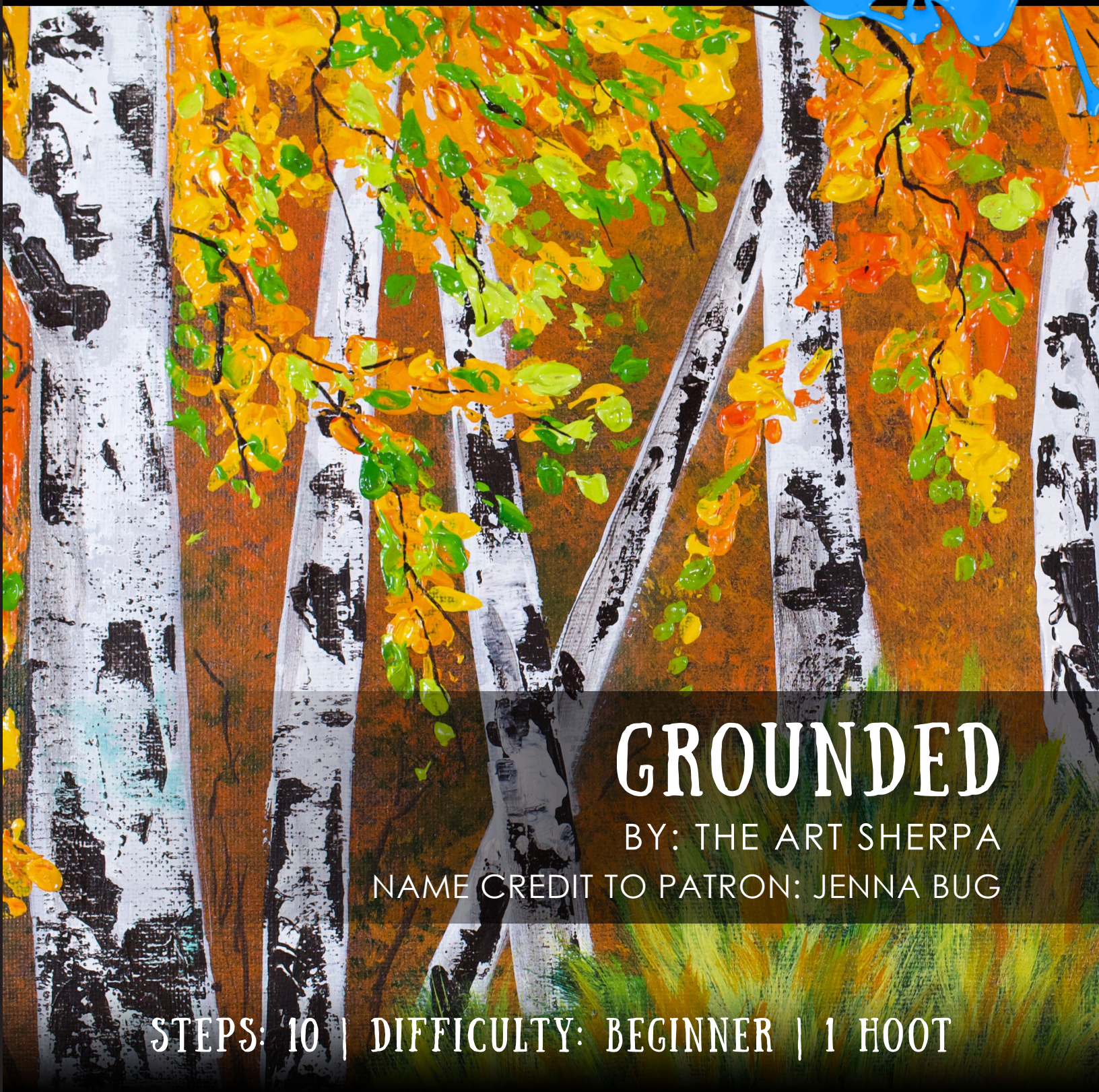


THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



GROUNDING


BY: THE ART SHERPA
NAME CREDIT TO PATRON: JENNA BUG

STEPS: 10 | DIFFICULTY: BEGINNER | 1 HOOT



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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.

This tutorial is a very beginner friendly painting of some beautiful birch trees that will introduce some of the community to the difference between a palette knife and an artist knife as well as giving some basic introduction to using artist knives. 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 beginner still life tutorials which can be found on my website if you would like to check out the video library. 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:

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

BRUSHES:

