
Make Art Where You Are: A Daily Practice with Courtney Cerruti

Chapter 1 - Make Art Where You Are: A Daily Practice

Overview

(gentle music) - Hi, I'm Courtney. I'm an artist and, an educator, and an author. And when I talk to people about being creative and how to set up a creative daily practice for themselves, one of the biggest barriers I hear is about time and a perfect amount of space and this concept of preciousness. And I'm here to tell you that anyone can make art and you can do it in as little as five minutes a day. And that's really the founding principle of my newest book, "Make Art Where You Are." This month we're going to talk about really easy techniques to fold into your daily life, to get you being creative, to get you drawing, and to get you observing your world in a new way. We'll be using techniques that I use in my daily life and anyone can start this practice. It doesn't matter your level or skill. We'll build on techniques and combine mediums, we'll be using things like brush markers, watercolor, a regular number two pencil, and colored pencils as well. We'll be working with photos, objects from our everyday life, and even go outside to see how the natural world and an urban space can inspire us. I'm not a great drawer, but I do love to put pencil to paper, so we'll start with things like blind contours, and then I'll show you some of my favorite ways to enhance those and make them finished drawings. In the 18 plus years that I've been teaching I feel like what people really need is permission to start and I'm giving you permission.

Day 1 - What's In My Tool Kit

- You can follow along with whatever materials you have on hand and whatever is your favorite. I will be working in my book, "Make Art Where You Are", that comes with a sketchbook and a guide book. And I'll be using some of my favorite materials, which are watercolors, colored pencils, and brush marker pens. What I have in front of me is a copy of my book, "Make Art Where You Are", and it has a sketchbook in it. So it's a horizontal sketchbook. The paper is sort of like a heavyweight card stock, it's a mixed media paper. I'm not working on a watercolor paper. Again, this is not about preciousness. So you're going to use whatever you have. If you don't have this book, that's totally fine. Use whatever sketchbook you have on hand. There's also a guidebook, covering some of the techniques we'll do in this daily practice. It's a nice little reminder for when you're on the go, but again, it's not necessary. I have my watercolor travel palette and what you definitely want to have in your watercolor palette as a warm and a cool of each of the primaries. So that's yellow, red, and blue. And if you look in the book, I've got this laid out here as well. Now there is a misprint in the book, so the warm and cool yellows are actually mixed up. And I'll talk about those. You can also have like a little clip or clothes pin to keep this open when you're working. So you'll see that it slides in here, but you can also clamp this until you really break this in. So we've got lemon yellow, which is cool and cadmium yellow, which is warm. And that's actually the part that's misprinted in the book. And then for a cool red, you could do something like a cadmium red and then a vermilion for the warm red. For blues, you can do something like ultramarine for a warm blue and Phthalo for a cool blue. And when I say warm and cool, that means they're leaning toward the warm colors. Like for blue, for example, anything that's a warm blue would be more purplely toned and anything that's a cool blue is gonna be more green tone, especially when you mix it with other colors. Now for myself, I never use black watercolor. And in this palette, I've replaced the black that it came with with opera rose, which is neon pink, the closest to neon pink you can get in a watercolor. So I just bought an

extra little pan here and squirted that into my palette. I also have greens, a couple of neutral colors, like yellow ochre and a burnt sienna. I've got indigo that I've also replaced in here and then a sepia, which is the darkest brown. So when I'm mixing my darkest colors, then I can mix my own using my darkest brown and my darkest blue, which is the indigo. And that's what these tubes are here. I also have a little bit of masking tape or Washi tape in case I wanna tape anything into my sketchbook. I like to travel with a small container for water. I really like this enamel bowl because I know it's not gonna break, but you can also do something like a glass or plastic yogurt jar. I've got paper towels, or you can use a tea towel, clothes pin or clamps, like I mentioned. I put everything in a bag like this. This one happens to be a baggu bag, which is something that you can wash and throw all of your toolkit into is really handy. My favorite pencil is actually just a Paper Mate pencil. I don't have to sharpen it, but if I'm working with colored pencils, then I do need a pencil sharpener. I don't erase often, but if you do wanna erase, I really like the Sumo eraser. I've got colored pencils, I'm working with a 36 set of Prismacolor, but you can use Crayola or whatever you have on hand. And then I really like working with brush marker pens. These are the Koi coloring brush pens, they're water soluble, so you can use them with water, like you would water color. And they have a felt brush pen tip, and we'll test those in just a minute. I've got a lot of colors in those, but you can also just work with a smaller amount because you can layer them. And for my watercolor brushes, I'm working with Escoda travel brushes. I like these because they feed into themselves and make it so that you can keep the point nice and sharp when you're traveling. These are a little bit fancy 'cause I paint all the time and so it's a good investment for me. I'm working with a two, a six and a size 10, and this is a round brush, which means that it gets a nice point at the tip, but you don't have to have something this fancy. You can have whatever kind of watercolor brushes you have lying around. Remember the best thing to do is just work with what you have. It doesn't matter what your materials are. It's really about getting in there, having fun, observing the world around you and just putting some color and drawing on the paper. The first thing we're gonna do and something I recommend doing, especially if you're starting with a brand new watercolor kit is just swatching out your watercolor so you know what you have. We'll do this in the beginning of our book. And until you've really started working in your sketchbook, you might wanna use your clamps just to hold things down. We'll rearrange this so it's comfortable. I'm right-handed so I usually put things on the right-hand side. And if you can start with the biggest brush that you have, this is a size 10 round brush. And actually something that you don't really learn right away is that the size of the brush is really independent of the number that's on it. It's all kind of proprietary to whoever the maker is. So a size 10 in one brand of brush is gonna be different than a size 10 in another brand. Always start by dipping your brush in the water. You can spray your palette too, or drop some water in here if you wanna get things nice and juicy. We're just going to go for it. Now you can tell that this is a well-loved palette so these might not be the cleanest, but again, we're not worried about it. There's a lemon yellow. So that's our cool yellow. This should be a cad yellow, this is warmer. This one's not super warm. It might be hard to tell on the camera. It's slightly warmer. Sometimes cad yellows can be even more like mac and cheese orangy color. Here's our warm red, this is a vermilion. Here's our cooler red. You can see that that's pinker in color. I don't have these perfectly aligned in my palette. I think my ultramarine blue is next. So that is a warmer blue. When I'm excited, it's going to be like more purple leaning. And if I skip over here, this is my Phthalo blue. This is greener. You can see it's a more teal or aqua-y kind of blue. So those are my primaries, a warm and cool of each. And then these are the colors that I've supplemented with, which is the hot pink. This is my opera rose. Let's do some of these greens. I actually don't use green paint very much because you can so easily mix

green. That's probably like a Phthalo green. I'm not even sure. This is probably a sap green. Sap greens a really interesting color because there's no standard for it. So sap green is made of totally different colors and pigments in every single brand. This is an ochre, yellow ochre. This is gonna be my burnt sienna. I do use these. I paint a lot of people's faces so I love this burnt sienna color. And then here's my sepia. This is my darkest brown. And when I'm making black or my darkest color, so my version of black, I normally use my sepia and my Phthalo blue or my indigo. I actually don't have any indigo in this palette, but I have a tube of it if I wanna use it. Now you can go ahead and swatch out all of your colored pencils and all of your markers too. And that will be a reference for you in your sketchbook if you ever wanna go back. But I actually, I love swatching 'cause it's really, really fun and you can do that as an exercise, but I don't actually refer back to my colors. I just kind of go with my intuition when I'm working on a piece. And I'll talk about that as we go throughout the month.

Day 2 - Playing With Your Materials

- We're gonna take today to just play with our different materials and see how they interact. I've used brush markers quite a lot, but I don't really use them with water that often, so I wanna show you how that looks. And you'll see that I've arranged both my colored pencils and my brush marker in jars and containers by color. That's how I like to work. So you can get a thick and thin line just by pressing down, just like you would with a watercolor brush. And then you can come in with a brush and play with this. Blend it a little. Now because I'm working in this mixed media sketchbook I can definitely use watercolor with it, but I can't get things super saturated and wet, 'cause it's not a water color paper. You can go back in, and draw right into that water, and get a kind of feathered look. You can also use water color with this. Dipping into an ochre. So I'm just making like random little squiggle marks just to see how things react. If I just lay down a circle of just wet water, there's nothing in it just yet, I can also play with dropping water color into this, or using my brush pen to see what happens. And you can see how, where it's hitting the water, it kind of feathers out, and then when it's just on the dry paper, you get like a much crisper line. Let's lay down some watercolor so that it dries. I might blot it a little and then we can do some colored pencil over it, so you can see it. I'm just mixing some opera pink and my cad yellow. It's giving me like a very neony orange kind of color. Take some of our brush markers. And you'll see that different pigments from both the water color and the colored pencil and the brush marker will all interact differently. So they might have different weights or densities, and they might push other colors away, especially in the water. Now I said I was working with a 36 set of Prisma colors, but I also have five additional colors here and they're just a neon set of colored pencils because I love my neon. That's a neon pink. I'm scribbling. You can see where the colored pencil interacts with the still wet circle of water color you don't get as intense a mark. The other thing I really like about these brush pens is that you can get these kind of like tear drop shapes just by pressing down with the pen and then lifting. This a nice way to add some texture. Ooh, I love that. Here, the brush pen is overlapping with the pink colored pencil and creating this kind of purple tone. And I'm not checking these colors, I'm just pulling them at random and just playing. So this is all just about experimenting with what you have in front of you. And seeing what happens when the colors overlap. So here, I've got this kind of aqua brush pen overlapping with the ochre watercolor, and I'm getting this sort of sap green color actually, that's very similar to this olive green marker pen I laid down. I can show you what my sap green paint looks like. That's very thick. And here, just watered down a little bit. You can see this orange color really kind of burst into this wet circle. And what's interesting is where the water crossed over

this line of marker pen, I don't know if you ever did that experiment when you were a kid where you colored on a piece of paper and put the piece of paper in water and you can see all of the colors kind of spectrum out from that blue marker pen, for example. So we've got this really blue edge on this pool of color here, and that's because there's blue ink in that green marker pen. So just kind of interesting thing. It's fun to do with kids. Spend today just playing with all of the different things that you have gathered in front of you. It might be watercolor, it might be Mr. Sketch marker pens, that's fine, colored pencil, and just look and see how they interact, because this will be your toolkit when you're out in the world or you're drawing something at your kitchen table, to know what mediums that you can use to make your image.

