

13 Days of

# HALLOWEEN

with  
THE ART SHERPA

## LITTLE SPITFIRE

NAME CREDIT TO  
PATRON  
LAURA ORDOGNE



STEPS: 11 | DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING | 3 HOOTS



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

SHERPA FORWARD.....	3
PAINT AND TOOL GUIDE .....	4
VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE.....	5
THE GOLDBLOCKS ZONE .....	5
STEP 1 - COLORED GROUND .....	7
STEP 2 - BACKGROUND KEYHOLE .....	8
STEP 3 - SKETCHING THE IMAGE.....	9
STEP 4 - DIFFUSED BACKGROUND.....	10
STEP 5 - LAYERING WINGS AND NECK .....	12
STEP 6 - WING TEXTURE.....	13
STEP 7 - UNDERPAINTING THE DRAGON .....	14
STEP 8 - SCALE HIGHLIGHTS .....	15
STEP 9 - DEFINING THE FACE AND EYES .....	16
STEP 10 - FACE DETAILS .....	17
STEP 11 - EYES .....	18
TRACING METHOD.....	20
TRACEABLE .....	21
GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS .....	22
TECHNIQUE REFERENCES.....	23





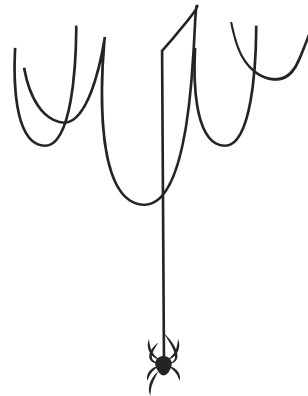
# SHERPA FORWARD:

## 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
- Yellow Ochre = YO

## BRUSHES:

- X-Large Synthetic Bright
- X-Small Synthetic Round
- Small Synthetic Round
- Large Hog Round
- Medium Hog Bright
- Medium Hog Round

## TOOLS:

- 8 x 8 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

## SYMBOL GUIDE:

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

## TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Clouds
- 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.

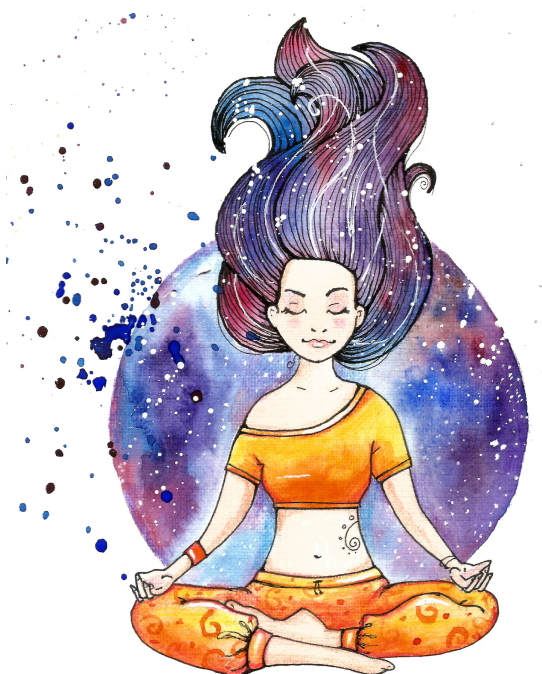
STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	02:57	COLORED GROUND
STEP 2	06:16	BACKGROUND KEYHOLE
STEP 3	17:01	SKETCHING THE IMAGE
STEP 4	24:44	DIFFUSED BACKGROUND
STEP 5	32:11	LAYERING WINGS AND NECK
STEP 6	36:57	WING TEXTURE
STEP 7	48:18	UNDERPAINTING THE DRAGON
STEP 8	55:53	SCALE HIGHLIGHTS
STEP 9	1:03:36	DEFINING THE FACE AND EYES
STEP 10	1:10:18	FACE DETAILS
STEP 11	1:19:12	EYES
	1:34:20	SIGN



## THE GOLDBLOCKS ZONE

In painting, every technique or process has what I call a "Goldilocks Zone". As an artist, you will be constantly seeking this space to achieve maximum results from any project you're doing. Much like Goldilocks, you will go into each technique and try to find a space that is just right for you. When you're loading your brush, sometimes you will have too much water, sometimes you will have too little water, and sometimes you

will find the amount of water is just right. When applying strokes to the canvas, you may find that you have too much brush pressure, too little brush pressure, or that your brush pressure is just right. The Goldilocks zone changes for every technique and every process. You will know you have found it when something that seemed difficult suddenly becomes much easier. A little goal I'd like to set for you is to notice when you have found yourself in the Goldilocks Zone so that you can locate it again easier the next time you come across a particular technique.





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# STEP 1 - COLORED GROUND

“THE UNDERPAINTING IS DRAGON’S GOLD”

## **PAINT:**

Yellow Ochre = YO

## **BRUSHES & TOOLS:**

X-Large Synthetic Bright

## **STEP DISCUSSION:**

- Load the dampened brush with Yellow Ochre, 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.





