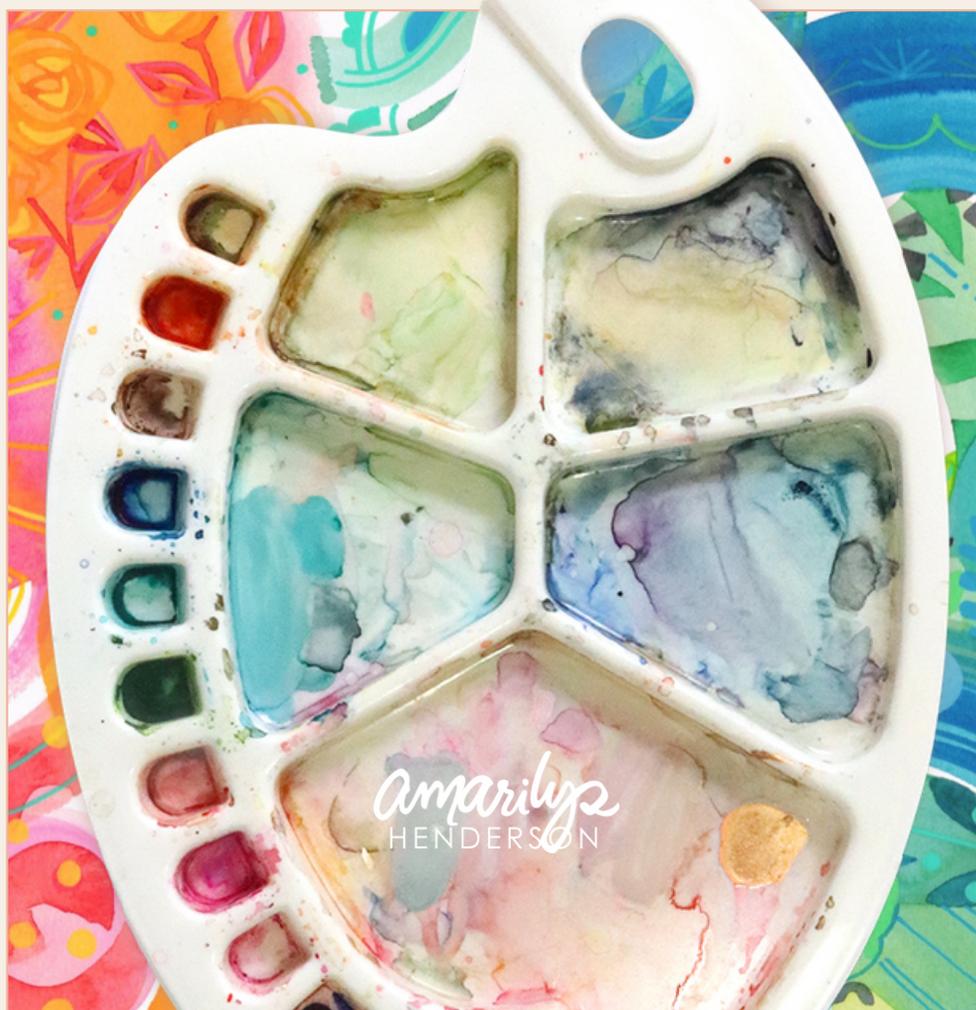


An A-Z Guide for
Watercolor Artists



Watercolor Painting

*Techniques to Grow
from A to Z*

A complete guide to modern watercolor
painting through various lessons by
Amarilyz Henderson on Skillshare



Welcome let's get you going.

Watercolor is stunning, vibrant, and freeing. I hope you'll say the same for this book. It is a vehicle to get you to what you need to know *at this very moment* while using this wildly lucid medium.



Hi there!
I'm Amarilis.

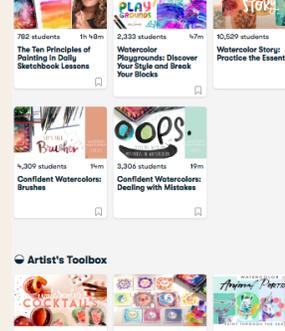
But we may have already met...

Because you may be one of my 120K amazing Skillshare students!



My work as a an online teacher, commercial artist, fabric designer, and published author boils down to this same beautiful ingredient: watercolor. And my people are the ones who echo this same phrase:

You make me want to take out my paints!

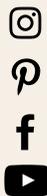


This is my WHY

While it makes my heart flutter to know that your trust in me motivates you to pull out those dusty supplies and jump to it, that same heart sinks with the question I sometimes hear:

Where do I start?

This guide will answer that question for you each time you're ready to paint. Whether you choose to systematically approach the steps and watch each segment from A-Z or if you choose to refer to it for a specific technique, my aim is to make it easy to roll up your sleeves and let go!



*Please do not share this guide with others.
Got a friend who needs it?*

Send them here, to:
watercolordevo.com/guide

COPYRIGHT *notice*

Listen, I know. It's tempting to take shortcuts. It's tempting to jump off another's success. And it's tempting to think it's okay. The reason we see the allure is the very same truth which should cause us pause:

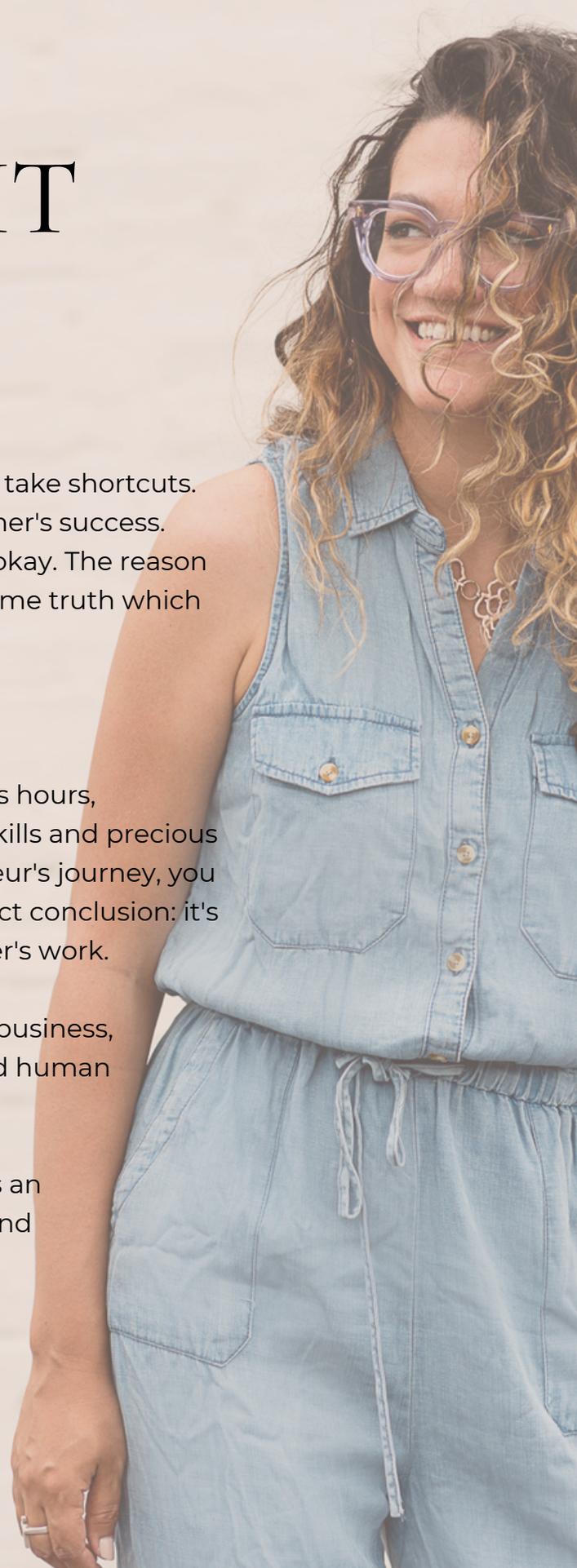
A lot of work went into this.

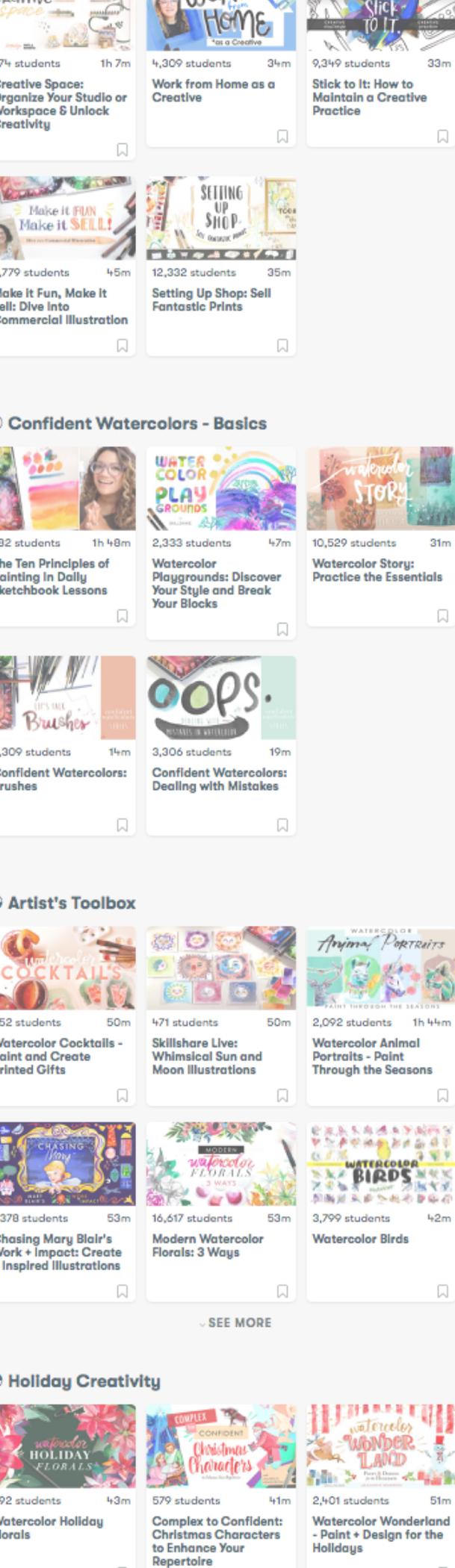
As you recognize the countless hours, compiled sacrifices, accrued skills and precious energy behind any entrepreneur's journey, you will inevitably end at the correct conclusion: it's not right to infringe on another's work.

