

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



FUEL THE FIRE

BY: THE ART SHERPA

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON: EMILY FLOR

STEPS: 10 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 HOOTS

SHERPA



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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 fairly difficult 2 Hoot difficulty painting of a campfire, which is a fairly neutral still life, 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 you are a beginning painter and want to attempt this, I do provide all the resources you need for success. 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.

Sherpa Tip: - Be comfortable being uncomfortable in art; that's when you grow.

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
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Dioxazine Purple = DP
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES:

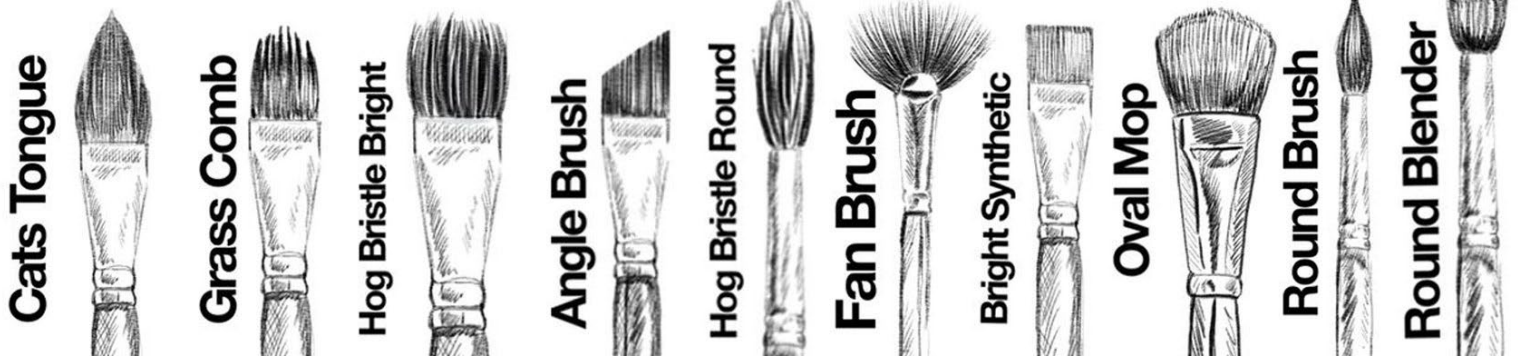
- Large Hog Cutter Brush
- Medium Hog Round Brush
- Large Round Hog Brush
- #1 Monogram Liner
- Small Fan Brush
- 1" Oval Mop
- #8 TAS Cat's Tongue
- ¾" Angle Brush
- Grass Comb/Grainer

TOOLS:

- 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
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Perspective of Waves
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing
- Dynamic Lighting
- 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	2:02	BACKGROUND
STEP 2	10:22	WHITE FIRE FOUNDATION
STEP 3	17:51	SMOKE
STEP 4	31:51	FIRE STRUCTURE
STEP 5	40:28	GLOWING EMBERS
STEP 6	55:22	DEEPER FLAME VALUES
STEP 7	1:04:16	WARMER FLAME VALUES
STEP 8	1:10:54	BRIGHTER FLAMES
STEP 9	1:19:42	SHAMCEY HEAT
STEP 10	1:33:43	DRAMA WITH SPARKS SIGN



THE GOLDSILLOCKS 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.



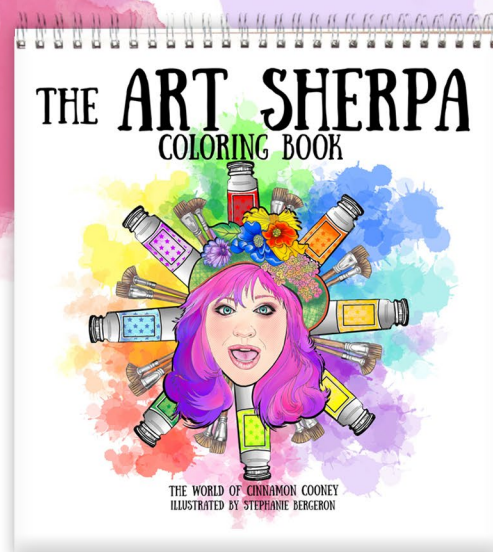


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STEP 1 - BACKGROUND

"SHERPA LOOKS TO THE FUTURE"

PAINT:

Dioxazine Purple = DP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Hog Cutter 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, the traceable, and the grid reference. I drew in only the major objects.

