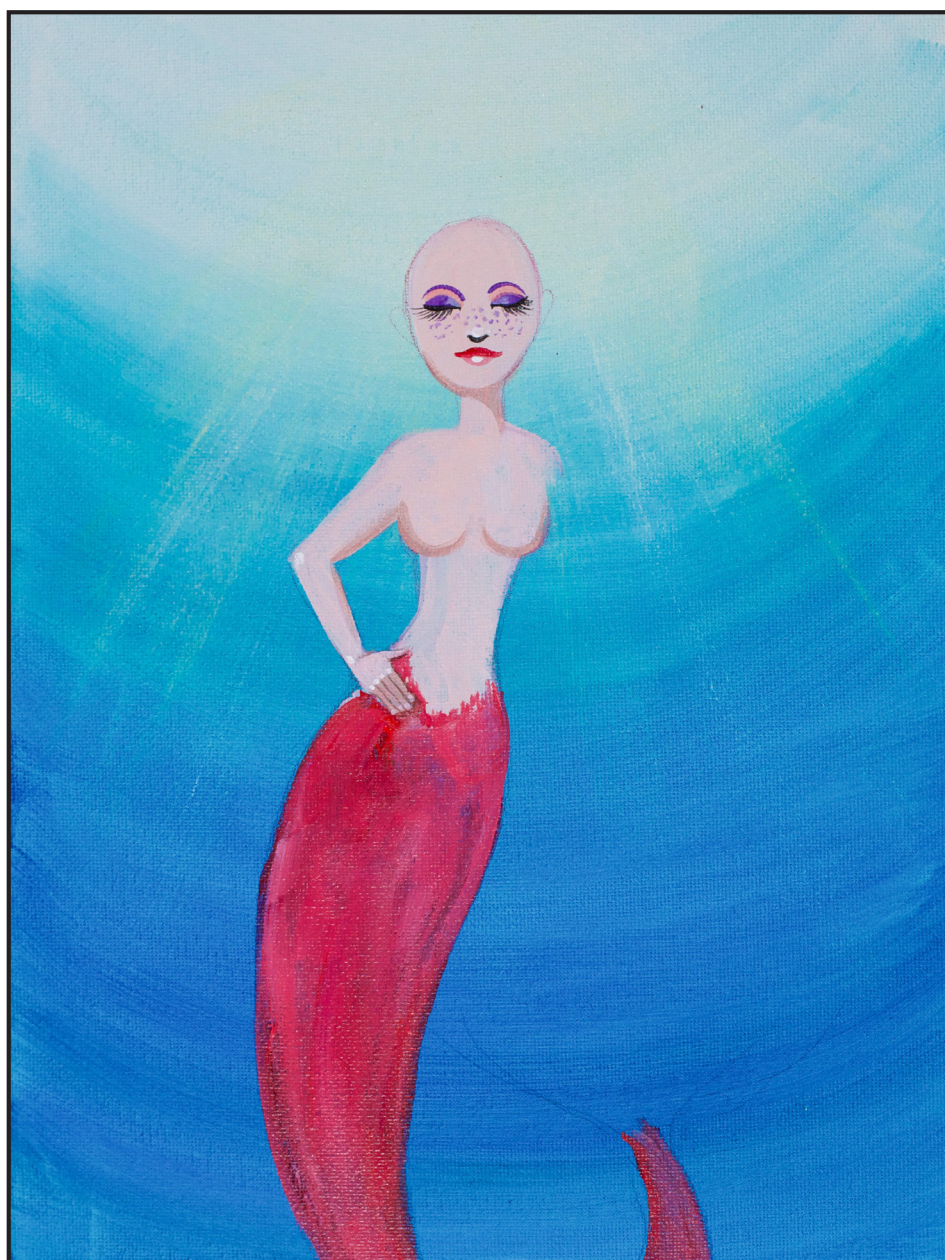
Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

TAS #1 Detail Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

- With a Detail Brush and the skin tones, define a bit on her hand.
- Then add highlights on her elbow, outside edge of the wrist, and knuckles with the same mix used for the light face reflections.
- Add some water to thin your BS and use this thinned paint to define the finger separation on her hand.
- Then give her TW nail polish on her fingers if you want to.





# STEP 7 - TAIL

## “THE FIRST STAGE OF SHIMMER”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Start tapping down fish scales with a Round brush and CRM + QM. There should be more scales on the sides and less as it goes toward the middle.
- We have to get the tail section in first before we add the hair and tail fin because each one layers over the previous one and they have to be dry. You want to make it rich and colorful, create the shimmer.
- You also want to add some taps on the upper tail that is “fin-less”, so to speak, at this moment.
- Add TW to your mix and tap some lighter scales going down the center of her tail.





# STEP 8 - TAIL GLOW

## “THE FANCY LITTLE YELLOW FOLLOWUP BITS”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Change your water and make sure your brush is clean and wiped out.
- Then load your Round Brush with CRM + QM + CYM to make an orangey color, which you will start tapping in the middle of the tail. You are looking for an orange gold color so it adds some glow. Don't forget to add some glow to the tail tip.
- Make a light yellow by adding CRM + the orange gold color. On the toe of the brush, dot in some pops of this.





