THE ART SHERPA™
HOW TO PAINT
IN ACRYLIC

FOLLOW YOUR OWN PATH

BY: THE ART SHERPA
NAME CREDIT TO: ERIKNASHLEY WELCH

STEPS: 13 | DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING | 3 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.

This tutorial is a lengthy one, but not an extremely difficult one.

It is a landscape painting, which is a depiction of natural scenery such as mountains, valleys, trees, rivers and forests, usually in a wide view of elements arranged in a coherent composition. Sky is usually included in the view and weather is often an element of the composition.

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
- Yellow Ochre = YO
- Golden's Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES:

- Medium Synthetic Filbert
- Large Hog Cutter
- Large Synthetic Mop
- Medium Hog Round
- Medium Synthetic Blender
- Large Hog Bright
- Medium Hog Bright
- Medium Synthetic Bright
- Small Hog Round
- Small Synthetic Round
- Synthetic Grainer

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
- Water Mister

TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Implying Foliage
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Clouds
- Setting a Horizon line
- 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	01:33	SKY
STEP 2	12:43	DISTANT WISPY CLOUDS
STEP 3	23:09	LOWER LEFT CLOUDS
STEP 4	43:11	BIGGER CLOUDS
STEP 5	56:29	CLOUD DETAILS
STEP 6	1:20:12	SKETCH THE LANDSCAPE
STEP 7	1:23:59	DISTANT LANDSCAPE
STEP 8	1:36:18	ROCKS
STEP 9	1:44:20	FOREGROUND, MIDGROUND UNDERPAINTING
STEP 10	1:56:26	MIDGROUND FIELD
STEP 11	2:12:07	BACK OF THE ROAD
STEP 12	2:23:41	ROADSIDE FOLIAGE, MIDGROUND
STEP 13	2:42:20	FORWARD ROAD
STEP 14	3:04:26	FOLIAGE DEPTH
STEP 15	3:09:46	ADDING GREEN VALUES
STEP 16	3:25:54	FORWARD WHITE FLOWERS
STEP 17	3:46:04	PINK FLOWERS
STEP 18	3:52:32	FINAL DETAILS
	3:58:04	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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TOGETHER

The ART SHERPA

STEP 1 – SKY

"MAY YOU HAVE BLUE SKIES"

PAINT:
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW
Golden's Acrylic Gloss
  Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Large Synthetic Cutter
Large Synthetic Oval Mop
Med Synthetic Pointed Filbert
T-Square Ruler
Chalk Pencil or
  Watercolor Pencil
Water Mister

COLOR MIXES:
Dark Blue = UB + PB + AGL
Mid Blue =
UB + PB + AGL + TW
Light Blue =
TW > UB + PB + AGL
Dark Gray = UB + BS + AGL

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Load the **Dark Gray mix** onto the Medium Synthetic Pointed Filbert. Roughly draw a hill on the left side of the canvas about 6" down from the top. Then, on the right side, draw another hill starting a little bit higher and meeting the first hill in the middle of the canvas.

• Switch to a Large Hog Cutter brush and mist the canvas and the brush. Use the **Light Blue mix** and paint the bottom of the sky with this light value, using a back and forth brushstroke.

Wipe off on your paper towel.

• Paint the upper part of the canvas with the **Mid Blue mix**, blending it into the lighter sky area, using a light touch and very little paint; at times, using an angled, criss cross stroke. Rinse. Wipe the brush off on a paper towel.

• Paint the top of the canvas using the **Dark Blue mix.** While everything is still wet, begin blending.

• Switch to the Oval Mop and blend the darker area into the mid tone area. Use a mister if you need to dampen the brush. Wipe the brush off on a paper towel and load the **Mid Blue mix** and continue to blend it softly into the sky. Rinse. Wipe the brush off on a paper towel, so it's just damp. Control the pigment and resume blending the different mixes until you have a glowing ombre.

• Dry the surface before continuing to the next step and rinse any brushes that you used.

"LITTLE CLOUD MOMENT DANCEY STORIES"

PAINT:
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW
Golden's Acrylic
  Gloss Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Medium Hog Round

COLOR MIXES:
Dark Blue = UB + PB + AGL
Light Blue =
TW > UB + PB + AGL
Dark Gray = UB + BS + AGL

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Add a smidge of the **Dark Gray mix** and a little of the **Dark Blue mix** to a lot of Titanium White to get a light value. Load small amounts of paint onto the toe brush and make soft curved brush strokes. Alternately, dance the brush using short curled movements. The clouds are more distant and lighter closer to the horizon so add more Titanium White to the mix. You can vary it up by adding Titanium White to the **Light Blue mix**.

• Continue adding these wispy clouds throughout the sky. Highlight them with Titanium White and shade them by adding a smidge of the **Dark Gray mix**.

• Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Sherpa Tip:
Control the amount of paint on your brush with the paper towel, control the amount of water on your brush by how deep you dip into the water and with your rag or paper towel, and control color changes by premixing them.

Remember to wipe off the hog brush after dipping into water because a hog brushes hides water in the bristles.

"GUESS WHO CAME TO VISIT?"

PAINT:
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW
Golden's Acrylic Gloss
Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Medium Hog Round
Medium Synthetic Blender

COLOR MIXES:
Dark Blue = UB + PB + AGL
Mid Blue = UB + PB + AGL + TW
Dark Gray = UB + BS + AGL

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Using the Medium Hog Round brush, mix the **Dark Blue mix** and the **Dark Gray mix** until you get a steel gray color. Now add Titanium White to the mix to lighten it. Starting a little to the left of center, just above the mountains, begin painting the distinct clouds. Use the toe of the brush to push up the irregular shapes of clouds on the left side. Blend and flatten the bottoms and do not use a lot of moisture on the brush. The tops of the clouds will be light and the bottoms will be dark.

• Layer the **Dark Gray mix** on the bottom of the clouds in almost a step formation to add perspective. Add Titanium White to get a lighter

value and add in between the darker areas. Continue to create contrast and interest by wiggling the brush and varying the value of your mixes and building up irregular clouds.

• Highlight the clouds by adding Titanium White and shade them by adding a smidge of the **Dark Gray mix** to the lighter mix.

• Switch to the Medium Synthetic Blender and add a little bit of the light colors to the top of the clouds. Control the amount of water, the pressure of the brush and the load of the paint when creating these clouds. Rinse as needed.

• Tone and highlight the tops of some of the clouds using the **Mid Blue mix** and Titanium White.

• Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Sherpa Tip: Rinse your brush on occasion to prevent it from becoming overloaded with paint.

