Daily Painting Challenge: 28 Acrylic Studies with Courtney Cerruti

Chapter 1 - 28 Acrylic Studies
Overview
(happy music) - Hey everybody, I'm Courtney Cerruti. You've probably seen me on Creativebug before, either in our live shoots or one of my daily challenges. A lot of you may want to start a painting practice, so I'm gonna break it down for you. We're gonna work on a painted study every day which means there's no pressure. This is about honing your skills and learning your craft and technique and making it your own. We'll be painting every day objects that you can find at your house, things like fruits and vegetables, flowers, and little tiny fun figurines or vases. Whatever you have lying around will work for this challenge. You'll see what I'm painting and how I approach painting from life, but you can really make this your own. This daily painting challenge is great for the seasoned painter or even the person that's never picked up a paintbrush before. If you're curious about working in acrylics or even eventually oils, this will be a good place for you to start because it's gonna hone your observational skills, your brush handling, and your color mixing. (happy music)

Materials
- The materials you need for this are pretty basic and simple. You should be able to find them at your local craft store. I chose brands that are easily accessible and not too expensive, so should be good to go. We're going to be working on a Strathmore Mixed Media paper. This comes in a pad, it's called Vision. It has a dark blue cover. And it's a nine by 12 pad, and I cut each sheet into six by nine. This works for me. If you want to work bigger, you can use an individual sheet. You could go smaller, but it's nice to have a little bit of room so that you can kind of play with your brushstrokes and work on your scale. We're going to be painting most things kind of on a one-to-one ratio, so pretty similar to the size that they are in real life. I've got a variety of brushes. These are all synthetic brushes. The brushes that I use for watercolor are really different than the brushes I use for acrylic or oil painting. So these are my favorites, but you should use what works best for you and your practice. You can start here and then, you know, just like anything else, figure out what you like and just focus on those brushes. This is one of those handy packs of brushes. They're really affordable, under $10 for the whole set. This is Princeton. It's a Golden Taklon set of synthetic brushes. I'm not going to use all of these brushes. The main thing that I want to use in here is a filbert. This is a size four for this brand. And a filbert has a rounded tip, kind of like a fingernail, and I really love using this shape of brush. If we have any fine line work or details, we may use one of our round brushes. Anything that has a straight edge, it might be nice to have a flat wash brush, like this. This one happens to be 3/8 inch. I also have a couple of other, slightly higher quality brushes. These are going to be under $10 a piece. This one is a da Vinci, four size, and it's also a flat wash, so just a little flat brush. This one is another filbert, which is my favorite kind of tip for this type of painting. This is a size two, and it's a Silver Briston. This is just what I had at my local art supply store, so feel free to change the brand. But you can look for a filbert if you've never used one before. I have a slightly larger flat-tipped brush. This is actually called a bright. And for this brand, this is a size four. I've also made a handy little backdrop for all of our objects. This is two pieces of my nine by 12 Strathmore Vision paper with tape in the center, and it's going to create a little backdrop for any of our objects so that we're not distracted by what's lying behind our object. You may not need this if you're

painting in a place that has a blank wall behind it. This is just handy, so you can really focus on your object, maybe see the shadows that it's casting. This is totally optional. I'm going to be using an enamel tray for my palette. I'll show you how to use this. I will use it for watercolor, for oil painting, and for acrylic. And in theory, you can mix any color in the rainbow with just the three primaries, which are red, yellow, and blue. But we're going to add a little bit of variety in there. Some things are easier to mix than others. So for your basic paints, I'm using the FolkArt brand. They have a lot of great colors. And I've got a warm and a cool of each of the primaries. So on the cooler side, I've got Imperial Red. On the warmer side, I've got Calico Red, which is going to be more like a vermilion. On the warmer side of yellow, I have Moon Yellow. And on the cooler side, so leaning more towards green, this is Lemon Yellow. And then I've got two blues, on the warmer side, Ultramarine, and on the cooler side, Cobalt Blue. And those will allow us to mix most of our colors. I've also got a Raw Umber and a Titanium White. You're going to use probably more than one bottle of white throughout the month. Because of the type of paint we're using and because FolkArt has a ton of existing colors that are already mixed for you, I've got a few other colors that are optional. Things like a really bright green, a bright turquoise, or a bright pink can sometimes be hard to mix with acrylic craft paint. So these are already mixed and ready for you to go, and these are some of my favorites. I've got Cayman Blue. Navy Blue for a dark blue, but I'll show you how to darken your colors. Yellow Ochre, Ochre is one of my favorites to use. Naphthol Crimson, this is an alternative to some of your reds, so it's just a nice third red to have. Pink Melon and Podge Pink, these are my two favorite pinks, one that's warm leaning, so more towards a yellowy color, that's the Pink Melon, and more towards a purpley, which is the Podge Pink. I've also got a couple of greens I like, Citrus Green and Fresh Fern. Peppercorn, which is a nice, kind of Payne's gray sort of tone. Burnt Sienna and Berry Wine. And then I've got another white, this is Winter White. I think Titanium is something you've probably heard before. It's something that kind of goes across oils and acrylics, but some of these other colors are specific to Plaid. So again, use what you have on hand, discover what you like, and then use your go-to colors. These just happen to be mine for this project. You'll also need water. If you're super prepared, you can have two containers of water, one for your warms and one for your cools to prevent getting muddy water and having to change it less. I often just use a single thing of water. I'm using an enamel bowl because that's what I use for all my painting, but I also have a glass jar, whatever your preference. And just a bit of an old T-shirt cut up, as a rag, you can also use paper towels, so just something to wipe off and clean your brushes as you go. Like I said, all of these materials are really accessible. You can get them at your local JOANN or other craft store. The FolkArt brand has a ton of paint, so maybe you already have some lying around. You want to start with your basic primaries, and we'll cover a little bit of color mixing as we move through the month.

Day 1: Pomegranate
- We're gonna start by talking about color mixing a little bit before we dive in to actually painting our object which for today is a pomegranate. I've got my primaries, the warm and cool of each laid out, my dark raw umber, and my titanium white. When we talk about the warm and cool of the primaries that may be a little bit abstract and you can start to see it more as we lay the paint out on our palette. So I've got my two reds. This cooler one is leaning more towards purple so if we look at these two reds, you can see that this red's slightly more orange so that's leaning toward the warmer side. This one, although it looks like a pretty true red, it's a slightly bluer red, a slightly cooler red. It's a little more obvious in the yellows. This is my cool leaning yellow, so my yellow that's closer to

green, and my warm leaning yellow which is closer to orange. This is more important or comes more into play when we are mixing our colors. So if I want a really vibrant, bright spring green, that's gonna be a cooler green and if I'm only using a warm yellow, it's gonna be hard for me to achieve that cool bright green. So it's nice to know the difference between a warm and a cool, especially when you're talking about your primaries 'cause these are the colors you're gonna be using to mix. Now if you're using colors right out of the bottle and you like it just as it is, that's fine too, but as you customize your own color palette and your own painting style, knowing and understanding how to mix and use color is gonna be really important. When we're looking at our blues, these blues are really similar, so you can't maybe tell on the camera, but my cooler blue is the one here on the left and my warmer blue, the blue that's leaning more towards purple or violet is gonna be on this side. I've also got my white and my raw umber like I mentioned before. Missy Dunaway talks a lot about these principles in her acrylic ink painting class, so if you wanna learn a second opinion on this that would be really good. We've got some other great color mixing tutorials throughout the classes on our site. So this is my approach to it. This is with acrylic painting and, again, you will start to develop your own color sense and mixing style as you paint throughout the month. Sometimes if you can't tell if you have a warm leaning color or a cool leaning color right out of the tube or bottle, you can mix it with a little bit of white and that will be more obvious. So just gonna put some white. This is my titanium white. I'm using my flat brush. This one's called a wash in this brand. It's a 3/8 inch, but I'm just using any kind of big brush for this. As we mix a little bit of yellow, rinse our brush really well, try not to fling water everywhere. So like I said, the yellow is more obvious to start anyway, but sometimes as you add white you can tell, okay, this is leaning more towards cool and this is leaning more towards warm. Do it with our blues. So here it's a little bit tricky to tell, but here it's gonna be more obvious. This is a cooler or more green, yellow leaning blue and this is a more purple leaning blue. More towards violet. It's a much warmer tone than this one is. This is a good way to just test or to further your knowledge if you're not 100% sure. This is my cooler red. This is my warmer leaning red. Much more towards orange. So this is a much pinker red, this is a much more orange red. Again, if it's hard for you to tell, adding a little bit of white to your paint can help you determine how your color is leaning. Now I could paint a little chart with these. I actually really recommend, if you're brand new to this, or if you love making color charts like I do, then you can pull out your paint, start with your primaries and see what happens when you add white. You can also do the same thing adding a darker color like the raw umber which is how we'll get some deeper tones and shades in here. I also wanna show you a quick little mixing technique. We're gonna go back, like I said, these are our primaries. If we wanna mix green, the two colors that do that are yellow and blue. So if we mix our cool yellow, and I'm just doing this on my paper, and our cool blue, we're gonna get this nice kind of aqua color. Rinse my brush. If I stick with my cool yellow, and really I should be mixing it here, here's our cool yellow. And now I go to my warm blue. You can see the change in the color here. And we can go even darker just kind of as we move toward that warmer blue. So if I wanted a brighter green not because I'm adding white, but because the yellow I'm working with is much cool, it's a more vibrant kind of color versus a slightly more neutral or muddy looking green then that's where the cool yellow versus the warm yellow come into play. We can do the same thing with our reds. So if I've got the cool red and a cool blue this is my purple I'm getting. Now you can add water. We're using acrylic so it's water soluble. This is gonna look a little bit more like watercolor 'cause we've thinned it out. Wash my brush. Work with my warm blue and my warmer red. More red 'cause I had too much blue. I'm gonna get an even more raisin kind of tone. And I'm just gonna add a little bit of water so that this is more consistent in its paint. So can you see that that purple's much

cooler and this purple is much warmer. It's more like a raisin tone. So knowing this as you move throughout your painting and as we do our pomegranate we're not gonna be using a lot of green in our pomegranate probably, but we might be using some purples. We're definitely gonna be using some reds. We might want orangy reds in which case we're gonna mix yellow and go towards our warmer tones, but we might want more purples in which case we'll go more towards our cool tones. So adapt and play and practice your color mixing so that you can customize your colors as you're painting. Let's dive in and paint our first object. For me it's gonna be a pomegranate. You could follow along with a different object because all of your color mixing principles are gonna be the same, but you'll kind of see as I'm referring to the pomegranate about color mixing and the shadows that are cast and so forth. I have that two pieces of paper taped in the back creating a little backdrop so that I'm not distracted by what's around me and I'm just focusing on my pomegranate. You can set up a direct light source like a little night light or something so that you get really harsh shadows and really high contrast. Sometimes that's easier to paint from. We have a few shadows here, but this would be similar to just painting in your own house. I'm gonna start by just mixing a general medium pomegranate color. You may think that like, "Oh it's just red." Which it's not really actually. So if I hold this up to my pomegranate and kinda close one eye and squint, I might see that color in some areas, but really it's more purple than that. So I'm gonna just dip into my blue. That one happened to be my warm blue. I'm using both reds kind of interchangeably here. We've got warm and cool tones on this pomegranate. This color is looking more similar. It's a little brown. So maybe that means I wanna use my cool blue to get a more purple tone and less of a raisin tone. But I can correct it, so let's just go with that to start. Acrylic paint does dry darker also. I'm using my Filbert, this happens to be a size two. And I'm just gonna roughly kind of use my paintbrush to sketch out the shape of the pomegranate. Just lay down my paint. It can be scrubby and weird and I can refine everything. This is pretty dark actually. I'm just gonna pull some lighter red in here. I never sketch before I paint. That's just how I work. You can sketch before you paint. There are definitely merits to sketching first. I don't know if it's just because I feel like that's doing the work twice. And we're just working with a single object. This isn't really in relationship to anything. It's not like I have a teacup next to it or a pot next to it, so I don't need to sketch and lay everything out 'cause I'm just working with a single object. Okay and that's my general shape. And now I'm just gonna fill it in. I'm working on a mix media paper. You can see that I'm just working with no water at this point. Just the paint as it comes out of the bottle. Just getting a nice layer here. Acrylic paint does dry fairly quickly which is great, unlike oil which takes a long time. Even with additives. Alright, so that's my basic shape. It looks really wonky, but that's actually how a pomegranate is, especially from my angle. These are sort of flat planes that we're gonna show our highlights and our shadows. So if I look at this part of my pomegranate, it's kind of darker, more bruised. This has kind of a gray tone because we have light actually reflecting from the table back up to its shiny surface. This is more medium, closer to what we've laid over the entire painting so far. And then this is actually much lighter because we've got this white light referred back to it and then we've got some super bright highlights here and here and this is darker here. And then we've got the brown at the top. I can actually put the kind of browny ocher in just for reference. I'm gonna use a little bit of my warm yellow. A little bit of my warm red to make an orange and then using a little blue I'll make brown, essentially. So that's a lot of blue. I have a really green tone. That means my blue is stronger than my other two colors in pigment. So I'm just gonna add, mix in proportion until I find the right color. I will hold this up to see. It looks a little vibrant. Add a tiny bit of blue. You can add a little bit of white too. If we just feel like everything is a little too saturated. That feels better. I'm just gonna kinda

create a placeholder. That's fine. For now. That's my placeholder. Let's start by doing our lighter tones in this part of the pomegranate and kinda working our way around. I'm gonna squint my eyes. You should definitely and often squint your eyes. This will kind of blur everything out and you're just looking for the values, so the lights and the darks. This could be, if this pomegranate was just black and white, for example, or you took a black and white photo of the pomegranate, then you would see the values, the light and the darks. You start to get confused or overwhelmed by the color because that's a new thing that we're considering. So black and white is sometimes the best way to start, if you were to take a black and white photo and work from that, but I think you guys can handle the color. We're gonna play with our color mixing and squinting our eyes is gonna help us kinda focus in on what's light and what's dark and how we get those. Alright. So I may need to add a little white. Because I'm using this particular craft paint, it's not fully opaque which means some of the layers below are still shining through. If I wanna go lighter than my base color I might need to add a little bit of white. And in this case also a little bit of yellow. I've got this like little patch of really pale area here. There's actually a little bit of it there and there's a tiny bit of it right there, too. So while I've got it on my brush I'll just put it in. And you might look at this paint and be like, "That's like peach, what are you doing?" But really if you squint your eyes and you look at what color this is, it's really, really pale. It's like close to the tip. It might even be lighter once this dries. It might even be closer to a really pale whitish color. For this sort of deeper, bruisy reddish purple down in here it's really the most vibrant in this V shape where the edges of the pomegranate are coming down and then it's actually kind of grayed out or subdued and muted here because we've got this light bouncing off the white table and reflecting back on those planes so I'm gonna use my most vibrant dark in this area. And I'm trying, in some cases, when I think I'm pretty close to the right color and I'm liking the marks I'm making, I'll actually paint in the shape of the fruit so instead of just going left to right I'm actually gonna do little strokes kind of in the curve of the pomegranate. 'Cause I am one step beyond just blocking in color. Also do a little bit of it here for that kinda stem thing. And then this little part is pretty dark. Some little dark bits on the edge. And then when we've got the areas in here that are dark, but they're a little less saturated or vibrant, then a little bit of white. Probably not that much white. Although, actually when you hold it up to the fruit it's pretty close. This might look crazy so let's put it down and then we'll change it. You can do that. So we're sort of at our color blocking stage here. If I hold this brush up to it you can see that the color is actually really similar to what I'm seeing on the pomegranate, but in reality it looks a little nutso, so I might just subdue this a little. So we're gonna go over. I'm not using water to mix into any of my paint. I'm just using it to clean my brush. And just using kind of a dry brushing technique with some red I'm gonna just reduce the contrast a little bit in these patches just so things feel a little more cohesive. I don't want it to be quite, quite this contrasty. I'm just using a clean brush here that has just a tiny bit of water catching a little bit of the paint that's still somewhat wet. It's starting to dry for sure. And that helps just, still have those under layers showing through that allows for some of that contrast, but it's making the pomegranate look a little more cohesive and less like a Rubik's Cube. Okay. So actually I think that's pretty close. Remember these are studies, so kind of you're laying down your initial color ideas. I'm gonna come back in and refine this stem a little. There's some really dark darks in here so I'm actually gonna put down a darker layer. I'm just picking up some of the paint that's already on my palette. I lost a little bit of that highlight. Just gonna add a little bit more of our highlight here. Using the paint a little bit thinner with a little bit of water just to kinda soften some of the brushwork. Picking up just some of my red. Going back to my highlight, refining that a little. Sorta like a lot of this back and forth as you mix your color and refine the shape of your object.

Alright. I think I just wanna refine that stem a little. I'm losing my highlight on that part of the stem. I'm using the Filbert for all of this and then I can go in, this little tiny kind of torn edge, I can go in with a thinner brush and do that separately. I wanna add my highlights 'cause I think this is pretty close to being done. So I have that super bright white highlight here, here, and here. I'm not gonna make it white white. I'm not gonna just pick up my white paint. I'm gonna mix a really pale kinda peachy tone to start. So this is kind of close to our highlight color. I wanna keep it just sort of pinky because I wanna save my white white white for any tiny little dot I need to add. So I'm just gonna add that here. Little brushstrokes sort of mimicking the shape. Maybe I wanna just add a tiny bit here. Some highlight there. Sometimes I might just add it on the edge, too, where I know it's really pale and kind of fading off into the distance there on the back. You're also, we're gonna have some referred light coming off the table. So this happens with your shadows, too, where you have a little bit of referred light. This is too light for that, but if I just do a little tiny bit since I already had it on my brush, and just take a clean brush and kinda fade it out there. That will work. Same thing here, that shape is more like that. We're gonna soften some of these highlights just by using a clean brush that has a little bit of water. Alright, I think that actually looks really good. Remember, it's a study so you're trying to just get down your color and your shape, where your highlights and your shadows are. The one thing that we really have only left untouched beyond the first layer is where that little stem is so I'm gonna use a round three. You could use any small, a one, two, a three, you could use a script for this. Something that has kind of a pointy tip. I wanna use that round brush to come in and just do these little elements. They're gonna feel more drawn. I'm just doing some simple strokes here. Get those little fuzzy seed-like bits in the center just by tapping my brush there. We've got some really, really dark darks so I might come back in with just my raw umber to get some of the darkest darks. Now if you feel like you're not getting your darkest darks, please do not go to black. It's like my biggest pet peeve. You can mix a darker color by adding a little bit of your darkest blue or your darkest brown to something. This feels a little cool for me so I might add a little bit of my darkest red that's on here. It's gonna give me a much deeper sort of purply tone which will make a great shadow color. Do not use black. Maybe I'll just use that here. I'm gonna just clean up the stem a little bit. This kind of really half inch articulated top on the pomegranate. I'm gonna mix up that deepest purple. And then go to my red just to create the stem there. To help ground your object in space so it doesn't look like it's floating, it's really handy to add a shadow. So if you don't feel like things are looking realistic and you're, kind of, mind is blown. You're like, "What is this? "It's like these weird highlights and shadows "and I'm not even sure this is a pomegranate anymore." Add a shadow and see if that helps. Because we have our studio lights we've got three shadows. I have sort of this ellipses here that's kind of a warm gray tone. I've got a little hint of a shadow coming off the back, and I've got a cool shadow that comes right up to the edge of this backdrop here, our little paper. And then I have a really kind of dark spot right there. I like this warm gray shadow, but I don't really have enough room for it on the paper. I could just paint it right off the page. I also have this cool shadow that can kinda go up here. So maybe let's do that and we might also just do a little bit of this warm tone one here. So to mix your gray, I might actually dip in my clean water since that water's so pinky, grab a little bit of my white, tiny bit of my blue. You should not be making sky blue shadows. That's not quite the right color. You can mix your own brown or you can just grab a little bit of whatever brown you have. So this is my raw umber. You can hold up your paintbrush to your shadow. That is way dark. Let's add a lot more white. That feels better. 'Kay and we are just gonna start it. It's kind of an odd shape. It's like a UFO back here. Sometimes it's really better to just interpret what you see and not try to paint what you think should be there. That's like one of our

biggest downfalls is to be like oh, pomegranate is red. It's just all red, but really it's not. It's purple and red and pink and coral and deep shadowy tones. So kind of one color all over for this shadow. The shape is vaguely right. I don't know, it's good, it's okay. I made it a little longer than it really is, but that's okay. And what does happen is in this case it's much lighter in the center of the shadow so just grab a little bit of your white. I've got just a bit too much paint. Blend that in, just quick little brush strokes. This is a pretty refined surface in that my brush strokes are not super heavy and thick, but you can go thicker. I really actually like the way that looks. Shadow's gonna be slightly darker closer to the pomegranate so pick up your darker color. If you need to add a little bit of brown or blue you can. And then we have this kinda second shadow also happening here. Now if, as a watercolor painter also, my tendency is to just dip into my water to kinda fade this out. Really though you should be just fading it with white paint I think. I think that would be the best way to do it. Until it sort of fades into your background. Just adding some white here to give me something to work into. Yeah, that's it, you guys. Don't be daunted by the first day. We talked a lot about how to set up your palette, how to work with your paints and your brushes, and just like anything else, as you become more familiar with these tools and techniques you will become faster at this. Remember these are daily painted studies so if you only have a few minutes to spend then make a painting that only is a few minutes. It may not be as refined on certain edges, it may not have all the shadows, but if you just start with your color blocking then that is your first step and as you progress toward understanding how to mix your colors and how to observe what you're seeing and how to translate that to your paper, you will get better and you will get faster just like any other practice. As we move through the month we'll do lots of different types of objects, we'll be doing fruits and flowers and all the things that I mentioned earlier. So now that you've seen one kinda gather some objects. Tomorrow we'll be doing another fruit.