- Dampen a 1 to 2" hog cutter brush, and paint the background with DP.

***Sherpa Tip:** I foresee the price of canvases going up in price, so if you can afford it, you might want to stock up on them before everyone is back indoors with COVID surges during the winter months.*



STEP 2 - WHITE FIRE FOUNDATION

"WHITE HOT AND SMOKEY"

PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Round Hog Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Dampen a large round, hog brush, and load it with TW. Then just above the center start adding sketchy little flame strokes to indicate the top of the fire.
- On the left side, about midway from the bottom, add "S" curved strokes to indicate the top of some flames.
- Below that, dance in another line of fire towards the center area, coming up to meet that first group of flames we added. Keep working lightly, to the right. Creating lines that help us contain the fire and not see the forest ablaze.
- The lofting areas indicate smoke that might be coming from the fire and in the body of the fire, the white indicates the hot area.

At the beginning of this step we talked about sign language between partners and tightening things up and "then" we decided to paint Step 2.



STEP 3 - SMOKE

"HAZY SHADES OF BLUE"

PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

1" Oval Mop

STEP DISCUSSION

- Get an oval mop, dampened and loaded with TW + PB, then start swirling blue fire movements in and around the white fire segments. This is quite transparent, like a glaze. You can add more blue if you want it to be less transparent.
- Some swirls of this could be lofting up into the atmosphere on the sides of the fire, but I chose to have my swirls loft to the right as if the wind were catching them and moving them.

John - Do you have a Smoke Shifter for this fire?

Cinnamon - I think you are making this up.

John - No, you mean you have never had a smoke shifter. In Boy Scouts, we used to send out young Scouts to borrow a Smoke Shifter from the next troop. It's a thing. Next time you see a Scout leader, go ask to borrow a Smoke Shifter.

***Sherpa Tip:** In landscaping painting, to give an oil look to your acrylics, add zinc white to your color.*





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STEP 4 - FIRE STRUCTURE

“FIRE IS DEFINED BY LIGHT AND SHADOW”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

¾" Angle Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Get an angle brush loaded with MB and add it under some of the white, at the bottom of some of the wood areas. This will set the foundation for burnt wood. The fire has to have a fuel source to live and today, it's wood. Use my reference at the back of this step to help you with placement.
- Get CRM on the dirty brush to start adding some areas that might still have live embers.
- Rinse out your brush.
- Mix DP + CRM for another layer of live embers that live there. Add TW to this mix for lighter irregular shapes, and different colored layers of burnt wood.
- Add DP + PB and make sure that values are dark and deep in the foreground, in front of the fire.
- Fire is defined by it's light as much as by its shadow.



STEP 5 - GLOWING EMBERS

"EMBERS LEAD TO WHITE HOT"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Round Hog Brush

¾" Angle Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Using the angle brush and PB + TW we will start adding some glow. At the center wood area, start adding a bit of a rock, with the lighter blue closest to the fire and darker as it moves out into the foreground. Add some more rocks and don't hesitate to use my reference to help you if you are having problems with placement.
- Rinse out thoroughly.
- Get DP + QM + TW to a warm purple, and add a touch of CYM, to desaturate it a bit. Then add this color, working up from the wood, closer to the flame.
- Come back with a bit of CRM in places for a hot spot of heat.
- Get a medium hog bright with CRM + DP and just below the flame, add burning embers in small irregular shapes.

- In my world, on the right side, I decided that a log had fallen and scattered embers on the ground in the foreground.
- Mix CRM + CYM to an orange, then using the corner of the brush, add the brightest of embers near the top of the logs.
- Get a lot more CYM in your orange, and add warmer, brighter highlights to some of the embers.

