

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



HUMMINGBIRD & FLOWER HAPPY HUMMINGBIRD

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NAME CREDIT TO: CRYSTAL BLAKE

STEPS: 9 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 HOOTS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SHERPA FORWARD	3
PAINT AND TOOL GUIDE	4
VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE	5
THE GOLDBLOCKS ZONE.....	5
STEP 1 - BLENDED BACKGROUND.....	7
STEP 2 - SKETCH IN IMAGE	8
STEP 3 - STEM AND LEAVES	9
STEP 4 - FLOWER PETALS	10
STEP 5 - FLOWER CENTER AND HIGHLIGHTS	12
STEP 6 - DARK AND LIGHT BIRD VALUES.....	13
STEP 7 - COLORFUL LAYERS.....	14
STEP 8 - MORE FEATHERS	15
STEP 9 - FACE AND DETAILS	16
TRACING METHOD.....	17
TRACEABLE	18
GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS	19
TECHNIQUE REFERENCES	20





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](https://www.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 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 Round
- Small Synthetic Angle
- X-Small Synthetic Round
- Medium Pointed Filbert

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:

- Foliage
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing
- 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	01:30	BLENDED BACKGROUND
STEP 2	07:32	SKETCH IN IMAGE
STEP 3	13:52	STEMS AND LEAVES
STEP 4	24:19	FLOWER PETALS
STEP 5	32:25	FLOWER CENTER AND HIGHLIGHTS
STEP 6	38:15	DARK AND LIGHT BIRD VALUES
STEP 7	47:25	COLORFUL LAYERS
STEP 8	59:00	MORE FEATHERS
STEP 9	1:07:20	FACE AND DETAILS
	1:15:00	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.



WATERCOLOR

WEDNESDAYS

FREE
weekly watercolor
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7:00 PM EST

Watch directly from TAS Facebook
page each week.

ALL skill levels welcome.
Bring your watercolors and let's

**RELAX &
CHILL OUT
TOGETHER**

THE ART
SHERPA



SHERPA

STEP 1 - BLENDED BACKGROUND

“IT’S NOT CLICK-BAIT IF IT IS REAL”

PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Hog Cutter

COLOR MIXES:

Background = TW + PB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Barely wet the brush with water and tap it out on a towel. Cover the entire canvas with Titanium White

first. When you have a nice coat of white, and while it is still wet, add a bit of Phthalo Blue to the brush. Blend it into the background using a slightly curved criss cross stroke and a light touch to create this diffused look.

- Very lightly dust the background to give it a finished look.
- Dry. Do the “no more shifty paint dance”, which always counts as exercise.
- If you have a #30 Sherpa, take care of that baby, cause there are not any more to be had, for now...Duh duh duh.



STEP 2 - SKETCH IN IMAGE

"BIRD/FLOWER COME TOGETHER - MAKE JOY ON CANVAS"

PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

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.
- Find the center of the canvas then just to the right of that sketch in the head. Start with a curved line going up and then down, for the top of the head and another line, curving in and down for the throat. Draw a nice rounded belly because we are all just about little bird bellies. Be sure to adjust the back of the head proportionately. To capture the important bow of the back, draw it in before adding the wings. That will help you place the flared feathers of the tail. The first wing

starts fairly high in the top right of the canvas and continues down to the shoulder of the bird. Loosely, imply the feathers of that wing. Add the second wing, a bit lower and behind the first. To finish the bird add the long thin beak, which is really the funnest part of the bird anatomy.

- If you like hummingbirds, like I like hummingbirds, and you go to my channel, you will find a lot of hummingbird videos.

John - Maybe everyone could "like" this hummingbird tutorial.

- Just beyond the beak, but not touching, sketch in a "button" for the cone of the big flower. It will be almost the same size as the head of the bird. On the left side of the canvas, near the bottom, add a stem that goes up then bends to the middle of the cone.
- Add an upper leaf near the left edge of the canvas. It is slightly wider near the base and has jagged edges. A second leaf is placed under the stem and has a bit of a downward curve, drawn in the same fashion as the upper leaf. Rinse.



