

APRIL 7, 2022

*Acrylic
April*

ACRYLIC APRIL 2022

BY: THE ART SHERPA



www.TheArtSherpa.com

ANY OTHER NAME

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON PAM MCELRATH

Steps: 7 | Difficulty: Challenging | 3 Hoots



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THE GOLDBLOCKS ZONE

In painting, every technique or process has what I call a “Goldilocks Zone”. As an artist, you will constantly seek 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 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 notice when you have found yourself in the Goldilocks Zone so you can locate it again easier the next time you come across a particular technique.



THE ACRYLIC APRIL PAINT CHALLENGE EXPLAINED

The Acrylic April Painting Challenge begins April 1st 2022 and ends April 30. Thirty powerful little painting tutorials that challenge global artists to participate by completing one small acrylic painting every day for an entire month.

PARTICIPATE BY COMPLETING ONE SMALL ACRYLIC PAINTING EVERY DAY FOR AN ENTIRE MONTH!

This year's Acrylic April Challenge is designed around the "Bloom...A Story of Flowers" and every painting will embrace that theme and every tutorial will teach skills that will be built upon in subsequent lessons. If you engage in this unbelievable art journey for 30 days, you will gain a greater understanding of the nature of flowers...how they engage with nature, how they behave, and how to successfully illustrate them.

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 Acrylic Art Journey and is best viewed in outline format to allow for ease in navigation between sections. Once all of the tutorials have been recorded and have an accompanying mini book, The Art Sherpa hopes to prepare a printed version of all of Acrylic April that you will be able to purchase. That expanded book will include technical resources not available to you at this time about color mixes, techniques, brushes, materials, and all things art.

Traceables for this tutorial can be found at theartsherpa.com.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy your experience with Acrylic April 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 Facebook Acrylic April group at: www.facebook.com/groups/AcrylicApril



DAY 7: APRIL 7, 2022

"Bloom...A Story Of Flowers", is the theme of Acrylic April 2022 and today's subject is a dramatic red rose on a black background. A mature red rose symbolizes romance, love, beauty, and courage and all of those attributes fit so beautifully into our art journey. It takes courage to undertake learning the skills and techniques that allow the artist to be able to create paintings that express the beautiful sentiments of romance and love. Besides the skills and techniques, perhaps the most important thing that can contribute to your success is to learn to love yourself. Not every painting you paint will be a masterpiece, but be gentle with yourself. Allow yourself to learn at your pace.

NOW, GRAB YOUR PAINT AND GET YOUR BRUSHES.



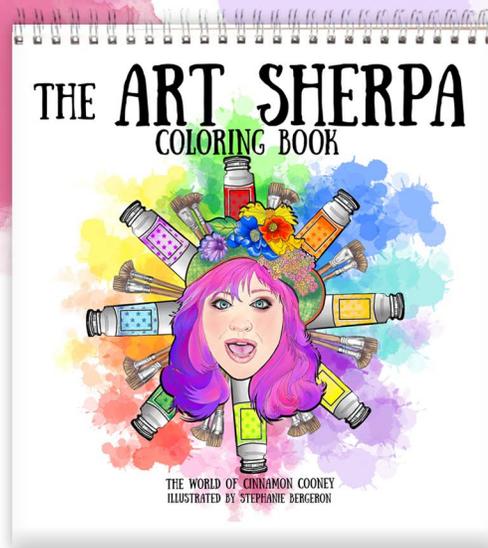


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THE ART SHERPA

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PAINT COLOR & MIXING LEGEND:

Use this paint legend below to understand the symbols that I use to give you important painting information.

- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES:

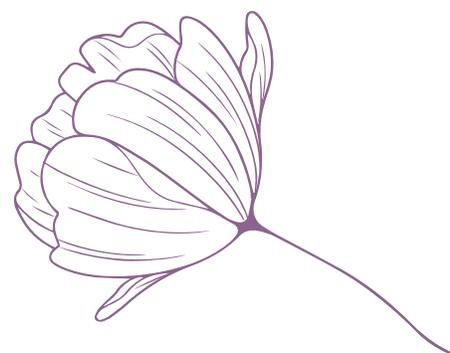
- Large Synthetic Angle
- Small Synthetic Round
- Medium Hog Round

TOOLS:

- 8x8 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 it dry before you proceed.)
- Optional: StayWet Palette

TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE:

