

13 Days of

HALLOWEEN

with
THE ART SHERPA



NEVERMORE

NAME CREDIT
TO PATRONS
MOLLY CARSON &
GEORGIA WALLACE

STEPS: 7 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 HOOTS

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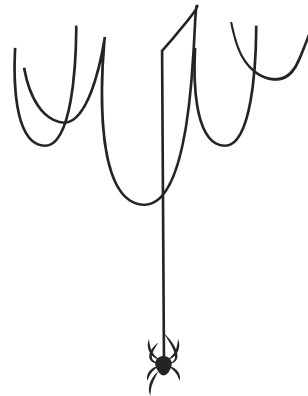
SHERPA FORWARD:

SHERPAWEEN:

The 13 days of Halloween acrylic painting challenge is perhaps my favorite time of year. Creating unusual paintings that can cover surprising topics is one of the things I love most about my job. I get to create artwork for people in my community who enjoy the holiday and the spooky ookie as well. This year is particularly special because I want to create a sense of a dark fairy tale. It's magical, mystical, and clearly Halloween with a side of fall, y'all. Since we've been moving I haven't been in my studio to design, so this let me do some digital painting on my tablet. In order to design things that would translate well into acrylic, there were some special challenges. However, it also gave me the chance to change things very easily in the design concept. The palette this year is rich and lush, and I really tried to focus on atmosphere and effect. The classes are two to three hoot but we're really going

to dive deep and break it down so I think that they're going to be fun for everyone. Every year I look forward to seeing your version of our challenge. You guys should have the best results ever with the mini books this year.

WISHING YOU A SPOOK-TACULAR,
BOO-TIFUL, WOOO-NDERFUL, AND
FANG-TASTIC HALLOWEEN!



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
- Dioxazine Purple = DP
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES:

- Large Synthetic Bright
- Medium Synthetic Filbert
- Small Synthetic Angle
- X-Small Synthetic Round

SYMBOL GUIDE:

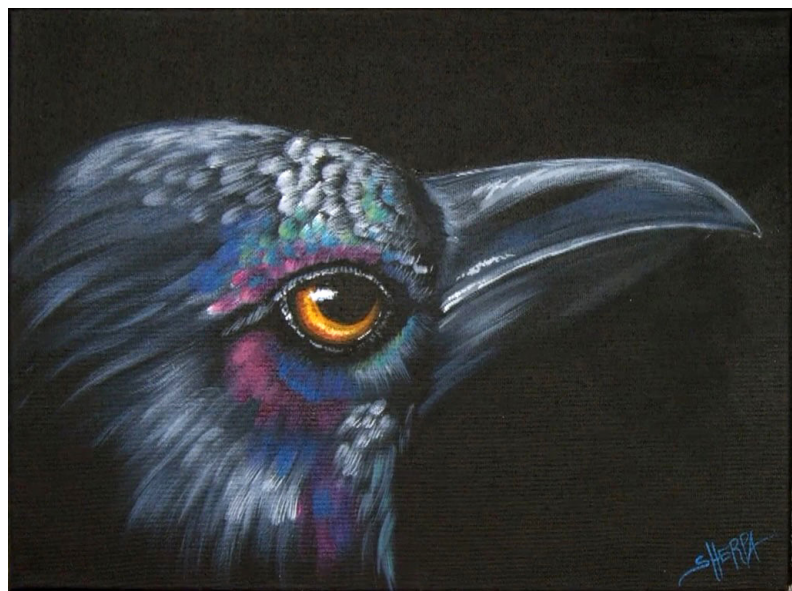
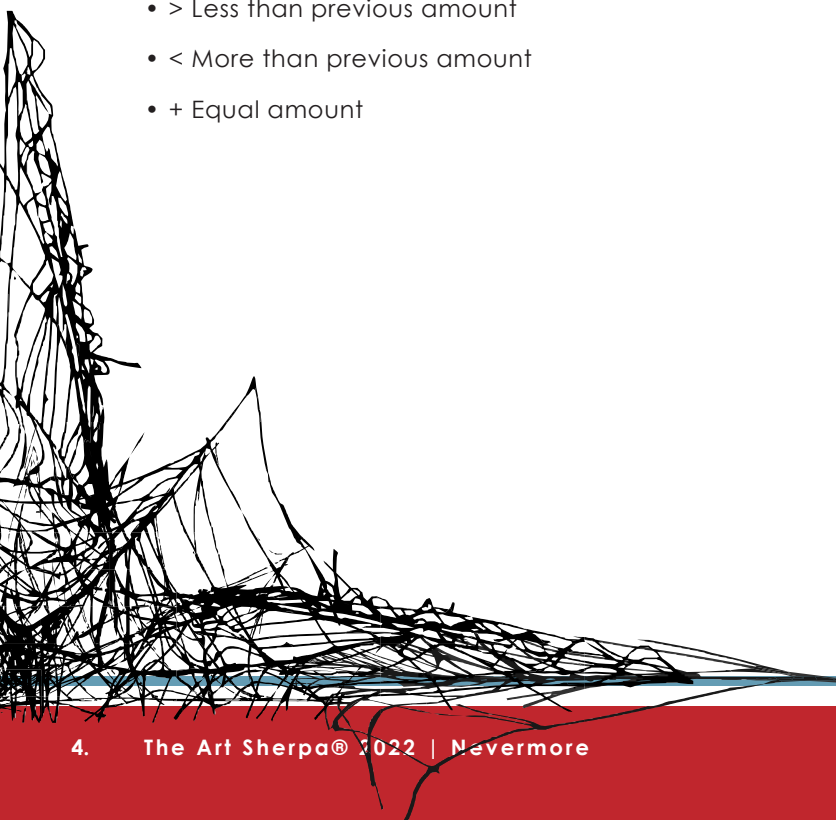
- > Less than previous amount
- < More than previous amount
- + Equal amount