Sherpa Tip: When painting fire, it is important to remember that the hotter the fire is, the whiter it is. To get to the white hot impression though, we have to show the heat of the ember so that the viewer understands the source of the heat.



STEP 6 - DEEPER FLAME VALUES

"FIRE TO FIRE"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

STEP DISCUSSION

- To add some fire to the fire, get the Cat's Tongue, dampened, and begin applying "S" strokes using the edge of the brush. Work from the outside of

the fire, inward and kind of outline the white with an orange, that is more to the CRM than CYM.

- Add flames in the foreground of all the wood areas of the fire pyre using varied mixes of the orange.
- On the main body of the flame add all of your oranges and yellow mixes.



STEP 7 - WARMER FLAME VALUES

“THE STEP TITLE”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

STEP DISCUSSION

- More heat sir. Get the Cat's Tongue and a mix of CYM with a touch of CRM, definitely more to the yellow, and start inputting that color in the

flames. A good fire will have shadow.

- If you need assistance, be sure to use the photo reference that follows to help you with placement of this slightly cooler flame. Try to imagine a fire in your head that maybe you have been able to observe. You can even do a little bit of research into campfires to help you get a better understanding of how others have captured flames and campfires. Having a good understanding of your subject matter will only make you a better artist.

John - Uh oh, we're on the most dangerous step.

Cinnamon - Why?

John - Because seven ate nine.



STEP 8 - BRIGHTER FLAMES

“SWIRLING CENTERS OF HEAT”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Fan Brush

Grass Comb

STEP DISCUSSION

- To start this step, we want a brush that gives ragged lines and a grass comb or grainer or filbert will give that effect.

- With a grass comb and CYM + TW, pop in bright curve strokes in the center of some of the flames.
- Use a fan brush to swirl some of these flames at the center bottom, for a beautiful effect.



STEP 9 - SCHMANCEY HEAT

"9 IS A SURVIVOR"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Grass Comb

STEP DISCUSSION

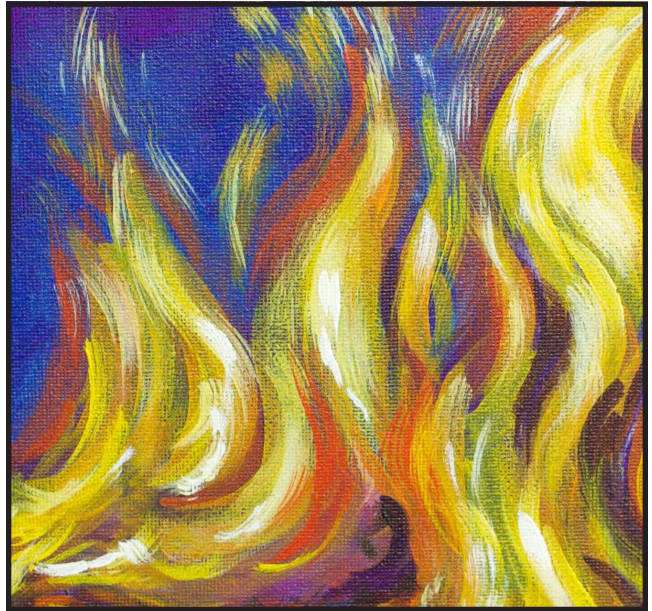
- Use the grass comb and the lightest yellow to keep inputting heat in the center of the flames.
- Get CRM + CYM to a yellowy-orange, and come into some of the upper red flames over the fire and add touches of sparkling embers rising from the depths.
- Get TW with a touch of CYM and add fine little lines of bright heat.
- Stand back to observe and see what you think you need to do. Do you need more shadow, or light? Do you need to put back in some dark to see the light?
- Add a light yellow to highlight some of the flying embers that are heading up and off the canvas.
- We learned a new word today from a community member. "Schmancy" is a great word and just rolls off the tongue. You can

find the definition in the Webster's Dictionary and you will undoubtedly hear and see this word come up again from time to time.