Day 2: Apple
- It's day two, we're gonna continue with our fruits. I got a little tiny apple and of course I picked it because of its colors. It has this beautiful red blush tone and then it's like a really bright sort of appley green. Just kind of a really pretty color and we're working again on our little backdrop. I'm gonna start with a Cool Yellow, because that's mostly what this is. And I'm actually gonna add a little bit of this green that I've added to my palette, this was the Citrus Green that I said was optional, but you can also add a little bit of blue to mix your green. We'll start with our basic shape. I'm just gonna paint the whole apple this color even though obviously there's a giant patch of red. It's not like water color in that way because these technically are not translucent layers. There's a little bit that will show through, but it's not like watercolor. For the most part, acrylic paint is more opaque. Like I said, paint gets darker as it dries. You can see where the Cool Yellow is important here. I wouldn't wanna use an orange yellow because I don't have any orange yellows on my apple. It's refining the outer shape a little. Okay. (splashing) So this color is probably pretty true to there, but this is actually more yellow and then obviously we have our red, so I might just pick up a little bit of that Cool Yellow and actually add a little bit of white... To get this tone here. The first layer I put down is still wet, so it's all mixing together. If I need it to be a little more vibrant and less mixing, I can wait for it to dry a second, but I'm okay just kind of working on it like this. You can see just by swooping that lighter color, we already start to get depth. Like this looks like this is pushing part of the apple back. Let's get a little bit there. This is a slightly warmer yellow. Little bit there. (splashing) Let's play with that red tone. That is red right out of the bottle, that is definitely not the same red as the apple. Needs to mix a little bit of yellow in. Still using that Cool Yellow. That feels closer. Start

with that. Using my filbert brush like we used yesterday. Okay, let's refine that edge a little. (splashing) I might come back in with a little bit of the green and just kind of soften these edges. Cause it's not a hard line on the apple. It's more hard at the top, but at the bottom it's a little bit softer. Come back in here. I like to sometimes work when the paint is sort of like at a gummy stage, so I'm gonna let that dry for a second and then it's not gonna be super slippery and wet and I can go in and kind of manipulate a little bit. I'm gonna put a little bit of a shadow in this divot. So... It's a little bit of a darker green right here. That color is also a little bit here. And kind of coming out. (splashing) Back to my medium green. (splashing) I think I had that red a little high. Let's cover that up a bit. It's not fully dry, so I can come back in in just a minute and add on top of it. Just blend it out a bit. I still think that this side of the apple is more yellow than green. Remember I was squinting when I can. Looking for lights and darks. It's a lot of going back and forth. Okay, on the apple, this part of the red is really dark and then there's that little kind of referred light so it tends to be less saturated, more muted grayish in there. Same here, this part is like the most vibrant, right around this edge of the apple that starts to curve. So... I'm gonna darken my red a little bit with a little bit of this Raw Umber. (brushing) It's gonna go like that. Maybe a little bit there. (splashing) Just cleaning off my brush, I might just kind of feather that out a little. Come back in with my red. Still using sort of a dry brush. I'm gonna dip in just a little bit of water to smooth this edge right here. I don't wanna lose that tiny bit of yellowy green I have at the bottom. It's raining outside. It's a nice backdrop to daily painting. A little bit of rain. Oops, I have some reds on my brush so instead of getting... A yellowy white tone, I have a pinky tone, so because this part's already dry, I'm just gently with a wet, clean brush just picking up that pink tone that I put down on accident. The highlights on this are pretty subtle. There's definitely a highlight right there. There's a little bit of a pinky highlight here. So I'll get that in. And I'm just gonna add a little bit of these kind of shadowy marks. Trying to... I'll take a little bit of Raw Umber into something right out of the bottle and dull it down a little bit sometimes. And I'm working all over my palette. And you can scrape down your palette or wipe it off with a paper towel or run it under hot water when you're ready to clean your palette. So the muddier green tone happening, I'm gonna dip, my brush is really dry, I'm gonna dip it in a little bit of water just to smooth out the edge a little. Come back into my Cool Yellow. I'm just gonna do... A little bit here. And using a little bit white, there's a little bit of reflective light. (splashing) I'm missing my pink highlight a little bit. Because as it dried it got really dark. We'll add that back in. There's a little bit of a highlight here. (splashing) It's refining. Okay, that's pretty good, let's do a stem. A little bit of my Raw Umber mixed with a little bit of my green to start. It's a simple little brush stroke. There's a bit of a shadow. My dry brush pressing down and kind of curving over the back edge of that apple. Do a little bit more brown for my stem. Might be a little too much there. (splashing) And then let's add our shadow. So I'll mix... Tiny bit of brown that Raw Umber color. Seems like kind of a warmer shadow. Add a little yellow. Lots of white. Do a little bit of the warmer yellow. Bit more brown. (brushing) You can hold that up to your shadow. So that's pretty close to my shadow color. If your shadow isn't perfect, don't worry about it. This just helps ground it on the table. I'm gonna rotate this and now I wanna get close to this edge. Just to help myself... Get close right up to that apple. Can add a little bit of white because the shadow is lighter right in the center of it. (splashing) It's really dark closer to the base of the apple. (splashing) Just a little bit of white to kind of, oh, away with pink! Take that off. It's my messy palette. Add a little bit of white just so I have something to kind of work into. It's okay is if has pink in it, don't worry. (brushing) These are just little studies. Back into my shadow color. (splashing) (brushing) (splashing) Softening that dark... That we laid down. Adding a little bit more so it doesn't get entirely lost. Painting is all about pushing and pulling,

so adding more color, removing color, finessing your stroke. You're not doing it wrong, you're discovering and finding and trying to figure out where everything goes. And that's why you do these little studies. Learning a few little things, but I think mostly that's pretty good. (splashing) We have some marks on the apple if we wanted to add those using a smaller brush. You can mix a sort of light brown. You can use a little bit of my shadow color, a bit of brown and a little bit of red and yellow because it's more of an orangy tone. (brushing) You could do some of these mark here. Not off the apple. I went off just a tiny bit with my mark, so I can just use some white paint to cover that up. It's fine. Yeah. Yeah, it looks pretty good. We're working a little bit tighter than normally I would work. If you wanna do big, loose brushstrokes, have really chunk color layers, that's totally fine. Create whatever practice that you want to create. So right now I'm kind of aiming that this looks like what I'm painting, I'm sort of working on a one-to-one scale, I'm not using the entire paper. That's fine. I may move away from that as we go through the month to keep myself interested. Maybe your style develops and changes, maybe your brushstrokes change. I've been working pretty exclusively with the filbert the last two days, but that could change also. Give yourself the freedom to enjoy the practice and also experiment with the materials you have at hand. I'm starting this month off trying to get you to understand sort of the foundational elements about observing and translating that to paper, looking for light and shadow value and then color. But like I said, feel free to make this your own as we progress through the month.

Day 3: Satsuma
- This time of year is satsuma season, which I love, they're delicious, but I think partially what I'm so drawn to is the fact that you get these little mandarins with these pretty, glossy, green leaves on them. You can use an orange or any fruit for that matter. I like the additional element of the leaves 'cause it's gonna be more fun for us to paint than just the fruit alone. Even though our leaf is in front of our orange, or satsuma, I'm gonna block in the satsuma first. I'm using my warm red and my warm yellow to make my orange. Red is a stronger color than the yellow. You notice that I've cleaned off a space on my enamel palette, because you guys are gonna be re-approaching your painting every day, you'll need to clean off your palette entirely, or a portion of it, every single day, because acrylic does dry quickly, and it will dry on your palette. Just check my color, going for a medium orange tone, that looks good. And there's part of the satsuma that's hidden by the leaves on top and the leaf in front, so, I'm just gonna kind of in my mind connect the dots. I can tell already that this is darker, it's gonna dry darker. It's going for the shape. It's like a little... The other thing is as, if you're painting from life, like I am, as you move, all the angles and shapes and shadows are gonna change a little bit, so try to stay still, or kinda in the same place, or orient yourself in a way that you can keep coming back to what you think you saw initially. If it changes a little bit, it's fine. All right, I need some more yellow. Add more of this warm yellow, my Moon Yellow, to my palette. Just add some here. Lighter there. Kinda this whole area is lighter. Some brighter points here and on the back side right here. Using that original medium orange I'm gonna add a tiny bit of white, and maybe just a little bit of brown to dull down that color, and I might use that on the back side here. As you get better at painting, you will use less strokes, you will be more efficient with your strokes. There are a lotta painters who do these daily paintings daily for many years, and they can just create this shadow with a single brushstroke and leave it. We're gonna be working things a little bit more than that. It's like a mark here. It's like this pockmark kinda highlights here. Squinting my eyes a little to try to see everything. I might come back over some of that orange here. So just we're finding the shape and the colors as we go. Now lets try to do some of our leaves. Mixing this green, I'm actually

gonna start with the Fresh Fern. It is a cooler green, it's leaning a little more towards blue, which is good. I'm gonna actually add a little bit of warm yellow, because I don't want it to be quite like that. Does need to be darker, so I add some blue and I add some raw umber. Okay, more yellow. Just take a look and see where we are. Yeah, not bad. So I'm gonna, using the tip of my brush, kinda draw where that stem is. Try to get the shape of that leaf as best I can. It's a big leaf compared to the satsuma. I don't have a lot of paint on my brush. Stem goes up. I'm like really just sketching here, with the paintbrush. There's this weird little leaf kind of caught in the back here. And another leaf kinda touches down onto the satsuma and then comes off. Hm. All right. I think the space between this leaf and the satsuma I did not not leave enough white space there. I can go in with white paint, but this is a study, so I'm just gonna leave it. Just gonna work on just developing the leaf itself. It's okay if it's not perfect. All right, let's add some tones into these leaves. This is darker, we've got like a grayish kind of reflected light happening, this is lighter, this is more yellow. We've got that underside of the leaf happening. So for the darker part of the leaf, adding some raw umber and just coming back in here. So a bit of darkness here. There's darkness here. On the back side of this. And here. Making more of my base leaf green. Using my green, adding some blue, adding some raw umber. Adding a little bit of warm yellow. Pushing and pulling until you get what you need. It's pretty close to what I originally had. I'm gonna actually add a little more yellow to come back in this area. The underneath of this leaf is much more muted, so, more raw umber, more yellow. Yellow ocher might be good in here too, to mix in. I'm gonna use a little bit of that stem. For the highlight running through this leaf, a little bit of white to my lighter tone. A little bit here. I wanna push this little part back a lot more so I'm gonna just use some raw umber. Here too on this leaf. Here. Here at the base where the shadow is. Shadow actually has a lot of orange, so I'm gonna pick up a little bit of orange. Mix some of my gray to create my shadow. Using just little bits of paint here. It's a little bit of shadow at the base of that orange, we kind of didn't do, so let's just lightly add some on top there. This is a pretty harsh shadow here. I'm just using a little bit of my raw umber on a slightly damp brush. Let's add one more highlight, kind of in this area. Refining it until I like the way it looks. Yeah. Maybe taking a little bit of my white to add to part of the stem here. Just squint your eyes and just see if you're missing anything that's like super dark or super light, but, yeah, I think that looks good. I can fiddle with this forever. You can see that I painted my satsuma slightly smaller than life this time, so it's a little bit smaller on the paper. You can continue rendering this, adding more highlights and more shadows, but these are study, the idea is for you to get your paintbrush on the paper, create a habit of looking, observing, and painting, and I think we've done that.

Day 4: Mushrooms
- We're gonna paint some cute little mushrooms. These are always really fun to draw and sketch and paint. Their shape is so interesting, and sometimes the colors could be interesting. These are harder to see where the highlights lay because the light's kind of being absorbed into the mushroom, so just squint your eyes a lot for this. And you can follow along with something else. We're doing a pair this time which will be fun because we are gonna have two objects to paint. I'm gonna mix a medium-brownish color using white, a little bit of raw umber, and then this is very gray, flat. It's a much warmer tone, so add a little bit of yellow. A little bit of warm red. Keep mixing until we find the right balance color. So just hold that up and see what it looks like. It needs more yellow. I think it'll do for our medium tone. It's gonna get darker. Starting with this front mushroom. This little arc. This is the outer part. You can start with a sketch if you want to first. This looks a little thicker. That's pretty close I think. Paint the other one. Okay, that's good to start. I'm gonna come in with just some

white. The white is not so opaque that it's gonna look super white while all this other paint is still wet. So we'll just come in. This is a little cooler than I would like, so let's actually to our white add a little bit of warm yellow and a little bit of warm red. There we go. Just make some gill action under here going into the stem. I'm okay using a little bit of dry brush in here, because there's so much texture. So if the paint feels dry, that's fine. I feel like there's kind of a large brushstroke that could happen there to mimic that. So let's do that. Just always looking at my painting and then back at my subject. Okay, now let's add some darks and see what happens. To our first initial mix we're gonna just add more raw umber, darken this down. This is too cool a color. It's too close to gray. I want it to be a little bit warmer. Add some warm yellow, some warm red. And keep doing it until you find the right color. I could even mix in a little bit of burnt sienna. This is actually a color I use a lot when doing watercolor. It's kind of a warm brown. Like that. Just using my brush. Again sometimes it's very dry, and in this case I really like that, because that's what these mushrooms look like. I think it is more grayish, so like a cooler brown in here. So come back and do that. The same thing with the top of this mushroom. Just using the dry brush. I'm missing a little bit of my lighter tone here. Come back and add that. Squinting, squinting, always squinting. This is a little bit darker. This part is all... This front part of the mushroom is kind of shadowing this entire section. So even though it's lighter in color it's still in shadow, so don't ever lose that. There's also some more shadowy bits here. That's pretty good. Let's add some shadows and see how we feel about it. Using my existing mushroom color I'm just gonna add white and I think throw a little bit of blue in the shadow. So that feels good. There's this kind of like harsher shadow there. I'd say more blue. So the shadows that are being cast are really weird. We've got lines here, here, here. And then in some cases I'm kind of covering where the shadow goes. The shadow does get darker as it comes closer to the object. That's like a weird arc. I'm just gonna use a little bit of white so I have something to kind of work into. Smear it all around, that's fine. Coming back to my shadow color. There's a shadow happening there. This shadow is really dark coming right off the back of this toadstool. So paint that if we can. Here, too. Here. I want to add a little bit more blue back into that shadow. I don't want it to be exactly my mushroom color. These shadows are really weird. It's okay though. All right, not a ton of contrast. There's a little bit of a highlight here I can maybe enhance a bit. Yeah, I think that's good. We're just painting these mushrooms as they lie on the table here, but you can rearrange them. You could paint over and over. You could spend an entire month just painting this one pair of mushrooms, because there are so many different angles you could do. You could play with the lighting. They could be on their backs as opposed to on their sides. So if you're not satisfied with your first study, try a different arrangement, change up your lighting and play. You could time yourself. You could do one-minute painted studies and then move on to the next one. Sort of like I do when I'm doing blind contours with friends. You can give yourself different challenges to meet the needs of whatever painting practice you want to create.

Day 5: Banana
- We're continuing with our theme of fruits and veggies and we're gonna paint a banana. And I would say the more marked up the banana, the more fun it is to paint. So get something that's not perfectly pristine. This one has a few marks on it. I switched to a Bright which is a flat tipped brush and I'm mixing a little bit of my warm yellow and my cool yellow to get somewhere in between. I'm probably gonna add actually a little bit of white because I feel like this is a bit saturated. And let's just hold it up to our banana. Looks pretty good. I switched to the Bright because the banana has these kind of squared off edges. Like look how that bruising creates basically a line. Our

pomegranate had some interesting edges too actually. But I feel like this brush will help me lay down this first layer nicely. It holds a little bit more paint than our Filbert we were using. So it's still very vibrant, this color. Just trying to look at this shape. So a little stem. Painting this a little bit smaller than it is in real life. It's probably good to start. Sticking with this brush. I'm gonna add a little bit of white. And I'm gonna come in here, add some patches. Just like a little bit of highlight back there. Can add a little bit of warm red. Oop, way too much red. And actually something like the Burnt Stein. It might be better instead of red. Just gonna add a little bit of this to our existing banana color. I think that's actually greener. But maybe this would be good for some over the bruises are. Add just a little bit of blue. Trying to get the tiniest amount on my brush. Mix it in to my existing banana color. Too green. Let's just see. Kind of going for that. Yeah, okay. Definitely in that stem. A little bit with the Burnt Sienna and I'm just gonna go over this back edge. You can see how that makes it pop a little, but that's what I'm seeing though, is like a pretty fined edge on that back ridge there. This is more shadowy. So let's see. We've got just a little bit of that green tone. Adding the Umber, I think, makes it a little too warm. So adding the Burnt Umber makes it a little too warm. Let's add the Raw Umber which is that kind of gray brown tone. See what that does for us. I like that better. Over here. Okay. I think that's probably blocked out enough. Squinting, squinting. I think this is actually just a little bit darker. So I'm just kind of laying it down that edge there. Here too. We still have that really dark end to add. Okay, going back to my Filbert. I'm gonna work on this tip and this end. Raw Umber, a little bit of Burnt Umber. More Umber. Little bit of blue. I'm gonna get this. And that. And while I have it, I'm gonna just go all on this edge to get some of that bruising. Just kind of dancing the brush. Yeah, good. I might go back in. The clean brush, and just kind of make those not perfect lines. Scruff 'em a little. Get some marks that go across the surface. And we've got a banana beauty mark there. Okay, good, almost done. I would say, in general, this needs to be more shadowy. This needs to be a little bit more shadowy. 'Cause once this is dry. I'm just watering down a little bit of my kind of greeny color. I'm just gonna go in and sort of glaze over that end of the banana. Same thing here. Yeah, that's fine. Just a little bit of a highlight right here. Right there. Here. Let's add a shadow. Shadow color, it's definitely on the bluer grayer side. Just gonna mix white into my light yellow here. Add a little bit of blue. Add a little bit of my Raw Umber. Test my shadow color. It's a little green. Add more blue. More Umber. It might be too dark. Let's just see. Oh, that's good. Shadow comes down like this. It's pretty light in here. And add some white so I can work into it with my shadow. It doesn't have to be perfect white. That's fine. Just helps me from painting like it's watercolor because otherwise I would just use water and spread it into the paper. If you're working on canvas, you definitely aren't gonna be doing that so might as well start your good habits. Put your white down so you have something to work into. Go back with my shadow color. I need to add some darker darks, just using my Raw Umber. There. Here. More white in here. I need to find banana edge. Shadows like really dark under this part of the banana. Yeah, I think that looks good. You should peel the banana and try painting in that way. The banana is gonna change over the hours even because of the marks and the bruising and as it ripens. You could paint the same banana over the course of a day or even a week. And that would change a lot and that would be a fun little series to do. Again these are just jumping off points for daily studies. You can work with any fruit or vegetable you have at home. Really observe the shape. Mix your colors appropriately. Squint your eyes as much as you can so that you can see the value and then play with your color.

