# IMPRESSIONIST TRAIN IN THE SNOW

BY: THE ART SHERPA

REFERENCE: "LE TRAIN EN HIVER" BY CLARENCE GAGNON

STEPS: 11 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2.5 HOOTS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# SHERPA
## FORWARD:

I have been resolved in 2021 to do more to teach art rather 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.

In November 2021, my community undertook a month-long painting journey entitled "Beginners Acrylic Paint Course" which consisted of almost daily premiers on YouTube and Facebook, followed by a live Q&A session. It was a true beginners art course and taught all a beginner needs to know to be able to paint my beginner, 1 Hoot, paintings. If you are a beginner painter and did not take advantage of that course, which culminates with a Certificate of Completion, I highly encourage you to do so.

https://theartsherpa.com/BeginnerAcrylicPaintingCourse

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 more complicated painting of The Art Sherpa's "12 Days of Christmas" 2021. Your end result will probably be by using this document as well as following the tutorial step by step. If you are a beginning painter and want to attempt this, I recommend that you take advantage of all the available free resources I provide.

I chose to take a look back at some vintage pictures from Christmases past this year, but I have done numerous holiday themed tutorials in years past that can be found on my website if you would like to see them. If there is something you don't like in the reference, you won't like it in the painting. Remove it or change it. I have also added the color Yellow Ochre to the 2021 palette for this one to aid in the skin tones.

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

• Ultramarine Blue = UB

• Burnt Sienna = BS

• Dioxazine Purple = DP

• Titanium White = TW

• Fluid White Paint = FWP

• Quinacridone Magenta = QM

### BRUSHES:

• Round Hog Brush

• Large Bright Hog Bristle

• #1 TAS Detail Brush

• ½" Angle Brush

• #4 TAS Round

• #8 TAS Cat's Tongue

## TOOLS:

• 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

• Expressive Painting Strokes

• Being Painterly and Loose

• Atmospheric Perspective

• Finding Value

• Dry Brushing

• Color Theory

• Directionality

• Blending Wet into Wet

• Clouds

• Color Mixing

• Dynamic Light



Hog Bristle Bright · Angle Brush · Hog Bristle Round · Detail Liner · Round Brush · Cats Tongue
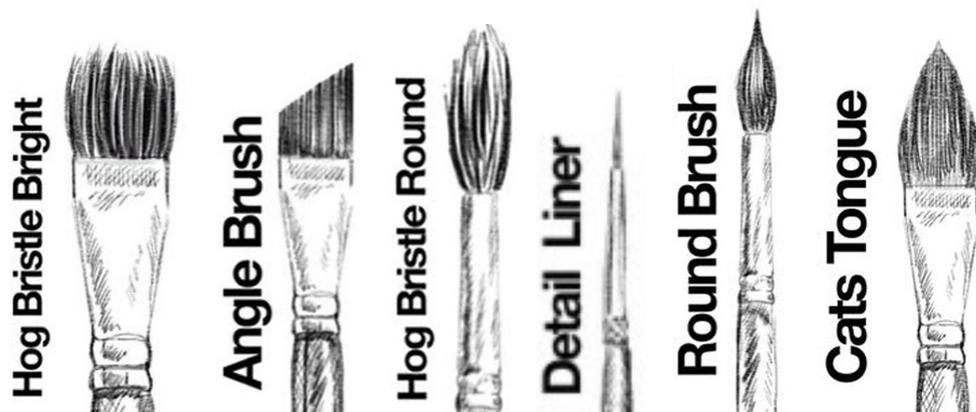
# VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE:

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 | 4:35 | COLOR GROUND |
| STEP 2 | 9:36 | IMAGE |
| STEP 3 | 14:56 | SKY |
| STEP 4 | 21:25 | SNOW FIRST LAYER |
| STEP 5 | 27:48 | BLUE SNOW LAYER |
| STEP 6 | 32:47 | MOUNTAINS |
| STEP 7 | 42:03 | HARDSCAPE |
| STEP 8 | 58:10 | FENCE AND FOREGROUND SNOW |
| STEP 9 | 1:16:13 | TRAIN |
| STEP 10 | 1:22:35 | SMOKE |
| STEP 11 | 1:33:46 | TRAIN DETAILS |
|  |  | SIGN |