John - Nine is here after all.

Cinnamon - No fighting. You are not allowed to fight.

John - 7 did not 8 9.



STEP 10 - DRAMA WITH SPARKS

"WHITE HOT MOMENTS"

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#1 Monogram Liner

Monogram Liner Brush, with CYM to start adding small pops of light in some of the upward flames near the top of the canvas.

- Add tiny ember highlights in some of the red hot moments in the dark burned wood area using FWP.
- Sign.

STEP DISCUSSION

- Details are a bit of a journey, so I wanted to detail all in one step.
- It takes me a second to find the detail brush, and I'm going to use the #1



THE TRACING METHOD

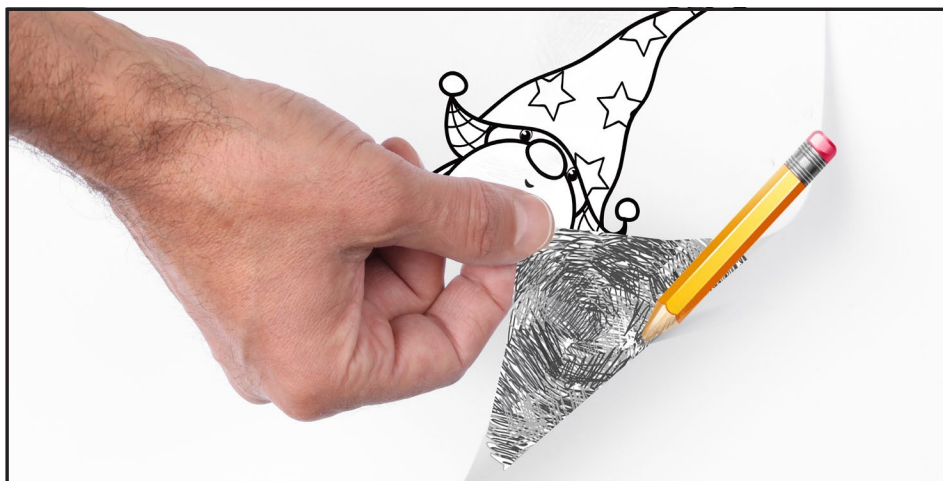
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