# STEP 2 – BACKGROUND KEYHOLE



## “SETTING CENTER STAGE FOR OUR DRAGON”

### PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Hog Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Almond = YO > BS < TW

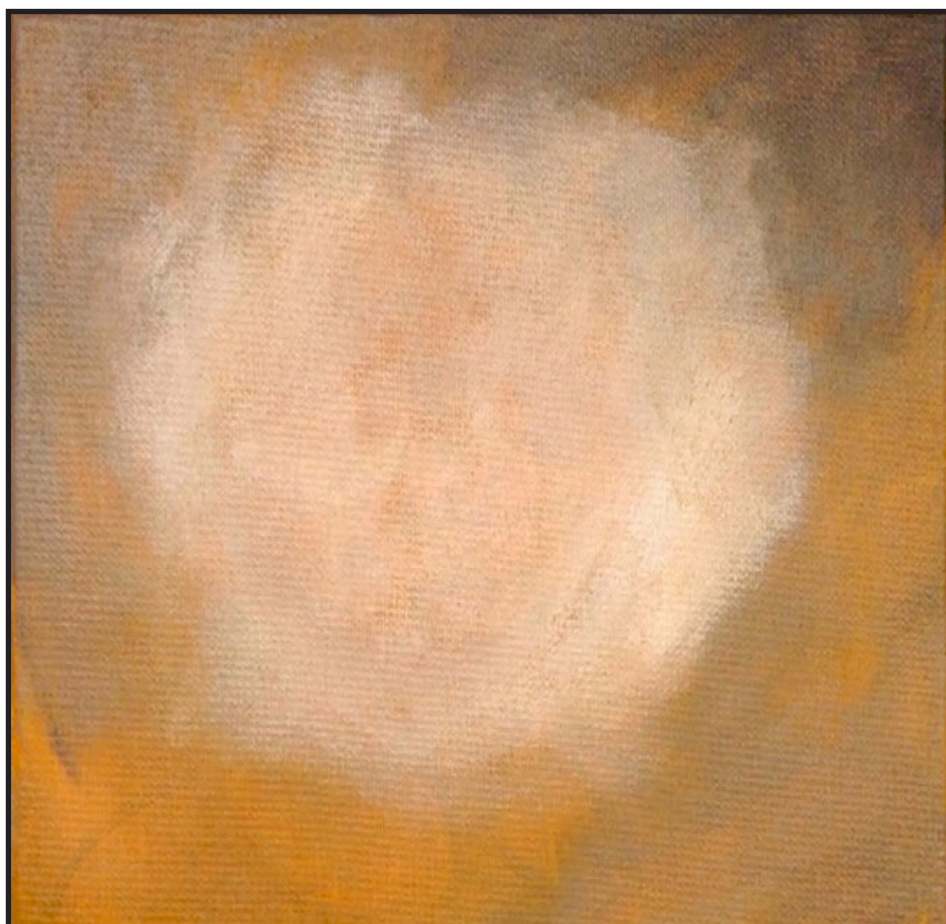
Muted Moss =

YO > BS < TW > MB

- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Begin creating the keyhole of light in the center of the canvas with the **Almond mix** on a damp brush. Use the side of the brush to scumble the paint on with very light pressure. Add a little more Yellow Ochre as you continue to dry brush color onto the canvas.
- Create a dark vignette around the outer corners using the **Muted Moss mix**. Blend it slightly into the keyhole of light.
- Mix a half tone using the **Almond mix** and the **Muted Moss mix**. Blend this color in to help transition between the lighter and darker areas.
- Alternate between these mixes as you continue to create the keyhole of light.
- Rinse.





# STEP 3 - SKETCHING THE IMAGE

## "THE BONES OF THE DRAGON"

### **PAINT:**

Mars Black = MB

### **BRUSHES & TOOLS:**

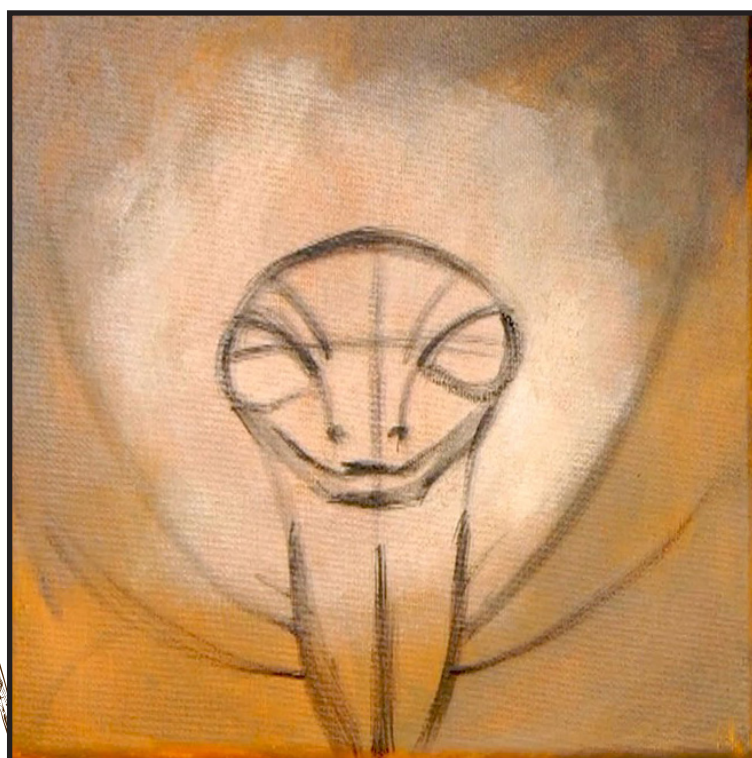
X-Small Synthetic Round  
Small Synthetic Round

### **STEP DISCUSSION:**

- I chose to freehand this image but I have also provided a traceable if you prefer to use that method. There is no right or wrong way 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.
- Use Mars Black on the Small Round Brush and make a small curved, horizontal line about 2 inches from the top of the canvas. Make a vertical line, to represent the neck of the dragon, about 2 ½ inches long at the bottom center of the canvas.
- Using the mark at the top of the canvas, increase the arc of the head. Add a

center guide line down to meet with the one already in place at the bottom of the canvas. Add a small mark where the jaw will be, about 3 inches from the bottom of the canvas. For the neck, sketch a line that begins a bit to the right of the centerline of the neck, and just a tad lower than the jaw. Curve this line in at the bottom. Mirror this line on the other side to create the soft "V" shape of the dragon's neck.