# 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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THE WORLD OF CINNAMON COONEY
ILLUSTRATED BY STEPHANIE BERGERON
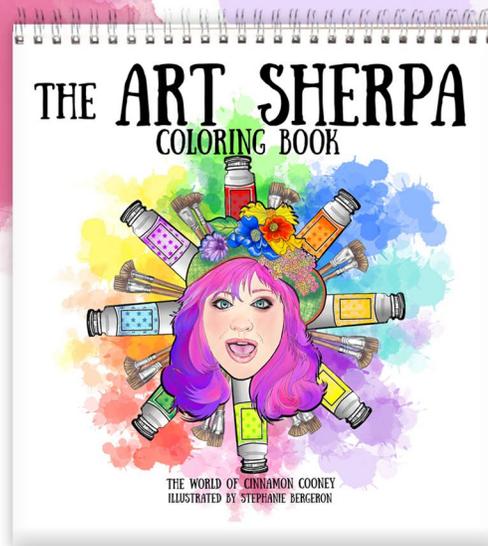
# STEP 1 - COLOR GROUND

## "ART & COUPLES THERAPY"

**PAINT:**
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW

**BRUSHES & TOOLS:**
Large Bright Hog Bristle

**STEP DISCUSSION**
• Today, we paint a reproduction of "Le Train En Hiver" by Clarence Gagnon, 1913-14, a Canadian Impressionist. We will not paint an authentic replica of the original, but a reproduction using the original as a reference. I definitely will be putting my own spin on it. Like Ya Do.

• Let's start with a colored ground. To begin this landscape, I chose a large bright brush with a mix of UB + BS to make a blue gray, then I added TW to lighten it. With the canvas in landscape orientation, just cover the entire surface. Your goal is a scruffy, wintery finish that shows a variety of color streaks.

• Dry, but remember John's lectures on using heat.

# STEP 2 – IMAGE

## "IT'LL BE COMING ROUND THE BEND"

**PAINT:**
Titanium White = TW

**BRUSHES & TOOLS:**
#8 TAS Cat's Tongue
#4 TAS Round
Chalk/Watercolor Pencil

**STEP DISCUSSION**

• The objective in this step is to determine where the major objects live in the landscape. I am using a Cat's Tongue and TW paint. On the left, just above the center, make a line that goes towards the middle of the canvas, using broken sweeping strokes. Add the mountain outline above this but stay about three fingers down from the top. I suggest you use chalk if you want. Start a hill on the right and then add the train tracks from the left lower corner that goes behind that hill you just put in.

• I scaled in an image to represent the train because as you paint, it can mentally get bigger than you realize.

• I switched to a round brush to paint the train, I came up the tracks from the hill and added the cattle pusher which is that front area of the train. It's very loose. Once I had that cattle pusher in, I added the roundness of the front of the engine. We don't even see the wheels because it is pushing snow up underneath it on the tracks.

• Use the brush to imply some cars and snow coming down from the hill and then a snow bank on the far side of the tracks.

# STEP 3 - SKY

## "FLICKING BRANCHES"

**PAINT:**

CadYellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Blue = PB
Titanium White = TW
Quinacridone Magenta = QM

**BRUSHES & TOOLS:**

Bright Hog Bristle

**STEP DISCUSSION**

- With a bright hog brush, mix UB with just a smidge of QM and TW for a light purple color. This is the color of the cloud bank over the mountainous range. Add more UB in the mix closer to the peaks of the hill, in the sky area.

- Rinse.

- Get some CYM to PB and TW to a very light, very bright aqua, and dust this arctic color into the upper regions of the sky.