TOOLS:

- 9 x 12 Canvas (If you notice that your canvas started to warp, as sometimes happens, just turn the canvas over and put it back side forward on your easel, then mist the back of the canvas. It usually resolves itself. Let dry before you proceed.)
- Optional: StayWet Palette
- T-Square Ruler
- Watercolor Pencil Or Chalk

TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing



VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE:

Below are the timestamps chapters we inserted in the tutorial video so that you can easily coordinate using the book and the tutorial video simultaneously. The actual timestamps will be provided after the tutorial goes live on YouTube. A revised version will be made available after it is revised.

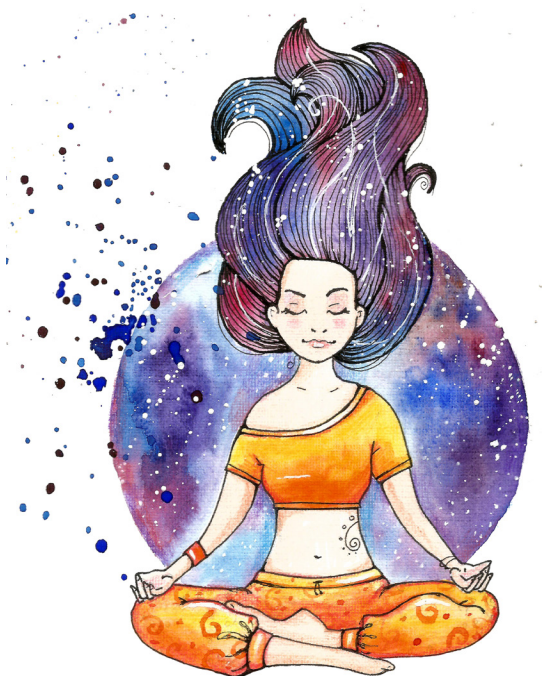
STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	02:49	COLORED GROUND
STEP 2	06:40	SKETCH THE IMAGE
STEP 3	11:16	FIRST FEATHER VALUES
STEP 4	16:47	BEAK
STEP 5	20:12	SECOND LAYER OF FEATHERS
STEP 6	24:25	FEATHER REFLECTIONS
STEP 7	30:24	EYE, HIGHLIGHTS AND REFLECTIONS
	52:39	SIGN



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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fabulous perks!