Day 3 - Painting With Two Colors

- When you start working with materials like watercolor, you immediately, at least for myself, want to get all of the colors and all of the sets possible, but you can actually do a lot with just a very limited color palette. So I wanna spend today just mixing two different colors in our water color palette, and you can pick any two colors. What is most striking about this is if you use combinations of colors that are across from each other on the color wheel. So those are complimentary colors like red and green, blue and orange and yellow and purple. I'm gonna use vermilion, which is my lighter red. It's more warm leaning. And then I'm gonna use my sap green, which is a pretty true green. It's a little bit more warm leaning also, but they're complimentary colors. Now, if you mix them really heavily, you're just gonna get brown. That's what happens when you mix complimentary colors, is you wind up with a neutral, but we're gonna kind of experiment with all of the shades and let's just get the two colors on their own to start. And you can do grids of this. You can really fill up pages just by mixing these two colors. We're just gonna do kind of like a little mini test. And I think I wanna clear out a place in my pallet here. I'll just put some water down and then use my paper towel to kinda wipe up a spot. I rarely clean my palette. So here's a bit of our vermilion. You can also be using a cad red light, and here's a bit of sap green. You can also use like an oxide of chromium. I love that color. It's like a sagey deep green. All right, so a little bit of my red and just a little bit of my green together. This has a pretty good amount of water in it, also. I can do this more saturated and we'll start pulling in a little bit of our green. And we're gonna wind up with some rust tones, some browns. Get a little more green in here so you can see what it looks like really, really saturated. Get a really pretty brown color. That's almost like my sepia. But what's cool is there's just like almost an iridescence. Now, it's not metallic, but I don't know. It's just like such a satisfying thing to do. If you work with like a blue and a red, you'll get some plummy tones. So I've quite a bit of green in here. You can see this is pretty brown. I'm going to start adding more vermilion. Here's that rusty color. This is sort of similar. And now from here, we can just dip into the water, blot, and see what happens when we make this lighter. Dip into the water blot and you can see we're gonna start to get some sort of blush tones. I don't have any structure for doing this. We're just experimenting and you can go real, real pale. So those were pretty blushy red kinda rusty colors. Let's go back and add more green. You can be more scientific about this and really work with your proportions, but again, I'm just playing with it. Alright, so this is gonna be closer to these mixes. Now I'll blot after dipping into my water, Let's add a lot of green. Get this like beautiful piney color, blot. Sometimes I'm just sort of like wiping it off on the edge of my bowl. And then sometimes I'm actually just putting it onto the paper towel. All right. You can just play with this. You can do this all day long. This is something you can try with any two colors in your color palette, and this really works best with watercolor. It doesn't work as much with your colored pencils or your brush pen markers, because

you don't have the same control of adding the water to it. See, do I want to play with anything else? Let's go really heavy on the vermilion or cad red light here. So you can add just a tiny bit of that complimentary tone. If you wanna just kind of desaturate the color, take away some of its vibrancy, make it more neutrally, And you may wanna label this. Something we haven't talked about in our sketchbook. As you're experimenting, you may wanna label either the place that you are or the object you're drawing. We haven't done any of that yet. We're really just playing with our materials. So for this, I just wanna write that I'm playing with a sap green plus a, this is cad red light or vermilion. Mine's vermilion that happens to be in my set. In the book, I did something similar and this one I used a phthalo, which was a cool blue, and then a scarlet pyrrole which is pretty similar to a vermilion. It's also like a light tone. And of course this is printed, this isn't actual watercolor, but you can kinda see that we got some of those plummy tones here. Again, I encourage you to do this with all of the colors in your palette, just taking two at a time and really swatching out all the colors that you can create with just those two pigments.

Day 4 - Consider Contrast

- I think it's great to be able to sketch outside if you're waiting for a friend, sitting in a cafe, or walking in a park. But sometimes you can only sketch when you're at home, and for that, you'll need a photo if you're not sketching your environment around you. And this is a rainy day photo. It'll be in your PDF, but again, use your own photos. Use examples from your own life. And this image is of scattered sort of autumn leaves on a wet, slick sidewalk, and I picked this photo because I wanna talk a little bit about contrast. We respond really well to things that have a lot of contrast. So if you think of black and white, that's the maximum amount of contrast, the darkest dark and the lightest light, black and white. And then you have all the ranges below that, especially when you're working with color. Things that are soft and muted totally have their place, but if you want a dynamic and captivating image, you wanna pump up the contrast. So you're looking for your really light lights and your really dark darks. We're gonna start with this image, and I never follow anything exactly. This is just an inspiration source. So I'm using my colored pencils to create just like a very simple leaf shape. I'm gonna scatter these around. Again, I'm not looking exactly at the image. I'm just using it sort of as a general reference. And you might notice that I'm always working on the right-hand side, and that's 'cause I'm right-handed. Often with this landscape format, I will do the whole book and then turn it around, and then the other pages are upside down. You can just do whatever feels comfortable for you. I think a lot of it is because when I work with watercolor, the pages are wet and I don't wanna smear anything if I'm working on the left-hand side as well. And you could, of course, layer some of these colors. I'm just using one color per leaf, but you could go in and add some color variation, some little spots. Okay. Certain colored pencils are very waxy, and they will act as a resist if you're working with watercolor on top. We'll see how these fare. I'm not really worried about cleaning my palette too much because I'm gonna mix up a gray. So I've got a little bit of my phthalo blue, which is my cool-leaning blue, and a little bit of my sepia until I have a gray that I like. And we'll just wash over this. And that's pretty. It kind of gives you the effect of fall leaves on a wet sidewalk. But if I go in and add some really deep, dark colors, this is where we're gonna start to get more visual pop, and this is the contrast I'm talking about. So sometimes when you're working and you've got things nice and tidy and you've spent a long time drawing your elements or painting your elements, you can be afraid to kind of push toward that edge of adding something that's really dark or really light. But it's that contrast that creates energy inside of your work. So here I'm adding really dark darks, and you can see that it's taking a while for the paint to kinda repel from the

colored pencil. So I can actually come in with my paper towel and kinda lift some of that. And then I'll just come in and be a little bit more careful around these elements. I like to use my paper towel for blotting things out. So just continuing to mix up the phthalo blue and the sepia for these really dark tones. I'm not doing the same mix every time, the same proportions. I'm just kind of mixing those two colors together to get the darkest color I can get. And watercolors tend to dry a little bit lighter than what you see when you put them down wet, and so you may wanna come in after this has dried and add even more contrast, and you can do that. So using the tip of my brush, I'm still working with that big brush, the number 10, but I can use the tip to get into these detail spots. Now, I could continue painting and then create really dark dark everywhere, but then I'll lose the light light part, right? And it's the darkest dark and the lightest light that creates that energy in the contrast. So I actually think this is done, and this gives me the feeling of that wet sidewalk sort of full of these scattered autumn leaves. And if you wanna remember the place, you can write the place and the time in your sketchbook. And this picture was taken in the autumn at Arrowmont, which is a school that I was teaching at. So this is a nice way to capture a memory. I'm not replicating the photo exactly. This is the cool thing about a sketchbook, is it allows you to sort of translate the experience into an image and a sketch, and you don't have to be precious about it. It doesn't have to be perfect. A sketch in your sketchbook is better than no sketch at all. So whatever you get down on paper is the best thing that you can do. I wanna show you just an example of the contrast in the book. And you'll see here I've swatched out really light, pale blush tones, and then I have some really deep, dark greens as well. And those are the things, that combination of the really darks on the really lights and not muddying up my image too much and creating just a neutral or mid tone is really important for these really vibrant images.

Day 5 - Layouts

- Your sketchbook is a place for you to experiment and one of the things I like to play with when I'm working in a sketchbook are different layouts. You can rotate your book and work on it vertically, like this. You can create smaller sections within your pages, and that's something that we're going to do, and we're going to play with different kind of perspectives. Now we're working from photos. You can work from photos yourself, but you can also do this when you're out in the field, looking at something, it's kind of shifting your perspective and changing the way you record it in your sketchbook. The first thing I'm going to do is just draw two boxes, very loosely with my Paper Mate pencil that I love so much. I have boxes of these at home. And I'm leaving a little bit of space in case I want to make some color notes. And you can see with my image here on the right that this is just sort of your average sunset picture, blue sky, pretty rosy clouds, there's a little bit of a moon here. This is cropped already with a really dramatic sort of composition where all of the action or interest in the photo is happening in the very bottom fifth of the image and then the top is all blue sky. Now, if you didn't take the photo this way, I challenge you to look at your environment or look at photos that you have that are kind of traditionally laid out with sort of maybe three bands of equal foreground, middle ground, and background. And just by cropping your image in the way that you record it in your book you can create really interesting compositions. So for this first one I'm going to do marker pen. And you can also swatch your colors, I often swatch my colors here on the side, just to make sure sometimes the caps are not exactly true to the color. Again, this is just inspiration, I am not following this exactly. Here are my clouds. Let's see, what color is this? Oh, too pink maybe. I could do sort of an ochrey color. That feels a little dark. So maybe I'll go back in and blend that out a little bit with one of my peach markers. I'm gonna switch over to my blues and kind of layer these