"DON'T BE AFRAID OF DARK CLOUD SHADOWS"

PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW
Golden's Acrylic Gloss
Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Round

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Blue = UB + PB + AGL
Dark Gray = UB + BS + AGL

STEP DISCUSSION:

• Using the Medium Hog Round brush, add the **Dark Blue mix** to the **Dark Gray mix** to get a steel gray color. Layer in another bank of clouds that is above the lower clouds on the left hand side. It is closer to the viewer so it will have a lot more of the darker color on the bottom. Add more Titanium White to the mix and begin to wiggle the brush at the top of this irregular cloud to get the overall contour and fill it in. Shade the bottom of this cloud with the **Dark Gray mix**. Use a little lighter gray on its forward face to make it a little more fluffiness using a curled stroke. Wipe off the brush with a paper towel.

• Add the Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid to this lighter gray color. At the top, just to the left of center, begin painting another contour line for a bigger focal cloud, then fill it in.

• Start pulling up another cloud just above the mountain, on the right hand side near the center. Use the **Dark Gray Mix** mixed with Titanium White and push the brush stroke upwards.

• Move to the top, right hand side of the canvas and begin wiggling in another bigger cloud. Blend and flatten it at the bottom and then fill it in. Add another lighter cloud just above the mountain on that right side.

• Paint more shadows in the clouds on the left with the **Dark Gray mix** and highlight them with Titanium White on the toe of the dirty brush. Continue building the clouds on the left using variations of the **Dark Gray mix** mixed with Titanium White and sometimes Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid. Use a lot more Titanium White mixed with Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid for the brightest highlights on these left clouds.

Sherpa Tip: When you rinse a Hog brush be sure to dry it on a towel because they hold a lot of water.

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THE ART SHERPA COLORING BOOK

THE WORLD OF CINNAMON COONEY
ILLUSTRATED BY STEPHANIE BERGERON
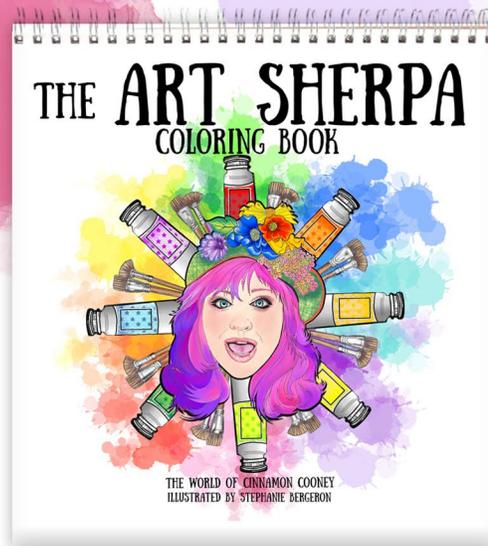
STEP 5 – CLOUD DETAILS

"SKY PERSEVERANCE"

PAINT:
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Blue = PB
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW
Golden's Acrylic Gloss
 Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Medium Synthetic Blender

COLOR MIXES:
Dark Gray = UB + BS + AGL
Dark Blue = UB + PB + AGL
Mid Blue =
UB + PB + AGL + TW
Light Blue =
TW > UB + PB + AGL

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Start creating some shapes to the upper center cloud using Titanium White mixed with the Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid and using a light semi circular stroke. Add a small forward bank of clouds just in front. Build the shadows between the two banks of clouds and on their bottoms using the **Dark Gray mix** and Titanium White. Apply varying values by adding in more Titanium White. Use a lot more Titanium White mixed with Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid for the brightest highlights. Tone and soften some of the clouds using the **Mid Blue mix** and Titanium White

• Continue building the remaining clouds in a similar manner throughout the sky. Use a little of the **Dark Blue mix** and Titanium White and, or the Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid in a couple areas in the clouds.

• Apply some of the **Light Blue mix** onto the right side of the sky, just above the mountain.

• Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.
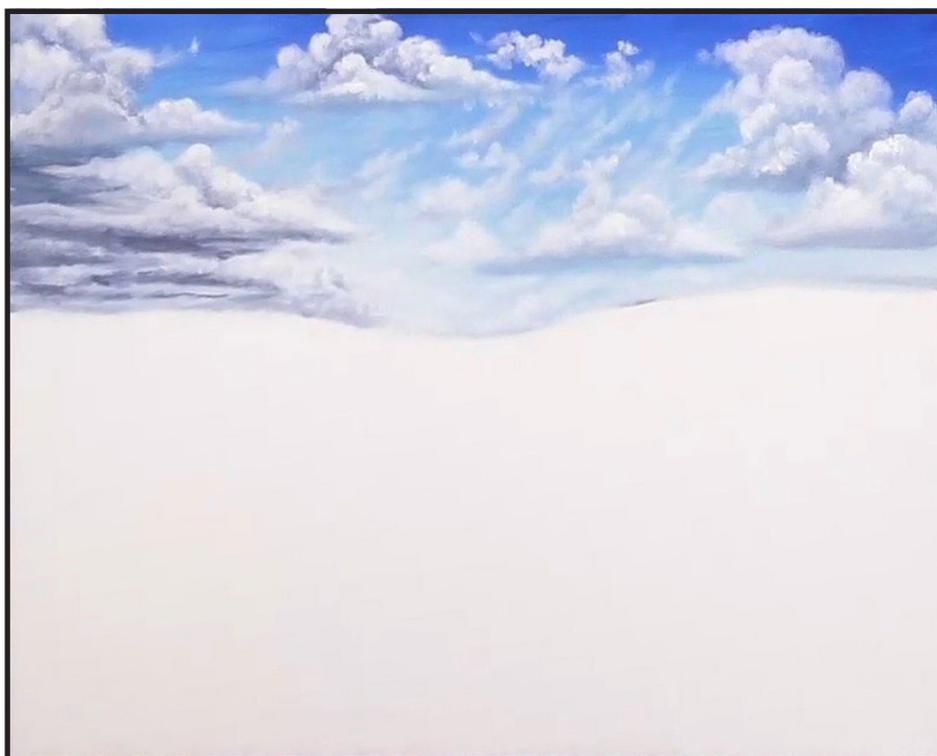
STEP 6 - SKETCH THE LANDSCAPE

"THE LONG AND MERGING ROAD"

PAINT:
Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Medium Synthetic Filbert
T-Square Ruler

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. For a more visible image on video, I use paint to sketch this image onto the canvas. You should use a Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil.

• Starting at 4 1/2 inches from the top, right, draw the mountain top on the side that includes a second peak, sloping towards the middle of the canvas. On the left side, about 6 1/2 inches down, draw another mountain, also sloping down towards the center.

• Add a mark 1/2 inch up from the right corner and another mark four inches

from the left corner. Then add a third mark, about 2 inches below the center of the mountain line, where the road will disappear, perspectively. Sketch a nice round curve on the left side of the road. Then starting at the back of the road, make another, less curved line to the right corner. The centerline curves from the left side down to the middle of the road, at the bottom of the canvas.

