

THE ART SHERPA™
presents

Winter WONDER



SILENT WATCHER

BY: THE ART SHERPA

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON KELLY MALOUE

STEPS: 14 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 HOOTS

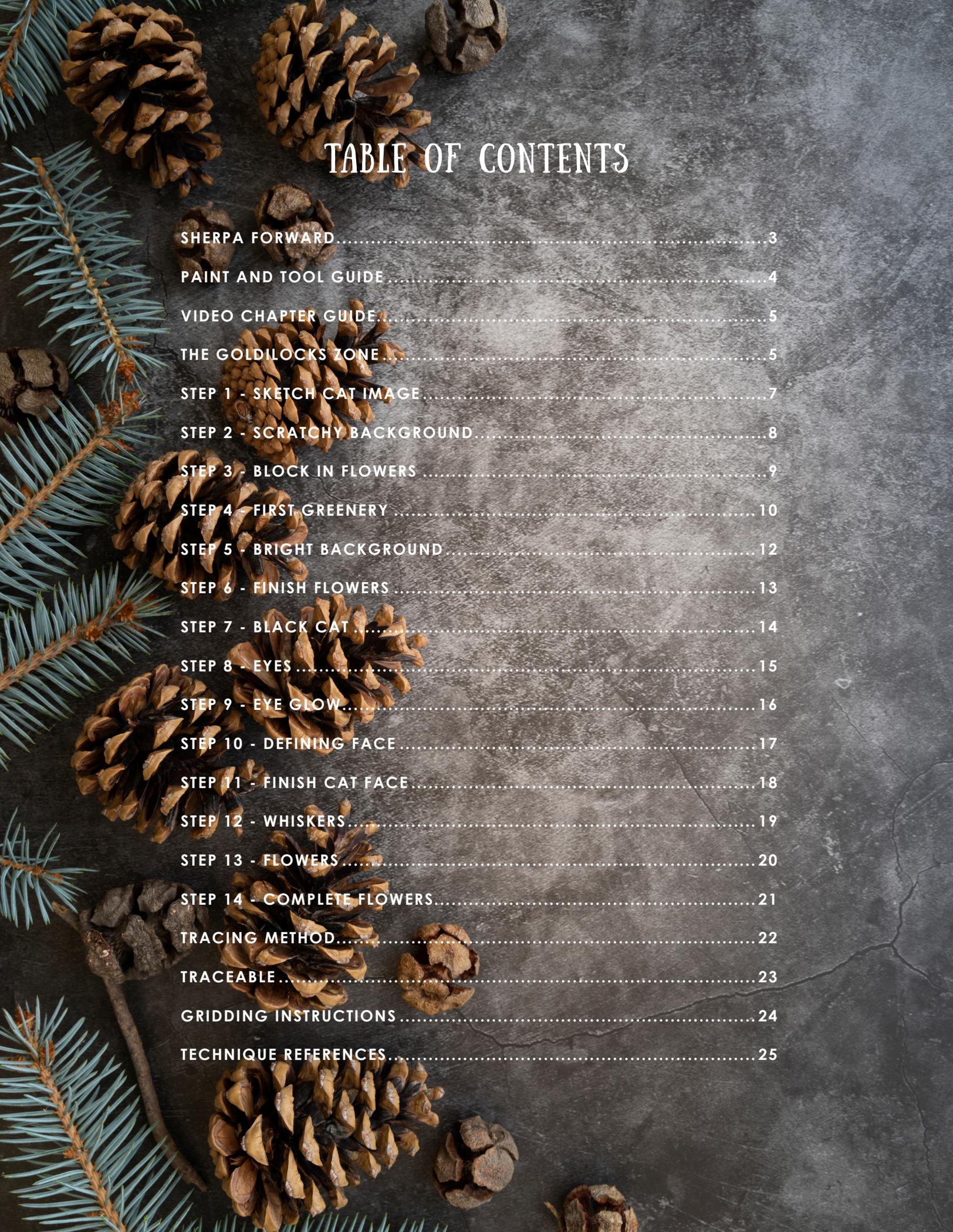
The background of the page is a dark, textured grey surface, possibly stone or concrete. Scattered across the left and bottom edges are several pinecones of various sizes and colors, ranging from light tan to dark brown. Interspersed among the pinecones are several pine branches with blue-green needles. The overall aesthetic is rustic and natural.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SHERPA FORWARD.....	3
PAINT AND TOOL GUIDE	4
VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE.....	5
THE GOLDILOCKS ZONE	5
STEP 1 - SKETCH CAT IMAGE.....	7
STEP 2 - SCRATCHY BACKGROUND	8
STEP 3 - BLOCK IN FLOWERS	9
STEP 4 - FIRST GREENERY	10
STEP 5 - BRIGHT BACKGROUND	12
STEP 6 - FINISH FLOWERS	13
STEP 7 - BLACK CAT	14
STEP 8 - EYES	15
STEP 9 - EYE GLOW.....	16
STEP 10 - DEFINING FACE	17
STEP 11 - FINISH CAT FACE	18
STEP 12 - WHISKERS.....	19
STEP 13 - FLOWERS	20
STEP 14 - COMPLETE FLOWERS.....	21
TRACING METHOD.....	22
TRACEABLE	23
GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS	24
TECHNIQUE REFERENCES.....	25



The Art 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.