STEP 3 - STEM AND LEAVES

“WORK SMARTER NOT HARDER”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round
Med Synthetic Pointed
Filbert
Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Cone = BS + MB
Dark Green = PG + BS
Petals = QM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Using the Dark Green mix and the small Round brush, paint in the stem. Add the ribs of the leaves, then fill them in. Begin the stroke on the outer edge of the leaf and curve it in toward the center rib of the leaf. Let the brush do most of the work while creating this shape.
- Load the Cone mix onto the brush and fill in the seed button of the flower. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the canvas before continuing.
- Use either the Pointed Filbert or the Medium Round to paint the petals. Load the Petal mix onto your brush of choice. Start with the longest petal at the back of the cone.

Press the brush onto the canvas and gradually lessen the pressure until you reach the cone, then lift the brush off the canvas. Continue creating petals, cupping the top ones down and the bottom ones, up. As you curve around the flower, both up and down, you might want to shorten the petals on top.

- This is now the underpainting of the flower.
- Rinse.



STEP 4 - FLOWER PETALS

“WE LIKE DRAMATIC PETALS”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Phthalo Green = PG
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Mid Green = PG + CYM + BS
Light Green = PG + CYM + TW
Mid Pink = QM > TW
Light Pink = TW > QM

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Create some depth on the leaves by layering the Mid Green mix on top of them; again, starting the stroke on the outer edge and move in, towards the rib. Then paint along the top edge of the stem.
- Highlight the center ribs with the Light Green mix, using the toe of the brush. Add this color to the tops of the leaves and stem, as well. You can add a little water if you need to in order to help with the paint flow. Rinse.

Sherpa Tip: Composition came up in a question and composition in art is an arrangement of items that is pleasing to the eye.

- To add drama, layer the Mid Pink mix into the petals using the toe of the brush. Rinse.

- Add another layer in the same fashion using the Light Pink mix.
- Make any adjustments you like using all the pink mixes. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



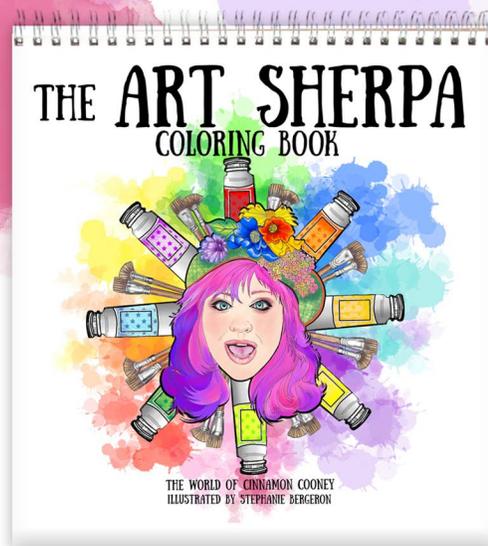


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STEP 5 – FLOWER CENTER AND HIGHLIGHTS

“THE TWIRL”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Green = PG
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Orange = CYM + CRM
Red Orange = CRM > CYM
Light Yellow = CYM + TW
Light Green = PG + CYM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Using the toe of the brush and the Orange mix, make a series of small seeds that wrap around the cone on an angle. Add the Red Orange mix to some of the seeds closer to the bottom of the cone. Rinse.
- Paint a lighter value at the top of the cone using the Light Yellow mix. Add more Cadmium Yellow Medium to brighten it even further. Highlight the top of the cone with just Titanium White. Adjust as needed. Rinse.
- Use pure Titanium White, thinned with just a touch of water, and highlight the center of the pink petals, using a light flicking stroke on the toe of the brush. Then add pops of bright highlights to the very top of the cone. Rinse.

- Add another lighter layer on the leaves and stem with the Light Green mix. Rinse.



STEP 6 - DARK AND LIGHT BIRD VALUES

“WE DON’T TALK ABOUT BRUNO”

PAINT:

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Angle

COLOR MIXES:

Gray = UB + BS

Light Gray = UB + BS + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Using the edge of the brush, add the Gray mix along the front of the wing and paint the front of the belly. Use a criss cross stroke to fill in bigger areas and the edge of the brush to refine the edges. Line the tail feathers and paint the back.
- On the wings, brush the color out in the direction the feathers would naturally grow.
- Use the Light Gray mix at the back edges of both wings, letting the brush stroke imply the feathers. Add this color to the throat and the belly and use your brush strokes to imply the roundness of it. Then paint in the tail feathers blending up into the back.
- We received a special wish from a community member, so a name was added to the underpainting of the bird in acknowledgment of that wish.

