The Art Sherpa Presents

Acrylic August-Day 1

Two Blue Birds

A Friend Understands

Name credit to Patron: Kathy Shaffer

10 Steps

Difficulty: Beginner - 1 Hoot 🦉

The Art Sherpa® 2024
Birds On A Branch - TAS#240801

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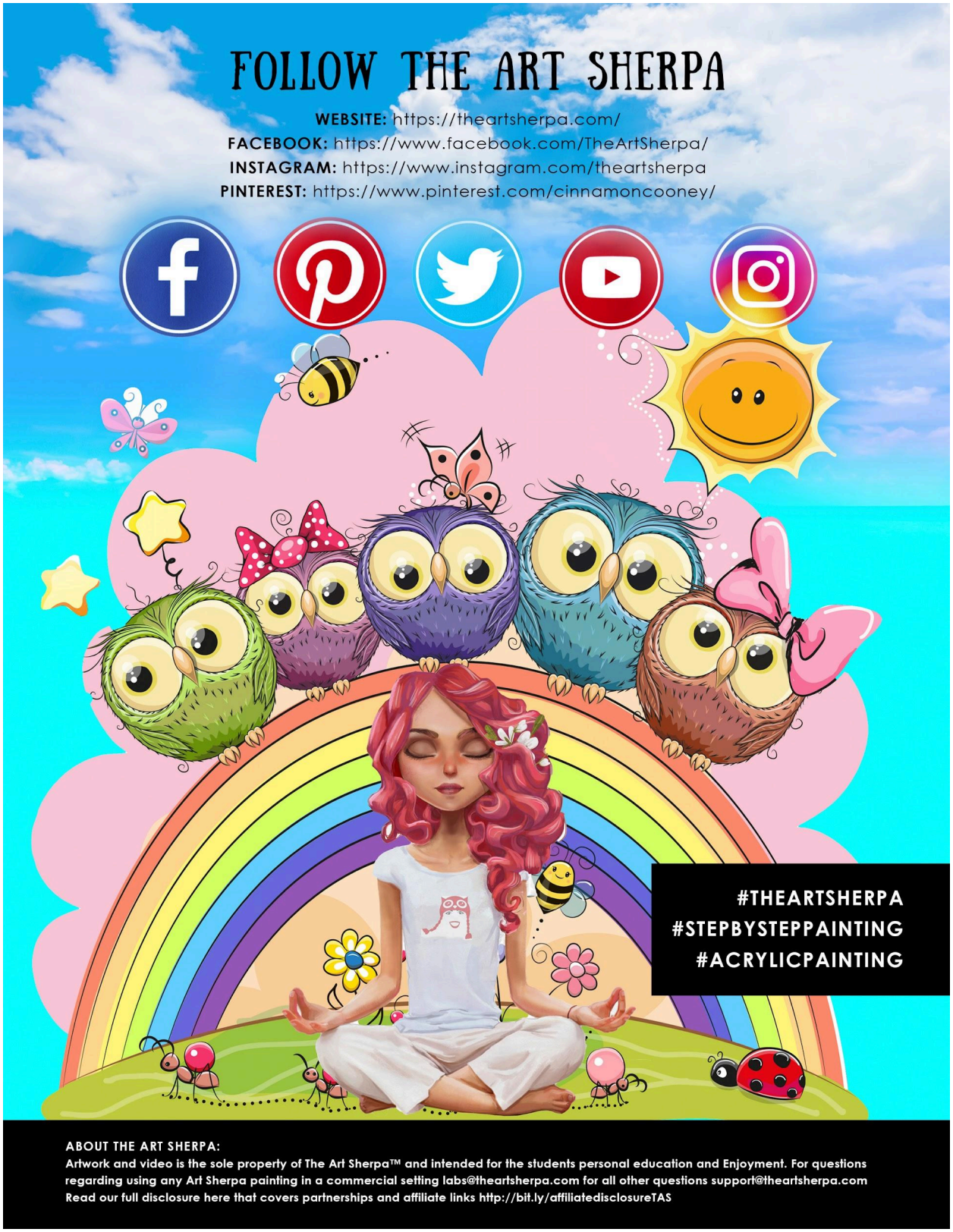
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PAINT AND TOOL GUIDE

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

PAINT

- Cadmium Red Medium = **CRM**
- 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**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Large Synthetic Angle
- X-Small Synthetic Round
- Medium Synthetic Round

TOOLS

- 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: Sta-Wet 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
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing

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.