Thank you for honoring small business, creative entrepreneurship, and human integrity.

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[SKILLSHARE.COM/AMARILYS](https://www.skillshare.com/amarilys)

Woah. That's a lot.

THIS GUIDE WILL
HELP YOU SORT IT
ALL OUT.

How will this work?

We'll work through the alphabet because
a.) I'm a sucker for simple systems.
b.) The topics work out beautifully!
c.) it's just easy to reference.

What will I learn?

Each A-Z technique will explain a key technique or principle in watercolor. Some may include a written tutorial as well, but the heavy learning comes from the video content linked to each.

How will I find the lesson?

The class with the assigned lesson is hyperlinked to the QR code on the page (it will not lead you to a restaurant menu)! Click on your device or scan it with your phone camera. You may also choose to navigate from my profile page at [skillshare.com/amarilys](https://www.skillshare.com/amarilys).

Growing *from A to Z*

This isn't an alphabetical reference, it's an alphabetically-structured guide. It's designed to lead you through your growth as a watercolor painter.

from Starting Out

A - D GETTING STARTED

E - F LETTING LOOSE

G - I RENDERING FORM

J - O FOCUS ON TECHNIQUES

P - V PUSHING FURTHER

W - Z ADVANCED FUN

to Seriously Hooked



Find Your Way

I've never touched watercolors.

GETTING STARTED

ART SUPPLIES
BRUSH HANDLING
COLOR
DEFINED SCHEMES

Let me play.

LETTING LOOSE

EXPLORATION
FINDING FLOW

How do I make things look like things?

RENDERING
FORM

GRADIENTS
HIGHLIGHTS
INTERMEDIATE VALUES

Some pointers to get rolling, please!

FOCUS ON
TECHNIQUES

JOTS & DOTS
KICKING INTIMIDATION
LAYERING
METALLICS
NEW MEDIUMS
OOPS

I want to get really good at this.

PUSHING
FURTHER

PRESSURE
QUICK GESTURES
RESISTS
SATURATION
TRANSLUCENCE
UNDERSTANDING STYLE
VALUE

Bring it.

ADVANCED FUN

WET ON WET
X-TRA SPECIAL BRUSHES
YOUR COLLECTION
ZOOM WITH ME!



Made for those
who can relate 100%



SKILLSHARE MEMBERS

You will need to be a member of the platform in order to watch the video content.

No a member yet?
[Try it for free with this link!](#)



WATERCOLORISTS

The techniques shown in this guide will progress and vary. New painters will enjoy the first sections, but all of the lessons are open for a broad range of skill levels.



CRAVING CLARITY

Clarity is a huge hunger for me and it is likely what drove the creation of this book. If you feel yourself say, "just give me the plan, please," you've got it.



COLOR LOVERS

I like my colors to punch and to err on the bold side. Realism, perfectionism, and muted moods have their place in this world, but not in my watercolor lessons.



Let's get started!

Guess what?
You already have everything you need.

Starting at the letter A?
We'll work on your shopping list.

Feeling like you're ready for letter M?
I'll help you shake things up.

Want to treat this book like a magic 8 ball?
That's cool, too.

My goal is the same, to hear you say:

You make me want to take out my paints!



A-D
*first
section*

GETTING STARTED

You've got to start somewhere!
And we'll begin at the art store.
Roll up those sleeves!



ART SUPPLIES

An obvious first question and one I'm happy to babble about at any given time of the day!

There's obviously a lot to choose from out there, but let's begin with my favorite paints.

Dr. Ph. Martins Radiant Watercolors

The bottles shown above and often in my painting backdrop are even more drool-worthy when on the page. Their fluid consistency makes them glide on the page. A new beginner may likely find them difficult to control, but aim for these with translucent color as your goal.

BEST FLUID PAINTS // INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED

Mijello Mission Gold Watercolors

These tube watercolor paints are nothing short of vibrant. I reach for them on a regular basis as the colors are just what I like, conveniently at the ready. My favorite feature, however, is how they feel. I've tried many brands and it seems that the trade-off for pigment is a tacky consistency. Not so with Mijello!

MOST VERSATILE // INTERMEDIATE



A



Arteza Watercolor Tube Paints

Arteza prides itself on offering a variety of budget-friendly art supplies that even professional artists can get behind. These paints are a great way to get a lot of great colors on your desk that are also brush-friendly.

FUN TUBE PAINTS // BEGINNER

Peerless Watercolor Paint Sheets

I was thrilled when I discovered these paints! They are literally sheets of paper coated with watercolor paint. Activate with a water brush (more on that later). These flat babies are easy to slip right in the sketchbook and keep going! The colors don't compromise either. Big win.

BEST TRAVEL PAINTS // BEGINNER TO INTERMEDIATE

Shopping List

Watercolor Paint Sheets

[Peerless Paints](#)

Tube Paints

[Mijello Mission Gold](#)

[Arteza](#)

Fluid Watercolors

docmartins.com

Get 20% off with code *AMARILYS20*

TIP: you will need a palette like these on left for most of these paints.





Getting Started

BRUSH HANDLING

*Your brush is an extension of your hand.
It may feel like an awkward appendage!
Making that brain to muscle to bristle
connection is key.*



Finding Your Faves

Quality, shape and size... these are the three characteristics you can consider when choosing a brush. Don't worry about the materials being synthetic or real or whether a particular artist uses one over the other. This is your arm-extension, not theirs.

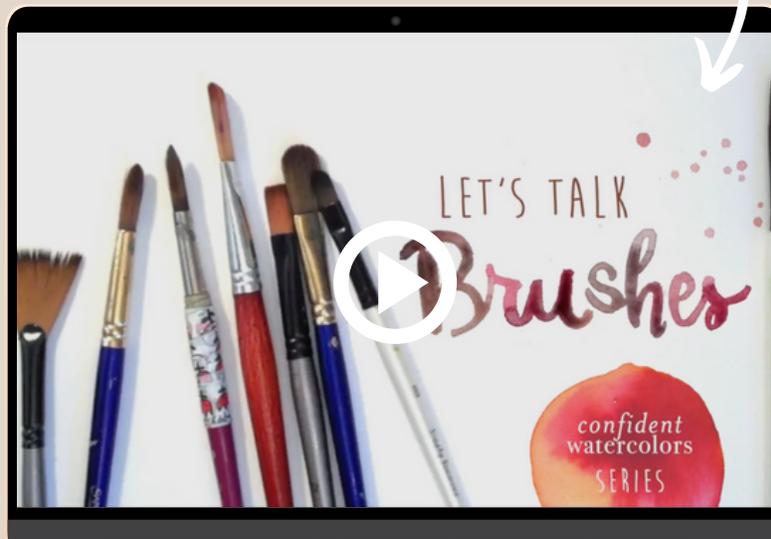
Quality in brushes is more recognizable by shopping in person rather than by price. Feel the brush. Is it stiff, soft, floppy? Notice if any hairs are going awry.

The **shape** of the brush will inform the shape it'll make on the page--exploit it! Don't try to force your round-tipped brush to create flat, rigid lines. You'll learn more in the video.

Consider its **size**. It seems simple: the smaller the brush, the smaller the line, and vice versa. Yet we often try to create a piece from beginning to end with the same brush. I like to use a rule of three sizes (above) for the three phases of painting.

B

Video Learning



This class will encourage you to play with all of your brushes

Class: Confident Watercolors: Brushes
Segments: 2-3 Basic & Round
Length: 8 minutes total



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



COLOR

I could park this book right here. Let's just talk about color for days, please. Okay, maybe that's unrealistic. I'll just point you to a couple of classes segments to relish in color at your own pace.

”

Amarily has been such a solid instructor in these beginning steps of my watercolor journey. Her teaching is so applicable. I'll be going through the day with thoughts of something I learned, and it will begin to grow.

-Robin Rodgers

- 1 Know Your Colors**
Your first task will be to know what you have to work with. I'll provide a fun activity for this.
- 2 Know What You're Drawn To**
Every artist has colors they can't seem to resist. Get clear about which these are and use them as a spring board.
- 3 Notice the Colors of Others**
We can only go so far when we're inwardly focused. Become a color investigator, noticing the preferred hues of others.

C

Video Learning



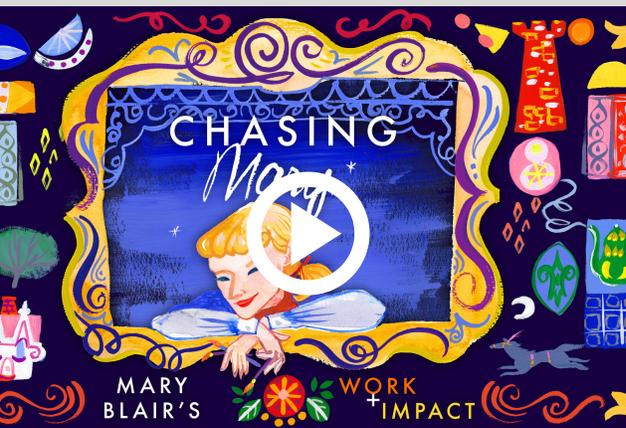
Catalog your colors

Class: Watercolor Story
Segment: 5 All the Colors
Length: 4 minutes



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Learn from a great

Class: Chasing Mary Blair
Segments:
13 Inspired by Color
14 To Create a Small World
Length: 11 minutes total



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DEFINED SCHEMES

Selecting colors is an art form, and one that we'll explore for as long as we paint. The video segment suggested for defining a color scheme is one I consistently receive raving comments on.