Day 6: Radish
- We're gonna paint a radish. Radishes are really cute, they're fun to stylize, they come in lots of

different colors, you can include the leaves or not. Mine is a little past its prime. Its leaves are a little wilty, but that doesn't matter, we can still paint them. I'm using my cool red, I added a little bit of this podge pink color, it's like a bluer pink. It's really way too saturated, let's add a little bit of burnt sienna, maybe a little bit of blue. No blue. It's kind of a shadow color. Let's do a little more of this podge pink. Some of the more pastel colors will have white in them, so you don't need to use white instead. That looks pretty close. This is gonna be really dark right away. I might wipe off a little bit of my paint and just keep that thinner application in the center, 'cause I know there's actually gonna be a highlight in there. I'm using my Filberts, it's basically my favorite. It's not perfectly round so I don't want it to look perfectly round. If these kind of dry brush edges, that's fine. If you're painting a background every time then those are especially okay because you're gonna be painting a background right up into it and you can go right over. Okay. It's good. Let's add a little bit more blue, a little of this burnt sienna. Come in here. Get some of that dark tone. Just a little bit of darkness here. We got a lot of gray and modeling because the radishes haven't been washed so there's some dirt on the surface. I'm gonna attempt to get a little bit of that. Gonna pull in some white. It's definitely a more tan color, so add a little bit of yellow. This will be harder to color match because it's sort of translucent, so you can just kinda guess at the color and put it down, see if you like it. Right now the center of this is pretty flat, it's like mostly one color. What makes a highlight pop is having something really dark next to something really light, so this is actually the darkest part of the darkest part of this radish, and this is light, so we're gonna maybe even accentuate that a little bit. Add some darker part right here. In between both waters, that's fine. And... Gonna make a little highlight here. Yeah, that's good. Add this tail. Might come back in with a little bit of white. Not perfect white, like a tannish white. Come in there, you can use your round brush for this too. I feel like there's a little pink just sort of right here. Maybe a little in there. Adding the leaves will make it feel less like a cherry. Looks like a cherry sorta right now. Using a little bit of my fern, fresh fern, a little bit of my warm yellow. Want to create my leaf tone. Too saturated, let's add a little bit of raw umber and burnt umber maybe. Just to mute it a little. It's okay. It's pretty light, coming from the back of the radish. Loosely kind of sketching in this paint that's lighter than it actually is. Let's do some leaves. Okay good. And then... I need some darker greens in here. Add a little blue, a little raw umber. I feel like Bob Ross, although I haven't made you paint little happy trees yet. I'm just doing sort of quick brush strokes. I'm not worrying about like veins and other little things. I'm gonna switch to a round. And just change up some of the color along here, there's like even a little bit of pink right there, so I just want a thinner brush so I can capture that. Take some pink right in there. Dip back into my greens, move that out so it's not perfectly pink. Some of that in here. Can use a little bit of water if you don't want all that dry brushy look, that's fine. Add a little white and get some of these lighter colors. Come into this. Can omit things if you don't want to paint them like weird little hairs or tails or whatever, that's fine. There are a few little sprouty things coming off the radish here. So a few little details since I have my round brush, and let's add our shadow wall, I have the little brush. I'm gonna create a shadow color. A little bit of blue and white. Might add a little bit of the burnt sienna, 'cause it's already kind of on the pinky red side. More blue, definitely more white. It's probably good to start. This little tail thing has actually two shadows coming off and then kind of almost makes like a pitchfork over here. I don't want to paint all of them. Let's just paint part of it. So there's this part where it touches down, I'm gonna mix that, and this part that comes here. It kinda comes from below the radish. I might switch to a bigger brush. Get that shadow. I'm painting over those little hairs, I can add them back in a minute. Shadow's getting a little green because of, my brush wasn't fully clean. Make our shadows over here too. Don't forget the elements in the back

here. Add some white so I can sorta blend in. I'll just come back and refine this shadow just a little. Get a little darker here. White's getting a little nice, I'm just gonna make sure I'm not leaving these weird holes around that little tail. And I'll just go back and clean up. Just right here where we got a little lost. I think that looks good, I'm happy with like the looseness, fine with the looseness in some of this. I do think I would like a little bit more vibrancy right in the center so I'm just gonna use that pure red. And just kind of lay it right on top. Like I said and have said before, any color with pinks dry a little bit darker than they appear on your palette, so. Liven that up a little. Yeah, I think that looks pretty good. Don't discount any of your subjects because they're not at their prime freshness. Flowers and fruits are often really more interesting to work with and paint when they are kind of in a state of decay, so take a second, look around your kitchen and see what you can paint.

Day 7: Berry Branch
- Today's painting is gonna be a bit of a challenge. We have this little berry branch which has a lot of different elements. When I approach a subject like this, I'm not gonna look and paint every single berry, that might drive you insane. You can work up to that. You can build up to that. We're going to get the impression or we're gonna do a study of this little berry branch. I'm gonna actually start differently than we have before, using that half inch flat, also known as a bright. I'm actually just gonna paint white so I have something to work into. So I don't have to painstakingly paint in between all these little bit of negative space. You can even tint this a little bit if that helps you. You can pick up a little bit of your shadow color if it's still wet. I feel like it's just kinda priming the surface. I'm not leaving a lot of paint on there because I don't want it to be super juicy wet when I go to paint into it, I just want it to be a little bit tacky. Now I'm using my filbert. I'm gonna mix a color for this branch. I probable don't actually need any white. Mixing right on top of my old, dried paint. Which is fine. If you start to pick up bits of dry paint and it becomes like little bits of texture in your painting and you don't want it, then just clean your palette. Wanna get it a little bit darker than that. Little bit warmer. Seems a, no, that looks pretty good actually. Getting a little bit of this. I'm switch to my filbert. I'm gonna do some quick sort of gestural sketching with my brush to get these twigs. If you press down you'll get a thicker line, but I'm sitting right on the tip of my brush. Don't worry about getting every single branch, or every single berry. This has a lot going on, so may or may not get every little thing that's in there. Yeah, I think that's good to start. Let's thicken up the end of this. You have to remember no one's gonna see whatever object you started with. They're just gonna see your finished painting, be like "Wow, that's amazing!" Now I'm gonna look for kinda the medium berry color here and paint that next, and then we can add highlights and shadows. It's definitely a pink. It's definitely not as vibrant as Podge Pink mixed with red. So I can add a little bit of burnt sienna and I can add a little bit of my raw umber. A little more red. Let's see what that looks like. It's probably more my shadow color. Let's just add a little more pink. And I'm gonna just use my filbert to make little berries. It's not gonna make a perfect circle. You're gonna have to just manipulate it. But these berries aren't perfect circles anyway. So that's great. I guess that I'm not gonna paint every single berry and every single twig. You can see that there is a berry at the end of every twig, so anywhere where I have an ending I know there has to be a berry. These berries are also a little desiccated, they're not fully plump and ripe. So that's fine. I do wanna add more berries in here so I'm gonna start adding berries and I can add stems later. Just going right on top of places where I already had my twigs. Looks like a little cluster here. Your inclination is gonna be like, "Make everything perfect and make it kind of pattery." But that's not really how it is in nature, so when you start to look closely at things you'll see how irregular they are. Let's add a little set here. I'm

gonna go back in with my branch color and add some stems. Can add a little bit of water if your brush is just very dry. Sometimes stems are poking through little bits of berries. Think that looks good. My berries are looking a little squarish so I might go in with my smaller round and just clean them up a little. So this is a little more finicky. And you can see I left out a stem there, so add a stem. So round brush, good for making round shapes. They don't have to be perfectly circles, but I don't want them to be all squarish so I'm going in with the round. Just cleaning 'em up a little. Still working in that medium tone, medium berry tone. I'm just gonna turn my paper 'cause it's easier for me to get to it. There. 'Kay, that looks better. While I have my round brush out let's actually add some little highlights to this branch, so slightly lighter color here. Get that end. It's kind of appearing in some places but maybe not all. Rinse it out and then let's get a lighter pink for our highlights. Add some white to our Podge Pink, but I don't want it to be this pink. I'm gonna add a little bit of the burnt sienna, little bit of the red. There we go. Some white. Too much! Go back, add a little bit more red. Little more burnt sienna. Now more white. 'Kay. Think that's good. And I'm just gonna add some highlights. They're kind of on the right side of some of these berries. So I can just create a little dab. So some of this is observation and some of this is invention because we didn't do every single berry in exactly how we see it, and that's okay, 'cause it's a little study. And then I'm gonna do a darker color that's a little bit more purpley. Red, raw umber, will give us a nice raisin tone. And I'm gonna do the left side of some of these. And anything that's kind of underneath, so there's probably some darkness in here. You might wanna bring a little bit of that color into your stem, warm up your stems a little bit in some places. And let's add shadows. Still keeping my round brush because we know these are gonna be little shadows. Squinting. Gonna start with my burnt sienna but it's really too warm a tone so we have to add some blue. Too much blue! Good. It's a little bright. 'Kay. That's better, and the shadows reconnect to the branch in a lot of places. Again the shadow's not gonna be exactly the same because we're not painting exactly what we see, we're doing an interpretation. Don't forget about these weird little spaces inside, they're darker actually, the shadow's even darker in there. So there's a cluster. And this isn't actually casting a shadow 'cause it's so far from the table, but if I pressed it down you'd see that there'd be a shadow at the base. So I might just add that here and do what we kinda have learned which is it's really dark closest to the base and then lightens up as it gets farther away. Little water on my brush there. Yeah, and then I might just clean up, there's a few areas where my shadows went over my berries, which is not a huge deal. I'm just gonna clean up a couple places. Looks good. Don't be intimidated by things that seem complex at first. You are building your skills. So you already know how the shadows are gonna lie. You know how to mix your shadow color. You know how things will behave in space. So use those skills and hone those skills. Also don't be afraid to edit things down. We had a branch that had a lot of berries. It could be a little bit overwhelming or complex. We are not going to avoid the object entirely, instead we're gonna kinda get the impression and the feel. The study still looks very similar but I did not paint every single berry and every single twig. You will begin to gain confidence the more you paint. You'll know how to tackle it. You can say, "Oh I know how to deal with the shapes, "the light and the shadow, mixing my color." And then you can approach any object this way.

Day 8: Persimmon
- Another winter fruit that's so beautiful are persimmons. There're two types of persimmons. I can never remember which one is which. This perhaps may be the Fuyu persimmon, this is the squatty one and not the pointed bottom one. But I love the little, kind of floral, flower shaped leaf at the top. Even though it's like a round fruit in general, it has kinda flat sides. It's a really interesting shape. And

because this one is pretty ripe it has a lot of also interesting colors in it, not just orange, it's not just a persimmon colored persimmon, it's got lots of colors. So it's good for us for color study. Working with my filbert which I love and dipping into yellow ochre, which I don't think we're used before, but it's one of my favorite colors. It's like a warm, earth tone-y yellow. Little bit of my red. I actually have my cool red on my pallet, let's add a little bit of my warm red as well. I'm gonna go for actually a color much lighter than the persimmon, over all. I think that's a good general color. From my angle this persimmon is kinda square in a lot of ways. It's like very, kinda cube-y. Need to make some more color. You'll notice that I'm not really dipping into water, 'cause it's not water color. This is water soluble. Can also use a medium, like a blending medium, (mumbles) medium, but we're just working just pretty quickly 'cause these are studies. So we don't need that much water. 'Kay, good. I like that. I'm gonna add a little burnt Sienna and raw umber. Get some of these darker colors in the back. Got kind of a dark band here. Just adding little patches of dark where I see them. And there're quite a few, some are shadows and some are bruises, so, it's not always easy to discern which is which. (water splashing) There's a little bit of like, brighter orange here. It's pretty subtle, but maybe I'll enhance it a little. I'm gonna add some of the warm yellow to our persimmon base color. Let's do a few little patches. Squint to help you see the value, the dark and the lights. But this is a fun one where you can play more with color. We're gonna pay attention to darks and lights too, but I actually like enhancing some of these bruise-y spots, I tend to like kinda bruised looking fruit, so it's fun to kind of enhance that sometimes. There're some pretty red reds in here too. These little patches are fun. There's one here. Let's address the leaf, since I'm kind of dancing around it. (water splashing) I'm gonna use a little bit of that yellow ochre also. Little bit of that fern green, since we have it. It's a pretty gray green. If I was doing water color, this would definitely be an oxide of chromium green. Got kind of a muddy tone, but it's too late so I'm gonna add a little bit of the raw umber. Let's just see what that looks like. It's still kinda too green. More raw umber. It's like a pretty gray color. It's pretty though, I like it. That's a little better. We're gonna add our darks and our lights to this, but we're just getting the base down. From my angle, this leaf is just crossing over the edge of this persimmon, so, I'm gonna paint it that way. Try to get the shape a little more accurately. Again, if your leaf shape is not perfect, don't worry about it. We're just trying to get a little study here. And most of this top leaf is much lighter than this, but this is kind of our medium tone. Adding some white to that and maybe a little bit of ochre. I'm actually gonna go in and brighten up some of this leaf. I'm actually kinda painting toward the center because it looks that way. With these short little strokes. Center has some lightness there too. (water splashing) Gonna add some darks to this. So this dark part, this is not actually dark leaf, this is the shadow underneath the leaf that's making this darkness here. So I'm not gonna pain dark green, I'm gonna pain the persimmon dark underneath. So I'm not adding that here while I'm working on my leaf. This is just for the dark parts of the leaf. (water splashing) Let me just feather some of this out a little, so it's not so extreme. (water splashing) Come back under where that leaf appears to be dark, but it's really the persimmon underneath. And let's get a dark patch under there. It's pretty dark. Might even be darker than that. Here. Here too. Even darker, let's go even darker. Just adding more raw umber. A little more blue. A little more deeper red. There. There. That's good. Seeing where there are dark patches. I think I feel like I have most of 'em. Looking at this distance, looks actually a little bit deeper or longer. I think that's just because I was sitting more on top of the persimmon and then I kinda moved back in my chair. I don't wanna change my whole painting, so I'm just gonna go with it. When I sit up closer then it's shorter, when I'm far back this is longer. That's okay. These are the things you're learning as you go. (water splashing) I wanna add some highlights onto the

persimmon itself. I don't know if you can hear the birds outside, but they're really excited about this painting. They're making lots of happy noises. Just mixing up a color for these highlights here. Looks like a little bit of reflected light here. A little here. (water splashing) Just gonna clean off my brush and kinda smooth out some of those. And come back in with a lighter version of that color. Brighter highlights. I feel like the center of the leaf can have a little more definition. This'll be darker. Darkness here. (water splashing) I'm gonna use my round real quick. It's the one that gives us our point and there just like this little thing in the center. (water splashing) And to make that part look dark you also need a highlight, just opposite it. Might add just a little really light yellow-y peachy tone right here. Smooth that edge out a little. (water splashing) Little bright patch there. (water splashing) That's good. Okay, now let's add our shadow. Again we have multiple shadows happening, let's just do this warm round shadow. (laughs) Those birds are so excited. (water splashing) I'm gonna go back to my filbert for the shadow. It's darker closer to the object, you should know this by now. Just right there. Maybe even darker. Might put some white paint down so I have something to mix into. Got a little white paint right onto my persimmon. Work this a little more. (water splashing) Still want it a little tiny bit darker closer to that persimmon then I think we're done. Going for more deep purple color here. (water splashing) Just gonna fan it out. And last, because I painted a little bit over my persimmon, I'm just gonna clean up that once edge. Just here. By now you might be making trips to the grocery store and instead of thinking about what you wanna eat you're thinking about your fruit and vegetables in a totally new way and thinking about what you wanna paint instead.

Day 9: Rubber Ball
- We're gonna move away from fruits and vegetables and move into household objects. So you can paint along with me with anything that you have at home. I'm going to start today off with a bouncy ball. I have a collection of these. Just put up our little backdrop for our bouncy ball. Starting with our Filbert. I'm gonna do a base color using a little bit of white, a little bit of yellow, and a little bit of Raw Umber. We'll start with this color. It may not be exactly. This may be a little more gray, but that's okay. We're gonna start with this guy. Try not to wiggle the table too much so the ball doesn't move. You can put a little tiny lentil or pea or something behind. An object that is round so it doesn't roll away. A little grain of rice, all of these would be uncooked. Lentil, pea, grain of rice. I know people have a hard time painting white objects. People always say Charlie is hard to paint 'cause he's white, but really the whites are made up of all these other colors. Like this is a pretty putty looking color. But it's gonna be a good base for our bouncy ball. This is definitely a cool red. It's a bit darker actually. I'm gonna use a little bit of the Raw Umber to deepen that. Maybe a tiny bit of blue. That's pretty close. I'm gonna start by doing the pattern on the ball itself. You can use round for this too if you have something that has more detail, finer lines. What's interesting about this is that the patterning, they're not lined, they're like staticky lines. Which is kind of fun. I'm not sure what the process is for making this, but it'll be interesting to paint. I'm working mostly dry brushy here. And I might switch to my round. Just cause I do have some really fine lines happening soon. I just got this guy. These lines look pretty straight because of the way they happen to be falling on the ball. It's possible that if you have something that's patterned, has geometric patterns on a curved shape that those will actually bend and move with the curve of the ball. Doesn't seem to be quite the case until I get to this line which does curve. I just got some skinny little lines there. I might wanna go back in with my base color so that these lines aren't all super crisp because of the way, I guess that the ball is made, it's kind of like vibrating lines. Sort of irregular. This is maybe more pink

in here. It's not quite the right pink. I'm pretty happy with the way this is looking. I think I missed a little white, tiny little white line in there. I may or may not be able to get it back in. It's okay, I kind of omit things if needed. This is pretty flat looking because I haven't added any shadows or highlights to it. It's just kind of the ball and its pattern. Just clean up a few things here and then we'll add some shadowy marks to it and some highlighty marks to it. Paint a little bit of white around it for when we go to our shadow or when we need to clean up any edges. So I might just put some white down. Try to make sure you have a clean brush while painting just your white. Cut into that a little bit, swipe it away. We're gonna work from our base white and make a slightly darker color. So that I can come in, in some places where there's this cream tone, but it's kind of in shadow. I'm gonna have to refine some of my lines. Kind of refining this edge and I'm gonna paint some of the red lines back in, but I want this shadowy color all along this edge. Go back with our darker. Just refining our colors, refining our shapes. Adding a shadow to this is also gonna help ground the ball a little. Because these lines are so fine on this ball, I'm just kind of going back and forth between the red and my base cream tone or the shadowy cream tone. They're a lot of fine lines in here I'm missing. I can go back and put them back in. Add this shadow. Little bit of the Raw Umber and blue. It's too dark. This is probably okay to start. See, the shadow is always darker closer to the object. Some of the white I've laid down is already dry. So I can go back and add some more. You could of course paint your entire background and work into that and play with your brushstrokes and stuff. I kinda like just these messy little brushstrokes surrounding my object. I think they're interesting. I wanna darken some of these lines because this is more in shadow than it appears. Gonna add more Raw Umber to my red. Just sort of pushing and pulling things back and things forward until you like the look of it. Just I don't have this white halo going around my ball, I will just bring this kind of background white. This is just pure white out of the bottle. The brushstrokes and the color of the paint are just enough different from the paper to create kind of an atmosphere. I'm gonna come back in and just give this more of a defined edge here. Just redefining until I like it. It's pretty good. There's a white highlight right here. There's a little bit of white here. And here. I still think there needs to be a little more shadow here. Put down some paint and rinse my brush and with just a slightly damp brush, I'm just gonna kind of feather this off. I want it to be less contrasty there. Yeah, I think that's good. You can take the same object and paint it more than once. This ball is a perfect candidate for that because the pattern is changing in every direction that I move the ball. I painted it earlier and you can see this one looks a bit like a peppermint because of where the pattern fell onto the ball and that spiral was kind of ending in the center there. The shadow is different. The tone is slightly different. Today the ball looked much warmer. There was more yellow that I used and the shadow was warmer. This was much more like violety gray. So one thing, you can spend an entire month of just doing studies of one single object or one piece of fruit. And I encourage you to paint whatever inspires you. So if it's this bouncy ball and you just do bouncy balls for the rest of this month, and that's awesome because the idea is just do a daily painted study.

Day 10: Spoon
- Painting metallic or shiny objects can be a little bit tricky, but there's no reason that it should deter you from having a go at it, making a try. We're gonna paint one of my soup spoons. I'm actually gonna create a base color of this. It's kind of a warm tone. And then we can add our lights and darks from there. So I often pick the medium color that I'm seeing. I'm using the warm yellow and not the cool yellow. There's a little bit of red in it too 'cause it's on the pinkish side. You can see that this is gonna be way too saturated. If I hold that up, it's too saturated, so it needs more white and maybe a

little bit of the raw umber to kind of tone it down. Gray it a little bit. This is just a good reminder of how you need to paint what you see, not what you think you see. If someone told you to paint a spoon, you would never start with peach, but that's kind of the color we're making. All right, I'm actually gonna kinda rotate my paper so it matches what I'm painting. Painting my spoon shape. Adding just a little bit of water so I can get cleaner edge instead of a dry brush edge. You can play with the angle of your spoon, obviously. Kind of drawing with my paintbrush right now. Whoa. Made that a little fat, but I can clean it up with white toward the end. Just using a little bit of water, I'll kind of fade it out so there's not a paint ridge. It's a pretty good start, I think. This little area needs to be addressed. Always be looking back at your subject as much as you can. Okay, that's a good start, I think. Start putting in some of our other shadows. Work from this base color. There's way too much blue in this, so add a little bit of our warmer red tone and maybe a little more white, a little more yellow. If you add too much of one color, just mix in the other components and get it back to where you need it. It is a delicate balance in finding that right tone. All right, good. So there's kind of this blocky shadow here that goes right up to the edge of the spoon. There's more of that color there. Just a little bit of it here. Just trying to see where this color is. It's not as quite as pronounced there, so I might just with a clean, damp brush feather that out a little. There's a highlight here and a little highlight here. Here as well. We're not going to paint all that tiny fine detail in that inlay there. We're just gonna be like, oh, there's a highlight. I'm gonna have to go over this, 'cause I still am missing some more medium tones. There's a lot of peach still in the spoon. Let's add some darks, though. Okay. That's maybe a little dark. Doing all of this with a Filbert. Light touch here. If I have a line thicker than I want, I can rinse off my brush and kinda smooth out that line a little. This edge is dark. Do a light touch, though. Squint. Remember to squint. I'm working a little bit more delicately in here, just until I get what I want going. Some of these kinds of objects can be hard because shadows will begin on a flat part and then continue onto an edge, and so they're changing shape. Just be patient. Constantly be referring back to your object. This is really dark here. So I'm smoothing that out, but I may wanna just go in a little more heavy-handed, thicker brushstrokes. Here. Squinting, squinting. You may determine your darkest dark and then decide that it needs to be darker or lighter, in which case you can reevaluate your tones, and that's fine. It needs to be more white here. It should probably be a warmer white. But I don't wanna make it too dark, so just a little bit of yellow into my white. And also switch to your round brush if you need more fine points. You can kinda get lost in the reflective surfaces, looking and seeing things. I might paint the spoon darker here on my painting, because that highlight is so bright and I really want it to pop, so I'm coming back to my painting and just making this a little bit darker right next to it so that I can go back and just make sure that that highlight is really popping, 'cause to me that's definitely the brightest. Go back in with my slightly warmed white. To really intensify those highlights, we know it's a finer line, but sometimes it kinda reflects onto the surface above and below or to the left and right so the highlight is a little bit rounded. And you may have to do a couple coats of white, like wait for something to dry and then go back over it, and that's fine. There are a few little guys in here. I think that's pretty close. Why don't we add a shadow? Shadow's on the warmer side. I do want it to be different than the colors in the spoon, however, somewhat. Can paint a little bit of white around this too so that I have something to paint into, like we've been doing. I'll do that in just a sec. You can tint your white a little bit too. The white has a different texture than the paper, so I don't need to in this case, but I could if I wanted. You can make it any color. Back in with my shadow. It's actually pretty dark. Right by the base of the spoon. It's a little warmer than I want it, so... Just mix up a little bit more, some blue in it. There we go. Kinda came into my spoon there. Just using a clean, damp

brush. I'll just wipe some of that away. All right, the shadow fades out into this white. Just wanna clean up this little area in between the spoon and the shadow. Just a little crisper. There we go. The shadow is right up to the spoon. I'm squinting, and I can see that my shadow just needs to be a hint darker on this side. It's really close to the spoon right now. Even though it's cooler than the spoon is. You don't have to correct this if you have also made the same choices. You could just leave it and know that next time, okay, I'm gonna pay more attention to the shadow color. But it will help that spoon pop a little. The fun thing about metallic objects is they reflect all of the colors around them. So we have some warm tones in this spoon because there's a pink wall in here. I was painting one at home also, additionally warm tones because my living room has some warm tones in it. So you can play with having metallic objects in front of different surfaces or in rooms that are lighted a little bit differently, and you'll see different colors reflected. And just doing that push and pull with dark and lights will really allow you to kind of capture that metallic quality. You can see this one that I painted does not actually have a shadow, so I still need to do that.