Intro	00:00	
Step 1	3:15	Light Blue Sky
Step 2	6:00	Block In Branch
Step 3	8:28	Sketch Birds
Step 4	13:00	Branch Structures
Step 5	16:30	More Branch Details
Step 6	20:20	Block In Bird Features
Step 7	27:00	Define Birds
Step 8	38:03	Branches And Leaves
Step 9	44:15	Little Pink Flowers
Step 10	54:05	Centers And Details
	58:50	Sign

Step 1 - Colored Ground

Timestamp 3:15

“Very Light Blue”

PAINT

- Ultramarine Blue = **UB**
- Titanium White = **TW**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Large Synthetic Angle

COLOR MIXES

- Sky Blue = **TW + UB**

STEP DISCUSSION

Load the brush with **Sky Blue mix**, then roughly paint the entire canvas until it is loosely covered. Smooth the paint over the canvas using long horizontal strokes. This helps to ensure that the canvas is completely covered with a light blue, slightly streaky background. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 1 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer.

Step 2 - Block In Branch

Timestamp 6:00

“This Is A Stick, Up”

PAINT

- Mars Black = **MB**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES

STEP DISCUSSION

Load the brush with Mars Black to create a branch that stretches across the canvas about an inch below the horizontal middle. The branch will be about an inch thick, using slightly irregular lines to give it a natural, rough texture. Fill the branch in with the black paint, using side to side strokes to ensure it is filled in entirely. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 2 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer.

Step 3 - Sketch Birds

Timestamp 8:28

"Insert Tweeters Here"

PAINT

- Mars Black = **MB**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES

STEP DISCUSSION

I chose to freehand this image, but I have also provided a traceable image if you prefer to use the transfer 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 the picture that follows this step, and the traceable to assist you. I drew in only the major objects using Mars Black.

Use the Mars Black paint, thinned with water, to begin the round body of the first bird slightly left of center on the branch. Then, make a smaller half-circle head on top of the body, and two long downward lines below the body that can be joined together to make the tail. Fill in the figure after you have it where you want it. Add a subtle wing to the left of the body using upward feather strokes, then refine the neck and forehead of the bird and add a beak to the front of the head. Repeat the process for the second bird, facing the first, but make this bird have a slightly different look than his friend. Place the beak at an upwards angle so this bird will be looking at a slight angle up. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 3 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer.

Step 4 - Branch Structure

Timestamp 13:00

"To Be Stepped On"

PAINT

- Cadmium Yellow Medium = **CYM**
- Burnt Sienna = **BS**
- Mars Black = **MB**
- Titanium White = **TW**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES

- Branch Brown = **BS + MB**

STEP DISCUSSION

Load the brush with **Branch Brown mix** to make short, rough, back-and-forth strokes across the branch for bark texture. Leave some of the black layer below peeking through. The tails of the birds are behind the branch, so go ahead and paint the branch right through to bury the hidden part of the tails. Cover the bottom of the branch with strokes of this darker mix, then add more Burnt Sienna to continue stroking along the top. The top being lighter than the bottom gives roundness to the branch.

Add pure Titanium White and a smidge of Cadmium Yellow Medium to the dirty brush to make loose horizontal strokes of highlight along the branch to accentuate the texture. Vary the amounts of each color on the brush occasionally to give the texture a natural look. If the highlights are blending in rather than layering on top of the paint below, allow some time for the bottom layer to dry or get a bit tacky before brushing on the highlights. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 4 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer.