in a little. I don't want to overmix and make it too muddy. Now I'm just going to go from the top all the way down. Maybe there's some blue in here. And going back over you can build sort of translucent or transparent layers just by coloring on top again. And your brush strokes with your marker will show up. So you don't want to do too many vertical strokes if you're wanting just like a really flat sort of wash. So I'll just keep these horizontal. And that's great, that's it. So the sunset cloud study. It does not have to be any more detailed or labored over than that. And I like my little color swatches here on the side. Now for the geranium, there isn't any sort of composition happening as far as like a foreground, middle ground, and background. It's just a closeup of a plant. But in this case what I can do is use this box and then kind of spill out of it, which is a look that I really like. So we'll start with our marker pens. Again, just as sort of inspiration. These leaves are, they're sort of like heart shaped with ruffles. So now I'm going outside of my bounding box. I did the same thing here with the clouds. So I want some to be inside and some to be outside. All right, what color is this? Sort of minty, but that's okay, I like it. And I'm choosing to ignore what's happening up here. I'm just gonna focus here. And these are the choices that we make that sort of help our artistic intuition build as we're going. We choose what to include and what to remove from our environment, from our source imagery. Switching to colored pencil. And I'm only looking at my reference photo every so often. Now I'm just sort of filling in parts. So the centers. I definitely wanna get to these kind of pretty burgundy parts, but I'm saving that for last. I tend to work lightest to darkest. That works for a lot of different media. It's really hard to layer a light color on top of a dark color. So I would always recommend starting that way if you can. The exception to that is if you're working in gouache, acrylic, or oil, but for watercolor marker pens and colored pencil, light to dark is the way to go. All right, now remember we talked about contrast. Now I'm gonna come in and add some dark tones. I really love geraniums. They're something that you, I feel like I see them all the time in people's yards, sort of like not that well cared for. They're kind of wild and sprouting up in random pots and on sidewalks, and I love the way that they smell, the leaves especially. Let's get some dark parts in here. Do some darker green. And I'm using lots of quick little scribbly strokes, and I'm concentrating all of this dark in this left side. And that's a choice you can make also, even if your reference image didn't look like that. So I'm adding little bits of dark and other places, but the mass of the dark is happening here on the left. And I do want to add a few flowers. I love red geraniums. This is, these are kind of like a vermilion red tone. Got three there. Let's add one here and switch up our red. Maybe that one's hiding behind. Now you can fill in this part if you want. Maybe I want to switch to a marker pen. Do I want to go all olivey? That's similar to this color. I want more contrast than that. I kept go that that's too Christmasy toned for me. What about indigo? Yeah, actually I like that. Ooh, but we could also go burgundy. Let's see here. That picks up these tones, they're very similar. Or we could leave it white, but I think I want to go indigo. So I'm actually drawing around my imagery and in some places I'm leaving like a little bit of a white space and that's a preference. Some artists actually only work that way and it's really representative of their style. And some people like to really seamlessly paint in a background. I kind of go back and forth. It just depends on what I want to do. Because I want these little places where my drawing is really peaking out from this bounding box that I drew I'm going to make this top part really clean and tight, which is going to exaggerate or accentuate this bottom part and sort of the rules that I broke by coming out of the box. And I want this really dark, so I'm going back over my image. I like that. Let's come in, clean up some of these white spaces, so it's a little bit denser in places. I'm just going to add some loose line work around my geranium leaves. There we go. And I really like how this page turned out. There's an element that's sort of like a study, because I've got these little color

swatches as I was testing, and then I've got this observational, very loose drawing. And it's two little sort of images on a single page. They're not necessarily representative or they go together, but I think they look really pretty just as a composition. So I'm just going to write red geraniums and sunset clouds. I have some other dynamic layouts included in my book and we'll talk about some of these throughout the month and actually do them together, but I just wanted to give you kind of a sneak peek to get you thinking about how you can use your sketchbook pages. You can take something from life and do an observational sketch. So this is a real leaf that's been taped in and then some paintings of leaves. And we'll do that later this month. Here's one that's a little bit more naturalistic and it's observational of the flora and an environment where I was, this happens to be at Big Sur. Here's a tiny little really delicate sketch in pencil right in the center of the page. Here we're playing with scale where I've got an observational sketch of a flower, but it's bigger than the giant landscape. So on the page, they sit with like equal weight, because they're the same size, but obviously seeing a road and a hillside and a mountain in the distance in real life is much bigger than a flower and it's fun to play with the scale here. This is one where I've got the entire image taking up the full two pages. And here other things like pushing your horizon all the way to the top. We did something where the horizon was all the way at the bottom with our clouds and you can do the opposite by pushing all of the interest up at the top of your page. We've got observational sketches and mark-making. Leaving white space, we'll talk about that later in the month. Playing with color palettes, using borders. There are lots of different things that you can do in your sketchbook to add personality and allow you to explore the way that you make marks on the page.

Day 6 - Using the White of the Page

- For today's drawing, we're going to let the white of the page help define our image. And that can be sort of tricky to think about. You can think about negative space as helping to define your image. You can also sketch this out and leave the white of the page until you get used to drawing like this. I've got a reference image. It's very high-contrast, so I've got some really dark darks and some really light lights. Even though this pampas grass is not the white of the paper, we are going to make it our lightest light. And so we're going to leave that space and draw everything around it. Now, I'm not gonna sketch it out with my pencil. If you are tempted to do this, you totally can. But instead, I'm just gonna start kinda scribbling my grass area. I'm starting with colored pencil. I'm leaving a band here for this pampas grass on the left. And I've drawn this so large, I may not get all the way to the top of this reference image, and that's totally fine too. Start to layer in some darker tones. And you can be doing this same technique, you can use this same technique if you're outside sketching. I just happen to be working from a photo. I mean, this really is scribbling. I'm really scribbling. But that's how I draw, and I like that texture. And I am using the stroke as a way to define the direction of these grasses. I'm gonna draw some of the negative space, the space behind the pampas grass, and here also. Often, I'm too lazy to sharpen my pencils right away, so I'll just switch to another color. Going really dark dark in here. So it looks like, I'm looking at this, and I kind of left this space. That's fine. So this'll be really, really dark in here. I may wanna come in and cover more ground with my marker pen. Wanna remember to leave space for the pampas grass here. So I'm drawing around it. Filling in these spaces. I've been using all vertical strokes. Now I'm gonna switch to some horizontal strokes as I work on this road. Little bit of light there at the end. Gonna get some of my grays out. Let's test that gray. I really like the grays in this Sakura set. About half of them are warm-leaning, and half of them are cool-leaning, so that's something to keep in mind as you're working. This is a very warm gray. I'm gonna use the gray in here to deepen part of my greens. And

let's do a really dark mass. If you look at the top of my image, I've got the silhouette of these trees. So let's just shrink this, make this really dark. I'm dancing my brush across. Doing my trees. Very scribbly. And now I'm gonna fill this in. This needs to be much, much darker, and probably a little bit of green, but we're gonna start with this. In here, we've got more variation in the way that the trees look. Add a little bit of green in here. I don't wanna leave a ton of white anywhere but where the pampas grass is because I'm really trying to focus on the white of the paper there. Oh, that's too Christmas-y. Let's use some of this olive color. I like that. I'll put some of that in here. There's a lot of contrast in the road, and I don't really like that. I wanna neutralize it a little bit, so I'm gonna come in with a light gray and just go across the whole thing and then maybe come in with a medium gray and then come in with a really dark gray. There's my trees. I'm using the brush marker on its side. You can use colored pencil. Any of these exercises, when we're just sketching and combining media, you can work with whatever media is comfortable for you. I like the brush pens because I don't need to have water with me. They're easy to travel with. And they give me a lot of similar marks that I would get with watercolor and a brush. Okay. That looks pretty good. So we still have the white part of the sky. I don't want that to be white because I just want this to be white. So I'm just gonna go in, add a quick coating of blue here. And then to give this a little bit of definition, yes, it's the white of the paper, that is the point of the exercise, but I wanna come in and just add a little bit of fine detail. And the reason I didn't go in and just color it this sort of yellow creamy tone is because then I think you lose that contrast, and you really just kind of have this mass of crazy gestural marks. But leaving that white space kinda gives a place for your eyes to land, and it really activates the rest of the space around it. So we'll go in with a little bit of brown and just create a tiny bit of definition. Can also come in with your colors surrounding to get a little bit more delineated space in here. Actually, maybe I want that solid. Here too. I really shrunk this band of white. It's only a little bit, but that's okay. And maybe come in with just a little bit of ochre in some of these places. There. So we've allowed the white of the paper to kinda really stand out. And we chose an image that has a lot of high contrast. When you're first doing this, having a high-contrast image helps your eye to find, where is that white space that you're gonna leave? In the book, I have two layouts that include that. We've got three women here, and instead of drawing out their T-shirt and creating shadows, I've literally just left the white of the paper, and it's really effective. There's a lot of contrast there. Here, this is Jardin des Plantes in Paris, and I've drawn all of the dark parts of the huge building at the end of this row of garden. And I didn't create any lines for the structure. I just did the shadows in the window and the roof. And you still tell that this is a building, right? So we're just giving a hint of what's there instead of fully sketching it out. Also done a sketch where, again, using mostly marker pen and a little bit of colored pencil, there was a white fire hydrant, and I just did a few little marks for the distressing on the fire hydrant, but I really let the nasturtiums around the fire hydrant kind of delineate the shape and create the overall composition and image. So play with using the white space of your paper to define your image.

Day 7 - Color Palettes

- We're back in our sketchbook, where we did our two color swatches, and I'm going to start working on color palettes. This is a good way to hone your skills about what colors go together or how to customize your own palette as you draw and paint in your own practice. We're not going to use anything as a template. If you are very particular about your circles for making color wheels and color palettes, you can trace like a can or a glass, but I'm just going to draw a circle, using my Paper Mate pencil, and they can be different sizes. You don't have to use circles, you can use other shapes.

I do want to draw some lines within these. And we're basically creating wonky color wheels. You can see that my center points are not always the same. They're not perfectly centered, and I'm intentionally making the sections really different sizes and we'll use all of our mediums for this. So now you just fill it in. And what color do I want to sit next to or near. And challenge yourself to use colors that you may not normally use. You might find some really unexpected, interesting color combinations this way. Going outside of the circle. I like the way neons and neutrals sort of clash or lay next to each other. I think that's super interesting. Watermelon color. Well, this is actually called Rouge Carmin. It's definitely watermelon. There's one. You can also work on a monochrome or not so much monochrome, but analogous. So those are colors that are all on the same side of the color wheel. So warm tones, it could be all your pinks and reds. It could be your red, yellows, oranges. Let's use some of our paint as well. This is a place where you might want to use a smaller tip to brush, but I'm still using the big fat guy, number 10. This is that same Bordeaux color that I used in this color wheel. And just see how it looks when you sit it next to something that's in its family, as opposed to something that's not in its family with the blue and the yellow on either side here. Since we've got so many warm tones, let's do this one more blues and greens. Do a painted section. Do something really dark. So will also allow you to see what paint kind of matches up with which markers, if you are using your markers a lot. You can also just do traditional color wheels. Those are really fun to paint, and you can try them in different mediums with your colored pencils and your paints and markers. So I'm discovering things that I like together and things I don't like together. It's funny that I basically wound up making a color wheel that's very similar to the two color study that we did on this opposite page. But that tells me something about those colors. I am really interested in all of these greens and adding these like rust and ochre and like even neon orange tones into that. And that's not a color palette that I usually use. Remember on the first day I said, I rarely use my greens, which is true. I often mix my own greens, but now I might want to explore how I can just make a ton of different shades and tones of these greens and add in these little bits of rusty tones to go with it.