- Mix CYM + BS and a lot of TW, and add some wiggles, on the edge of the brush, in the skyline. Less is more. Step back and observe and fix any elements of the sky that you want to.
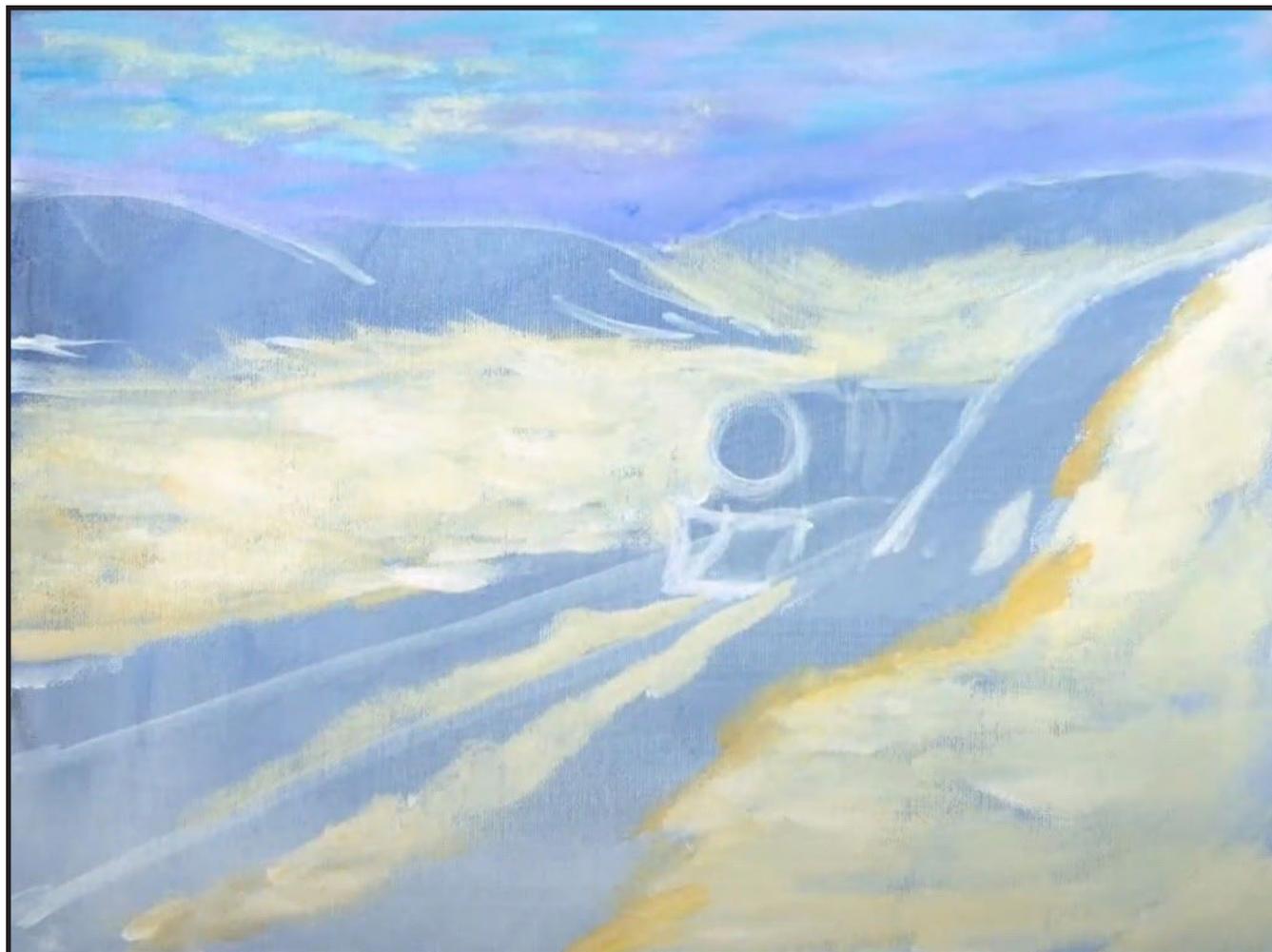
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# STEP 4 - SNOW FIRST LAYER

## "MESSY TREES CAN PUT THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE"

**PAINT:**
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Titanium White = TW
Burnt Sienna = BS

**BRUSHES & TOOLS:**
Bright Hog Bristle

**STEP DISCUSSION**
• I loved the CYM + BS + TW snow color, so we're going to start with it on the bright hog brush. Paint in this warm snow value, which is quite reflective, in the valley on the left.