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
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Dioxazine Purple = DP
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES:

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

TOOLS:

- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- T-Square Ruler
- 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

SYMBOL GUIDE:

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

TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Color Theory
- Implying Foliage
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing
- Fur



VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE:

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

STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	05:55	SKETCH CAT IMAGE
STEP 2	13:48	SCRATCHY BACKGROUND
STEP 3	18:28	BLOCK IN FLOWERS
STEP 4	22:03	FIRST GREENERY
STEP 5	29:36	BRIGHT BACKGROUND
STEP 6	33:59	FINISH FLOWERS
STEP 7	45:35	BLACK CAT
STEP 8	53:32	EYES
STEP 9	1:00:20	EYE GLOW
STEP 10	1:13:50	DEFINING FACE
STEP 11	1:24:45	FINISH CAT FACE
STEP 12		OOOPPS
STEP 13	1:36:56	WHISKERS
STEP 14	1:40:34	FLOWERS
STEP 15	1:48:39	COMPLETE FLOWERS
	1:55:30	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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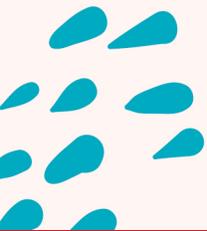
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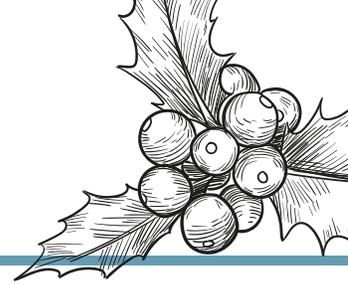
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STEP 1 - SKETCH CAT IMAGE Timestamp 5:55



“KITTY FACE”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Violet = QM + DP

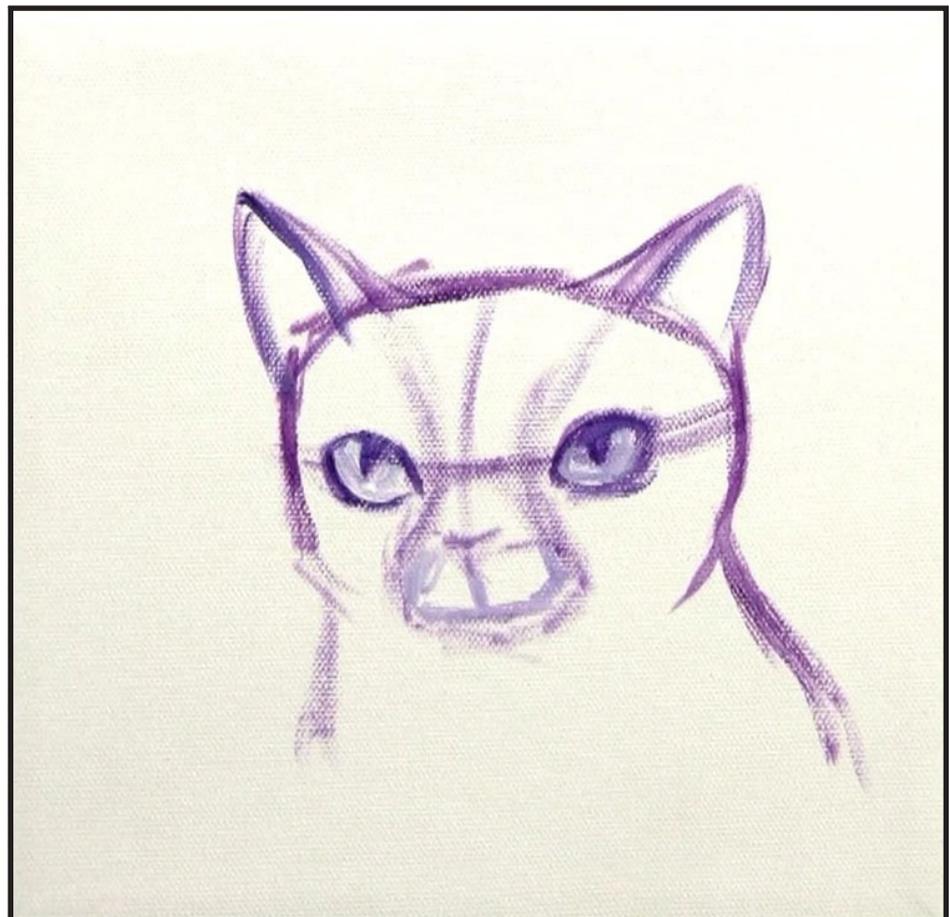
STEP DISCUSSION:

- 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.
- To get the proper scale, center a squashed oval, for the head, about 4 inches wide, in the middle third of the canvas. The top of the head is about 2 ½ inches from the top of the canvas. Add a curvy

line for the shoulder that comes from the oval, to the bottom right. Place the ears where the top of the oval begins turning, on either side. They are quite large triangular shaped, approximately 1 ½ inches tall.

- Sketch an upward curved line for the eyes, horizontally at the center of the head. Then, because the face is slightly turned, draw the vertical curved nose line, somewhat to the left of center. Draw another shape centered below the eye line that is a bit triangular at the top and squarish at the bottom, for the muzzle. Then, sketch the almond shaped eyes on either side of the muzzle. Indicate the top of the nose and the mouth, inside of the muzzle. Then add the left shoulder and imply the bridge of the nose and forehead and paint in the pupils.
- Use Titanium white to make any needed adjustment.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Sherpa Tip: You can see how the lines of the nose, set the ear lines.



STEP 2 - SCRATCHY BACKGROUND

Timestamp 13:48

"KITTY HALO"

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Hog Bright

COLOR MIXES:

Light Yellow = CYM + TW

Peach = CYM + QM + TW

Pink = QM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load some of the **Light Yellow mix** on a slightly damp brush, and paint the background directly above the head, with rough up and down brush strokes. Add more Cadmium Yellow Medium on the corner of the brush and paint the right side of the upper canvas. Then roughly paint around the left ear with this color. Rinse and dry it off really well.
- Using very light pressure and a rough up and down stroke, begin transitioning the **Peach mix** with some white into the background. At this stage, there is a lot of time to make adjustments so there is no need to put huge pressure on yourself to be perfect.
- Then roughly add the **Pink mix**, mostly to the left side. It is nice to go around the

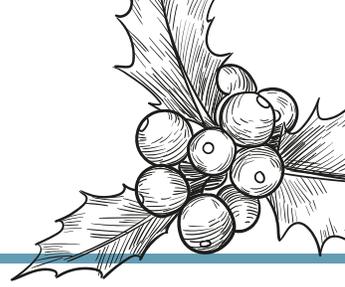
corner of the canvas. Use up and down brush strokes and pay attention to directionality, letting the bristles make marks.

- Bring some Cadmium Yellow Medium back into the background by the left ear to create a fun orange color directly onto the canvas. This background should be rough and scratchy. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 3 - BLOCK IN FLOWERS

Timestamp 18:28



"HANGING FLOWERS"

PAINT:

Dioxazine Purple = DP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Round

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Working in the upper canvas, starting left to right, begin painting in the spike flowers. Use the tip of the brush and Dioxazine Purple and make a little short vertical pullback strokes to build the flower structure. Paint one flower on the left and remaining flowers from just off center to the right, with a group of flowers by the right shoulder. Some are thicker, some are taller and some go off the edge of the canvas but balance is what you are looking for. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 4 - FIRST GREENERY Timestamp 22:03

“KITTY IN THE GREENS”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

Medium Hog Round

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Green = PG + BS

Medium Green =

CYM + PG + BS

Light Green = CYM < PG + TW

Yellow Green = CYM > PG

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Add a few more blades and another layer of value in the leaves by alternating between the **Medium Green mix** and the **Yellow Green mix**.
 - Then, paint highlights into the greenery with the **Light Green mix** to just add pops of dynamic lighting. Rinse.
 - Switch to the Synthetic brush and use the **Dark Green mix** to set a couple stems and define some of the blades. Rinse.
 - Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.
- Load the Hog brush with the basic **Dark Green mix**, then add just a smidge of Cadmium Yellow Medium to it. Paint around the purple flowers by the right shoulder, using scratchy vertical strokes.
 - Use the **Medium Green mix** on the left side of the cat.
 - Paint the arcing longer leaves of the spike flowers using the **Medium Green mix**. Be sure to increase and decrease pressure as you paint the longer leaves to make sure they are both thick and thin in places. Continue adding these leaves through the upper background, varying their direction and thickness.