- Curve a wing line from about mid neck, up to just above the halfway mark at the side of the canvas. Mirror a second wing on the opposite side.
- Round out the top of the head, to about the cheek level, filling a good amount of the center of the canvas. Then, curve the lines inward to the bottom of the jaw. Connect the sides of the neck to just under the cheek bones.
- Sketch a guide line across the head to set the level of the eyes. Use the toe of the brush to curve upward arcs on either side of the head for the upper eyelids. Then, join the bottom lids, creating a sideways teardrop shape.
- Sketch in the upper lip a little bit above the jaw line. Place the nostrils fairly wide apart and just above the lip. Add a curved line joining them to the inner eye to indicate a snout.
- Place curved lines above the eyes to help set the horn placement. Then imply the curve of the inner wing structure.
- Use the X-Small brush to make any adjustments you feel are needed.





# STEP 4 - DIFFUSED BACKGROUND



## "BACKLIGHTING THE DRAGON"

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Bright

### COLOR MIXES:

Light Ochre = YO + TW

Dark Moss = YO + MB

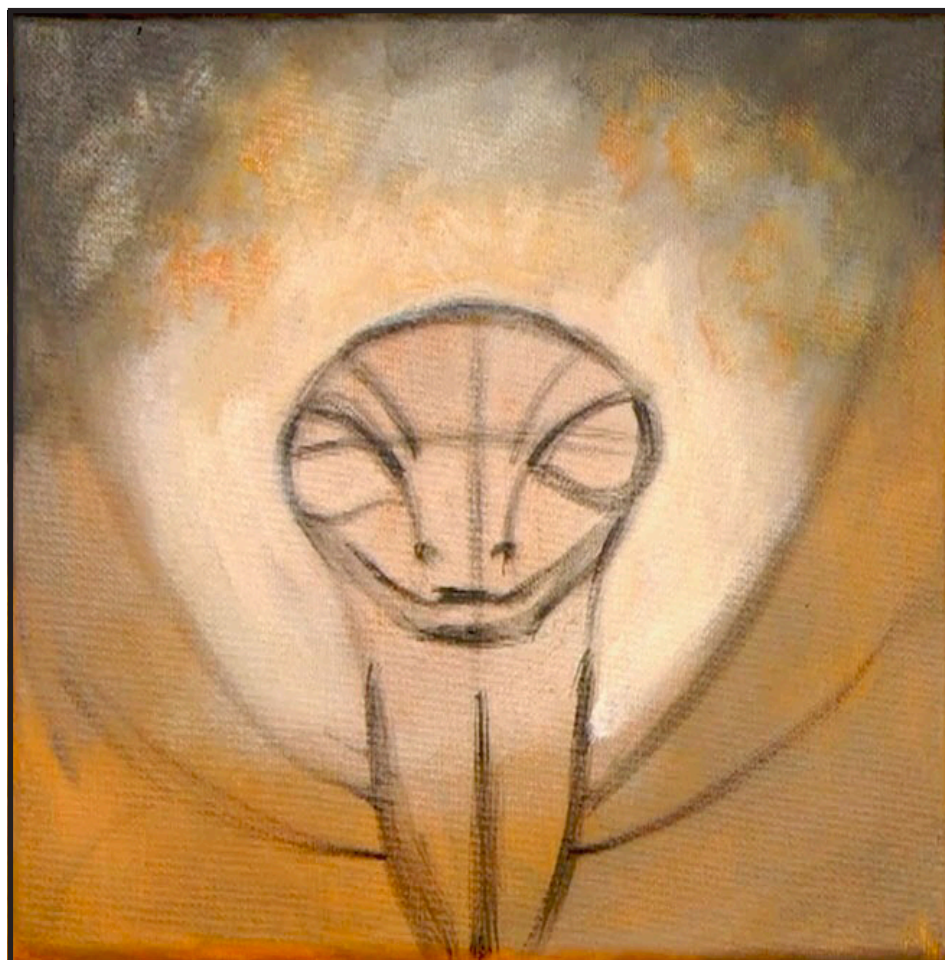
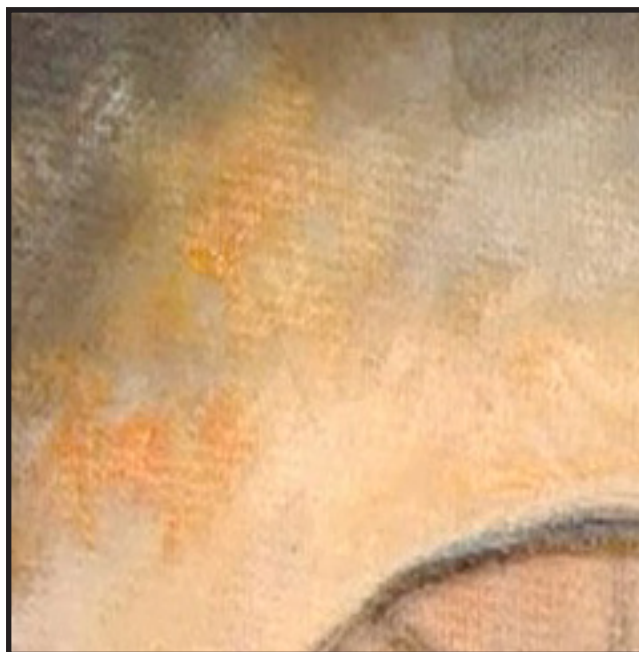
Orange = CRM + CYM

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Using the corner of this brush, scumble the **Light Ochre mix** around the head of the dragon. Apply light pressure and dry brush these layers in to create some subtle transitions. Mix in a little more Titanium White to add some value variation.
- Paint the darker, outer vignette with the **Dark Moss mix**. Scumble this color on to create a bit of a diffused line. Then darken the corners by adding a little more Mars Black with a dry brush.
- Add a little bit of Titanium White on the dirty brush and blend it in the upper, center of the canvas. Then, use the **Light Ochre mix** to help blend that out and create a very distinct transitioning effect. Add more Mars Black too deep

in the corners further. Rinse.