Why Limit Yourself?

With all of the colors continually at our fingertips, why limit ourselves?! I can admit that being selective and sticking to a color palette is a challenge for me. I'm tempted to add a little of this and that. But I've learned that selectively mingling a few ingredients is more powerful... just ask any cocktail crafter.

D

Video Learning



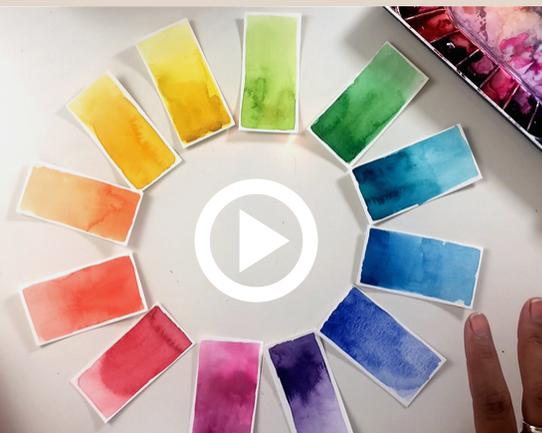
Create color recipes

Class: Watercolor Story
Segment: 6 Color Mixing
Length: 4 minutes



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Split-complementary color scheme

Class: Whimsical Suns & Moons
Segment: 2 Color Schemes
Length: 5 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



EE
second
section

LETTING LOOSE

We all start with play. Watching the paints move with the water and finding our own rhythm is the fun way to mastery.



E

Letting Loose

EXPLORATION

Before we get too tied down to making our paintings look like a particular subject, let's get used to the feel of the paints and learn what's most important first: enjoying the process.



This is my plug for a sketchbook practice.

I would be nowhere without my regular sketchbook time. The practice of creating routinely will alleviate the pressure of creating a show-stopper piece every time while reassuring your mode of creating.



My Tips for Developing Your Sketchbook Practice

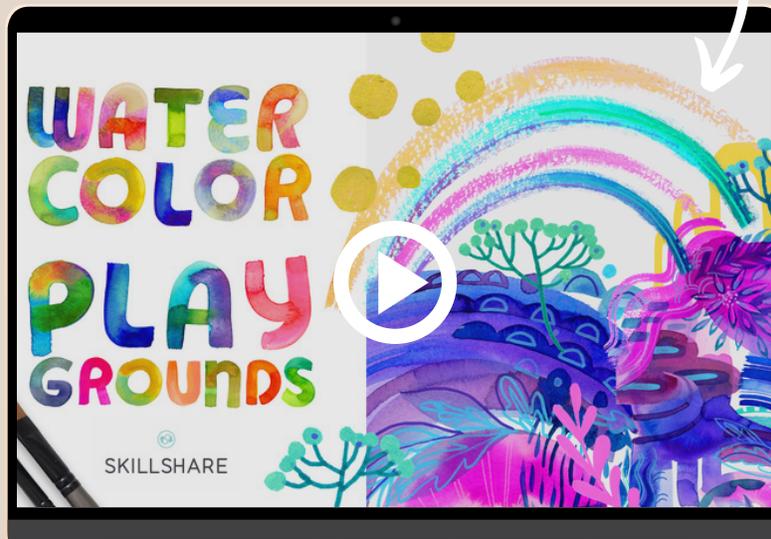
It doesn't happen overnight, folks. That's the thought I always have on my mind when I look at the photo on the left. But you might say, "sure, but what about day 16?" You know, when the magic fades and you're feeling kind of *meh* about the whole thing?

- Get those art supplies ready. Just as a jogger needs to have those sneaks unlaced and waiting at the door before the sun rises, you too need to be ready. I am a big believer in having a travel sketchbook and supplies in my purse.
- Know that the goal is to create a practice, a habit, not a stunning notebook of early Rembrandt treasures. So doodle. Create mediocre work. Create hurried work. Create your not-best work. These are soccer practices, not big games. This is for you.
- Map out a plan or a challenge if that helps. If you're joining a community challenge, you may feel pressured to "keep up" with the group's expectations. Instead I suggest you craft your own parameters and dictate your own pace. This class ([Stick To It](#)) guides you through how to do just that. In fact, the classes below came about because of my self-directed challenges!





Video Learning



*This class is an antidote to feeling
constrained by expectations*

Class: Watercolor Playgrounds
Segment: 6 Loose Shapes
Length: 7 minutes



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video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above
using your device's camera



FINDING FLOW

Do you know how it feels to just be "in the flow" of painting? It's a magical crossroads of inspiration, wonder and skill. It's when everything comes together while you're having fun--and poof! A beautiful painting happens! Well, it doesn't just happen, now does it?

My slight sarcasm isn't to say that this is untrue. Indeed, flow is important--important enough to give it the place for this letter--over form, foundations, fill and fun! Flow should be the biggest hope you have for your work. It's where heavenly inspiration meets feeble fingers, much more addictive than polished finished products.

While I can't paint you a roadmap to finding flow on a regular basis, I can tell you just about where it is: 1/2 to 2/3 into painting.

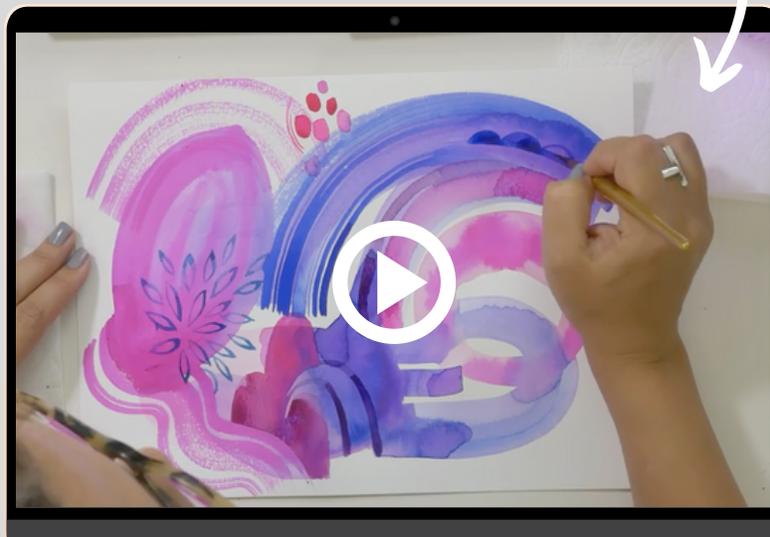
You know what else happens at that point (and often the moment before it)? The lowest point of your work in progress!

”

When your work looks its ugliest, flow may be lurking around the corner. Why? Because creating art is a labor of faith, and that's when it's most acutely exercised.

F

Video Learning



*Continuing our playground
to point of flow*

Class: Watercolor Playgrounds
Segment: 7 Playful Forms
Length: 12 minutes



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video preview image at left

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using your device's camera

A watercolor palette with various colors and a spiral-bound sketchbook are visible in the background. The palette includes shades of blue, green, pink, and purple. The sketchbook is open, showing a drawing of a succulent plant.

GI

*third
section*

RENDERING FORM

Light and dark are handled uniquely in watercolor. They're key to portraying your subject.



Rendering Form

GRADIENTS

What's the fun of watercolor if you can't make those smooth gradient bleeds that ooh and ahh?!

The delicate bleeds of watercolor are best showcased using a few approaches common to watercolor. (That's a hint to get these down pat!)

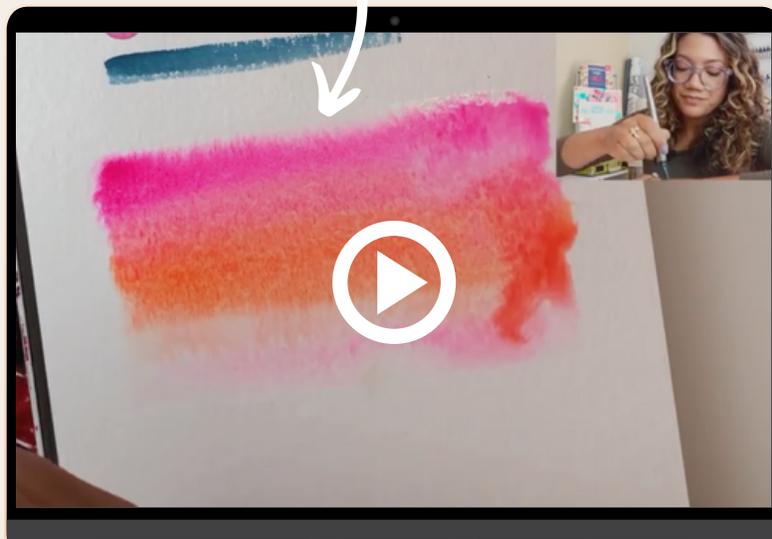
Achieving the Bleeds We Love

1. Wetting your paper before applying color will grant it a silky surface to glide on.
2. Select colors that are similar shades. The video exercise for this section will talk more about an analogous color scheme, but you may choose colors that are not next to each other on the color wheel. These may be similar in value (darkness).
3. Select a large brush in order to help keep your brush wet. I like to use a 1" wide flat brush.



G

Video Learning



*Paint a lush watercolor
gradient*

Class: The Ten Principles of Painting
Segment: 4 Practicing Color
Length: 10 minutes



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video preview image at left

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using your device's camera

H

Rendering Form

HIGHLIGHTS

True white in watercolor painting is the white of the paper left untouched. But lucky for us, modern watercolor embraces white additives to make sure those highlights shine!

