

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



NO BRAINER

BY: THE ART SHERPA


NAME CREDIT TO PATRON: VALERIE O'BRIEN

STEPS: 11 | 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.

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.

Our painting today is a fall themed still life of a colorful scarecrow in a field of wildflowers. Maybe he lives on a farm in the country, maybe he lives in a Victory Garden in the middle of the city; we only know that he begs us to paint him and for many, probably brought back fond memories of watching "The Wizard of Oz" in their youth. A classic for all times. This tutorial is not an extremely difficult one of 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.

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:

- 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

BRUSHES:

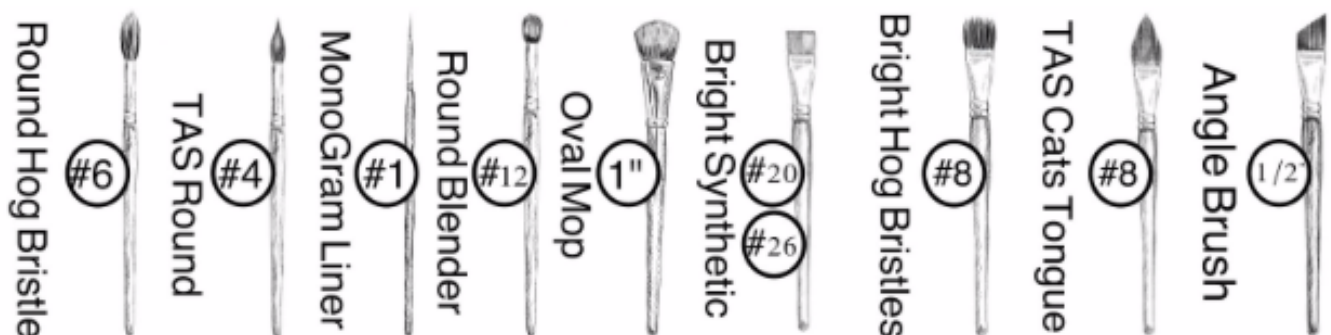
- #12 Round Hog Brush
- #4 TAS Round
- #1 Monogram Liner
- 1" Oval Mop
- ½" Angle Brush

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:

- Painting a Silhouette Landscape
- 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	4:54	COLORED GROUND
STEP 2	10:16	IMAGE
STEP 3	14:29	DIFFUSED BACKGROUND
STEP 4	21:44	FARAWAY FLOWERS
STEP 5	27:41	YELLOW FLOWERS
STEP 6	36:01	YELLOW FLOWER DETAILS
STEP 7	41:33	PURPLE FORWARD FLOWERS
STEP 8	53:06	PINK HIGHLIGHTS
STEP 9	1:00:17	BLOCK IN SCARECROW
STEP 10	1:12:54	DETAIL SCARECROW
STEP 11	1:26:38	HAIR 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.



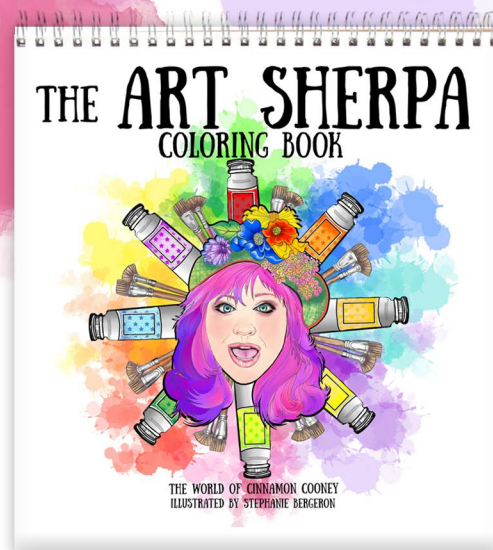


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STEP 1 - COLORED GROUND

“#1 IS THE EASIEST NUMBER THAT YOU’LL DO TODAY”

PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB

Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

1" Oval Mop

STEP DISCUSSION

- Start by blending any wishes on your canvas with a damp brush.
- I loosely mixed PB + BS, on an oval mop, sometimes I got more brown, sometimes I got more

green. It was brushy and rough, and that's ok, this is really just the first layer.