Leave the lower snowbank area unpainted for now. This area is streaky and the color is varied.

• Come back with TW in places toward the center of the canvas. Bring this color to the right snowbank and use the photo reference to help you with placement.

• There is an area where I added more BS to the mix to separate the warm snow from the cool snow.

# STEP 5 – BLUE SNOW LAYER

## "THE COOLER SNOW"

**PAINT:**
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Titanium White = TW
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB

**BRUSHES & TOOLS:**
Bright Hog Bristle

**STEP DISCUSSION**

• Mix UB + PB on the bright hog brush and add TW for a neutral color, it's ok if there is a touch of QM in the mix. As I worked on the right side of the canvas, I slightly redesigned the hill and the separation between cool and warm snow; not, in any sense, that snow is ever warm. While there is a lot of yellow snow in this landscape, it probably would be good enough for snow ice cream. Avoid the yellow snow in your yard when making snow ice cream.

• Paint the bank of snow between the train path and the yellow valley on the left applying these brush strokes vertically. Paint the snow banks on each side of the snow in front of the train.

• Bring this color into some spaces on the right side and roughly into the mountains.

# STEP 6 – MOUNTAINS

## "THE QUIET STEP"

**PAINT:**
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Blue = PB

**BRUSHES & TOOLS:**
Round Hog Brush

**STEP DISCUSSION**

• Get a round hog brush and mix UB + BS to a smokey blue gray, then add it to the mountain tops to define them against the beautiful sky. You want to use this to help you paint the shadows of the mountains. Vary the color and try to be as loose as possible. As you move down, you can get more into the PB, blending it into the mountain. If your value gets too dark, add in the light value with UB + TW. You can add some BS to the mix in places. Please use the step photo reference to help you with color placement and to get to the place I was before I went to the next step.

• Remember to refresh your colors on your palette as you need to.

• Add some shadow on the snow directly in front of

the mountains, using your cool snow color from the last step.

• Rinse the brush.

• Get CYM + BS to add the light reflections between the first range and the second range of mountains and between the front hill and the back mountains. TW will be used for the brightest areas on the dirty brush.

• Rinse the brush.

• Mix CYM + TW for some bright highlights, along the top of the snow drifts by the path, maybe the snow is very light there.

• Use a mix of PB + TW as a highlight color along the furthest mountain. Then add UB + QM + TW at the base of that back mountain.
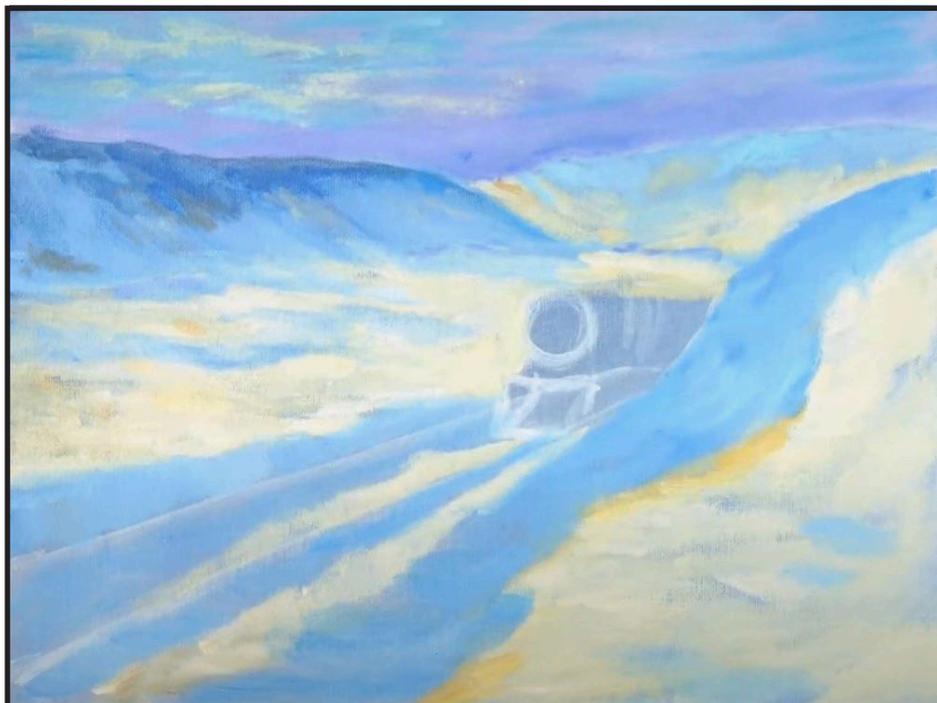
# STEP 7 - HARDSCAPE

