

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



CALMING BEAUTY

BY: THE ART SHERPA


NAME CREDIT TO PATRON: KIM DOSECK ZOOK

STEPS: 6 | 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.

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.

This tutorial is a beginner's acrylic still life of some fall grasses in front of what I imagined to be a setting sun in a very dynamic orangey-yellow sky. 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 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:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Dioxazine Purple = DP
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Golden's Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES:

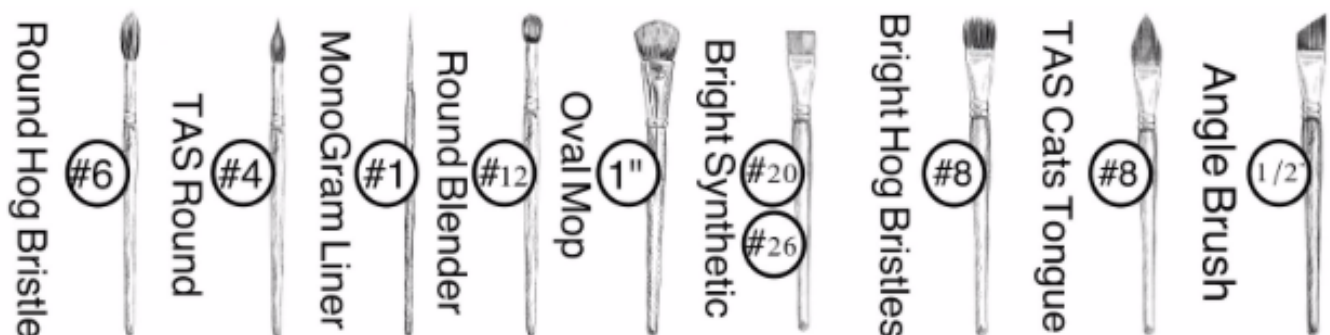
- #1 Monogram Liner
- #12 Round Blender
- 1" Oval Mop
- Grass Comb/Grainer
- TAS Pouncers
- #2 Detail Brush

TOOLS:

- 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:

- Painting a Silhouette Landscape
- Implying Foliage
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Perspective of Waves
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Clouds
- 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.

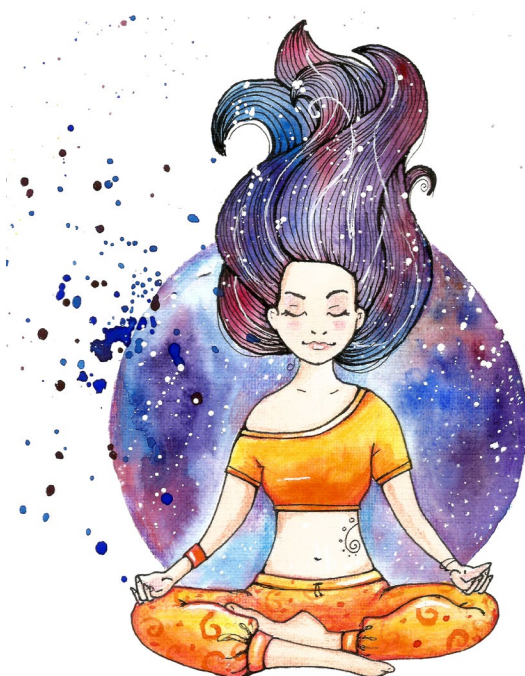
STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	2:32	BLENDED BACKGROUND
STEP 2	6:34	DRAMATIC SKY
STEP 3	15:15	MOON AND DRAMA
STEP 4	23:00	GRASS STEMS
STEP 5	31:39	GRASS SEED PODS
STEP 6	42:59	FINE LINES SIGN



THE GOLDDILOCKS 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.