Not all white mediums are the same. Here's my honor roll:



MOST VERSATILE: Dr. Ph. Martin's Pen White
Mix it with your paints or use as a white on top. Its chalky consistency means that it can also be reworked after it's dry.

MOST OPAQUE: Copic Opaque White
I recommend this for the brightest whites this side of thick ink! But it expires quickly so don't buy in a large bottle.

MOST CONTROL: Signo Gel Pen
Feel young again with this thin line maker!

MIX-ABLE: Dr. Ph. Martin's Hydrus White
This one squeaked in as more of an additive to achieve mid-grade highlights and fresh pastels.

Three Stages of White



1

Plan to
Avoid

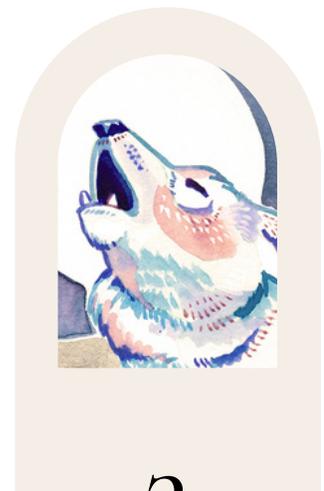
Find the areas you will need to leave white. Watercolor painting is about what you *don't* touch. It may be large areas like this arctic fox or it could be small areas left for highlights like the twinkle of an eye.



2

Resolve to
Alleviate

Lighten your touch when working. You can always layer on darkness, but work in soft colors to create mid-value highlights. These are light areas that aren't full-on white.



3

Opt for an
Add-In

Check out those tiny dabs of opaque white on the cheek. They're placed over dry watercolor as the final step in the painting of this fox.



Video Learning



*Watch me add opaque white
to an Amaryllis flower*

Class: Watercolor Holiday Florals
Segment: 8 Light Final Touches
Length: 4 minutes



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video preview image at left

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Rendering Form

INTERMEDIATE VALUES

The lightness or darkness of a color is its value. And the best way to represent the depth of a form is to add a lot of steps between your lightest light and darkest dark.

Think of it this way: what do you need to make a sandwich? You only need one thing between two slices of bread. Be it a slice of cheese or a slice of ham, you have yourself a basic sandwich. But what if you add more ingredients--layers, if you will--between your bread slices? It makes for a tastier sandwich.

Your painting is the same. You really only need three values to render form: light, dark, and middle. But the more you add in the middle, the clearer your subject's "form flavor" will be.

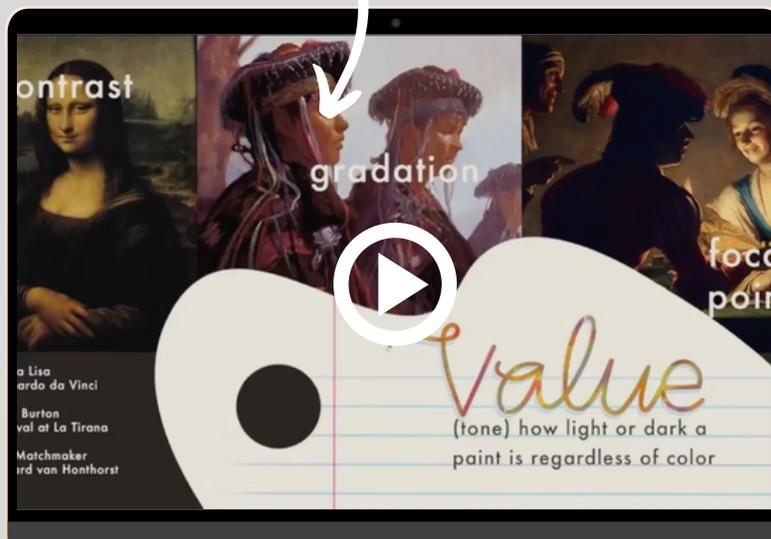
You will create a value scale in this section's exercise. It will tune your eye to noticing the nuances between each step.



While both are beautiful, one's folds are clearer.

I

Video Learning



Watch an overview about value and create a scale

Class: Ten Principles of Painting
Segments: 5 & 6 Value
Length: 10 minutes total



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JO
fourth
section

FOCUS ON TECHNIQUES

Now that we have the basics down, let's have fun with what it is to paint in watercolor.



J

Focus on Techniques

JOTS AND DOTS

*It sounds bizarre. But this to me is crucial.
As this section moves us into techniques, a
collection of strategies for your creative tool belt,
we'll often glean from design principles.*

Don't underestimate the power of a dot.

While this may not be everyone's favorite back pocket trick, jots and dots serve to create movement and rhythm in a piece effortlessly.

Some different takes on this same principle include:

- splatters
- brush strokes
- dashes
- dabs of the brush
- lines or rays
- abstracted foliage



J

Video Learning



Adding lines, dots, and details with marker

Class: Watercolor Playgrounds
Segment: 9 Decorative Details
Length: 9 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

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Painted details and dots

Class: Whimsical Suns & Moons
Segment: 6 Small Motifs
Length: 5 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

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K

Focus on Techniques

KICKING INTIMIDATION

Fear lurks at every corner of the creative process. But consider this: it is a path, not a grid of steps. Many decisions need to be made along the way, opening cracks for intimidation to set in. The antidote is both practical and ethereal.

PREPARE, PRACTICE, & TRUST

Have your supplies ready. Be they on the table where you have your morning coffee or in your bag saying hello during the kids' soccer practice. You'll feel their welcome beckoning.

Break in the page. The letter K's video teaches how to prepare your sketchbook even further.

Do you agree that inspiration "comes" to you? It isn't all on your shoulders! Trust it'll show up.

”

My travel art supplies have consistently fought against fears and intimidation. Objections such as little time, few ideas, and being ill-equipped just simply didn't stand.



water brush + sketchbook + paint sheets

K

Loosen Up!

I will bet that your favorite artists work loosely. Even the most accurate, realistic painters have a laid back confidence about them when they work. But how?

Set a timer

Nothing will make you tense up more than having to work fast, right? Wrong! Setting a timer will make you loosen up quite a bit! The mad dash to make your piece show up on the page will force you to make quick-thinking decisions, and going with your gut (rather than overthinking) is the epitome of loosening up!



Hold your brush differently

Seriously? Yes. I can tell when a student is tensing up at a watercolor workshop. Even if their shoulders are relaxed and their tongue isn't wrapped over their upper lip, I can tell by their hands. If their grip is on the bottom of the brush, they're holding their breath. Actually, it's called choking your brush (so I guess it's the brush that's without breath)! When you feel your fingers creep down to utterly mangle your brush's brass neck, push that hand back to the wooden body. And for a deeper stretch on your loosening, hold your brush from the end!

Place your paper differently

If you've watched my classes, you may have wanted to crane your neck at times. My apologies. I twist and turn my piece to make sure that all the angles are covered. In the same way, remember to twist your paper and better yet, stand. You'll get the bird's eye view on your work--a perspective we often lack.

K

Video Learning



Listen to the concept behind this method of prepping your sketchbook

Class: Start with a Shape
Segment: 2 Why to Paint from Shapes
Length: 2 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



LAYERING

There's a rumor going around that watercolor is a one-and-done, pass-or-fail sort of medium.

While it's not the sort of medium that makes room for much tinkering, layering is very important in this painting practice.

LAYER FOR DEPTH & DETAIL

Remember how we talked about intermediate values in the letter "l"? The more intervals you can place on the scale from light to dark, the more realistic your painting will look. The same holds true for the number of layers as it's often the approach for getting those interval steps onto the page. So as you paint a grey dog, you'll start with a very light wash, and graduate a step darker with each layer. Similarly, each layer may not require big color blocks, but rather, small strokes for more details.



LAYER FOR DEEPER COLORS

The husky dog shown above will not remain light grey, it actually ended up looking like the dog above! Many layers of colors made the dark areas of this pup richer and more interesting to look at.

L

Video Learning



Watch as I paint this Amaryllis in several layers. Brave it when you reach "W" in this guide

Class: Watercolor Holiday Florals
Segment: 5-8 Amaryllis painting
Length: 27 minutes, scrub through to watch



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On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



M

Focus on Techniques

METALLICS

Metallics are the bacon, the cherry, the decadent garnish of a piece. Currently, it's a nod to giving it instant modern appeal.



TEMPERATURE

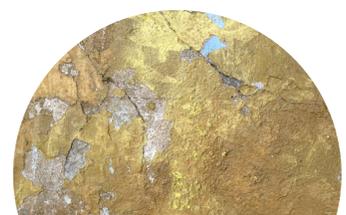
Are you seeking a warm glow or a cool metal look? The best way to note the difference is by comparing side by side. Stay away from yellow golds that remind us of cheap fakes.

OPACITY

Do you want to add a slight shimmer or a bold area like above? Watercolors and some inks will fair iridescent, while thicker mediums such as acrylic will look like the brush stroke above.

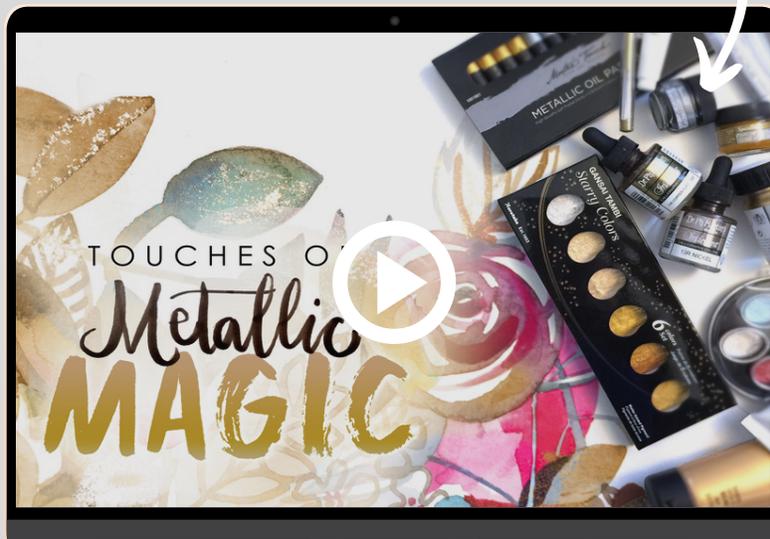
TEXTURE

The kind of medium plays a big role in what texture your shimmer will offer. Gold leaf will offer an altogether different look than an ink or colored pencil.