- 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.
- Once the canvas is covered, make sure all the strokes are going side to side and the canvas placed in landscape mode.
- Dry.

In landscape mode...a landscape...In landscape mode. Ok, nevermind. Did the words “Three Dog Night” come to mind? These are the little snippets of phrases that create earworms.



STEP 2 - IMAGE

"FOLK ART EXPLAINED"

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round
T-Square Ruler
Chalk Pencil or
Watercolor Pencil

STEP DISCUSSION

- This painting has a great opportunity to personalize it to your liking. You can change anything you want; own it. I added a bow tie, because my cutie patootie has a bow tie; you be you.
 - Draw in two ovals in the upper part of the face for his eyes, give him a triangle nose and a smiley face with dimples.
- Sherpa Tip:** *This is folk art and folk art implies that it is handmade.*
- Mix TW + CYM on your Round brush and draw in the scarecrow. Mentally divide the canvas in half vertically and horizontally. You could use a chalk pencil and do this with a T-square if you want to.
 - Draw in the face in the upper left hand quadrant, then add the hat, brim and crown. We won't worry about features right now.
 - His shoulders are just a stuffed shirt, so draw in an arc that goes about three fingers beyond the head, and on the right side, bring the arm down to the bottom. Add a line to the left of that to divide the sleeve from the body of the shirt. Then imply the suspender straps while keeping in mind that the left strap is right at the edge of the shirt. Both straps go to the bottom of the canvas.



STEP 3 - DIFFUSED BACKGROUND

“AND HEAT MY COFFEE, PLEASE”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#12 Round Hog Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Get a hog brush and mix PG + BS evenly, then add a touch of CYM.
- Roughly scumble, scribble, brush this lighter green into the background. You are not trying to paint out the darker green. This technique adds dimension and interest.
- Get darker green by adding PB and scumble that color around the background. It is a little richer than the first background.
- Add BS to the mix in places. We are just creating a diffused, soft background for Mr. Cutie.
- Add more CYM to the mix for some irregular marks.
- You are implying deep plants, things that are not totally in focus.
- Dry the step. DON'T USE HEAT or you will be doing the shifty paint panic dance.

Never hesitate to pull out your Agent of Chaos badge...secret handshake and decoder ring coming soon. Jk





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STEP 4 - FARAWAY FLOWERS

“FOR...FOUR...FORE”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#12 Round Hog Bristle