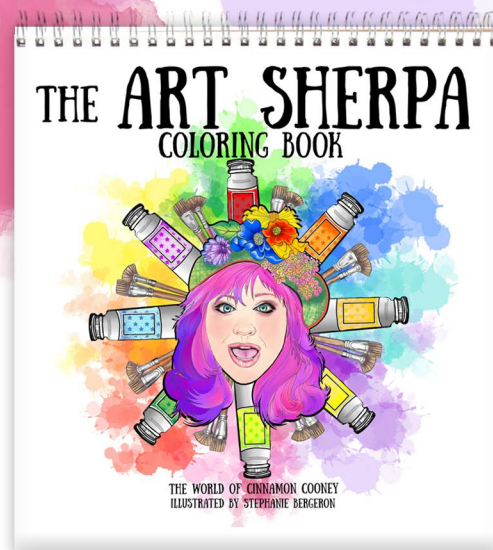


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STEP 1 - BLENDED BACKGROUND

"BEGINNINGS ARE FAIRLY EASY"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Titanium White = TW

- Dry.

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

1" Oval Mop

STEP DISCUSSION

- Mist the canvas if it is dry where you are, then get a 1" oval mop, with a synthetic filament. Mix CRM + CYM to an orange and apply it using sweeping strokes. Paint this orange, varying the color and going up the canvas about halfway.
- Rinse your brush and dry it a bit. Use TW to paint the transition area just at the top of this section and into the white of the canvas. This will help us avoid making green when we add the blue sky.
- With TW + UB on the brush, sweep in the top area of the sky, leaving a white section towards the middle between the sunset and the blue sky. Add UB in areas of the sky closer to the top of your canvas.
- Blend the two areas together using a clean, dry brush making sure that you have a soft transition.



STEP 2 - DRAMATIC SKY

"LIGHT SKY DANCING"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

1" Oval Mop

STEP DISCUSSION

- What makes the piece so dramatic is the grasses against that dynamic sky. Get your mop damp and load it with TW. Start laying in some atmospheric clouds in the middle section, between the orange and the blue, using curved brush strokes. Try not to repeat your patterns.
- Then use CYM + TW and reinforce the upper area of yellow.
- Add more CRM to your orange mix to make it darker, and sweep this in around the sides of the orange section. Be random, vary the colors, sweep, sweep, sweeping.
- As you come down, add more CYM to the mix to vary the color. You are trying to find the random shapes that reveal themselves as you go and allowing them to be incorporated into your painting, making it yours.
- Rinse out.
- Get UB + TW on the brush to reinforce the darker blue of the sky, creating almost a counter sky leading to the orangey-yellow bands. Again, soft sweeping strokes, not allowing yourself to pattern, even coming over some of the orange to create visually exciting areas.
- Rinse and wipe your brush.
- Mix DP + CRM + TW to a lavender-ish color, and on the corner of the brush, lightly paint in some of that purple. Add more color where you want it to be darker. Again, you are all Agents of Chaos, so avoid those nasty patterns; vary the color, and shape, and size, and directionality.
- Get a clean damp brush to softly blend, wet into wet. Not wet, damp.
- Dry.

John - It's amazing how the colors cause some of the clouds to push forward and the sky to push backward.



STEP 3 - MOON AND DRAMA

“ADDING THE HEAT”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#12 Round Blender