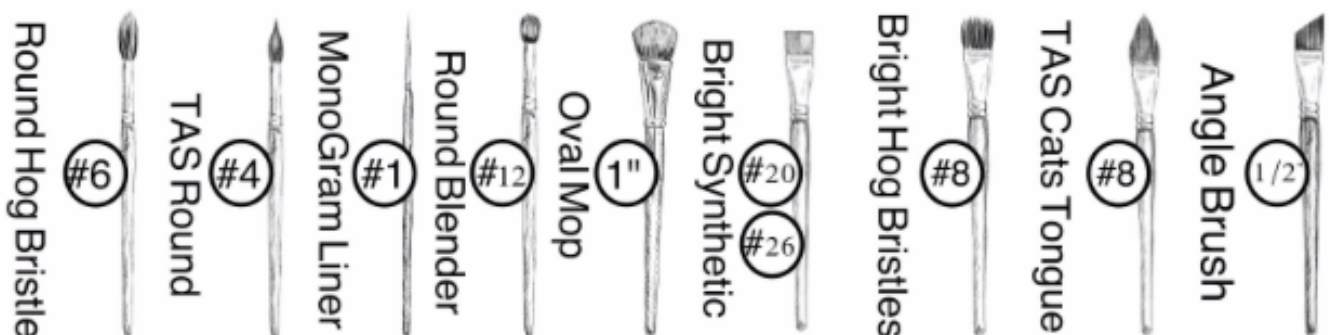
- Large Round Brush
- Large Hog Brush
- #1 Monogram Liner
- 1" Hog Cutter Brush
- Grass Comb/Grainer
- Palette Knife
- Artist Knife

TOOLS:

- T-Square Ruler
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- 9 x 12 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.

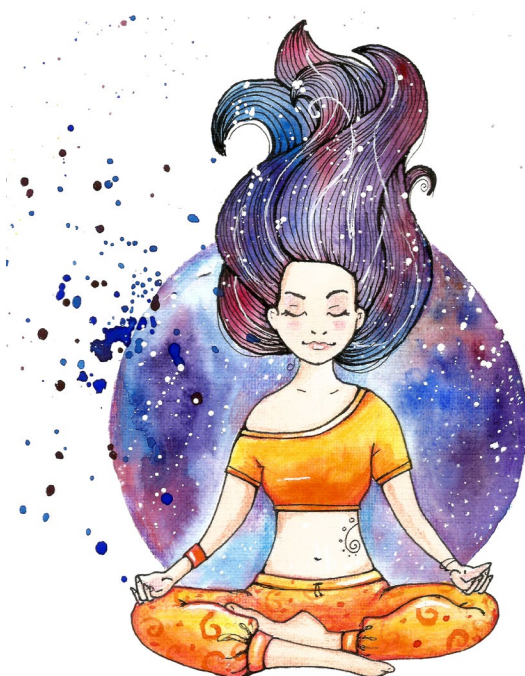
STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	2:11	COLORED BACKGROUND
STEP 2	5:28	1ST LAYER TEXTURED BACKGROUND
STEP 3	9:51	FINISH TEXTURED BACKGROUND
STEP 4	14:03	BLOCK IN TREES
STEP 5	21:18	RICH LAYER OF LIGHT GREY
STEP 6	23:28	WHITE PALETTE KNIFE BARK
STEP 7	32:32	BLACK PALETTE KNIFE BARK
STEP 8	39:12	LEAVES
STEP 9	1:00:57	GREEN GREEN GRASS
STEP 10	1:07:44	FINAL DETAILS, BRANCHES 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.



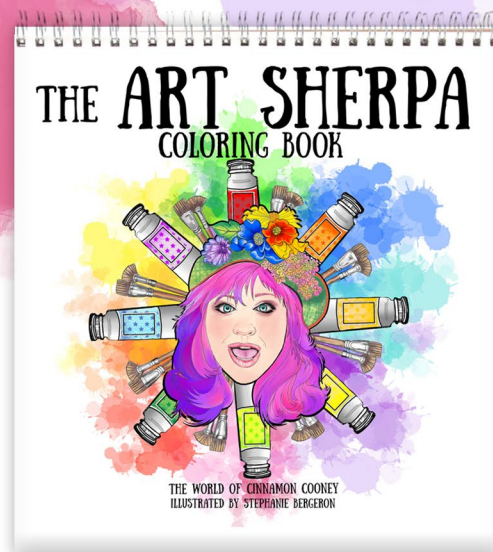


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STEP 1 - COLORED BACKGROUND

“GET SCRUFFY WITH IT”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

1" Cutter Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- With a 1" hog cutter brush and a mix of BS + MB, scruff in a layer of paint over the entire canvas. Vary the color as you cover the white.
- Dry.



STEP 2 - 1ST LAYER TEXTURED BACKGROUND

"PREMIERE VS. LIVE"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

1" Hog Cutter Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- With CRM + CYM + BS, mix a muted red-orange color. Make another brighter orange to the side with CRM + CYM. You can deepen or lighten this on either side by adding CRM or CYM.

- Dampen a big old hog brush and load it by tapping it into the pile of color, then dabbing it onto the canvas. Random taps of color all over the canvas. This bigger brush makes it go faster. Add in some half tones of both color values.
- As you go forward, allow some of the brown canvas to show through. There is no pattern, you want to avoid that. This is about stress relief. Tap, tap, tap that negative energy out.
- Rinse out and hug your brush dry.