Day 11: Buttons
- If you're looking for things to paint, just search your drawers, your house. I have some buttons; I have a whole box of these buttons, and they're a little bit of a challenge 'cause they're tiny. We might paint them slightly larger than life. They're also white, and like I mentioned before, sometimes white things can seem hard to paint, but it's a great challenge. Working with my round brush, this happens to be a size three. We're gonna paint these a little bit darker. We can add our shadows and our highlights. They seem to be a little bit warmer than that, so add a little tiny bit of my warm red. So I'll probably paint these slightly larger than life. The right edge is a little wonky. You know how my hand makes strokes, so I'm just gonna turn this a little bit just so I can clean up that edge, 'cause I don't want to have a lumpy button. Okay, there's one. And I flipped one over. So it's a different look to it 'cause you can't see the ridge all the way around the perimeter. Again, I'm just gonna rotate, 'cause I know how my hand makes the motion. Just to smooth the edge out. Okay, we can refine the shape a little. That might be a bit too round. These are probably more at an angle than how I've painted them. I'll correct that as we go. So then I need to make a shadow color. I'll just work into my base color with a little bit of my raw umber. It's a little bit warmer than that, so. This is actually maybe a good place to add some burnt sienna to my palette, because it's not red, but it does have a warm, reddish tone. It could be good. So there's this lip. (water sloshing) Again, I might just turn this a little bit to get this mark. I like it. There's too much water on my brush. I'm erasing as I go. So let's put more paint back on the brush. Shadows are gonna make a huge difference in making this button come to life. It's a little finicky but you can do it. This whole left side of this other button is shadowy because it's domed. I'm just blending my shadow color and my base color. This needs to be darker. Curved button, I'm making curved strokes. I like the color of that shadow; I'm gonna add it here. And then I'm gonna start to add some of the shadows to ground these objects to, because the relationship of all these shadows is important to make this look like an object. Getting a little bit of dried paint while I'm painting which means it's time for me to clean my palette, so I'll do that after I'm done with this little study. Shadows rounder. Good. Shadow coming off the other button too, of course. And then actually comes behind this button, just a little bit. Looks like I made that button too big, so I might try to correct it a little. Let's get this shadow in here first. Just gonna rotate this and clean up this edge. This shadow needs to be darker. Darker than that, even. A shadow really comes like this. (water sloshing) A button comes to about there. Make sure my brush is as clean as I can get it. And just clean up a little bit with this white, 'cause I made my button too big. Let's add

the holes to our buttons. Using my shadow color, we'll drop those in. So one here. One here. Here. Here. Oh, a little wonky but that's okay. We're gonna add a second kinda layer to these holes, also. It's definitely darker under here. Too much water on my brush after cleaning it. That's actually kind of like a secondary shadow in here. (water sloshing) Let's clean up that edge. If your painting is dryish, you can just use a wet, damp brush to clean up any paint that you accidentally got over. You can just go back in with your color too, and clean up. This button opening's a little wonky. Yeah, it's okay. So there are a couple things. The holes actually have depth to them, so we need to add that. There is a tiny, reflective highlight on the edge of this button. Even though that's the darkest part of the button, there's a tiny bit of light reflected back up. It's so small, but needs to be included. There's a white highlight here. There's some white in here. Which is a little bit hard to see, because my base color may be not quite dark enough. It's pretty subtle. I might just darken this edge in here so you can see it a little more. I think I need that other shadow to be darker still. Just rotating so I can get to this edge. I'm not observing the button and then painting it at this angle because it doesn't match what I'm actually looking at. I just know where my shadow's gonna go, and I need to just move the paper so my hand can make the movement. It's helping a little bit. This button looks larger than this button. That's an optical illusion because we have this lip going around all the way on this button, where this button we don't have it, and it's domed. So I'm happy with the size. I'm not worried about that. We still need to add a little bit of detail in here to make this kinda come together, but I feel like I'm missing just a little bit of this reflected peachy tone in here. And definitely in the button openings themselves as well. So I'm just gonna go over that. Feel like there's, just wanna warm 'em up a little, in their color. (water sloshing) This white highlight here. And this white here. Make a darker color, still a little bit warm, so using a little bit of my burnt sienna in here, to drop into the button openings, and they only are the holes. They only go into part of that hole. They're going kind of on the left lower side on this button. And kind of the bottom on this other one. Just adding a little bit of water. I'm gonna go back to my base color because this is looking messy to me, in here. Just wanna clean it up a little so that I can re-add the highlight. Make this more readable and more believable. Cool. Same thing here. Just refining some of this. Whoop, too wet. We're gonna add some lighter color also, to those button holes. 'Cause each little button hole has kind of like a light part and a dark part and even a medium tone. Trying to mix like a warmish white. It's the color that's on this rim highlight here. It's kind of at the left of each hole. So adding that will help. Sort of obliterated the button hole there, so clean brush, wipe it away. Come back for your highlight color. Kind of go back and forth and clean up. Everything needs to be cleaned up. You might wanna just add a little bit of shadow even though it's not there, just to help define that edge. Squint your eyes when you need to. See if there's anything that you did not catch. Just smooth out one more curve and I think we're good. Too much water on my brush. Playing with the scale of the object you choose to paint can be helpful and honing your tiny detail skills or working really large. Jen Orkin Lewis gave me this advice once that somebody gave to her, and they said, "Use the largest brush you can, and then add the detail," which I think is pretty good advice. In this case we had to work pretty small the entire time 'cause we had little, tiny buttons, and sometimes it's fun to do something like that and just change up your scale.

Day 12: Bead
- Today is another fun metallic object. This is the vintage bead I have. It's likely that you probably don't have something similar at your house. You can follow along with the video or use some other kind of metallic object. So this one's gonna be an interesting challenge. It's always fun. I'm gonna

start, I could just use this cool yellow to paint the whole thing because it's kind of like my highlight color. I probably will actually mix a medium gold color here. It's kind of like a greenish looking gold, using my cool yellow. I will have to push over to the green side and my Raw Umber. This object is not a circle. It's actually kind of like a lemon shape. Just make it a little bigger. Maybe slightly larger than it is in real life. I don't know where this came from, but I had it so I thought it would fun to paint. We're finding my shape in just the single color. It doesn't look quite symmetrical. I think I need it to be more like that. I think that's pretty good to start. I'm actually gonna kinda do the lights and then darks before I focus on those little weird striations or pleats. I'm using Yellow Ochre and my warm yellow 'cause there's both warm and cool yellow in this. I'm kinda going for these warm tones. I'm gonna make my brushstrokes and then make the shape of the object. And they may be a little dark. Everything's drying a little bit darker, as it does. It's okay. I can lighten it up. I'm using a little bit of white. Just using my Filbert. Squinting my eyes, I wanna get some of the shadow which is that kind of greeny color I started with plus more Raw Umber. That's happening here. So these kind of bands of color wrap around the object. Some really bright and cool yellow happening here. That might need some white added to it so it pops a little bit more. A little bit of cool yellow here. And in here. Looks so crazy, doesn't it? All right, using our Script, we haven't this Script yet. It also comes to a fine point. Let's get wet so you can see. It's really long and allows you to do fine lines and this might be fun time to use it, why not? This is Script One for this particular brand. I'm gonna pick something slightly darker than my medium tone. Add a little bit of water just because we have these really fine lines we're dealing with here. I'm gonna start to create these horizontal bands that curve with my object. Trying to kind of help start to define the shape of this. They have highlights on them too so they're not consistently this color, but I think this is a good way to start. Just like we do our base color. So now they're starting to curve down. They were curving up before. I might just wanna do one at the top here to kind of help smooth out that edge. Here. I think I need some lightness in here. We're using my warm yellow. Put a little bit of Raw Umber so it's not so saturated. I'm gonna come in here just to add some lines. Here, maybe too a little. Using my cool yellow and a little bit of Raw Umber for that medium tone. I'm gonna add some lines here. It's bringing it together a little bit. Got a good amount of our darks and medium tones. We need some light tones in here pretty soon. Just gonna clean up a little bit in here. Squinting my eyes. Kind of reevaluating where I see those medium tones. That might've been a little too much. Just put away. There's some warm right in here. Forget what day I mentioned this, but sometimes I make the highlights a little bold to see, more bold to see than a line 'cause they kind of spill over the edges. They're brighter, and that's gonna help create that shininess. And keep our round shape also. Yeah, I think that's looking pretty good. We just need our brightest brights and maybe I'm gonna add a little more dark to some of this. I want a warm dark color. I don't have my Burnt Sienna on my palette so I'm just obeying to some of that warm red I have. Some warm darks in here. I think some of what we're seeing also is tarnishing in the middle so that's adding its own kind of flavor. Let's add the shadow on the table. That way this is dried to add our lightest lights. Or biggest highlights. I'm gonna switch to my Filbert. And mix my shadow color. Just a little bit of white, a little bit of Raw Umber. Let's add just a little bit of blue to our palette. That's too blue. Always searching for the right color. You can hold it up to your subject and see how it's matching up. So that's pretty close. It's creating sort of an oval shape. I'm going to paint some white around so I have something to work into. We're not spending as much time on the shadow. You could get really into this because the shadow has a lot of tonality also. And we just want something to ground our shape a little. Just refining it a little. Remember it's darkest closest to the object so we wanna add that back in. It's really dark right here. Looks a little

bit like a golden walnut shell or something. It's not the same texture as a walnut shell, but it's kind of same shape and size. Okay, that's probably fine enough for the shadow. Now that everything else is dry, why don't we add some highlights? They're not white, white. They're a pretty light yellow. So I'm using cool yellow and some white on that Script brush which nice and fine. The highlights are sort of curving here and then there's one warm highlight over there. So they're almost like little dashes or dots. They're kind of on these lines too. Might wanna go over them one more time so they're even more vibrant. There's some warmer ones so I'll dip into my warm yellow with white. Kind of in here. That probably should be more golden colored. There's like a reflected one here too. This one goes up further. This one down. Let's go back to our gold yellow and just change these highlights a little. Let's make them more warm. Just right on top of the white that we painted or the first round of highlights. Good, and then why don't we do the same but with a cool yellow? On the ones that we did on the right hand side so they really pop, pop, pop. Yeah, I think that's pretty good. If I change even slightly my perspective, I get a whole new set of highlights. Slightly, that's probably pretty close. Yeah, that looks good. Approaching something that may be tricky or scary to paint is actually a really great challenge. You may look at this and be like, "Well, I don't have any gold paint." And the idea is you don't want to use gold paint. You want to look at it and see all the brown tones, all the yellow tones, all the white tones that may be hidden in that gold object or silver object or any other object that may have tricky little elements to it. If you look at historic paintings that have jewelry in them, go to your local museum or even if you get an image online where you can kind of zoom in. Look at the jewelry because what makes it look so real from far away are actually just these tiny little white dot highlights. And it's pretty miraculous once you kind of change your perspective and your way of thinking. It influences the way you approach painting and it will make things look more realistic and it'll be a way to hone your skills.

Day 13: Drinking Glass
- When I was planning this daily challenge I posted on Instagram to see what you guys wanted to see painted. Of course, objects, fruits, veggies, the things that we've already covered were on the list, but also glasses, reflective objects, things like vases and glasses you drink out of. Glasses you drink out of, that was one of them. And they're really hard, but we're gonna do it. So I have a little faceted glass that is from my kitchen. I have filled it with some pink liquid, because there's so much white and stuff happening on the table, that way it's gonna help us define our shapes a little bit more. We'll put up our backdrop and we're gonna attempt to paint this guy. I will probably use all the brushes. I'm gonna start with my Filbert. Mixing a little bit of white. I put paint water in the glass, which is the pink color you see, which is going to show up in everything. So everything is gonna have some pink added to it practically, because that color is reflecting. This is a new pink I think for us. It is called pink melon. It's a warm pink, like a coraly pink. I'm gonna start with this rim of the glass and there's no way it would be a perfect circle unless you were looking at it perfectly straight overhead, but we're definitely not doing that. So it's more like a squashed circle. We're gonna be using lots of paint, so refining this edge is gonna happen basically at all points. Some of those edges are starting. And it's generally dark, so I mixed my white with my raw umber and my pink. So this is generally the shape. It's obviously very lumpy, that's okay, 'cause now we're gonna paint the inner part of the glass. Which I can just use a little bit of that rim color, add a lot more white to it. Maybe add a little bit more raw umber, 'cause I don't want it to be quite so pink. And I'm going to just paint the inside of this. Can begin to refine this edge a little. Remember these are daily studies, so spend as much or as little time as you can. If it doesn't look perfect, because you've only spent 10 minutes

then you just know that. Next time you'll spend more time. And you can further refine your shapes and your image. Also, I haven't said this yet, but don't always play it safe, because that is the most boring. I often struggle with having a painting and be like, oh, but I like how it looks, but knowing that there's something in the face that's not quite right. But I'm like uh, if I add this black that's so scary, it's so much contrast, but that's actually what makes things look more realistic and also which makes them exciting to paint and exciting to look at. So don't always play it safe. Paint the glass, the glass is hard. All right, obviously there's gonna be pink in there, so let's add the pink liquid. Which is also, if you look at this glass we have our circle. Our pink liquid is also a little circle in there, we have these facets, the tops of these arches kind of over it, but I know that there's a pink circle in there. The pink circle is not just the pink from the paint, we have to mix the color that we see. It's partially this, it's lighter than this and darker than this. That's pretty light. It might be helpful to just paint the circle and then I can kind of see my lip under there anyway and I can come back to it. I'm just gonna rotate my paper to help me with this motion, then I can refine it. Refine this top edge a little. It's also like light in here too. The edge of that pink liquid, because it's watercolor paint and not something that's like milk that is fully opaque, the edge is actually grayish, because it's becoming more translucent, 'cause it's thinning out where it's meeting the edge of the glass. And then it's kind of darker below it. It's subtle, but sometimes enhancing what you see can help. And then if it's crazy looking, like that, you can tone it down. Just cleaning my brush, tone down too much. I don't wanna tone down with water too often. You really should be using paint. Watercolor, if I was painting with watercolor I'd be using water, but in our case we're using acrylic, so we wanna be using paint. Definitely settle in, because this is a painting that is going to take longer than some of the others. Especially if you've never painted a glass before, 'cause it can be tricky. Some of the arches in the back of the glass are starting to happen. You can see them here. So we should address those. I also think. I'm jumping around a little bit, I don't wanna like fully render anything without kind of addressing the whole thing, so I don't wanna get too detailed just yet, which I can have a tendency to do. I think everybody can. 'Cause you kind of wanna like paint the thing that you're excited about. But you should be working on everything kind of at the same time. So I wanna address this area. Squint your eyes. I was trying to get this kind of darker a little bit in here. Because this is looking like sort of some crazy abstract painting, why don't we actually paint the sides and the bottom of our glass, so you believe me when I say this is how you approach painting a glass. Okay, sides of glass, I can fix this later. I have to say, I don't always recommend this, but sometimes I'll actually take my phone out and take a picture of the object I'm painting and what I'm painting. If you're having a really hard time with some element of your painting sometimes this helps to get this kind of flat perspective and the camera does that. And then you can clearly see like oh, this side I clearly didn't do the right angle. That can be helpful as sort of a trick or sometimes a last resort. This has a lot of darker points and lighter points, but we're just kind of doing the medium tone here. The angle is a bit tricky. Okay, I'm gonna paint in some of this Pepto-Bismol looking liquid. I'm still all working in the Filbert here. The bright or flat square kind of ended brush could be really good too, especially for some of these edges, so we might switch to that at some point. This actually looks a little bit lower than it should be. Don't you just wanna drink this, looks so gross. There's a lot of weird, tricky things happening, because the glass is see-through, it's also faceted on the sides, so you're getting some strange angles and things. This bottom is definitely, like the glass should be ending here, the inside of the glass, but then the bottom of the glass is thick and there's pink again here. I might just delineate some lines at the bottom just to remind myself that this part of the pink is the reflection and this part of the pink is the liquid. So bottom is happening hereish. And there's some strange

kind of edges also. This comes down to far. With a wet cleanish brush I'm just gonna scrub some of that out and we'll go back over it with white paint. And come back to that. All right, let me block in the bottom just roughly. Let's switch to our bright, which has the flat edge. There are a lot of things happening, so I wanna make sure I get all the elements. That is it ish, ish. Okay, let me do some work with my round, get some of these lines. There's some really dark darks, we don't have any of our darkest, what I'm seeing as the darkest in my actual object, I don't have any of that on the paper yet. I want this to be a little darker, so add some blue, but I want it to be a little warmer, so I add some pink. Some really darks in here. I pressed down on my brush, so I got a thicker line, but actually it's thinner in real life. Right there it comes thinner closer to me and then kind of gets thicker toward the edge, the sides here. Just gonna clean that up a little. This is the nice thing about working in acrylic, because it dries pretty quickly, so if you need to do a little bit of cleaning and scrubbing the layer below is usually ready for that and okay with it if you're not doing too much. So it's very light here, as in a light touch, not as in a light color. So I find some pink reflections happening here and here. So I'll just add those while I see them and before I forget about them. Blah, not that pink. Didn't mix enough on my brush. Pink pink. And here it's. That's better color wise. Okay, still a bit of a wobbly edge there, that's okay. There's definitely some darker pink happening here. While it's on my brush, here, here. There are these kinds of striations here on the side. This angle is really hard, from my angle this dimension that kind of is this upper lip is pretty tricky to discern. We'll just do our best. Some strange sort of reflections, things I'm seeing in the glass. And then we're gonna start to get these arches. Because the glass itself is so thick the arches kind of happen at the top and at the bottom of this 1/2 inch band or so. It's always looking at your subject and then looking back. Still wanna kind of fade this out a little bit. There's also more white in here. There's some white in here. There's also arches in the back that we haven't addressed yet, let's not forget those. I might be exaggerating these just a bit. We'll smooth them out in a second. Can see more of the left side of that arch. And that right side of that one. Don't be afraid to, if you need the motion, to pull down to make the right shape, don't be afraid to do that, even if you're painting into your pink liquid, because we can go back and refine our pink. Like I've been saying, there's push and pull in finding shapes and finding colors. You just have to be willing and committed to doing that. And that's what's gonna allow you to learn. The pink in these places changes color, it's kind of light at the top and then a little bit darker and it matches the facets in the glass. Using a bright for this might be a better option, because of those edges. There's a little bit of reflected pink even in that middle layer. There's a little bit of pink on this. Maybe not quite that much pink. We haven't added any of our highlights yet. Our darks on the top of the glass are looking okay. Let's use a little bit of our one script, like we used I think on the buttons, just because I'm gonna be drawing these sort of delicate lines here. Can get a thinner, sketchier kind of feel. I don't wanna draw everything out, but I just wanna keep refining the edges, so this looks like our glass. That's a little thick. There are darker spots in here. These weird little like lines on the left and the right, like on the sides, I think they're almost reflections in repetition of just these arches closest. This isn't quite right, but we're getting there. Also, when I squint my eyes the edges of this liquid looks a little gray, so I gonna very lightly paint a line. I don't want it to be this hard, in just a second I wanna smooth it out a little. So using my just my round or whatever just do a little bit of softening of that line I just painted. But I do see that when I squint. It's because liquid's not entirely opaque. There's also highlights here. I feel like the edges of glasses are the hardest. There shouldn't quite be this much contrast, so I'm just gonna paint this and then I'm gonna come back to it. There's some highlights happening here, kind of like a double highlight. So you'll get to a point where you're kind of working on all things. Like I said,

adding highlights, seeing how that changes things, where you need to go back and add darker things, the bottom of the glass we basically haven't addressed at all. Exaggerate those a little. There's also like a highlight right here on that edge. I might add some more dark there. Made that a little fat. I think using my flat brush or bright I might just kind of soften these. Get a little bit of water, a little bit of white paint mixed with, it's kind of like maybe a pale gray color I'm mixing. I wanna add a little bit of that in here. There's definitely something happening in the base of the cup that is very sort of gray. Using this flat brush while I have it I'm just gonna kind of add some strokes here and there to help with these edges. The bottom of the glass is not perfect, but I also kind of don't mind it. It is definitely darker, which is what I'm seeing in real life, and then there's this kind of white highlighty element. I might just leave it. There are parts that if they don't call to you to change them then don't overthink it. People are always asking, how do you know when something's done? It's like when you aren't so irritated to fix every little thing and if you get to the point where you've been doing that for a really long time you need to step away and go have a snack or whatever your go-to thing is. Mine's a peanut butter pretzel. All right, I'm gonna go in and probably just add a few more of these reflections, which are happening, especially on the edges. That might be enough in those weird stripy sections. In this part of the glass the subtlety's really tricky, it almost looks like all the same color regardless if you squint your eyes or not. So I might be enhancing things just a bit until it feels right. The pink liquid looks a little overworked, but what are we gonna do? I think it's okay. All right, let's just do our shadow and see how we feel about it. This is casting a lot of different shadows. There are these kind of arches here, when my hand moves and I'm pointing things out new shadows occur, so it's kind of like this cape shadow that's happening on the back. There's also this elliptical shadow and I think that's the one I'm gonna probably paint, that's gonna be going off the page. You can see that I was working vertical, which we hadn't done until now. A little bit of our raw umber, a little bit of white, a little bit of blue. Just a tiny bit of pink just to warm it up a little bit. There are some funny little weird light arcs happening in the shadow here and kind of there. They're a little bit hard to see. It's not a bad study, it's a little heavy, but I think it works. Just a little shadow thing there. Yeah, I think that's good. I think that's pretty good. Remember these are studies. That painting is done enough for me. Could it be better? Yes. Would I approach it differently next time? I don't know, I think it would really be different in watercolor, as it would be in oil, but I'm happy with it is as it is. I don't wanna work on it further. I think it has all of the elements that I'm trying to capture when I'm creating a study. I have another one that I did. You can see it's smaller, so this one's slightly larger than our subject, this one's slightly smaller than our subject. It's the same glass. This one was in a different light setting. It didn't have any liquid in it, it was looking really blue, just because of the color of the glass and the reflections. Just like everything else we've painted this month, depending on the time of day and the shadows and even the palette and the paints that you're using you're gonna have different kind of iterations and different interpretations of the objects you're working with. That is the part of creating studies, because you're learning something, you're tuning your skills, you're tuning your observational skills and your painting skills as well.