STEP DISCUSSION

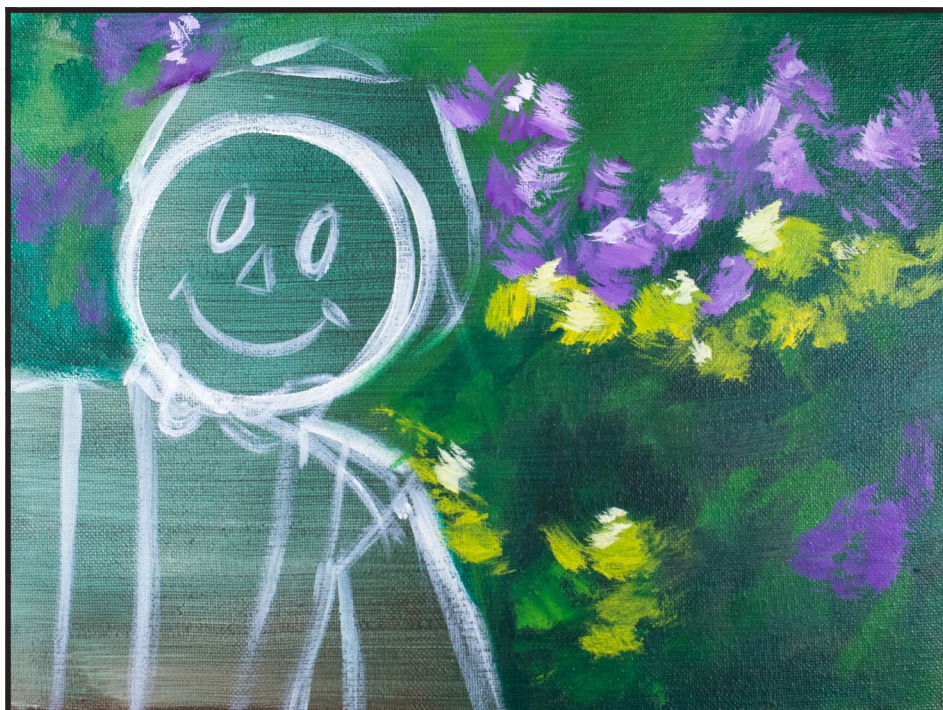
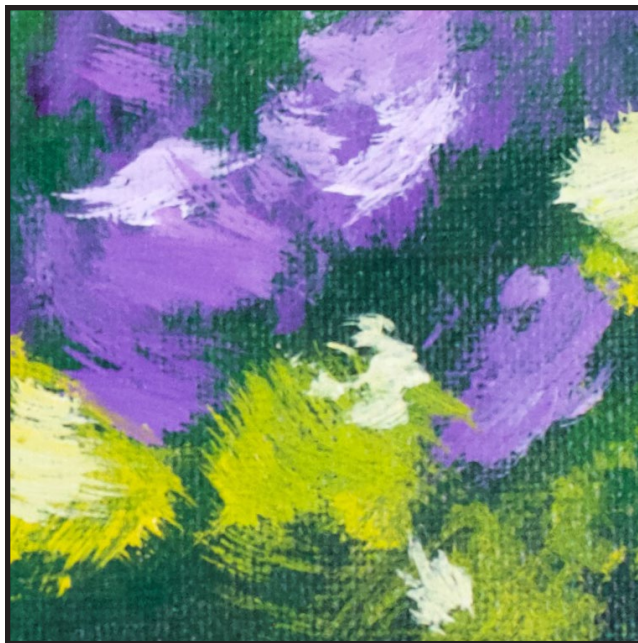
- I put out QM and DP, and got fresh water.
- Continue using the Hog brush and mix QM + DP on the clean brush, then add a tad of TW. Using the toe of the brush and starting in the background near the hat, begin dropping in diffused pops of color. These are out of focus blossoms in the background. Vary the blend of color, sometimes more white, sometimes more pink, sometimes more purple. Use any hog brush that you have, use your fingers, use a round brush if you need to. Try to be restrained because we want it to feel far away.
- Rinse out very thoroughly before getting CYM, it is ok if it has a touch of the green in it, and start adding pops of this color in the background as well. You can use my reference photo at the end of this step to help you with placement, but I

do encourage you to trust yourself.

- Rinse out and wipe your brush between colors. Don't be a Bob Ross Brush Beater, instead, hug your brushes dry. Try to keep all these pops of color very abstract.
- Dry.

John forgot to Step the Four. FORE!

Please keep in mind that your stars make all the difference in the world.



STEP 5 - YELLOW FLOWERS

“JOURNEYS INTO MAKING INTROSPECTIVE PETALS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round
Chalk Pencil or
Watercolor Pencil