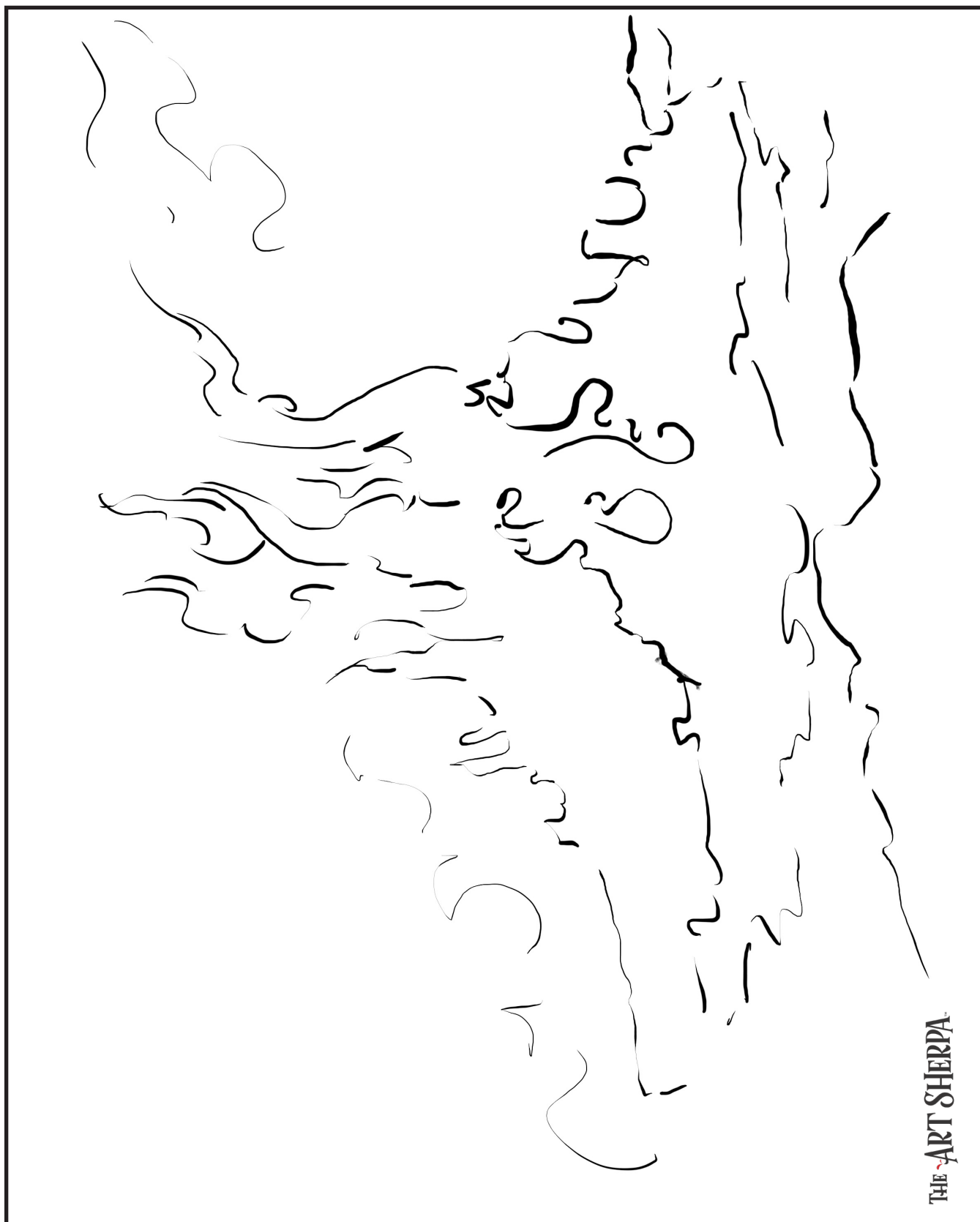
see that your transfer is happening. If not check if your rubbing is too thin or that your pressure is not too light. After you are done tracing the lines, remove your traceable and you should have a copy of the line art on your canvas.



- 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 9 x 12 canvas and the example is based on a one-inch square grid with everything of equal ratio. On your 9 x 12 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.

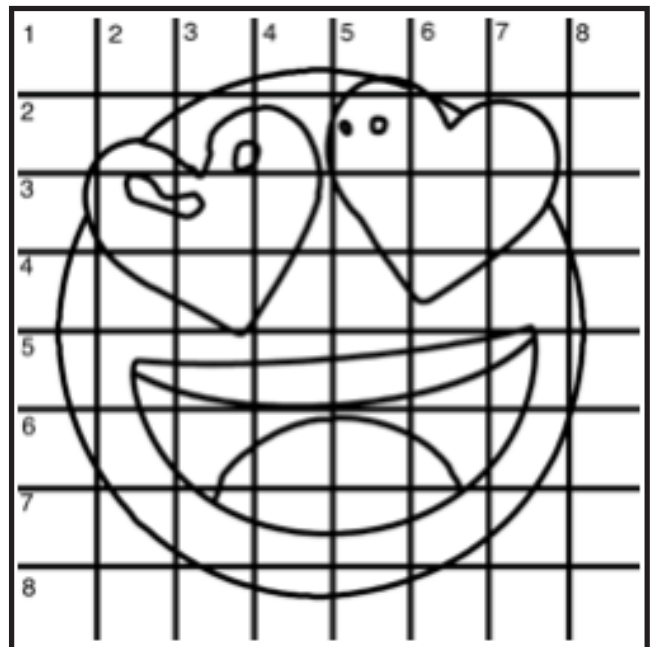
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could 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 - 12, left to right, and your rows 1 - 9 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.



