

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



MOUNTAIN MAMMA

BY: THE ART SHERPA

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON: ROCKY VANCE

STEPS: 8 | 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.

Traceable for this tutorial can be found at theartsherpa.com and in this document. There is no grid reference.

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 wildlife, a mountain lion, or a puma, or maybe even a cougar, and not one that wears high heels. The environment should not detract from the subject in a wildlife.

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:

- 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:

- #6 Round Hog Bristle
- #4 TAS Round
- #1 Monogram Liner
- #12 Round Blender
- 1" Oval Mop
- #20 Bright

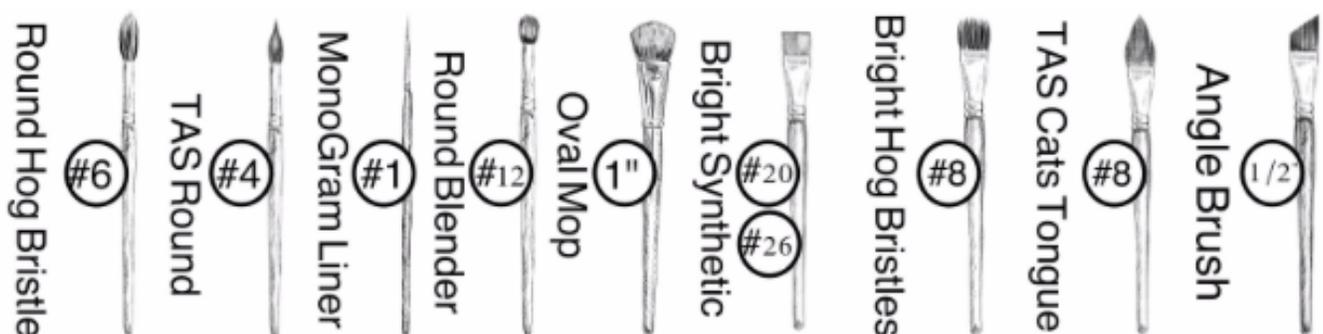
- #26 Bright
- #8 Bright Hog Bristle
- #8 TAS Cat's Tongue
- ¾" Angle Brush
- ½" Grass Comb/Grainer

TOOLS:

- T-Square Ruler
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- 8 x 8 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
- Fur



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	3:53	DRAWING IN
STEP 2	18:24	DARK BACKGROUND
STEP 3	24:00	DIFFUSED BACKGROUND
STEP 4	32:15	EYES
STEP 5	50:41	BEGINNING FUR
STEP 6	1:06:10	FACE FUR
STEP 7	1:23:16	FINISH FUR
STEP 8	2:06:20	DETAIL FUR AND WHISKERS



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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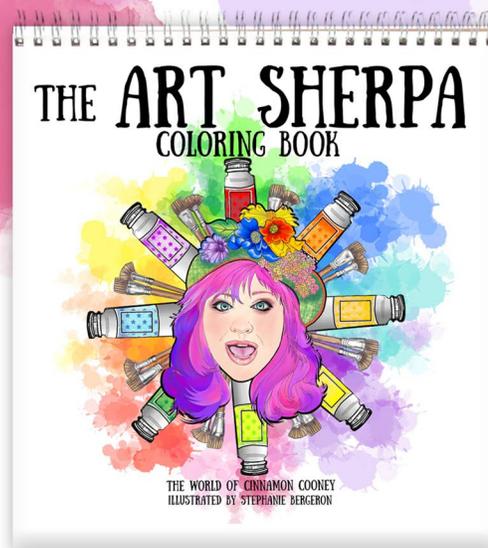


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STEP 1 - DRAWING IN

“NO DRAWING SHAME”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

T-Square Ruler

Chalk Pencil or

Watercolor Pencil

STEP DISCUSSION

- Get MB + BS on your palette.
- With a T-square, divide the canvas in half both ways. You now have four equal sections. Draw the lines with a brown watercolor pencil or a piece of chalk.
- 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 drew in only the major objects.
- I started with the eyes at about the 3.5" mark from the top of the canvas. Make that nose big and beautiful. One of your

best references to use if you are drawing this in is the grid reference which is included in this book. The nose is a critical element, you do want to get the scale correct. The forehead and ears and eyes are also critical. Take your time, use all your references and draw her in; or, if you just want to concentrate on painting, use the traceable. All the various methods of transfers are also explained at the back of this document. The chest comes in at about 4" area.