• Just About 1/2 an inch under the mountains, on the left, draw a horizon line that slopes towards the middle. Then draw the horizon line on the right side starting about 1 1/2 inches below the mountain and again sloping towards the middle of the canvas.

• Draw a line for the midground grass zone that merges on either side of the end of the road. Rinse the brush.

STEP 7 - DISTANT LANDSCAPE

"GETTING SOME TOPS OF THINGS"

PAINT:
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW
Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Large Hog Bright

COLOR MIXES:
Green Brown =
UB + CYM + BS
Bright Green = CYM + UB
Green Blue = UB + BS < CYM
Dark Green = PG + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:
• On the edge of the brush, line the mountain on the right using the **Green Brown mix** and fill it in. Paint the mountain on the left side with the same mix, but add more Cadmium Yellow Medium to get a slightly lighter value.

• Add more Yellow Ochre to the same mix and paint the area closer to the center, on the right mountain with short up and down strokes.

• Apply the **Bright Green mix** and paint the area closer to the center, on the left mountain.

• Paint the furthest mountain on the right using the **Green Blue mix**. As you move forward,

add more Burnt Sienna to the **Green Blue mix**. Work it in the distant field on the right and then apply short choppy brushstrokes on top.

• Add Yellow Ochre to the **Bright Green mix** and apply it to the distant field on the left. In the same manner.

• Combine some Titanium White to the **Green Brown mix** where the value needs to be lighter on the right mountain. Rinse and wipe the brush. Also add Titanium White to lighten the mixes of the mountain and field on the left.

• Bring back some darker values in the field with the **Dark Green mix** and a side to side stroke.

• Combine some Titanium White and Yellow Ochre to the **Green Brown mix** for a very light value at the base of the mountains in the valley area. Rinse and wipe the brush.

STEP 8 – ROCKS

"GETTING ROUGH WITH SOME STONES"

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

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Medium Synthetic Bright

COLOR MIXES:
Dark Brown = BS + MB
Deep Olive = PG + UB + CYM
Stone = YO + TW + BS
Sandstone = YO + TW > BS
Dark Green = PG + BS
Muted Green = YO + PG + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Load the **Dark Brown mix** on a lightly damp brush. At the bottom of the right mountain, make some sharp crisp lines representing rocks using the edge of your brush.

• Add some deeper values using the edge of the brush, a side to side stroke and the **Deep Olive mix**, to the mountain at the center, right. Then, add some Yellow Ochre to the **Deep Olive mix** to create some values to the mountain that is furthest back, on the right, using the same brush stroke.

• Rough in rocks on the left side using the **Dark Brown mix** and highlight the tops

of these rocks with the **Stone mix.**

• Apply the **Sandstone mix** as a highlight to the rocks on the right side. Pushing them back with the **Deep Olive mix.** Rinse.

• Add the **Dark Green mix** with more of a brown bias, on the right side of the distant field using direction side to side strokes.

• Apply a dusting of the **Muted Green mix** to the field on the left. Paint shadows under the rocks using the **Dark Green mix**.

• Lightly glaze the rocks with Burnt Sienna, pushing them back into the distance. Then using the corner of the brush apply a layer of highlight using the previous **Sandstone mix**. Rinse.
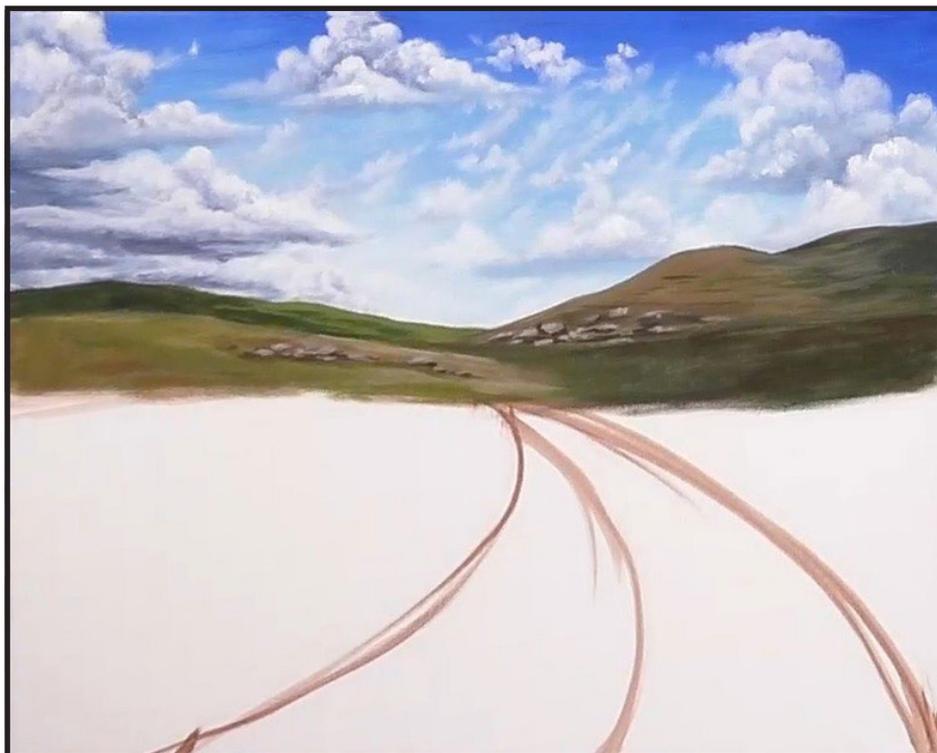
STEP 9 - MIDGROUND, FOREGROUND UNDERPAINTING

"DIRT ROADS AND TIRE RUTS"

PAINT:
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Large Hog Bright

COLOR MIXES:
Dirt = YO + BS
Mid Brown = BS + YO > MB
Dark Green = PG + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:
- Begin painting the distant road using the **Dirt mix** and keep your brushstrokes almost level. As you come forward, begin curving the strokes upward, on either side of the center of the road and as you get closer to the bottom of the canvas, your strokes will be bigger and broader.

- Paint the downward curved centerline of the road using the **Mid Brown mix** and remember that the centerline of the road disappears on the left side as it nears the back. Use Burnt Sienna to add a little bit of rusty color to both edges of the road, feathering the strokes into the dirt.

- Add some Titanium White to the **Dirt mix** for the next

lighter layer on either side of the centerline. Brighten the mix with the little Cadmium Yellow Medium on the dirty brush and add it to the tire ruts. Rinse the brush.

- Fill in the right side of the midground area using short up and down brushstrokes and the **Dirt mix**. Paint the left side in the same manner.

- Apply the **Dark Green mix** to the outer edges of the road and the forward area of the grasses on both sides of the road using smaller, up and down brush strokes. Allow the strokes to get larger, coming forward and vary the mix slightly. Add a little grass into the dirt on the road.

- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Sherpa Tip: If you use a wet palette to keep your paint fresh, remember to put the lid on it when you leave. Just saying.

STEP 10 - MIDGROUND FIELD

"LET'S TALK ABOUT FIELDS"

PAINT:
Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Medium Hog Bright

COLOR MIXES:
Dirt = YO + BS
Faded Green =
YO > CYM > PG
Light Green =
TW > CYM > PG > BS
Dark Brown = BS + MB
Bright Gold =
CYM + YO > CRM

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Using a slightly damp brush, add a smidge of Titanium White to the Dirt mix. Begin adding the dried grass using short up and down strokes. Vary the mix by adding less Titanium White in a few spots. Apply a similar method on the dried grass area on the right side. Pulling short strokes on a slight angle inwards.

• Using the **Faded Green mix**, add just a kiss of color to the grass using a short angled stroke inward towards the road. This color also helps to merge the midground into the distant background.

• Apply some highlights to the tops of the dry grass on the left using the **Light Green mix.** Flick short directional brush strokes and catch the wave of the grass. Apply the same method on the right side. Rinse.

• Deepen the values and add shadows in the dried grasses, using the **Dark Brown mix** and short strokes. Occasionally add just Yellow Ochre for an added value.

• Combine Titanium White with a **Dark Brown mix**.and the **Light Green mix**. Then apply a layer of highlights to the dry grass. Rinse the brush thoroughly. Use your **Dark Brown mix** to lightly tap in the tops of the grass on the left. Vary the mix and sometimes use the corner of the brush. Continue to the right side using the same method.

• Add touches of the **Bright Gold mix** to the tops of some of the grass. Add a little Titanium White in spots. Adjust as needed. Rinse.
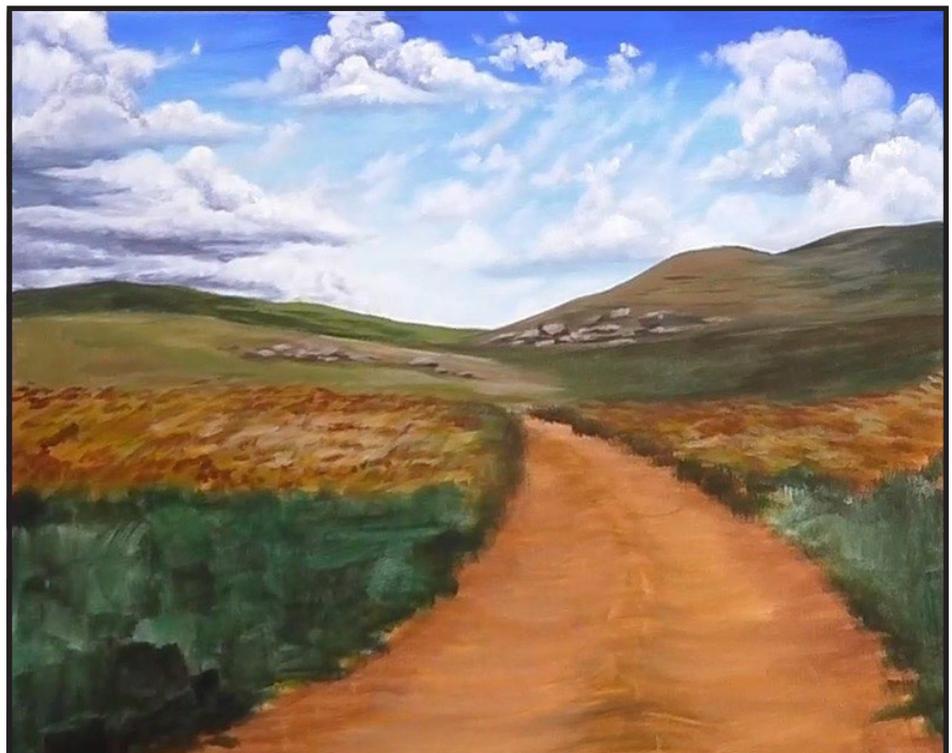
STEP 11 - BACK OF THE ROAD

"THE 'I'M JUST STANDING HERE DOING NOTHING' ATTENTION BREAK"

PAINT:
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Medium Hog Bright
Small Hog Round

COLOR MIXES:
Dark Green = PG + BS
Moss Green = CYM > PG
Dark Brown = BS + MB
Dirt = YO + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Use the Medium Hog Bright brush and the **Dark Green mix** to add touches of grass along the edges of the road. Flick the stroke upwards using the toe of the brush. Add even more Burnt Sienna to the mix and begin adding the shadows of the clumps of the grass in the curved centerline of the road.

• Brighten the grass along the edges of the road using the **Moss Green mix**. Add a little of this color to the clumps of stray grass in the center of the road. Rinse the brush.

• Switch to the Round Hog brush and add a shadow to the edges of the road and to the centerline,

using the **Dark Brown mix**. Scrub in some of the **Dirt mix** at the back of the road in the rut area using a side to side stroke. Then add Burnt Sienna along the edges and in the ruts. Mix a little Titanium White to the **Dirt mix** to softly highlight the tire ruts. Alternate between the Burnt Sienna and the **Dark Brown mix** and tap in the rough road edges.

• Mix a little Titanium White to the **Dirt mix** to softly highlight the tire ruts on the front of the road using a side to side brush stroke. Rinse.
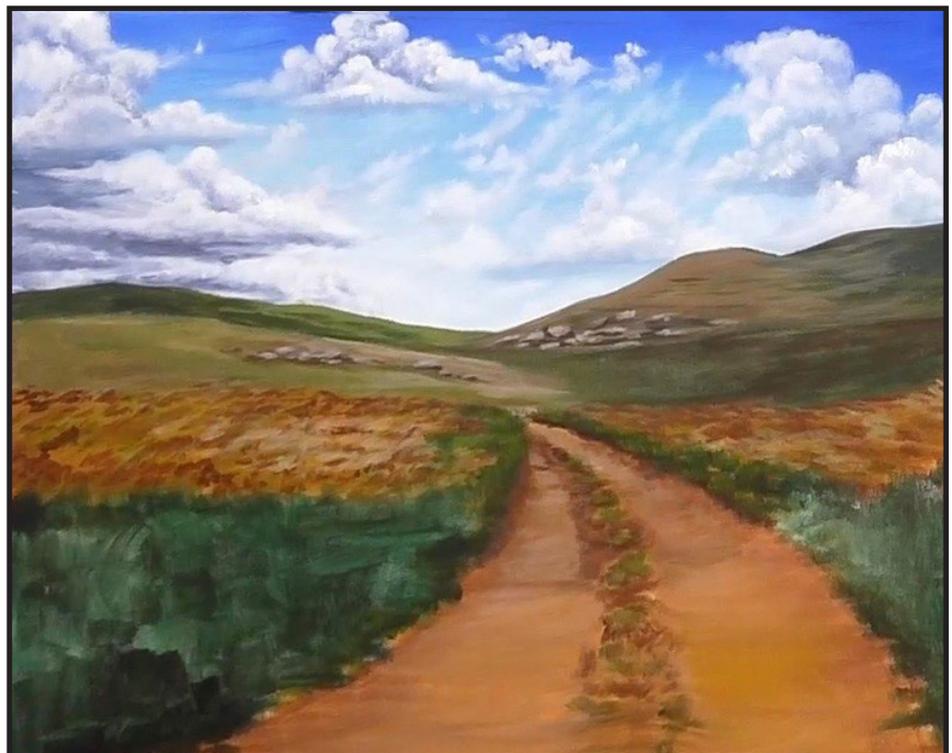
STEP 12 - ROADSIDE FOLIAGE, MIDGROUND

