

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



BLUE ROBIN BIRD ON A BRANCH

BLUEBIRD & BLOSSOMS

BY: THE ART SHERPA

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON: RAQUEL LYNN ROSE

STEPS: 8 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 HOOTS



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SHERPA FORWARD:

I am resolved 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 are included and more can be found at: theartsherpa.com

Keep 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.

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:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES:

- Large Hog Cutter Brush
- Large Synthetic Round Brush
- Medium Synthetic Bright Brush
- Medium Hog Bright Brush
- Small Synthetic Round Brush
- Medium Synthetic Angle Brush

TOOLS:

- T-Square Ruler
- 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
- Implying Foliage
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Sea Foam
- 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	03:36	SKETCH IN THE IMAGE
STEP 2	11:31	PAINTING THE BLUE SKY
STEP 3	33:24	BRANCH BROWNS
STEP 4	37:39	FLOWER WARMS
STEP 5	56:30	FLOWERS COOL AND LEAVES
STEP 6	1:09:48	BIRD DARK
STEP 7	1:15:09	BIRD'S FIRST LAYER COLOR
STEP 8	1:23:30	MORE COLOR, EYE AND BEAK
	1:33:00	SIGN

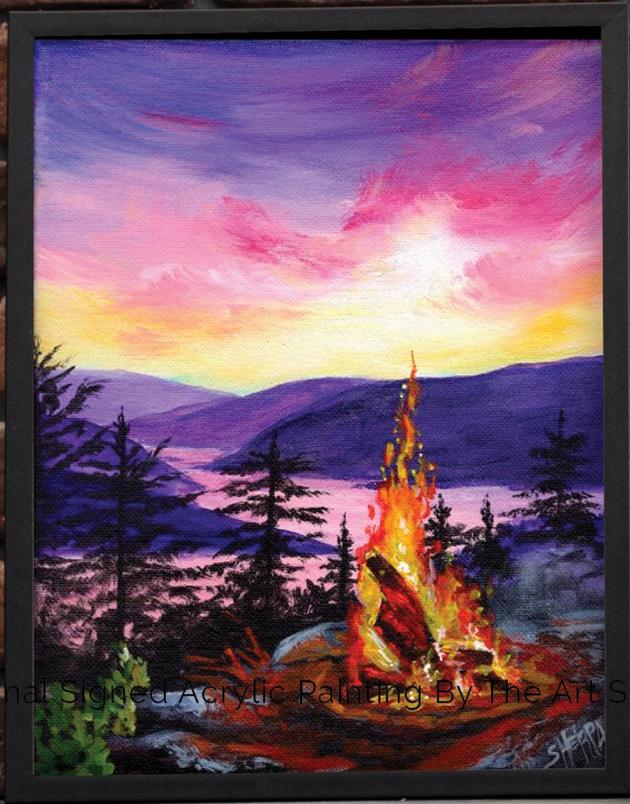


THE GOLDILOCKS ZONE

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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STEP 1 - SKETCH IN IMAGE

“LET’S DO THIS”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Round Synthetic Brush

COLOR MIXES:

- Deep Brown = BS + MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- I chose to freehand this image but I have also provided a traceable 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.
- Loosely sketch in the positioning of the branches and the bird using the Deep Brown mix. Then, make a mark on the right hand side about a hand down from the top. Starting at that mark, swoop down, on an angle and across the canvas, stopping before you get all the way to the other side. Thin it as you go to create a rough branch. Just a little below

that, sketch in a second similar branch that ends near the center of the canvas.

- Two or three fingers above the branch, put in a circle for the bird's body and fill it in. At the top left side of the circle add a triangle for the beak. Add his head above the beak and tuck it into the back. Paint the wing off the back, also tucking it into the body. Just below that, sketch the tail and anchor his legs to the branch.
- On the branches, roughly wiggle in irregular shapes that later become flowers and leaves. This allows you to position these objects while also giving them depth.
- Dry the canvas before the next step.



STEP 2 - PAINTING THE BLUE SKY

“PROTECT THE ART”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Hog Cutter Brush

Medium Synthetic Bright Brush

COLOR MIXES:

- Light Sky = TW + PB + CYM
- Medium Sky = PB + CYM

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Lightly, wet the Cutter Brush and load it with the Light Sky mix. Roughly paint in the sky starting at the top left. You can paint the sides now if you are not framing your piece. Begin adding in the Medium Sky mix as you move lower on the surface. The top area of the sky will be lighter and deepen and darken as it gets lower. Finally ending with Phthalo Blue at the bottom right corner. Blending as you go. No need to get real close or be precious around the objects because we will be painting that in shortly. Make adjustments in the sky, around the bird, so that the values will stand out against the background. Rinse.
- Switch to the Bright Brush to paint in close to the

objects, using the same color mixes in the same areas. Be expressive and painterly as you blend these mixes. The Bird will have lighter colors on his back so you want the sky a bit darker there, his belly will be darker so the sky should be lighter in that area. Make these 'thought out' adjustments as you paint around all your objects.