John: OK, are you ready to start?

Cinnamon: Yes

John: Are you ready to start?

Cinnamon: I don't know what you mean.

John: Let me rephrase this. ACTION



STEP 3 - FINISH TEXTURED BACKGROUND

"THE PALETTE KNIFE"

PAINT:

Phthalo Green = PG

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

1" Hog Cutter Brush

Palette Knife

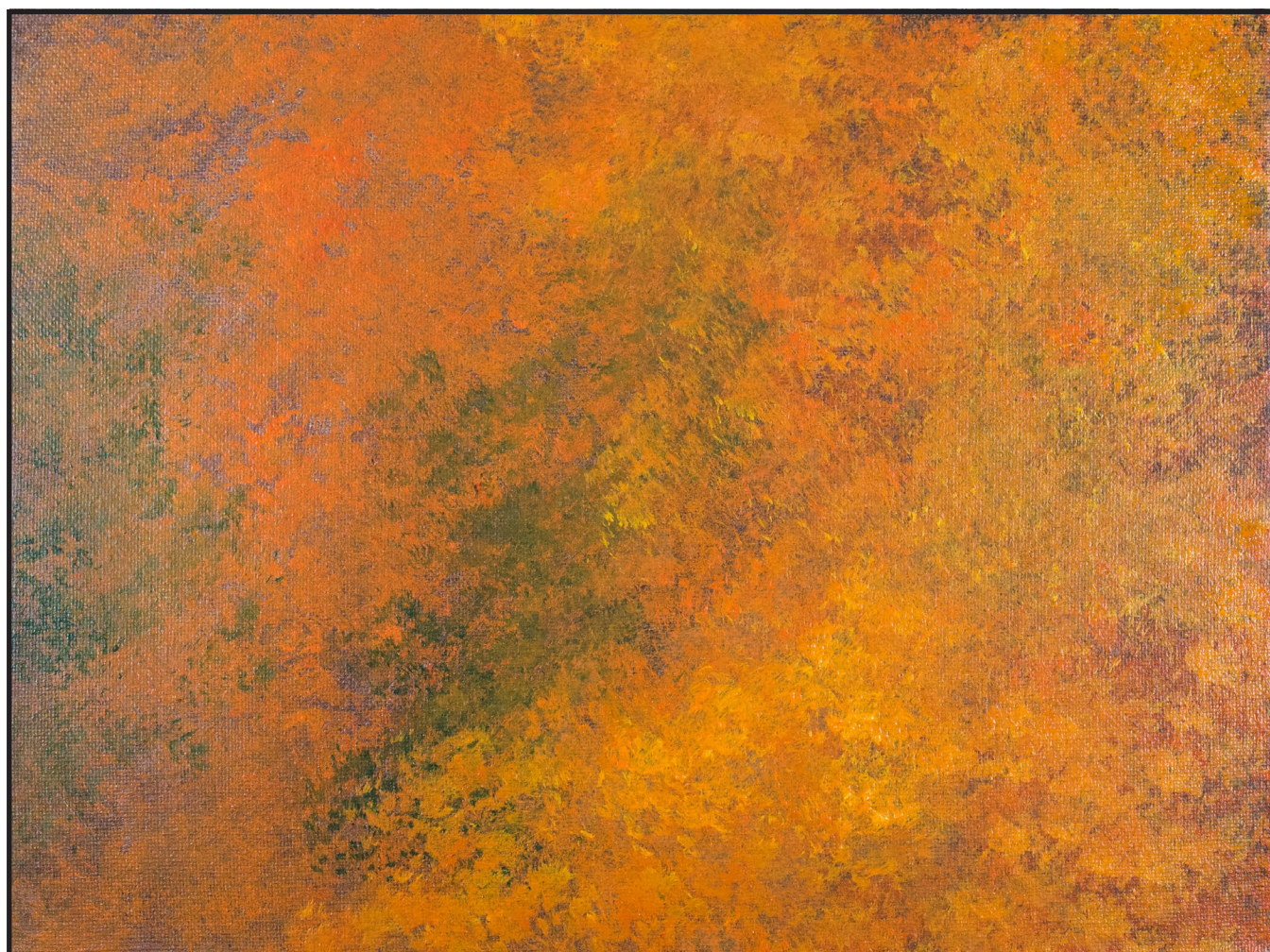
STEP DISCUSSION

- Get PG on the palette knife and mix BS with the orange mix, and add a hint of green at the bottom, with the Cutter Brush, starting at about the mid center of the canvas, going up. Add bits of this color at both the

right side of the canvas and on the left side. Less is more of this color.

- Rinse out and hug your brush, especially if it is a hog.
- Get some bright orange on the brush and start popping in this bright color randomly, Agent Chaos.
- This should be lighter on the right and darker on the left.
- Rinse and hug your brush.