- Glaze in a light amount of the **Orange mix** to a few places throughout the background. Rinse.





# WATERCOLOR WEDNESDAYS

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**7:00PM** EST

Watch directly from  
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page each week.

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

**RELAX &  
CHILL OUT  
TOGETHER**

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# STEP 5 - LAYERING WINGS AND NECK



## "BLENDING SOFT, SMOOTH TRANSITIONS"

### PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

Yellow Ochre = YO

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Bright

### COLOR MIXES:

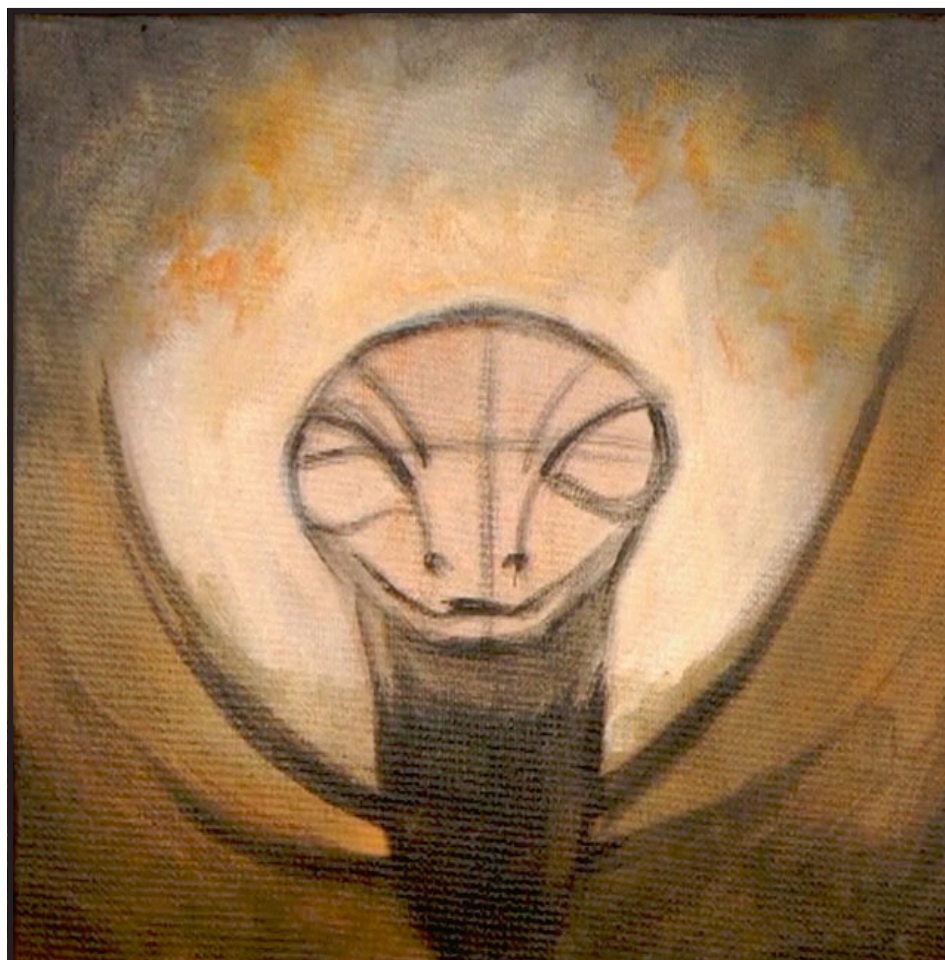
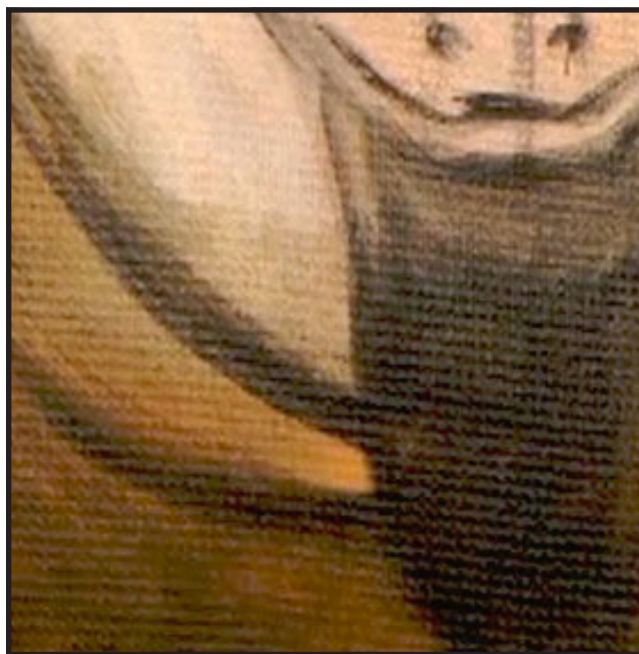
Dark Moss = YO + MB

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Dark Moss mix** on the edge of the brush to create the line of the wings from the shoulders, making sure they are symmetrical. Then begin filling them in, glazing with the dark color on both sides. Sweep some of this dark glaze out at the top of the wings, so there is a bit of a blend into the dark top corners of the canvas. Thin the mix with water, and glaze a bit of this color on top of the wings to create the shoulders and back muscles of the wing, attaching them to the neck.
- Darken the mix with more Mars Black, and block in the neck. Paint down the sides and then curve those brush strokes across the throat. This directionality will help the shaping of his neck. Paint the lines on the wings to darken them.
- Darken the bottom of the

wings and create subtle differences between the shades with a little bit of **Dark Moss mix**. Blend in this deep value.