STEP DISCUSSION

- About half way up on the right side, add a few little circles to represent the

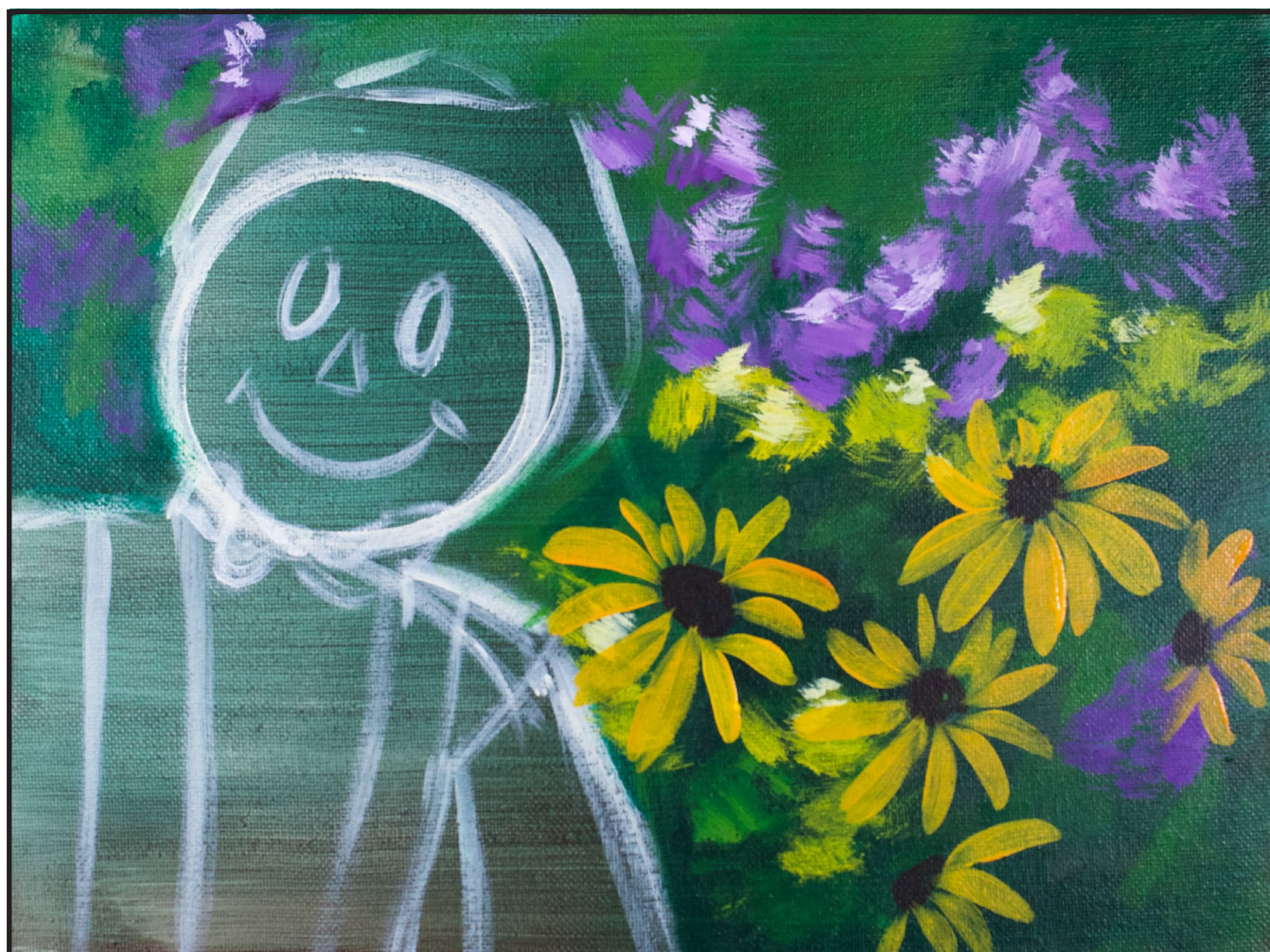
sunflowers, using a chalk pencil. Sunflowers are my favorite flower to paint.

- Mix BS + MB to paint in these centers with a Round Brush.
- Mix CYM with a touch of CRM to make a yellow-orange, then on the toe of the brush, pull some petals into the center of the flower. Make the petals introspective by varying the size, color blend, shape and distance they are from each other.
- You can choose, like I did, to put a very focal sunflower near the scarecrow.
- Dry.

John: I've stepped away.

Sherpa Tips: Hog brushes are an experimental journey because until you get them wet the first time, you can't guarantee how they will retain their shape.

If your flowers are not bright, or you are using craft paint, paint the petals white before you paint them yellow.



STEP 6 - YELLOW FLOWER DETAILS

“SUNFLOWER BUTTONS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

STEP DISCUSSION

- Use the Round brush, and add TW to the yellow petal color. Add dimensionality to some of the petals by using

highlights. Not on all of them though. You need balance.

