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*EASY BEGINNER COURSE*  
PRESENTED BY THE ART SHERPA

# *Moonlight Lovers*

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON: SASKIA FABER

*9 Steps // 2 Hoots*  
*Intermediate Level*

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# 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
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW

## BRUSHES:

- Medium Synthetic Bright
- X-Small Round Liner

## TOOLS:

- 9x12 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.)
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- 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
- Implying Motion
- Painting a Silhouette Landscape

# 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 6	21:34	TREE
STEP 1	3:26	WET SUN	STEP 7	31:22	PEOPLE
STEP 2	5:19	BLENDED BACKGROUND	STEP 8	40:17	UPPER BRANCHES AND LEAVES
STEP 3	9:27	SECOND LAYER	STEP 9	47:14	LOWER BRANCHES AND LEAVES
STEP 4	14:06	DISTANT BUSHES AND		53:09	HIGHLIGHTS
STEP 5	17:47	FOLIAGE			SIGN

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# Step 1 - Wet Sun

"Sun Halo"

Timestamp 3:26

## PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM  
Titanium White = TW  
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Bright

## COLOR MIXES:

Sun Yellow = TW > CYM  
Light Orange =  
CRM + CYM + TW

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Wet the brush slightly, load it with the **Sun Yellow mix**, and then paint a light, round dot in the middle of the canvas. Without rinsing, surrounding the dot, paint another circle with the **Light Orange mix**. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



## Step 2 - Blended Background

“Radiating Sunse”

Timestamp 5:19

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM  
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Bright

### COLOR MIXES:

Orange = CYM + CRM  
Reddish Orange =  
CRM > CYM

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Once again surrounding the previous circles in the middle of the canvas, paint another circular shape with the **Orange mix**. After creating that circle around the center, surround what you have just painted with **Reddish Orange mix**. Continue adding Cadmium Red Medium to the mix as you go further out towards the edges of the canvas with each circle, becoming more and more red until becoming nearly solid.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# Step 3 - Second Layer

“Rich Pizzazz”

Timestamp 9:27

## PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Titanium White = TW

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Bright

## COLOR MIXES:

Sunlight Yellow = CYM + TW

Peach = CYM + CRM + TW

Bright Orange =

CRM + CYM + TW

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Begin with the **Sunlight Yellow mix** and create artful, energetic circular motions around the central sun. Surrounding the previous marks, add **Bright Orange mix** to your brush and continue creating circles around the canvas. Go back and forth between Cadmium Red and Cadmium Yellow as you dance around the painting, creating depth with a beautiful, hypnotic gradient.
- As you go out, add a touch of Titanium White to create a **Peach mix**, making a haze over the red from the previous step. Let the colors work themselves out as you shape them. Rinse the brush.
- There is no need to dry the canvas before the next step.



# Step 4 - Distant Bushes and Foliage

*"Depth From Value"*

Timestamp 14:06

## PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Mars Black = MB

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Bright

## COLOR MIXES:

Deep Brown = MB > CRM

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Create bush-y shapes at the bottom left of the canvas by wiggling in the **Deep Brown mix**. Notice how the very deep black and red values create a brown with the paint already on the canvas. Create the same bush shapes at each corner, continuing to wiggle them in. Somewhat connect the top bushes together, still wiggling in brush strokes. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# Step 5 - Tree

*"Bend and Branch"*

Timestamp 17:47

## PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Bright  
Chalk Pencil or Watercolor  
Pencil

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Take your Chalk Pencil and curve a tree in, coming in from the bottom, around the sun, and going off to the left. Next, use your Bright brush with Mars Black, and create a hill for the tree to live on. Then, fill in the chalk outline you previously created. The tree looks almost mythical in the way it curves around the sun. The base of the tree is thick, and the ground below it goes off the canvas in front of the bushes. The trunk of the tree is about an inch as it goes up, and thins out greatly as it goes winding and wandering, to the left.
- Create a branch coming off the heart of the trunk, going up. Continue creating arching branches on top of the tree that curve and creep along. There is also one branch that is opposite to the first branch, but it is very small and humble. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# Step 6 - People

## “Simplified Silhouettes”

Timestamp 21:34

### PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round  
Chalk Pencil or Pencil

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- With your Chalk Pencil, create two placeholder figures below the sun, under the tree and on top of the hill. Switch to your Round brush, and with Mars Black, create a head at the top of the figure on the left. This figure is looking down at the figure on the right. Then, about halfway

down the chalk line, create a tapering line to represent legs that meld into the hill. Connect the head and the legs with a thin line of Mars Black on the back.