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STEP 5 - BRIGHT BACKGROUND

Timestamp 29:36

“ORANGE IT UP”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Round

COLOR MIXES:

Vibrant Orange =
CYM + QM + CRM
Yellow Orange =
CYM > QM > CRM
Light Yellow = CYM + TW
Peach = CYM + QM + TW

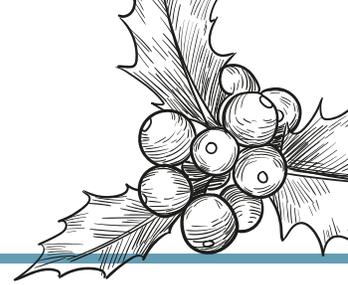
STEP DISCUSSION:

- This step involves painting the negative space between these objects in the upper canvas to reset the background. This will also give the opportunity to push some of the leaves further back into the background. Start with the **Vibrant Orange mix**, and paint around the left ear of the cat, and also in between the leaves in this area. Wipe the brush on a towel.
- Paint the background spaces between some of the leaves on the right with the **Yellow Orange mix**. Then add a little of this color to the left edge of the canvas to create a bit of atmospheric light popping up. Rinse.
- Use light pressure to paint

the halo above the head with the **Light Yellow mix**. Paint this color in between some of the stems on a couple places as well.

- Dry brush the **Peach mix** back into the top of the background, blending it into the colors below. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.





“POP THE FLOWERS”

PAINT:

Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Dioxazine Purple = DP
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Round

COLOR MIXES:

Mid Purple = QM + DP > TW
Lilac = TW > DP > QM
Periwinkle = DP + UB > TW
Pink = QM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Create the first level of depth to the flowers using the **Mid Purple mix**. Use short angled strokes to layer this color onto the spikes to start pulling them in and help them find their shape.
- Add the highlights onto the spiked flowers using the **Lilac mix**. Tap this color mostly on the left side of the flowers. Keeping the load of the paint on the toe of this brush will give some control even though the brush is fluffy. Rinse.
- Add a rich value onto the flowers with the **Periwinkle mix**. Rinse. Then focus the dark Dioxazine Purple at the bottom of the spikes to really create some dramatic contrast. Rinse thoroughly.
- Use the **Pink mix** to add

little light touches on the left side of the spike flowers. Sometimes, maybe a little more pink and sometimes more of the lighter tone. Different places. It really just depends. Then add a strong amount of Quinacridone Magenta to make the flowers pop. Rinse.

- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 7 - BLACK CAT Timestamp 45:35

“HERE IS THE KITTY KITTY”

PAINT:

Dioxazine Purple = DP
Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Purple Black = MB > DP

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Roughly paint the cat with the **Purple Black mix**, starting with the left ear. Follow the lines of the sketch or the traceable as you fill in the kitty. Make any needed adjustment at this stage of the painting, I will be adjusting the nose so I just painted it all in. Scale is what is important now. Brush directionality is not important at the moment because there will be more layers. There are a lot of flowers in front, with so much of the kitty behind, so just cover this lower center area in this dark value, down to the bottom edge of the canvas.
- On either side of the dark center area paint outward to the side edges of the canvas with Dioxazine Purple. This color is dark but not quite as dark as black. Create uneven edges to weave this dark color into the upper background.

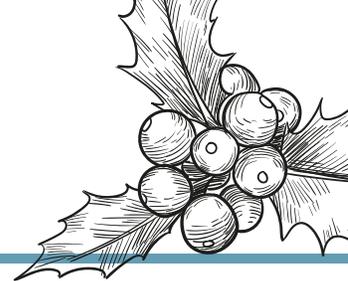
Use the edge of the brush to help create a natural looking space. Rinse.

- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 8 - EYES

Timestamp 58:06



“EYE CAN SEE YOU”

PAINT:

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

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

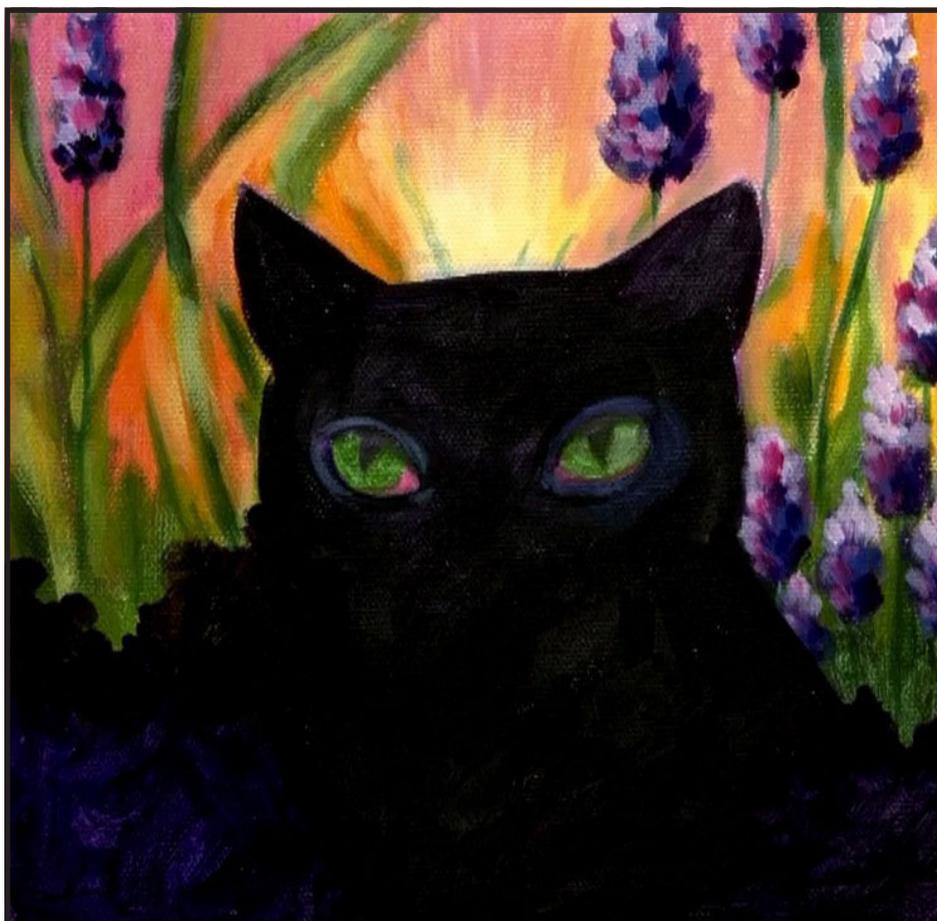
Rich Red = CRM + QM > TW
Bright Green = CYM + PG > BS
Mid Purple = DP > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the Mars Black to clean up the lines around the eyes. This is sort of where you make adjustments and move things as needed. Rinse. Dry the surface before continuing.
- Paint the corners and bottom lids of the eyes with the Rich Red mix. Use the toe of the brush to work the inside structure of the eyes. Apply Mars Black if you need to thin or adjust the lines. Rinse.
- Fill in the eyes using the Bright Green mix, it is ok to paint over the irises because they will still show through. Rinse.
- Highlight the fur around the eyes with the Mid

purple mix. Rinse.

- Paint the shadow, between the highlight and the upper eye, using Mars Black. If the painting is not dry enough to take it yet, then you will need to dry it. Then paint the pupils back in. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 9 – EYE GLOW

Timestamp 1:00:20

“WINDOW TO THE SOUL”

PAINT:

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

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Lime Green = CYM > PG > BS
Lavender = TW > DP
Blush = TW > CRM + QM > CYM
Mid Purple = QM + DP > TW
Medium Green =
CYM + PG + BS
Moss Green = MB + CYM