- Make a bright orange by adding BS to CYM + CRM and tap this to the top, of the center buttons of the sunflowers, where the sun might be kissing them.
- Mix MB + BS, not as dark as before, and tap that into the shadow area of the sunflower buttons.
- Get the green-brown color and add CYM to make a brighter green. Then add some curved little strokes that imply leaves, just using a little comma stroke. Add some TW to that for an even brighter leaf color.

***Sherpa Tip:** Diminished colors push the object back into the painting and is a technique used to enhance the viewability.*



STEP 7 – PURPLE FORWARD FLOWERS

“NATURE BUILDS UP, AS ARTISTS DO”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

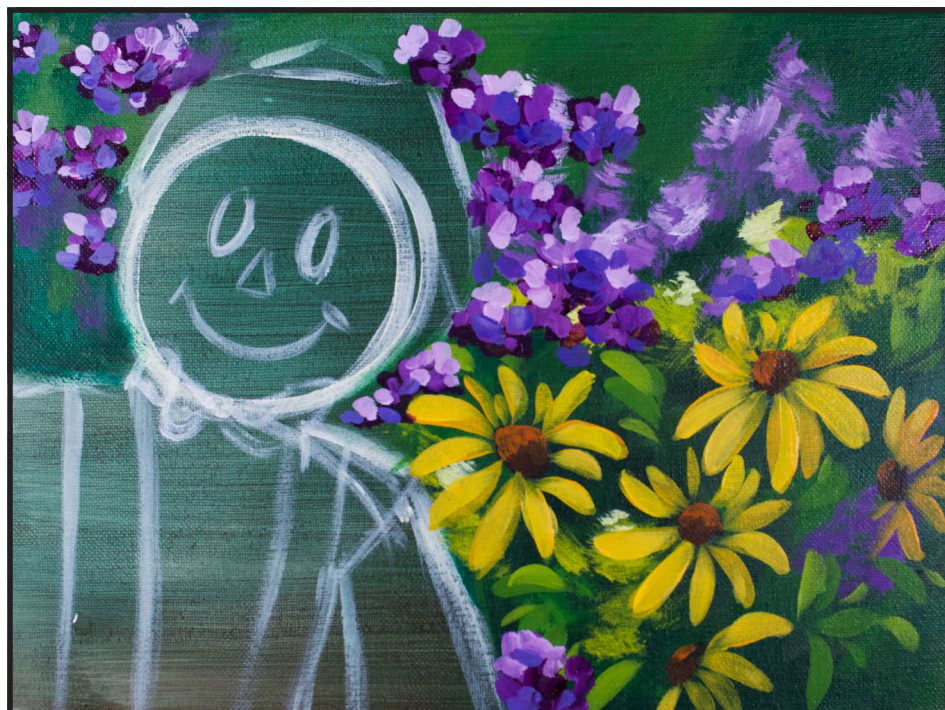
#4 TAS Round

STEP DISCUSSION

- Back to the paint stone, as they say, with forward flowers. Using a Round brush, mix DP + QM and put out little dabs of paint to represent the clusters of flowers. Don't hesitate to “layer” over flowers you have already put in. These are closer to the viewer and more in focus. This is true in abstract art.
- Add TW and mix to get a lighter purple to add highlights. Vary the mix by adding more pink or purple or white as you go. Adding the shadow first, then the highlight.
- Rinse out your brush, and mix TW to the purple color for a very light purple, then randomly add this brightest highlight to the clusters. Again, vary the mixes.
- Rinse out, and get UB + a tad of that light purple to make a blue-purple. Add that layer to the underside and shadow area of the clusters.

- UB has a strong red bias and works well with this color scheme, giving depth and dimensionality. Nature builds things up, just as you are doing.
- Dry.

It's natural and easy to trust my pops of paint, and harder to trust your own, but your self-confidence will come.



STEP 8 - PINK HIGHLIGHTS

"I CALL FOUL"

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

STEP DISCUSSION

- We will add some compelling interest factors by adding zhuzh. Get a Round brush with a green-yellow-brown mix, and start adding stems

and more touches of leaves. Add more TW here and there, framing in the flowers.