Day 14: Vase
- We're gonna paint a little vase from my collection. What's fun about something like this is it's handmade, it's a bit wonky. None of the shapes are gonna be perfectly circle or perfectly elliptical, or whatever you're anticipating in a traditional vase shape. The markings on the vase itself can be interesting to paint. You can paint figurines or other souvenirs. We're just gonna do this wonky little vase. I've got a lot of earth tones on my palette. The ones we've been using, the raw umber, the

white, the yellow ochre, the burnt sienna, my warmer blue. And then this one's new for us, it's berry wine. I could make something like that using my red and my blue, but I really like it so why not use it. Just hold it up and see how we did on that sort of putty color. We're gonna create our shape. Why don't we do a vertical. I love that it's not perfect. Makes it easier to paint. And then it's really cute just in general. Still be paying attention to what you see, as much as you can. Such a sweet, squatty little vase. I have a collection of Tonala objects from Tonala, Mexico, that sit on my desk. They're actually on my kitchen table, but I'm always painting on my kitchen table, so it feels like my desk. And I believe that this piece of pottery is from that area too. It's not marked, I'm not 100% sure, but it goes with those little figures I have. And I love them so much. This color is drying a little differently than when we mixed it. Kinda squinting. I think this, a shade more like that. Just refining the shape of that top. It was a little short. You don't wanna scoot back or move your position too much 'cause then you'll totally change the way everything looks. I think that's okay. Yeah. You know what? Why don't we throw caution to the wind and put in the shadow now? Just adding some blue to our base color. This shadow, because I'm working on this paper vertically, is going to go off the paper. Again, there are sort of several shadows. I'm just doing the most obvious one. We're not actually throwing caution to the wind. This is very deliberate, but we just haven't done it before. We've always saved it for the end. But why not add it now? Like I said, I think every day, shadow is darker closer to the object. Just here. So this, there's kind of a second shadow beginning also, but we're just gonna take it to there and just blend this out. We can refine it later. If we so desire. All right. Squinting, squinting. Using a little bit of berry wine, which is super vibrant. We're gonna dull that down with a little bit of our raw umber. Maybe actually, a little bit of yellow ochre. Little more raw umber. May want a little blue in there. Yeah, that's good. Mix up our color for that rusty tone. When I paint it in, there will be parts that are lighter than this and darker than this. But we're gonna add it now. It's actually drying much more brown than I feel like it actually is. It should be redder. I wanna come back in with that base color because I brought it down too far. And continuing. Yeah, I like that a little bit better, added more red. That's a little darker here. It's darker here on the front and a little darker there. There's this shadow kind of inside of here. Let's add some yellow ochre. This is one of those things where there's a lot of distressing on the surface painting, on the vase itself, and we can add that or not add that. Just gonna start by getting the bands down. It's a little bit of yellow ochre mixed with the burnt sienna. It's pretty vibrant. It's not quite as vibrant on the vase itself. It's okay, we'll start here. Be able to make it a little brush stroke-y there. So another band of it, while it's on my brush, might as well get it. It's a pretty thick little band here. I'm gonna move to that script liner to get those berry-colored lines. And these arches. Painting objects like this can be really fun for making gifts because when they're personal objects, they hold a lot of meaning. So even if they don't look perfect, but they're enough to be reminiscent of the object, the person receiving this will be so thrilled. Now let's add some lights and darks. We have a little bit of dark here. I've got a bright patch of the inside, there's like, the inside of this lip has like that little bright patch of the base color. So let's add that. Let's do our berry color with a little bit of white because we have some reflected light happening here. And here. Got a little bit of water on my brush from cleaning it. Got some brightness here. Here. We squint your eyes. This kind of area is more in shadow. We could just take a little bit of our shadow color, sort of veil it over this and dull some of that down. Probably come back and add a little more shadow underneath. Let's mix a darker color for this part and this part. So just here at the base a little bit more. Some highlights here. The shadow's a little dark. Maybe I want it to be a little less dark. Out in this area. Just gonna rotate my painting so I have better access to that area. Gonna blend it in. Add some white to work into, like

we've done. It's a quick little study, but I actually think it's pretty effective. I might just add another little dark spot in here. Some of these lines are a little bit darker as they go toward the shadow. I think that's pretty good. Sometimes they might come together more quickly than you anticipate. And that's fine, just go with it. The study is what you wanna make of it, how much you wanna learn, and control it. Here's another little version of the same vase that I did in a slightly different lighting situation at home. And you can see the similarities and where maybe the colors have changed a little bit. Some of the mark making, it's a little chunkier here, which actually I really like. You can enhance with that. You can play with using different brushes to see what kind of strokes they make as you work on your objects.

Day 15: Clothespin
- We're gonna paint a vintage clothespin. This one's kind of fun because we're gonna use mostly our bright bush or the brush that has the flat edge because it has flat edges. So something like a matchbox could be fun or anything else that has kind of square edges to use your brush with square edges. We're using the same pallette we used yesterday of colors. I probably won't use the berry wine, but it's here. I'm gonna mix a warm wood color. It's a grayish wood, but it's still warm 'cause it's a weathered, old clothespin. I'm using another bright brush. This one happens to be a Da Vinci Four. I don't think we've used this before although it's been sitting in our jar. That's like a little light. It's gonna dry a little bit darker so I'm gonna just go with it. And I might paint it... I'll probably paint it pretty close to life just because of the size of the brush. If you have a bigger brush, you're gonna need to paint it a little bit larger than life because it's gonna be harder to get your brush strokes down if your brush is much wider. Color's not perfect, but it's okay. That angle is a little steep, but I am going to go with it. Let's do, that's our top. Let's do our bottom. The bottom one looks like it's coming out more sort of just because of the way the angle is. This comes back like this. And then heads back. Looking at the negative shapes can also help you determine what you're painting. For instance, how open is the negative space between this. I'm saying like, "How much of the white table am I seeing?" The other thing I want to be looking at are the angles of these edges. If I just paint this straight out, I don't know that I'm gonna get exactly the angle that I want. So I might just try to kind of hold in my mind where that angle needs to be and flip it and just get the edge right. Yeah, that's more like this. Same thing with this angle. And this one. It's just refining those. So look, I made it smaller than in real life. I wasn't expecting that. Happens though. Maybe we need to make it just a smidge longer. Now that I've refined the edges, I'm gonna paint over them. Let's make this a little bit longer. This looks like it's going out more like that. This one looks like it's going more out like that too. I mean, they are going to be parallel so that makes sense. Just cleaning up my edge. Okay, that's not bad. I'm pretty okay with that. I think because I extended this, this negative space needs to change and go back to the proportions I had it at. Still using the same brush, I'm going to add some of my darker color. When you mix your grays or your dark colors, you're gonna have your go-to things. Like when I'm doing watercolor, I almost always do sepia and indigo as my darkest dark. You'll notice I never, ever use black. I think I said this in the beginning of the month, but if I didn't, let me just say that creating a black out of the tube or using a black out of the tube is very flattening and deadening for all of the color and the activation and the movement of your eye. And a piece is better to make your own black or as close to black as you can get than use a black out of the bottle. So we're not making anything that's super, super dark like a black, but we're doing something close by mixing our burnt umber with things like our blue and some of our darker reds. I can do a little bit of dry brush here because this is a rusty, old wooden clothespin. I can also refine

my shapes if I need to. There's definitely blue in this bottom part. You may need to switch your brush. Do it like that for now. It's also... I'm definitely going to switch my brush for this part. I'm gonna use, I don't know, maybe the round. No, let's just stick with the filbert; that's fine. Gonna create that little keyhole opening in the clothespin. It's being created from both the top and bottom wooden components. It's the little opening. We've got our metal component. I'm just doing sort of this dark shadow color for it. We can go back and refine that. There's a little loop here which I'm just gonna make a circle for. The clothespin still is a little short. That's okay though. I'm just gonna leave it. You, of course, can repaint anything you want. This is acrylic so you can paint on top of things. But these are studies, they're meant to be quick. Quickish. This is edge happening here. It's hard to tell because of the coloration on the surface of the wood itself, but there's one plane on the top of this. And then there's a different plane coming down from it. This is like the top of a box, and this is the side of a box, for example. Because of the lighting in here, that is almost invisible. It's very hard to see that there are two planes. I can exaggerate the lighting a little bit to try to show that there are two planes. We can choose to make that side lighter or darker. I think we're gonna make it slightly lighter. So I'm gonna differentiate it from the clothespin component on the bottom. And it tapers off as you reach the end. If you're doing say, this exact same clothespin at home, this side could be darker for you or lighter depending on your lighting. So that's just arbitrary for now. This is a little shallow. Same thing with the bottom: there's a side and then a flat part which I'm kind of sketching in lightly. There's some shadowing here. Shadow here. There's more of an angle. This little pinning has some depth to it. Let me just switch to a round brush to get in there. This is more of a medium tone with a darker in the back. There's definitely a darker spot in here with a darker edge in here. This edge also is a little darker. Okay, I think that's pretty close. Let's add some highlights to the metal area which is gonna be a lighter gray. I'm gonna highlight here and there. This curve. There's a little bit of white edge there. This curve is a little small. It's not hard to see the whitening too and on to the darker area. Let that dry for just a second so we can come back and do our white on top of it. It's pretty subtle the way this is lit so not everything is super obvious or that dramatic. There we go. And this one like sort of highlight there. One sort of there. That's really bright. I think that's pretty close. I'll just add that little shadow. So I'm just gonna keep working with this round 'cause I have it in my hand. That was too close to what we're working with so I'll add a little more blue and a little more white. That's a little better. There's not like a lot of shadow under this, but I might exaggerate it a little. I'm sort of blocking the shadow that is appearing on the back here with my body when I move. Give myself some white to paint into. So they're using water. Gonna cut that edge here. Put that back up. Yeah, that's a good little study. Slightly shorter clothespin but still looks like a clothespin. Office supplies can be a fun thing to paint. You can paint something like a paperclip if you have a little bitty brush. Or you can even just enlarge whatever object it is so that you can play with the scale, and that can be fun too.

Day 16: Ornament
- We've been practicing some shiny objects. We're gonna change it up even more. We're gonna do an ornament which is both shiny and a bright color. You'll notice when we start to paint it that it's actually gonna cast some of it's color into the shadow, which is gonna make it a little more interesting than the things we've painted so far. This podge pink is actually perfect to start. It's kind of the medium-light color on it's own. There are a lot of reflections in this ornament, but overall I think this color's gonna be a great base. The podge pink is a cooler pink and like I mentioned earlier in the month, sometimes these really vibrant pinks can be hard to mix with just red and white. So

this is a color that for me is worth investing in. One, because I love bright pink, and two, because a lot of the things in my house have it, which means I will inevitably need to use it. (snickers) Tryin' to make this pretty round to start. We can refine it as we paint. That's pretty good. I don't wanna forget about this little piece that comes down where the top of the ornament is, so definitely wanna get that in there. I'm using my filbert, which as you know is my favorite brush for this. I might make it just a little bit longer, that way when I paint the metal component I don't have to go in between and create any negative space, this'll just be underneath. There's a slight kinda curve. Good. Now I can come in and do some of the darker components. Pick up a little red, a little bit of raw umber, more podge pink. I'm looking for kinda the shadow color or the darker part of the bulb there. That's pretty good. There are a lot of reflections in the ornament itself. We're not gonna paint all of those. I can even see myself in here. I'm not gonna be painting that. (chuckles) You could if you had a ton of time, do a little M.C. Escher study of all your reflections in your space, but this is a study so we're just tryin' to capture some of the brightness and some of the general shadows. There's more of this darkness here. I think that's even darker here, though. I kinda went off my ornament shape here. I'm just gonna feather that out and I can come back with white paint later. I think actually that that shadow at the base of the ornament is even deeper than the one we put at the top of the ornament. So add a little bit. I've got a new color on the palette, the navy blue, which is kinda like indigo, when I use water colors, just kind of a darker, cooler blue. So I've got a little bit of that to help me get some of these deeper purples when I'm mixing. There's this kinda really crazy reflection that looks like a lotus, or some kind of really geometric sort of flower. I'm gonna play with putting some of that in. That is really, really dark, the top of that little weird lotus shape. Gonna try to mix something as close as I can. I still want it to have a pink kind of undertone though, so be careful not to make it too solid. There's a little bit of that color here and here. It's good to push yourself to go dark-dark and light-light and get that contrast because that's what's really gonna make your objects look more realistic. It's good practice for you in observing and mixing color and so forth. So we're not gonna focus on every little tiny reflection 'cause there are so many of them. I also don't wanna paint over all my original base color because it actually makes a really nice highlighty color. So make sure to keep a little bit of that where I see it. Just coming in here and adding a little more shadow. Think that looks pretty good. We haven't added any of the actual printed motifs on the ornament, so let's do that now. This is silver but it's really like a gray for us. So just adding some white to some of the darker shadow color I already have going. I'm probably gonna switch from my filbert to a round. This is a number one round, so it's a small round. So I'm just gonna add this dot here. It's a little darker than is ideal, so I can go back over it later. And they're not perfect circles because it's a vintage ornament, so they're a little bit wonky. Which is great, 'cause then I don't have to paint a perfect circle. Part of it is a little bit lighter. So just looking back, trying to match what I see. There's some yellow also. I may need to wash my brush, but let's just see if I can not. Avoid washing it for right now. That's pretty good. You can't actually see any gold there. And then we have this dark blue v and this kind of silvery, glittery star, which is also sort of gray with pink underneath it. So this star comes like that. Sticking with my number one round here. My angles on this aren't perfect, but that's okay. I can tell that some of the inner sections should be a little different. Also, some of the motif's happening right on the edge here. And there's that dark blue motif. I use a little bit of my navy to create that. Yeah, it's looking pretty good. We haven't added our brightest highlights yet. Let's address the little metal component, like the little top of the ornament and the wire. Gonna use a little bit of the navy in this, little bit of the raw umber. Yeah, that's close. We'll probably do a little bit of dry brushing on top of that 'cause it's like this really tarnished metal. So being a little delicate

here, just 'cause it's so tiny and fine. That's a little warmer than I think it actually is. So I'm gonna add more navy, more umber back into the mix. That right now, that middle color I made is a little too purpley. Better. A little better. I think it also needs to be a little whiter. It's like I really liked the shapes so I was like, "I don't wanna change it, "but actually I think it needs to be a little bit whiter." So now we'll change it. We can refine it. All right, definitely needs some lighter tones in there. We'll let that dry and we'll come back to it. I might change to my number one script, 'cause I wanna get this little loop at the top, using the same metal color I mixed up. A little more liquid for this 'cause it's so fine. So a little water. Too much water, it's a little thicker than I'd like. That's okay, we could come back in once it dries and add some white if we need to. This wire, I'm gonna approach it like I would probably approach painting in water color, which is I'm just gonna do one gesture and I'm not gonna refine it much. So you might wanna kinda practice in the air, it's gonna come up, but it need to be kind of a quick gesture, like a signature. I might just do that part. It's a little lower than it is in real life, but that's okay. This is more of a loop. It's not bad though. The thing is, it's not a ribbon so it doesn't really have a lot of thick and thin like I've drawn it. You'll just get that because of the flecks of your brush. When you're making the motions it's gonna create that. So I'm gonna come back in, probably with my white and clean it up just a little. So moving back to my round. Gonna add some white in here. And I need to do this probably twice. Might be easier for you to actually just take it more slowly but for me I just kinda need to do the full gesture, and then refining it is okay. Change this a little. I'll redraw where it crosses. So in the actual thing, it crosses over that loop and comes back and loops through inside of it. I'm not actually gonna paint it that way, just because what I already have establishing here, it would be way too tight. Instead I'm just gonna refine it and get it close to it. And you can do that. There's nothing wrong with that. You're the artist. Well I've got a little bit of white on my brush. I'm gonna just come in and add it to this little top which is still wet so it's kind of blending. Good. Gonna come back in with some kind of dark purple and come back in to this with more of a dry brush. There's some glitter on this. It looks dark. All right, we still wanna clean this up a little. We need to add a shadow which is gonna have pink reflected in it. Let's add our highlights though, since the ball is dry. And this is something that you might do, we haven't done it yet, but we're gonna put down some white where the highlight is and once it dries we're gonna go over it with a thin amount of color. And that's gonna give us a brighter pink for this highlight than if we just put down the pink by itself. It's kind of a glazing technique. We haven't done it before. So I'm just gonna see where this highlight lands. And there's another one here. This is pretty shiny in here too, so I might just add a little bit of white in there that we can glaze over with pink also. Yep, that's good. I also wanna address, there needs to be a shadow coming down here more, into this. And now that this is dry I might add a little bit more white in here. Clean up this even further. I made that really thin. I can re-add that 'cause I'm gonna have to re-add some stuff anyway. Also gonna come in here, kinda dance the brush around 'cause there's all this middle texture there. All right before we refine the little wire, I'm gonna paint the shadow because we're gonna have to paint inside the negative space that this wire creates. We didn't place the shadow down first, which is totally fine. You can approach it in any which way you prefer. So I'm gonna mix kind of a light shadow color just by adding more white. So I'm sort of matching that shadow color. But we're gonna have some pink reflected in it too. It's not as obvious, with the studio lighting, but depending on what kind of object you have and what your lighting looks like, can be really super pink, which is cool. So I'm painting around. We could actually make the shadow much bigger if we want. I'm gonna paint some white also, so that we have something to paint into like we've been doing. And then just turn this so I have better access. This center part is where the pink is actually gonna be

reflecting, or is reflecting, and we're gonna capture that. So what we wanna do is just lay down our shadow color. In some ways it could have been easier to paint the shadow first and then the wire, but if you messed up your wire then you'd have to repaint the shadow, and sometimes it's hard to remix your shadow color. So either way works. You're gonna have to do a little bit of work with this wire and the reflected pink and so forth. And so again with my white on there. Work my shadow. Where can I come back in and clean up the wire? And then I wanna add just a little bit of podge pink in here. It's kind of all over here. Not everything is dry. It's kind of gummy so I'm pulling up a little paint here. I'm gonna come back to that and add to it. Little more white. 'Kay. Clean some of that up. That's still sticky there. Okay, I'm gonna clean up the wire. The shadow color was kind of missed inside of this loop. There is a darker shadow closest to the object. We'll put that in. Has a little bit of pink in it. I'm just gonna blend this out and there's actually a shadow, a really specific shadow that the wire is casting. So after we finish cleaning up the wire itself, we will include that shadow. Probably just use our script liner for all of that. And we need to glaze over those white highlights we painted, with pink. Just gonna clean up that little edge. Those white highlights are dry. That's really important. You want a clean brush. And just with a little bit of your pink paint and a little bit of water, we're just gonna paint right over those to get a really vibrant, bright highlight. All right let's clean up our wire using our script liner. Dipping into just mostly raw umber here and let's add a little navy. A little bit of water. And this time a little bit more delicately we're gonna just go over the first wire we did. Feel free to get more paint or more water if you need it. And move that. Try not to press down too much because you'll create that thick and thin again. This little component, also while I've got my script liner, might work on that just a bit. It's very dark in between these elements. There's a little bit of a curve here. And just using kind of some texture from the brush. Just made that look a little bit more like it's supposed to. Then darken right under here. And this shadow kinda goes toward this thing. I'm just gonna use my filbert real quick to smooth that. I don't want it to be a harsh line 'cause it's not quite a line. That's good enough. And then let's put in those shadows that happen on the back part of that wire. So I'm using the wire color plus a little bit of pink so it's a slightly different color. The shadow comes from underneath the wire and fades, so we might fan that out a little. And then it's like the loop, but really exaggerated. So right now that looks kookoo because it's really vibrant. I might actually just use my finger to lighten it. Sometimes that's what works. (chuckles) Okay, good. I might darken that wire a little bit, right where the loop is happening because I used my finger to remove a little bit of that shadow. Good. Oh, and then there's a little bit of shadow also under this part. Too pink! I'd like a shadow happening here. Same thing, I'll just do a little hand motion. I think that's good. I actually really love vintage Christmas ornaments. I have a lot of them and I love to paint them. It's a nice way to kind of let the magic of the season last a little bit longer before you put them away. Also do this with flowers, like if somebody gives me flowers, before they kind of wither and die or as they're withering they're really fun to paint. So this is just another way that you can look at the objects in your house and think of another way to use them. This ornament has a second life outside of being on the Christmas tree, which is to make a painting of it. And it could be a good Christmas card for next year.

