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THE ART SHERPA



Acrylic  
April

ABSTRACT  
HORSE  
*SPIRIT PONY*

BY THE ART SHERPA

Name credit to Patron: Heather Finn McDonough

Steps: 12 | Difficulty: Challenging | 3 Hoots

2023

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# Sherpa FORWARD:

I am resolved to do more to help teach art than demonstrate how to paint art and this document is a step by step written description of brushes, colors and mixes, techniques and explanations taken directly from the tutorial. It is provided to you as a resource to assist you in your art journey. It is best viewed in outline format to allow for ease in navigation between sections. We hope to prepare a printed version of all of those documents that you will be able to purchase which will include technical resources not available to you at this time about color mixes, techniques, brushes, materials, and all things art.

Traceables and grid resources for this tutorial can be found at [theartsherpa.com](https://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.

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*It is abstract art which means that the image representation will be a slight, partial, or complete departure from reality.*

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We sincerely hope that 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](mailto:support@theartsherpa.com) if you require assistance.

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*Grab your paint, get your brushes and let's go!*

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# Day 29: Paint and Tool Guide

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

---

## PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL
- Fluid White Paint = FWP

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Large Synthetic Bright
- Small Synthetic Round
- X-Small Synthetic Round
- Large Hog Bright
- Medium Synthetic Angle
- Diamond Palette Knife
- Low Tack Tape
- Paper Towel

- 8x8 Canvas  
(If you notice that your canvas started to warp, as sometimes happens, just turn the canvas over and put it back side forward on your easel, then mist the back of the canvas. It usually resolves itself. Let it dry before you proceed.)
- Optional: StayWet Palette

## SYMBOL GUIDE:

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

## TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

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

# Video Chapter Guide

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

---

STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:	STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
Intro	00:00	Intro	Step 9	33:45	Blue Face And Mane
Step 1	02:20	Sketch The Horse	Step 10	36:39	Adding Energy
Step 2	04:48	Eyes And Nose	Step 11	40:41	Highlights
Step 3	08:31	Define The Eye	Step 12	43:40	White Lining
Step 4	11:40	Background		52:24	Sign
Step 5	14:19	Splats And Scribbles			
Step 6	20:04	Paint In The Horse			
Step 7	24:55	Red Background			
Step 8	28:09	Colorful Face			

# Step 1 - Sketch The Horse

Timestamp 2:20

## PLACING FEATURES AFTER BUILDING STRUCTURE



### PAINT:

- *Burnt Sienna* = BS · *Mars Black* = MB

### BRUSHES:

- *Large Synthetic Bright*

### COLOR MIXES:

- *Dark Brown* = BS + MB

### STEP DISCUSSION:

I chose to freehand this image, but I have also provided a traceable if you prefer to use that method. There is no right or wrong way 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 the edge of the brush loaded with the **Dark Brown mix** to find the shape and scale of the subject. Start by drawing a line that angles down and to the left, for the bridge of the nose. The line begins about 2 inches from the top and 3 inches from the left side of the canvas, and ends about 2 inches from the left side. From there, draw small lines that angle first down and to the right, then extend horizontally back to the right to

represent the nostrils, muzzle, lips, chin and the chin groove. Angle a tiny line straight up from that point, and then a small line on a 45 degree angle up and to the right to imply the lower jaw. Next, create a large semicircular shape for the jowl.

At the top of the first line, angle a line, almost straight back to the right, to represent the top of the head. Create a shallow arc from under the jowl to the lower right corner, to indicate the front of the neck. Then, the front shoulder angles down to the left, and off the bottom of the canvas, meeting the neck in a "Y" shape.

Bump out a raised eyebrow about a third of the way down the bridge of the nose for the hidden eye, at that same level, on the opposite side of the forehead.

Indicate the nostril at the top of the muzzle, draw an ear that is sitting flat on the head, pointing back to the right at the top of the jowl. Rinse the brush.