Step 5 - More Branch Definition

Timestamp 16:30

"Stick It To The Birds"

PAINT

- Cadmium Yellow Medium = **CYM**
- Burnt Sienna = **BS**
- Mars Black = **MB**
- Titanium White = **TW**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES

- Branch Brown = **BS + MB**

STEP DISCUSSION

Use the previous **Branch Brown mix** with even more Titanium White and a little Cadmium Yellow Medium on the dirty brush to weave in some brighter highlights on the branch, but still leave bits of the lower layers peeking through. There will be fewer bright highlights below the bird because it is blocking the light. Use the brush to make thin strokes lightly with the tip or thicker strokes using heavier pressure to widen the brush's contact with the canvas. Be as precise or loose as you would like. You are learning how paint layers up, how value impacts the shapes of objects, and how brush stroke creates an implied line.

Create some warmer highlights by adding more Cadmium Yellow Medium to the dirty brush to layer on more texture. Weave pure Burnt Sienna for striking pops of brown along the branch. Use some Mars Black to make cracks in the wood to add interest to the branch. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 5 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer.

Step 6 - Block In Bird Features

Timestamp 20:20
“Pudgy Wudgy”

PAINT

- Phthalo Blue = **PB**
- Titanium White = **TW**
- Mars Black = **MB**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- X-Small Synthetic Round
- Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES

- Grey = **TW + MB**
- Dark Blue = **PB > MB**

STEP DISCUSSION

Load the X-Small brush with the **Grey mix** to add highlights along the tops of the beaks. Then, create a small, open circle for the eye of each bird placed behind and in line with the beak. Rinse the brush.

Next, load the Medium brush with the **Dark Blue mix** to start the blue pattern along the top of the heads of the birds from above the beak, stretching around to the back of the neck Then, add a smidge of Titanium White to the dirty brush to lighten the blue color and apply a second layer to the blue heads. Bring the paint up the wing feathers of the birds, using slightly curved, upright strokes. Rinse the brush.

Load the **Grey mix** once again, biased more towards Titanium White this time. Leave just a bit of black below and behind the beak when dry brushing this grey onto the cheek with short strokes down then angling back as you paint across the cheek. Also dry brush this color roughly over the tummies using a vertical stroke that mimics the curve of the bellies. Make sure to use the direction of the strokes to shape the body and face as you paint.

Use the **Dark Blue mix** with some Titanium White to brush up the under layer of the tails. Then, use a smidge more Titanium White to brush a lighter value up the bottom tips of the tails. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 6 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer

Step 7 - Define Birds

Timestamp 27:00

"Feathered Critters"

PAINT

- Phthalo Blue = **PB**
- Mars Black = **MB**
- Titanium White = **TW**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Medium Synthetic Round
- X-Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES

STEP DISCUSSION

Load Titanium White on the Medium Round brush, it is ok if a touch of Mars Black gets on the brush. Highlight the chest of the bird, flicking the strokes to imply feathers. Leave more of the dark under the chin, under the belly and at the fullest part of the middle of the tummy. The lightest highlights will be on the central chest and on the cheeks. Rinse the brush.

Next, load Phthalo Blue and a smidge of Titanium White to highlight the heads with a lighter value. Wipe off the pigment occasionally, then add more Titanium White for an even lighter value at the top of the forehead. Blend this back gently. Give these pops of color to the wings as well. Wipe off the brush, as needed, to get lighter values of highlights. Use pure Titanium White for the brightest highlights at the top of wings, and on the foreheads. Rinse the brush.

Come back with Mars Black to redefine the shadows, and deepen the markings along the neck. Also, do this around the eyes. With some Titanium White on the dirty brush, break up the dark areas with some light markings, as desired. Rinse the brush.