Day 8 - Embrace Wonkiness

- I really love paper and packaging that's printed with images and words, and it's so evocative of a place. This is a little paper bag that would have been filled with French macaroons, which are my favorite from Paris. And I'm personally not good at lettering at all, but that is not gonna prevent me from capturing it or putting it into my sketchbook. So this is really about embracing the wonkiness. Try and do the thing that you're not good at because the more you do it, the better you will become and you'll become more relaxed about it. You won't think that you've messed up your page or messed up your sketchbook and putting something that isn't perfect in there. And we're not gonna sketch, we're just gonna go for it. So I'm using my colored pencil, I could also use a brush marker for this. And instead of perfectly drawing every little leaf on here, instead what I'm gonna do is just get the feeling of this. It's not a blind contour, which we'll talk about later because I'm looking, but I am not really picking up my pencil too much. You can see that my leaves are overlapping into the oval. And it wasn't until I was drawing this that I really even noticed what this little guy is at the bottom. I think it's an angel holding a cup of coffee and wearing beret, but his head looks like, I don't know, like a lemon that's been sliced open or something. It's really funny. I don't think I'm gonna draw him. He's too funny looking. But I do like the branch that comes down here. I like the asymmetry that it creates. All right, is that a perfect rendition of the Laduree logo? No. Does it have the same feeling? Sort of, and so I'm happy with that. There is a double circle in here. You could draw some of that in.

All right, now's the fun part, which is adding the type. And I, most likely, it will be just like when you're in the first grade and you're trying to write your friend's name on the top of the birthday card, and then you get all the way to the end and you're missing still like three letters at the end of their name. That's probably what's gonna happen. I'm also gonna sharpen my pencil before I start this. I want a nice sharp tip for this lettering. Again, I'm not gonna do it exactly as I see it. I'm just gonna try to get the essence of it. And this is where the wonkiness prevails. And there's something charming in that irregularity. I used to really love doing a lot of lettering when I was in high school, but it's not something I've continued to do too much of. When you get a double letter, you can really start to see how silly and irregular they are because they're right next to each other, but it's pretty good, I filled in the space. Now we'll do our Paris, and I'm really just doing it in my own handwriting. And you can include (speaking in French). That's like when it was established, but I'm not gonna try to copy that lettering. I'm just gonna write it in my own handwriting. And I need to sharpen my pencil again. You can see that there's a lot of space on the left and not a lot of space on the right, but that's totally okay. I'm gonna look at this logo, I know exactly what it is. I can do some color swatching here. This is actually kind of similar in color, which was not my original intention. This is really similar to this bag. Although it may not look the same when I draw it down. I could mix up a little bit of paint to kind of better capture that minty bag. That's much closer. And instead of taping this in, which you of course can do, and I really like the way that packaging looks taped into a sketchbook. It's nice to kind of attempt your version or rendering of an image. And I like getting the color palette as well. This is something that I talk about in the book also, just getting just everyday items. This is a can of sardines, and I don't eat sardines, but I love Kansas sardines 'cause I always have really great imagery on them and good type. You can get this into your sketchbook and it really is evocative of a place or a time or a memory. And it's a fun thing to record.

Day 9 - Blind Contour

- If you've watched any of my classes or know anything about my art practice, you'll know that my favorite way to draw is using blind contour. This is a drawing technique that feels very silly and absurd in the beginning, but I promise you, it is like the most delightful way to draw ever. And what you're doing is you're gonna to make contact with your pencil or pen to the paper. You're going to draw in one continuous line, looking at your subject. In this case, it's a vase of dried flowers, but it could be the person across the table from you. It could be a building across the street. It could be a squirrel in your backyard. It could be anything. And you're not going to look at your paper and you're not going to pick up your pencil. I've rotated my sketchbook. So I'm gonna use the full vertical length, which is really extreme. But if you look at my vase and flowers, you can see that it's also very tall and skinny. And the reason this is called a blind contour is because you're looking at the contours or the outer edges of your subject. And I'm not going to try to draw every single little flower, but I'm going to do my best. And I'm working sort of in and out of the vase. And sometimes I'm getting these stems and sometimes I'm not. And the reason I'm rotating my pencil a little bit is because I can feel that the edge is getting very blunt. So I'm trying to maximize the sharper edges. I'll do this in marker pen brush marker. I don't often do it in watercolor. And the reason is that the water color brushes, you can't really press hard on them. And you can't really tell what mark you're making. So I like something where I can really feel the contact to the paper. My hand is sliding, not lifting. Here's the top of the base. I'm just looking at my subject. Whoop, I forgot that part. There we go. Now I'm looking, I can see there's a big gap here where there should probably be stems and such, but that's totally okay. You could go back in if you wanted now that you've kind of done your

initial pass. And I could go in and just do a little blind contour in this open space and somewhere here in the middle of my flowers. So I can do that. Just fill in a few. Great, maybe add a stem here. Working over the seam or binding is a little tricky. I know I've definitely done this in restaurants and been very leery when I get to the edge. I don't want to draw on the tablecloth, but it's really my most favorite way to draw. I said earlier in this month that I'm not great at drawing, sitting down and perfectly rendering something. I don't have the patience for it. I don't know that I actually have the technical skill for it either, but every time I sit down and make a blind contour, I'm super, super happy with the results. And this is something that the more you do, the more confident your line will be, the way your hand moves, the way that you relate from your brain, and what you're seeing with your vision into the way that your hand is making a mark on the page. And this is also really fun to do with kids, with adults that don't consider themselves creative at all. I forced my parents to do this at the dinner table once, and the results were amazing.

Day 10 - Color Swatching Your Meal

- When you only have a few minutes, but you wanna break out the paints and do something in your sketchbook, I like to color swatch my environment, my meal, maybe my mood. It could be something from a book. Almost anything is ripe for making a color swatch in your sketchbook. I've got a photo of some soup here. This could be an actual meal. And I'm just going to attempt at getting some of these colors. They don't have to be perfect to go in the sketchbook. This is a place for you to practice. I'm mixing something that's sort of brothy. And the edge of the broth is more yellow here on the bowl. Oh, that looks pretty similar, so maybe more yellow. Yeah, that looks right. What color is a noodle? Maybe this pale color. Got our carrots. Add some vermilion, my warm cad yellow. Oh yeah, that's definitely a carrot color. And then there's the shadow. In this photo, especially, you can see the shadow in the carrot. That's a much deeper color. There's a bit of celery in there. That's too green, definitely needs more yellow. Too vibrant, add a little bit of this gray that's already on my palette and a lotta water. Yeah, that's celery color. Maybe even a lighter version. There are mushrooms in there. I think I see part of a mushroom there. It's very dark. Maybe a warm gray tone and a little bit of red to warm this up. Nice mushroomy color. I don't wanna add too many gray tones. It's not very appetizing, but you can definitely see that in the photograph because those are the shadows. But what we haven't mixed, and is a really fun color, is the blue on the plate. So let's mix that color. That's a very cool blue and you can see that this is a much more warm blue. This is my ultramarine color. That's maybe more similar to the shadow. Yeah. Could look at the grays in the spoon, as opposed to the grays in the soup image. Gonna add sepia to the blue I already have in here to get a gray tone. It's a very cool gray. Let's see how that looks. Hmm, maybe add just a tiny bit of red to that to warm it up a little. Lighter, some more water. That is chicken soup. I'm a vegetarian, so it's not actually chicken soup. It's chicken soup with no chicken. On a cold day. Simple as that.

Day 11 - Doodle Borders

- Another thing you can do in your sketchbook when you feel like you want to be creative but you're not really sure what to draw is to just draw borders. And they can be filled in later with images or portraits, or you can draw around something that's already in your sketchbook. This is a little portrait of my dog, Charlie, and I'm just gonna doodle some borders around. I'm gonna start with my marker pen. Mimic stitches. You can use different media for this. This is almost like a mandala because I'm just gonna keep going just to demonstrate different kinds of borders. But you

could just do a single border around an image like that and then move on and create other ones. Actually, let's do that. We'll just make some blank ones, and I'll do more portraits of Charlie in here some other time. So you could do little squiggles. This is a way to doodle with a little bit of intentionality in that you're setting up something to draw in later. Those are very pale. Maybe make them a little bigger. Maybe we're gonna do an eye-shaped one here. And that's a very heavy mark against the colored pencil because it's the pen. So I feel like I want to mimic that texture over here too. Did an oval, a rectangle, an eye shape. Could do a little heart. Gonna change my colors then. Add some pink to this. And I'm not planning this in advance. I'm just putting down one thing and then responding to it and then adding the next thing and so forth just moving forward. I like that better. Maybe also gets some colored pencil in there too. I like how the different mediums, the colored pencil and the marker, have different textures when you draw with them on the page. Maybe I want to leave a space here for Charlie's name, and these will all be pictures of Charlie. That's less like a border and more like a motif, but that works too. And I said I'm not good at lettering, and I'm definitely not, but let's just attempt. You can go back in and refine it. Charlie. Channel my third grade self. I actually don't think I ever put hearts over any of my I's no matter my age, but it feels right in this because Charlie's my little baby. I don't even know what these marks are. They're like little sprinkles, and it just feels like this page is fun and full of those. Could do a border around the whole page. Obviously, I need to put something there. Let's just do a sort of wonky circle. And it was wonky, so let's make it really wonky and wide on the edges on purpose. And maybe I want to just do a little plant to fill in that space because this guy is crooked. Again, just lay down one mark and respond to it, and then lay down the next one. And that looks like a plant to me, so maybe I'll make those more botanical-looking. There, I have a page full of borders that I can fill in later. I've already labeled this page Charlie, so I'll most likely put in little things about Charlie. Maybe just his paw or maybe just little portraits of him.