## "IT TAKES A VILLAGE"

### PAINT:
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Phthalo Blue = PB
Cad Red Medium = CRM
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Ultramarine Blue = UB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:
½" Angle Brush
#1 TAS Detail Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

• With a tricky move, I deftly switched to an angle brush for control, mix BS + MB and add a triangle to the valley on the left side of the canvas. Turn that triangle into a rooftop and add some bits to imply that perhaps the land is inhabited. You have my photo reference in this step to assist you. I did switch to a small detail brush. You just want a loose expression here; just implying architectural shapes.

• Add some of your purple-blue mix on the right side of the clearing and on the houses.

• Switch back to your angle brush and mix UB, BS + MB. Paint in the metal of the rail lines and add a pole and line on the slope of the hill on the right, add

some rocks there as well. Don't forget the fence posts that run behind the train, in front of the back mountains.

• Mix your UB + QM + TW to purple and add some of this color in the buildings of the community. Add some PB in the houses.

• Rinse out.

• Paint along the tops of the rails with UB and then with BS+TW.

• Make an orange with CYM + CRM + BS + TW and use this color in the buildings. Then add UB on some of the roof tops. Use purple to add shadows in the community.

• This is definitely the step that will make all of the paintings be very different.

• Add some of your gold to the top of the tracks and the orange to highlight some rocks on the left.

# STEP 8 – FENCE AND FOREGROUND SNOW

## "THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER"

**PAINT:**
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Titanium White = TW
Phthalo Blue = PB
Cad Red Medium = CRM
Ultramarine Blue = UB

**BRUSHES & TOOLS:**
½" Angle Brush
Round Hog Brush

**STEP DISCUSSION**

• Continue using the angle brush. Add a peachy-orange fence line near the bottom of the slope on the left. Some of these fence posts are upright, some have fallen over, and some are leaning. Get some UB on the dirty brush for shadows. Add some TW for a highlight color. Use the shadow blue to add dark areas in the snow.

• Get your hog round and your snow color, CYM + BS + TW, and on the toe of the brush, start adding warm snow in the track area in front of the train. It is actually drifts of snow. It is ok to add some touches of orange here and there. Add a touch of PB in there as a shadow. Put some shadow under the ledge of the snow bank on the left. Add snow over and close to the track. Dry brush some TW on the slope on the left.

• Add some lilac on the hill, which is just a bit of QM + TW on the dirty brush. Snow is great because it reflects every color around it.

• Get some blue to that pole on the hill. Then highlight it by adding more TW, add shadows with more blue.

• Add highlights and shadows to your rocks on the hill, using some of your mixes.