Sherpa Tip: We've used palette knives before in my tutorials to mix colors. Palette knives cut through paint more cleanly than grabbing paint on a brush, especially when using white to blend with a lot of other colors. By using the palette knife, your white stays less muddy. A palette knife can be metal or plastic, you could even use a credit card or a plastic knife. They are fairly inexpensive. The head of a palette knife can come in several different shapes. They are fairly flat. I do have a set of them in The Art Sherpa brand line.





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STEP 4 - BLOCKING IN TREES

"NO DRAWING SHAME ZONE"

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Big Round Bristle

Chalk Pencil or Watercolor

Pencil

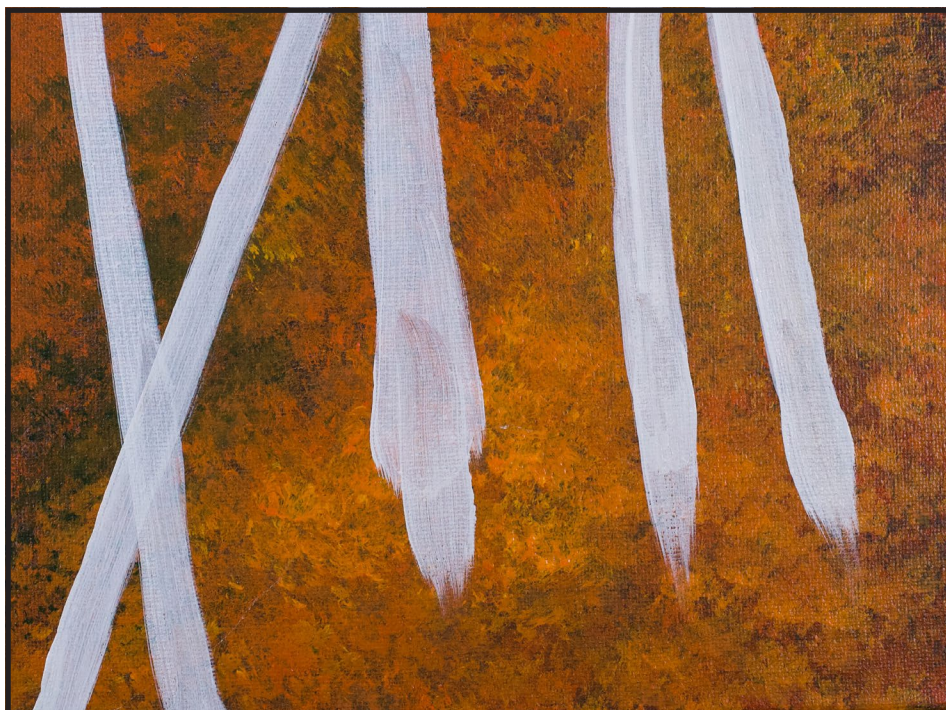
STEP DISCUSSION

- Step 4 gives you more. 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.
- With a chalk pencil, draw in the big tree that goes in on the left. You can't really see the chalk lines on the tutorial.
- Get a big round brush loaded with TW + MB to make a light gray and add a drop of two of water for flow if you need to. Starting at the bottom, left and going up, paint in that first birch tree with this light gray color. The trunk is bigger at the base and

narrows as it goes up. This is the big focal tree. You want a nice coat of color for these trees. Paint a little branch that goes off the side to the left.

- The furthest trees back get painted first. The tree trunk should taper and the pressure on your brush should lighten as you go up. The tree next to the focal tree goes up at a big angle to the right. Then add the three trees on the right that start about 1.5" up from the bottom of the canvas and go up. There is yet another tree that lives between the last tree and the second tree that we painted in that leaned so far to the right. I added yet another tree between this one and the focal tree. A good beginning for our trunks.

- Dry



STEP 5 - RICH LAYER OF LIGHT GREY

“WHY A SECOND COAT?”

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

the artist knife to add shadows on these trees, so we want a very good foundation to support those shadows.

- Just a little step that will make a big difference.

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Round Brush

- Dry.

STEP DISCUSSION

- The second coat on the trees is very important. I am using pro paint and I still need to paint another coat. If you are using student or craft paint, you will need this to cover the streaks. We will be using



STEP 6 - WHITE PALETTE KNIFE BARK

"THE CHUNKY REFRIGERATOR PEANUT BUTTER ON WONDER BREAD TECHNIQUE"

PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Artist Knife

STEP DISCUSSION

- Get the artist knife and grab a bead of TW under its left edge and gently come across the tree, from the left side towards the right side. I started with the trees on the right. I drew a bead of paint on the right side of the knife and then I dragged the paint from the right side towards the left, then from the left side towards the right, on each tree. If you blooped it up, you can come in with a damp filbert and remove the paint. Left side bead, scrape right; right side bead, scrape left. If you tend to have jagged edges on the side after scrapping, use your damp brush to trim them up.
- Scrape all the trees on both sides.
- The trick is to allow the paint to completely dry before you move beyond this step. Sometimes, even if it feels dry, it's not. If you intend to varnish, let it dry about 3 weeks first.
- It's the chunky peanut butter from the refrigerator on Wonder Bread skill.