Day 12 - Vertical Orientation

- Even though your sketchbook is oriented in a landscape format, you don't have to use it that way. Earlier this month, we did the blind contour using this entire vertical spread. And we're gonna try that again just playing with this really long page format to draw in. And I've got a reference photo here, but you can totally do this in your own home, when you're out in the field. You can just turn your sketchbook sideways and start drawing. I'm not gonna do the entire night sky here. I'm just gonna focus on the string lights that I love in different colors. And I'm going use markers for this 'cause they're really quick. We'll start with just some light strings here. Two different colors of gray. It'd be one really low one and then a couple down here. So it's almost like I've zoomed in and I'm just cropping to this part. Oh, that's a very wonky string. It's okay. Don't want it to look too perfect, so maybe that's good. And then we'll add lots of glowy lights. You won't have the full glowing effect because we're not doing the night sky component, but you could go back and draw or paint in around this and add that. You can also use some colored pencils or markers to add like radiating glow, if you wanted. Get a few blue ones in here Now in real life, these would be perfectly laid out. We're just using our photo as an inspiration point, allowing just a random pattern to happen. Gonna add some bright red ones. I want a bright pink in here also. And this is where I can just use the colors that I like. When we did the wonky color wheel pallets, if there were any color combinations you really liked, you can use them here. You don't have to use exactly what's in the photo. That's the beauty of your sketchbook, is it can be anything that you want it to be. I'm gonna go back in with this neon yellow and just add a few little dashes and lines. And that's it, just gonna leave it pretty

minimal. I wanna write string lights at the bottom using a brush marker. Can be as simple as that. I wanna share a couple of layouts in the book. These are also vertical using both pages and things that are already naturally vertical, of course, work really well for this, like a bookshelf. In here, I just used the bookshelf on the top part of the spread, and then on the bottom, I did some notes and some color swatching. And in this one, this is a full spread. This is looking down a road, the photo for this had a lot more information on either side, but I just really zoomed in and did this kind of interesting crop to get that full vertical effect.

Day 13 - Coloring Around Your Subject

- When you sit down to create a drawing or draw an object, you can start with a background first and then lay your image on top and kind of plan for that in your sketching. But I also like to just have something, draw it on the paper and then deal with the background. And so you kind of get this activated background by drawing around your object or painting around your object. So that's what we're gonna do. I'm drawing from life. I have this little ceramic puppy, I'm gonna do a little bit of pencil sketching, and then I'm gonna go over with some darker lines and then we'll paint around the background. And I'm not gonna worry about shading and all of that. This is gonna be kind of a flat illustration style image and to get those curly ears and this gold necklace. It's kind of an exaggerated little puppy chest and his little paws. So paw there and a fluffy tail. It's like a curly Charlie sorta. Alright, very basic. Now let's go back in with, let's do, pink, I know I wanna paint the background 'cause it's the fastest and it's gonna be really fun. So I actually think I wanna do some kind of colored pencil, so I have two different textures. All right, so now, I'm not going over my lines. My lines were just to get roughly the proportions. Curly, can do some of these interior ones. It's my little eyebrows. Do dogs really have those kinds of eyebrows? Maybe not exactly. And this curly little nose. I love these things. You either love or hate the staffordshire dog sculptures. They're very kitschy, but they're so fun. Okay, that's pretty good. I do like that crazy orange around the muzzle, so I'm gonna include that. It's not really gonna make sense in my drawing, but I like it so I still wanna put it in. And then I also want to get some dark color in here. I'm going over my lines, that's fine. I'm gonna come in with something darker. Maybe add some of that color back in the face. It's just a dark blue. Oh yeah, whiskers. This has so much personality. I actually have a gold colored pencil. Normally I wouldn't use something like that, but it's kind of fun and blingy, so let's just do it. All right, so I've got my object. I'm choosing to paint the background in though, because I can cover the most ground the quickest, and this is just like a quick and loose sketch in my sketchbook. I want something really dark, so I'm doing that tried and true the darkest blue, in this case, they low blue and sepia. Indigo would be really good too, but the color I'm mixing is gonna be kind of similar to an indigo. And now, instead of trying to get perfectly around my image, I'm leaving a little bit of white space. And this just creates more energy in the background. If this is not your thing, totally fine. But I really like how it looks. Gonna rotate this. I'm using that number 10, my biggest brush. And I'm mixing more color as I go. It's okay if it's not exactly the same as before, I'm drawing down a little bit of that paint so it doesn't look like a stripe. There you go. You can see there's a lot of brush strokes and movement in the background and the sketch is sort of similar. It's very loose and has a lot of gestural lines. You can try painting around or scribbling or drawing in around your objects, on any spread.

Day 14 - Grounding Your Objects

- Your sketchbook is a good place to practice your drawing skills, and you should draw the things

that are around you. Anything that is in your house, anything that you had for breakfast, whatever's on your kitchen table, like this donut that just appeared. We're gonna draw the donut, and then I'm gonna give you a little trick for showing you how to ground objects on the page of your sketchbook. We're gonna start by just sketching our donut here. I'm looking at the bottom of it. And then gotta find a brown color for the top. You can make it pink if you wanted. I guess it depends on what flavor. Myself, I really like the maple bars. Sometimes my dad would get donuts when I was a kid and he gets up really, really early, it was like, you'd groggily come downstairs into the kitchen and he would have already been up for many hours, but there'd be donuts sitting on the table. That was very special. And he always liked the maple bars, so I think that's why I liked them too. This is a raised donut, so it's kind of like fluffy and tall, and a little bit irregular shaped. All right, that's kind of our sketch for the donut. Now, the donut's very glossy. I don't wanna leave the white of the page in this case. I'm just gonna cover the whole top with a really pale shade of brown and that's gonna be our highlight color. The sprinkles on this are tricky because they're light and they sit on top, and if you were painting it, you would have to apply the paint on top or if we were drawing it, we'd have to painstakingly color around every little sprinkle, which I am not doing. And I can say that I'm not doing that because this is my sketchbook. I just wanna fill in some of this. This is not like a, I don't wanna perfectly render my donut. I just wanna sketch it. So we're gonna do some rough color in here, and then I think I have a darker brown also. Go in here, and just get some of these darker parts. Center is obviously the darkest, and from my angle, it's just all dark chocolate frosting. I don't even see any of the cakey part. So I'm pressing down pretty hard 'cause this is like very, very dark. And I could do some sprinkles, and I might just use the marker pen for that 'cause they're so saturated. These are gonna mostly be obscured though because I am not gonna draw around them. I'm just going to draw over them, but we could do a little bit of sprinkle action, even if it's subdued. All right, now I'm just gonna kinda blend this together by doing a medium tone here. It doesn't have to be perfect. This is my sketchbook. I am attempting to draw a donut. Doesn't matter if I'm good at drawing a donut, that's not the point of a sketchbook. Okay, so I can't get a really super dark, dark, like I'd like with my colored pencil, so I'm gonna go to add a little bit of brown marker just to really darken it up. And I can use the marker right over the colored pencil that I've already laid down, and it kind of blends with it, which is good. And you can come back in with like a really dark blue, get that dark, even darker. And because these brush markers are water-soluble, they will blend together. Can just draw right on top of each other. All right, that's pretty close. When you're drawing any object, a donut, a vase, an orange, your glasses, the television remote control, when you draw it, it's just sort of floating in space, and if you don't wanna draw the table that it's sitting on or the environment around it, that's totally fine. But I do like to add a little bit of a shadow to kind of ground the object to the page, and that's really the point of this whole lesson. It's not about the donut. And so you can do that with like a pale gray, or a pale blue shadow also really works nicely. And I'm not looking at the way the shadows are cast on this donut, especially because we have studio lights so I'm getting like four different shadows. But you can just add a little bit of a swash under there, and that just kind of helps ground your object to the page. And usually shadows when they end, they're sort of circular, so you can do that too if you wanted. And I've been sitting in front of this donut this whole time, and now that I've drawn it, I think I can have a bite.

Day 15 - Off Register

- Sometimes the pleasure of drawing something is not actually in making it look perfect. It's more about the action of drawing and that's how I prefer to draw. And one of my favorite things to do is

play with the registration. So sometimes I'll outline things or leave the outline and `kind of shift where the color of the object is and where the outlines or the details lie. Sounds kind of abstract, but I'll show you what it looks like. I rotated my sketchbook. I'll start with a colored pencil. Drawing my orange loosely here. It's supposed to be a Cutie, but he's pretty large. I find that when I draw really fast is actually when I like the results the best. This may not be the case for you, but something to keep in mind, you can experiment with how you draw, what you draw, the way that you make your marks. Using different materials and mediums can really change the mark-making. So if I was doing this with marker pen, it would feel really different than with the colored pencil. I like that. So right now I'm just filling in these forms. There's nothing off-register about anything just yet. Just yet. I'm getting a little bit of color in there. I like that tan, brown stuff at the top here. Okay. Those are two pieces of fruit. Arguably, they're kind of like blobs, but we're going to add some definition with a really dark outline and this I'm actually looking, but I'm going to make up some more. I really like clementines or mandarins that have leaves. And I didn't have one that had a leaf so I'm gonna draw a leaf. So here's what the off-registration is. I'm just gonna draw this outline, but I'm not going to closely follow what I drew. You can see that part of that field of color is outside of my line here. Maybe I can draw that little star and a leaf shape. And then same thing with my apple. Just kind of playing with the outline. Another approach for this is to draw your blobs and then do a blind contour of the objects over it. I'm looking at what I'm drawing and kind of using the blob that's there to create and dictate this outline. This technique is just another way to experiment with line quality.

