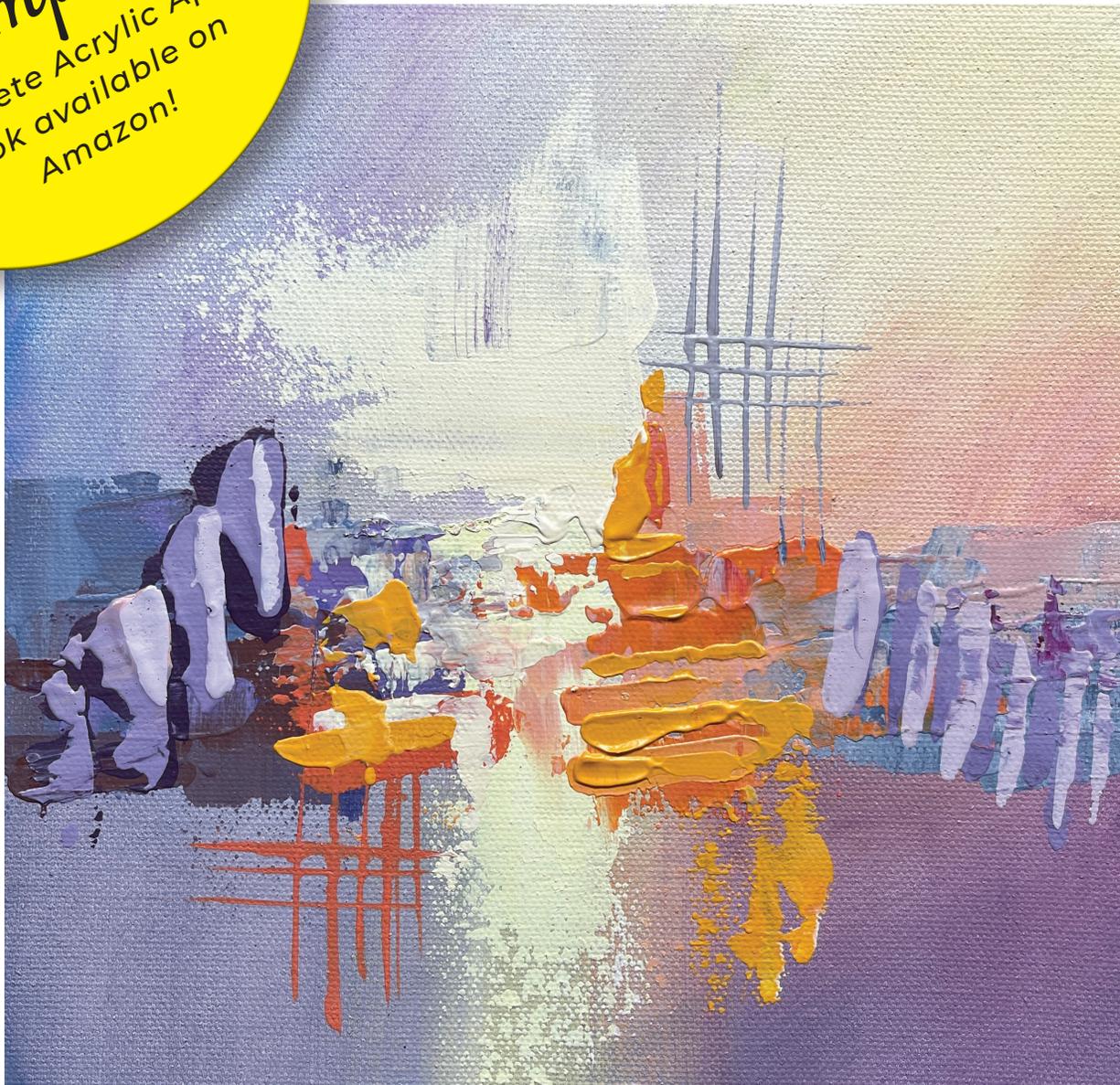


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*Acrylic
April*

EASY ABSTRACT
COLOR FIELD & GESTURAL PAINTING
SAFE HARBOR

BY THE ART SHERPA

Name credit to Patron: Linda Fordyce
Steps: 5 | Difficulty: Intermediate | 2 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.