M

Video Learning



*So many mediums to choose from,
you choose!*

Class: Touches of Metallic Magic
Segment: your choice



On a Device, click on the
video preview image at left

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using your device's camera



NEW MEDIUMS

Watercolor? Always. Other mediums brought into the mix? Why not! Each medium brings its own flavor to the mix. With watercolor as the base, there's no telling how tasty our concoctions will be.

I recommend introducing a new medium after the halfway stage of a painting generally. Switching to another medium resets the creative process; it forces your hand to re-engage afresh.

Below is a slight exception to this pattern as I started with a few lines in colored pencil, painted, and then returned to colored pencil for a retro feel.



Must play well *with watercolor*

It only makes sense that water-solubles would play well with each other. I also consider how the medium behaves once dry. If it has a lot of plastic binders like acrylic or ink, they won't mix well with watercolor. These can still be used, but only after watercolor painting. I've found the following three to work best with watercolors *and* wherever my workflow leads.

GOUACHE

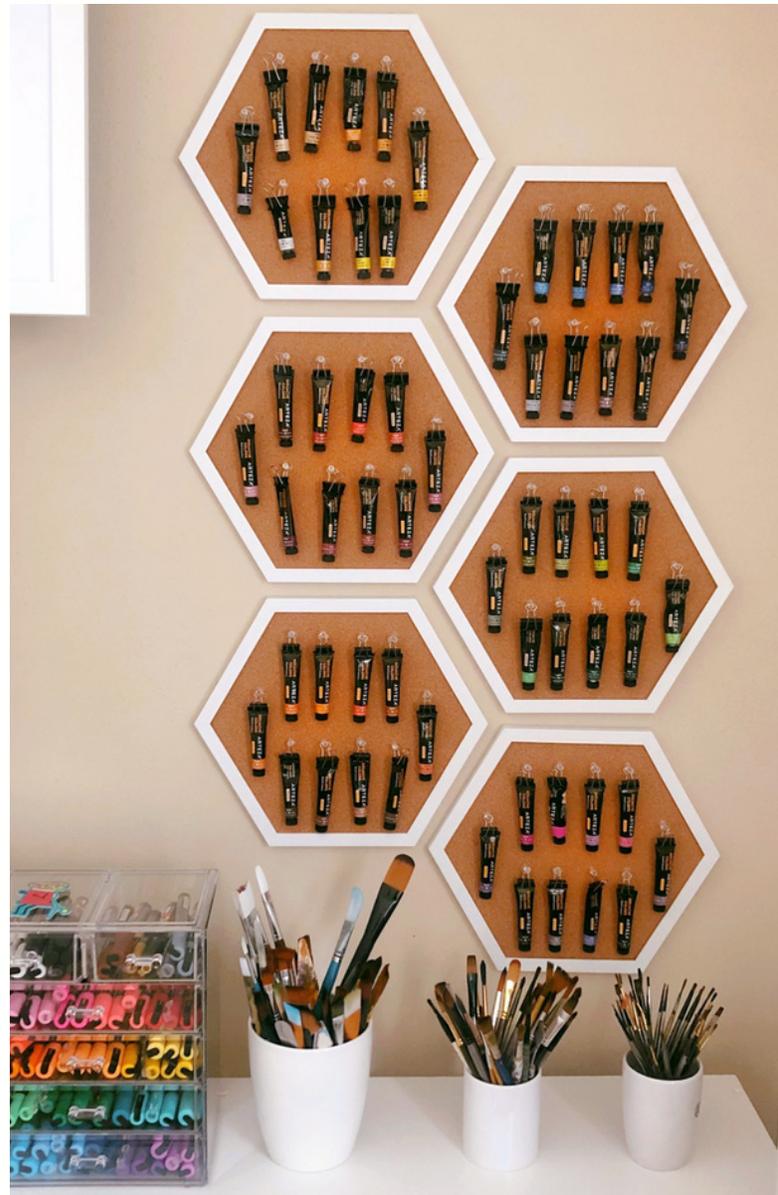
Think of gouache as opaque watercolor paint. It can be watered-down to give the feel of watercolor. I enjoy being able to squirt a bit right in my watercolor palette and even mix with my paints. They dry with a chalky consistency and offer great flat color.

PAINT MARKERS

Not all markers are alike. Paint markers are much like chalkboard markers, filled with chalky paint that dries with a flat finish. I've become picky about my brand choice with markers as I've had too many clogs, spills, and dry out's.

COLORED PENCILS

As shown in the mistletoe art on the previous page, pencils add a nice bit of dry texture and precision to a painted piece.



GOUACHE: [Arteza](#)
 MARKERS: [Uniball Posca](#)
 COLORED PENCILS: [Prismacolor](#)



Video Learning



Using ink to let your watercolor run wild

Class: Watercolor Animal Portraits
Segment: 6 Key First Step
Length: 11 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left
On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



See how Posca markers add a touch of magic

Class: Christmas Characters
Segment: 8 Magic Touch
Length: 3 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left
On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



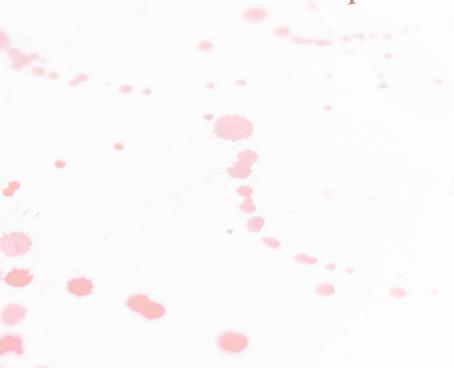
Focus on Techniques

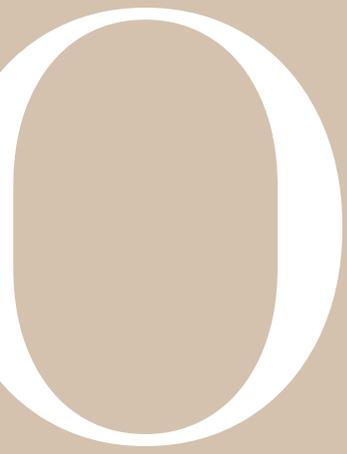
OOPS

There's a rumor that watercolor is unforgiving and that mistakes can't be handled. They can be, though it won't feel like simply hitting the "undo" button. Like any medium, the repair calls for some readjustment. Rather than replace, your greatest skill to master is to reframe when faced with an "oops" moment.



That moment when you knock over a bottle of Jungle Green that should have been closed tightly. And then you grow to kinda dig it. And it ends up hanging in a coffee shop, receiving more accolades than any of its pristine siblings.





Video Learning



Learn how to lift, replace, and work with your oops!

Class: Confident Watercolors: Dealing with Mistakes
Segments: 2-7 Steps 1-4
Length: 12 minutes total



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



P V
fifth
section

PUSHING FURTHER

Let's explore the many shades
between the structures and
techniques we've learned so far.



Pushing Further

PRESSURE

The level at which you apply pressure to your brush dictates line quality.

Water to Paint Ratio

Pressure and water control go hand in hand--no pun intended. A safe feel is a 50:50 ratio of water to paint. From there, you can explore placing more water on your brush so that it'll glide nicely on the page. Alternately, loading your brush with paint will make for a brilliant swoosh that is shorter lived.

Line Quality

Your brush can create a variety of line widths by applying pressure--or not! Your brush's hairs fan out when you press down, creating a broad line. Lighten the pressure and let your brush's tip dance on the page for a thin line.



2
factors

P

Video Learning



*Explore line quality with your brush
and your sketchbook*

Class: Ten Elements of Painting
Segment: 8 Practicing Line
Length: 8 minutes



On a Device, click on the
video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above
using your device's camera



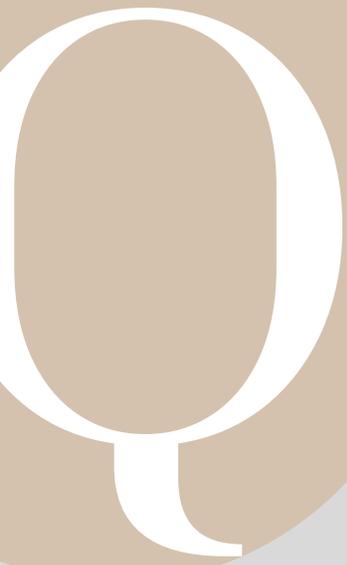
QUICK GESTURES

Gestural art aims to get at the essence of what a subject's energy is. Boldness, movement, and a focus on important features replaces nuance and accuracy.