• The side of the hill, near the train, has more BS. Add TW + BS + CYM for a highlight color on the rocks. Use UB to define the edge of the hill in front of that BS.
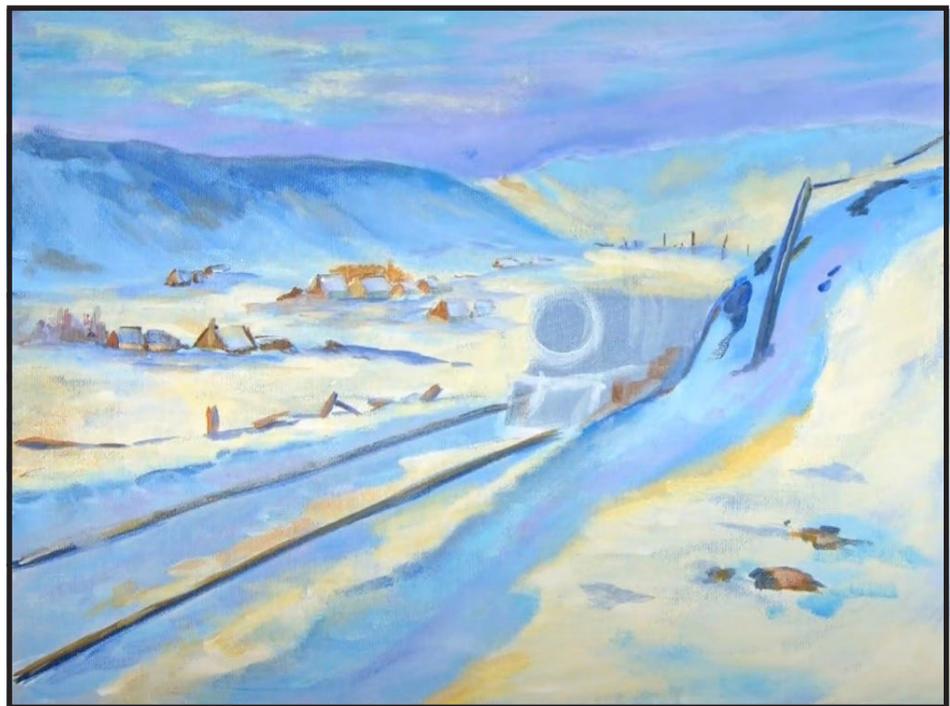
# STEP 9 - TRAIN

## "TIMBITS VS KRISPY CREME"

**PAINT:**
Mars Black = MB
Ultramarine Blue = UB

**BRUSHES & TOOLS:**
#4 TAS Round
Round Hog Brush

**STEP DISCUSSION**

• With the round hog brush, add some dry brushed snow over the train tracks with one of your bluish-white snow mixes.

• Get a round brush loaded with UB and paint the cattle catcher; it's kind of like an open book that is pointed down. Outline the circle face of the engine and then paint it in. As you get to the engine, you will start at the top and paint down in arches to imply the roundness.

• Use MB to outline the cars.

• Mix UB + MB and paint this dark value into the cars behind the engine and between the cattle catcher and the engine. Do allow the black outline to show between the cars.

*John - OK, I have to say that the donut discussion in chat is making me hungry and for information purposes, TimBits are Canada's response to Krispy Creme.*

# STEP 10 – SMOKE

## "SMOKE STACK SMOKE"

**PAINT:**
Titanium White = TW
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Burnt Sienna = BS
Cad Red Medium = CRM
Mars Black = MB
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

**BRUSHES & TOOLS:**
Round Hog Brush

**STEP DISCUSSION**

• For puffy clouds, use the round hog. Mix BS + QM + TW to a pinkish color, and paint it coming out the smokestack, on the front of the engine and drifting back into the sky, behind the train and near the top of the canvas. Add UB to this mix for the next smoky layer. Mix BS + MB to a sooty color and add that. Why? Because smoke is sooty.

• Rinse out.

• Make an orange using CRM + CYM and add this as a highlight. Your goal is not to overpaint all the layers but to enhance the overall effect.

• Play with your colors to build up the steamy smoke. Make gray with MB + TW and then add some CYM for another smokey color. Come back with another gray in the smoke.

• Add TW, to the gray for a smokey highlight color. The smoke is probably where Clarence spent the most of his time, and it is the place we will play with our paintings the most. This is another area that guarantees that no two paintings will look alike.

# STEP 11 - TRAIN DETAILS

## "SOOTY, SNOWY, AND DARK, SO THERE"

### PAINT:
Phthalo Blue = PB
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Cad Red Medium = CRM
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Quinacridone Magenta = QM

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:
#1 TAS Detail Brush
#4 TAS Round
Round Hog Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION
• Get the round brush and make an orange using CRM + CYM. add in those little plates on the front of the engine that do stuff, above the cattle pusher. Add BS to the mix and paint around the face of the circle, reserving a blue box area in the middle of the circle. Add some highlights to the cattle pusher and along the tops of some of the cars behind the engine.