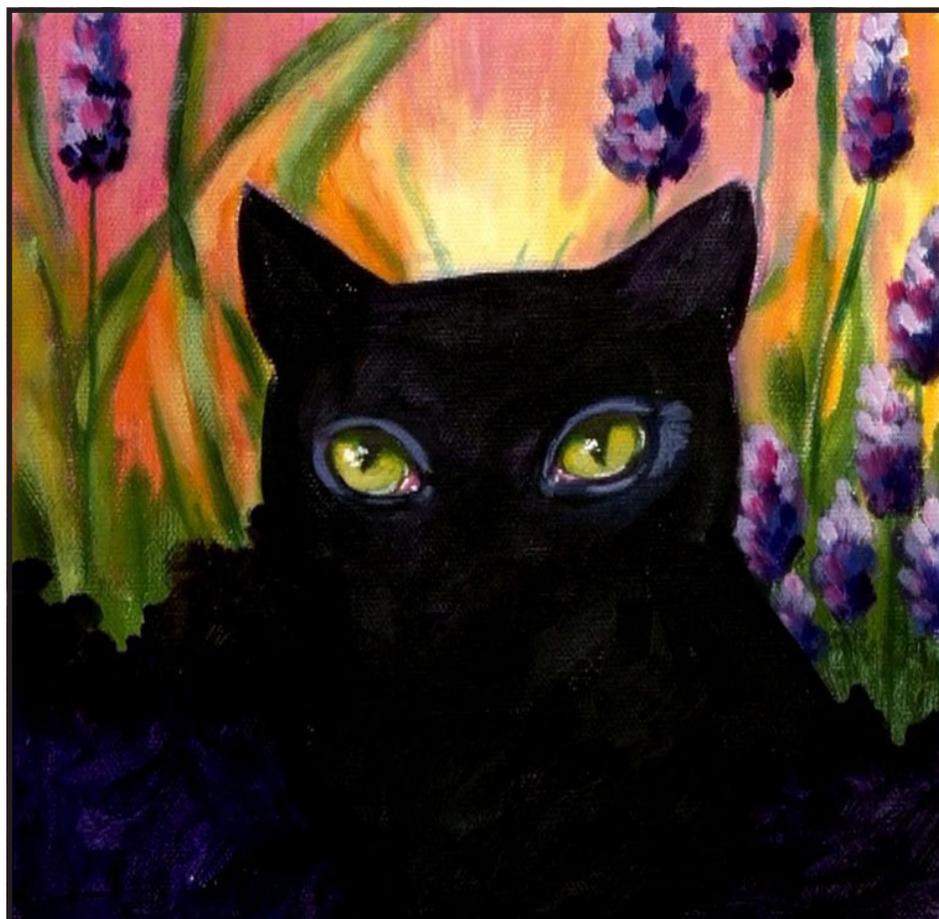
STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint another layer on the irises with the **Lime Green mix**. Rinse.
- Add another layer of highlight on the fur around the eyes using the **Lavender mix**. Use the toe of the brush to create finer fur around the corners of the eyes. The forward highlighting is a little heavier.
- Tap some of the **Blush mix** into the corners of the eyes and a little on the bottom right lid. Then add some of the **Mid Purple mix** in these areas as well. Rinse.
- Add a lot more Cadmium Yellow Medium and a little

Titanium White to the **Lime Green mix**. Start to light that up the bottom of the irises. Blend a little bit of the darker **Medium Green mix** in the upper iris to create a little bit of interior shading on the upper lid and the outer corners.

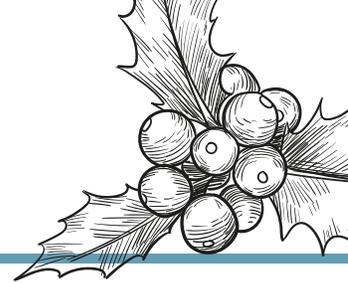
- Add even more Cadmium Yellow Medium and a little Titanium White to the **Lime Green mix**. It is still a yellow green, but lighter. Create luminosity by adding a bit of this color into the bottom of the irises. Then tap in some Cadmium Yellow Medium on either side of the pupils to even pop it up even further. Rinse.
- Create a lot of drama and depth in the pupils and shade the upper lids, using the **Moss Black mix**. Add some shadowing on the inside corners of the eyes. Dry the surface before continuing.
- Use the Titanium White to create the wet reflections in the eyes. Tap in a couple reflections in the corner of the left eye. Then add some across the pupils, breaking up the spots a bit to make them shine. Do the same thing to the right eye. Paint a broken line along the bottom of both irises. Rinse.
- If needed, use Mars Black to thin the reflection line on the bottom of the irises.

Sherpa Tip: You can always use a fine liner brush for the lines around the eyes.



STEP 10 – DEFINING FACE

Timestamp 1:13:50



“ABOUT FACE”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Filbert

Small Synthetic Round

Medium Hog Round

COLOR MIXES:

Rich Red = CRM + QM > TW

Lavender = TW > DP

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Rich Red mix** and the Filbert brush to paint the glow inside of the ears. Rinse.
- Switch to the Small Synthetic Round brush and the **Lavender mix** and begin painting the upper arc of the nose. Just capturing the highlight of the nose, not the whole structure. Then imply the lower open lip, about an inch down from the nose and centered with the eyes. Add more Titanium White to the mix where you need a bit brighter highlight. Highlight the arc of the nose below the eyes and pull a little line down the center. Rinse.
- Switch to the Hog Round and use the **Lavender mix** to capture the triangular fur highlight between the

eyes, using brush directionality. Add a little Titanium White where the fur needs to be a little lighter. Start to highlight the bridge of the nose and also around the muzzle using short little brush strokes. Paint the fur highlights around the outside of the eyes. Paint fur above the eyes and on the forehead.

- Then dry brush down the right shoulder. Continue subtly implying fur using this color to highlight and pop it up a bit.
- Highlight around the outer edges of the ears and add a bit inside of the ears too so that the glow is just a hint.
- Reinforce the deep shadows using Mars Black. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Sherpa Tip: The less I paint, the more my mind fills in, and the better cat my mind will see.