STEP 2 - DARK BACKGROUND

“FUR LOOKS BEST ON A DARK BACKGROUND”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

STEP DISCUSSION

- Let's begin with the Cat's Tongue brush and a mix of BS + MB, and outline the cat's image with this color. Redefine anything that you think might need to be adjusted.
- Use MB to block in the chest, body and head because fur looks best when it is on a dark background. Paint a little lighter value around the outline to help you keep track of the structures. It's ok to be rough and untidy, you are just covering the canvas right now.
- If you used the traceable, you just outline the transferred lines and then proceed with blocking in the dark of the fur. I painted the face a little lighter than the body. Leave the eyes, the inner part of his left ear, and the tip of the nose, white.



STEP 3 - DIFFUSED BACKGROUND

“CALLING AGENT CHAOS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Golden's Acrylic Gloss
Glazing Liquid = AGL

- Dry.

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

¾" Angle Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Put some CYM and CRM, PG, TW, AGL onto your palette.
- With an angle brush, start to paint in a blurry bokeh background by alternating mixes of MB + BS, and CYM + CRM. Use super soft, light pressure, to create an illusion that the background is out of focus leaves and little elements. Vary your mixes and add TW where you want a lighter value. Look at the references, and try to capture the colors.
- I keep lighter colors immediately around the upper face. Mix PG + BS for a great color. Be abstract and loose, Agent Chaos. You don't want patterns, or repeats or any kind. The area right behind, on the left, is quite dark, maybe it's a tree or a rock, it's blurry, but it's there.