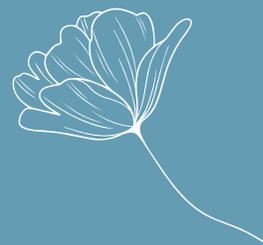
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Finding Value
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing
- Implying Motion



VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE:

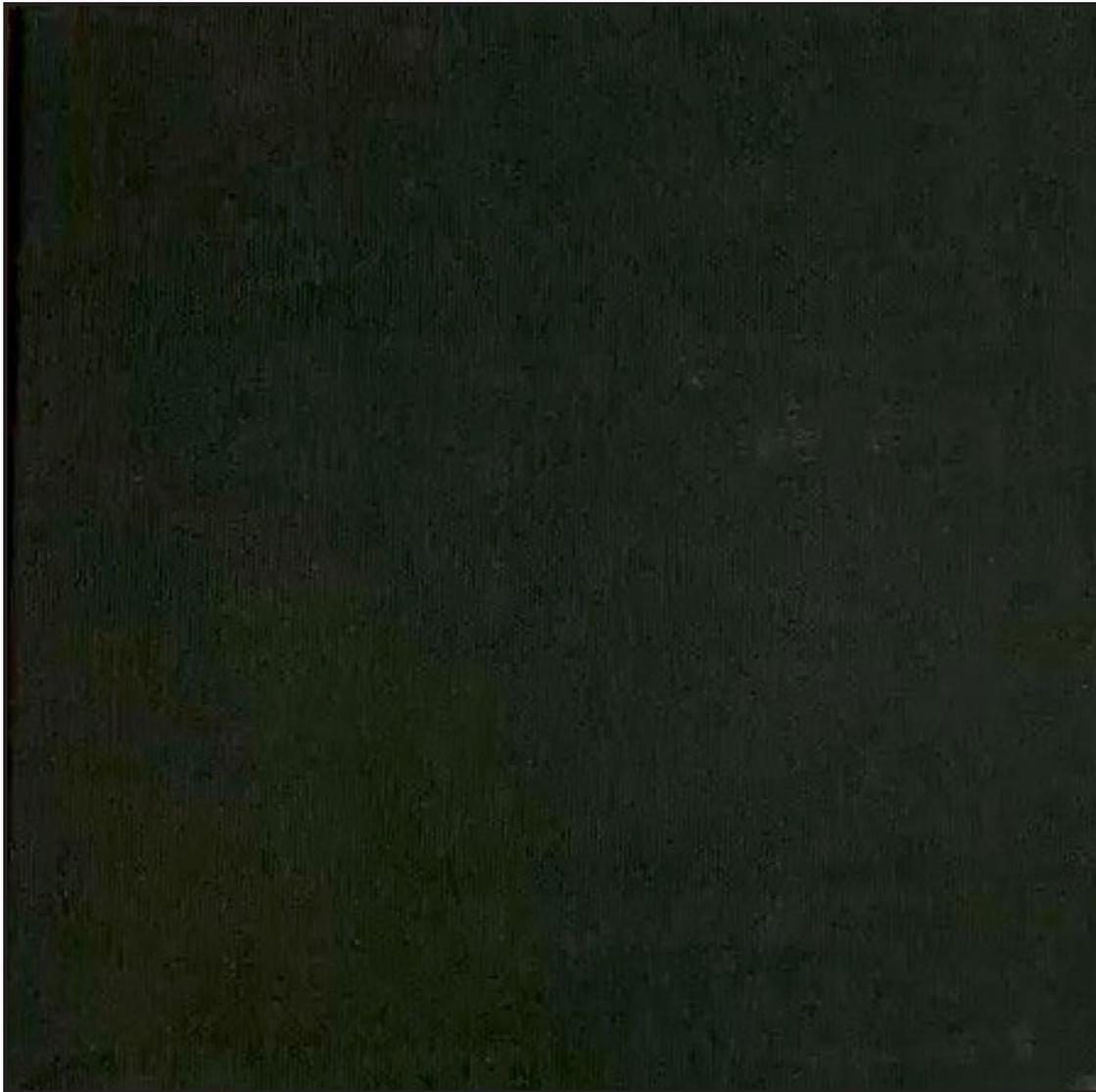
Below are the timestamps we inserted in the tutorial video so that you can easily coordinate using the book and the tutorial video simultaneously.

STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	01:11	COLORED GROUND
STEP 2	04:29	BUDDING CENTER
STEP 3	07:55	LARGER MIDDLE AND TOP PETALS
STEP 4	13:23	SIDE AND CENTER PETALS
STEP 5	21:31	BOTTOM PETALS
STEP 6	25:08	OUTER PETALS
STEP 7	30:32	FINAL HIGHLIGHTS
	45:44	SIGN



STEP 1 - COLORED GROUND

“ROSE BREAKTHROUGH”



PAINT:

- Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Large Synthetic Angle



STEP DISCUSSION:

- Loosely paint the entire background using Mars Black. Once the surface is covered, smooth the paint using long strokes, horizontally and then vertically over the canvas. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

SHERPA TIP:

You can also just buy a black canvas from most art stores if you'd rather.



STEP 2 - BUDDING CENTER

“LET’S DO A RED ROSE VALUE STUDY”



PAINT:

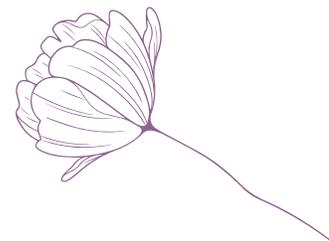
- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

- Dark Red = CRM + 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.
- Mentally divide the canvas into four quadrants. Begin with a small curl in the upper right quarter, using the **Dark red mix**, on the toe of the brush. Then, at the bottom of the curl, start pressing down a bit more, to thicken the petal slightly, creating a comma.

- The second petal wraps around the first, on the left, and thickens more at the bottom. Use the Mars Black to shade the left side of this second petal into the background.
- On the right side of the first petal, paint another smaller curl facing it. Add more Cadmium Red Medium to the brush, create another curled petal, that almost mirrors the first petal.

SHERPA TIP: If your red is not covering well, you may need to paint these segments white first, then dry it completely before adding the red back in. To know where to place a stem, visualize a line coming down from the center of the rose bud.

STEP 3 - LARGER MIDDLE AND TOP PETAL

"DON'T WANT TO BACK PETAL"



PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

- Medium Red = CRM > MB
- Dark Red = CRM + MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the next petal with the **Medium Red mix**. Using the toe of the brush, begin painting a line going towards the right, under the first curl. Be sure to add the center divot that petals have. Then, fill in this petal using downward brush strokes and blend it in towards the bowl of the flower, using Mars Black on the dirty brush. Apply pure Mars Black to create a shadow on the left side, defining it, from the petal next to it.
- Use Cadmium Red Medium to highlight the tops of all the petals, so far. Adjust shadows as needed with the Mars Black.
- Paint a bigger petal at the top of the bud that goes off the canvas, on the right using the **Medium Red mix**. Fill it in with the **Dark Red mix**, adding more Mars Black as you get closer to the center bud. Softly, blending the

values together, using circular, irregular stroke. Add a highlight to this petal with just Cadmium Red Medium.

- Make any needed adjustments using variations of the two colors in the mix. Clean and dry the brush then softly blend any hard edges that remain.

SHERPA TIP:

Until the very last step, use both of the mixes, or a combination of any of the colors in the mixes, to create the petals. Generally, use the Cadmium Red Medium to shape and highlight the petal, then the Medium Red mix to fill it in. The Dark Red mix to begin shading and finally the Mars Black to deepen the shadows even more.

STEP 4 - SIDE AND CENTER PETALS

"THIS ROSE IS LIGHT AND SHADOW"



PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

- Medium Red = CRM > MB
- Dark Red = CRM + MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the next pointed petal by layering behind, and to the left side of the previous petal with the **Medium Red mix** and fill it in with the **Dark Red mix**. Add more Mars Black on the dirty brush to shade the bottom of it into the background. Highlight the top with Cadmium Red Medium. Add another petal that is just showing a bit, behind this one.

STEP DISCUSSION CONTINUED:

- The first forward facing petal begins just slightly to the left of the center bud. Use the **Medium Red mix** on the toe of the brush and curve a line downward a bit and then back up, finishing it in the dark area of the upper right petal. Add more Cadmium Red Medium to the edge to highlight the curl that is facing out. Shade the petals of the center bud with the **Dark Red mix** to define the different values between them. Fill the bottom of this petal with the **Dark Red mix**, adding more Mars Black as you get closer to the bowl of the flower.
- Use pure Cadmium Red Medium to create just the highlighted edge of the next petal. It begins in the dark background on the left and curves down to layer in front of the petal you just did.
- Add another petal using Cadmium Red Medium, that wraps around in the same manner, allowing it to fade into the darkness on the right. Load on some more Cadmium Red Medium and paint the rounded bottom. Fill it in with the **Medium Red mix** and blend it into shadow at the bottom of the bowl, with the Mars Black. Make any needed adjustments using variations of the two colors.
- Use the **Dark Red mix** on the left side of these two petals for the shadow of the next petal. Then use Cadmium Red Medium to outline the outer lip that curves out to the left, and is torn at the middle and wraps back around towards the center bud. Shade and highlight this petal in the same manner as the previous ones. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 5 - BOTTOM PETALS