- Switch back to the Cutter Brush loaded with Phthalo Blue, and deepen the color at the bottom right side of the canvas, roughly blending it in as you move to the left. Add Titanium White to the dirty brush and work out the sky at the top. Add a touch of Cadmium Yellow Medium near the bird's belly, using an almost dry brushed technique.
- Play with the sky until you're happy, switching between color mixes and brushes as needed.
- Dry the canvas before the next step.

Sherpa Tip: It is important to keep your brushes clean, so it is not a bad idea to pause between steps and wash the ones you have used.



STEP 3 - BRANCH BROWNS

“LET IT BE”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Mars Black = MB
Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Bright Brush

COLOR MIXES:

- Light Brown =
CYM + CRM + BS
- Dark Brown = BS + MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load the Light Brown mix

on your damp brush. Highlight along the tops of the branch, using the toe of the brush and strong strokes.

- Add Burnt Sienna on the dirty brush and dash in some midtone, bark texture. The dark value below creates a lot of depth. Rinse.
- Continue using the toe of the brush to add your shadows with the Dark Brown mix.
- Dry the canvas before the next step.



STEP 4 - FLOWER WARMS

“LOTS OF CONTRAST”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Bright Brush

COLOR MIXES:

- Deep Pink =
QM + CRM + TW
- Medium Pink =
TW + CRM + QM + CYM
- Light Pink = TW + QM
- Center = CYM + CRM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Begin the flowers with the Deep Pink mix using strong curved strokes. Flowers will start to emerge as you continue to paint. Vary the shapes and sizes. Some flowers will be fully open, some will layer over the branches and others will be buds.
- Loosely add in midtones using the Medium Pink mix.
- Highlight with the Light Pink mix. Add a bit of Cadmium Yellow Medium or a little Titanium White to create a bit of interest, in spots, here and there.
- Mix a lot of Titanium White on the dirty brush for the brightest pops of highlights.

- Add the Center mix to the middle of some of the flowers.
- Dry the canvas before the next step.

Sherpa Tip: Loose means, adding gestural strokes to form the shapes of the object without adding too much detail.



STEP 5 - FLOWERS COOL AND LEAVES

“PRETTY COOL”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
CadYellow Medium = CYM
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Bright Brush

COLOR MIXES:

- Cool Lavender =
QM + UB + TW
- Dark Green =
PG + BS + CYM
- Mid Green =
CYM + PG + BS
- Light Green =
CYM + PG + TW
- Yellow Pops = CYM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- With the Cool Lavender mix, create the bigger flowers on the right using curved strokes. Add this to some of the other flowers as shadows. Rinse thoroughly.
- While that dries, load the Dark Green mix and start adding the bases of leaves along the branches. Rinse thoroughly.
- Add touches of the Mid Green mix for a mid tone value on the leaves and sporadically around the branches.

- Load the Light Green mix to add the leaf highlights. Rinse.
- Add a lot more Titanium White to the Cool Lavender mix for the brightest pops of light. Touches of Cadmium Yellow tapped in, here and there. Rinse.
- Enhance the centers of the flowers with the Center mix from Step 4. Then tap in some of the Yellow Pop mix.
- Use the Light Brown mix from Step 3 and a bit of Titanium White to highlight the branches a little, wherever you think it is needed. Rinse.
- Dry the canvas before the next step.





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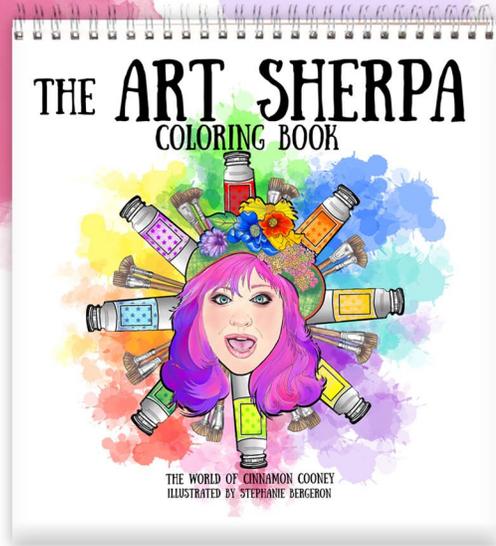


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STEP 6 - BIRD DARK

“SONG IN MY HEART”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

CadYellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Bright
Brush

Small Synthetic Round Brush

COLOR MIXES:

- Deep Purple = QM + UB
- Blue Purple = PB + UB + BS
- Cool Gray = BS + QM + UB
- Chest = CYM + CRM

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Using the Bright brush, loosely put in the cool areas of the bird with the Deep Purple mix. Apply this to the belly, tail and the wing line using strong strokes. The Blue Purple mix is applied under the wing and over the back. Refine the wing using the edge of the brush. Also paint some of this color at the top of the head. Rinse well.
- Load some of the Chest mix and add it to the breast, the cheek and above the eye area. Vary the mix slightly with more Cadmium Yellow and use the corner of the brush where needed. A touch is

also added to the wing. Rinse.