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STEP 1 - COLORED GROUND

"I WANT TO PAINT IT BLACK"

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

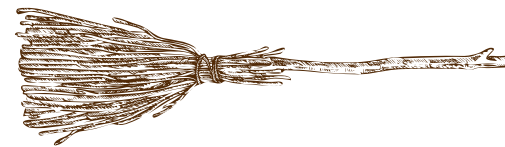
BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Synthetic Bright

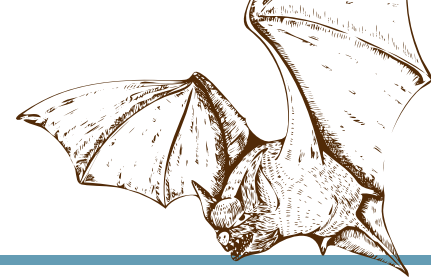
STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load the brush with Mars Black, and then roughly paint the entire canvas. We are just ensuring that all the white of the canvas is loosely covered. Smooth the paint somewhat by applying long strokes, vertically and horizontally. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

***Sherpa Tip:** We often get the question "Can I just use a black canvas?" and yes you can. However, it is best to paint that with a layer of black paint so that if you want to trim back or touch up your bird, the black paint will be the same color and sheen as the background.p.*



STEP 2 - SKETCH THE IMAGE



“IS IT A RAVEN OR A CROW?”

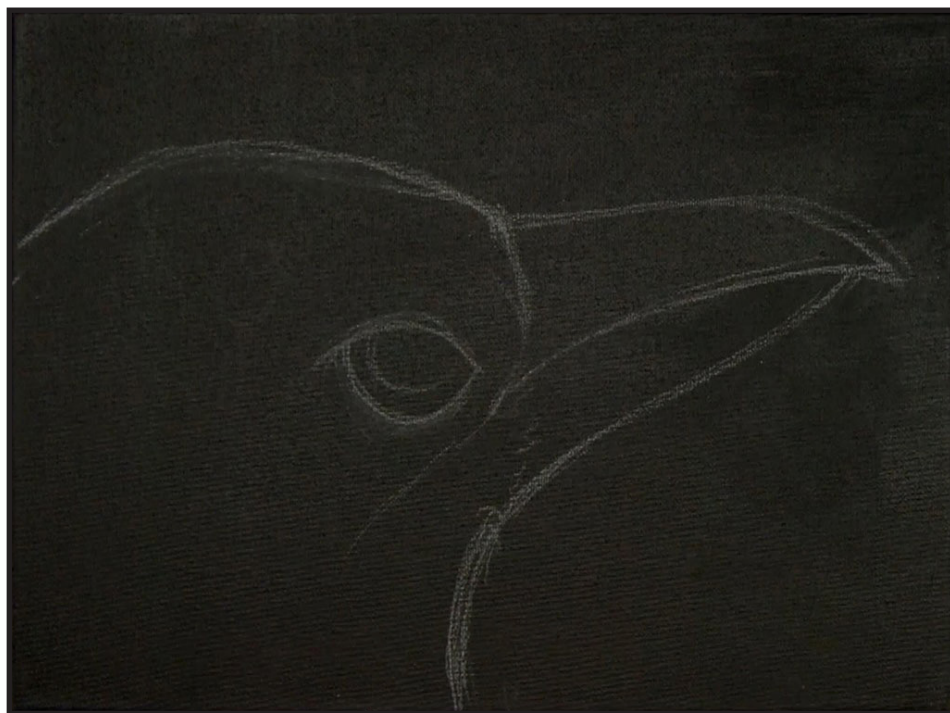
BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil

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 to get your image on the canvas. 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.
- Place a small mark in the center of the canvas, about 2 ½ inches from the top. To draw the top of the head, slightly curve a line towards the left and allow it to curve off the side of the canvas.
- Start the throat just slightly to the left of center. Curve this line to the right, somewhat. Sketch another line coming down, about an inch or so, from the top of the head.

- Draw the dividing line that is where the top and bottom of the beak meet. This line starts at the front midpoint of the face and curves over to almost the right edge of the canvas.
- The top of the beak starts at the top of the head but suddenly curves down near the tip. The bottom part of the beak comes from the throat and has a gentle, upward curve that ends just short of the tip. Imply a few feathers where the head and beak meet.
- The eye placement is just back from the centerline of the beak. The upper lid arcs into an upside down smile. The bottom lid is a right side up smile, that has a bit of a deeper curve in the middle. Off set the pupil at the top of the eye to the right.
- Imply a few feather lines if you like. Adjust the image to your own personal liking.