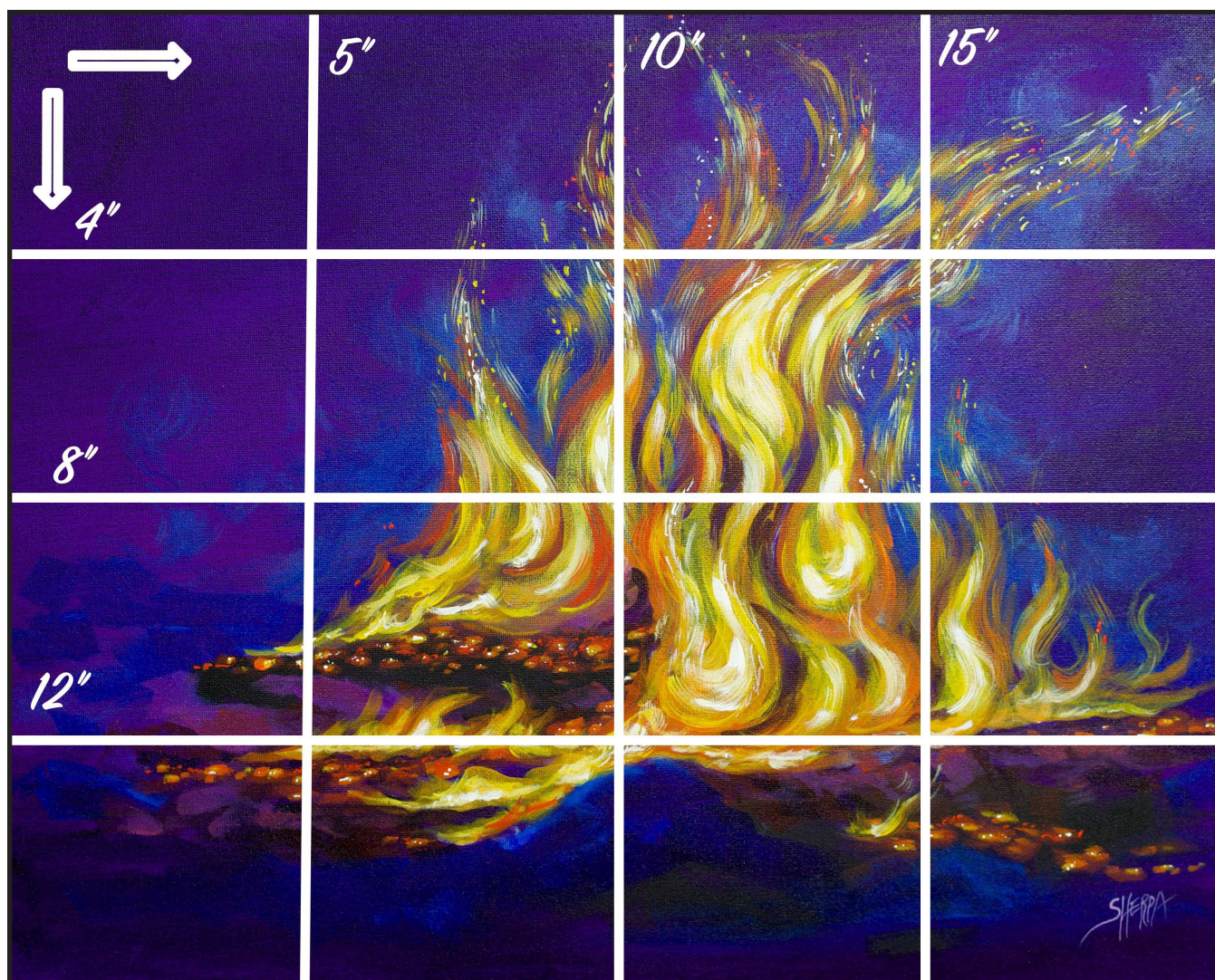
GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

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 9 x 12 canvas to match the free grid for this project.

GRID REFERENCE:



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