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## Step 2 - Eyes & Nose

Timestamp 4:48

### ROUGHING IN THE FEATURES



#### PAINT:

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

#### BRUSHES:

- Small Synthetic Round

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Light Blue = TW + PB
- Dark Orange = CYM + CRM + BS
- Orange = CYM + CRM
- Blue Black = PB + MB

#### STEP DISCUSSION:

Use Mars Black on the toe of the brush to paint in the shape of the eye, nostril and mouth. Rinse the

brush.

Paint the **Light Blue mix** around the eye, creating the overall shape of the socket.

Grab a bit of Mars Black to place a line under the eye that suggests another plane of the face.

Use the **Dark Orange mix** to give the inside front of the eye some color. Highlight this color with Cadmium Yellow Medium. Using the dirty brush, blend some Titanium White into the back corner of the eye, wet into wet with the black, and adjust the upper eyelid. Dip into

the Mars Black to adjust the pupil.

Layer the **Orange mix** onto the front of the eye. Rinse the brush.

Reshape the contours of the eye further with Mars Black. Then, refine the shape of the nostril and mouth a bit more, and add the divot above the eye.

Create a deep shadow under the eye with the **Blue Black mix**. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

## Step 3 - Define The Eye

### THE WINDOW TO THE SOUL

Timestamp 8:31



Carefully brighten the inside front of the eye using the **Dark Orange mix**. Rinse the brush.

Combine the **Light Pink mix** with the **Dark Orange mix** to paint the front and back corners of the eye, and to paint in the lower rim of the eyelid. Tap a bit of this color into the eye duct. Rinse the brush.

Paint an elongated, triangular upper eyelid highlight using the **Light Turquoise mix**. Without rinsing the brush, add Cadmium Yellow Medium to line the upper crease

#### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW

#### BRUSHES:

- X-Small Synthetic Round

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Dark Orange = CYM + CRM + BS
- Light Pink = TW > QM
- Light Turquoise = TW > PG > PB
- Yellow Orange = CYM > CRM

#### STEP DISCUSSION:

and lower lid. Rinse the brush.

Use pure Phthalo Blue to paint a fine line to define the lower inner lid, and to reline the line between the upper eyelid and the eyeball. Rinse the brush.

Tap in a bit of a reflection at the back of the pupil using Titanium White. Rinse the brush.

Paint an opposing reflection at the front of the iris using the **Yellow Orange mix**. Rinse the brush.

## Step 4 - Background

Timestamp 11:40

### A SOFT, BRIGHT COLOR WITH ENERGY



using the **Light Yellow mix**. Add pure Hansa Yellow Light in the upper left corner, and blend it on the canvas to vary the values in the background slightly. Then, use the **Light Yellow mix** to paint the background at the bottom of the canvas.

Softly blend in just a bit of the **Light Pink mix** into the background in front of the neck area. Follow with the **Plum mix** in the same area for a soft glow of color.

Softly blend a bit of the **Plum mix** into the

background along the bridge of the nose. Still using a soft blend, add the **Light Turquoise mix**, while moving towards the upper left corner. Scribble a bit of the color that is left on the brush underneath the muzzle. Rinse and dry the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

#### PAINT:

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

#### BRUSHES:

- Large Hog Bright

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Light Yellow = TW > HYL
- Light Pink = TW > QM
- Plum = TW > QM + UB
- Light Turquoise = TW > PG > PB

#### STEP DISCUSSION:

Paint the background on the left side of the canvas

## Step 5 - Splats And Scribbles

Timestamp 14:19

### MAYHEM!



Cover the eye with low tack tape to protect it from splatters of colors in this step. Then put paper towels at the bottom of your canvas to absorb any drips.

Refine the shape of the ears, and the arc of the back of the neck using the **Dark Brown mix**. Rinse the brush. As you refine the shape of the horse, blend in more Hansa Yellow Light into the revealed background.

Thin the **Light Teal mix** with water, then splat it against the canvas on the upper left quadrant of the background, allowing it to drip down. Rinse the brush.

While the paint is still wet, paint a stroke of the **Red Orange mix** along the front of the face. Use Quinacridone Magenta in front of the muzzle, and push some color

expressively around the upper left corner. It is okay if the watery colors blend together. Rinse the brush.