"LITTLE MOMENTS"

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

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Small Synthetic Grainer

COLOR MIXES:
Moss Green = CYM > PG
Dark Green = PG + BS
Light Green =
TW > CYM > PG > BS
Dark Brown = BS + MB
Off White = TW > UB
Brown Red = TW + BS > CRM

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Thin the **Moss Green mix** with water. Create small grasses along the edges of the road by lightly pushing down on the brush, then pulling the stroke upward and releasing at the end. Change directions and curve the grasses and stems. Coming forward, add Titanium White to the mix to make a more vibrant value.

• Use the **Dark Green mix** to add stems to the clumps in the center of the road. Highlight the grass in the center of the road with the **Light Green mix**. Vary the mix by adding more Phthalo Green here and

there. Continue building up the grasses and stems along the back edges of the road and down the center by adjusting and varying the mixes.

• Add rough shadows along the edges of the road and the center line using the **Dark Brown mix** and a side to side brush stroke.

• Thin the **Off White mix** and lightly tap the brush up and down to create the flowers on top of the stems. Occasionally using the side of the brush. Continue adding flowers to the back half of the road on both sides and try to avoid patterns.

• Tap the **Brown Red mix** at the back of the road for a few distant, out of focus stones. Rinse.

Sharp Tip: If an area gets too bright, diffuse it by adding more grasses in different directions.
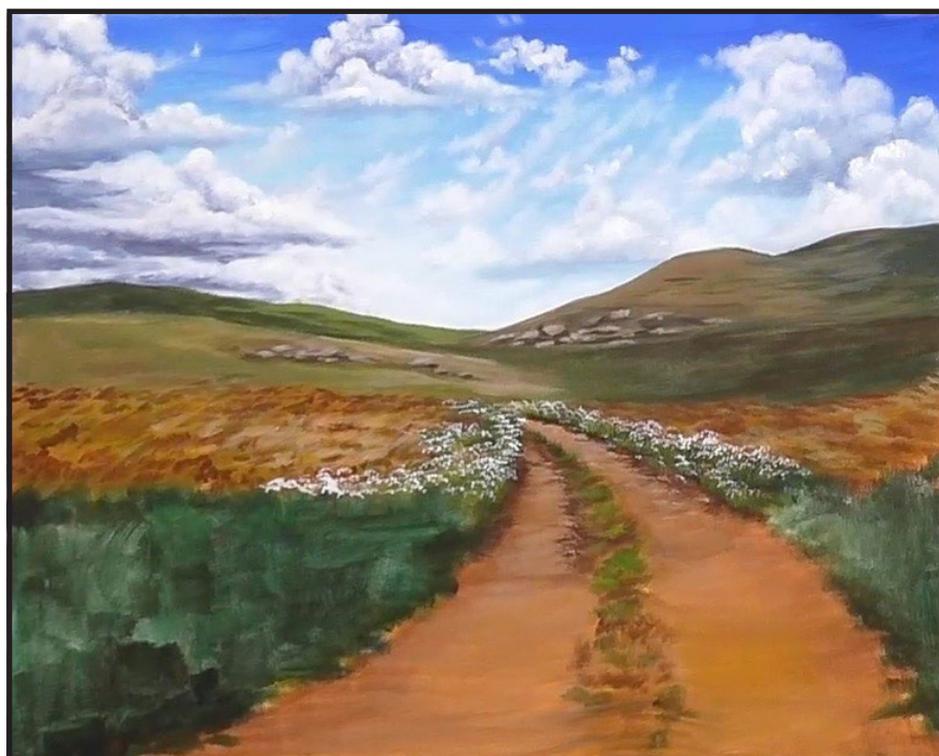
STEP 13 – FOREGROUND ROAD

"SMALL HUMP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD"

PAINT:
Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Medium Hog Bright
Small Hog Round
Small Synthetic Grainer
Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:
Sandstone = YO + TW > BS
Dark Brown = BS + MB
Dirt = YO + BS
Bright Gold = CYM + YO > CRM
Light Yellow = CYM + YO + TW
Dark Green = PG + BS
Light Green =
TW > CYM > PG > BS

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Add Cad Yellow Medium to the **Sandstone mix** using the Medium Hog Bright brush. Curve some of the rut lines upward and then pull strokes across them.

• Alternate between Burnt Sienna and the **Dark Brown mix** to deepen edges of the lower part of the road.

• Reinforce the hump in the middle of the road using the **Dirt Mix** and a downward curved stroke. Tap in Burnt Sienna here and there in the center, to imply rough edges.

• Use the **Dark Brown mix** alternated with Burnt Sienna to shade the edges of the road and along the centerline using a back and forth scrubbing stroke. Add some Cadmium Yellow Medium to the **Sandstone mix** and highlight the center of the ruts using a slightly curved stroke. Rinse.

• Switch to the Small Round Hog brush and the **Dark Brown mix** then paint the shadows of the forward rocks.

• Switch to the Medium Hog Bright brush and add another layer of highlight on the ruts of the road by adding Titanium White to the **Dirt Mix.**

• Switch to the Small Synthetic Round brush and combine the **Bright Gold mix** with some Burnt Sienna and Titanium White and paint the tops of the stones. Add different colors sometimes to create variation on the rocks. Rinse.

• Add a deeper shadow under the stones using Mars Black.

• Switch to the Small Synthetic Grainer and the **Dark Brown mix** and imply a roughness in the road using a light touch and a side to side stroke. Add highlights to the road with the **Light Yellow mix.** Rinse.

• Add some grass back to the center of the road using the **Dark Green mix.** Then add pops of highlights using the **Light Green mix.** Add some Phthalo Green here and there on the road.

• Make adjustments and add any colors as needed. Rinse.