- Paint just a little bit on the neck under the chin. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.





# STEP 6 - WING TEXTURE

## "THE SPARKLY BITS ON THE WINGS"

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Dark Blue = MB + UB > TW

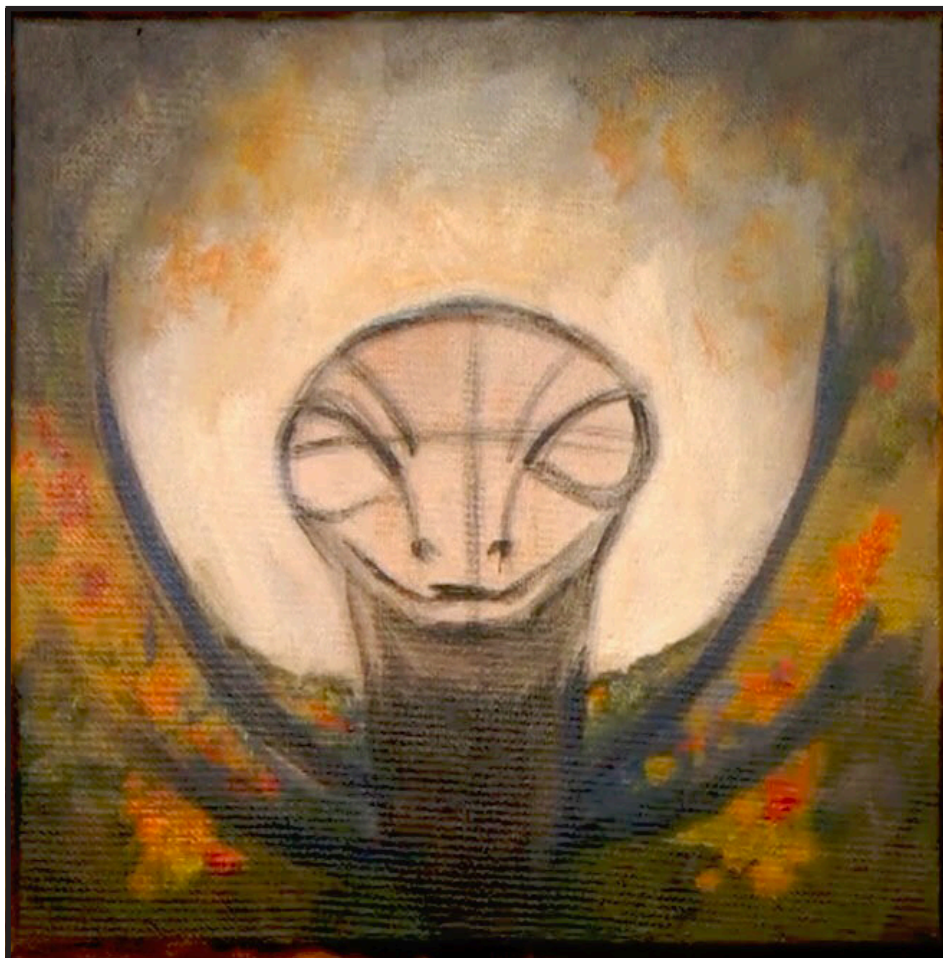
Deep Green = CYM + MB

Light Green = CYM > MB

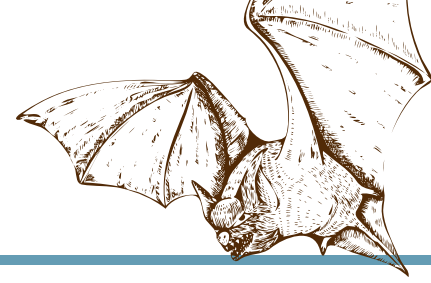
Orange = CRM + CYM

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Begin weaving in some of the **Light Green mix** onto the shoulders and wings in a few spots.
- Without rinsing, add the **Dark Blue mix** into the wings. Create halftones by mixing the **Dark Blue mix** and the **Deep Green mix** and wiggle small spots of this in the wings as well. Continue alternating between these mixes as you paint the implied scales. Rinse.
- Combine the **Orange mix** with the **Light Green mix**. Add this color to the little diffuse scales. Paint on one side, then the other, to keep the piece balanced. Blend in a little Mars Black where the color needs to be a bit more muted. Rinse.
- Apply bits of brighter, more colorful scales with the **Orange mix**. There is a slightly heavier amount of this color on the left side. Add in a little more Cadmium Red Medium into the mix and work it in as well. Paint the pops of glowing gems by touching spots of Quinacridone Magenta here and there. Rinse.
- Line and define the wing and veins with the Dark Blue mix. Add a little more Titanium White to the mix, and tap up and down to create a mosaic pattern, diffusing the shoulder area above the wings.
- Use this color to go over the wing lines. Then paint the mottled, mosaic pattern inside the upper part of the wings, near the neck, to imply scales. Add some of this at the top of the wings and blend it into the background a little.
- Use the **Deep Green mix** to achieve that mottled green cast on the lower area of the wings. Add a bit of that same color where the wings and background meet.