• Take UB + BS and glaze it over the other side of the cattle pusher. Add TW to your orange, with a touch of BS, to highlight the ridge between the sides of the cattle pusher and the left side. Add some of this gold to the open box in the face and at the smoke stack.

• Make your cool snow color, UB + QM + TW, and add some snow that has gotten stuck along the cattle pusher. Get MB + BS for a dark shadow color for the left side of the cattle pusher and in places as an outline color or as a shadow along the engine and railcars.

• Switch to a detail brush and orange to play with highlights on the engine face. Add CYM for a brighter color, and CRM for a redder color. Add TW to lighten or MB to shade. I did decide to come back with BS to make sure that the front of the engine had that oxidized look to it.

• Mix PB + UB + MB and add some deep values to the sides of the cars.

• On the tip of a round hog, without a lot of water, use your aqua (PB + TW) to apply a base of snow that is being thrown out from under the train up the sides of the cars.

• We spent a little time but we painted a train.

• 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.



- 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 Seral 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

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.
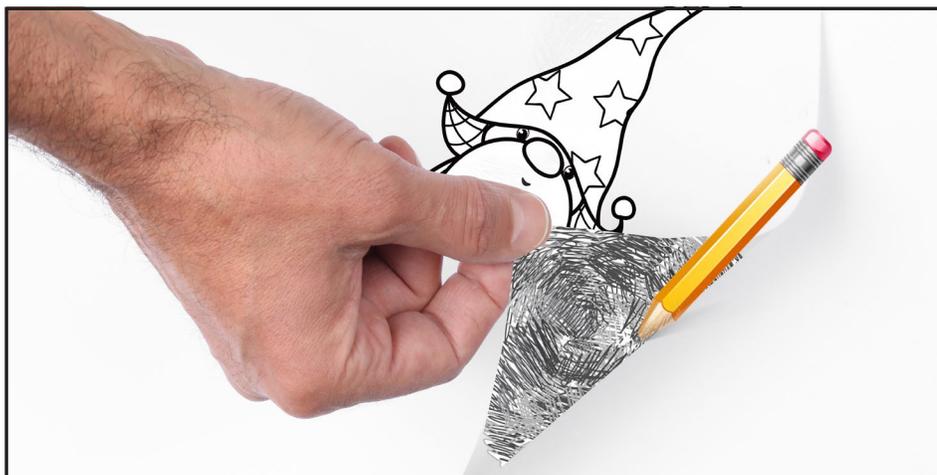
## GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS:

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.
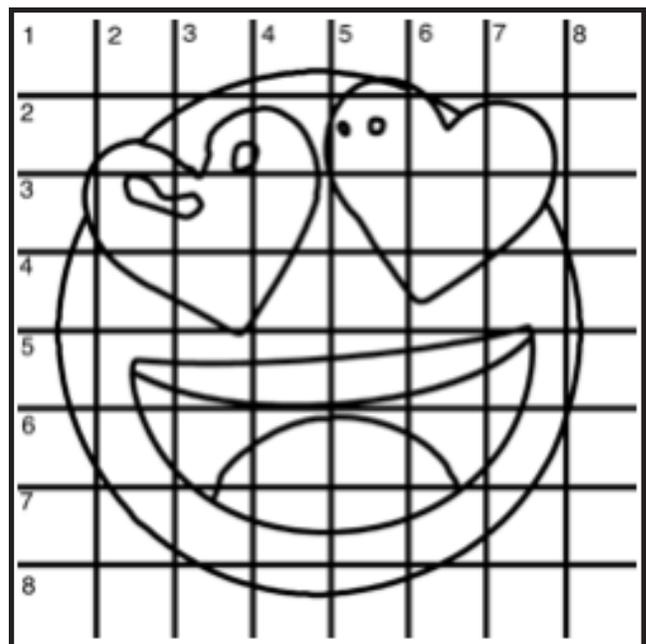
## GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