Day 16 - Simple Stroke Landscape

- I'm not a landscape painter. I really love portraits, and faces, and people. But often I'm in a place, or take a photo of a place, and I really wanna capture that in my sketchbook. And this is the trick to getting a landscape without a lot of work and fussy detail. And it's just a base, you can also build from here and add more detail, which is why I really love it's versatility. And this is what I call a simple stroke landscape. I have four pictures from my phone printed out, and instead of focusing on all the little details, I'm gonna think of these in just bands of color first. And we're gonna switch to water color, you can do this with any media. But we haven't used watercolor in a while, and I think it works really nicely. (mixing) So if I start with this one, you've got this band of wheat, (cleaning brush) and then this dark blue band where the mountain is. And then like a light aqua-y color here. (cleaning brush) And if I wanna add a little bit more detail, this is very prominently dark. So I'll just come back in with an even darker little tone and just dab it in there, and just see what happens. I'm gonna let that do its thing. Let's go to this one. I'm gonna mix some ochre, oop, there's red on my palette. It's not quite that warm, so I'm gonna mix some green back into that. (mixing paint) And for that, I'm just gonna, that's very olive-y but that's okay. Maybe I'll add a little more ochre in there. There's a little spot of it there. There's a really deep green color, so I'll do sepia. There was already phthalo blue, which is my cool leaning blue, I'll just add some sap green into that. Every time I say sap green, I think of Bob Ross, every single time. He used a lot of sap green. (cleaning brush) And for this pale tone, I'm actually just gonna put water. Oop, try to get your brush clean. And just let it touch, and it's gonna bleed up. And I like that, I'm gonna leave that. Now we'll go to this one. This is from the train going to Sacramento. There's this like kind of flooded plains there that are so fun to cross on the train, 'cause you're so close to the water, and from the highway you're not that close, so. And let's start from the top on this one. Got a real blue color here. I can do some dashes to leave that white space for some of the clouds if I want that texture. There is a very tiny band of land, or

brush or something there. Just a little stroke. (cleaning brush) Then there's this kinda muddy water, here. (mixing) (painting) Wanna bring a little bit more blue back into that, so it looks more like water. And everything just really wet while we're working. And then if you wanted to add those little scrubby things, you can. Just dancing my brush around there. (cleaning brush) I think I just wanna extend this a little. This isn't watercolor paper, so it's gonna behave a little bit differently. It might absorb or pool differently, but that's okay we're just goin' with it. Alright. And this last one. (painting) Draw that down with just some water. Get that band of sun city orange happening. That's right onto wet paper. Draw that down. It's very green, this isn't green in the photo, but I'm okay with it. I'm just letting things mix and bleed. But you'll notice that when I touch the paint to another section that's wet, or to the water, I'm not then moving my brush back and forth. That's gonna make everything really muddy, and you're gonna bring up a lot of fibers from the paper. I'm more just like laying down a stroke and letting it do what it's gonna do. And that's kind of the key of this technique. (mixing) And then we're gonna get that dark silhouetted beach. (mixing) There's like some palm trees or something there. I'd like that to be a little warmer. So I'm adding a warm blue back into it, I might even add just a little bit of red. (mixing) There we go. Alright. (cleaning brush) I think these are really beautiful on their own, but they're even more impactful when you have a whole page of them. And this is a nice way to kind of center yourself in a place, whether it's from a photo, or when you're actually in the world on vacation, walking in your own neighborhood, kind of looking at your environment with this new set of eyes. Like, how would I take this space and make it into a few simple strokes to make it into a landscape? You can also squint your eyes if you're out in the world, having a photograph kind of flattens things and it allows you to choose and pick. But when you're out, looking at your environment, in a field, a meadow, you're on a hike, or even in an urban landscape, squint your eyes to help you see kind of these bands of color, and then try capturing those in your sketch book.

Day 17 - Mark Making

- When you wanna record something in your sketchbook, but it has a lot of detail or it's very intimidating to draw, you can turn to mark making as a way to get the color or the feeling of something in front of you, whether it be your environment or a photo. I've got three images here that have a ton of detail, a lot of texture and something that I probably wouldn't want to painstakingly draw every little element of, but I still wanna somehow get an image or a feeling of these into my sketchbook. We'll start with the Acacia trees here. And they're out of focus, which is even more fun. And I'm not gonna try to actually draw them. I'm just gonna look at them and kind of through my artistic self process them into marks. What I see into marks. So these could be dashes. These are repetitive dash marks. These could be little dots I wanna draw. Is it a cluster that I wanna get? I definitely want to. I like the scribble feeling. For me, the process of mark making is also a lot about the feeling of drawing. So how does it feel to draw on the page? And that can also dictate what medium I wanna use. I really like the scribbly feeling of the colored pencil on the page. But I also like the smoothness of using the marker. This totally matches my sweater too. And do I want to also include some kind of marks for these leaves? Maybe, maybe I wanna leave them out. These kind of circles are not that interesting to me. If I was working like with a big paint brush, maybe blobs would feel good, but I do like these little details. These kinds of feathery parts that are scattered throughout. And I'm not trying to actually draw this. If I was actually gonna try to draw this, I'd probably do a blind contour or I might start with mark making and then go back with something really detailed and add my line work. But this totally for me captures the feeling of that, the color,

the movement, the texture, without having to painstakingly draw what I see in this photo. So that's the Acacia, this crazy bookstore. This is a bookshop in New Orleans. And I love books, I love pictures of shelves with books on them. There are so many books in here. It would take me a year to perfectly draw all of these, but instead I'm just gonna represent them in marks. So what do I wanna start with maybe blue. These are just lines. There's a lot of this like yellowy tones. Maybe I wanna do some of that. And I'm just looking at what are the things that are popping to me. It's just these parallel stacks of strokes. And I can be influenced by the color too, but you don't have to use the colors that you see in your image. This is more about the feelings and the repetition of what your hand is doing on the page. I do enjoy these like little pops of red, so I might wanna include those. And now my marks were overlapping And I'm looking at sort of blocks of color and then just like a really simple yellow. That's too warm, I wanna just get, Oh, that's too warm. Should I just put down and pick up the same one? There. Okay, good bookstore. And I might actually wanna write that in my sketchbook. Bookshop in New Orleans, Acacia blooming. And then this is a bunch of shells. And I dunno if this is seaweed or what this is, but it's stuff that I've collected. So this feels like a lot of swirly motions and parallel soft curves. And this looks like a weird mushroom. I think it's dried up seaweed and that feels like weird loopy, curly things also. This might feel like that. Shells in a drawer. It's gonna be a very freeing way to interpret imagery or your surroundings into your sketchbook. It's also a nice way to play with your materials and learn what kind of marks they can make.

Day 18 - Make a Visual List

- Something I like to do in my sketchbook is make a visual list instead of writing out the items that I need to pack for a trip or remembering what I had for breakfast over the weekend or maybe things I need to put in a beach bag for Charlie. I'll actually draw those items. It's just a fun way to record something you're gonna do or something that you did in a visual manner. We're not gonna use a reference for this. You're just gonna draw from your imagination for better or worse. So I think I'm gonna do what I ate this weekend or part of what I ate this weekend. I've been drinking a lot of coffee because I have a baby and I don't get a lot of sleep. So the coffee is helpful. And can be wonky. What else did we have? We had scones. That's very pale. Let's find the color that I can see better. They were homemade scones. They were sort of like wonky and triangular. Blueberry scones. Put little blueberries in them. You could put these on a plate if you wanted but I'm just kinda making a list of the things that I had. I drink a lot of iced tea. So I had iced tea. Lightly drawing and then filling in. I like a lot of ice in mine. I'm not really sure how to draw that. Sorta like that. And I have a metal straw. Put that in there. My iced tea. Oops. Let's define the bottom of that cup a little. And, oh, I had spaghetti at my parents' house. Spaghetti is really hard to draw. It did not have a red sauce on it. Sometimes you could do like the red sauce on top and then all these noodles underneath. This was like a pasta primavera style so it had a lot of veggies in it. So I'm just gonna do a big scrumbly mess of noodles in this really light color. And then draw some of the things that were in the pasta. There were like little bits of bell pepper. And there were little mushrooms. Now, obviously they were not like perfectly little sliced mushrooms but that's what I'm gonna draw 'cause that's what was in it. And now this looks like a pizza. That's okay. Maybe we'll use a darker color to get the scrumbly noodles. There. And I am gonna put that in a plate. And maybe I wanna add a fork to it. And it was my dad's birthday so we had the tiramisu cake for dessert, which was delicious. Had cocoa powder on the top like that. And then like a layer of chocolate inside. And coffee-soaked sponge. And marscapone cream. It was so good. And it had three candles because my dad turned 73. Okay, we

had salad. I could draw salad. I actually didn't eat my salad. It was served to me and then I ate so much pasta, I couldn't fit the salad. We had apple cake for breakfast one day. I think I'm gonna stick with colored pencil 'cause I've been using it and I just kinda like this theme that's happening, this like little dancing line of my weekend meals. So apple cake is gonna look a lot like this. It was from the same place. It's a little bit smaller. It makes a really good breakfast treat. It's like a golden brown color. Could try to do a slice out of it like that. Who am I kidding though? We ate like half the cake in one sitting. It was not even, not even just a slice. Okay. And then when we went to the beach, what did we have? Oh, we had like little Baby Bells. Those are the cheeses that are wrapped in the red wax. And they're just circular. But I'm gonna have it be just a little bit open like that. And 'cause you can barely see that, we'll just add like a little line under it. Oh, we had a bar of chocolate. So maybe I'll make a bite out of that too. Although we really snapped it into pieces and were civil about eating it but let's pretend that there's a little bite out of it. And a wrapper like that. Can't really tell what that is but that's okay. I know that it's a bar of chocolate. Maybe we'll make some like lines in there. Creating a list in a visual format is a nice way to reinterpret something that you do daily. You might be doing your grocery list and of course you may not have time to draw out every item on your grocery list but it's a nice way to think about the things that you do all the time and put them into your sketchbook with a little bit more intention.