Scribble some of the **Light Blue mix** around the horse in the bottom of the canvas. Apply Cadmium Yellow Medium, thickly and scribbly, to the same area. Then, counterbalance that with a little Cadmium Yellow Medium in the upper center of the canvas. Rinse the brush.

Add random marks in the upper left corner using a thick application of Titanium White. Rinse the brush.

Use the **Light Blue mix** to add to the drips or alter the path of ones you don't like. Then, use some of this color to splatter loosely onto the left side of the canvas. Rinse the brush.

Allow the paint to dry naturally or, alternatively you could use a diffuser on the hair dryer.

*Sherpa Tip: Use a brush to pick up extra water and watery paint on the palette, so it does not make it too hard to manage the remaining paint.*

### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW
- Mars Black = MB
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

### BRUSHES:

- Large Synthetic Bright
- Low Tack Tape

### COLOR MIXES:

- Dark Brown = BS + MB
- Light Teal = TW > PG > PB > HYL
- Red Orange = CYM + CRM + QM
- Light Blue = TW + PB

### STEP DISCUSSION:

## Step 6 - Paint In The Horse

Timestamp 20:04

### ENERGETICALLY INTERESTING COLOR



of the head with the **Viva Magenta mix**. Paint the eyebrow bump on the left side, and the upper part of the ear with the **Orange mix**.

Without rinsing, load Cadmium Yellow Medium onto the brush and paint the back of the neck. Rinse the brush. Blend in some Titanium White, wet into wet, as you move down the neck.

Use the **Light Teal mix** to paint with random brush marks as you move down the right side of the canvas. Then, use the edge of the brush to create the curved line of the jugular groove at the front of the neck coming from under the jowl.

Without rinsing, load Cadmium Yellow Medium onto the brush again, and

brush it along the right side of that jugular curve, and on the front of the shoulder. Continue with Phthalo Blue on the dirty brush to paint the front of the neck, and the shoulder. Rinse the brush.

Glaze the muzzle with the **Violet mix**. Then, paint the jowls with the **Light Turquoise mix**. Follow by adding expressive strokes of the Quinacridone Magenta around the eye, and the remainder of the ear. Use the **Violet mix** on the edge of the brush to define the contour lines of the horse structure, then using the flat of the brush to paint a wide swath around the jowl. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

#### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

#### BRUSHES:

- Medium Synthetic Angle

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Viva Magenta = QM + CRM
- Orange = CYM + CRM
- Light Teal = TW > PG > PB > HYL
- Violet = QM + UB
- Light Turquoise = TW > PG > PB

#### STEP DISCUSSION:

Pull the tape off of the eye. Begin painting the front

## Step 7 - Red Background

Timestamp 24:55

### SWIPING ON THE PAINT



#### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

#### BRUSHES:

- Diamond Palette Knife

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Viva Magenta = QM + CRM
- Coral = QM + CRM + TW
- Light Yellow = TW > HYL

#### STEP DISCUSSION:

Load the **Viva Magenta mix** onto the right side of the knife. Scrape a heavy application of this paint from the bottom of the neck towards the left, allowing it to skip over the surface as you finish

the stroke.

Add another stroke from the shoulder, swiping lightly to the left along the bottom of the canvas.

Use the toe of the knife to partially fill any large gaps near the horse.

Load the right side of the knife with the **Coral mix**, and layer it right over top of the magenta. Counterbalance this by pulling some of the **Coral mix** downward over some of the area at the top left corner of the canvas. Wipe the knife on a towel.

Lightly swipe a layer of the **Light Yellow mix** over top of the coral

in the top left corner, and a little bit at the bottom of the canvas as well. You are not blending the paint, but rather just skipping a layer of color over top of the previous one. Wipe and clean the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

## Step 8 - Colorful Face

Timestamp 28:09

### ADDING DEPTH WITH SUPER COLORFUL LAYERS



#### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

#### BRUSHES:

- Large Synthetic Bright

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Light Teal = TW > PG > PB > HYL
- Plum = TW > QM + UB
- Orange = CYM + CRM
- Yellow Orange = CYM > CRM
- Peach = HYL + QM
- Light Pink = TW > QM
- Violet = QM + UB

#### STEP DISCUSSION:

Take care not to put a lot of pressure on the thicker applications of paint, because even though they are dry to the touch they will still be wet underneath, and you do not want to smear them.