Small Pouncer

STEP DISCUSSION

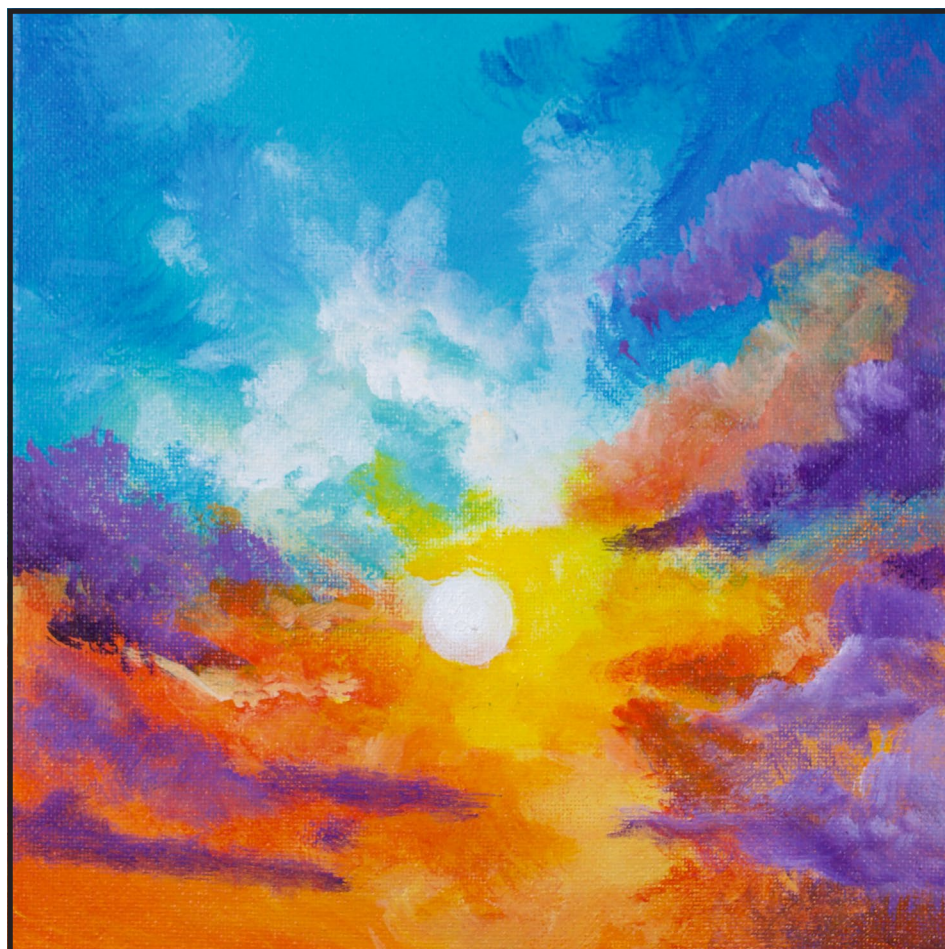
- More cloud drama and lighting is where we will go in this step, and my favorite brush for that is a Round Blender. Get some orange on the brush to start adding a little bit of “heat” under the clouds. Add TW to the mix in places for hotter “heat”.
- This is the playful step, you can add red at the top of clouds, heat at the bottom, but still using rather curved strokes. Building up the little peaks and valleys of the clouds.
- Add more TW to highlight the undersides of clouds that are near that corridor of light at the center of the canvas.
- Mix UB + CYM to a turquoise color then add TW, and exaggerate that center area of open sky, between the lighter clouds.
- Rinse your brush.
- Get a small pouncer loaded with TW and find a

section in the sky where you want to place your sun, or moon. Make sure it is really, really visible. Put the pouncer in water until you can clean it.

- Get the blender again and add CYM around the sky to reinforce this color and help the sun, or moon stand out. Go up toward some of the clouds, but don't make a ring of yellow.
- This sky is really good practice to help you become more comfortable with clouds.

John - How do you know where a peak is?

***Sherpa Tip:** Cloud drama is something that comes after you observe clouds and it becomes more intuitive after you have taken the time to know clouds. After you have looked at clouds from both sides now, from give and take, and still somehow...Buh ha ha ha ha. Oh, yeah, I forgot to announce “earworm alert”.*





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STEP 4 - GRASS STEMS

“FIND YOUR STRONG BRUSH STROKE DIRECTIONALITY”

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#2 Detail Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- 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 and the traceable, but you can do this, it's a very beginner friendly draw.
 - Use a small detail brush, and thin MB with a touch of water, then start putting in grasses. They are very tall and come up from the bottom of the canvas and grow toward the sky. When you press harder, the stroke thickens, so be careful of that. These are cattywampus grass; it just grows where it wants to grow and it refuses to be orderly.
 - Vary the height of the stems, make them go different directions, try to find balance around your sun.
- Come back and start adding little jointed, off the stems, that will hold the seed pods in a bit. Again, vary length, curve, etc. It can be a bit thicker at the top. Be sure to place everything randomly.
 - Remember to move your canvas so that you stay in the direction of your strongest brush stroke.

Grasses like these are really nature's abstract.