Day 17: Leafy Branch
- We're gonna move into botanicals, which is some of my favorite things to paint. I've picked this particular plant from a bouquet from my local grocery store. I don't even know what this plant is called, but I love the shape and the movement of the leaves. You can follow along with any plant. I'm gonna start by laying down some white because there's so much negative space, sort of like we

did with the berries earlier this month. Just a pretty liberal coating I'm using the whitest, flat or bright brush I have in my pack. Obviously we're gonna be painting this smaller than the actual object 'cause of our paper size. This is going to be very gestural. My approach to painting plants regardless of the medium is not about getting every exact, single leaf. And in fact I might even start with the stems so we get our shape down first. Got a little bit of my burnt sienna. Actually gonna add some yellow ochre, which I don't have on my palette yet, 'cause I think it will be helpful. And add just a little bit of green. All right, I like that. Using my filbert, which by now you probably realized is my favorite. One because I've actually said it's my favorite, and also because I always use it. Just trying to get the general shape. It's actually gonna be hard for me to paint this smaller than it really is, just 'cause I'm so used to doing this for a one-to-one ratio, and I think this would be really fun to paint really large. A good restriction for myself to do. I'm gonna do a little berry wine and raw umber, because that center branch has more than one color in it. Using that darker mixture with a little bit of green. I'm gonna also do this little branch here. Some of these beginning leaf shapes to kinda… This is almost like my sketch if you will, because it maps out the layout so I don't accidentally run outta room for painting. Which could still happen. All right let's do some leaves. Just like when we were painting our vegetables, and you saw my radish leaves. We're not doing every little tiny vein, we're just getting the motion and the shape. So we've got some little guys here. Kinda crisscrossy. That is too green, my color feels too green. I'm gonna add a little bit of blue to it. Let's see. Let's just paint right on top and see if we like that better. Yeah, I like that a little better. Might add a little bit of berry wine to it also. Adding the complement, so berry wine's sort of the reddest thing on my palette, and green's it's complement. Adding the complement will kind of desaturate your color. I've got this happening. This little twisted leaf here, gonna figure right here, because I've put that paint down, the white layer and it's drying, getting sort of a dry rush. Which is fine, I like that. And I'm kind of adding yellow, adding some dark varieties so that I have a variety of colors in my leaves. This is a darker leaf 'cause it's falling underneath. So let's make sure we have a darker green. This little leaf got cut off. We'll just make a shorty. All right. So I've painted this kind of curving and I've got my little reminder starter here. Which means if I paint this leaf how it actually appears these little sections are gonna intersect, and they don't intersect in real life, but that's okay, because this is a study. This is how we're practicing our brush handling and our painting. I've got some leaves where I'm seeing the underside. Those are gonna be really silvery in their color, and I might switch my brush for some of those. So just gonna continue with my darker leaves for now. Got this one that goes over this one. Can't make the rest sort of count because I'm at the edge of my paper here, so I'm shortening some of my leaves a little so then I can fit everything on here. This kinda comes down and then curves out. I'm gonna add some of the dark spots I see, where the shadow from one leaf is casting onto the next leaf. I'm just gonna add a little bit of blue, like we have been, but even more. A little bit of berry wine. A little bit of raw umber. And maybe a little bit of that light green, I know that just lightened it up a little bit, but I wanted it to be a little more olivey. More umber. Maybe a little bit more blue. Cool. And I'm just gonna look and see where kind of we have these dark moments. 'Specially there. Here. Gonna get the edges of the few of these leaves that kind of tapered off. Let's do those silvery leaves. Just for fun why don't we switch to our round. Use a round five for this. And I'm just gonna mix up the under color of the leaf, which is much more silvery, so more white. I've got some coming up like that. Got one coming, curving over, this will actually be dark, but I just wanna, this part that's facing me again will be dark. There's a little bit of some showing there. There's one that's really fat and right in here. And these ones I will be putting the center vein in so that you kinda get they're the underside. There's a little bit of it over

here. I think that's it. If you feel like you need another one for composition, you can do that. I might just add one there. To capture those veins on the underside of the leaves, we're gonna switch to our script liner which has been kind of our favorite thing for any fine detail that is line-like. I'm gonna come from the center stem, and just bring it up. It's how it actually appears. In this case I'm also gonna come down, just 'cause the motion, I think, is gonna be easier for me. That disappears there and this is actually where we need to change to the dark leaf. I've kind of put it in light, because the bottom part is light and I just wanna continue the motion of the leaf. So that's this leaf here, where we're seeing the underside and then it's coming down to show the top, underside coming down to show the top. You don't have to be that persnickety with it. I don't have to paint exactly what I'm seeing if I'm just kinda trying to capture the gestural quality of everything. But it's a good place to just see it. Looks like a little guy here. Little one here. Before I move to the shadows, this area, this dry brush area, just from my initial strokes, is a little too undefined for me, so I am gonna clean up that edge just a little. Take the green color below and just clean up here, a little more defined. That's a little better. All right, shadow color. Some of our white. Mixing in some of our brown. Probably a little bit of our blue. Yeah, that's good. Again, you don't have to do the shadow under every single leaf, but let's do the ones that are prominent and important. This shadow here I think would be good. So it's kind of farther away from the leaf and then as we get toward the tip it gets closer and meets the leaf. It's also darker, the closer we get to the object. You guys should be saying this before I even say it at this point. Hmm, there's some shadows that just come and meet the leaf as it is, and there's clearly more than a single shadow being cast, because of our lighting here. This leaf is this leaf. So it's shadow is actually being cast up there, just because of our lighting situation. It's really faint. I may address this shadow first, which is kind of a little different than how it looks in real life. I definitely wanna get some some here so that we ground this. These guys are good. Right now our shadow shapes are as definite as our leaf shapes, which is visually confusing. So we're gonna go back in with our white so we have something to paint into because our first layer of white has dried. Just wanna soften the shadows a little, so they're not so distinct unless that's how we see them. When we see them distinct then that's fine, they can stay that way, but we do need some softness also so that you know that they're shadows and not gray, silvery gray leaves. It's definitely gonna be important up there in the back where the shadows are definitely softer. So let's just paint some more white in here so we have something to work into. Here is a shadow. It's a little different, I'm painting it a little different than how it actually is because I moved my leaves a bit. Looks like some shadowy bits in here. Here too. Just gonna blur that out a little. So really distinct shadow back here. Paint some white so I have something to work into. Yeah, I think I just wanna capture a little bit of soft. There are a lotta leaves, so the shadows are kind of all over. So I wanna create a general shadow. And I think I wanna have a shadow kinda here. If this branch were touching right down to the table, there'd be a shadow all along this center branch. There isn't one, but I am gonna darken the bottom because we didn't do much to the branch after we did it's initial painting. Just to help give that sense of 3D, and to be a little bit darker. Yeah, I think that's good. Cool. Flowers and botanicals are some of my favorite things to paint, other than faces of course. They're really abundant. They're all around you. You can go into your own backyard and select a single bloom. If someone has gifted you flowers, this is a really nice way to kind of keep them living on beyond their timeline. And you can isolate a single branch, just to kind of play with the shapes and the colors. And as you increase your skill and your interest you can start adding more elements.

Day 18: Dynamic branch

- Today we're gonna paint this plant that looks a little bit like a spiky bush, but the ends kind of look like a flower. Actually, I'm not sure what this one is called, but I really like it. I often pick arrangements that have this plant in them. So I've just placed them in a little flower frog so that they're standing upright. We've been everything kind of flat on the table, so I thought this would be fun to try. Using my half inch flat or my bright brush, I'm just gonna start by laying down a little bit of white paint so I have something to work into since there's so much open space in these flowers or plants. Okay, just a kind of thinnish layer of white. Switching to my filbert. I'm using both my warm and cool yellows just to kinda mix up the yellow and I've got some dried paint on my pallette, and that's fine. Just gonna paint over that until it becomes a problem. So I need some more warmth in this. This is too orange, I think. Although it is kinda similar to that. But I know it's gonna dry a little bit darker, so I'm actually gonna just add a little bit more yellow, just lighten it just a tad. I'm not gonna use white. I'm just gonna use more of that light yellow. Okay. I think I'm gonna start with this little bloom up top, just doing sort of single strokes. Obviously, all of these petal shapes end in kind of a pinky tone, which I'll come back into in a minute. I kinda just want to get the placement of that, and then I'm gonna paint that center stem so then I can place this smaller bloom. I'm using a little of that berry wine tone, mix in a little of our yellow. So I'm almost kind of like sketching with my brush to get this line. It's very dry and it's okay. And then this guy maybe comes in like that. Now I can place this blossom. I'm being pretty deliberate with my strokes. I'm looking and then placing a stroke, and if you wind up with too many petals or too little petals, that's fine, too. Just kinda trying to be efficient as possible. Picking up a little bit of that berry wine and coming back into these tips. I'm just pulling down toward the center. Just kinda go back in here. Make those more definitive. If I need just a little bit of water, I can add that. These are pretty thick stems as I'm painting them, but in real life, they're a little bit thinner, so I can correct that later with white back in my background. I'm gonna move on, though, to my leaves. They're sort of an appley green color with a little bit of that berry tone mixed in so they're not perfectly green. They, too, kind of have the red at the end. I might omit a leaf or two, depending on how they fall and how they look. Sometimes I'm painting from the stalk up, and sometimes I'm coming back into finding the tip. Just because of the shape of my brush, it's like easier to make this stroke. Doing these little guys. There's kind of one hanging out back there, too. Come back in with the berry and just kinda add that in to the edges. Remember these are studies. I've said this all month, but I really mean it. Don't hold yourself to something that feels impossible. Just observe what's working, what's not working. Change what you can. I'm adding a little bit of pink back in here. Again, the more you paint, the better you'll get. This is the first time I've ever painted this flower, but if I spent an entire week doing little studies of it in different light scenarios, turning it in different positions, it'd be really interesting to see what I capture each time I paint it. The other thing is sometimes in just doing a study, you get your initial impressions, which can have this freshness that a really worked painting doesn't have, it can easily lose. So that's why I like these little studies. Okay, those are the centers. I also have this flower frog. You can paint it or not paint it. For us, it's just kind of holding everything in place, so if I were to paint it, let's just add it in, just so you can see, and then maybe tomorrow we won't paint it. It's just lots of little vertical strokes, these little spikes, some of which are appearing behind the flowers. I'm running out of room here on the bottom. The color isn't very green, so let's add a little bit of blue to it. Just gonna add a little bit of my darkest blue which is not on my pallette, just to kinda get a depth. So it's very dark in here. I might come back in with a round to get a finer line, and just create a little bit more variation in the stem. And then we have this bright yellow that's here in the centers. Then you can play with this. Whatever. Just add these leaves back in where they were kind of disappearing. I'm taking my

script, which is my thinnest brush. Might just mix a slightly lighter brown to show these. There's like layers of these frogs. It's kind of hard to read, but it's okay. Just go with it. There's really dark ones in the back. Let's use this. There's a bit of a highlight here since the frog's made out of metal. And then I'm working on a drop cloth today so the shadows aren't as obvious to see. The lighting's a little different. We can see the shadow that's being cast on my backing, but I really don't have much of a shadow on the table. There's a little bit right here. That's just a shadow of this flower frog, so I might just lay that down. I'm not gonna worry about the flower shadows. Since they're upright, you're not really catching those. And I am painting like right off the edge of this card. All right, maybe just one more highlight here. Yeah. I've probably already said this this month, but the thing that so nice about painting flowers and botanicals is just like a lot of things are all around you, so it kind of refocuses your mind when you're taking a walk or you're out in nature to really look at things and observe the colors, maybe the shadows they're casting, their colors in relationship to other things around them. It's also a nice way to just extend the longevity of purchased flowers. if you happen to pick something up at the farmer's market, at the grocery store, you can kind of give them a new life by painting them in memoriam.

Day 19: Eucalyptus
- We're gonna paint this stalk of eucalyptus. There are many different kinds of eucalyptus and they're all really beautiful in their own way. This one's funny because it's just sticking upright, straight at like a little angle. Looks like a little tree and I've got it in my flower frog too. I've laid down a little bit of white with my half inch brush. I'm gonna start with this stalk or central stem. I'm not gonna worry about the frog, I'm not gonna paint it in this one. We did that yesterday, so now you know how to do it, if you're using a frog. I've got a really limited palette of colors here. I may add some more colors as I paint. Right now we're going for that stem color. I think I just need one warm tone. I'll add a little bit of my burnt sienna. I love neutral tones, especially in watercolor. It's like the first colors I go through. So probably in the acrylic paint, that's gonna be the same too. Right, that's probably good. And I'm using my flibert, probably a round would be better for this central stem but, I'm just gonna use the filbert 'cause I think that's gonna be best for our little leaves. It's a little dry. Let's add a little bit of water, not too much. So, when I'm using the floral frog, I'm not gonna paint that, I'm not gonna worry about the shadows because they're being cast on this background. We're just gonna paint this as it is. The reason I'm not painting it lying down is because it would smush the leaves and petals and I like the way this looks better. I can get a better sense of the shape. I'm gonna mix up a eucalyptus color. If I were painting this in watercolor, the color I would go to is oxide of chromium, that is eucalyptus color through and through. But, in acrylic paint we're mixing a little bit of aqua, a little bit of green. I've got a neutral that I've been working with for the stem. I'm gonna hold that right up to one of the leaves. It's little bit harder to tell because I've got some layers of paint here, but the tip of this is pretty close, it's maybe a little light, but I think it's a good base color to start with. So, it's not just a mint green or a turquoise blue, it's got a lot of this warm kind of neutral in it. And we're just gonna lay down some shapes. They're like little nibbles taken out of these first few. What's interesting about this stalk is some leaves look like really skinny little kind of fine lines and some are gonna look like little bleeding heart shapes because of the way the leaves orient themselves on the stalk. It's really interesting. So there's this pattern that happens and I think just naturally I'm painting these a little bit bigger than they are in real life, which means I probably won't have room for every single leaf that I'm seeing, but that's okay. 'Cause these are impressions. To mix more of my color. I feel like it needs to be a little darker, so I'm adding a little bit

of this navy tone. There we go, I like that better. Just come down to the bottom. There, this is the bottom. So now were gonna go in and just like really kind of clean everything up and refine it because we've got things sort of placed. And maybe I'll switch to my round brush, just so I have a little bit more control. There's like this powdery substance. I'm adding a little more white. These leaves that are on the back side of the stem are really pale. When you squint your eyes they're like much lighter than the pairing leaf that's its partner but lies in front of the stem. So you might just wanna make those lighter and kind of push them into the background. And they're a weird little shape too. They kinda look like, like a little flat seat or something. Just draw my stem back in, paint my stem back in in some cases. All right, there are also these little shadows that are cast from the pairing above each leaf set. So I might add some of those. They kinda happen here. Refine some of my shapes too. Look like little hearts. So I'm cleaning up the edges. That one actually has like a lot of weight on that edge. This one has a little cut out. Little edges here. Just kinda looking back at my subject, looking back at my painting and refining where I can. It doesn't have to be perfect, but I don't want it to look too blobby. I want it to look like the eucalyptus. I'm gonna go back in and add some light and dark to the stem. It's kinda more lemony towards the top. But also there are these shadows that are cast. The shadows or the dark coloration happens like underneath each pairing. So, I'll just add those in. And they can just be sort of like little dots really. And we're just gonna continue that stem down here right off the page. Just clean that up a little. Maybe add some powdery white in some places. A little texture. This little hooked leaf here. Yeah. Even just the single stalk of eucalyptus can give you, kind of, endless interest because as you turn it, you get all these different variations the way that the leaves fall on the stalk. It's like very structured and it gives you, like, a really specific kind of view. So this would be a really fun thing to even start with a blind contour. Just to kind of get your hand thinking about the way the leaves fall and then actually painting it in a study.

Day 20: Tulip
- You've probably noticed these really beautiful tulips at the edge of my table. So I thought of course we should paint one. They're rapidly changing. So they're opening and expanding, and drooping in really interesting ways. So actually I'm just gonna probably paint the blossom, because I can't put all of this on my paper. The base of the tulip is a warmish yellow-white tone. Might just add the tiniest bit of this warm pink tone. Using my filbert, which you've probably noticed is my favorite. I'm starting here and just painting the shape of the flower. This really pretty like vanilla-y color. I'm just gonna allow it to be sort of dry brushy, and then we'll switch to our pink. I've got both a warm and a cool pink here, because I see both. I see cool pink coming from the creamy vanilla tone, and then a really warm corally pink toward the edge of the petal. So I want to capture both of those. You can do your color matching. The paint dries pretty quickly. So it's kind of like at this tacky stage, which is actually kind of fun to work in too. It's actually kind of a lot of like gray deeper tones, because that white is really bright right there. So you need to bring those in. Too much water on my brush, because I just cleaned it. Just add that and then I'll come back to it again. There's this kind of prominent line happening here. I want to get the pinks that are happening here, before we get to the edge of the pedal. It's too bright. And I'm gonna use the warmer pink tone, with maybe just a bit of the cool mixed in. That's Podge Pink and I think my warm pink is called Pink Melon. We've used them a little bit this month. Pulling from the outside of the petal back in, just to kind of play with that shape. The nice thing about painting flowers is, they don't have like harsh edges. I mean there's definitely an edge to the each petal, but unlike trying to paint something that's like, manufactured

and square, like a match box, or something that has like really specific right angles everywhere. You can kind of take some liberties with the way your flower looks. All right everything's kind of dry. So it's gonna be hard to blend, and everything right now needs to be blended. So I'm gonna start on the second layer. It's kind of going back with some of my warm white tone that it mixed to begin with, and just livening, and blending some of these little areas. And you can play with your color and your shadow, and such to whatever level is comfortable. These are studies so however much time you can dedicate to doing this. Do it and then whatever is too much stop. It's really just about initial impressions. Like there's this real edge there. It's got a little bit of reflected light there. There are a lot of great tones I still need to incorporate, kind of in here. Needs to be darker even than that. Okay that's looking better. So maybe some more here. I don't want to overwork it with the gray, because I don't want to become muddy. I was just trying to capture the shadows. Maybe we'll add some darker pink tones too, in some of these areas. This definitely has like a little... I think I need a little bit of red. Just down here. Okay I think that's looking pretty good. Maybe here too. I could play more with the shadows. The surface of this tulip is like kind of satiny, and feels like painting fabric. So you could spend a lot of time, kind of playing with the highlights and the shadows. Just like a pretty bright highlight there. Let's get a stem and then we'll, look back and see if one add anything more to our flower. Just gonna work with the medium green. This happens just be right out of the bottle. That's fine because we're gonna add highlights to it. I'm kinda just with my hand gonna get the general, shape and then paint it in. And that back edge, has some weight in it. I think so. It's coming right into the tulip. The bottom is pretty dark. This makes a darker tone. Splitting that out a little bit. It's kind of this like highlight there. Still just like really vibrant highlight on the tulip right there. My basement may not be quite dark enough to get, the contrast that I like, but I think it's pretty close for a study. Yeah. There's a point where I want to keep the freshness, and I don't want to overwork the blossom, or the bloom, or whatever my subject matter is. So I'm happy with the way this looks. I think I want to probably paint it again. Paint it in its various stages. I might paint a couple together, or as the petals start to fall off, maybe include those as well. So look at your subject matter, and know when to push ahead, and know when to stop. You don't want things to become too muddy, but you do want to kind of explore the shadows, and the highlights as you're working.