STEP 3 - FIRST FEATHER VALUES

"IMPLYING THE DIRECTION OF THE FEATHERS"

PAINT:

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Grey = UB + MB >> TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Dark Grey mix** to start to paint in small values that you see on the underside of the beak. The upper beak is more visible, so paint all of it in

with this mix. If it gets too light you can easily put the shadows back in with Mars Black.

- Paint loose brush strokes along the cheek, indicating little feathers. Continue adding feathers directionally onto the head. Apply curved strokes following the line of the feathers that you see in the reference. Use light pressure and a dry brush technique.
- Add a little more Mars Black at the front of the head because we will be adding those feathers later. Paint those first initial values in a circle around the eye. This first layer of feathers are just implying the beginning elements of the bird.
- Then go back and paint just enough of the lower beak to just see it. Rinse.



STEP 4 - BEAK



"HIGHLIGHTS AND DEFINITION"

PAINT:

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Mid Gray = TW + UB > MB

Dark Blue = UB + MB

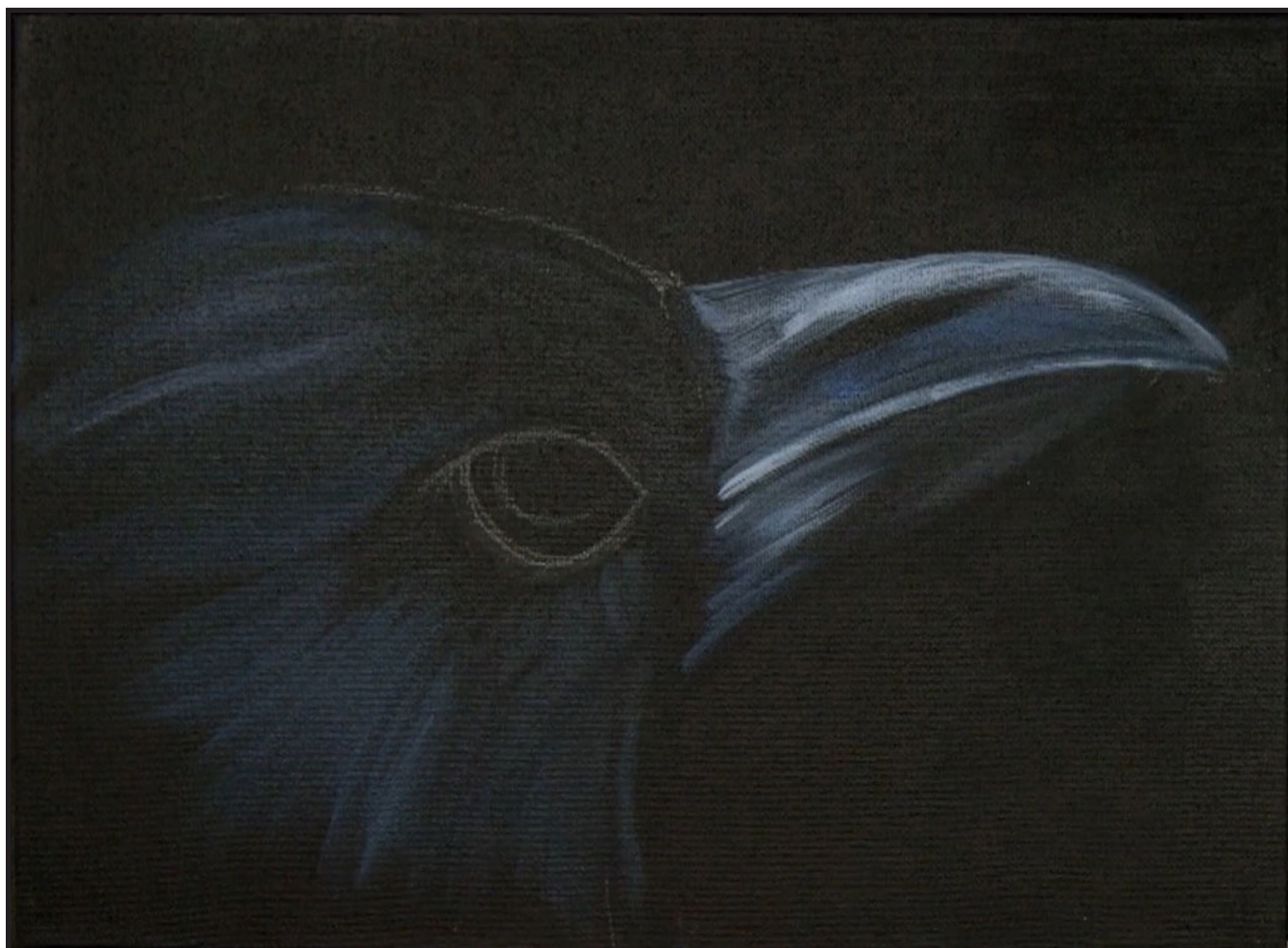
Light Grey = TW > UB > MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Mid Grey mix** and paint along the top line of the beak. Then dry brush some texture onto the top of