Sherpa Tip: As you paint the back wing, slightly cover the edge of the front wing. By doing this, there will be a better layering effect as you paint the front wing.



STEP 7 - COLORFUL LAYERS

"HE'S A SERIOUS BIRD, THIS BIRD"

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Burnt Sienna = BS
Phthalo Green = PG
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Angle

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Green = PG + BS
Dark Blue = MB + PB
Gray = UB + BS
Light Gray = UB + BS + TW
Background = TW + PB
Mid Pink = QM > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the Dark Green mix to fill in under the wing, blending it into the area of the back and tail. Add this color to the throat pattern and at the top of the head. Dust a little in a few places on the belly and tail, to add interest. Rinse.
- Fill in the eye area with the Dark Blue mix. Add some onto the back and tap in a few feather patterns near the tail. These little bits of blue are very important.
- Add the Gray mix and using the edge of the dirty brush, paint the bottom of the beak. Rinse. Paint the top of the beak with the Light Gray mix.

- Make any needed adjustments on the head with the Dark Green mix, and refine the edge of the bird outline with the Background mix.

John: Sometimes the Zodiac Gnome bus has to take a backseat to the Hummingbird bus, but the Gnome bus is coming.

- Shade under the tail feathers with the Dark Blue mix then, lighten the tops of them with the Light Gray mix. Rinse.
- Tap in some Mid Pink mix to the throat. Rinse. Blend Titanium White into the pink area.

John: Where do all the Quinacridones come from?

They are born in a lab.

- Highlight the back edge of the wings with the Light Gray mix on the dirty brush. Then using the Gray mix make adjustments, adding more Burnt Sienna as needed. Tap in highlights.
- Add a little splash of color to the wings and tail with the Mid Pink mix, muting the color in places with Burnt Sienna. Adjust as needed. Rinse.



STEP 8 - MORE FEATHERS

"THANK YOU FOR THE COMMENTARY"

PAINT:

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

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Angle

COLOR MIXES:

Gray = UB + BS
Light Gray = UB + BS + TW
Coral =
QM + CYM + CRM + TW
Light Green = PG + CYM + TW
Bright Green = CYM > PG
Dark Green = PG + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Refine the beak with the Gray mix. Continue making adjustments in the darker areas of the bird, by alternating between the Gray mix for the deeper colors and the Light Gray mix for the highlights.
- Highlight the front of the tail feathers using the Light Gray mix. Add more Titanium White to the mix for a pop of brighter highlights, in a few places, on the back and on the tips of the wings.

John: Congratulations to all of the community members who are chatting about the

numbers of years since they fought and won a cancer battle. High fives around and keep up the good work.

- Tap in the Coral mix at the back of the throat. Vary the mix by adding Burnt Sienna for a deeper color at the front of the throat. Add more Titanium White and Cadmium Yellow Medium to the mix for a highlight at the center of that area. Then pop in some pure Titanium White for the brightest reflection.

- Use the Dark Green mix as an added value on the top of the head and to a few areas along the body. Tap in the Bright Green mix, using the toe of the brush, to indicate tiny feathers on the head and throat. Also add some of this color to

a few places under the wings. Add the Light Green mix as a highlight. Continue adjusting the green areas and varying the mixes as needed. Rinse.



STEP 9 - FACE AND DETAILS

“YOU DID IT”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Blue = PB
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Ultramarine Blue = UB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round
Small Synthetic Angle

COLOR MIXES:

Light Gray = UB + BS + TW
Mid Gray = PB + MB
Gray = UB + BS
Bright Green = CYM > PG

STEP DISCUSSION:

- With the Detail brush, load the Mars Black and capture the details of the beak. Then add a circle for the eye, behind the beak, using the Light Gray mix. Tap in some tiny feathers behind the eye.
- Refine the outline with the Light Gray mix then fill the eye in with Mars Black. Without rinsing the brush, add the Mid Gray mix to the back of the eye.
- Add more Titanium White for the bright eye reflection. Tap in a few bright feathers around the eye then and highlight the top of the beak. Rinse.
- Switch to the Angle brush. Add more highlights

to the belly, using the Light Gray mix added with more Titanium White. Tip the wings with more highlights as well as anywhere else that needs it.

- Use the Bright Green mix to pop in highlights in the green areas. Make any color adjustments as needed. Rinse.
- Sign.