Sherpa Tip: Introduction to an artist's knife, and the title on the video says palette knife so I left it on this page to match, but it should have said "White Artist Knife Bark". You could use a palette knife, but an artist knife will work better. An artist knife has a neck that takes the surface of the knife below the knuckles a bit so it's easier to use to apply paint. If you don't have an artist knife, you can use a card card or even a palette knife, just whatever will work for you. I used a diamond headed artist knife; palette knives are for mixing and artists knives are for blending.



STEP 7 - BLACK PALETTE KNIFE BARK

"IT'S REALLY THE ARTIST KNIFE AGAIN"

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Artist Knife

STEP DISCUSSION

- With the same artist knife, cleaned, let's take this painting up a notch, with a mix of MB + BS to get a dark color; it should read as black, but not as harsh.

- Grab a bead and start to create the rough bark discoloration on the trees. I tap up and down more because they are not even and not evenly spaced, formed, or colored. I do find that there are more of them near the base than at the top. Just dancing the knife across the dry surface of the tree.

- Do the same for all of your trees.

- Dry.

John - You should not play with knives, unless you have a totin chip, like I do. I'm an Eagle Scout and ergo, practically a trained professional in knot tying and cutting the knots out of rope with a knife.



STEP 8 - LEAVES

"AUTUMN LOVES ORANGE"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Artist Knife

STEP DISCUSSION

- Sticking with a clean artist knife, and a well mixed blend of CYM + CRM to get a light orange, load a bead on the tip of the brush. Branches have directionality. Use the touch and scrape method to tap in some of these leaves.
- When you want a brighter orange in places add CRM. Turn your canvas, don't injure your neck by standing on your head. You can also tap the knife down flat and pick up. Stay tight to the tree. I added the first leaves to the right of the focal tree, so for balance, I added a few pops of color on the left of it.
- Add some of these colors throughout your grove. Stay on the toe of the knife for an individual leaf.
- Use all of the free resources that I provide to assist you in getting this step completed. Maybe you are ready to trust your artistic eye in

placement, maybe you still like to use my placement as a guide. It's all good either way.

- Refresh any colors that you might need to.
- When you have the yellow and orange where you want it, mix PG to these colors for a mintish green color and can be added sparingly throughout the picture.
- Come back and add more CYM to the mix color for an off yellow green and remember not to over spice, but to just create interest, don't distract and make the painting invisible.



STEP 9 - GREEN, GREEN GRASS

"IT'S ALL ABOUT AUTUMN, AUTUMN, AUTUMN"

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

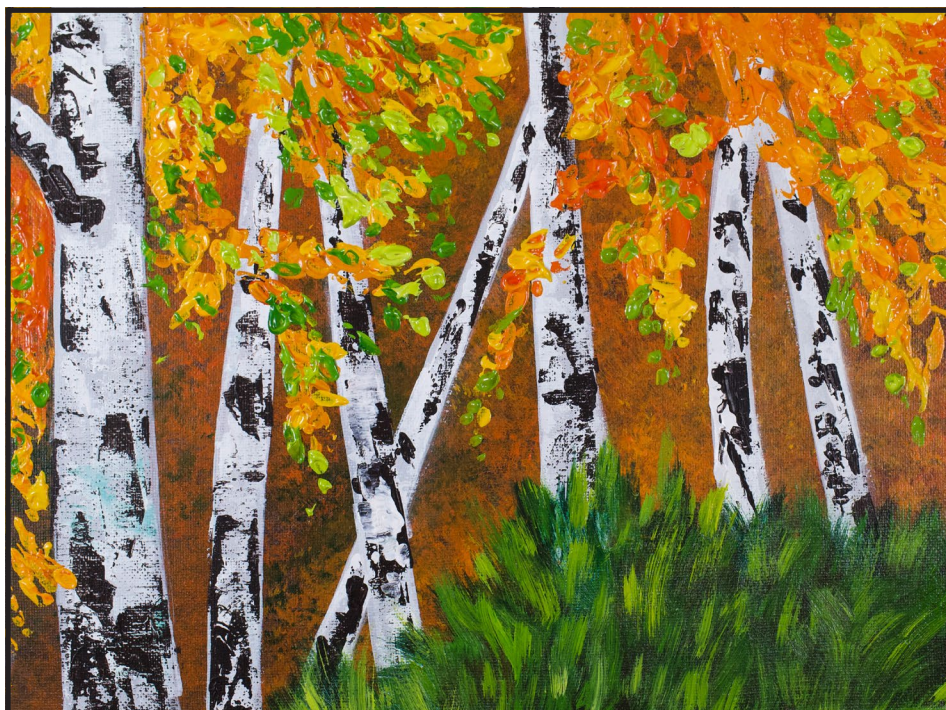
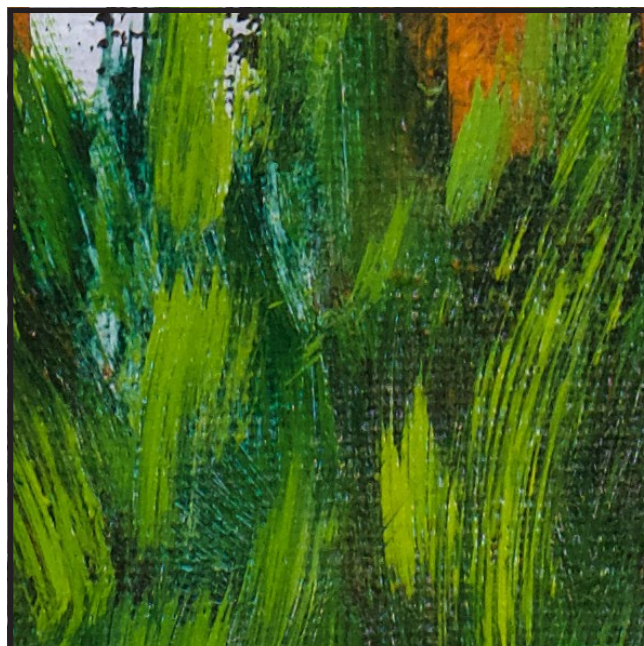
Round Hog Bristle