- Rinse out and mix QM + CYM + TW to get a pink, and kiss a couple of the clusters with that color. Mix in more TW and add in that lighter color.
- Rinse out.
- Use MB for a strong outline all around the scarecrow. Thin the paint with a drop of two of water if you need to. This will help you create the folk art feel. I did not outline the head above where the ears would be in because I'll be adding hair over this. But I did outline the hat on the outside.

The house is hot and the coffee is cold; I call FOUL.



STEP 9 - BLOCK IN SCARECROW

"MIX UP YOUR ROUTINE"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Blue = PB
Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

½" Angle Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- I switched to a dampened angle brush, with a mix of CRM + CYM + BS. Using this deep red-orange, paint the shirt, the shoulder caps, the hat and the sleeves, staying inside the black outline. The mix should be brighter on the shirt front and shoulder caps, but browner and in shadow, on the left sleeve and side of the shirt. I also painted the nose with the shadow orange color.
- Mix PB + CYM to a little brighter, muted green, and paint the suspenders inside the outline.
- Use BS + TW mixed to an off-white, and paint in the face, around the features. Take your time. This folk art scarecrow was handmade, with love.
- I drew lines indicating teeth, but that was kind of scary, so I came back and repainted the black line to make stitches instead.
- Paint in the center of the

eyes with the off-white color.

- Paint in the bow tie, if your painting has one, with DP.
- Dry.

I consider him a charming and light little picture. It's important to mix up the more difficult with the fun and shorter projects.



STEP 10 - DETAIL SCARECROW

"THE BIG ONE"

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Burnt Sienna = BS

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

½" Angle Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- We'll continue to refine his clothes before we put the hair in because it will layer over everything else.
- With an angle brush, add some TW to the orange, and make rough little criss-cross strokes on the shirt to simulate a sort of pattern or texture. Vary the mix of color and the direction of the brush strokes. Your pressure is very light, you can handle this.
- Get a light green and add checkers up the suspenders by staggering little boxes, on the right then on the left of each suspender. Add more TW + CYM to that color and paint over the black outline of the suspenders. Bring a single line down the center of the suspenders to divide the two rows of checks and on the top of the individual boxes. Add more TW for a highlight color. UMPH!!!!
- Look under his arm and make sure that you have some interesting green foliage down there.
- Get fresh water.
- Load the Round Brush with the red-purple mix to redefine the sides of the bow tie; then get the lighter purple to paint the actual bows and knot of the tie.
- Switch back to the angle brush and refresh any colors you might need.
- Add CYM to the orange mix and paint along the outside edge of the upturned brim of the hat. Add the darker orange if you add too much highlight. Then add more of this to the crown of the hat.
- Rinse out.
- Load the Round brush with UB + TW to get a mid-blue color and paint in the inside of the eyes.
- Add TW to sweep in a highlight to the left side of both eyes.
- Make an off white with TW + BS and add a second coat to the white of his face. Allow your brush strokes to show. Folk Art does not mean not well crafted, but you don't want to hide the fact that it is handcrafted.
- Redefine the stitching on the mouth with MB if you need to.
- For balance, use a mid purple to add an ornament of some sort, to the upturned brim over the left eye. In my world, it was a round button.
- Dry Intermission, no step, just dry.
- Fix any little thing that you need to and then put another coat of bright orange on the nose.
- Get MB to define the outline around the eyes and nose. Add a half circle inside the eye for the iris and so he is "eyeing" those pretty little sunflowers.
- Add black lines outside the green outline lines we painted in earlier. Redefine the shirt outline and add some stitches at the shoulder. Redefine the hat and crown and button outline. Add stitches at the edge of the brim.
- Using the blue eye color, add some darker blue at the top and lighter blue at the bottom of the eyes. Add TW for a brighter highlight in both irises.
- Get QM + TW and add some cheek color with a little dry brush technique.
- Add DP for a little more purple in the center of the button, then add a lot more TW to paint around that dark part, but still inside the black outline. This will POP that button.