STEP 14 – FOLIAGE DEPTH

"IT'S OK TO CHANGE YOUR MIND"

PAINT:
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Medium Hog Bright

COLOR MIXES:
Medium Green =
PG + BS + CYM
Dark Green = PG + BS
Deep Green = CYM + MB

STEP DISCUSSION:
- Using short upward strokes and the **Dark Green mix,** add the depth to the front foliage on both sides of the road. Apply the **Deep Green mix** at the front of the canvas and to the very bottom of the foliage, giving it more depth in contrast. Blended the two mixes, wet into wet.

Sherpa Tip: It is OK to change your mind sometimes. I began by using the Medium Green mix but quickly changed my mind when I found I needed more depth and contrast.
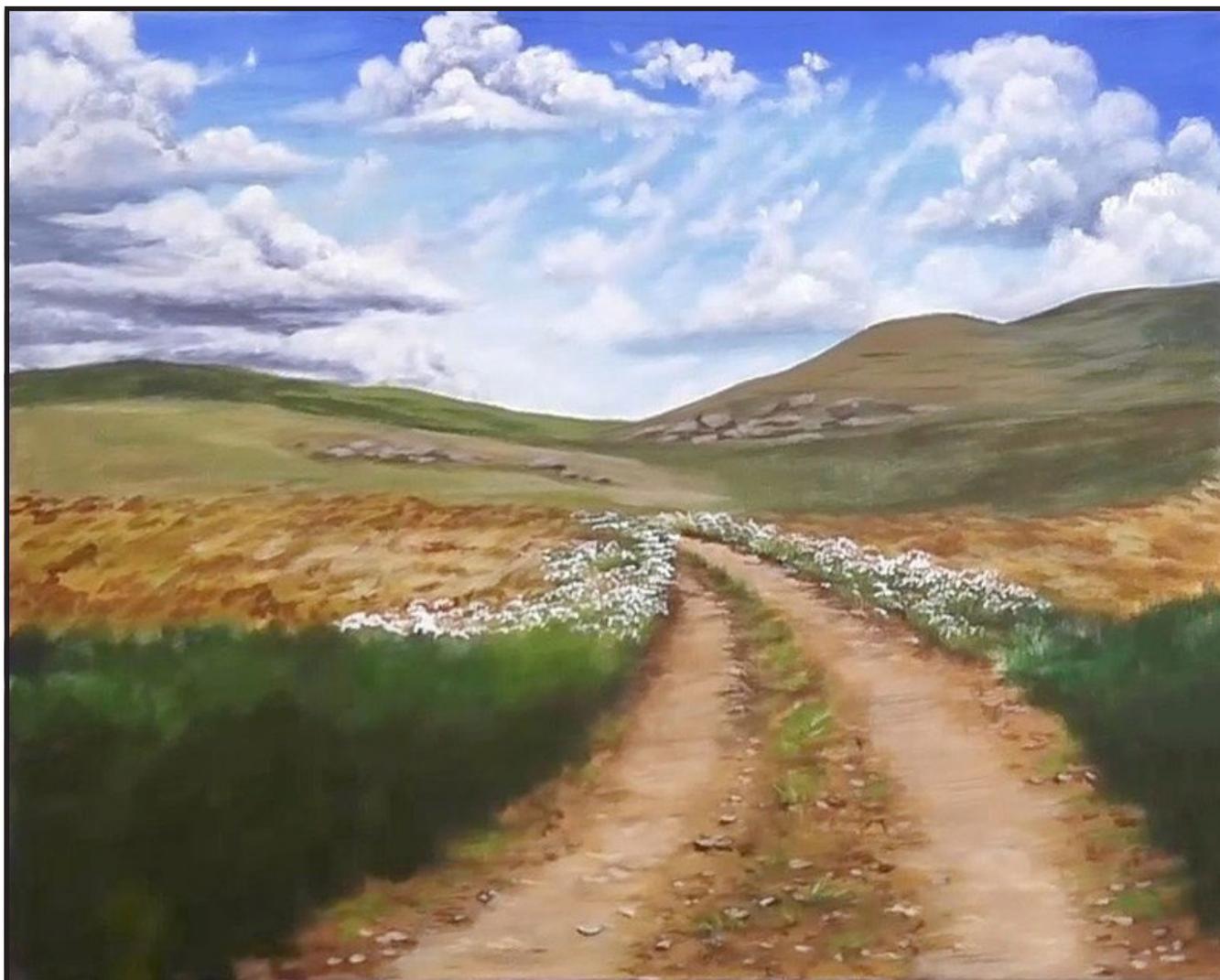
STEP 15 - ADDING GREEN VALUES

"LIVING THEIR BEST LITTLE WEED LIFE"

PAINT:
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Small Synthetic Filbert
Grainer

COLOR MIXES:
Medium Green =
PG + BS + CYM
Deep Green = CYM + MB
Light Green =
TW > CYM > PG > BS

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Using short upward strokes in the **Medium Green mix**, add another value to your stems and grasses. Carry the strokes up over the tops of the green area that was painted in the previous step. Change directions of the strokes often and let some of them wander and bend over the road in spots. Closer to the road, where the stems and grasses are in shadow, add more of the Phthalo Green for a darker value. When you want to lighten the value, add more Cadmium Yellow Medium to the mix. Use the **Deep Green mix** with more Cadmium Yellow Medium added to the mix, for yet another value. Continue making

irregular upward strokes on both sides of the road until the green area is full.

• Add highlights to the grasses and stems using the **Light Green mix** and short upward strokes. Create variety by adjusting any of the colors in the mixes and changing directions of the strokes. Add more detailed strokes at the very front of the canvas where the stems and grasses would be more in focus, using the edge of the brush.

• Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.
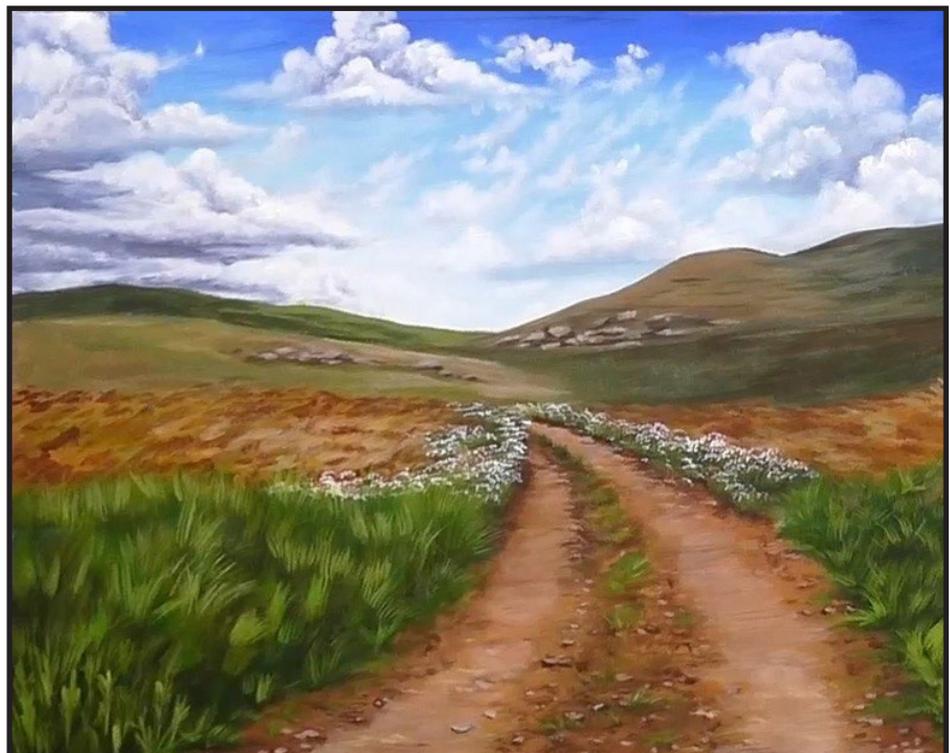
STEP 16 - FORWARD WHITE FLOWERS