STEP DISCUSSION

- The last part is the forward grass. There are several brushes that would work for this but I'm going to use a hog brush. Make a dark fall green with PB + BS and use a damp brush to flick some grasses up in front of the base of the trees. The brush is rough and unruly and is exactly what we need to make these grasses. In my world, there was a weird little hill that I wanted to capture.
- Add CYM to this color and highlight, wet into wet, onto that darker color. Allow some of the darker colors to show through.
- Add more CYM to the mix and highlight even more.
- If you are nervous about making a mistake, dry the canvas before you proceed with this lightest highlight. You need the contrast so do not paint out all the contrasting colors.
- Be sure to pull the paint in from the bottom, be light and airy. Some strokes go left, some strokes to right; some strokes stand up and say "fight, fight, fight". Just kidding.
- Dry.

John: Whoa, there, slow down with that brush; you're like Nascar with all those left turns.

I've got those three hour fall paintings of "AUTUMN", but if you want some joy and peace, try a few of these small one-hoot "AUTUMN" paintings, like this, that I have in my library.



STEP 10 – FINAL DETAILS, BRANCHES

“WICKED, EVIL TREE LIMBS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Mars Black = MB

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Hog Brush

#1 Monogram Liner

Grass Comb

STEP DISCUSSION

- It is Step 10 and time we kicked it up and pushed some trees back with shadows. Get CYM + CRM and some of that pale green, then add TW, for some dry grass strokes using the hog brush. The green keeps it from disappearing into the trees.
- Rinse out and hug your brush.
- Add a few pops of your reds or oranges in the grass.
- Put AGL on your palette or thin your paint with a touch of water.
- Get your bark color and AGL together then add some glazing to the trees for an unexpected dimensionality of shading. There is now depth in the forest. Put the shadows on the side that is hidden from the light. Where is your source of light?
- With a Rigger or Liner Brush, add a drop of water to MB and carefully paint some little downward twigs from the trees into the leaf clusters. You want to stagger joints on the branches; some branches go behind leaves, some go in front of leaves.
- Sign.



THE TRACING METHOD

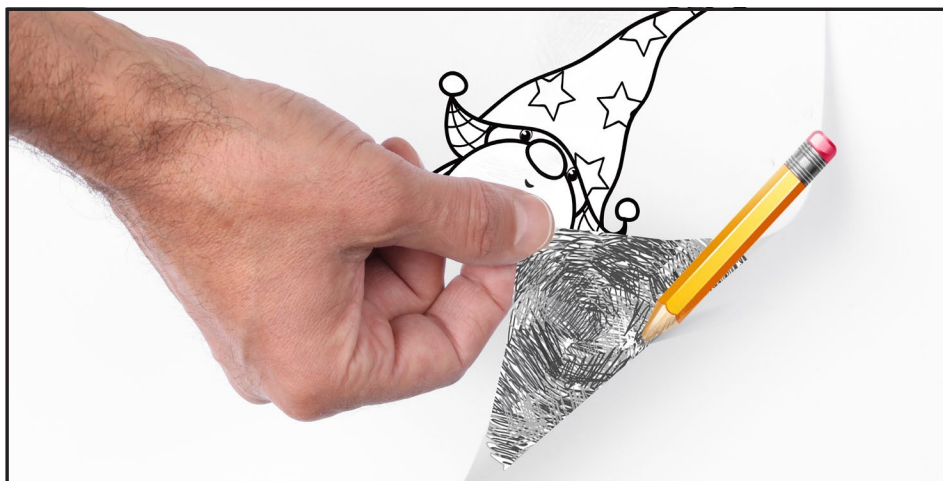
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