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STEP 4 - EYES BACKGROUND

“THIS SOUL OF A MAN-EATER”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

#1 Monogram Liner

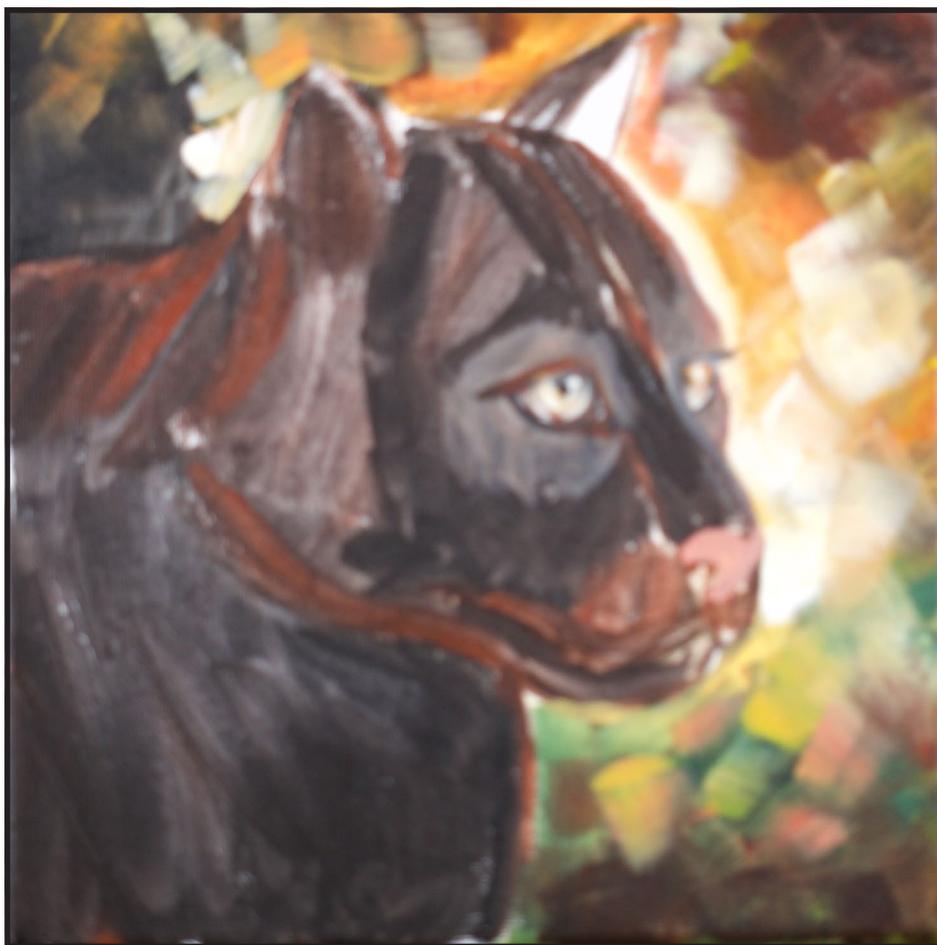
STEP DISCUSSION

- I love to put my eyes first. There is almost a silver-yellow color to these ones.
- With the Round Brush, and a mix of MB + BS + CYM + TW, start to paint around the eye socket. Then, with MB outline all around the eye socket close to the eye and paint down the tear duct area toward the muzzle. Use your light color from earlier and paint the inside of the eyes with this strange yellow-gold color.
- Get some CRM on the dirty brush, which is lighter than the previous color mixes, and paint in the nose. A nice big sniffer - the better to track, and smell, and sneak up on you with.
- Use MB to outline the iris of the eye then add a bit of BS. Mix CYM + CRM to get an orange and paint in his

left eye.

- Come back with the yellow-gold and paint in the iris. Then, add a touch more TW to the mix and using a liner brush, draw in those two lines that are just inside the iris, this is very important. I also tap this color in areas around the eye. Add some of the gold to the left eye, and a little to the right.
- Get MB to add the small pupil on his right eye. If you make a mistake, dry it, repaint it with the gold, dry it again, then fix it. Paint MB in the corner of his left eye.
- Add TW to the dirty brush to get a gray, then using a touch of AGL, and glaze a shadow at the top of the entire eye. The eye sits in a socket, which casts a shadow when the light is coming from above; and cats are not ALL THAT tall. Lastly, add TW as highlights and reflective marks.

This cat is a man-eater, we are snacks. Bears want honey. Wild cats are land sharks.