STEP 11 - FINISH CAT FACE

Timestamp 1:24:45

“FUR THEE WELL”

PAINT:

Dioxazine Purple = DP
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Lavender = TW > DP

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Add a bit more Titanium White to the **Lavender mix**. Then, on the toe of the brush, highlight the outer edges of the ear to shape them. Highlight a spot beside the left eye and the curve at the top of the nose. Brighten the centerline of the nose and a tiny spot on either side of it.
- Vary the mix slightly by adding a little more Dioxazine Purple, and highlight the bottom lip and the upper lid on the right eye.
- Barely tint Titanium White with a touch of the **Lavender mix** and highlight the bridge of the nose, and either side of the muzzle.
- Continue building up the layers of highlights using this mix or a variation of it. Lighten it with Titanium White or darken it with Dioxazine Purple.
- Then imply some longer

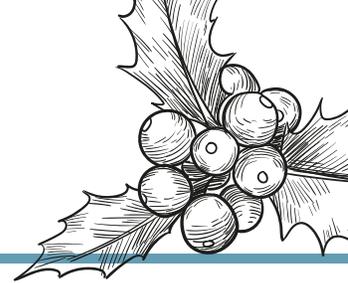
deep ear hairs using a flicking brush stroke. Rinse.

- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 12 - WHISKERS

Timestamp 1:36:56



“SOFT WHISKER KITTY KISSES”

PAINT:

Dioxazine Purple = DP

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Lavender = TW > DP

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Set your hand so you have as steady of a stroke as possible Barely tint Titanium White with a touch of the **Lavender mix** and Thin it a bit with water. Flick the eyebrow whiskers upward, using very light pressure.
- If there is a whisker you do not like, Just paint it out with some Dioxazine Purple.
- Thin the mix with a drop of water, It needs to be thick enough to show up. Using very light pressure and an almost dry brush technique, Paint the whiskers on the muzzle. It does not have to be a thick continuous line. It is OK if some of the whiskers appear broken. You can see them, but they are not the focus of the piece.
- Highlight the top of the nose. Rinse.



STEP 13 – FLOWERS

Timestamp 1:40:35

“SMELL THE FLOWERS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Dioxazine Purple = DP
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Hog Round

COLOR MIXES:

Blush = TW > CRM + QM > CYM
Mid Purple = QM + DP > TW
Lilac = TW > DP > QM

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the star flowers in the bottom left side of the canvas, using the **Blush mix**. Some might have more yellow in them, some of them are a bit bigger and make some of them small, some have five petals, some have six. Some petals are shorter, which just changes the direction that the flower is facing. To get the nice continuity, you can layer some of the flowers over the whiskers a little. Rinse.
- Paint the cluster flowers with the **Mid Purple Mix**. This initial color is not too bright. Paint impressions of these little flowers that are clumped in the bottom of the canvas. You do not need to paint the entire flower because your brain will fill them in automatically. Continue making irregular shapes

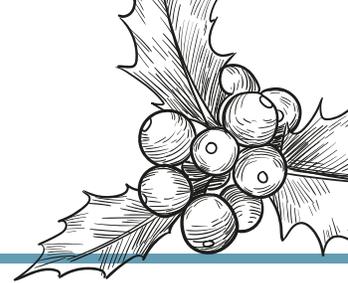
throughout the bottom dark area, touching just the tip of the brush to the surface. Then, lightly soften the bottom lip of the cat and glaze over the whiskers to make them a little fainter.

- Highlight the purple flowers using the **Lilac mix**. Layer this color over the purple petals, allowing you to see a bit more of the flower. Do not paint all the darker purple out, just highlight the top of the cluster shapes. The flowers on the right are a bit lighter. Rinse.



STEP 14 - COMPLETE FLOWERS

Timestamp 1:48:39



“PRETTY KITTY KITTY”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Dioxazine Purple = DP
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Hog Round
Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Lilac = TW > DP > QM
Blush = TW > CRM + QM > CYM
Loosely mixed Orange =
CYM + CRM

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the Small hog brush to add Quinacridone Magenta to the **Lilac mix**. Apply loose brush strokes for a much stronger pink color onto some of the round flowers. Then add a lot more Titanium White to the mix and just touch the tops of those flowers with the lighter highlight. This will help find the shapes of those flowers and make them pop. The right side flowers are lighter and the center flowers are darker. Add pops of the Quinacridone Magenta into them, as well. Rinse.
- Switch to the Small Round brush and add more Titanium White to the **Blush mix**. Start adding this color to the tips of the star flowers, to accentuate them. Use loose comma shaped brush strokes to give the face

of these flowers their shape. Vary the mix occasionally with a little more Cadmium Yellow Medium sometimes or a little more Titanium White other times. Rinse.