Day 19 - Inspired by Ephemera

- I love to collect lots of bits of ephemera and little things, especially if I'm on a trip. And so I have pockets and backpacks and purses and drawers full of these little items, and they're fun to tape into your sketchbook, but they can also be really fun to draw. And for something that's really precise, like a ticket stub that has really small text or fine lines, I especially like to draw that because it ultimately looks really wonky and weird, and that's part of the fun of a sketchbook. So I'm not gonna worry about perfect lettering. I'm just gonna go for it. So we'll start with just the ticket shape. I'm doing it a little bit larger than life maybe. I can already tell that the proportions are wrong, but that's fine. I'm gonna color this in. Sometimes I like to use watercolor and really precisely replicate ephemeral like with postage stamps or photos, but I also really enjoy these weird, like I said, wonky interpretations of things that are very precise, like tickets. While the marker's sort of wet. I'm gonna do more of my fine lines and then I'll come back in for some of that type. So I'm going to embrace the wonkiness and also possibly maybe the off register. We talked about that earlier in the month, where things are not lining up perfectly. And I like how that looks. These bars on either side, I'm just breaking these down into their elements and maybe I'll write the word one. Now it's nice to have a sharp pencil for this. So I am gonna do that. You can also use a pen if you have better control. I like to use microns. And I'm just using capital plain, non-cursive writing here. I'm not trying to replicate exactly the typeface that's on here. And then let's attempt these numbers. Ooh, that one's backwards. I'm not even gonna mess with that. They're going in opposite directions. I'll flip it and then do it. So this is 010499. Okay. There's some really fine print here at the bottom. I'm not doing that either. Now we just have to do our 50. And I could draw out the 50, since this is a very thick number here, but instead I'm just gonna use a brush marker because the brush marker already has a thick tip. There we go! Can't even tell which is which, right? I challenge you to just open your wallet and draw something that you find inside.

Day 20 - Tiny and Minimal

- Occasionally, I like to push myself to do things I don't normally do in my sketchbook, and one of

those is to draw really delicately. I have this picture of a lollipop and normally I would do something that's really bold because the colors are so great. But instead, I'm going to just use my pencil and finally draw the detail in here. So just like a tiny little detailed sketch. It doesn't have to be really precise, even though it's detailed, it's the outer part of the wrapper. Here's the lollipop. Here's the stick. I'm still being very sketchy and loose, but doing something with a little more detail forces me to slow down, which is something I kind of have a problem with, I like to go fast. So slowing down as part of this challenge for me. And this will help your observational skills too. Just trying to get darker lines in here. See the faint, like hint of the stick inside the lollipop. There. And we can add some color to this by writing some text instead of actually coloring in our image, so let's write lollipop. Lollipop, done.

Day 21: From Nature

- [Instructor] A traditional use for a sketchbook is a place to collect natural elements. You can gather something from a walk, your backyard, or even a fallen leaf from a houseplant, which is what I have here. I've taped it into my sketchbook temporarily so I can draw it on the other side. I'm gonna use colored pencil for this, but you can use any medium. Hm, this is very light, so I'll have to go back over it. You could start this with a blind contour. I'm not gonna worry about these outside portions just yet. I'm just gonna start with this creamy yellow tone. I don't really have an exact match for this color. It's almost like a marigold. Okay, that's closer. I'm just using really quick, repetitive strokes, looking back at my object often. With colored pencil, the direction of your strokes is really important because it's going to help with these striations here in the leaf. You can also color swatch here on the side. I like these pencils because they have a naturally waxy quality which mimics the surface of the leaf. Let's add some brown to the stem. I'm going to come back in with that cream-colored pencil and work that in. There will be a point where it's going to be very waxy as you build up your layers, and you may not get any more pigment down. And I'm approaching that point now. And that's totally okay. This is pretty close to what I'm seeing. Let's add some more brown around the edges here. All right, that's your leaf.

Day 22 - Limited Color Palette

- [Narrator] I have a photo here that has a lot of beautiful tones and colors and variations. But instead of trying to replicate all of that, I'm just going to use a very limited color palette. I'm starting with a maroon pencil. This is sort of a cheater-blind contour because I'm looking. I'm not drawing everything. Just keeping it very loose. From here, I'm just gonna riff off this and draw some more berries and leaves. This pencil is very similar to the colors of the leaves and that's why I chose it. Now, I have the opportunity to choose one or maybe two other colors. I'm gonna ignore all the nuance in this photo and just lay down one simple color. And for that, I'll use watercolor. I'm gonna use just straight Opera Rose, because I love this color and I'm going to paint these berries with it. If you're feeling this is a little too plain, you can add another color. I think if I use more pink, I would lose a little bit in this image. So I'm gonna use gray instead. This is the way that you can also stylize your artwork or sketches. By limiting your color palette and even shifting the colors away from what it looks like, naturally. You can go back to those wonky color wheels that we made and find color combinations that you really like. So let's swatch this out. The three colors I used for this are gray, Opera Rose and this maroon color. And there you go. Just keep it simple.

Day 23 - Enhanced Blind Contour

- [Instructor] We're gonna start combining techniques, and we're going to use an enhanced blind contour as the basis of our drawing for these marigolds in a vase, but you could draw anything, it doesn't have to be flowers. I'm using a ballpoint pen just to switch it up from the materials we've been using. For an enhanced blind contour, I'm going to allow myself to look at my page and then to lift my pen occasionally. As I've mentioned before, this is my favorite way to draw, I feel like it has more energy, more interest, and I like the quality of the line better. It definitely has a wonky element, but I think that's what I respond to, it's way more interesting. There's a bunch of crazy leaves that are happening here. I'm going to make the vase shorter so it actually fits on my page. I'll go back now and get the insides of these flowers. Now I'm just gonna fill in this with water color, you could use marker pen or colored pencil, whatever you have. I'm going to dip into that cad yellow, which is the warmer yellow and a little Vermilion. A little more yellow, this is a little too thick, I'm gonna blot this off so my lines still shows through. Let's get that deep rusty color, add some red, a little blue and some burnt sienna. I'm just waking up some of this paint where it obscures the line work. Okay, let's get the stems, I'm using that sap green color and some yellow. The stems coming into the vase here, adding some more squiggly lines into these marigolds. I'm gonna blot this so I can paint some atmosphere in that glass and then I can come back in with a green if I want. And you can ground your vase a little. There you go, marigolds.

Day 24 - Collaging Ephemera

- [Instructor] Your sketchbook is also a place for you to keep ephemera and things that you collect on your travels. I usually have a box or a bin that I also put things into so I can pull them out whenever I wanna use them. I have some wrappers here, I love wrappers, some joss paper, origami paper that's shiny, I love shiny things. Photos, a show postcard from Spoke Art with Amelie on it, a bit of wrapping paper, color swatching, this macaroon guide. You can respond to what you've just put into your sketchbook, or you can curate your elements before you put them in. Looking at this, I'm seeing a lot of warm tones, so maybe I'll use that as the thing that brings all of these elements together. I love this fringe because it has little bits of pink on it. I don't know if that was intentional. And I forgot to pack my glue sticks so I'm just gonna use my tape. Now, this makes me think of stripes so maybe I'll just cut these things into stripes, and that will be my cohesive element. I'm not worrying about measuring or proportions, I'm just cutting things up. You can also use paint here. I'm gonna paint a stripe in. When in doubt, use hot pink. Maybe drop in some of this vermilion. And I like these little dashes so let's make some marks here. Let's tape some of these things down because they're starting to get wiggly and I have wet paint here now. The tape you use can also add a visual element to your page. This kind of activity will help you strengthen your creative intuition. If you're the kind of person who takes a long time to make decisions when you're working something like this can be really good. Just force yourself to immediately respond and continue and move on to the next thing. If you don't like you can cover it up, or just don't worry about it, it's your sketchbook. I wanna add in some color pencil here. A neon red. Let's do a true red here. I actually like just this hint of dark blue, I think I'm gonna mimic that here. What else do we have? Oo, I like this type here. This here, I think, is an image of fabric. And I can look at this motif and I can draw a sort of abstracted version of that. All right, I feel like I need one thing here, something really thin. I like approaching collage in this manner because it abstracts the elements from their original form and allows you to play with texture, a variety of materials, and reframe them with a new theme or understanding of how you use your materials.

Day 25 - Blind Contour Outside

- We've been in the studio for the last couple of weeks and we're gonna spend this last week outdoors. We're in Oakland where I live and we're pretty close to Lake Merrit and we picked this spot because I've got a little bit of greenery here and a little bit of urban architecture and I can pull from both of those for our next few sketches in our sketchbook. The first thing I like to do and the thing that I do probably most often when I have just a few minutes in any location is a blind contour. And I love these palm trees, I think that's gonna be really fun to capture in a blind contour 'cause there's going to be lots of spiky, little moments to try. I've got my whole supply kit here that fits in this bag. I brought a water bottle for water when I paint, my travel water colors, this is actually the pouch of the travel water colors come in. So I threw my colored pencils in there, so there'll be easy to find. And then a little jar just for all of my markers. I don't normally travel with this much, but since I'm doing this with you guys, we brought a little bit of extra. So for this first blind contour, let's do something bright and fun like, a vermilion. I can choose to do anything that's in my view for a blind contour, but I wanna get these palm trees and maybe the theater behind there. There's a lot to cram in this narrow space so who knows what I'm actually gonna get. Am looking at a Palm tree, kinda right in front of me, I'm squeezing it into this little spot because I wanna try to get some of that theater behind. And you can choose what to include and what to leave out that's a little bench, and now I'm looking behind at the theater and then there's the Grand Lake Theater sign itself, I'm not gonna do the lettering, I'm just leaving a space for it. I could go back and do an enhanced blind contour and do the lettering while looking at it later. There's another little palm tree closer to me, there's a big palm tree that I wanna get, but I also really like the staircase, so I'm gonna try to get this staircase. So there's this cool staircase coming down. And then there's a big palm tree on this knoll here. And I'm gonna look, yeah I think I'm done I'm gonna look. Oh my gosh!, I really squeezed everything together, so that was my theater that I made really tiny and that's where the Grand Lake Theater sign goes and these are my palm trees and I actually have some space here. If I wanted to now look kind of beyond where this palm tree is and draw more of the neighborhood, but I kind of like how that looks. So I'm gonna label it, looking at the Grand Lake Theater. When you're in a new place, you can choose to do a blind contour of almost anything. I did something that was far away from me, but you can do something really tiny, a leaf on the ground, a bench, a person sitting on a bench, some flower that's fallen, a dog laying in the sunshine, almost anything is right for blind contour. So this is the thing that I like to start with when I'm in a new space.