# STEP 7 – UNDERPAINTING THE DRAGON



## “A GUIDE FOR THE REST OF THE PAINTING”

### PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Phthalo Green = PG

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Teal = UB + PG > TW

Blue Black = MB + PB

Mid Purple = DP > TW

Light Pink = QM + YO + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Line the facial features using the **Teal mix** to hold their position. Make sure the shape of the eyes is symmetrical. Paint the top of the eyes curving up and out from the bridge of the nose, and the bottoms of the eyes set into the shelf of the cheekbone.
- Use the **Blue Black mix** first down the center of the neck. Then, use a downward touch-pull stroke to create scaling on the outer edges of the neck. Now, add that same texture where the neck and the head join, and flare it out a little at the jaw.
- Continue using the **Blue**
- **Black mix** to set the curved lines that begin at the bridge of the snout, and up to the brows. Then, add the curved lines of the horns. Thicken them at the base of the horn and end with a point at the tip. Keep the horns as symmetrical as possible.
- Imply the scales at the top of the head, and down through the forehead to the top of the snout, using a downward touch-pull stroke and the **Blue Black mix**.
- Paint the whole nose and upper lip with the **Teal mix**. Then, paint in the cheeks and eyebrows with the **Blue Black mix**. Add some curly, fly away hairs coming off the top of both eyes, and the top of the mouth on both sides.
- Use the **Mid Purple mix** to paint the chin. This is just so that it holds that space with a different color, allowing it to be visible. Then, use the **Blue Black mix** to thin or adjust the chin as needed. Rinse.
- Paint the interior of the eye with the **Light Pink mix**. Rinse.





# STEP 8 - SCALE HIGHLIGHTS

## "PLAYING AROUND WITH THE SCALES"

### PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Phthalo Green = PG

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Blueberry = DP + UB

Blue Black = MB + PB

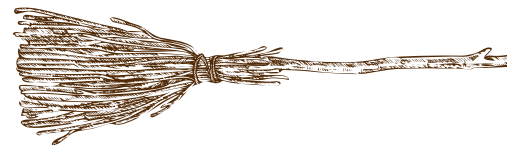
Teal = UB + PG + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

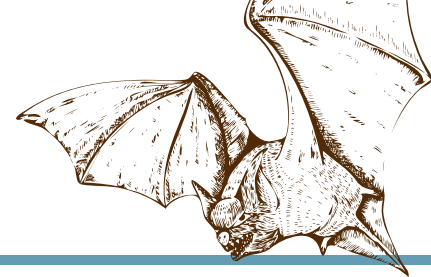
- Add some Titanium White to the **Blueberry mix**. Highlight the scales on the outer edge of the neck. As they come down, the marks get smaller. Then, tap in just the **Blueberry mix** on the dirty brush and create another row of scales inside the first row. Blend them into the neck using the **Blue Black mix**. Add some Titanium White to the **Blueberry mix**, and highlight the scales at the sides of the jaw. Rinse.
- Add a small bit of Mars Black to the **Teal mix**, and use the touch-pull stroke to paint a row of scales at the top of the head. Add in a little more Titanium White as you come down the forehead. Then, load some Phthalo Blue on the dirty brush for another row of scales. Paint more

scales as you move down to the nose using the **Blueberry mix** with a little Titanium White added. These scales are pretty dark. Then, add some Titanium White to the **Teal mix** and paint this lighter color on the scales that run along the brow line, making them stand out a little.

- Use a bit of the **Blue Black mix** with a touch of Titanium White, for some small, dark scales near the snout. Paint this color on the upper eyelids, and as a line of highlight on the top edge of the horns. Then, add a layer of this color around the nose, down the cheeks, flicking a little of it out into the flyaway hairs.
- Line the eyes with the **Teal mix**, exaggerating the drop on the inner corners. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# STEP 9 - DEFINING THE FACE AND EYES



“IF NOT SYMMETRICAL, AT LEAST SIMILAR”

## PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Phthalo Green = PG

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

Small Synthetic Round

## COLOR MIXES:

Blueberry = DP + UB

Light Purple = DP + UB + TW

Turquoise = PB + PG + TW

Light Pink = QM + YO + TW

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Start with the Small Round brush and the **Blueberry mix** with a little Titanium White. Add just a few little scales coming out from his neck and onto the wing ridges. Feather these scales out with light touches to diffuse it a little. Add a little more Titanium White to the dirty brush to lightly touch in a highlight on these scales.
- Deepen the lower jaw with Dioxazine Purple, then tap in little scales with the **Light Purple mix**. The scales are a little bigger in the front and get smaller as they move back. Rinse.
- Make sure there is not too

much water in the brush, and highlight the ridge of the nostrils with the **Turquoise mix**. Use the **Teal mix** to highlight the upper lip, blending it up into the nostril ridge slightly. Then, blend in a little of the **Turquoise mix** at the front of the lip. Rinse.

- Switch to the X-Small Round brush and load it with Mars Black. Line under the top eyelids. Add rather large pupils, trying to keep them symmetrical. Then, refine the flyaway hairs. Line the lower lids and shade in the nostrils, again trying to keep the symmetry. Also, paint a line between the upper and lower lip. Rinse.
- Paint the whites of the eyes using the **Light Pink mix** with more Titanium White added. Rinse.