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:
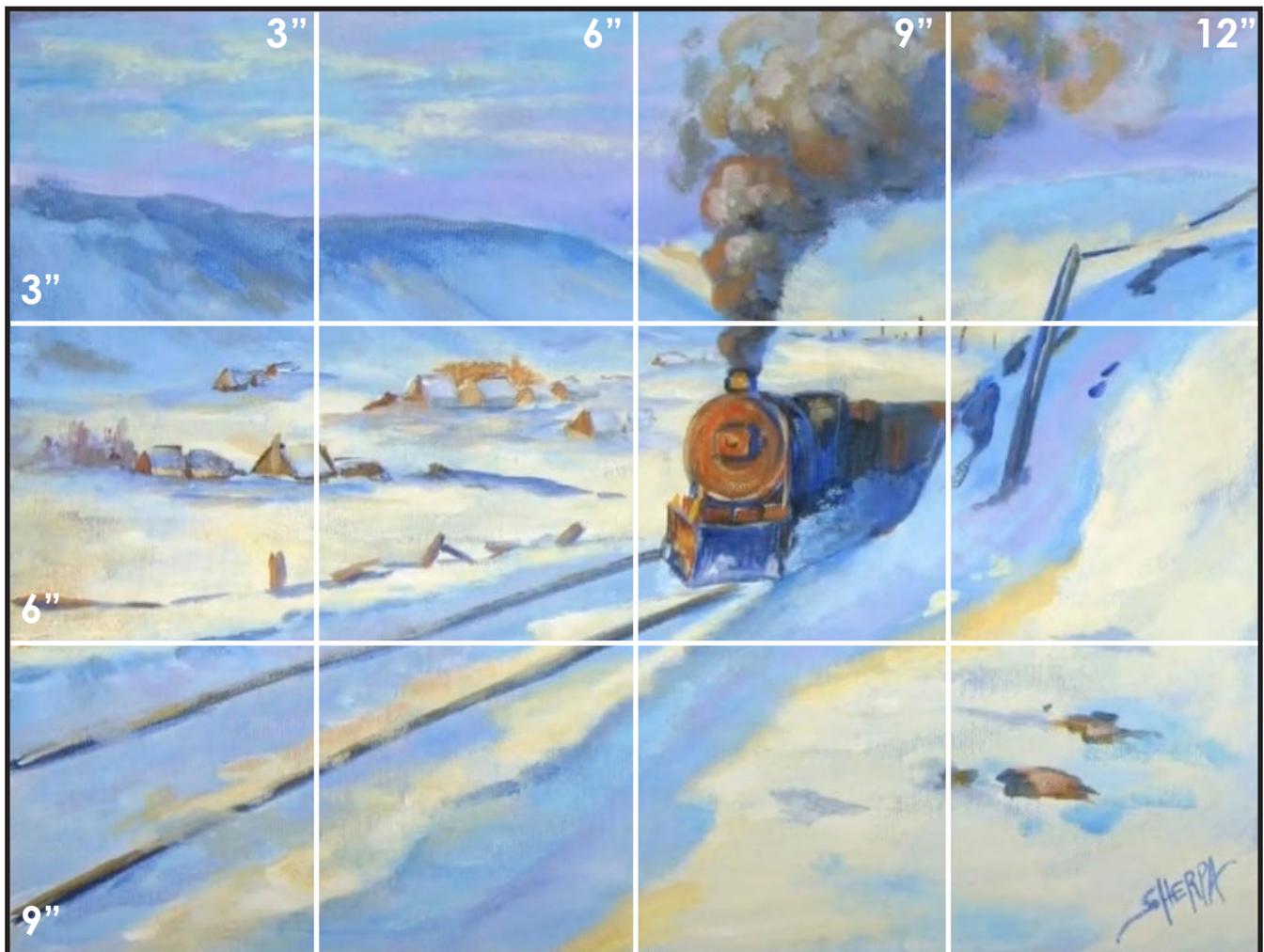
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