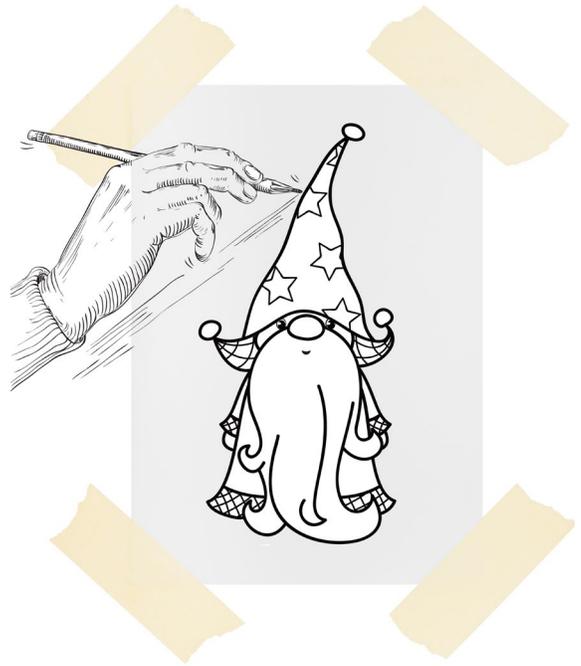


THE TRACING METHOD

- 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:



THE ART SHERPA

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.

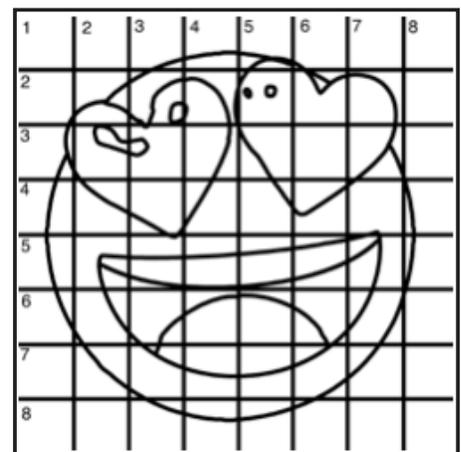
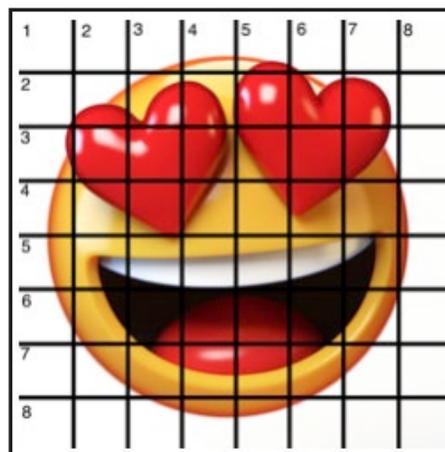
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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.



TECHNIQUE REFERENCES:

BLENDING WET INTO WET

Create transitions from one color to another, or one value to another, in acrylic painting, by blending colors together with the brush on the canvas while both are still wet. Mastering a blend like this is also essential for acrylic painting. In general, blending requires a soft pressure with a bit of urgency because it must be accomplished before the paint is dry. If you are in very dry studio conditions, such as air conditioning or dry heating in winter, your paint may dry out faster than you can blend it. No worries...there are mediums called retarders that you can add to the paint to slow the drying time.

BLOCKING IN

Paint in the shape with a color, without detail.

CONTOUR

Following the outer lines of an object or subject with your brush or tool.

COOL COLOR

Colors on the cool side of a color wheel. Blues, greens and purples. These colors shouldn't visually feel cool to the eye. They often make up objects in our real world that are cool like ice or the green in nature. These colors tend to recede visually and give a sense of distance.

CONTOUR PAINTING

Use the brushstroke to define the outline of the form. The brushstrokes are long and smooth and help us express the form and line of the object.

FEATHERED BLENDING

Create a softened edge by gently brushing on the toe of the head of the brush allowing the bristles to feather out visually defusing the stroke.

FINE LINE WORK

Taking paint that is made more fluid and a fine line brush to create brush Strokes that are delicate and elegant in nature. This is often used for hair, delicate grasses or natural elements, edged highlights.

GLAZING

Taking thin transparent coats of paint over another coat of dry paint. The transparency of the paint allows the color from the paint underneath to affect the paint on top. This is another way for artists to make transitions with acrylic paint. Some paint is naturally transparent because of how pigmentated it is. Colors like quinacridone magenta or phthalo blue are very transparent. Opaque pigments can be made transparent using a medium for glazing.