# STEP 10 – FACE DETAILS

## “FLUFFING UP THE HAIR, PUTTING ON THE MAKEUP”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Phthalo Green = PG

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Turquoise = PB + PG + TW

Light Yellow = CYM + TW

Light Purple = DP + UB + TW

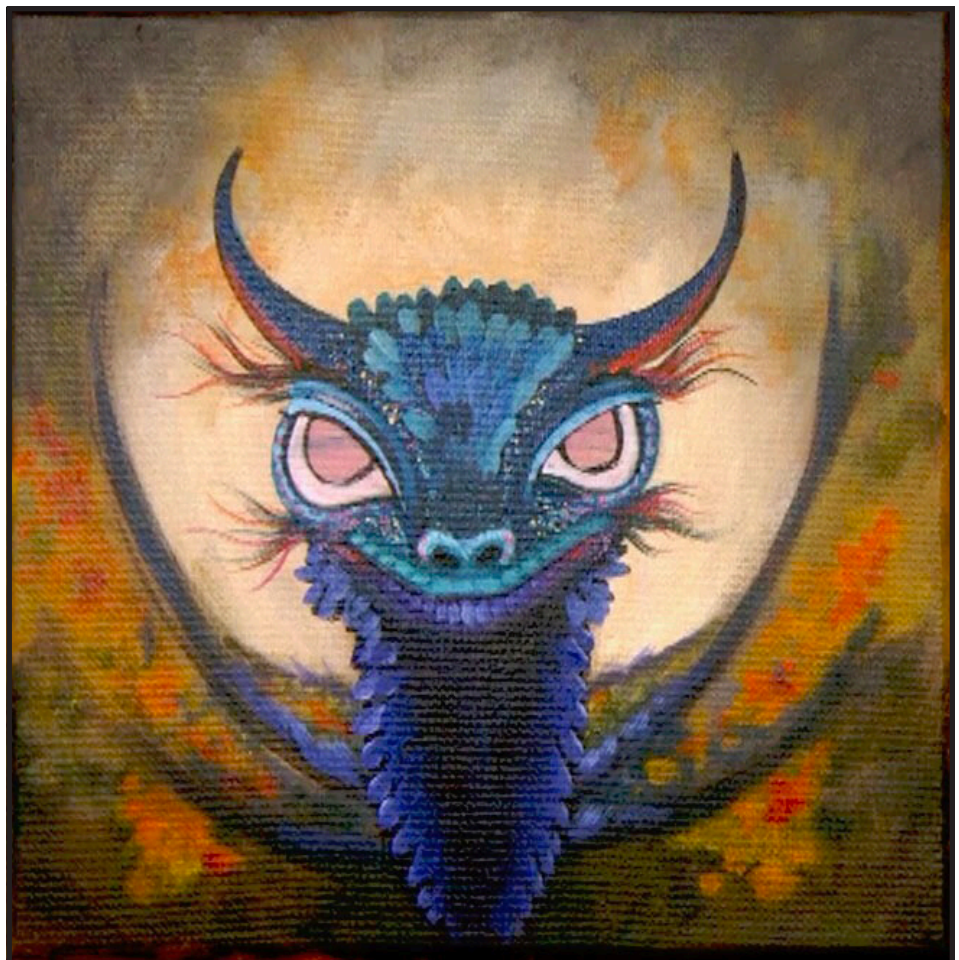
Teal = UB + PG + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

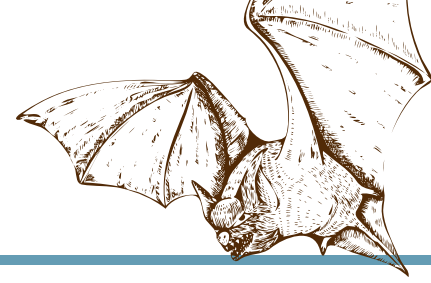
- Use the **Turquoise mix** to add some little, random dots clustered along the brow line. Add more tiny dots on both cheeks, and on the bridge of the nose. Rinse. Paint more little dots in these same areas using the **Light Yellow mix**, followed by small dots of Quinacridone Magenta on the dirty brush.
- Paint some Cadmium Red Medium dots at the corners of the mouth and the base of the horn. Highlight the bottom of the horns with Cadmium Red Medium, not going all the way to the tips. Rinse the brush to reset it. Then, feather the Cadmium Red medium into the flyaway hairs on both

sides of the head. Add a few hairs with the Quinacridone Magenta and layer a bit on the red of the bottom of the horns. Rinse.

- Add more Titanium White to the **Turquoise mix**, and paint a thin line on the upper lids of the eyes. Apply small dots along the outer and lower lids.
- Use the **Light Purple mix** and paint dots on the light upper lid area. Rinse.
- Paint a dark line between the upper lid and brow line with Mars Black. Rinse.
- Switch back to the Small Round brush and the **Turquoise mix**. Paint dots on the upper lip. Add more Titanium White to the mix and lighten the dots on the nostril ridges.
- Use the X-Small Round and the **Teal mix** to clean the edges of the nostrils. Add even more Titanium White to the mix and highlight the nostril ridges. Tap tiny dots of Quinacridone Magenta onto the turquoise dots on the lower eyelids. Also, add a few of these dots on the cheeks, the nostrils, and around the corners of the mouth. Rinse.