“PETALING IN THE DARK”



PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

- Medium Red = CRM > MB
- Dark Red = CRM + MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Medium Red mix** to paint the lip of the next petal. It unfurls at the bottom of the front petal, in an almost elongated “U” shape and then continues off the canvas on the right with an odd “S” shape.
- On the right, just below that, there is a little bit of a petal showing in the dark.
- Paint the lip of another petal below, starting near the middle of the last petal, then curls down and off the right side of the canvas.
- Add a curved line as the last petal at the bottom right side.
- Make any needed adjustments by alternating between the **Dark Red mix** and the **Medium Red mix** or adding the pure colors.



STEP 6 - OUTER PETALS

“PURE RED SATURATION”



PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

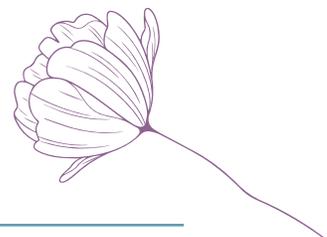
- Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

- Medium Red = CRM > MB
- Dark Red = CRM + MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Look at the shape of the petals so far and make any adjustments you feel are needed.
- Then, on the left side, near the middle of the canvas, sketch in the biggest petal by angling a line up towards the left, then curve it around and come back down to the bottom of the flower. Add a little shaded bowl underneath it. The curl of the lip angles down almost in the middle of this petal, creating a cupped shape. Fill it in as you painted the petals in the previous steps, by alternating between the **Dark Red mix** and the **Medium Red mix** or adding the pure colors. Keeping the center and underneath parts in shadow.
- Create the last petal on the left in a similar manner as the one above it. Rinse.



STEP 7 - FINAL HIGHLIGHTS

"A RED ROSE DOING RED ROSE THINGS"



PAINT:

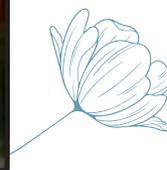
- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round
- Medium Hog Round

COLOR MIXES:

- Bright Red = CRM > CYM
- Light Red = CRM > TW
- Dark Red = CRM + MB



STEP DISCUSSION:

- Start with the Hog Round brush and the Cadmium Red Medium to highlight the outer edges of the upper, right petal. Then, lightly shade down into the petal with a little Mars Black. Warm the edge of this petal by adding a bit of the **Bright Red mix**.
- Switch to the Synthetic Round brush and highlight the center bud area with the **Light Red mix**.
- Continue shaping the lips of the petals by alternating between the **Bright Red mix** for the warmer highlights and the **Light Red mix** where a lighter highlight is needed. Lightly brushing back towards the shadows and curving the brush stroke, directionally, to create the desired shape.
- Using the **Dark Red mix**, shade under the lips of the petals where they would cast a shadow. Also shade the centers of the petals to create the natural cupping that occurs as they unfurl. Lightly, blend it out.
- Exaggerate the highlights and blend in the shadows of each individual petal in the same manner. Rinse.
- Sign.