STEP 10: CONTINUED



STEP 11 - HAIR

"THE PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER STEP"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round
#1 Monogram Liner

STEP DISCUSSION

- He needs some straw hair, so using a Round brush, mix a straw color with CYM + CRM + BS. Then under the brim of the hat, paint in an irregular, angular bang. As you get to the left side, start painting longer downward strokes of hair, layering over the hat, the cheek and down to the shoulder.
- Do the same on both sides of the face.
- If you are having trouble with coverage, you may have to paint it all TW first.
- Dry.
- Add CYM + TW to the mix for the next layer of straw hair. Don't paint out all the dark, just add some lighter strands.
- Add more TW for a third layer going up over the brim a bit and over the suspenders and shirt as you come down; and over the cheeks a skosh.
- Use the lightest purple to add highlights to the bow tie and button.
- Reinforce the white of the eye with TW.
- Sign.

While I've never used a Scarecrow to deter crows from crops, I do enjoy painting them. Not sure if they are effective pest control.



THE TRACING METHOD

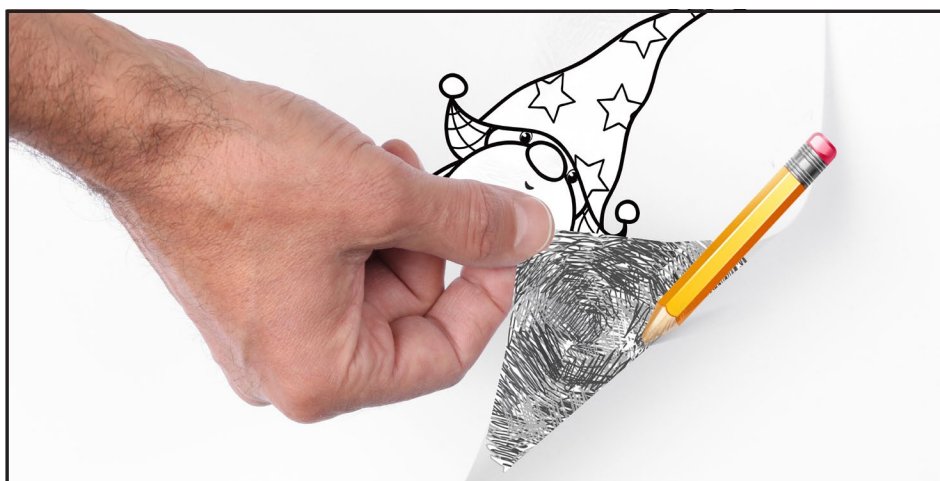
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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:



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.

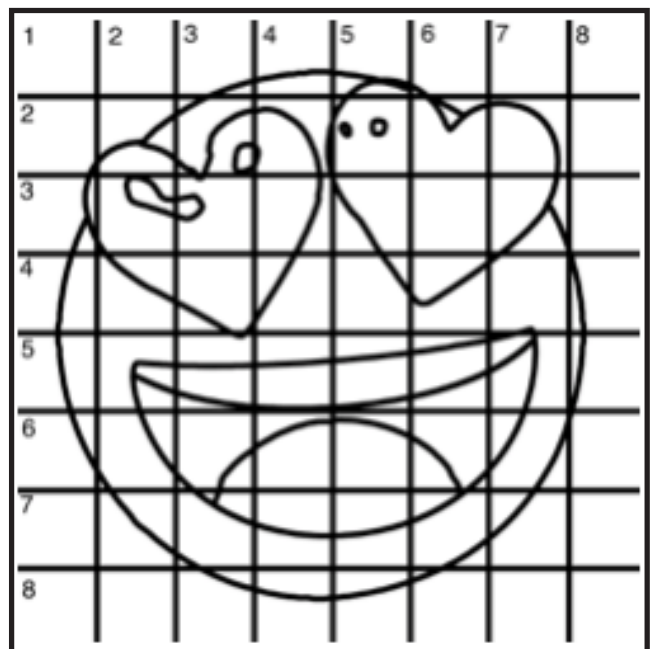
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could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