# STEP 11 - EYES



## “ADDING THE ATTITUDE: I DARE YOU!”

### PAINT:

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

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

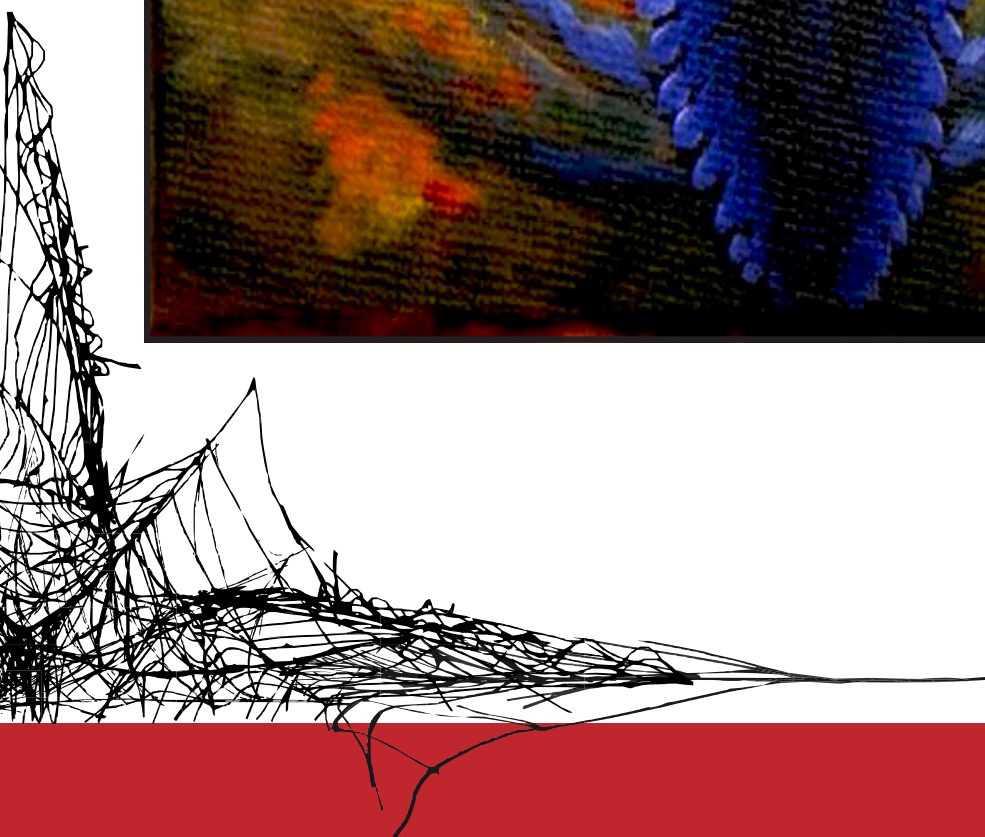
Bright Green = PG + CYM  
Light Pink = QM + YO + TW  
Blue Black = MB + PB  
Light Yellow = CYM + TW  
Orange = CRM + CYM  
Mid Blue = PB + UB + TW  
Turquoise = PB + PG + TW  
Light Purple = DP + UB + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Using the **Bright Green mix** and the X-Small Round brush, paint the iris line around the outside of the pupils. Rinse.
- Add more Titanium White into the **Light Pink mix** and paint the outside edges of the white part of the eyes. Rinse.
- Paint the pupils with the **Blue Black mix**. Then, line underneath the upper lids. Rinse.
- Tap in a little of the **Light Pink mix** back into the inner corners of the eyes. Rinse.
- Highlight the center of the iris with the **Light Yellow mix**. Rinse.
- Tap in a little of the **Orange mix** on the outside edges of the highlight of the iris. Rinse.
- Paint a reflection at the bottom of the pupils with the **Mid Blue mix**. Rinse. Then, deepen the pupil and blend the reflection back a little with Mars Black. Rinse.
- At the outer corners of the bottom lids, tap in a few dots of the Cadmium Red Medium. Rinse.
- Define the iris area with a little more of the **Bright Green mix**. Rinse. Touch up the highlight in the center of the iris with the **Light Yellow mix**. Rinse.
- Add a lot of Titanium White to the **Turquoise mix** to highlight the ridges of the nostrils, and the top lip. Paint a few flyaway hairs using the **Turquoise mix**. Rinse.
- Shade in between the nostril ridges by glazing in a little Mars Black. Rinse.
- Add a lot of Titanium White to the **Light Purple mix** and highlight the bottom lip. Rinse.
- Highlight the reflection on the pupils using a mix of more Titanium White added to the **Mid Blue mix**. Rinse.
- Dot the inside corners of the eyes with Titanium White. Then, dance a broken, wet reflection across the eyes. Use Mars Black, if needed, to adjust the dark areas of the pupils.
- Paint a little reflected light on the outer side of the whites of the eyes using Titanium White. Rinse.
- Add another layer of highlights on the top lip, and the upper eyelids above the black eyeliner, using more Titanium White added to the **Turquoise mix**. Rinse.
- Switch to the Small round brush, and diffuse the red line at the bottom of the horns by tapping in some of the **Blue Black mix**. Then, come right back in with some Cadmium Red Medium, and tap that in to create more of a horn texture. Rinse.
- Sign.



STEP 11 REFERENCE PHOTO:





## THE TRACING METHOD

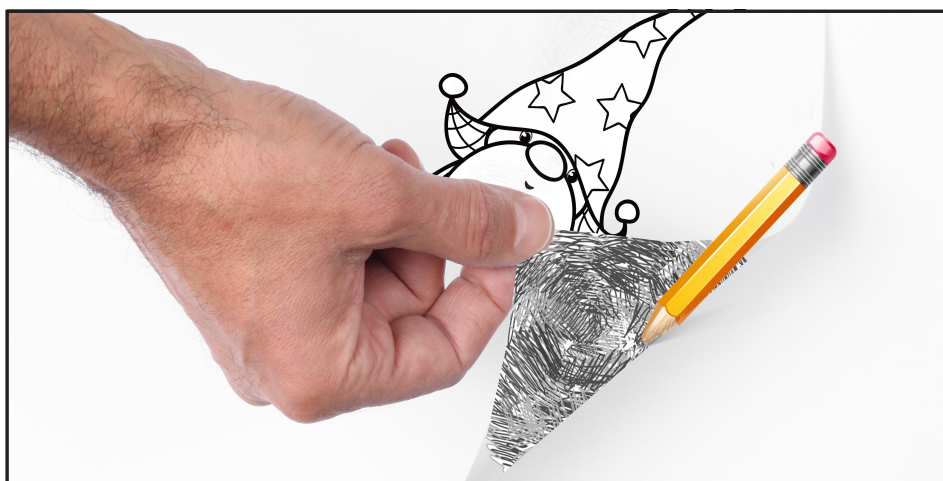
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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.

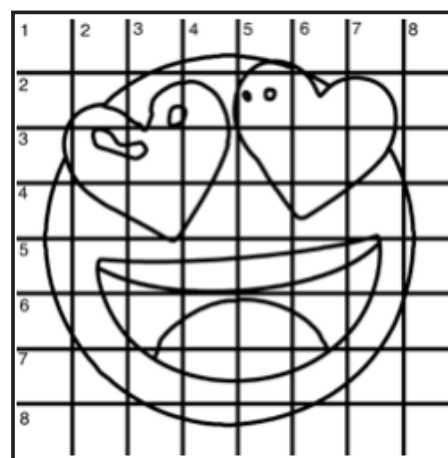
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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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