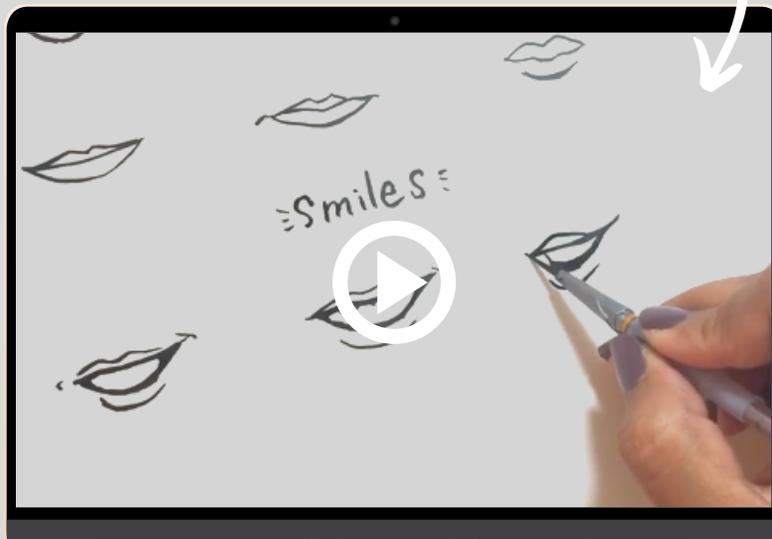
Have you ever felt the weight of a moment and wish you could put it on a page? Maybe it's a mood or the way the light hits a face, it could be the rhythm of a dancer or the vibe of an atmosphere.

We can begin to capture these intangible concepts with tools like color, repetition, and line weight or we can take all three to create quick gestures with our brushes. These colorful lines can speak a language unknown to words and powerful to the eyes.





Video Learning



Try your hand at some quick facial features using black ink or watercolor

Class: Expressive Little Faces
Segments: Choose from 5,6 or 7
Length: 3 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



R

Pushing Further

RESISTS

Resists are mediums used in watercolor painting that are designed to cover or repel the paint in order to protect the white of the paper.

Common Methods

Masking fluid or Frisket - This gooey, glue-like substance is placed with a brush, allowed to dry and painted over. It can be peeled or rubbed off once it's served its purpose.

Wax - Oil and water don't mix, right? Waxy substances can be placed on the page before painting. The watercolor paint will not adhere and those areas will stay white.

Masking Tape - Tape with a light adhesive can be placed on the paper before painting to offer a clean-edged resist.

When to reach for this tool

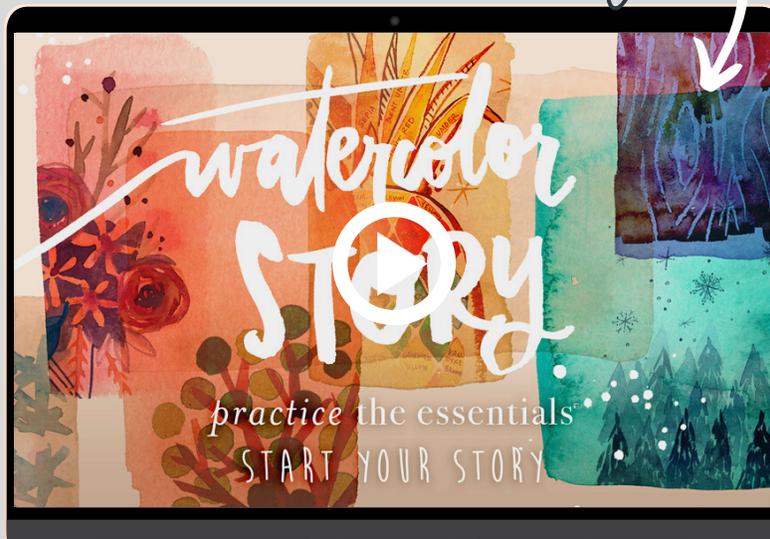
We will always need to reserve a bit of white to have the best highlights in our artwork. But when should you work around white areas and when should you rely on resists?

The simple answer is: when you need help. Here are some examples I've found true for me:

- When it's important to maintain a precise shape of white. The glimmer in an eye does not need to be a certain shape, but perhaps the outline of a backlit silhouette does.
- When I want to create large washes without working around small spots (as shown in the deer above). I can have the confidence to place heavy blends freely.
- Also as shown above, use the help of a resist or mask for a dark to light gradient that is speckled with white spots--be they dust, shimmer, water droplets, etc.

R

Video Learning



Resist with crayon & masking fluid

Class: Watercolor Story
Segment: 8 Resist Techniques
Length: 3 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

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Pushing Further

SATURATION

Saturated colors are full of pigment, rich and bold. A color may be light in value, yet saturated in hue.

Can you spot any on this page?



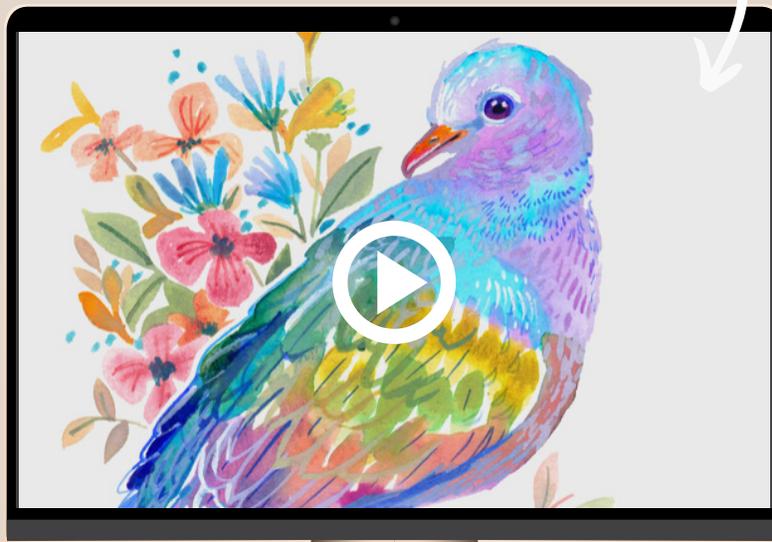
My general policy is that saturated colors can crop up anywhere--from flowers to faces! Yet they needn't show up *everywhere*. Your viewers' eyes will be pulled wherever the colors pop the most. Give those eyes areas of rest, even if it's just white paper.

Not getting the level of color saturation that you'd like? See this checklist:

- Check the quality of your paints. Paints are a combination of pigment and necessary binders, but beware of paints disproportionately full of other ingredients (binders). Purchase professional grade paints, not student grade
- Layer your paints. In case you missed it, this is covered in the letter "L"
- Load your brush up! You may be a bit off on your water to paint ratios. Take your wet brush and dig in to those paint wells to fill 'er up!

S

Video Learning



Read to paint this Emerald dove?

Class: Watercolor Birds
Segment: 13 Rainbow Bird
Length: 3 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

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T

Pushing Further

TRANSLUCENCE

*What is it about watercolor paint that makes it seem to shine?
It's the translucence of the paint's drying process. Watercolor
requires heavy paper as the paint particles settle on the
various layers of paper to soak and stay once dry.*

Layers of color & light

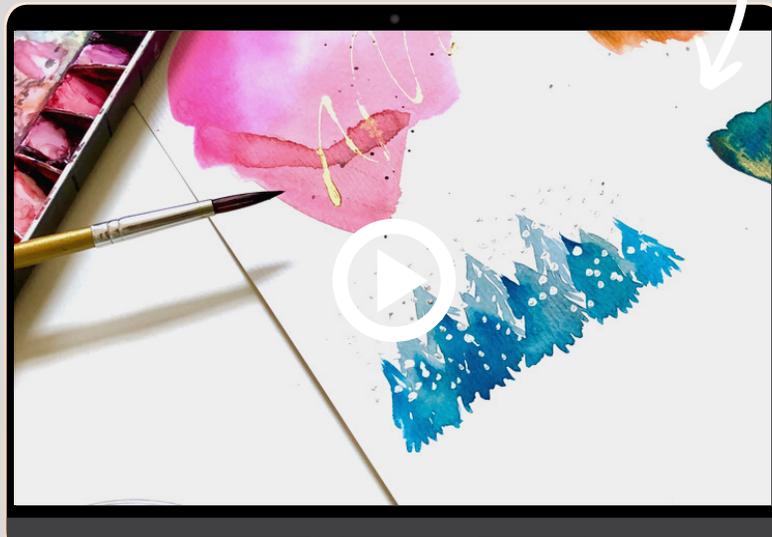
If we could slice your painting laterally, peeling back each thin layer like we can with a facial tissue, we'd find some are painted more heavily than others. These cotton tiers are pressed together so our eye interprets light bouncing off several levels of color.

We can take this same concept and double it. We can layer our own color upon what's already taking place. We can overlap shapes just a little to mimic the effect of rain drops or crystals.



T

Video Learning



Paint a translucent forest

Class: Watercolor Story
Segment: 7 Value Studies
Length: 3 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



UNDERSTANDING STYLE

It's a buzz word, but for good reason. Style is what pulls all of our influences together while setting us apart from others. It's your aesthetic flavor, visible and instantly recognizable.

What is your style?

This is like asking, "what kind of music do you like?" Annoying question, right? I mean, sure, everybody has different preferences, but can you pinpoint it by listing off genres? Not really. And yet, we'll need to be able to articulate it somehow. Your style is a convergence of many things, and we'll explore those on the next page.

An equally important question

How can we be influenced by other's work, enjoy and learn from what they're offering the world, while not copying? I don't think any of us want to be known as "that artist whose work looks like so-and-so's." No thank you.

The key word here is: study. Ask yourself: what am I reacting to? What do I like? What are they doing well?

These flowers look much like William Morris. And it's no surprise as I was studying his work. Do you know what I noticed? Curved, beehive-like botanical forms. So I ran with it!





Ask yourself...



What subjects do you tend to do?

When you've got 30 minutes to wait at the doctor's office and you have a sketchbook in your bag, what will you doodle?

List three words you'd like to be associated with your work:

List three words you'd hate to be associated with your work:

Whose work makes you jump to create?

What supplies do you use?

I've learned that part of my style is the supplies I use. And of course, a natural factor as they are the vehicles of my work.

I loved and used these paints well before I was rewarded for sharing their brilliance.