Layer a touch of the **Light Teal mix** behind the eye, the nostril, and place a couple of strokes through the center of the area between the muzzle and the

cheek. Then, add some random brush strokes in various directions along the side of the neck.

Add a few strokes of the Plum mix below the eye onto the jowl. Grab Ultramarine blue on the dirty brush to place a touch in front of the eye divot, and under the front of the eye onto the jowl, then along the top curve of the jowl. Add Quinacridone Magenta and Titanium White to the dirty brush to add a swipe along the back of the jowl, blending with the Ultramarine Blue, and creating more depth. Rinse the brush.

Paint small strokes of the **Light Teal mix** around the eye divot. Rinse the brush.

Use the **Orange mix** to highlight the left eyebrow bump, and the forehead above the teal marks around the eye divot. Add some Cadmium Red Medium between the eyes, then layer some of the **Yellow Orange mix** in front of the eye, and down the bridge of the nose, going lightly over the purple paint that will desaturate the orange in a nice transition. Wipe the brush off on a towel.

Paint a few strokes of the **Peach mix** on the lower nose bridge, and around the front of the nostril and muzzle. Add Ultramarine Blue to the dirty brush, and continue layering paint on the muzzle and chin. Rinse the brush.

Add shadows to the muzzle, the mouth, and under the chin with Ultramarine Blue. Then, layer some of the **Light Teal mix** behind the nostril. Rinse the brush.

Highlight the top of the ear with the **Light Pink mix**. Add Quinacridone Magenta to the dirty brush, and paint the inside of the ear. Then, paint a shadow on the lower edge of the ear with the **Violet mix**. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

## Step 9 - Blue Face And Mane

Timestamp 33:45

### EMPHASIZING AND EXAGGERATING



#### PAINT:

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Titanium White = TW

#### BRUSHES:

- Small Synthetic Round

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Dark Violet = QM + UB + PB

#### STEP DISCUSSION:

Use the **Dark Violet mix** to create some long “S” curve strokes off the forehead, to imply the forelock. Use this color to line the muzzle and mouth again. Also line the bottom of the chin, around the ear and the jowl, down the neck and the shoulder. Continue adding forward locks along the mane over the horse’s head. As you get to the crest of the neck, begin pulling them down and to the right.

Add Titanium White to the **Dark Violet mix** to highlight the mane. Rinse the brush.

# Step 10 - Adding Energy

Timestamp 36:39

## BEING BRAVE WITH COLOR



### STEP DISCUSSION:

Highlight the edges of the ear with the **Coral mix**. Add a thick stroke of this color at the back of the jawl. Then, push forward some scribbles of this color into the cheek, as well. Rinse the brush.

Use the **Mauve mix** to paint a stroke of this color above the nose, and around the curl of the nostril. Without rinsing, add Ultramarine Blue to the brush to paint the front of the muzzle, and the top lip. Add even more Ultramarine Blue, and paint it just above the lip, behind the nostril. Without rinsing, use the **Light Pink mix** to add another layer of color above and around the curve of the nostril, and above the top lip. Rinse the brush.

### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

### BRUSHES:

- Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

- Coral = QM + CRM + TW
- Mauve = QM > UB + TW
- Light Pink = TW > QM
- Light Teal = TW > PG > PB > HYL
- Mid Red = CRM > TW
- Yellow Orange = CYM > CRM
- Peach = HYL + QM

Paint some energetic scribbles using the **Light Teal mix** through the middle of the face, and onto the cheek below the eye. Also, scribble some of this color through the back of the neck. Rinse the brush.

Add another layer of the **Orange mix** to the bridge of the nose, followed by pure Cadmium Yellow Medium. Then, scribble some strokes of Cadmium Yellow Medium through the middle of the face, above the blue area. Get back into the **Orange mix**, and scribble some of this bright color onto the ear and cheek. Rinse the brush.