STEP 5 - GRASS SEED PODS

“WE GO ALL THE WAY WITH TECHNIQUES”

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

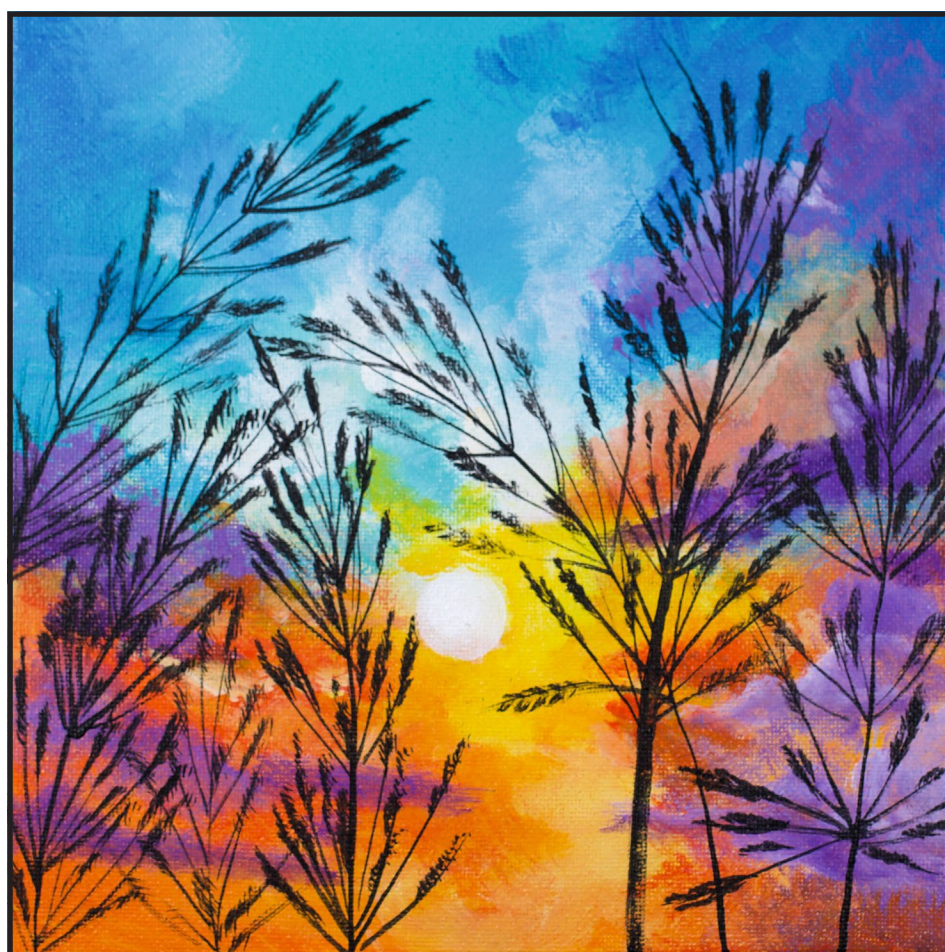
BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#1 Monogram Liner

Grass Comb

STEP DISCUSSION

- Seed pods, we need seed pods, so I will use a Liner brush to start painting little strokes along some of the joints. I switched to a grass comb and loaded a bit of MB and tested that as well, and I really like the way it worked. Less exertion on my part, letting the brush do the job it was designed to do. When a tool makes the job easier, embrace that tool.
- There is a little time involved in this step, but it will be worth the effort when you get done. Pay attention to where the grasses cross each other.
- You could use AGL here rather than thinned paint, but it is entirely your call. You're the artist, you get to make the choices.
- Sherpa Tip: I highly recommend that if you do this, and like it, that you do it again on a much larger canvas. It will be just stunning.



STEP 6 - FINE LINES

"DON'T WAKE THE BEES"

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#1 Monogram Liner

STEP DISCUSSION

- There are some delicate little lines that I felt added a lot of interest. I took a water pipette and added a couple of drops of water to my MB, and thinned it at the palette.
- Use a Liner brush and start adding the top hairs to the jointed areas going out from the seed pods. Again, you want to vary the length of these hairs as much as possible.
- I added a few random strokes at the bottom to fill in and imply that there were grasses out of the view, to make it more interesting.
- Sign.