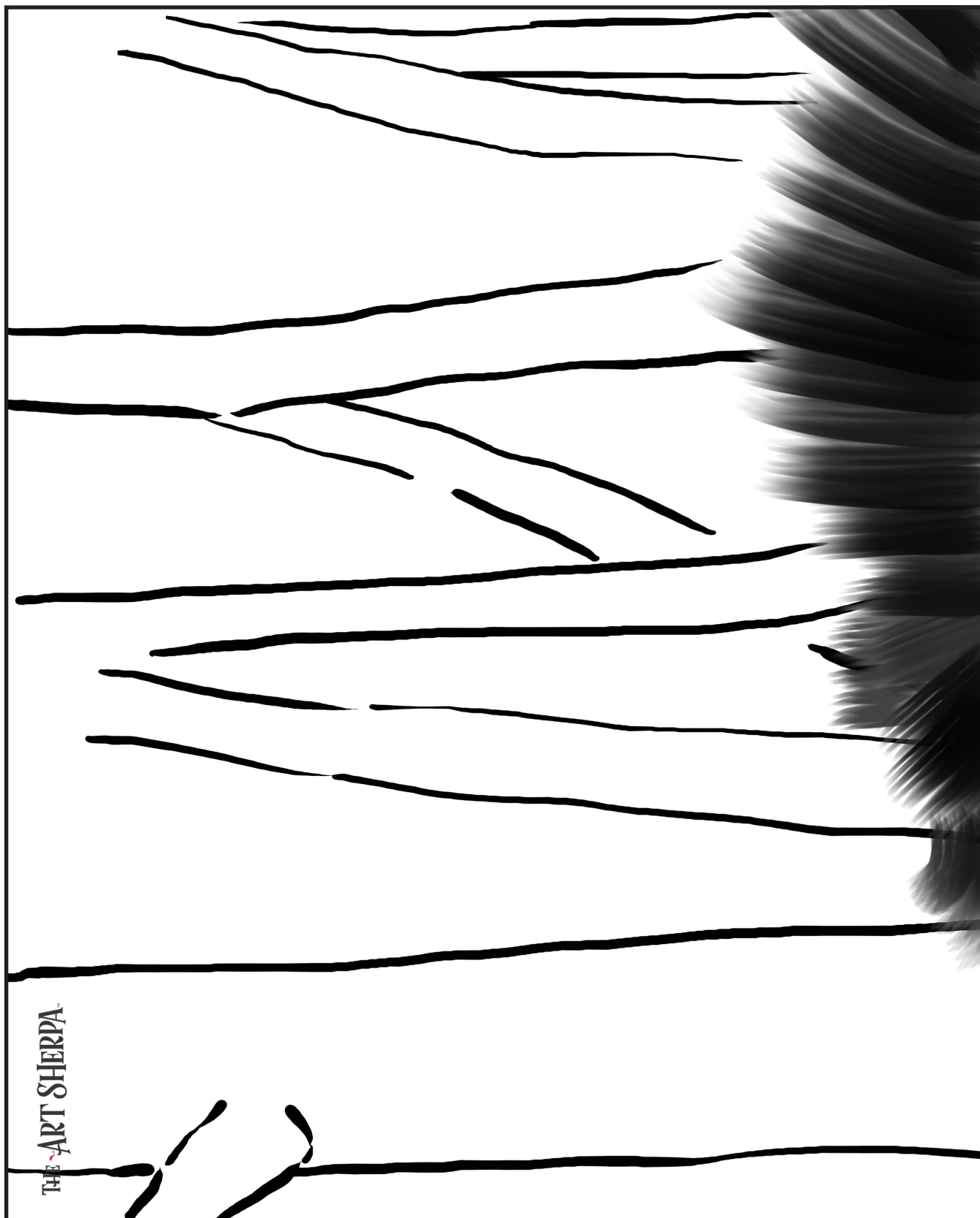
see that your transfer is happening. If not check if your rubbing is too thin or that your pressure is not too light. After you are done tracing the lines, remove your traceable and you should have a copy of the line art on your canvas.



- 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.