"TEDIOUS, BUT SO WORTH IT"

PAINT:
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:
Off White = TW > UB

STEP DISCUSSION:

• To create the Cosmo flowers use the **Off White mix**. Use the toe of the brush to paint opposing comma strokes. Some have just two petals, while others will have up to 5 petals with one crossing at the bottom. Closer to the midground they will be smaller and less focused. Closer to the front they will be bigger and more detailed. Vary the mix here and there by using combinations of any of the colors in the mix. And paint some that even carry up above the greenery.

• Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 17 - PINK FLOWERS

"A SMATTERING OF PINK AND SOME CENTERS"

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

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
X-Small Synthetic Round
Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:
Pink = TW + QM + UB

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Use the X-Small Synthetic Round brush to dot the centers of some of the white Cosmo flowers with Mars Black. The dots need to be smaller on the flowers that are closer to the back and slightly larger on the foreground flowers. Rinse the brush as needed to remove any built up paint.

• Switch to the Small Synthetic Round brush and use the **Pink mix** to add a smattering of the pink Comos throughout the roadside. Use the same method to create these flowers as you did in the previous step. Vary the mix here and there by using combinations of any of the colors in the mix.
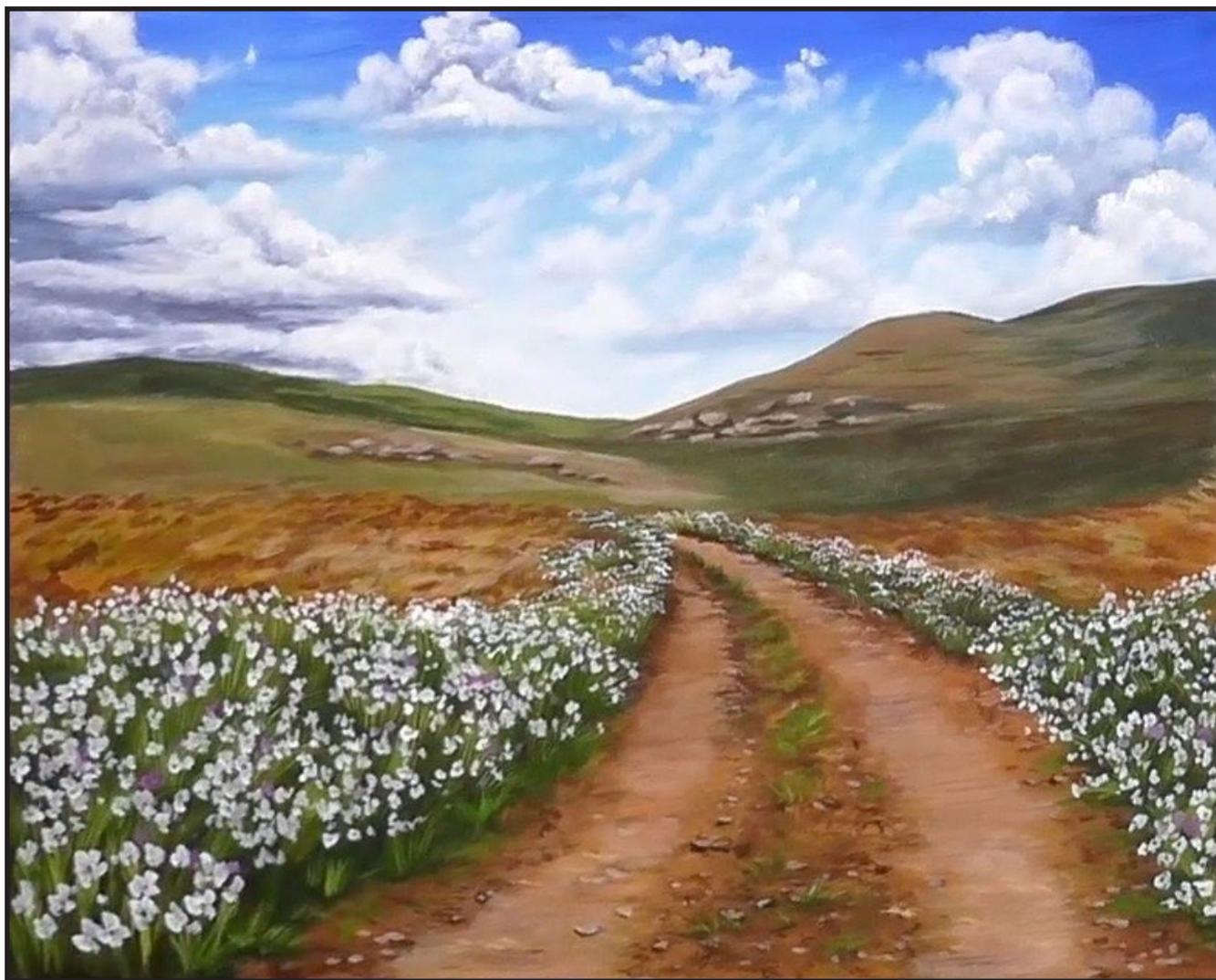
STEP 18 - FINAL DETAILS

"SUPERSTARS WITHIN THE PAINTING THAT TAKE ME HOME"

PAINT:
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Titanium White = TW
Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:
X-Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:
Warm Pink =
QM > CYM > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:
• Add a second value to

your pink cosmos using the **Warm Pink mix** and the extra small synthetic round. Rinse.

• Dot some of the centers in the pink Cosmos using Cadmium Yellow Medium. Rinse.

• Highlight some of the white petals with Titanium White for an extra pop. Avoid being too detailed in the midground but adding a bit more focus at the front.

• Sign.