THE TRACING METHOD

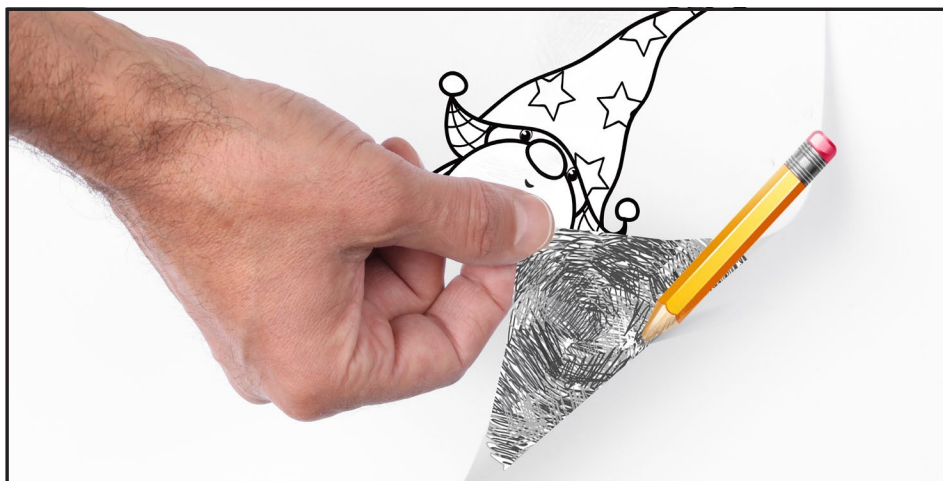
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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:



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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.

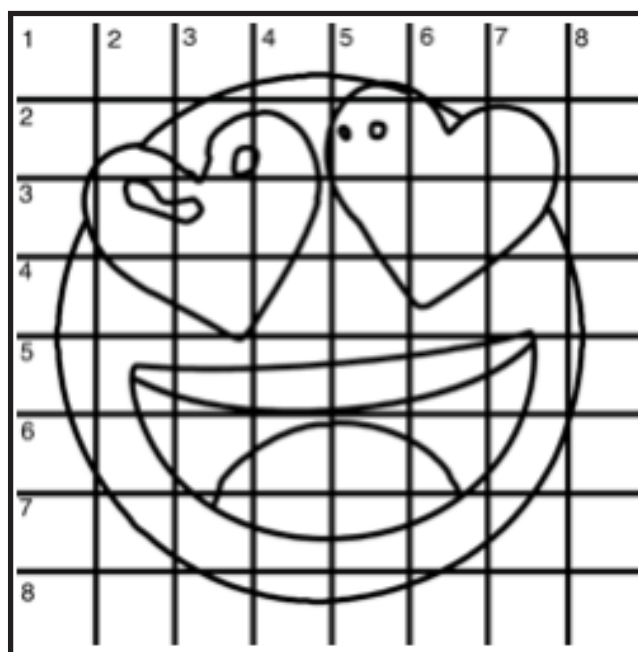
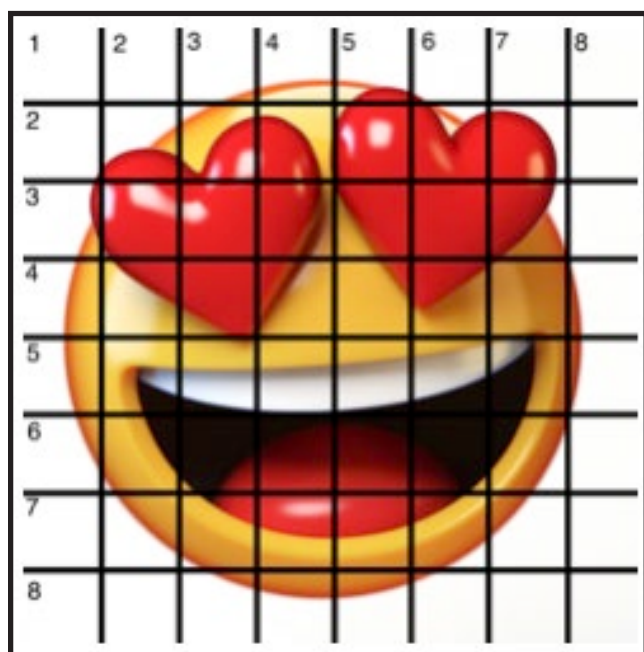
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could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