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.

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

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 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!

Day 3: 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
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

BRUSHES:

- Large Synthetic Oval Mop
- Diamond Palette Knife
- Trowel Palette Knife

TOOLS:

- T-Square Ruler
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- 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
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Setting a Horizon line
- Color Mixing
- Implying Motion

Video Chapter Guide

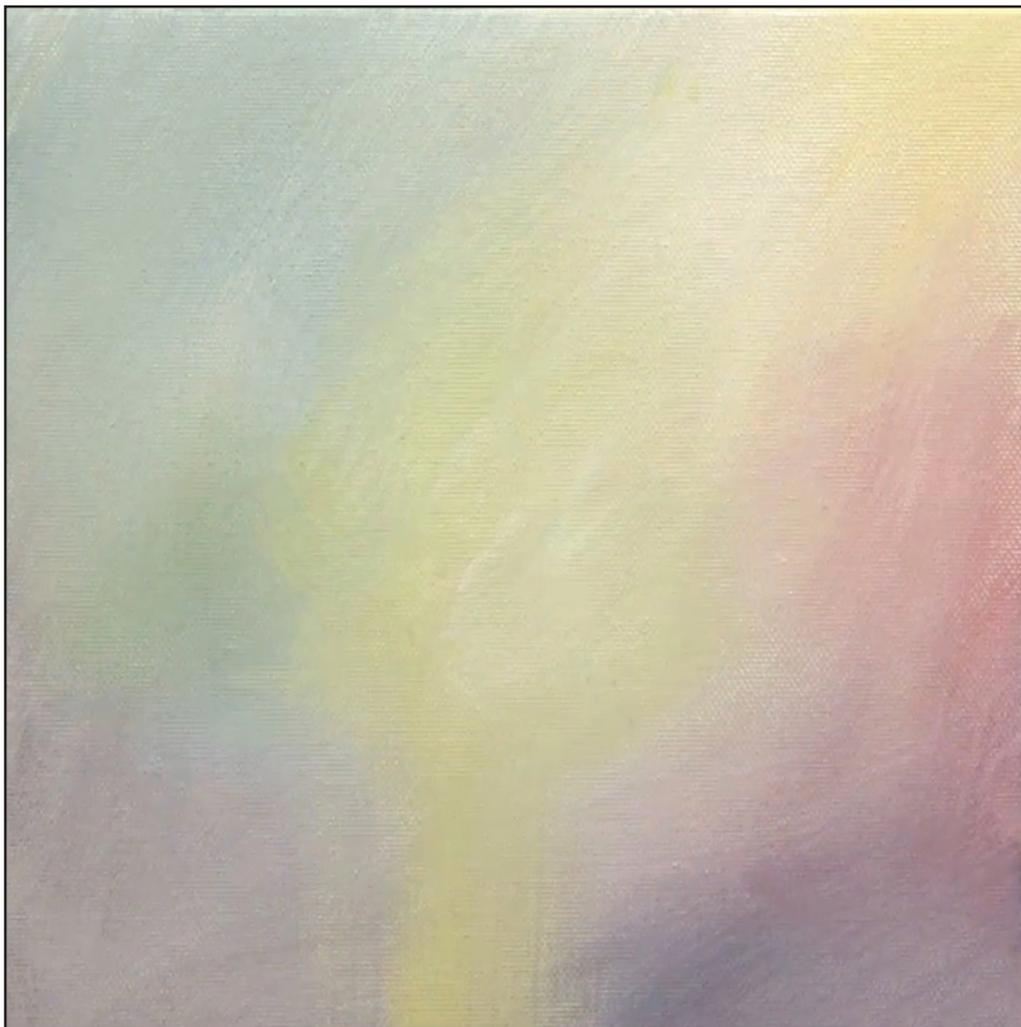
Below are the timestamps chapters we inserted in the tutorial video so that you can easily coordinate using the book and the tutorial video simultaneously.

STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
Intro	00:00	Intro
Step 1	01:52	Pastel Background
Step 2	05:55	Smoky Background
Step 3	11:58	Midground Pastel
Step 4	17:42	Smoky Left Side
Step 5	20:57	Structure

1 - Pastel Background

Timestamp 1:52

EBB & FLOW OF COLOR



STEP DISCUSSION:

Load the slightly damp brush with the **Yellow Blush mix**, and roughly paint the upper corner on the right side of the canvas. Begin blending in the **Baby Pink mix** through the middle left. Then, as you move to the bottom left corner, start blending in the **Violet mix**. Rinse the brush, very slightly.

Add Titanium White to the brush and, starting from the center of the canvas, soften the blend all along the right side of the canvas.

PAINT:

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW
- Hansa Yellow Light = HYL

BRUSHES:

- Large Synthetic Oval Mop

COLOR MIXES:

- Yellow Blush = TW + HYL > QM
- Baby Pink = TW + QM > HYL
- Violet = UB + QM > TW
- Blue Grey = UB + BS
- Light Olive = TW + UB > CYM
- Light Lemon = TW + HYL

Load the **Blue Grey mix** without rinsing the brush. Starting in the middle-bottom of the canvas, begin blending this color over to the right. Vary the mix with Burnt Sienna in the bottom right corner, and blend it up the left side with a bit of Titanium White.

Start lightly blending in the **Light Olive mix** in the upper left corner of the canvas. Rinse and dry the brush.

Use the damp brush to soften and diffuse the blend throughout the canvas.

After that, add the **Light Lemon mix** and softly blend it outward. Then, take the brush from the center, and lightly pull a few strokes of this color down to the bottom of the canvas.

Add Titanium White to the brush and lighten the center a bit further. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



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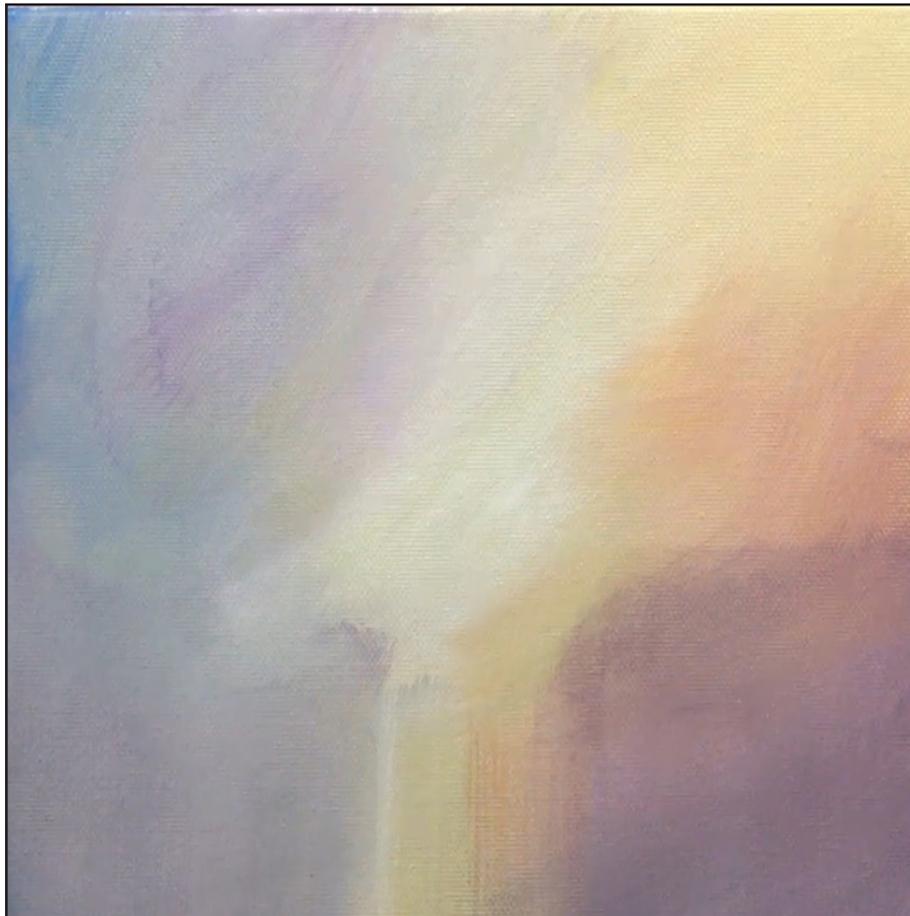
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Step 2 - Smoky Background