If you do happen to purchase the same paints, be sure to use the coupon code as they very rarely have sales.

drphm.co code: *AMARILYS20*





Video Learning



Let's talk about style

Class: Watercolor Playgrounds
Segment: 3 Exploring Style
Length: 3 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

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*How to be inspired to create, *not to copy*

Class: Chasing Mary
Segment: 4 Be Inspired
Length: 3 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above using your device's camera



VALUE REPLACEMENT

*You can make anything any color by replacing with their proper value equivalents. *Before you dig in, be sure to see the letter "I" for an introduction to value.*



This is going to sound wonderful to those who don't care much for neutrals... like me.

I love the simplicity, elegance, and flexibility of being able to replace values with the colors that are needed to make a piece shine. The suggested video will show you exactly how to do this.





The Ultimate Challenge Colorfic Faces

I hope you become fearless in your approach to color. I've painted blue reindeer, green squirrels, bubblegum clouds and black flowers...

But the "holy grail" for me was applying these colorific principles to faces. I've learned a thing or two about pushing the limits on value replacements. Here are a few hard-earned lessons for faces:



Generally, cool colors are best for eyes, while warm colors are best for lips.

Fall back on de-saturated colors. A grey-blue (Prussian Blue) or a brown-violet (Mahogany). They're a great way to tone down a piece gone too color wild!

FIGURING OUT FACES?
See the [class](#) or the [book](#)



V

Video Learning



*A trick to substituting any value
with color... using your phone!*

Class: Watercolor Playgrounds
Segment: Segments 6
Length: 7 minutes



On a Device, click on the
video preview image at left

On Print, scan QR code above
using your device's camera

A watercolor illustration of a bouquet of flowers in shades of purple, pink, and blue, with green foliage. In the foreground, a white artist's palette and a paintbrush with a blue handle are visible. A large, light brown oval shape is overlaid on the top center of the image, containing the text 'WZ' in a large, white, serif font, and 'sixth section' in a smaller, black, cursive font below it.

WZ
sixth
section

ADVANCED FUN

Let your watercolor prowess soar
with these techniques for the
brave, experienced or wild!



WET ON WET

The tension between letting go and watercolor wisdom meet here. The wet on wet watercolor method means that we are dropping color into puddles of water. It requires an understanding of water ratios and a great amount of trust.

FOUNDATIONAL MIND-SHIFTS
TO SUCCEED AT IT

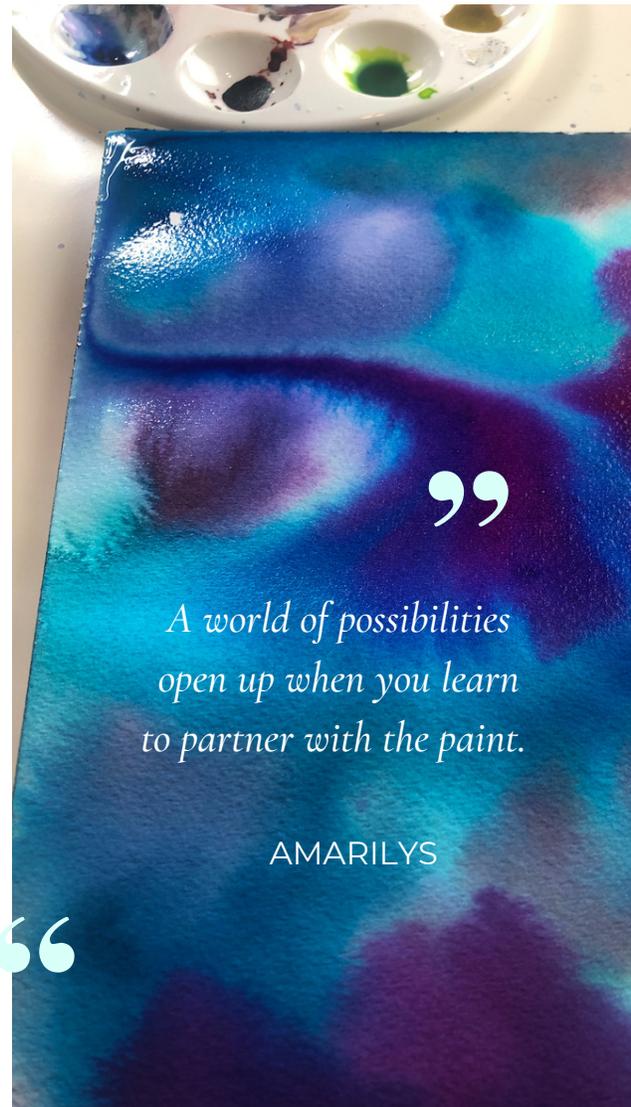
I do not decide the finished product.

I will discover it.

The paint and I take turns working away. I lay down my ideas, and let it dry and

work its magic.

...because painting is much more like interpretive dance than the two-step.



”

A world of possibilities open up when you learn to partner with the paint.

AMARILYS

“



Let's break in easy.

Taking a page from my own playbook--my class *Start With a Shape*, let's approach wet on wet the fun way!

- Paint a few pink and peach blobs. (This is the wet on wet part.) Ideally, paint your circle with water and then dip in paint, 1-2 colors.
- Here's the trick: let it dry. Don't massage it. Don't blend it. Let the paint swirl, mix or not. Just wait and see!
- Once dry, use a small brush to place outlines on the blobs to give them form. My go-to are florals, but you can consider other subjects. These could just as easily be fruits or fancy candies.
- Keep developing your forms as needed but be careful not to cover those beautiful bleeds that you worked over initially!





Video Learning



Paint a watery drink

Class: Watercolor Cocktails
Segment: 6 Paint an Old Fashioned
Length: 11 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

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Practice a few roses in the "dropped" method

Class: Modern Watercolor Florals
Segment: Dropped Practice
Length: 4 minutes



On a Device, click on the video preview image at left

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Advanced Fun

X-TRA SPECIAL BRUSHES

Find the sight of them baffling or boring, but brushes are powerful as you read under "B". Now that you've come this far, I want to encourage you to push farther than before to explore and exploit these tools for all that they offer.



FAN - can create a set of stripes as you see on the bottom of my sketchbook. Its curve will encourage you to move your wrist clockwise

FILBERT - named after a nut, the end of the brush is a round shape, much like a make-up brush but less full

MOP - a lot like the filbert in shape, but used to move a lot of water on the page

DETAILER - small and very pointy to use in tight, specific areas

X

Brush Play

A square brush actually works well for curves.

Here's how.

At left, see how the ballerina's tutu is textured with the stippling of a flat brush. On right, round balloons and clouds flow easily from the same brush. But how? It's all about the angle.

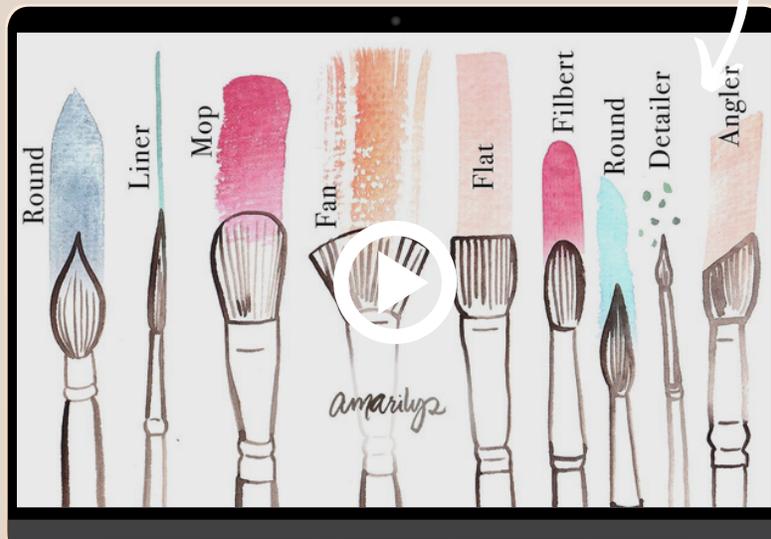
**Balloon tutorial with a 1" flat brush
+ a size 4 small round brush**

- Load & Twirl your loaded brush. Hold it perpendicular (upright) to the page in order to get a nice, round circle. Let your circles overlap to create a translucent bunch of balloons.
- Use a small brush to make tiny triangles at the bottom tip of each balloon with their corresponding colors. It's okay if these are darker than the circles; after all, they're not inflated, right?
- Pick up your flat brush again but dab its wetness off with a paper towel, leaving you with a brush that's damp with paint. Create half-circles that intertwine with each other. A nice cluster of these will form a cloud.
- Draw lines as string that ties these balloons together. You may use your small brush, pencil or marker. Tip: place a dot towards the bottom of the page where the balloon strings will gather.





Video Learning



*Explore your own brushes and
create a set of reference cards*

Class: Confident Watercolors: Brushes
Segment: 4 Variety of Brushes
Length: 5 minutes



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Y

YOUR COLLECTION *continued*

Video Learning



Paint 2 flowers from the full 25-lesson course

Skillshare Class:
Watercolor Holiday Florals
includes
Amaryllis & Poinsettia



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The A-Z Watercolor
Floral Pathway

*Create a daily practice,
one flower at a time.*



25 Flowers in 25-minute videos
One month to your floral collection.

All you need is 25 minutes a day to create your floral collection!
Lessons are taught in real time. Easy to follow along, easy to feel
like we're studio mates.

Watercolor Devo Courses available on web & in the app store



ZOOM WITH ME!

Wahoooooo! Did you do all the letters? Okay, did you do most of them? I want to hear from you! I really, really do.



first

Start the conversation here.

This form asks a few simple questions about your journey through this guide and through my classes. I'd love to hear you share a bit about your experience.

You'll tell me how to get in touch with you so that...