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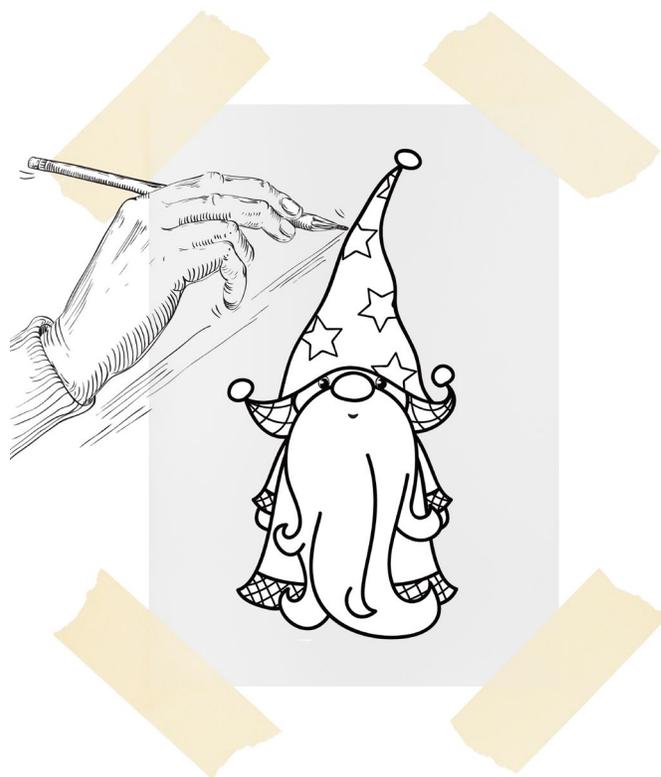
SHERPA

TRACING METHOD

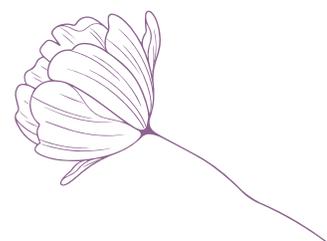
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



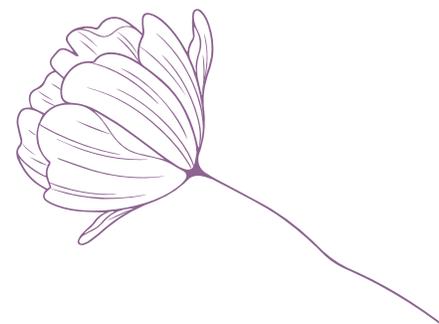
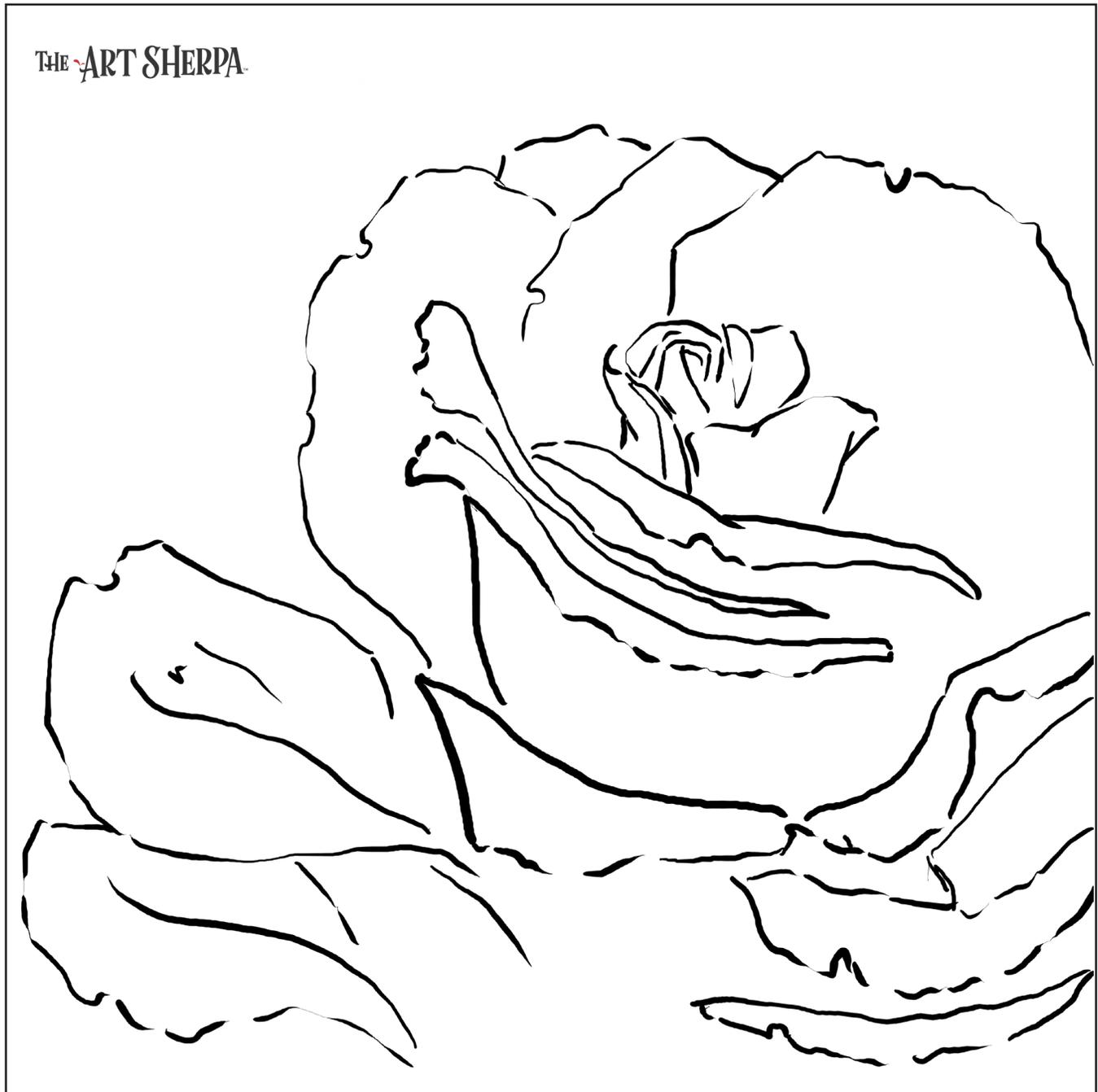
- Rub the back with graphite or use Saral paper and skip this step.