Timestamp 5:5

PASTEL-ING



and blend it outward to brighten the center of the canvas even further. Along the right side of the canvas, begin adding in the **Sherbet mix**, wet into wet. Softly blend the colors by applying a curved, light flicking stroke. Then, just to the right of center, pull a downward stroke of this color to the bottom of the canvas.

Blend in another layer of the **Light Lemon mix** into the top right corner. Rinse the brush.

Keep the brush strokes soft while adding another layer of the **Violet mix** in the upper left corner. Vary the mix by adding a bit more Ultramarine Blue in and adding it to the very corner. Add more Titanium White to keep everything light.

PAINT:

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

BRUSHES:

- Large Synthetic Oval Mop

COLOR MIXES:

- Sherbet = TW + CRM + CYM
- Light Lemon = TW + HYL
- Violet = UB + QM > TW
- Light Blue = TW > UB
- Blue Grey = UB + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:

Add a light load of Titanium white to the brush

Soften any hard edges by blending in Titanium White using a damp brush. Then, add a kiss of the **Light Blue mix** back into the upper left corner.

Paint a little bit of **Blue Grey mix** in the bottom left corner. Then, combine the **Blue Grey mix** with some **Violet mix**, and add a little more water and Titanium White. Blend that mix into this corner, taking care not to cover the downward yellow stroke in the bottom center.

Bring more of that mix into the violet hue and deepen the bottom right corner.

Continue to soften any hard edges by blending in Titanium White. Use a dry brush to soften and diffuse the blends even further. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Step 3 - Midground Pastel

Timestamp 11:58

MAKING THE CENTER STAGE



STEP DISCUSSION:

Load a bead of the **Slate mix** onto the back of the Trowel knife. Hold the knife horizontally and sweep a thick amount of this color down near the middle of the right side. Apply a layer of the **Light Slate mix** over top without completely covering the first layer.

Very barely tone in Titanium White with what little of the **Light Slate mix** that is still on the knife, and pull some of that color to the top of the grey area. Move to the middle left side of the canvas and pull a bit of this color downward.

Thoroughly mix the **Light Slate mix** with the **Light Orange mix** and scrape some of this color on top of the grey on the right side.

Then, use the tip of the knife to tap a bit of this mix onto the left side.

Position the knife vertically, and bring a couple strokes of this color across the end of the grey area on the right. Then, add a couple more strokes down. Wipe the knife off thoroughly.

Switch to the Diamond knife and sweep a few strokes of the **Light Lemon mix** downward onto the center of the canvas. Then, flatten the knife onto the surface and scrape this color down from the center to the bottom of the canvas, allowing the paint to skip as it nears the bottom.

Tap in a few vertical and horizontal strokes of the **Light Peach mix** just to the right of center. Then, pull a stroke down towards the bottom of the canvas, allowing it to skip as it goes. Add pops of the **Orange mix** layered over top of the peach. Wipe the knife off.

PAINT:

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

BRUSHES:

- Diamond Palette Knife
- Trowel Palette Knife

COLOR MIXES:

- Slate = UB + BS + TW
- Light Slate = TW > UB > BS
- Light Orange = TW > CYM > CRM
- Light Lemon = TW + HYL
- Light Peach = TW + QM > CYM
- Orange = CRM + CYM

Step 4 - Smoky Left Side

Timestamp 17:42

FILLING THE STAGE



of the left side of the canvas.

Layer on some of the **Violet mix** below that with a downward stroke.

Combine the **Violet mix** and the **Blue Grey mix** and pull it downward, closer to the left edge of the canvas. Then, sweep some of this color vertically off the left side.