Day 26 - Neighborhood Color Palette

- One of my other favorite practices in any spot is to do a color palette. That could be of my immediate surroundings or an entire neighborhood. So sitting in the same spot as we were yesterday, we're going to just take in our environment and record some of the colors. Start with some obvious things like the green, the really green grass. Ooh, yeah, if you're painting find some place shady, because it's very difficult to see when you're in bright sun. Maybe something more olivy. All right, there are a bunch of little kids in front of me and one of them has really, bright blue shoes on. So let's see if we can get a blue. Blue shoes. The palm trees have this kind of ambery tone at the edges of their leaves. And really rusty tones. There's the museum banner on the light post. There are really pretty bright, yellow flowers behind me. And they have dark burgundy centers. So I'm mixing up a color that looks like that. There's some really deep shadow tones on the grass from the palm trees. And the colors of the trunk. There's a sign across the street that's like a marigold color. I'll add that. And I could label each of these individually. But instead, I think I'm just gonna

write, "At the intersection of Lake Park and Grand Ave, Oakland." And there's my neighborhood color palette.

Day 27 - Combining Techniques

- We're gonna blend a lot of the techniques we've used so far, maybe a little bit of blind contour, using various media. And we're gonna do this sort of beautiful bank of wildflowers here, the trees beyond and possibly the blue sky beyond that. I absolutely love these flowers. I think they're so pretty. And we just found out from the local gardener that they're called Elegant Tarweed. So we're gonna start with just a little bit of watercolor. I'm gonna do this part first, because I need it to dry so that I can go back over it with colored pencil. I'm mixing up a green here, and I'm just gonna fill this in this side. Using the tip of my brush and then we'll do some yellow. I got to clean that yellow out. I'll just put some dots of color in here. This is really just a foundation, because I wanna come in here with more detail using colored pencil. At this point, this is almost just like mark making. And there's like a berry bush, I think they are like little red berries on it, but from here it's reading very orange. So we'll get that, too. And that's a little more muted. It's kind of like a blobby concentration of color there. And I thought I was gonna get the trees in the back, but I think it might be too much. I do wanna get a little bit of this heart-shaped leaf that's coming, and they're so pretty. Maybe just put a little bit of color down for that. I feel like there's more blue, like more silvery tone in that, there we go. All right, so this is the tricky part. We have to let this dry before we can go back over it with our colored pencil. If there's anything you wanna blot with your paper towel, you can. My watercolor is pretty dry and I've pulled out a selection of colored pencils I think I might use, that way I don't have to dig for them as I'm drawing. And I'm just gonna start by adding more marks. I use this really bright yellow for the flowers that are right now in the sun. The one tricky thing about drawing outside is the light is constantly changing, especially if there are clouds going overhead. So just capture what you can, when you can. If there's a particular quality of light that you're really liking, then get that first. I'll move to a darker shade of yellow for these ones that are more in the shade. I'm making just like little squiggle marks. Right now this looks like an underwater abstract scene. But that's okay, we're gonna try to pull it together as we add more detail. And then moving to like an ochre tone for some of these. There's so many flowers I'm not looking really at the flowers all that much as a reference, it's just like the overall feeling of the flowers. Let's switch to a green and try to get a little bit of definition in some of these stalks. I'm gonna come back and look at the stalks and just see what they look like. So one long stem with these leaves just coming off. We're using our line to define some of these plants. Okay, I think I'm gonna do, I want a lighter green, maybe this one. And now I'm drawing down from some of these yellow marks I made. Some of these. I don't have to connect every single one, I'm just doing some. I'm gonna add more marks in here and add more yellow flowers also. I might even wanna come in with a marker pen, see how that looks. Eh, I think I prefer the colored pencil. A lot of the yellow I put down bled into my green, which is fine. I just wanna get more definition over here. And the centers of some of these flowers have these little burgundy colors inside. All right, so for that berry bush, I'm gonna do some like squiggly berries, because there are berries just like lining every single branch on that. Oo. And then let's add a little bit definition to these heart-shaped leaves here. Right now, the way the light is the left side of every leaf is in shadow and the right side is open and light colored. You can see how fast I'm moving, this is just how I like to draw. You can be much more methodical and slow this down. Sometimes I challenge myself to try to go slower and I don't really like the results. I wind up losing something. So for me, this is the pace that works. But for you, it might be much slower, more thoughtful. All right, I

like that. So right now everything's kind of got the same size and texture, which honestly is kind of how this feels to me. I do feel like I need a little bit of something. Maybe it's a bit of darkness here to ground this, or some larger, bigger shapes. I'm gonna draw some bigger flowers here. These are just like blobby scribbles (chuckles). It's a concentration of yellow, really. And then maybe actually going in and defining. Now I know that the outsides of these flowers are not this color, but I'm using this anyway to create definition and change the scale just a little bit. So I'm kind of making this up, but I think it's what it needs so that's what I'm doing. I like that, I mean, I definitely feel like I'm immersed in what's happening here. And as much as I think there needs to be something really dark and dense, I love how light and open that is and I don't wanna change that. I really like how light and open that is also. I think what maybe I need to do is just make something a little bit asymmetrical. So maybe I'll come up here and do like one wild bit of plant that's reaching up to the sky. And that might help me feel better about this kind of dense mass of marks. Just little bits of, yeah. I'm pretty happy with that. Just use a little bit of brown in here. Yeah, I think that's good.

Day 28 - Flower Study

- We've looked really far out. We've come a little bit closer. And now we're gonna look at something really small and detailed and try to capture that. There's a whole grassy knoll here full of blooming clover. You can see that the bumblebees are pretty happy. And we're gonna try to look at some of the tiny blossoms and just get those in our sketchbook. What I like about these clover is they kind of look like little angels, like with open arms or something. I'm using my brush pen markers, just 'cause I haven't used them in awhile. Like a really pale gray. It's pink on top. That's green, oh, that's my gray. I want my green. These colors aren't exact because I'm not mixing them. They're just what exists in the brush marker already. But I'm gonna try to capture the feeling. These little stalks. And you can't have clover blossoms without the actual cloverleaves. Some are more closed little blossoms. Just like little bits of green in the center. Maybe I want to come in with a little bit of colored pencil. That's pretty subtle, but I like it. Just adding a different texture. That's why I like working with the markers, the colored pencils, and the water color, because sometimes you just want a little bit of difference in mark making or texture that just one medium can't give you. And there are some really dark little spots hiding under all these little clover patches, so maybe I want to get that. I feel like when I'm drawing outside, sometimes I'll wind up like with Edward Scissorhands situation where like all of my, I've got like a brush, and many markers, and then colored pencils, and they're all nestled between each of my fingers. Yeah, so just a tiny little clover patch. We're just drilling down to really small detail, and there's little dry bits of grasses around, sort of wily. They're also a lot of these like weird vertical things. I'm not really sure what part of the plant that is. And there are also tall heathery bits. There.

Day 29 - Spontaneous Draw

- You want to allow the place that you're in to inspire you. And I really love the post office and I'm sitting, across from a post office that has all of these boxes outside. And I like the repetition. I'm not great at drawing architectural elements, but I'm not going to let that stop me from capturing it in my sketchbook. And of course, (laughing) right as I'm about to start drawing these mailboxes, the UPS van pulls right in front of them. So we're just going to go with what's in front of us and I'm going to start drawing this UPS truck. It's likely that it will move midway my drawing. I'm going to do a modified blind contour. And that means I'm using the spirit of a blind contour, but I'm allowing myself to look up, every once in a while. I want this to fill almost the whole page. OK, so that's pretty

good. And now I'm going to go in and actually look occasionally and fill in these details. It's a very wonky drawing, but I'm embracing that. I like that quality. Do this UPS logo Let's grab this gold. There's some writing here. A little red tail light. It's actually double wheels, steering wheel, like bucket seat. (vehicle vrooming) Maybe I'll use the window. Yeah, sometimes you just gotta go with it.

Day 30 - Watercolor Landscape

- We did simple stroke landscapes in the studio using a photo, but when you're out in the world, sometimes it can be hard to determine what exactly you're looking at, what it is that you want to paint. And the simple strokes exercise will allow you to kind of just really dumb things down to just a few simple strokes, a few bands of color. So we're facing Lake Merritt and I'm going to do maybe three simple stroke landscapes, just kind of changing my view. Not moving my body, but just kind of like turning my head to get three different views. For this most immediate view, my first band of color is going to be the asphalt in front of me. So I'm mixing up a gray color. When you're painting outside, everything that you have becomes part of your studio. So my palate is propped on my purse. So first band, the asphalts. And then generally, that whole band of the lake, and the grass behind it is green, so now green. Maybe a little bit more yellow in that green there. And then the sky, that's going to be my third band. Just because it's an easy breakdown of what's in front of me. So that's looking directly across. If I just look a little bit to the left, there's that rusty building. And so maybe that will become part. And instead of using the sidewalk and the asphalt of the lane in front of me as my first band, maybe the lake will be my first band. So that's a bluey green. I like to start with three bands of color and then expand from there, depending on my attention to detail. So there's a tiny ochre band on the other side of the lake, and then another green band of color. I'm going to let that brick building represent that whole area. So that's a whole band of color, and then sky. What's funny about this, is looking at this, this looks more urban and structured than this does, and this is the one that has a building in it. And this one does not have a building in it. It's very abstracted, but to me, that's how it feels. So I feel like that's good. And if I'm looking just a little bit more to my left, I see a lot of buildings in the distance, a lot of trees, I barely see the lake. Maybe for my first band of color, I'll actually just skip to across the street and get those bushes. That's my first band. And then I just have a tiny bit of lake peeking out, skinny second band. There are a lot of trees across the lake there, so that'll be my next band of color. And now looking beyond the trees, I see a lot of buildings. So I'm gonna mix kind of like a bluish gray. You can play with the proportions of your bands also. And there's just a little bit of this creamy building over there that I just want to have a little blob of. These are really, really basic. That is the point of this exercise is to allow you to take in all of this visual information and translate it into these simple strokes on the page. This can also be the basis for something more. So as these dry, I can go in with colored pencil or a pen, and actually start to build out more elements from what I'm seeing within these fields of color.

Day 31 - Review and Send-Off