- Load the **Loosely Mixed Orange**, onto the brush. It is called loosely mixed, because you can see a little bit of both colors in the mix. Paint the centers of the spike flowers. Rinse.
- Sign.



THE TRACING METHOD

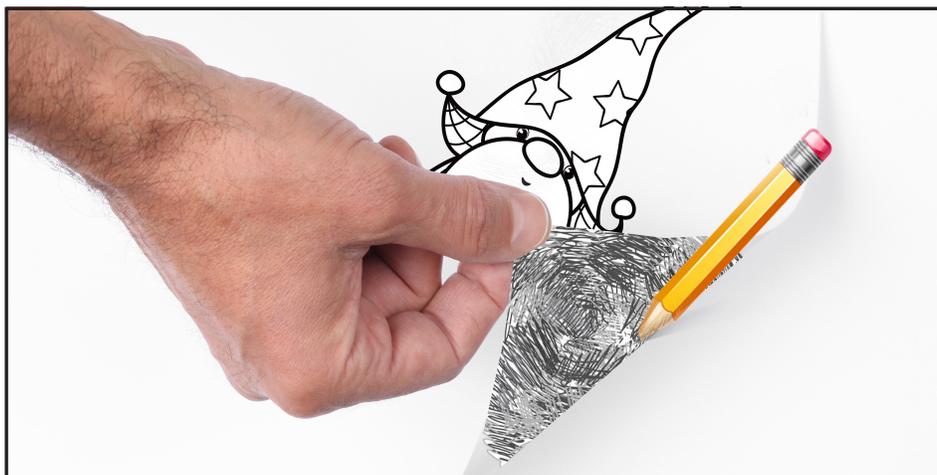
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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



- Rub the back with graphite or use Saral paper and skip this step.
- Be sure to rub the back of your paper on the side without the lines drawing using a HB pencil.
- Hold up to window light to make sure graphite covers all the lines of the subject drawing.
- Test your Seral paper to make sure the color you are using is going to show on the canvas.
- Tape your paper on your surface to transfer with tape to keep it from moving. If you are using saral paper make sure you have both sheets taped down and the transfer side of the Saral paper will be facing your surface. Carefully, with medium pressure, redraw over every line. You can lift one corner of paper to



TRACEABLE:



THE ART SHERPA

GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS:

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

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

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

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

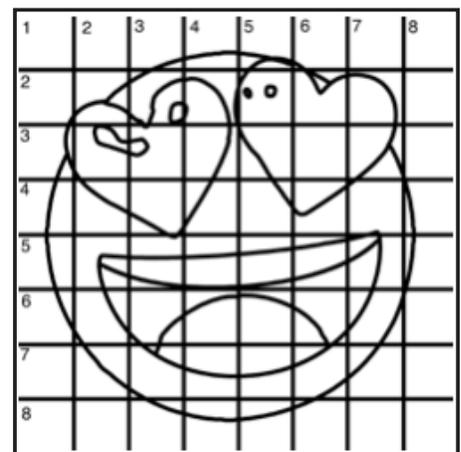
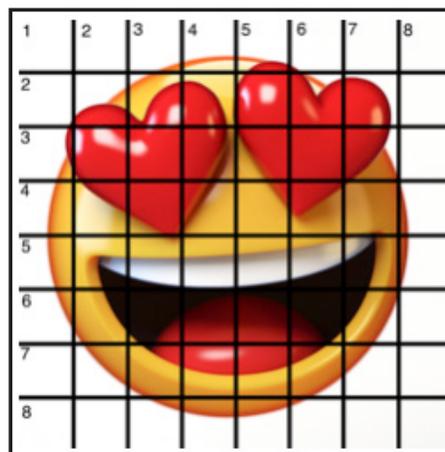
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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

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

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

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



TECHNIQUE REFERENCES:

BLENDING WET INTO WET

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

BLOCKING IN

Paint in the shape with a color, without detail.

CONTOUR

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

COOL COLOR

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

CONTOUR PAINTING

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

FEATHERED BLENDING

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

FINE LINE WORK

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

GLAZING

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

LAYERING

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

LOOSE, EXPRESSIVE AND PAINTERLY

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

LOOSELY MIXED

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

PAINTERLY

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

S STROKES

Being able to create compound curves as strokes is

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

SCUMBLING

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

SMOOTHLY BLENDED OR TIGHT PAINTING

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

THOROUGHLY MIXED

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

TRANSITIONAL MIXING

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

UNDERPAINTING

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

WARM COLOR

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

RESOURCES

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

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR FINISH PIECE

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

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

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

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

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