STEP 5 - BEGINNING FUR

“LET’S TALK FUR”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

½" Grass Comb

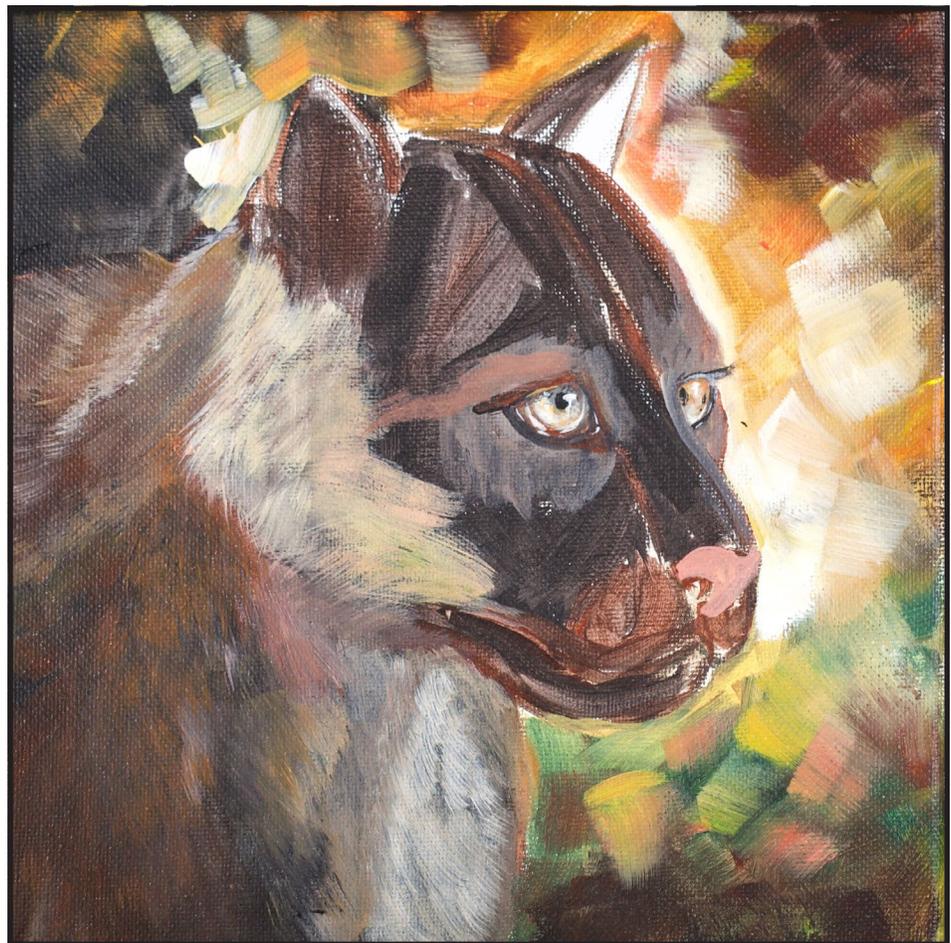
STEP DISCUSSION

- Refresh any colors on the palette that you might need.
- Use a grass comb and load a mix of BS + MB, add some CYM in there, and even a touch of TW. Start at the back, and make short strokes using light pressure, while pulling the brush toward you. Vary the colors. Give yourself the time to complete the task. The top of the back and the upper edges of the ears are lighter, so add more white on the brush to vary the color mix. The coat gets deeper under the cheek, but a lighter golden on the cheeks, then darker on the face. The area in front of her will have some foliage, so don't do your best work there; just get the canvas covered with good fur color. Some areas of the fur almost look orange, so add that in there. Add more CYM to the orange mix to get the golds that

are in the fur. You are the artist, you have control of your painting.

- Use the reference that immediately follows this step to help you with color placement.
- The chest also has a lot lighter fur, so add more CYM and TW in those mixes. This light color would also be good for that “L” shape between her cheek and neck.

***Sherpa Tip:** Fur, like scales, layers back, so you start at the back and work forward. To put in fur elements there are brushes called combs that have almost a trimmed out edge, with uneven cuts in the bristles, that work wonderfully for fur.*