# STEP 9 – HAIR, FIRST LAYER

## “HAIR DOWN TO THERE”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

Fluid White Paint = FWP

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

### STEP DISCUSSION

- The hair has so many colors, but let's start with a mix of QM + DP + FWP.
- Again using a Round Brush, curl in some hair starting at the center forehead. If you want to leave your mermaid nude and paint hair over the unmentionable bits, you certainly could do that, and that is what I will do today. Alternatively you could add “glam clams” if you wanted more exposure.
- Your goal is wavy hair that the ocean current is playing with. Vary the color mix lighter and darker and vary the way that the individual strands ripple.
- Add TW to the mix for more variety.
- At the crown, just feel free to “go big”.

*In Texas, they believe that the higher the hair, the closer to God that person is. Well, gurl, this mermaid is very close to Heaven.*

*We're hair today, gone tomorrow.*





# STEP 10 - HAIR DRAMA

## "TWO HOOT HAIR"

### PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Titanium White = TW

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Use QM + CYM mixed more to a yellow value with the Round Brush. Then add variations of color to her strands of floating hair. Add AGL where you need to in order to improve flow.
- Mix CYM + TW for a lighter yellow option to add in, just play, play, play with her hair. If you were a mermaid, what color would your hair be and how would it float on the ocean currents? Make yourself happy.
- Rinse out often so your paint does not get muddy and change your water when you feel that you need to.
- Be careful to preserve the various flows of the strands and keep them separate and apart.
- Get DP on your brush to apply closer to her face,

giving her the "Rachel" look from Friends.

- Add some TW to the purple for another variation of mermaid hair.

**Sherpa Tip:** Remember that I did finish my initial study reference with a Neon Pink Abstract Ink which I will not use on the tutorial because it is very difficult to obtain the particular brand I used. It's one of the two I recommend because other brands of neon ink can be fugitive, or fade.





# STEP 11 - TAIL FIN

## “MERMAID TAIL FINS”

### PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Titanium White = TW

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

**Sherpa Tip:** Breathe in creativity and breathe out everything that holds you back.

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Bright Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

- If you do want to use a neon abstract ink on the hair, you would want to do it now before we go on. I used Sennelier Abstract Ink in Neon Pink.
- Get a small bright brush to paint the tail. You want it transparent, so load AGL + TW. Start at the base of the tail on the outside right, and brush up and out with a curved stroke. You could thin the paint with water if you do not have AGL.
- When you have the right side done, repeat the process on the left being sure to bring the outside of the tail fin overtop of the body.
- The center of the tail fin is quite short. Add CYM and even CYM + TW to the tail fin, as well as QM and DP. You could just use the same hair mixes to work the tail fin.





# STEP 12 - FIN DETAILS AND SPARKLES

## “HOW MANY DOTS?”

### PAINT:

Fluid White Paint = FWP

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#1 Monogram Liner

TAS Dotting Tool (Galaxy Set)

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Along the outside edges of the tail fin create the lace-like outline of the fin and add some highlights inside the fin colors using a Monogram Liner and FWP.
- Get the TAS Dotting Tool, which is found in my Galaxy Set, or a toothpick or the pointy end of a brush, to dot FWP near the center of the main tail section to create some highlights.
- You might like to take a few dots up onto her torso area; maybe they are not highlights, maybe they are bubbles from the little fishies swimming below her. I made big dots and small dots.
- Add some sparkles in her hair.
- I intend to make stars out of some of the big dots, so you do want both sizes randomly placed here and there.
- Dry.

*How many dots could a dotting tool dot if a dotting tool could dot dots?*

*John - I feel like when you say sparkle, you should have jazz hands.*

*Some people have fish phobia, so we hesitate to bring up the idea that guppies or sharks MIGHT exist in any environment that I am teaching.*





# STEP 13 – STAR SHIMMER

## “GET YOUR SPARKLE ON”

### PAINT:

Fluid White Paint = FWP

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#1 Monogram Liner

T-Square Ruler

*John - You could also add mica powder to your paint to enhance the sparkle, which is better for the environment and some other options, like glitter.*

*For all your people who thought glitter was the devil - turns out, it was.*

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Today, you will learn how to make a star. You could use a T-Square to assist you if you want straight lines or you could just freehand them in. You do you.
- With a Monogram Liner and FWP, add a longish thin line above and below the dot.
- Then add shorter side lines. It's not a dot with 4 equal sections.
- THEN, you can add even shorter quarter lines in between the spaces.
- When you are happy with Miss Coral and the amount of stars and her shimmering ways, sign her.
- I sincerely hope that you are happy with the way she turned out and I hope you will post it to my Facebook Official group page.