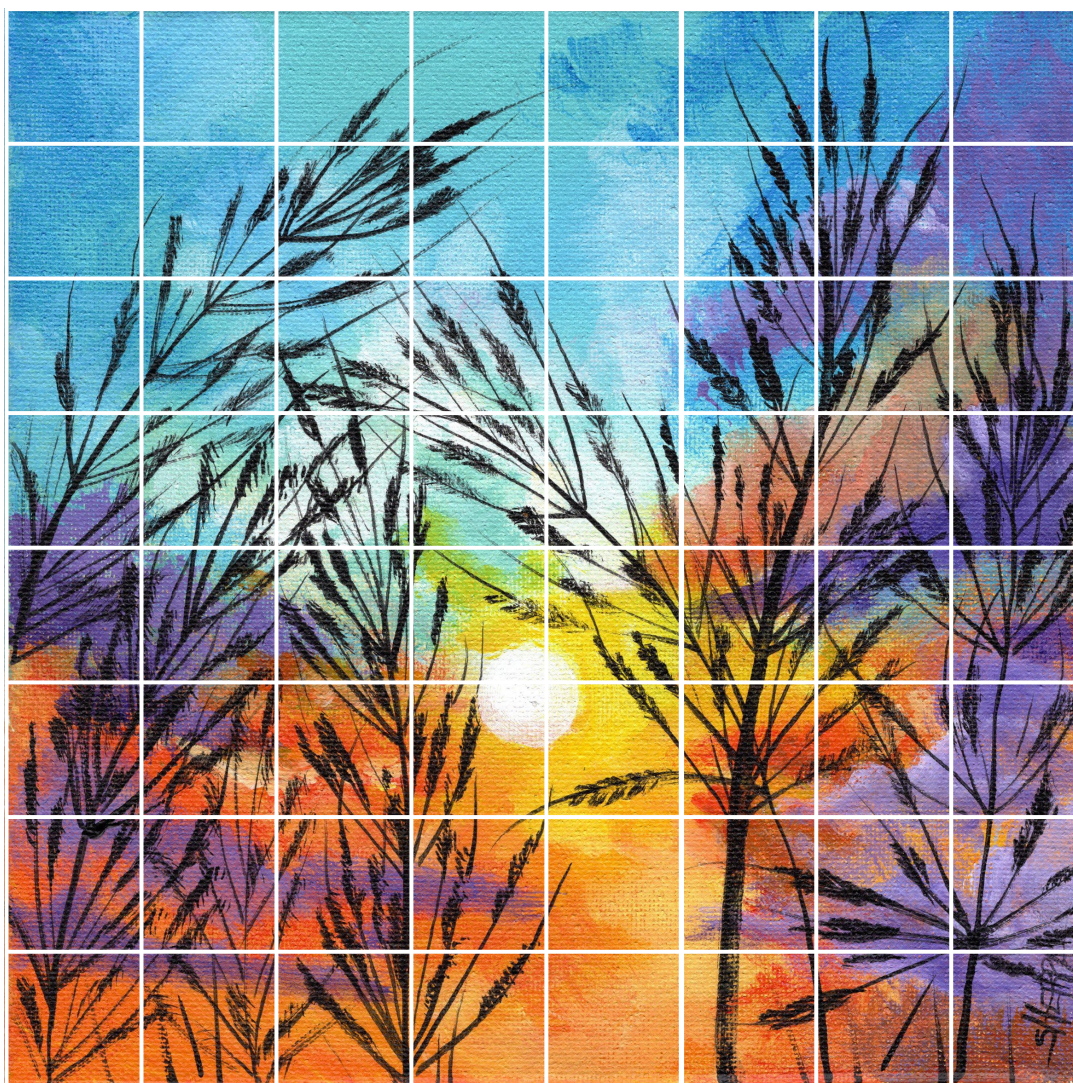
GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

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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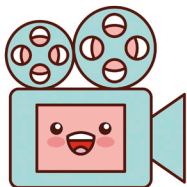
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