- For the second figure, have its head looking up at the other, and create shorter, tapering legs. Give the figure shapes like shoulders, perhaps a skirt to give variance. Then, fill in the chest and finish the figure.
- Return to the first figure and finish its torso, perhaps giving it a coat, filled out in a bold way. Then, connect the two figures with black lines that represent arms and hands, creating a unique, romantic scene. Give the second figure a ponytail coming off the back of the head. These are little choices that give uniqueness to the piece. Feel free to make your own and give this painting a little bit of flourish. However you do it, build it up slowly. Creating second legs, maybe another arm for the figures, maybe flowers and grass surrounding them. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

*Sherpa Tip: Do not be hyper-judgemental of your figures. Even if this is your first painting, each painting has a story to tell, and this one is your own. Enjoy the process, and remember to have fun with it. To create is to improve, and to improve is to create.*



# Step 7 - Upper Branches and Leaves

*"Wandering, Wiggly Twiggly Bits"*

Timestamp 31:22

## PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load the brush with Mars Black and add branches on top of the tree. Have twigs branch off from parts of the tree trunk, and add leaves to said twigs and branches. Take your time and try to be deliberate, yet plentiful with the placement and addition of the twigs on the branches. Give variety to the twiggly bits on the tree.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# Step 8 - Lower Branches and Leaves

*"Filling Out The Area Around The Couple"*

Timestamp 40:17

## PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Round Liner

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Moving onto the lower part of the tree, add branches and leaves to the bottom side of the trunk with Mars Black. These creep and hang down, yet have the same flow and variance as the ones above. You can add a few, fun falling leaves if you would like. Keep in mind that this is your painting, and you can do with it as you see fit. Have fun with it.
- Have some thick branches here or there, forgo leaves on a few branches. Trees are much like people, they go through a lot as they grow, and that shows up in their branches. Give your tree a story.



# Step 9 - Highlights

“Implied Light And Texture”

Timestamp 47:14

## PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

Mars Black = MB

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Bright

X-Small Synthetic Round

## COLOR MIXES:

Grey = TW + MB

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load the Bright brush with the **Grey mix**, and loosely brush a highlight onto the tree using back and forth strokes. Add this mix to the branches, adding rough, bark-like marks. They go up and down the tree a little bit, not too much.
- After giving the tree a bit of texture, grab the Round brush and make some fine details on the bark, on the edges of the tree, giving it a bit of a gleam. You can even add a bit of glow to the grass on the hill, or some to the figures to give a little extra interest. These extra little touches go a long way to make the painting pop.
- Sign.