Add some of the **Light Blue mix** into the previous color and add this just above the last strokes.

Without wiping the knife, mix in more Burnt Sienna. Add some horizontal structural lines on the left side of

PAINT:

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES:

- Diamond Palette Knife

COLOR MIXES:

- Mauve = TW > UB + QM
- Violet = UB + QM > TW
- Blue Grey = UB + BS
- Light Blue = TW > UB

STEP DISCUSSION:

Load the **Mauve mix** onto the back of the knife. Pull a stroke of it down and then across, in the middle

the canvas, using just the edge of the knife.

Pull a bit of the **Mauve mix** vertically towards the left but closer to the bright center. Then, add a horizontal stroke of this color between the brown strokes. Wipe the knife off.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Step 5 - Structure

Timestamp 20:57

A MEDLEY OF COLOR

PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES:

- Diamond Palette Knife

COLOR MIXES:

- Blue Grey = UB + BS
- Yellow Orange = TW + CYM > CRM
- Coral = TW + QM > CYM + CRM
- Light Yellow = TW > CYM
- Dark Purple = BS + UB > QM
- Mauve = TW > UB + QM

STEP DISCUSSION:

Add just a bit of the **Blue Grey mix** to quite a lot of Titanium White, and then mix it thoroughly. Begin working it into the upper-right quadrant, just to the right of center. Use the edge of the knife to create a thin vertical line going up towards the top of the canvas. Then, add a few more of these lines here, each of varying heights. Pull a few thin, bisecting horizontal lines here as well.

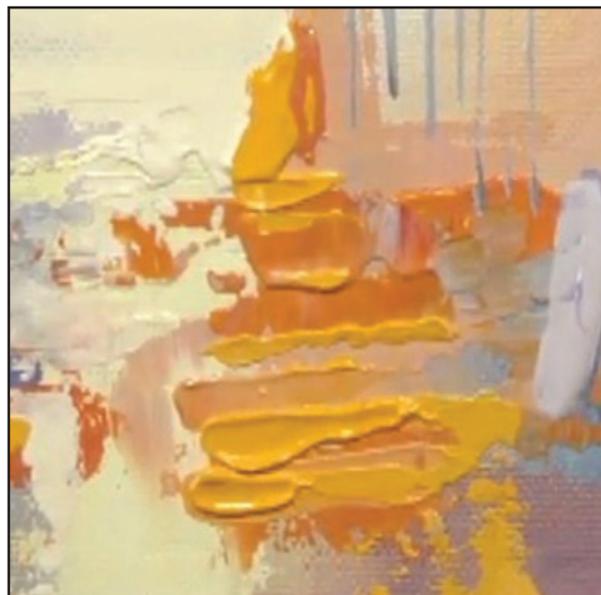
Pull down some of this lighter color horizontally, on the left side. Wipe the knife off.

Tap a few horizontal strokes of the **Yellow Orange mix** onto the bottom of the darker orange layer, near the middle of the canvas.

Add a horizontal stroke of the **Coral mix** on the left side. Then, pull smaller lines of this color vertically here as well.

Move to the bottom-left quadrant, just to the left of center. Then, use the **Coral mix** and the edge of the knife to create a thin vertical line, going up from the bottom of the canvas. Add a few more of these lines here, each of varying heights. Pull a few thin, bisecting horizontal lines here as well. Similar, but slightly different, to the structure in the top right.

Add heavier strokes of the **Light Yellow mix** onto the upper center of the canvas. Mostly horizontal, but building upwards, creating a vertical bright area. Then, place the knife onto the right edge of



this structure and pull it to the right, using very bold strokes. Allow it to skip across the canvas as you get nearer to the right side. Add in a couple upward strokes as well.

Pull some of this **Light Yellow mix** onto the top of the coral area. Wipe the knife.

On the left side of the canvas, pull several strokes of the **Dark Purple mix**, beginning a bit larger a couple inches from the side, then cascading down as they near the edge.

Load the right side of the knife with the **Mauve mix** and highlight the dark purple.