Apply some very energetic strokes of the **Mid Red mix** over the top of the jugular curve, and on the shoulder. Follow with the **Yellow Orange mix** below the jugular curve, and a few places on the face. Then, add touches of the **Peach mix** here and there. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

## Step 11 - Highlights

Timestamp 40:41

### REINFORCING THE DARKEST DARKS, BRINGING IN THE BRIGHTEST BRIGHTS



#### STEP DISCUSSION:

Create some deep shadows above the ear, in the forelock area, using the **Dark Violet mix**. Reinforce some of the darker lining around the shape of the horse. Rinse the brush.

Highlight all along the bridge of the nose using the **Light Yellow mix**, scribbling a little over and in front of the eye. Touch some of the **Yellow Orange mix** onto the ear, face, and neck. Rinse the brush.

Add more Titanium White to the **Plum mix**, and paint a few

pops of this color around the nose, the back of the jawl, and across the cheek. Rinse the brush.

Use the **Orange mix** to add more vibrancy to the scribbles on the shoulder. Mix in more Cadmium Red Medium on the brush to add it to the squiggles above the jugular curve, and to the back of the cheek. Pop a couple of touches of this color into the face as well. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

#### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

#### BRUSHES:

- Small Synthetic Round

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Dark Violet = QM + UB + PB
- Light Yellow = TW > HYL
- Yellow Orange = CYM > CRM
- Plum = TW > QM + UB
- Orange = CYM + CRM

## Step 12 - White Lining

Timestamp 43:40

### TAKING IT OVER THE TOP TO THE FINISH LINE



#### STEP DISCUSSION:

Add very small amounts of the **Plum mix** to the Fluid White paint to get a very light value. Use the X-Small liner brush with very light pressure to line the nose and mouth, and later the ear and the forelock.

Use the **Tinted Yellow mix** to paint a bright highlight on the back of the nose, above and below the eye, then later the left brow bump, along the front of the face, and on a few more hairs in the forelock with this color. Rinse the brush.

Lightly tint some of the mixes on the palette with the Fluid White paint. First tint the **Light Turquoise mix**, followed by the **Tinted Green mix**, and then the **Orange mix** to weave individual hairs of many

colors throughout the entire mane. Rinse the brush.

Anchor the mane with the tinted cool Ultramarine Blue. Follow that by using pure Fluid White Paint throughout the mane, and a couple places in the face.

Line the front of the face with the **Pale Yellow mix**. Then, use this color to scribble exciting energy throughout the face, around and behind the eye. Rinse the brush.

Tint any of the mixes on the palette with the Fluid White Paint and play until you are happy. Rinse the brush.

Sign.

#### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

#### BRUSHES:

- X-Small Synthetic Round
- Small Synthetic Round

#### COLOR MIXES:

- Plum = TW > QM + UB
- Light Turquoise = TW > PG > PB
- Orange = CYM + CRM
- Tinted Yellow = CYM + FWP
- Tinted Green = FWP > PG + HYL
- Pale Yellow = FWP > CYM > HYL