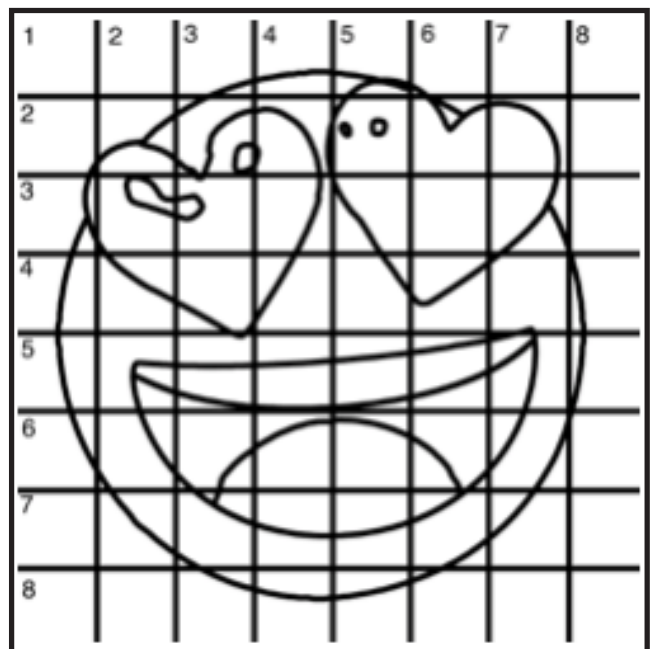
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could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



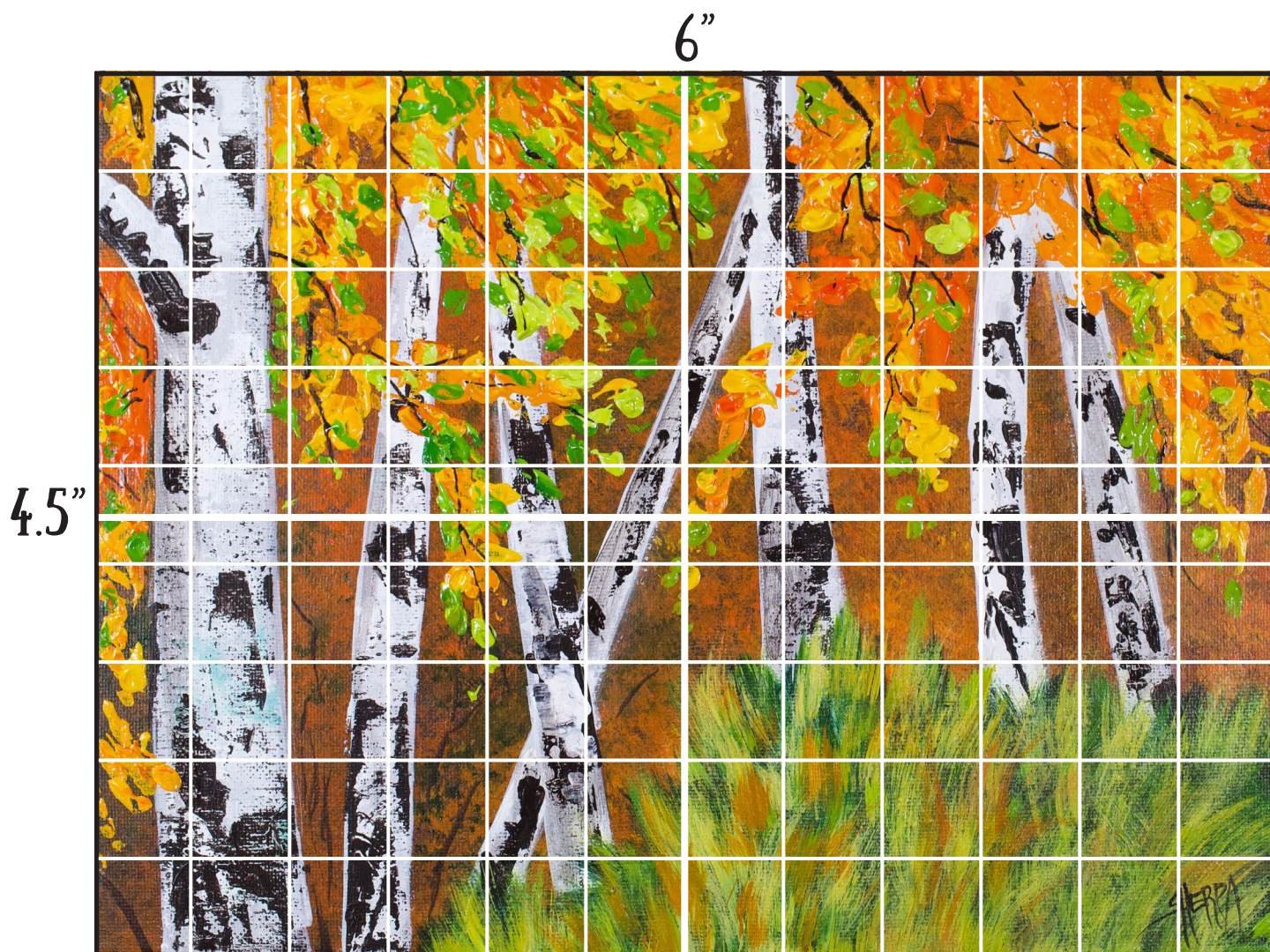
GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

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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