## 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.

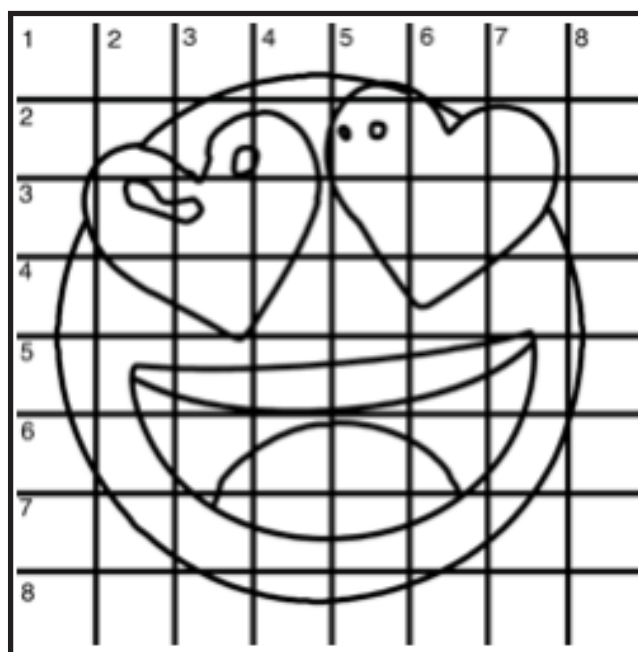
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could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





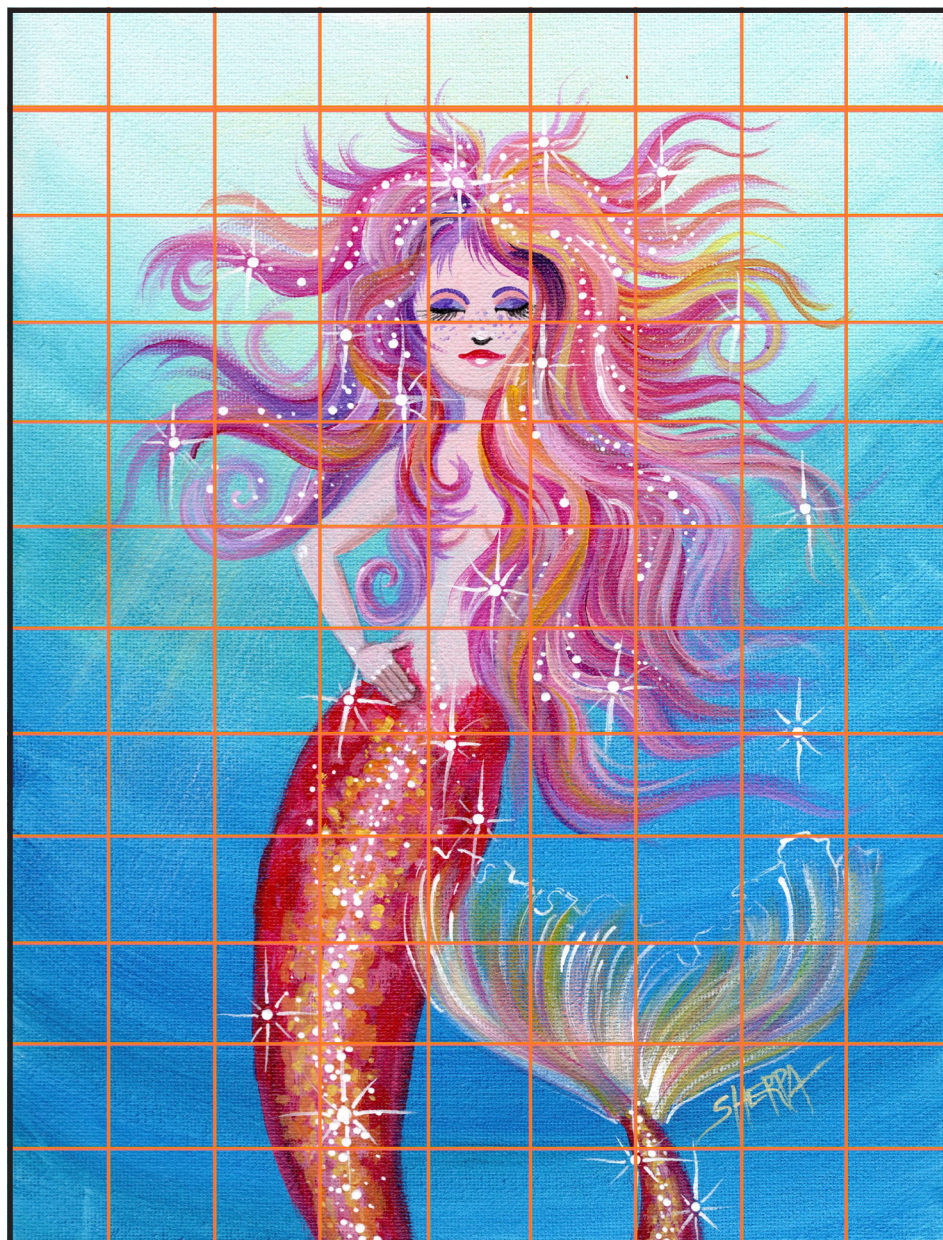
## GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

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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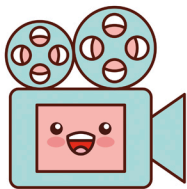
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