STEP 6 - FACE FUR

“DON'T WAKE THE BEES”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

½" Grass Comb

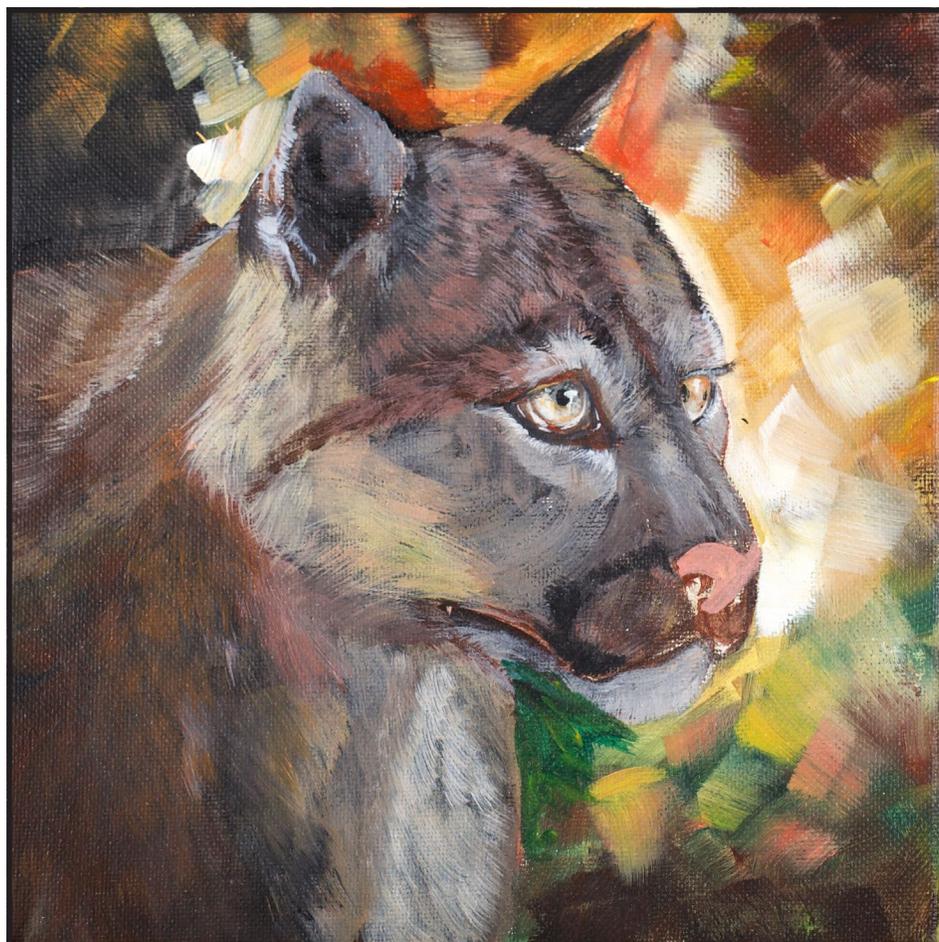
STEP DISCUSSION

- Continue using the grass comb and MB to start adding some dark fur along the outside of the ears, along the forehead and along the inside of her right ear, (her right ear, but on your left).
- Work down the forehead and toward the eyes with some of your precious cat colors. Use MB + BS for the deep shadow color that runs from the right eye over the cheekbone. Add oranges and golds in places. The area above the eye is very light. It is also very light under the eye socket and down the side of the muzzle. Be sure to catch both eyes; although we don't see the whole of her left eye, it is there. There is a deeper color of fur on the side of the nose that comes almost to the cheekbone. Highlight with the lighter color. The fur does change direction on the nose, so pay attention to the reference as much as possible. There is a very dark band of hair that

starts at the edge of the upper lip, and goes out and up toward the outer edge of the eye, and then back to the tip of the nose. We will lighten up the center part later, but she needs this area so we can add the whiskers later.

- If you need to refine any of the body, it's very easy to re-apply those colors.
- Add water to your brush to improve blending as you add in the ear hair.
- Get your light gray and start highlighting the tippy top hairs on the fold of his ears. Follow the curves of the folds - I can just imagine how silky it feels to the touch. If you overpaint, come back with the dark color to repaint in the dark value.
- Get some reds into the brown mixes to use around the eyes and forehead; short little strokes, observing the directionality of the fur.

“Angry Bees” is our codeword for our teenage studio assistant.



STEP 7 – FINISH FUR

“TO WHISKER OR NOT TO WHISKER”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

½" Grass Comb

STEP DISCUSSION

- Use the Round Brush, loaded with MB to outline the nose, paint in the nostrils and to define the upper lip from the jaw.
- Add BS + CRM to the nose. Then add TW to the dirty brush to highlight the top of the nose. Tint it with the nose color.
- Load the light beige color onto the grass comb and start adding in those bright hairs on the left ear.
- Change out your water.
- Add more TW to the brush and keep adding lighter hairs. Once you are happy with that ear, move to her bigger, more-in-view, ear and start adding those lighter hairs there. Adding more TW as you go until you have that ear to your happy place too. This is almost a dry brush technique.
- Start moving down the side of her face, toward and over the cheek bones, at the throat area and down over the chest. Get the lighter beige on the brush and start tapping in the white of the upper lip. Paint in the lower jaw.
- Be sure to rinse out your brush if you move from dark colors to light colors.
- Come back with some of your mid browns and grays and paint in the upper cheekbone, under the eye area. Paint the upper lip and be sure to spin the canvas, not craning your neck.
- Put a few orange highlights along the brow bone and that dark shadowy layer along the cheek and the side of her muzzle. Add water to improve flow, or you could add AGL.
- Add TW for the pure white fur on the ears. Bring this under the eye in that area between the eye socket and the ridge of the nose.
- Be sure to use the photo reference at the end of this step to help you get your cougar to the point where we move on to the next step. Continue using all of your cougar fur mixes.
- Get some thick MB on the grass comb and start adding the dark spots that mark so many cats coats and that enable them to blend into the forest environment. Putting these shadows in helps us to find the fur again.