the beak, curving the brush stroke up from the face to the top of the beak. Add a little more Mars Black in the mix, and apply a shadow to the side of the top beak where the nostril would be. Load more of the **Mid Grey mix** on the brush, and line the bottom edge of the top beak. Use the **Dark Blue mix** to feather soft, short strokes over the edge of the beak at the top of the head.

- Highlight the bottom half of the beak with the **Mid Grey mix**. Start at the jaw and lightly feather the strokes directionally towards the tip of the beak. Pick up a little more Ultramarine Blue on the dirty brush and add this as a reflection on the top and lower beak. Rinse.
- Use the **Light Grey mix** and follow the grain of the beak, starting on the lower edge of the upper beak. Then highlight the top of the beak. Rinse.



WATERCOLOR WEDNESDAYS

FREE weekly watercolor
live stream
virtual art class!
7:00PM 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



STEP 5 - SECOND LAYER OF FEATHERS



"PAINTING THE LIGHT REFLECTING ON THE FEATHERS"

PAINT:

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Blue Grey = UB > MB > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load the **Blue Grey mix** on the edge of the brush and add some light, little feathers at the front of the throat that you barely see. Paint some feather

highlights under the eye. Then, paint short little marks for the feathers that are between the eye and the throat.

- Continue adding slightly longer, reflective feathers with the **Blue Grey mix**, while following the semicircular shape of the cheek. Use very light pressure and a very dry brush technique, allowing the brush to do the work.
- Lightly dry brush more feathers, starting from just above the back corner of the eye and flowing to the back of the head. Continue adding feathers filling in the top, back of the head. Rinse.

***Sherpa Tip:** To fix an area where I had a little bit too much blue, I just mixed my background color and came back in, brushing in the opposite direction to blend back the blue. I'm never never stuck, any "mistake" can be fixed.*



STEP 6 - FEATHER REFLECTIONS

"PAINTING OUR ELEGANT FELLOW IN BLACK AND WHITE"

PAINT:

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

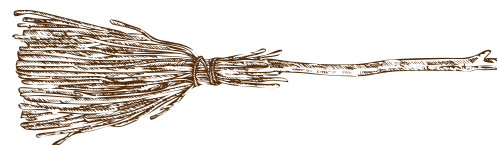
Light Grey = TW > UB > MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Add a little highlight on the throat feathers with the **Light Grey mix** using the toe of the brush, sometimes the side and sometimes the flat of the brush, to make

shorter dry brush reflections. Add more short strokes under the eye where it is more reflective. Add more reflections on the top front edge of the beak.

- Use short little strokes, starting at the back of the forehead moving back, to create the shape of the feathers at the top of the head. See how it looks like they overlap because there is a little dark left between rows of feathers. Add a little bit of a reflection around the semicircle of the cheek. Then, paint tiny brush strokes upwards above the upper lid of the eye.
- Continue filling in the forehead feathers, still using the **Light Grey mix**. Use the toe of the brush and a directional stroke to make shorter, dry brush reflections. Rinse.