Add narrow vertical strokes of this mix on the right side of the canvas as well. Start near the orange area and step them downward slightly towards the right.

Add more Titanium White to the **Mauve mix** and tap in a brighter highlight onto the structure to the left. Use the edge of the brush and just touch it on.

Mix in even more Titanium White and load it on the left side of the knife. Apply this very light value on the vertical strokes, on the left side of the canvas.

Add thick horizontal touches of the **Yellow Orange mix** to the structure just to the right of center. Pop a bit of this color on the left for balance. Then, in the bottom-left quadrant, just below the orange structure, pull a few vertical lines of this color as well. Wipe the knife.

STEP 5 - CONTINUED



Sherpa Tip:

Sometimes, accidents create moments you may have been looking for. I accidentally touched some Quinacridone Magenta into the mix on the right. I left it in because it added to the piece, although I did work in some more of the Mauve mix to diffuse it a bit.

WATERCOLOR

WEDNESDAYS

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

Watch directly from TAS Facebook
page each week.

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

RELAX & CHILL OUT TOGETHER

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THE TRACING METHOD

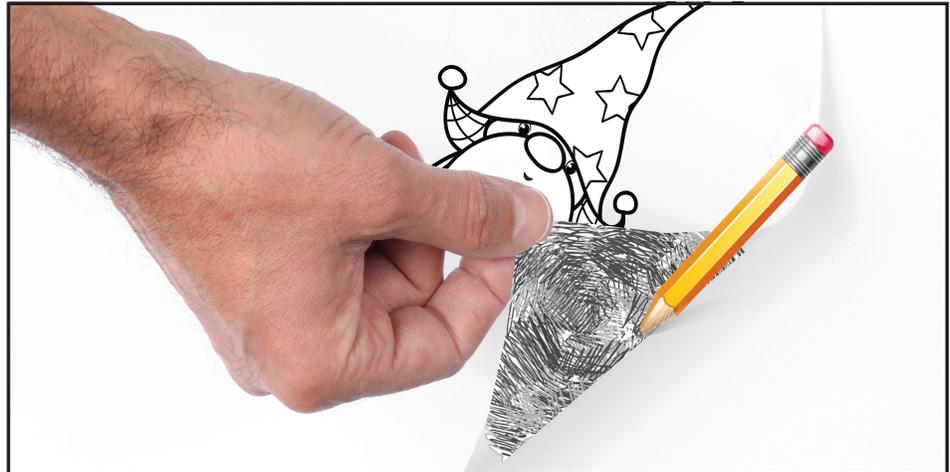
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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.

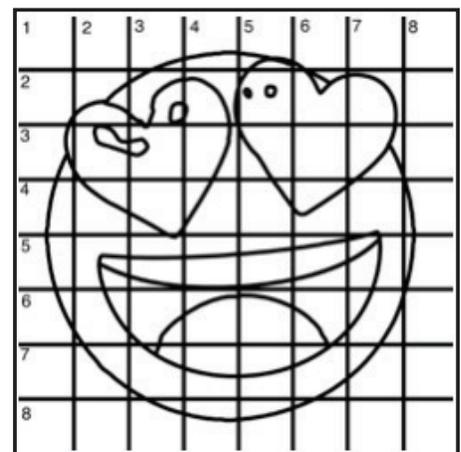
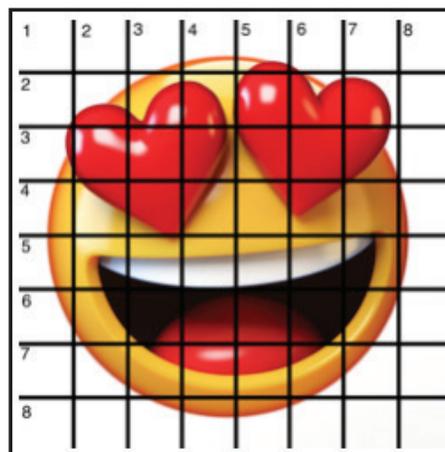
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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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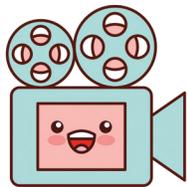
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