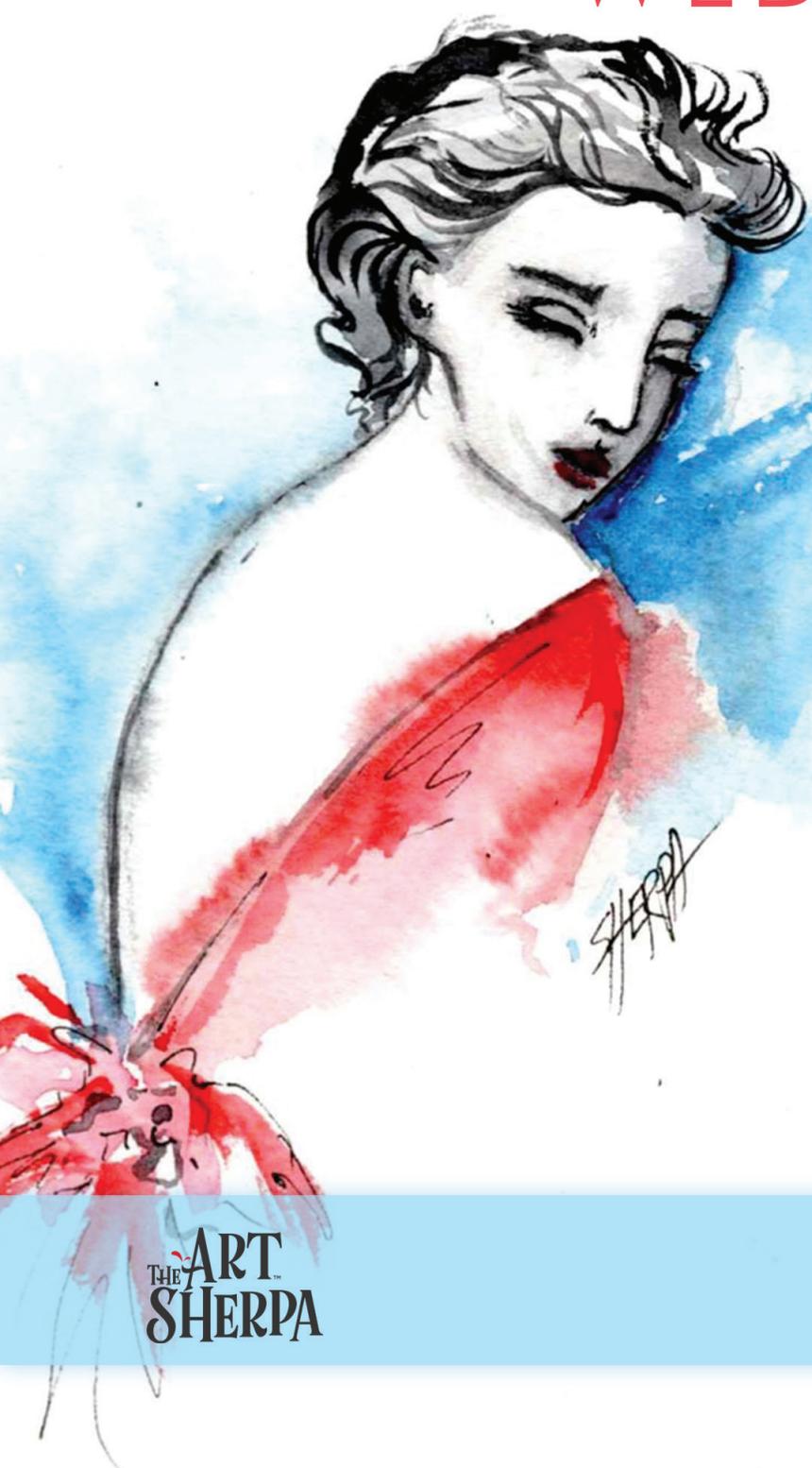
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**7:00PM** EST

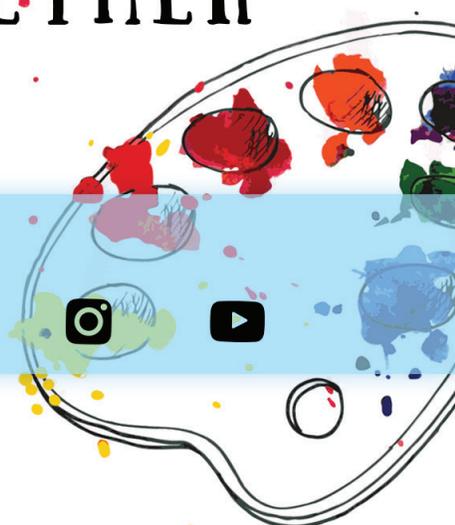
Watch directly from  
TAS Facebook  
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ALL skill levels welcome.  
Bring your watercolors  
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**RELAX &  
CHILL OUT  
TOGETHER**