STEP 7 - EYE, HIGHLIGHTS AND REFLECTIONS



“BRINGING IN SOME COLOR FOR PIZAZZ”

PAINT:

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

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert
Small Synthetic Round
X-Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Light Grey = TW > UB > MB
Orange = CYM + CRM
Dark Orange =
CYM + CRM + BS
Medium Yellow = CYM > TW
Light Blue = TW > UB
Medium Pink = QM > TW
Dark Magenta = QM + DP
Turquoise = PB + PG > TW
Seafoam =
PG > PB > CYM > TW
Indigo = DP + UB > TW
Light Pink = TW > QM > CYM
Light Green = TW > PG > CYM
Medium Blue = PB > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

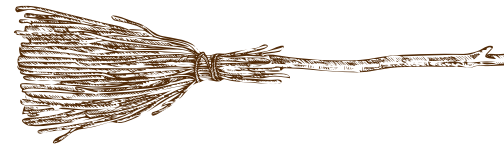
- Start with the X-Small Round and the **Light Grey mix** to paint the tiny feathers that are on the upper and lower lid. Use the Mars Black to define the shape of the eye. Rinse.
- Dot small reflections

onto those tiny feathers around the eye with Titanium White. Add a high reflection on the centerline of the beak. Dot some more reflection just above that, but closer to the head. Then, add a line of highlight at the top of the beak. Rinse. Use Mars Black on the background to refine the top of the beak to ensure it is not too overwhelming. Rinse. Use Titanium White to paint lines of highlight on the upper beak near the top. Add a tiny bit at the tip to make it pop. Rinse.

- Switch to the Filbert brush and the **Light Grey mix** to tap in a few small feathers coming off the back of the eye. Use Titanium White to add even lighter reflections on the feathers along the throat, the cheek, the top of the head, and on the forehead. Rinse.
- Switch to the Small Round Brush and use the **Orange mix** to paint the iris of the eye. Be sure to leave some dark between this color and the lid. Rinse. Paint the pupil, and define the dark space between the iris and the lower lid with Mars Black. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing.
- Switch to the X-Small Round and tap lines of Cadmium Yellow Medium into the iris, and line the edge near the pupil. Tap lines of the **Dark Orange mix** inward from the not quite the outer edge of the iris. Rinse. Use Titanium White to dot in wet reflections on the inner corner of the eye, and add a couple dots at the back of the lower and upper lids. Rinse.
- Paint a lighter value in the iris with some of the **Medium Yellow mix**. Rinse. Add an irregular reflection near the top of the eye using the **Light Blue mix**. Rinse. Tap in the brightest highlight on top of that reflection with Titanium White. Then, add a bit of the **Medium Yellow mix** to the bottom center of the iris. Rinse.
- Switch to the Filbert brush and the **Medium Pink mix**, and lightly brush a bit on the feathers under the eye leaving some open areas. Paint just a hint of this down the throat. Add a little more Quinacridone Magenta into the mix, and barely touch another little layer under the eye. There is some of this color on the feathers just above the eye, as well. Use the **Dark Magenta mix** to add a deeper value on these pinkish feathers. Rinse.
- Add some iridescence to the feathers on the forehead with the **Turquoise mix**. Vary the mix by sometimes having it a little greener and sometimes it is a little bluer. Add a touch more of Titanium White in the mix, and add a reflection on the feathers just below the front of the eye. Use the **Seafoam mix** to add another value on these blue feathers. Rinse.

STEP 7 CONTINUED:

- Paint little hints of the **Indigo mix** on the feathers under the eye, at the back above the eye, a bit on the throat, and just along the front edge of the eye. Rinse.
- Use the **Light Pink mix** to highlight some of the pink feathers in tiny touches. Rinse. Add the **Light Green mix** to highlight some of the turquoise feathers. Rinse. Then, use the **Light Blue mix** to highlight the Indigo feathers. Rinse.
- Sign.