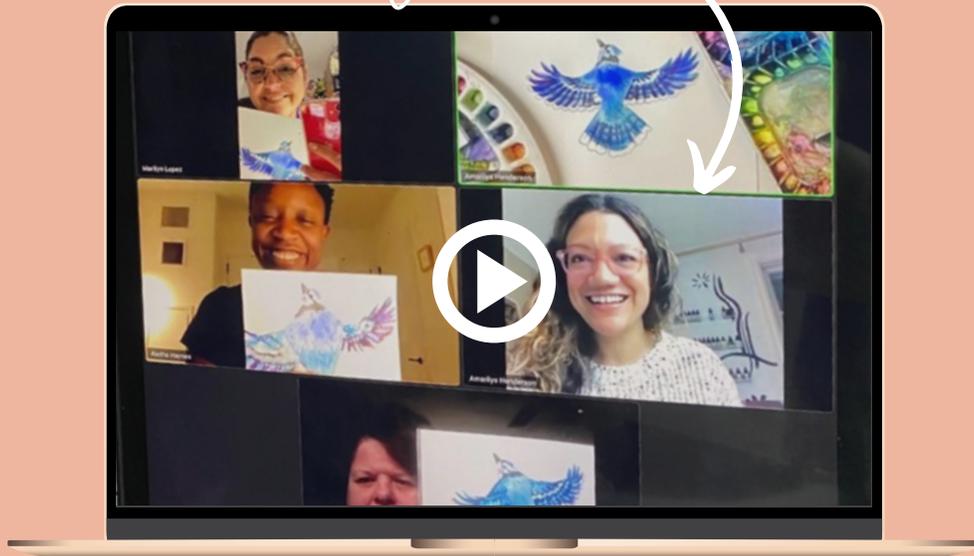
then

We can keep the conversation going.

I'll reach out via e-mail and as time permits, we can have a quick call via Zoom or Marco Polo! I'd love to get the chance to hear about how our creative worlds have intersected.



Paint-Alongs + Real Talk

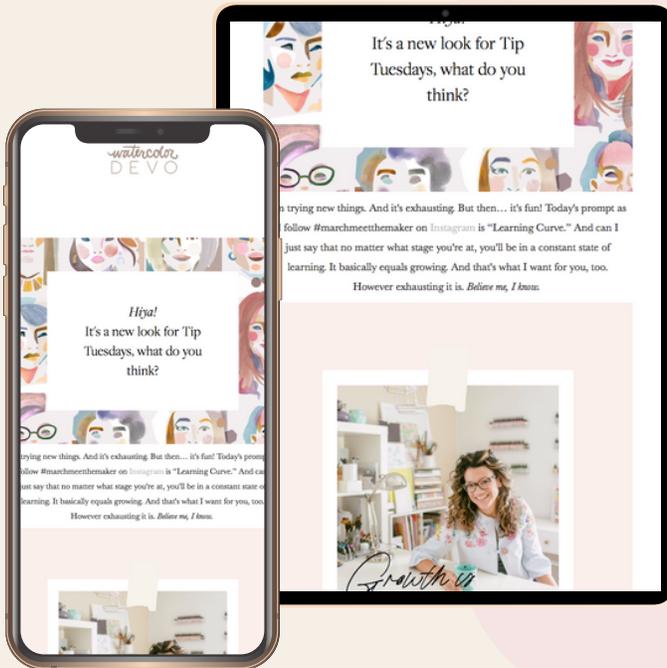


YOU MAY BE INVITED
to join the Watercolor Devo Inner Circle.

Start sharing with me [here](https://watercolordevo.com/guide).
watercolordevo.com/guide

Stay motivated with

tip tuesdays



TIPS & PROMPTS *Delivered Weekly*

Tip Tuesdays are delivered to your inbox--you guessed it--every Tuesday! They're your direct line to me.

New classes, books, sales, collaborations, lessons, and of course a weekly tip are all included here!

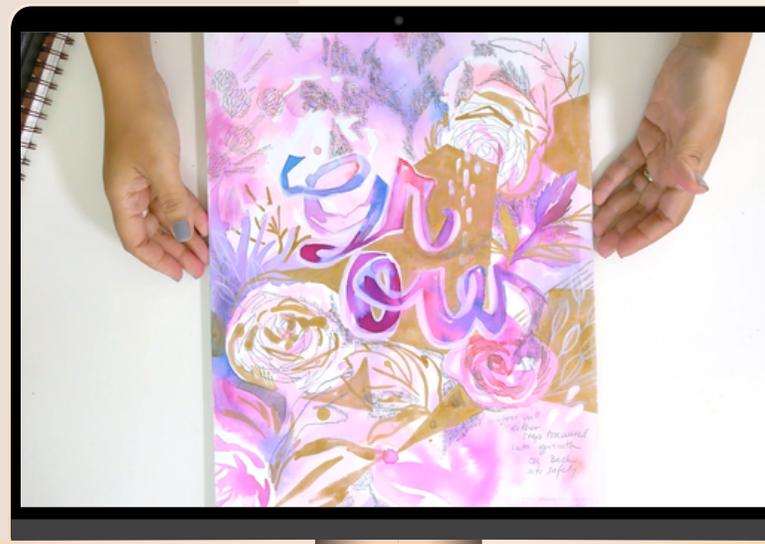
MORE TO COME *to Build Your Body of Work*

Feel like you haven't reached the tippy top of your potential?

You're right.

Growing never ends.

Stay motivated. Stay connected.
Your commitment, inspiration, and skill will naturally grow.



”

A FEW WORDS OF PRAISE

from 7,500 reviews



I started teaching myself watercolor years ago but I grew in leaps and bounds with just this one lesson. I can't even imagine how much I'm going to learn with her others. What an amazing teacher! Most of the challenges, I did twice. Love her!

ANGIE MUIR

Amarilys is a wonderful teacher! I bought two of her books and her style is so trendy but clear. She has a great speaking voice and her classes are so easy to follow. I am terrified, but this video gives me the confidence to just start and see what happens. Thank you!

JILL HUMPHREYS

Amarilys has a great engaging teaching style. I like the way she keeps everything loose and encouraging.

JANET O'CONNOR

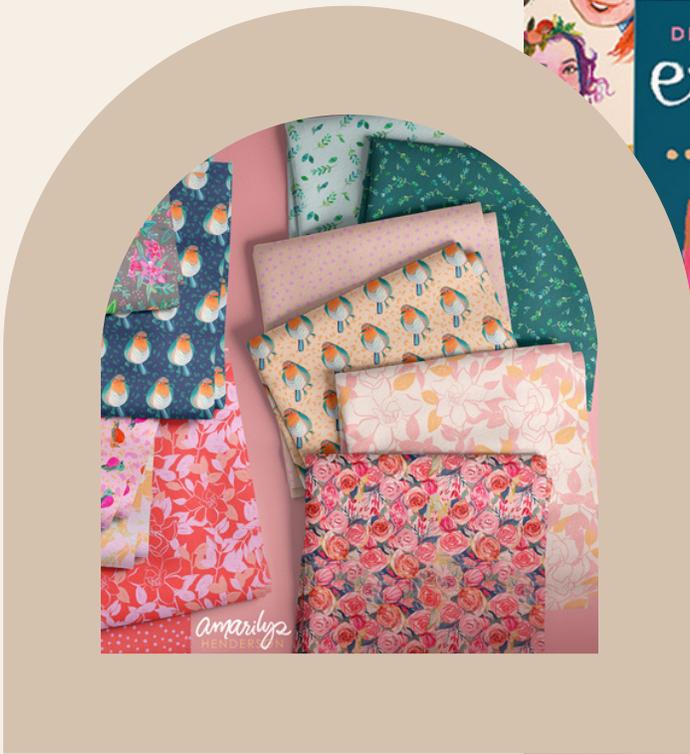
You are such a knowledgeable instructor, and that makes you very convincing and confident about how the paint will behave. You also work in those design techniques as you are doing the work. Superb.

JUDITH DAVIS

I just took my first class from you, and I absolutely LOVE how you teach and more importantly EXPLAIN finding your style in a fresh way! I will post some projects for sure after I devour some more of your content!

RENEE EGAN





A LOOK *around the web*

Fabrics

[Spoonflower](#) | [Paintbrush Studio](#)

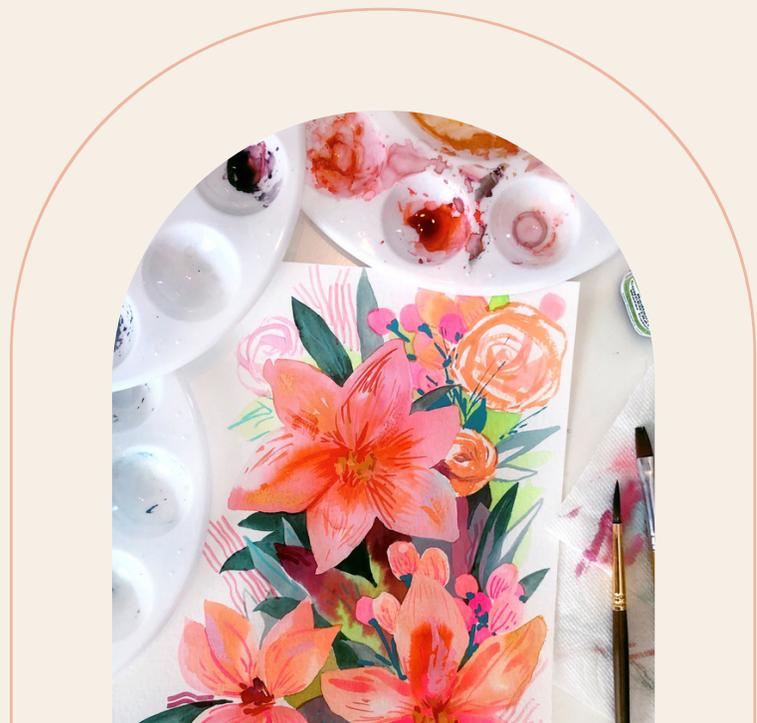
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*Grow and find
bits of joy in those
paints.*

AMARILYS HENDERSON

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