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SHERPA



## THE TRACING METHOD

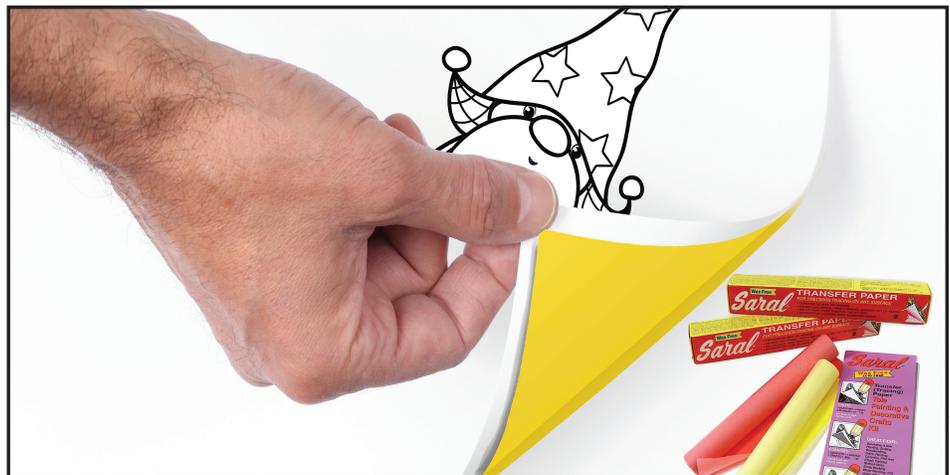
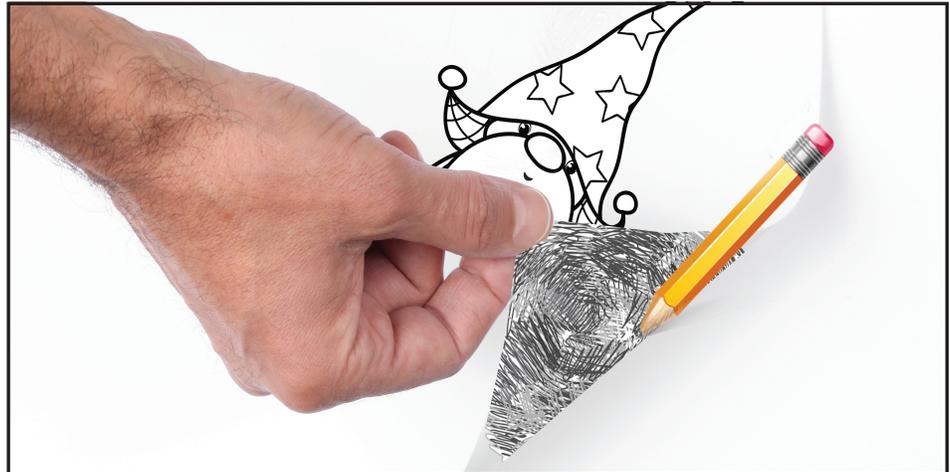
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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



## 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.

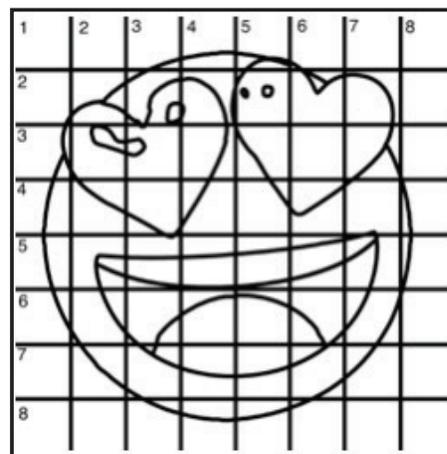
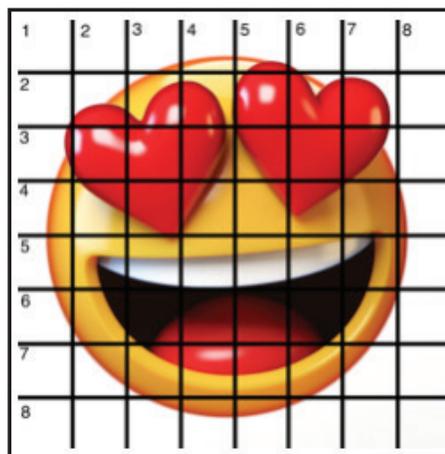
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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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#ACRYLICPAINTING



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