Day 21: Tulip with Greenery
- These tulips are too pretty not to paint two days in a row but we've paired them with some greens to give us a little different texture and more color to play with. You could put this into a vase and paint that as well, but I'm just using my floral frog so that they're standing upright. I'm gonna start with the center of the tulip. Now I have to paint smaller than life, which is a little bit tricky, to stay on this size paper. We'll see if I run outta room. That's just me. Some people have no problem staying right on the page. I think I'll probably, actually, paint a little bit into these petals. That's probably a little cooler than I would like. But we can correct it later. Keeping it kind of dry and it's very quick and loose. I love this little ruffled edge. You're seeing the front of the petal there. It's the front of the petal here. It's actually much darker here. Just refining. Bringing those strokes right into the middle of the flower. Kind of just like very loose and brush strokey with these petal shapes, but I really like the feel, so I might actually just leave some of that. We'll see. It's nice to kind of guard the things that you love, but not let them inhibit you from making the right marks. So you have to find a balance between pushing forward and holding back, which is so tricky. Could take years, not just a month of daily painting. All right let's do some of our greens. These greens are really dark so I'm probably gonna add a little bit of this navy color to my palette here. I'm using, I think it's called fresh

fern, and a little bit of navy. That's a really saturated color so I'm also going to add a little bit of umber to get the color I want. Needs more yellow though. These leaves are kind of coming up and then behind the tulip. The tulip is obscuring some of this view, so to keep my leaves kind of continuous, with my hand and holding the brush up, not touching the paper, I might just kinda get the motions and then come in and paint them. So that one disappears. Disappears. Disappears and then comes up. I didn't paint white to begin with. I might leave this whole thing kind of dry brushy. You can play with your painting style and the mark that you're making. I'm using the filbert on it's side a little bit. I may or may not be adding the exact number of green leaves here. But I just suddenly want the feeling of this. All right. I think I also wanna put the tulip stem in. And it's actually very brown. So I'm gonna use a little bit of my green and then warm it up with this berry wine color. It's kinda coming right from the center there. Like I said, I'm not painting this quite to life, it has to be a little bit smaller. Whoop, that's giant. We'll go back in and fix that. (chuckles) Just gonna add a little bit of white paint. That's the awesome thing about acrylic versus water color, because you would have to lift that in water color, which is a little bit trickier depending on how you're painting. I'm gonna let that dry 'cause we need to go over it again. I also feel like I've crowded a lot. I had the feeling of this, but I've crowded a lot here and I need some more coming out, and I also need to put a stem in here. So I'm gonna actually just paint over with white. And since I've added white, why don't we just add some white all around. Actually really like how the white creates this other ground. Like I said, you can paint into it, which is nice. But when you're looking at the painting itself there's kind of this white backing which I love. Looks really subtle now, but in the finished version I think it adds an extra textural element. You can also use it to go back in and refine some of these shapes, if you so desire. Yeah. While were waiting for this stuff to dry so we can go back on top of it, I'll work on the petals a little. They're not white-white, they're kind of a warm yellowy-white. I'm actually pretty happy with the way they look, but why don't we just add a few more little details in here. I kept it really dry brushy and I think I'm gonna keep it that way, just 'cause I like the way it looks. I think that's too much white in that one area. Might go back in with this. We could do this stamen while we're here. It's a pretty true green in the center, maybe just a little muted. Maybe a little more muted, I have some water on my brush still. Have these warm yellow pollen areas. More brown than that. You don't have to hold up your brush every time you're color mixing. You can just kinda squint your eyes and look at your palette and know. And you'll develop more of that as you go. It's gonna be like that. It's a little darker here at the bottom. There are these bright yellow things right on the top of that green center thing. Now that I'm looking, there's actually a little bit of yellow. I think it's actually fallen pollen in the center. This is fun. It feels different than the other paintings we've done this month because it's a little more stylized because I'm doing it so dry brushy. But I don't know why it's just really calling to me to do it this way. It's fun. It feels like a vintage image. All right let's finish up this side, a bit of greenery. I wanna put that stem in. It's a brownish-red. These things just kinda blend together at the bottom here. Come back in and do... Still a little wet. There's this dark leaf here, but then there's sagey green leafs that I wanna make sure to include. And I'll go back in with my paint to cover up any spots. Okay, the sagey green is that fresh fern color. A little bit of white and then we're gonna mute it a bit with the umber. Maybe a little bit of this yellow too. See how that looks. That's good. This looks a little bit similar to one of the first plants we painted together. It might be the same plant, just kind of a different version. I think I've kinda squished everything together because I was afraid of going off the page, but that's okay. 'cause I'm still looking and trying to observe and replicate what I see in my painting. This is an interesting painting because it's different than what we've been doing so far this month. Because we

painted the tulip yesterday and kind of rendered the petals a little more true to what we saw, I feel like today was fun to leave it more dry brush and a little bit more stylized. This painting feels a lot more vintage, kind of more like an illustration than kind of a fine art painting. But I really like that. It's fun to experiment with the same subject matter and maybe treat your brush handling or your color palette a little differently. You have the freedom to do that because these are daily studies. So one day you might paint a background, one day you may not. You may work into something. You may keep everything really dry or really wet. And I totally give you the permission to experiment with your materials and your subject matter to kinda see what different effects you can get.

Day 22: Protea
- We're gonna paint a protea or protea, however you want to pronounce it. I'm gonna start with the center blossom color. This'll be a fun one, 'cause there's actually a lot of colors you can pull out. Mix a little aqua. I really love this Podge pink color. It's really fun to mix with. It's too vibrant a color, but it's starting to get there, so it needs to be less saturated, less neon. So I might add a little bit of burnt sienna. Still pretty vibrant. A little bit of burnt umber. Let's see how we feel about that. It's kind of dark. Let's add some white. It's gonna dry even darker, so. Just gonna get the general shape first. And it's kind of more true pink in the middle. Just kind of has a square shape at the end here. Okay. So that shape. And then it's actually super dark in the middle, so even though I've painted kind of these petals, we're just gonna paint right over that, actually, because I need to do the center color. It's pretty dark. We'll go back in and add petals, and then the underneath color is very pink and less silvery-purple. So... Feel like there's that pink here. Let me pull a little bit of this red tone. Add some weight. So maybe we can add some of those petals back or begin to. It's getting that shape. (water gurgling) Let's get our leaves and our stem going. Stem has a lot of colors happening too. Lot of burnt sienna. We're not gonna be able to paint the whole stem, 'cause it's gonna go right off the page. Same thing with the leaves. I'm gonna make this leaf a little bit closer to the protea so I can get the whole thing in there. It's hard for me sometimes to reduce the shape of what I'm painting to make it fit on the paper. So feel free to use bigger paper if you want. The small paper also kind of makes things feel a little less precious, I think, in some ways, and it's not as much looming white space. So that's why I'm doing the smaller paper. But sometimes it's a little crowded. So I'm just gonna modify a bit. There's also this weird leaf that's just kind of coming like that. And then... This leaf here. Another leaf here. These leaves remind me of the banana we painted in the beginning of the month 'cause it has all these, like, bruises on it or colorations. Should be fun to add. So another leaf right under the protea. So refining my shapes as I go. (water gurgling) All right, we'll come back in and just kind of add some color to these leaves now that we have a base down. I'm not gonna be super precious about it. Just gonna observe, look, place a few colors quickly. Let's get those dark markings that are so cool. Here and here. So that's sort of like a little vein down the center of the leaf. In some places, I might want to capture that, like here. That's on the underneath side. Okay. The fuzzy, purpley feel of some of these petals showing up on the edges of that. All right. Let's take a closer look and address these petals. I'm actually really happy with the way the back petals look and the center is pretty good. The tip of the center might just need to be a wee bit darker. Just a tad. So I might just do something like that. All right. So you have this kind of pale pink, silveryness in these first layer of petals. And then it becomes less pink, less lavendery, and more red. And then there's some gray in that back layer. So squint your eyes as much as you can. I think kind of in these petals there are these little gray, purpley-gray moments that I want to get. Good. And then I want to get that red tone in the center. Ow. Okay. So these... That's a little too much

difference in color. I think this layer kind of, yeah, that's fine. So there're kind of a few petals here, and then we get a deeper color, and there're even fewer petals, and they're kind of staggered. And then we go back into this kind of gray tone on the tips. That might be a little too purple, but I don't mind it. And then come back in there with a little bit of that red on top just to kind of bring these back. There is this grayish tone at the edge of each of those petals. Some kind of darker shadows too. Just... Yeah. (water gurgling) Just gonna take one more look at the leaves. Like this is a little bit lighter. Mm. All right, let's do some shadows, ground this guy, call it a day. Mix up a shadow color. We haven't done shadows in a couple of days because we're painting everything kind of upright. It's a little too purple. I think I'm gonna add a little brown and maybe a little bit of yellow, and then I think it'll be good. Okay. So there's this big shadow here. It's butting right up against this leaf that kind of looks like a skinny line, and there are shadows here that kind of spread out. So let's paint some white to paint into in just a second. Let's add some white to paint into. There's not a shadow under that leaf because it's so far off the table. There are shadows kind of just below the protea bloom. (water gurgling) So back to our shadow color. Shadows kind of connecting that shadow. And you know that the shadows get darker the closer they are to the object. So here, here. That shadow is a little purple. Just gonna smooth that out. Here too. Kind of just goes into the background here. At the tip of these leaves, the shadow color is kind of similar in value, so that's fine. They kind of blend into each other. I'm okay with that. I think that looks pretty good. Don't be intimidated to tackle any flower. I think, actually, roses, like really densely petaled roses, can be really hard to paint if you're thinking, oh my god, I have to paint every single one of those petals, but you don't. You want to get the impression of what you're seeing. So I didn't count how many petals were on this protea. I just kind of was like, oh, these brushstrokes kind of emulate the feeling that this flower gives me. And I think we did a pretty good job, right? So look at your flower. Break it down into its basic elements. Think about your shadows and your highlights. Try to mix your color. All of these exercises are ways for you to get to know your painting practice a little better, understand color mixing a little better, and also understand how you correlate what you see to what you put on the page. So all of that, just like any other muscle, needs to be exercised over and over. And the more you do it, the better you'll get.

Day 23: Straw Flowers
- We're gonna be painting strawflowers, which are actually one of my favorite flowers. They look just like this when they're living, and on the stalk, and then you can clip them off and kind of save them forever. And they still have that kind of crinkly sound and this really beautiful texture. And they are really fun to paint because this is gonna force you not to be a perfectionist. We're not going to paint every single, tiny little petal, instead we're just gonna paint an impression of them. So pull out your impressionist book and get some inspiration because you're gonna have to let go a little bit for this one. Just laying down a little bit of white to work into. And then with my filbert, which is my favorite brush, I'm gonna start kind of blocking in the different colors of the different flowers. Start with that back one, which is really beautiful, kind of muted, flesh tone. You can mix in the opposite of a color to kind of dilute the saturation. So the opposite of red would be green, and this is kind of an orange so the opposite would be blue. I happen to have a little bit of turquoise here, so, maybe not that much. That might be a little too brown. That's pretty. There actually is some green in the center of that flower. I'm using brush strokes that mimic the shape of this flower. And the outside edges are darker. Maybe you wanna include those too. Even darker than that. Needs a little of that berry wine color. And I'm allowing the brush to be a little bit dry in some spots,

and that's fine. It's kinda like when we did the poppy, that was more stylized. Had some dry brush going on. And I liked it for that. And I think for the strawflowers that could be nice here too. I wanna do a little bit lighter version of that blush tone, so add some white. Go right to the center here. And then we have a little bit of that green. So mix up a little bit of green. Cool yellow, aqua just 'cause I have it. That's way too vibrant, so I'll add some white. That's a little minty, add a little more yellow, a little brown. Through the center. That's pretty good. Again you can get lost in the nuance of these tones. There's so many pretty little tone on here. As we wanted this flower, this is a cooler pink, kind of deep in the petals and the outside gets to be a little bit more warm, more towards orange. So I'm using that podge pink I'm so in to. Adding a little bit of turquoise to bring it more toward a purple. I might add a little bit of this berry wine too. It shows a little more neutral. And just push and pull until I like the color. So I think more muted on the outside. My probably favorite floral painter in the impressionist era is Fantin-Latour. Paints the most amazing flowers, and every time I'm at the museum and I see his work I just cannot get enough. If you look up his work, you'll be immediately inspired and maybe a little gut-punched as well because they're so perfect and spectacular. But that's what's so amazing about the impressionist is you get close and it's just these little layers of brush marks and paint marks and you can learn something from observing that. So we're just kind of getting the impression, that's what we're doing. You can also channel your inner Bob Ross and just think happy trees, happy little trees. (snickers) But for us it's little strawflowers. That's kinda too purple for what I want. I'll probably come back to that. There's some lighter tones I can add. Let's move on to this red flower. And this one's a little trickier because you can't see the articulation of each petal in the same way so in some ways that's harder, in some ways it's easier, 'cause you're not gonna be kind of lured into painting every single petal, instead you're just gonna get the impression. I'm mixing a little berry wine with burnt umber. So that berry wine's really dark! I mixed it with a little bit of red but that's okay because we're gonna paint a brighter red on top. I'm just kinda doing these outer petals. This is so fun. Painting these is really fun and kind of liberating because you're mostly just dealing with your color mixing and your brush strokes. Gonna do some red on top of it. It's nice and vibrant. And then I might change that even further, 'cause it's a little too red, but it might dry a little different in tone. Wanna address this flower again because it feels like it's pointing in a different direction to my painting, which is fine, if that happens. Not a big deal. Back here. That's pretty good. It's way too light. I'll just go back over it later. Let's do our yellow strawflower. He's kind of sitting away from the others. Again, let's do the darker kind of underlayer and then paint the lighter one on top. So those back petals are pretty deep in color. Paint those back layers first. Come back in with the yellow. That's good. We can add some more detail in a sec. We'll get this guy next. And this one has some elements that this one has, but this one has kinda like frosted highlight tips and this one's just a little bit plumier, deeper color. So we'll mix that color up. I'm mixing in a place that's kind of dried. And if you agitate it too much then you're gonna get little bit of paint, dried paint in your brush. So just be careful and try to pay attention to where you're mixing. So just little brush strokes. There's so many flowers I would love to paint that just are not in season right now. I'm really obsessed with dianthus, which are also known as pinks. They're in the carnation family, but they're smaller. Ahh, they're so beautiful. I wanna paint those right now. Maybe we'll use a little bit of this color in here too. Like I said I'm not doing every single petal, I'm just kind of getting the impression down. Of course now that I have this on my brush I wanna use it everywhere. I might just use a little bit of red to go over that, and we'll fix it a little bit later. I wanna get that ridge of green inside the first flower that we painted. That's better. There's not really any other place to use the green, so rinse that off. There's a really kind of sunflower yellow edge here. Again, not painting

every single petal, but just getting the impression down. Make a peachy tone to kind of get that back. And that peach might be nice in here too. Kind of marry some of these elements. I think these are all looking pretty good. I maybe could add a little darker spot right in the center of this one if I want to. That's pretty good. I love how just that first little pass looks. It's so sweet! But let's add just a few more petals on top in a lighter color, like we see, right in the center here. Those are drying pretty dark so maybe we need to make 'em even lighter. Don't wanna overwork it too much. I think adding a little bit deeper tone toward the bottom will also help. And then we can add some just very loose shadows. We'll definitely have to repaint some of this white back in because it's dried since we first laid it down. Oh while I'm here, maybe I wanna add a little bit of light yellow highlight in there. There we go. Okay. Shadow color. Just make something up on your palette. A little bit of umber, I put some of my berry wine in there. That might be too purple. You might need a little bit of yellow. I might not have the best palette habits. I just kind of move around, until I find an empty space! That's pretty warm, but you know we're gonna go with it. Actually, add a little blue. Too warm, too warm. 'Kay, better. Some shadows here. This guy, shadow casting all the way back to that other flower. Let's use some white to work these. And we know that the shadow's closest to the object so that's our base shadow. Let's just add a little bit darker tone right underneath each flower, where we see that. Nope, not dark enough. Here. Yeah! I love these sweet little strawflowers. There just as vibrant in their dried state as they are when they're living and on the stalk. They don't lose much color, especially if you keep them in a dark spot. This has been an interesting painting because of this little kind of collection or grouping, and things still relate to one another. There's the yellow that I'm using in the yellow flower is the same yellow that I'm using in the pink flowers when I'm mixing kind of my coral or warmer tones. So you do wanna think about how the different objects in your painting kind of relate to one another. I wouldn't add a new color, even to create my shadow that hadn't also shown up somewhere in one of my flowers. And that's something to think about as you develop your color sense and your own color palette for the kind of artist that you wanna be and in the work that you wanna make, is thinking about your color relationships and how they work in your painting. So using a little bit of each color, maybe in each flower, not predominantly, but maybe as part of the shadow or part of the highlight is something that you can consider as you're working.

Day 24: Succulents
- We're gonna paint this little collection of succulents. Succulents can be a fun thing to paint because they're kind of different textures and shapes depending on how they're potted. This one is actually not real. Don't tell anyone. Start with that sort of back part of the succulent. Using some of the berry wine, which is a complimentary tone 'cause it's on the red scale but it's also kind of muted. So this will make this a little more olivey in color. And then I also want a little part of this that's much darker, so add a little navy and a little bit of umber, and a little berry wine, warm it up a bit. All right. Let's block in the succulent leaves using my filbert. It's my favorite. Maybe you guys'll have a different favorite to work with but it really is my favorite. Because we're working in acrylic this pink succulent which may not be that realistic in tone, but I like it, we can kind of ignore that and paint all the green in the back first and then paint that on top. If we were using watercolor we wouldn't be able to do that. We'd have to mask that area out and come back to it later. I'm using this vertically because this composition's actually kinda tall when you include the pot and everything in. I feel like I am notoriously running out of room for things. Okay, I feel like that's generally the back area. Move on to this succulent here. Just looking back at my subject often. And these front leaves are more

purple. I could mix a color like berry wine but I just really like it. It works really well for so many things, skin tones and warming up kind of cooler tones. Let's get these pinky translucent guys in here. We're gonna be mixing with white to achieve that tone. This little guy is, this stem it goes up and then to the right so just kind of lay it in there. And depending on my angle, this top bloom kind of just crests where these come together so it might actually live kind of right there. Oh, paint might still be a little wet so we can come back to that too. So bigger kind of blossom here. I need to mix some more of this color. So a little bit of my berry wine and like a little bit of yellow into the white. Okay. I want to get all of this dark color and then block in little cement pot. My darkest color, remember we're not using any black, so umber, a little bit of navy, and I might throw in some of the berry wine to warm that up a little. Can refine everything. Okay. And this is really dark in here too so maybe I'll just put in a few little snippets of that. This color palette's actually so pretty. I love all these tones together. Let's mix a color for the pot. I'm using white, of course. A little bit of my umber. The pot's kind of like our shadow color we've been mixing all month, some kind of variation on that. This look a little cool but let's test it. So that looks too blue. We can add a little bit of berry wine or red or pink or what have you to warm it up, maybe a little yellow also. It's closer. Hm, that's not bad. it's gonna dry a little darker so I think that's good, at least to start. This little pot really like bows out on the sides. But I'm seeing more of it on the left from my angle than I am on the right. And I haven't said this recently but I think I said it earlier in the month, of course you're not gonna have exactly this thing in front of you so just observe what you are painting from, and constantly be looking at your reference and remember we're just doing studies. And once we put a shadow on that too I think that will help ground it. I actually might just do that now since we're kind of over here. Just by mixing a slightly darker color. I think that's a little cool. Paint some white. It's like having something to paint into for these edges and so forth. For me I really have to squint my eyes because we don't have a lot of dramatic lighting on this and it all kind of looks the same color. I think in general this left side's a little bit darker, so. That's too dark. That's too much like our shadow color so let me, I want a little bit warmer. A little bit more white. Not that warm. That's not darker. (chuckles) Make it darker. There we go. It's pretty subtle but it's a little darker. It's gonna help me to find that edge. It's definitely dark up here on the left where the little succulent is casting a shadow. Maybe we'll whiten this side just a little. Okay, let's work on the succulents themselves. Let's come in here and articulate some of these petals a little bit more. Some brighter greens in here too. (water splashing) I might have switched my position a little bit. Things are looking a bit different there. Just getting some of those darker tips. This is a lot darker. (water splashing) And then let's focus on the little pinky bits. Just warming those up a little. (water splashing) I'm gonna bring darker in to get this little space as opposed to trying to paint the light color into the dark. Some darker little bits in here. (water splashing) Just use some little brush strokes to create these petals. More like that. Yeah, I think the soil color is a little bit blue so I'm just gonna add a little bit of my umber on top of there in some places. And really maybe just get a hint of this darker kind of grounding shadow. And last let's add a few little highlights into those pink ones. Just mix a slightly lighter color. And I might switch actually to my round which gives me more of a point. Some white here. White there. When you're sitting down to do any of your daily studies think about what it is that you want to capture. Are you really focused on color, on the energy, on the light? Are you trying to work on your brush strokes? I really like the luminosity of the inside of the succulent. It could be because it's made out of plastic. I have no idea, but I feel like I captured that. I didn't paint every single little petal but there's something about the contrast and the push and pull of those darks and light that feels like really glowy and vibrant to me, which makes me really happy. I love that. So these are the things

that you'll discover as you're painting. And try to keep an intention in mind too, because as we move out of this month and you go to work on your own painting practice you want to give yourself kind of maybe a little bit of an assignment or intention when you sit down. These are studies, so be as loose as you can, but think about what it is that you are kind of looking at and what you want to kind of capture on your paper as you go.