• 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.
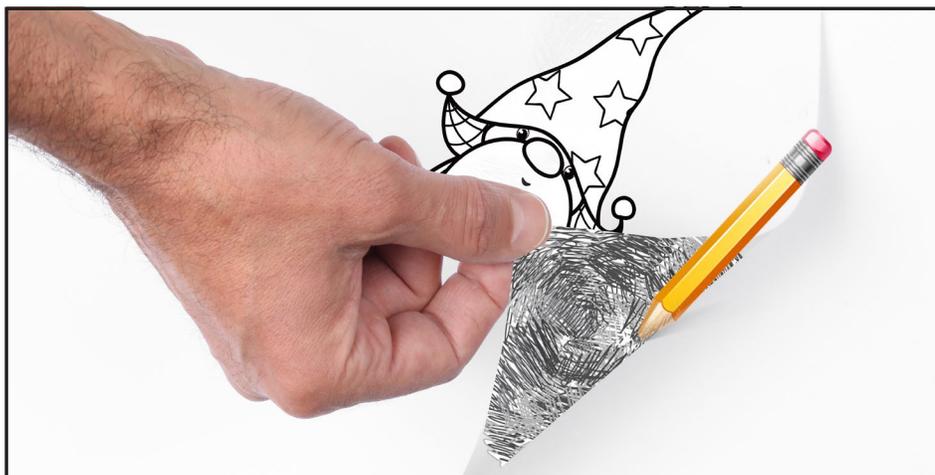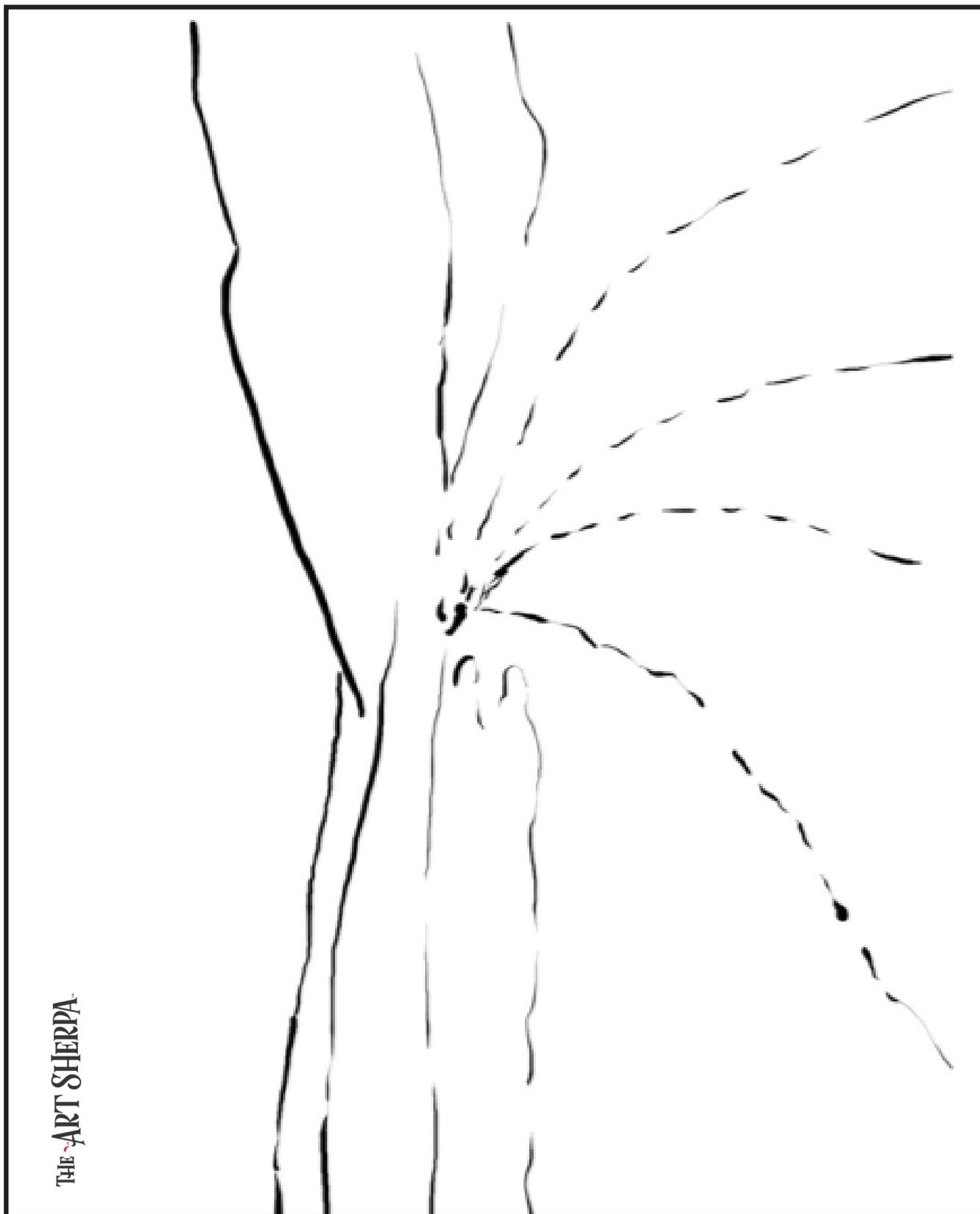
The gridding method allows you to dip your toe into drawing without being in the deep end of the drawing pool on day one. For our purposes, the gridding method has been worked out for you. In this example, we have an 8 x 8 canvas and the example is based on a one-inch square grid with everything of equal 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.
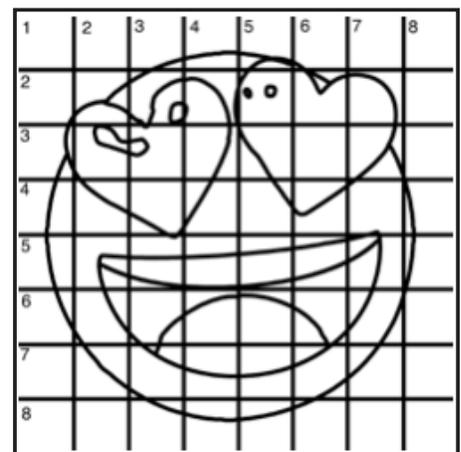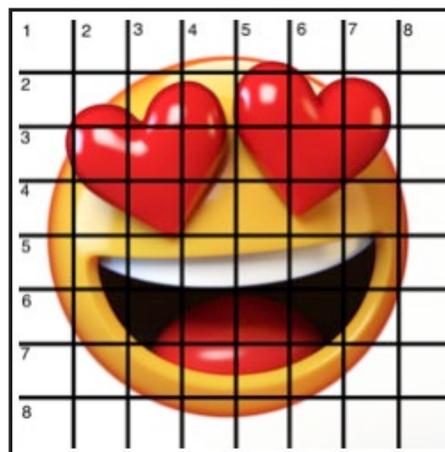
BLENDING WET INTO WET

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 pigmentmented 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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