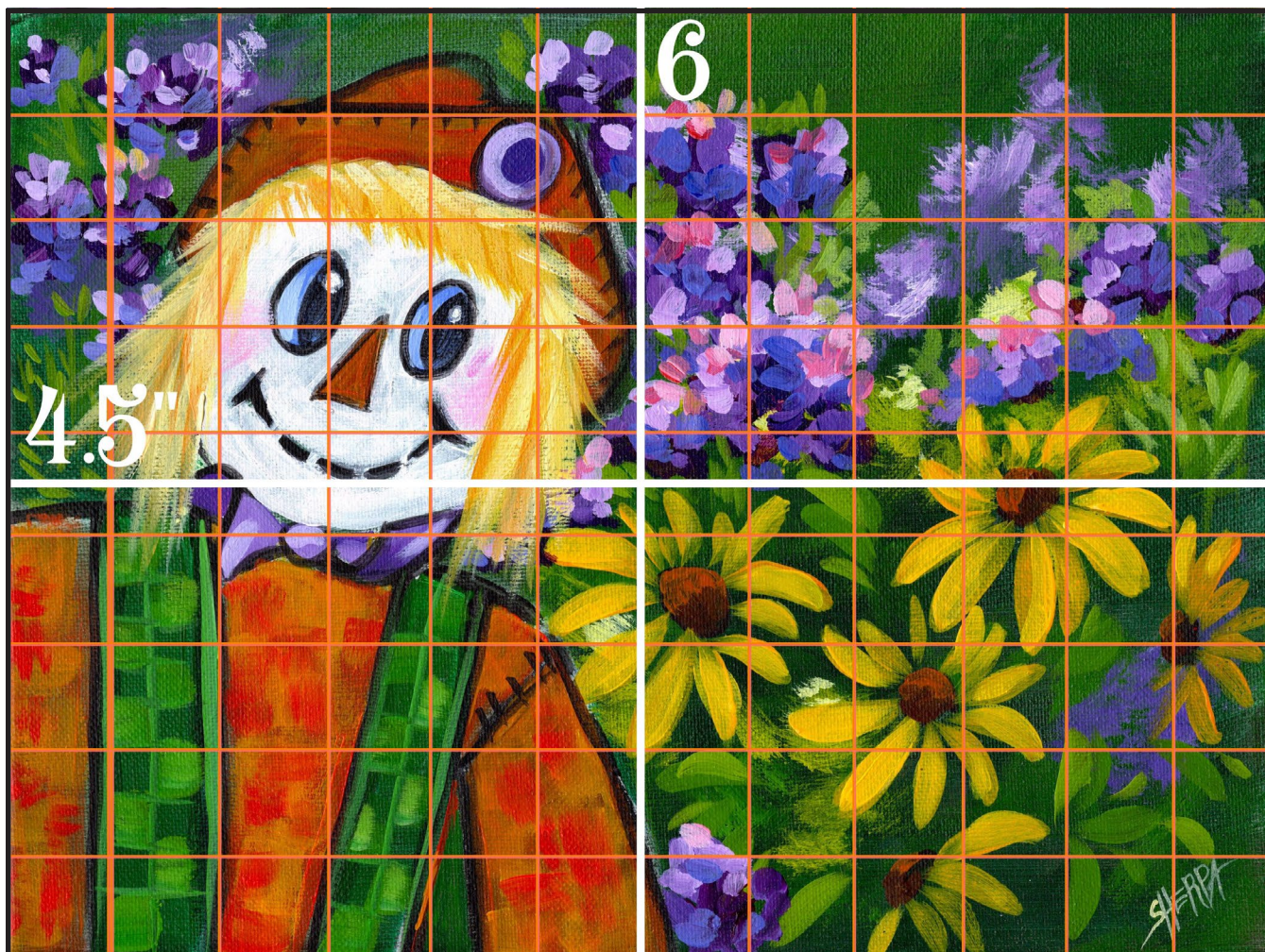
GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

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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