- The legs are captured using the edge of the brush and the Ultramarine Blue. Rinse.
- Switch to the Round brush and the Cool Gray mix. Add it on the beak and darken the eye area. Then a little on the top of his back and under the belly.
- Define the feet with Mars Black.
- Dry thoroughly before moving to the next step.



STEP 7 - BIRD'S FIRST LAYER COLOR

"FROSTING"

PAINT:

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

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Angle
Brush

COLOR MIXES:

- Purple = QM + UB + TW
- Color Pops =
CYM + CRM + BS
- Highlights = TW + CYM
- Chest = CYM + CRM

STEP DISCUSSION:

- On the breast of the bird add the Chest mix. Deepen the mix with Cadmium Red and tap in some of that color here as well. Then on the corner of the brush, add Cadmium Yellow, for the area around the beak. Use the Highlight mix to brighten his chest.
- Add some of the Chest mix into the wing, varying it with more Cadmium Red. Then use the Light Brown mix from Step 3, along the upper back. Rinse.
- Apply the Purple Mix on the belly, upper back and wing. Add a

lot of Titanium White to the mix for the top of the head. Darken it with Ultramarine Blue as you move towards his back. Mute the mix with a little Burnt Sienna and add it on his back and to the pin feathers on the wing.

- Add Phthalo Blue onto the dirty brush and blend it onto the back, tail, and lower belly. Mix in some Ultramarine Blue for more belly values. Rinse.
- Load the Cool Gray mix from step 6 and paint in the bottom of the beak, using the corner of the brush. Add a little Titanium White for the top of the beak.
- Mix Titanium White to the Purple mix for lighter touches of color in places on the bird. Rinse.
- Dry thoroughly before moving to the next step.

Sherpa Tip: Use all sides of the brush to give it more versatility and to paint details.



STEP 8 - MORE COLOR, EYE AND BEAK

"BIRDS OF A FEATHER"

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Angle Brush

Small Synthetic Round Brush

COLOR MIXES:

- Bright Yellow = CYM + TW
- Teal = PG + PB
- Bright Green = PG + PB + TW + CY
- Muted Blue = UB + QM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Lighten his chest, the forehead, above the eye and a dot on the cheek, using the corner of the Angle brush and the Bright Yellow mix. Rinse.
- Add the Teal mix under the wing. Then, mix in just a touch of the light browns from the palette, for a few pops of color on the belly. Paint a couple spots of the Bright Green mix here as well.
- Mix in more Titanium White and a touch of Cadmium Yellow for a spot on the cheek and wing. Vary these values and add interest throughout his

body by mixing in some of the previous blue mixes that are on your palette.

- Highlight the pin feathers on the tail and wing with Titanium White added to the Light Purple mix.
- Apply the Muted Blue mix to the top of the head and a few more random spots. Mix and add little pops of color until you are happy. Rinse.
- Switch to the Round brush. Mix some Burnt Sienna to the purple color on your palette and lighten it with Titanium White, for the highlight on the upper beak. Add the Bright Green mix to the dirty brush and put in a circle in the eye area. Add more Titanium White to highlight legs. Rinse. Refine the areas under the wing and belly with the purple mixes.
- Mars Black for the eye, beak line and nose. Rinse thoroughly. Highlight the eye with a dot of Titanium White.
- 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 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



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.

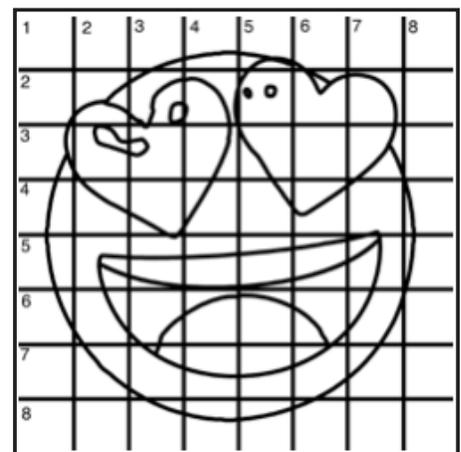
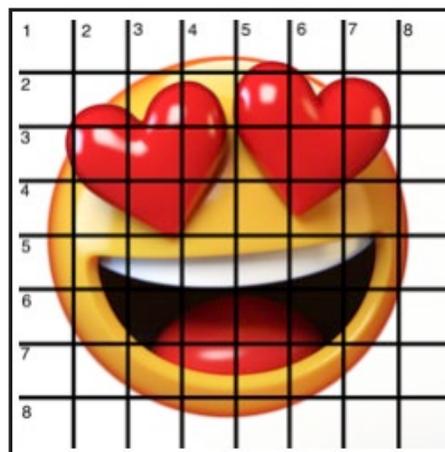
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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.

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.

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A 8 X 8 CANVAS; YOU CAN DO A 1" GRID ON ANY SIZE CANVAS.





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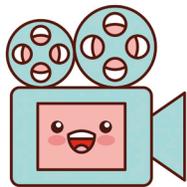
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