- 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 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 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.



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.

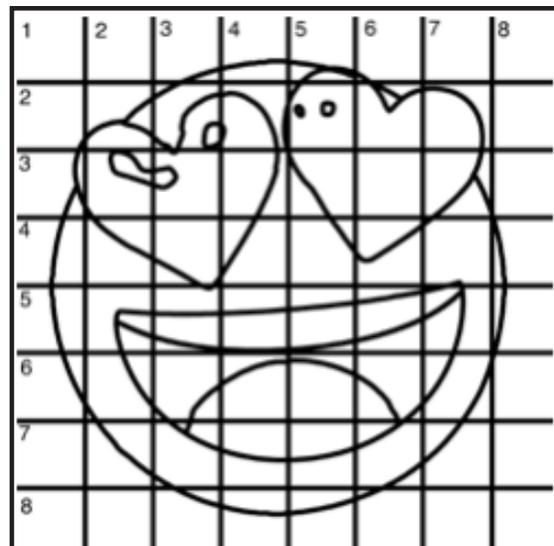
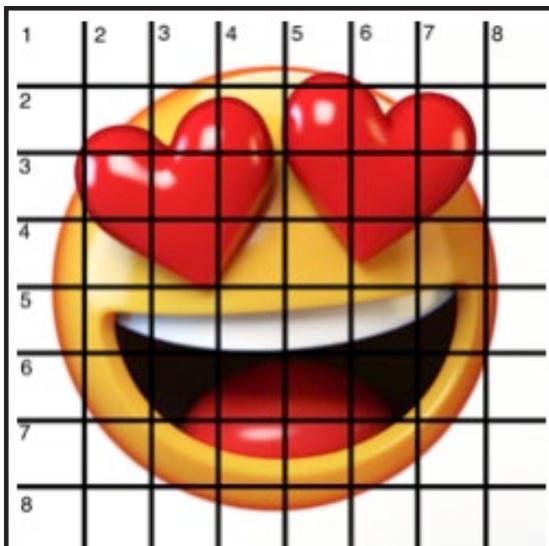
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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 instructions above.

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

Another way to create transitions from one color to another, or one value to another, in acrylic painting, is 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, no detail is required.

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

Glazing is 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 pigmented 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. It can be hard for new artists to understand because it's used in so many different ways. 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. What I mean by that is 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

This is 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 we're both colors are still evident in the mix and brush stroke.

PAINTERLY

Brush strokes that are free flowing and expressive. A 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 not 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

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

Taking two colors and thoroughly incorporating 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. This is always useful.

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

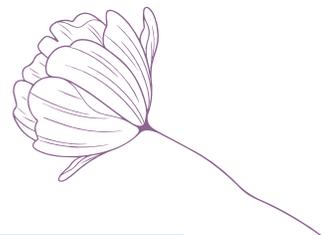
- The best resource for this book is to use it with the YouTube video. Additionally, I have many resources to help new painters achieve their dreams of being creative. I've made over a thousand videos and chances are I have a video that will help you with your specific challenges.
- Be sure to check 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 FINISHED PIECE

As an artist, and, yes, you are an artist, because you have created a painting. But 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.



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