Next, use the X-Small brush and Mars Black to add bird feet onto the branch. Paint a long middle toe with a shorter toe on either side of it. Also, darken the black inside each eye with this detail brush, and refine the outer gray line if needed. Rinse the brush, and dry the handle with a towel to get rid of hidden water droplets.

Then, get a very small amount of Titanium White to barely highlight the feet with tiny, delicate lines. Add a reflection to each eye for a bit of added cuteness. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 7 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer.

Step 8 - Branches And Leaves

Timestamp 38:00
“Branching Out”

PAINT

- Cadmium Yellow Medium = **CYM**
- Phthalo Green = **PG**
- Burnt Sienna = **BS**
- Mars Black = **MB**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES

- Dark Green = **PG + BS + CYM**

STEP DISCUSSION

Load the brush with Mars Black. From the left-hand side, create a branch slightly above the middle of the canvas, angling upwards. It will be slightly crooked in each segment, with little twigs every so often at the nodes. Below the first branch, add a second crooked branch angling upwards and to the left. Then, make a third branch below the branch the birds are perched on, angling downwards this time. There will be flowers coming from the sides of the canvas, so it is OK to leave branches floating and unattached.

Repeat on the right side, making the branches slightly different angles from the left side. The two sides should not be mirror images, differences create more interest. Rinse the brush.

Next, load the brush with **Dark Green mix** to add little leaves to the ends of twigs and along the branches. Use small, touch-pull strokes to create the leaves. The smallest leaves can be created just by dabbing the tip of the brush on the canvas for. Turn the canvas if it helps with the touch-pull motions. Rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 8 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer

Step 9 - Little Pink Flowers

Timestamp 44:15

"Every Flower Matters"

PAINT

- Cadmium Red Medium = **CRM**
- Quinacridone Magenta = **QM**
- Titanium White = **TW**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES

- Deep Pink = **CRM + QM**

STEP DISCUSSION

Load the brush with the loosely mixed **Deep Pink mix** to create little buds at the ends of the tiny twigs using touch-pull strokes, placing the bud along or on top of some of the leaves. Vary the size of the buds to make them feel like they are part of the natural world. Once you have your buds where you want them, add a little more Titanium White to the dirty brush to start placing a few star flowers along the branches. These will be 5 touch-pull strokes radiating from a central point, but can be fewer for smaller flowers or flowers facing different directions. Vary the amount of Titanium White added to the loose **Deep Pink mix** so that the brush strokes make unique petals each time, sometimes lighter, sometimes darker.. Press harder for larger petals, and be light for thinner, smaller petals. Aim for a light and breezy look as you paint. Continue to rotate the canvas as needed. Also add these flowers coming from the side of the canvas, giving the idea of a much bigger tree existing outside the limits of the canvas.

Some of these flowers can overlap the main branch, the background twigs, or even each other. Repeat for both sides, giving attention to each twig, going over with more mix or Titanium White for a difference in value. When you are happy with it, rinse the brush.

Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 9 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer.

Step 10 - Centers And Details

Timestamp 54:05
“All In Bloom”

PAINT

- Cadmium Red Medium = **CRM**
- Quinacridone Magenta = **QM**
- Mars Black = **MB**
- Titanium White = **TW**

BRUSHES & TOOLS

- X-Small Synthetic Round
- Medium Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES

- Deep Pink = **CRM + QM**

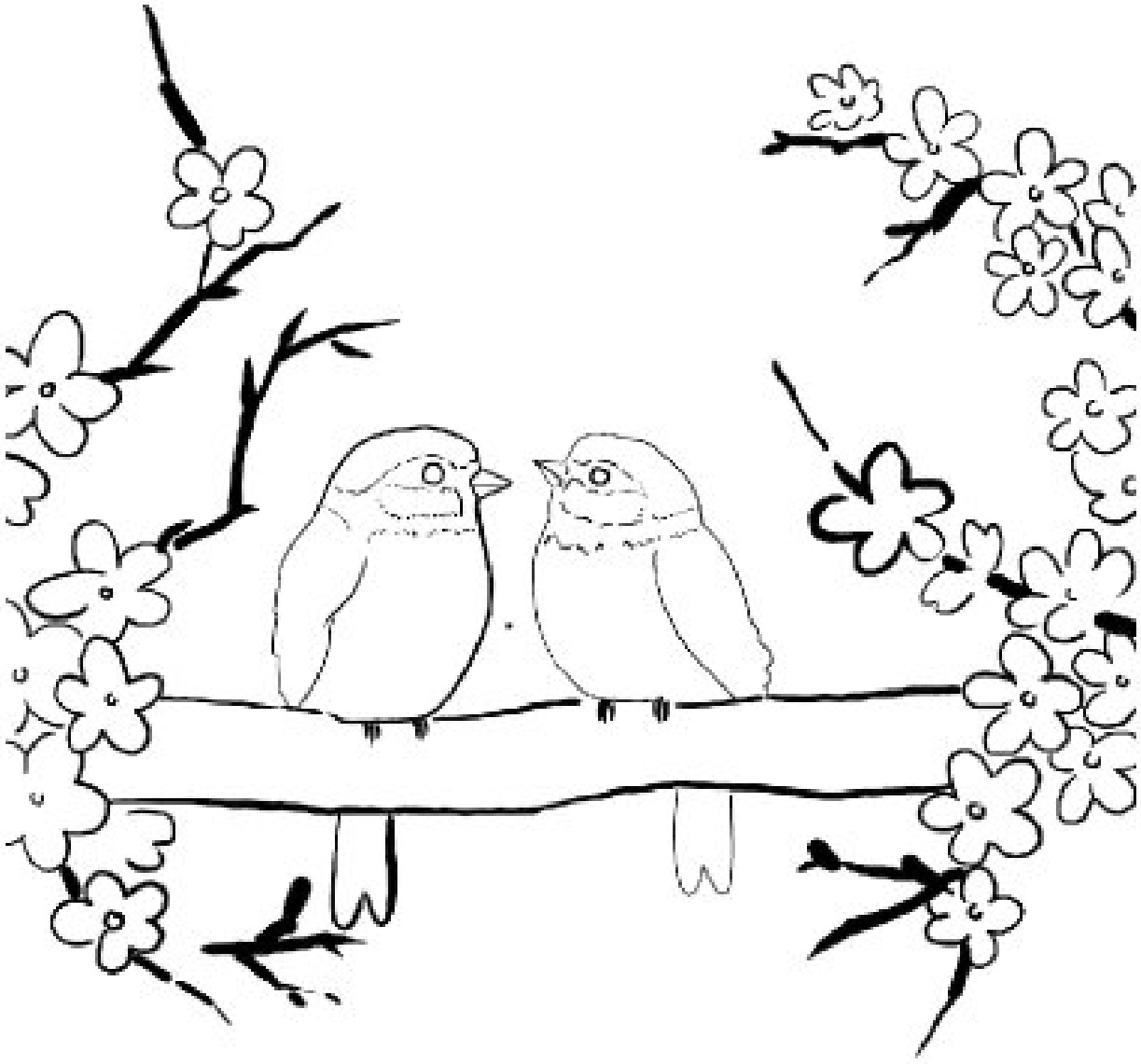
STEP DISCUSSION

Load the Medium brush with Mars Black to add little dots to the center of each flower. They are even smaller than the eyes of the birds. Rinse the brush.

Next, use the X-Small brush loaded with Titanium White and a smidge of **Deep Pink mix** to give a highlight or outline to a few of the darker flowers, being gentle and loose with the application. There is no need to be super precise. Add more dots as needed. Rinse the brush.

Sign.

STEP 10 PHOTO

If you did not understand any part of this step you can ask in the comment section of this video and I will do my best to answer.

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