LAYERING

This is a very important part of acrylic painting. You can layer wet paint over wet paint. You can layer dry paint over dry paint. You can glaze over dry paint to layer also. Layering can help you build texture and depth in a painting. Understanding that techniques are built up in layers will help you move away from the magical brush thinking. You remember seeing cartoons paint a tunnel in one stroke with a single brush? As regular humans we can't do that to get these effects, we need to layer the paint. Once you embrace this thinking, the depth of your painting will improve greatly.

LOOSE, EXPRESSIVE AND PAINTERLY

When you paint showing the brush stroke. The painting has a freshly captured feel. This technique gives the impression of capturing a moment in time. It has qualities where the color stroke in texture defines the artwork instead of line.

LOOSELY MIXED

Taking two colors and mixing them together with both colors still evident in the mix and brush stroke.

PAINTERLY

Free flowing and expressive brush strokes. Painterly expression of art generally allows the medium and the brush strokes to show instead of hiding them through blending and careful placement.

S STROKES

Being able to create compound curves as strokes is

a very important technique in painting. Most of the natural world will require your ability to execute it as a stroke. It's a good idea to practice making bold S strokes and delicate S Strokes.

SCUMBLING

Scumbling certainly has some dry brushing to it but involves a more randomized circular brush stroke. Be careful when you scumble, you don't want to press so hard that you break the heel of the brush. In scumbling, just like in dry brushing, we won't be using a lot of water in the brush. We are going to want to move the brush around in a random and circular motion creating no sense of a particular line or direction.

SMOOTHLY BLENDED OR TIGHT PAINTING

This is when you smooth the paint and try to hide the brush Strokes and transitions. When you hear an artist talking about a particular painter being tight, what they're speaking of is the way that this artist is able to hide the medium method of the painting. Acrylic blending is one of the more frustrating techniques for new artists.

THOROUGHLY MIXED

Take two colors and thoroughly incorporate them so they make a smooth, even secondary color with no sign of the two colors used to create it.

TRANSITIONAL MIXING

There are many ways to blend acrylic paint creating tonal and value transitions through the hues. When you have two very different colors you can create hues that are half shades by mixing them together and biasing the mix to create a subtle transition.

UNDERPAINTING

Loose large fields of color that future layers of painting will build on.

WARM COLOR

These colors are on the warm side of the wheel such as red, yellow and orange. Warm colors remind us of things like fire and sunlight. They tend to come forward visually and pull the viewer in.

RESOURCES

- The best resource for this book is to use it with the YouTube video. Additionally, I have many resources to help new painters achieve their dreams of being creative. I've made over a thousand videos and chances are I have a video that will help you with your specific challenges.
- Be sure to check out the "Where to Start Acrylic Painting with the Art Sherpa" playlist on Youtube.
- Search for videos on the website.
- Use the traceable - it is NOT cheating.
- Join the Art Sherpa Official Facebook group for support.
- Come to live streams and ask questions.

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR FINISH PIECE

As an artist, there's still a lot to think about.

Do you varnish? Believe it or not, varnishing is optional with acrylic painting. In my opinion it's best only to do so in good weather in a dust free space following the instructions of the specific varnish for acrylic painting exactly. Varnish is good because it does protect and unify the finish of a painting, but it is not required.

Allow your painting a few days to cure and harden. Acrylic paintings do dry quickly but they still continue to cure a few days after you're finished even with thin applications of paint. Taking the time to allow your paintings to cure will help them be more resilient through the framing and hanging process. These days you don't need to be a professional to frame or hang your paintings. Frames and ready to hang options are available at your local craft and art store.

When acrylic paint is warm, it gets soft, so when a painting is near the warmth of a fireplace you wouldn't want to add decorations that would touch it because they could leave an impression. It's perfectly fine to hang your artwork over the fireplace and change it out seasonally like I do. It's just important to be aware of hazards and fire safety. Also knowing that acrylic paintings can become a little softer when they're warm will prevent you from accidentally having a boo boo. Perhaps your Elf on the Shelf doesn't need to sit on the edge of the frame or lean against the painting if your art is in a warm spot. Properly cared for, acrylic paint will never become wet again or lose its cure and it will always remain finished and dry. This is the nature of plastics.

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