THE TRACING METHOD

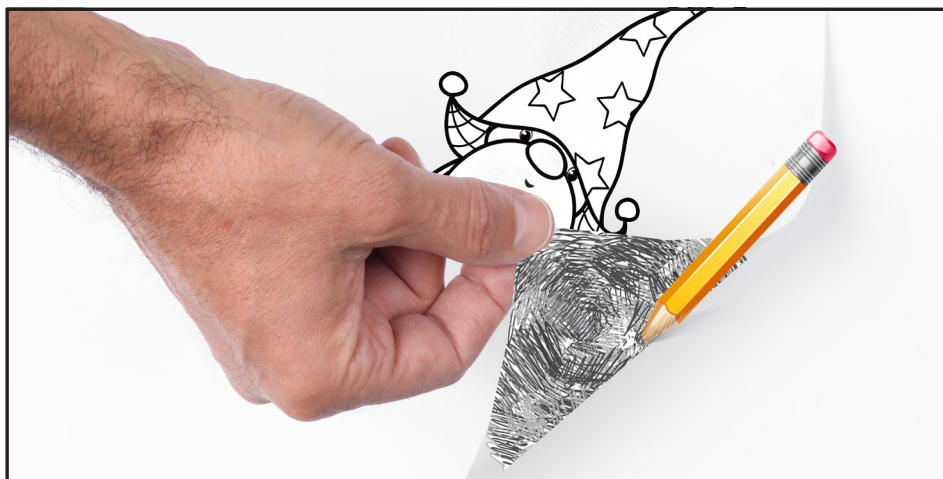
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



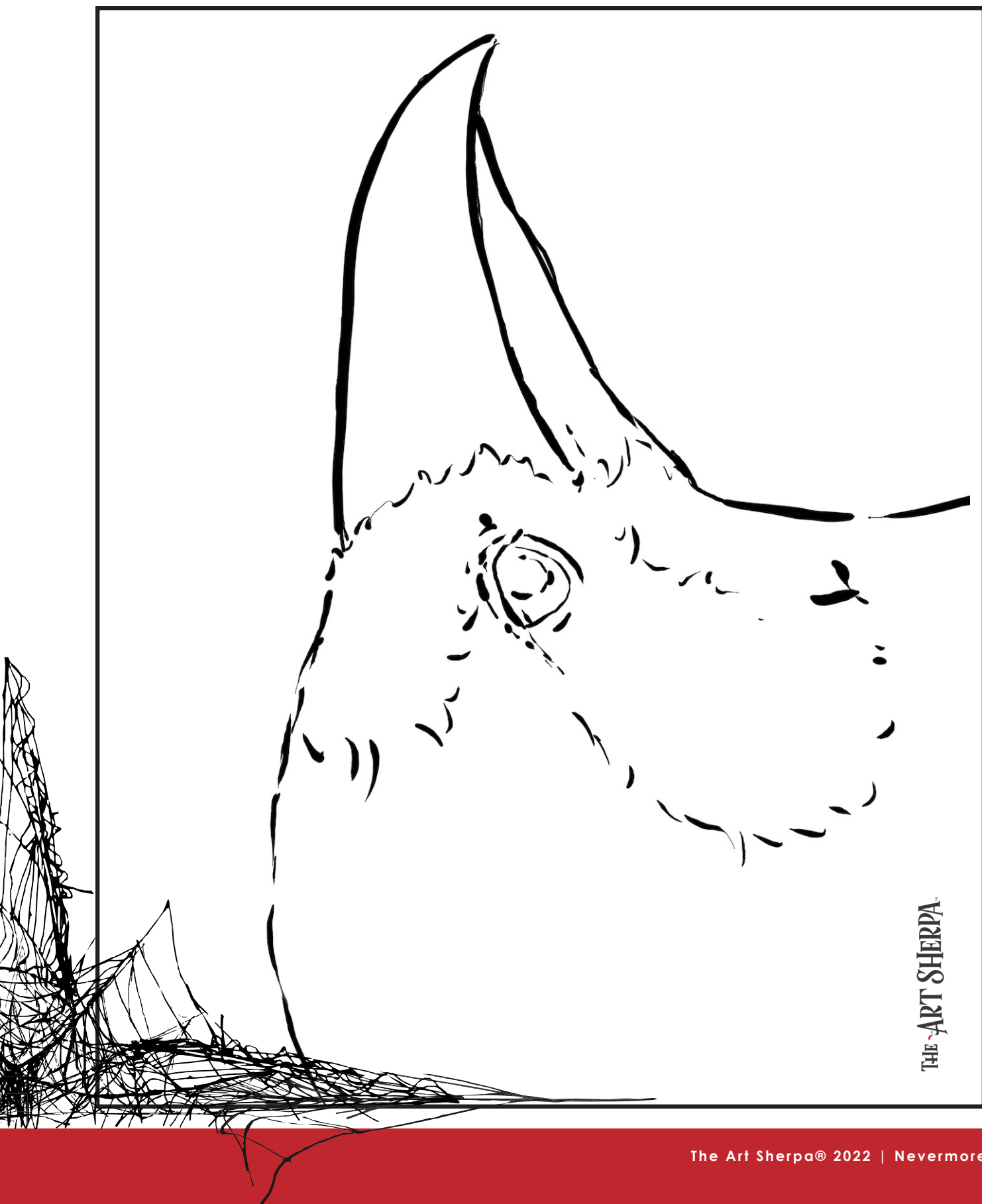
see that your transfer is happening. If not check if your rubbing is too thin or that your pressure is not too light. After you are done tracing the lines, remove your traceable and you should have a copy of the line art on your canvas.