John: That's a face that says, "You look delicious".

Cougarlicious!!!!

As an artist, you need to learn how to paint wet into wet, alla prima or layering over each other, and dry brushing. A grass comb helps you paint fur, but you still need to know HOW to paint fur, but the right tool really helps.

I like to get into the details.

To whisker or not to whisker? That is the question. Whether tis nobler in the minds of cats to have whiskers, matters not, but only to thine own self shall I be true.

STEP 7: CONTINUED



STEP 8 - DETAIL FUR AND WHISKERS

"WHISKER IS A GO"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

½" Grass Comb

#1 Monogram Liner

STEP DISCUSSION

- With the Round Brush, CRM + BS + MB, come to the nose to add some shading to reinforce the dark areas. Just break that nose up a little.
- Switch to a grass comb, load some TW to add at the high cheek bone and under both eyes. Get MB to darken up the hidden side, if you need to.
- Thin MB with a drop of water on a Liner Brush and start adding some dark whiskers on the face. They start at the upper lip section and come out over the lower part of the face and mouth.
- Clean the brush, then add AGL + TW over the eyes on the left side. You can add MB to the dirty brush if the whiskers are two toned in your world. Just trust the process. Then use TW and draw in some

white whiskers on his left side that droop out over the mouth.

- There are also some white whiskers on the chin. I am quiet because I'm trying to stay steady and focused. There are some rather large whiskers that come out of the cheek area. Don't forget little short ones over the eye sockets.
- We have not even gotten into the eyelashes yet. Come back with MB to define the area, then with TW to add the eyelashes over the black.
- Play with the details; they are what make the piece come together. Add some random white hairs coming out of the ears and a drizzle of highlight on the nose. Define the tear duct and make the hairs on his chinney, chinney, chin stand out.
- Sign.

Is whiskering smart? Probably not. Is it improving or not? I can't tell.

John: I think it is improving him.



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.

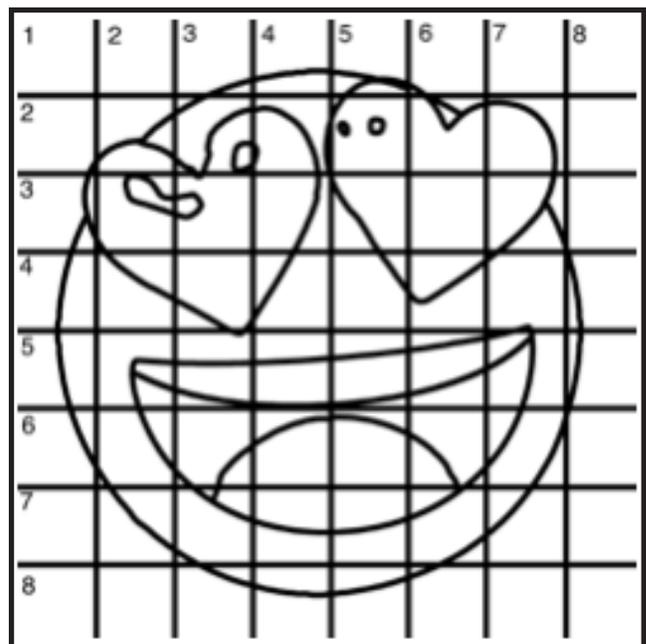
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could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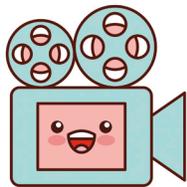
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