## THE TRACING METHOD

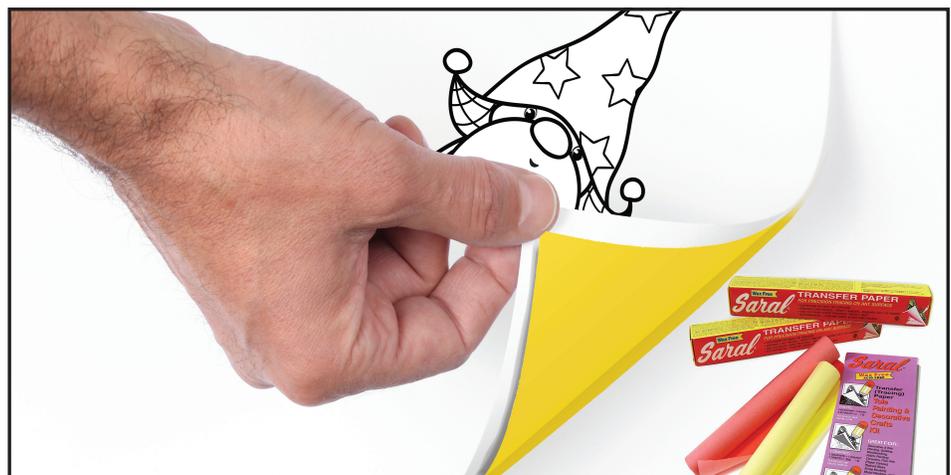
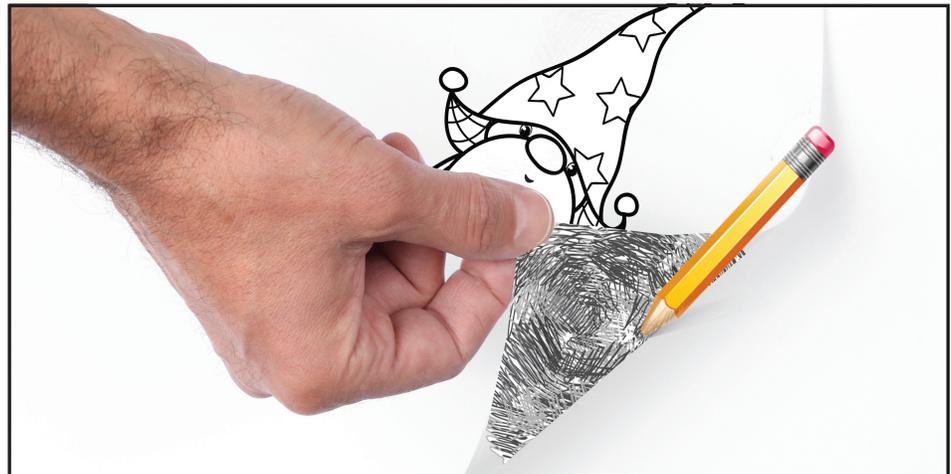
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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 see that your transfer is happening. If not check if



## 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.

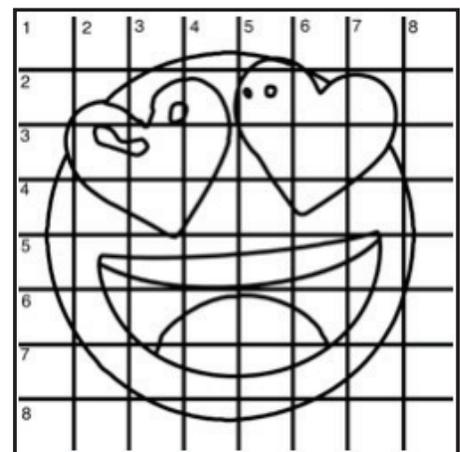
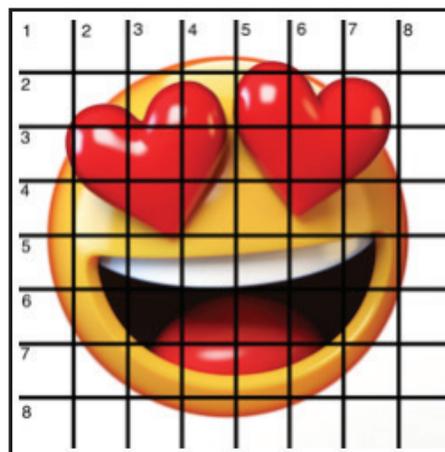
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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.



TRACEABLE:



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## TECHNIQUE REFERENCES:

### BLENDING WET INTO WET

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

### BLOCKING IN

Paint in the shape with a color, without detail.

### CONTOUR

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

### COOL COLOR

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

### CONTOUR PAINTING

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

### FEATHERED BLENDING

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

### FINE LINE WORK

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

### GLAZING

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

### LAYERING

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

### LOOSE, EXPRESSIVE AND PAINTERLY

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

### LOOSELY MIXED

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

### PAINTERLY

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

## S STROKES

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

## SCUMBLING

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

## SMOOTHLY BLENDED OR TIGHT PAINTING

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

## THOROUGHLY MIXED

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

## TRANSITIONAL MIXING

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

## UNDERPAINTING

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

## WARM COLOR

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

## RESOURCES

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

## WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR FINISH PIECE

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

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

*Allow your painting a few days to cure and harden. Acrylic paintings do dry quickly but still continue to cure a few days after you're finished even with thin applications of paint. Taking the time to allow 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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