- 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 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



TRACEABLE:



GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS:

The gridding method allows you to dip your toe into drawing without being in the deep end of the drawing pool on day one. For our purposes, the gridding method has been worked out for you. In this example, we have an 8 x 8 canvas and the example is based on a one-inch square grid with everything of equal ratio. On your 8 x 8 canvas, you will make a mark using your chalk tool and a T-square ruler at every 1 inch point both horizontally and vertically. The T-square will help ensure that your lines are straight.

To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could use chalkboard chalk. While I will always share with you the tools and equipment that I am using, you are welcome to deviate from that any time you feel something else is best for you.

Something that I have learned especially with complex images is that it can be easy to get lost in the grid. If you find yourself

unsure, go back and check to make sure that the square you are marking on matches the square in your reference. After you master this method, you will be able to use gridding to transfer any image from a reference to your canvas.

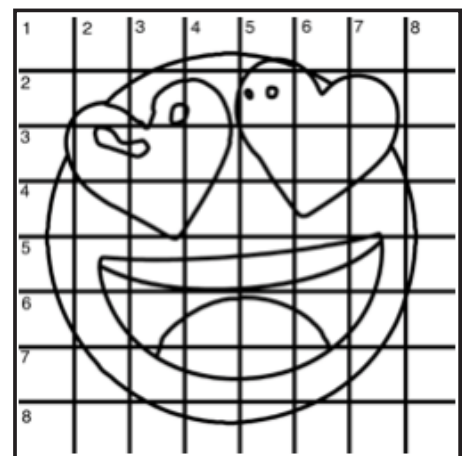
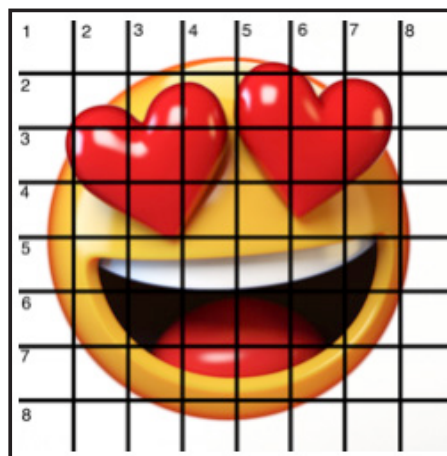
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

Find the first row that the contour line of your image enters and exits and duplicate only what you see in that one single square. Continue through the entire image square by square transferring, the contour lines of the subject with chalk on your canvas. When you have duplicated the subject from your reference to your canvas, you will be done.

You can remove chalk easily by taking a soft brush and getting it damp with clean water. Gently brush over the lines you wish to remove and they will lift.

If you prefer a different size there are many great resources out there that involve math about how to scale. I do not teach math for many good reasons and I could count them all for you, but that would be doing math. The resources out there for that information and those mathematical formulas exist online in copious amounts. Explained beautifully and if you are choosing to paint different sizes than we are utilizing in this mini book, I highly recommend finding one of those formulas and mastering it. Short of that, buy a 8 x 8 canvas to match the free grid for this project.

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



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 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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