Day 25: Pet Portrait
- We're nearing the end of our month together, and I thought we should do some people and maybe a puppy, my puppy, just because this is what actually I paint most often. I do paint a lot of flowers, but I also paint a lot of faces. And I think it's something that people are curious about the process of, and so I thought I'd break it down and show you how I approach it. I like to work from photographs, so we're gonna be including some images in the PDF that you can use, including my picture of Charlie, but you can also use your favorite pet or animal of your choice. When you're looking for imagery, if you are just practicing, then I'll let you find your own imagery. But if you are going to sell or exhibit or put your work out in to the world, you wanna make sure that you're using copyright-free imagery. And the images that we've used and are going to provide ^in the PDF are from pexels.com, ^and it's an open source free stock image site ^so check that out. I've got two sizes of printouts of Charlie, one that's smaller because I'm working on small paper. It's nice initially if you're starting to work from photos to not have to worry about in your head translating something very large to something very small in proportions. So if this is new to you, I would recommend doing that. But also sometimes you're like, oh, I wanna see this little detail, I'm having a hard time painting it, so having it a little bit larger is nice too. I've got this on a clipboard and I'm just gonna prop it up with a book. When you're starting out, I find it helpful if you're parallel to your source image, so not turned at a different angle, but just kind of have everything in line so that you don't unintentionally distort anything. I'm actually gonna block out the background first, and then we'll paint Charlie on top. I'm not going to paint all this little detail just yet. I'm just gonna say that this, when I squint my eyes, it's kind of a darker gray color, this is a lighter gray, and then Charlie's the lightest thing. Might be tricky 'cause he's a white dog, but that's not gonna stop us. Basically mixing up a cementy gray color. I'm just using my Bright or 1/2 inch flat. So I can see that basically this is where the pillow is, just kind of intersecting that top 1/3 to 1/2 of the page. And I'm just gonna block it in loosely. I might create a slightly lighter color. Just bring in these sections that are lighter in tone. Okay, and then we'll do the bottom part. Some darker little bits in here. I feel like there's a little bit of darkness in here. All right, now I can block in Charlie. Things may not be quite dry enough, but we'll start. He's not pure white; he's actually warmer. Just kinda get the shape. His little ear, (laughs) it's a little curved up here. So cute. I painted kind of more margin at the top of the pillow than is actually in the image, so I'm gonna kind of imagine what the rest of his ear looks like. So I can come in and refine this shape also by kind of painting back into him. This is a little creamy. That's okay, 'cause we can add highlights and shadows on top of it. His other ear is actually right there. It's hard to tell because he's got all this curly, fluffy alpaca kind of hair (laughs) coming off his ears. There's his paws. His back legs. He's going right off the edge, so we're just gonna paint part of him. And then between his legs, all of this jumbled fur, that's actually his tail. He's got a really fluffy tail. And it's actually coming from behind and then wrapping around. Don't think that I made this white enough. Just keep looking back at your subject and back at your painting, and what are the relationships between things? Again, these are studies, so they may not be perfectly proportioned or perfectly painted, but we're gonna try to get the feeling. All right, it's really dark around his face,

What will you make today?

so I might come back in. I'm still using this Bright or 1/2 inch flat brush. And just get some darker colors behind him. And I can use this as an opportunity to refine that shape. It's really dark here. And these kind of striations on the bed cloth also. There's also some shadows happening here in his fur. Here there's a really dark shadow where his hind leg happens and where you get the separation of the two legs. It's a little bit under his paw in his actual paw. His little chest. He's just a cute little ball of fluff. This part of him is darker. Let's use some brown. He's got this little patch by his nose. His nose is here. Kinda the shape of his eye. I can refine that with a smaller brush if I feel like this is too big. This here. Let's get all these wily hairs. His back leg is much darker. This in general is kinda shadowy in here. So you're just kind of going in, looking at darks, looking at the lights, and trying to record those on your paper. Put in that shadow color that's too warm, so let's just make it cooler. Goes right up to his paw. Okay, let's switch to my Filbert. This part of his face is really light right over his eye, this little bit I'm still not using pure white; I'm using a warmer white. But he is a white dog, so it's a little tricky sometimes because there's not a ton of contrast in his body. It's a lot of the same tone. So sometimes I'll kind of enhance what I'm seeing, and you can do that. His little eye goes like that. His nose. He has a sweet little warm brown nose. He's got a dark spot there. This is dark. This is much darker. His little paw pads. Here too. You can't even really see exactly what's happening where his feet are. It's starting to come out a little bit, I think. How I've painted this part, I think the angle of where his face is is a little different. I think it's needs to be kind of almost more vertical, and I have a little bit too angular here. So I'm gonna mix more of my shadow color that's in the background and kind of cut in and refine that silhouette. I think it's more like that. You just need to constantly be strengthening your powers of observation. And sometimes painting something you know really well makes it easier and sometimes it makes it harder. So you have to trust yourself on that. It's more... I think more like that. His little face comes down like that, his little shoulder. So I can't really tell what's happening here with his tail and his butt. I know that his tail is kinda coming up between his legs there. I need to make this space even a little darker. His little eye is right there. All right, let's add some of the background pattern and see how that changes things for us. We're not gonna paint every tiny little detail, and so now I'm gonna squint my eyes and kind of place some color, just to get the feeling of a pattern and not actually paint a photorealistic pattern. Because this is in shadow, I'm just muting my tones a little bit. And I just have these kinds of flowers happening. They will, of course, come right up and disappear behind him also. They're especially darker behind his head. Let's mix a slightly darker red there. Gotta get the yellow. Also darker. That's a little vibrant. Let's add some more burnt umber into it. It looks like most of the yellow is in here, but actually there's some of it kind of hiding up in here too. It's just more in shadow. So it's a little darker here. I might do a little bit of pink in there also. I feel like there's another kinda red tone. More muted. So now I'm kind of looking at my picture, but I'm also just kind of adding these little marks. I'm gonna use my script and some darker tones to mimic those vines that we see in the pattern, but, again, not following it perfectly, just kinda, I'm gonna dance the brush around. I am gonna thin out my paint a little bit when I'm using my script. So I might just kinda... And because this paint is wetter because we thinned it out, it's gonna take longer to dry if I wanna kinda go back and correct anything, so just keep that in mind. So it's really dark in there. Ugh, I painted over his ear! That's okay. I'm gonna put some white in there so I remember. (laughs) It's a sleeping puppy, how cute is that? (laughs) Okay, don't paint over Charlie's ear. All right, that looks pretty good. We can paint the background circles. Again, we're not gonna paint every little single circle, but we are just gonna get the feeling of it. It's kind of the berry wine color. I'm still just using my script. The one thing that's hard about the circles is you don't wanna just put a bunch of circles. You can see how the

circles are distorted here because of the ripples in the bed clothing. Don't expect to just lay down a perfect pattern. We're gonna have kinda wonky circles. Also, my circles are really small. If I look up here, they're really two half circles, which means that my circles should be more like that. So, let's actually go for that, 'cause I think that's nice to have a change in scale. So let's just paint over this. Little shadow there. Shadow here. Lighter. We may need to let that dry a minute before we can go paint over it. While that's drying, let's work on Charlie a little bit more. I think we can capture these tones in the ears that I haven't really gotten to yet. It's much warmer. He has like champagne kinda ears. So I'm actually just using my round. I'm using the burnt sienna and white. Little bit of yellow. And the ear starts there. They need to be a little darker. Yeah, that's better. Back of his head. Might have made his head a little smaller than it is in the photo, but at this stage we're just going with it, because we've already painted all the rest of it. And like I said, this is a study, so these are my kind of initial impressions. This is pretty dark in here. Just using some dry brush in here to create a little bit of fur texture. Oops. Picked up a lot of white there. This leg here is actually a lot more in shadow. We kind of haven't gotten there yet, so let's paint that darker now. This guy's darker also. And then really dark right here against the body. Looking back at Charlie, I think I elongated his snout a little bit, made his legs a little too short. Some of these I can correct briefly, but because this is a study, I don't wanna spend a ton of time. These are things I'm observing and noticing, and that's kinda half the battle, so I think we're pretty close. I just wanna paint those circles in. I think the scale of them is gonna help to kinda define the space around him. So, circle. Some of them are kind of hidden because of the way the sheets are pulled in that little area. Just being super loose with it. That's more elongated. This kind of disappears under his, this is kinda his tail there. That circle is too little, but (laughs) it's okay. There's kind of another one kinda going behind him. That's fine. All right. Let's kinda look again and see if there's anything else I wanna add, like there's a little bit of a highlight there. Some of my paint's drying. Maybe it's a little more shadowy there. This paw in the back, it's kinda hard to what's happening, but it's darker in general, which we've got. This front paw just kind of like fades right into the bed clothing here. His pads are maybe a little bit more pronounced. I think that's good for a little study of Charlie. I might just add a few... This part of his ear is a little bit more defined 'cause that hair separates right there, so I just might add a few of those. And here. I think people who actually paint dog portraits will say that you wanna accentuate some of the features. Charlie has really crimpy hair there. Maybe you make it even more crimpy to kinda capture what he looks like, but I think this is pretty good. I think it looks a lot like my baby. Okay, I think that's good. There's something in creating a study that has an intimacy and kind of a sweetness that I feel like a really finely rendered painting can sometimes lose. When I'm at the museum, I love looking at sketchbooks of artists. You might be really familiar with their finished portraiture, but seeing an unfinished painting or a quick study for something can usually be a lot more telling and have a lot more kind of soul or emotion to the piece. So these studies, don't hold yourself to this perfect photorealistic image. If you wanted a photorealistic painting, then just keep the photo. There's no reason to do a painting of it. But coming into a daily study and creating your own painting practice, I think you can learn a lot by the way you put down your marks and what you're observing. And I think this painting has a lot of sweetness and really feels like Charlie even though it may not look exactly like the photo I started with.

Day 26: Portrait of a Woman 1
- We're gonna move onto doing some faces. Like I said earlier, these are copyright free images. They're safe for you to use and paint from. Sometimes it's actually easier to start by painting

somebody you don't know, because then you're not hung up on it doesn't look like them. You don't know this person, so you don't know if it really is how they look. We're just using these as references. We're not trying to replicate the photo. We just wanna get the anatomy, kind of the highlights and shadows right. Remember, these are studies, so you can refine it as much as you like, but we're really looking and focusing on just trying to capture this moment, and capture this image, but not on making a photorealistic painting. We'll start by just blocking in our figure. Creating kind of a vague flesh tone here. It's very yellow in color. Definitely needs to be warmed up. We'll start with something like that. It's like that hideous foundation color. I'm trying to just get the shape of the face. I think it's more. And I actually think it's better. If we look at her head, there's kind of this heart shape, but instead of just painting this and then painting the hair, we'll have kind of this weird place where these two meet. It's better to just kinda paint beyond that. So, we might be making this wider, bigger than it appears, so that the other things can lie on top when we get to it. So, I'm just kinda painting all of this peach, and then we'll come back in and cut into it. This left, like, on my left, it's like the right side of her face, but on my left, this is all really dark, so I wanna just block that in. This might not be the right color just yet. Okay, it's all really dark down here too. Even darker than what I'm painting it right now. I also wanna block the left side. If I look in the image, the top, like, where her neck and shoulder kind of come out from the body is almost where her chin is. It's just like a hair below that. This is something that, like, when I just draw people, if I'm just doodling and I draw people, I never have their shoulders in the right place, so I kind of always wanna bring them lower than they really are. So, if you know you have a weakness like that, then just look at the relationships to things in your painting and in your photo. This color's not quite the hair color, but let's just use it to kind of block in a little bit of the hair out. So, this is maybe a little bit too blue. And we're gonna also paint that white head covering. Her hair kinda comes here, her ear is in there. I actually could've extended that peach skin tone. It's very abstract to start with, but we're gonna start to refine it. So, there's some really pretty warm tones in her nose. Her cheeks. There's like a deeper tone here. Kinda here, where the mouth is. These might feel like heavy-handed, and they are, 'cause we're just really blocking stuff in. And having that underneath can really be helpful sometimes in creating your painting. Put some lighter points in here. You can see that the hair needs to come in much more than where I had it placed. Also, I think maybe the chin goes more like that, and then my shadow is kind of in the wrong spot. I think the hair comes much more like that. I'm using my Filbert. Let's block that ear in. It's kinda pinky. I love putting ears on things when I draw. I love the ear. Just the shape of it, even if it's just a blob, I love having it in my sketches. And the ear actually lines up, on a face, the ear lines up with the bottom of the nose, so the bottom of the ear and the bottom of the nose line up. I think people are much more inclined to put ears high up. If we look at her whole head, the eyes actually are kind of a midway point. If we're thinking about the most crown of her head, top of her head to chin, eyes are halfway, nose is kind of halfway between the eyes and the chin, and then the mouth, and these are markers you'll kinda get familiar with as you paint people. It's very pink. This mouth, kinda block that in. Using a larger brush, I'm gonna also block in the white of that head covering. It's not a pure white, it's kind of a gray tone, so I'm gonna mix some gray like we mix our shadows. It's not quite that gray. That's really good. Comes down like that. And I'm also running out of room on my page. So, this may be a little dark, a little too blue, but we'll kinda go with it now. I also, I think I've squished this dark space. Like, I've painted it to here, but I actually think it needs to come almost up to there. So, I can adjust that in a minute. It's gonna be much darker back here. It may not be quite the right color either, but kinda just block it in. Let's do that correction with her hair at the top of the painting. Yeah, it's much higher. That white paint's still

wet, so we can come back and fix it in a little bit. It's also too blue. I can also block in a little bit of this darkness in the back. I'm not gonna focus too much on painting a background, but to get that white to pop, it might be nice to add a little bit so that you have something to kind of paint up against and help define these shapes. Right to the edge. I'm just gonna add some of that color in here since this was so blue and I still have it on my brush. Okay, let's work on the face. I'm looking at my reference. The angle of that shoulder may not be quite right. Let's attempt it, kinda laying down some of the eye. The contrast in something is what allows you to kinda see it and paint it. It is definitely hard to try to find a balance where you're not making people all look older than they are because you're kinda painting these harsh shadows around their eyes, but you also don't wanna do the opposite and smooth everything out, because then you're just gonna get this really flat, pancakey face, which is not interesting to look at or to paint. So, I'm looking at this, and I've kind of cut it away too much, so this is not quite the right color, but I just wanna get in there and add something back in. All right, start squinting your eyes more. It has to be darker here than that even. Dark here, dark here. There's this sort of flatness here that's happening. Okay. Her eye's right here. This eye. Kind of looking back at your reference photo, making adjustments where you can. Too light. This might be a little darker. This is a nice shadow color. So there's the nose here. Let's get her lips in also. Using my warm red for that and a little bit of the burnt umber. I think I painted her lips a little bit low. So that's slightly better. I might just mark in where her nostril is with this. Kind of her base of her eye is there. Other eye. I like to do kind of a medium tone when I'm working on the eyes. I don't like to just come in with a dark brown and try to hit it, 'cause that's not gonna work. I'm making her a little bit rosier. That's how I paint, I kind of exaggerate the colors in the face. I really like how that looks. You can tone things down a little bit if that's your preference, and that's something you'll decide as you develop your own practice. All right, we're getting there, we're getting there, slowly but surely. Let's block in the eye a little bit. Again, I'm not going super dark. It's gonna look crazy to start, 'cause I'm gonna refine it. I might have her eyes a little high. I think they're a little high, but I'm okay with it. Kind of how I've built things, so. But you should that, like, these paintings come together little by little, and you develop them, and you're just constantly referring back and forth. And she's gonna look like a woman, even if she doesn't look exactly like this woman. That's why we're not painting, you know, our Great Aunt Mary. Eventually you can paint your Great Aunt Mary, but right now you're just starting with something that's an anatomical and light reference. That's a little light. I think I said I painted her mouth too low, and then I made it higher, and now I've come back in and added a bottom lip again and made it lower. That's how it goes. This is way too light over here. I'm gonna darken that up. All right, I'm gonna put in some white here where I see it. I kinda like what happening here in the shadow. I don't wanna overwork that. There's a little bit more of a highlight there. Too much. This really dark part of her mouth, I wanna get. This is bothering me, so that's wrong. All right. There's some kind of braid things happening here. Let's do some quick little brushstrokes. That's probably a little too much. Let's switch to our round, so that we can work on the eye a little bit. I just need a brush that has a slightly finer point. And of course, there are masters who could just use a big brush to do this with, just by kind of wiggling away at their strokes, but I'm gonna do this so it's a little more precise. That's where her eyelash goes. So, I'm honestly just being pretty delicate here. But it's also not the final thing. It's also a little bit dry brushy, and that's good, I like that. I'm also gonna come in here. I'll just darken up the space where her lips meet. I want it to be, like, almost like a really deep purple-brown, so. I'll use that here too. This area of the eye needs to be darker, the skin needs to be darker there, so I'll do that in just a sec. We haven't addressed her pearls. I guess we'll put those on. And let's darken up that part of the

right eye that I mentioned. This feels too bright in there. So, this is kinda where I'm starting to take liberties with my color. I mixed kind of a purple tone to capture the darkness in that eye, and it might be vaguely purple, but it's not as purple as I made it, but that's how I like to paint. I might use it in a few places. Definitely need it over here in this shadowing. And we're gonna fix this left eye in just a second, and then I think we're pretty close. Oh, we can do those pearls if we want. Mix like a little kinda warm medium tone. Do little pearls. It's kinda like when we did the pattern on the bedsheets. I'm not gonna paint every single pearl, I'm just giving a vague impression of the pearls. That actually might be a little bright. But we can come back and add a white highlight to it. I think there's only just that purple there. Okay, let's fix that left eye a little bit. Hair is coming down too far on that. That's a little better. All right. All right, I'm just kind of playing with the shape of this. Well, both eyes, really, just to get it close to where I feel like it's good and readable, and it's round in the place I want it to be round, and so forth. I think that's pretty close. I think it could be a little darker on this left side, but I'm happy with the way that this looks. Its kinda muddy out here, so round that out. And then, if we take the whitest white we can get on here, and if you take your round brush and just dip it in your purest white, and just come in here and add a little dot to those pearls, that'll help those pop a little. We might have the whitest white right there, and this part of the nose. I think that's good. These painted studies for faces will probably take you a little bit longer than maybe the flowers or the objects, because we're invested in faces. At least I am. I want it to evoke a feeling. I never paint people who are smiling. Teeth are really hard to do. A blonde with a suntan is really difficult to do because of color mixing. People with a lot of wrinkles can be very interesting to paint, but can also be very tricky. Freckles can be hard. So, these are things that you can test in different lengths when you kind of build your strengths and figure out what kind of painter you are. Like I said, when I was painting this, I'm a person that really kind of increases the colors, and I really like a more obvious brushstroke, so you can see that especially in something like a study, but as you maybe make a finished painting or work many, many hours on a single painting, you can kind of reduce the brushstrokes if that's your preference for the final aesthetic. Now that we've done one together, I wanna talk a little bit about the kind of photos that you should avoid. And I have this one printed out, and this is a very pretty woman, and it's a pretty photo, but it doesn't make a good source image for painting because it's so flat. There aren't enough highlights and shadows. It's kind of all highlight in here, and it creates a very flat face, and you could paint from this, but you'd wind up with a kind of pancakey painting, and you wouldn't have that depth and contour that shadows provide. Another way to think about this is that the image has been altered or Photoshopped, so when this person was originally photographed, the photo didn't actually look like this. There's been computer work to kind of soften the edges and take out some of that contrast. So if you are looking for images, things in magazines might be tricky to actually paint from. Now, if you're just drawing or you're doing a blind contour, that's fine, but when you're really looking for shadows and contours in the face when something's been photoshopped or made really pale and blown out, and removed all of the little wrinkles and imperfections, it makes them much less interesting to paint, and you're not gonna push your talent and your skill and develop a painting style if you're working from a photo like this. If we go back to the image I painted just now, you can see where I've actually kind of enhanced and pushed the tones and colors in her face. I've added pinks and purples where maybe there were only kind of subtle suggestions of those colors, but I've made them more noticeable in my painting practice, and that's my style, that's what I like to do, and I find it a much more interesting image in the end. As you develop your own painting style, you will notice what you enhance and what you maybe diminish from your photo source into your final painting.

Day 27: Portrait of a Man
- We're gonna paint a man today. He's also from that Pexels site where you can download copyright-free imagery. I don't know anything about his story, but I liked his face, I like that he has dark eyes and dark hair, I think that'll be fun to paint. There's not a lot of tone in his face, so this might be one where I even enhance it further than what we're seeing in the photo. It is a little bit flat, but if you squint your eyes, you can kind of see where things might be a little bit shadowy-er, and we can enhance that, and where things are gonna be a little bit brighter. We're gonna start by mixing up a general tone for his skin. Using a little bit of burnt sienna mixed in with my white, maybe a bit of yellow, the cooler one is what I happen to have on my palette. It's not quite pink enough. He does look like a little sun-kissed, so, I'm not sure how much of the pink I'm gonna use. Faces aren't always the usual flesh tone. When we did our painting yesterday we used purples and really bright pinks and so forth. You might wind up using blues. Oof, that looks like calamine lotion. I don't like that color. Sometimes it looks different on the paper too. So I'm gonna just change it a little. I think I wanna add a little bit of my burnt umber to kind of just desaturate and tone down that brightness, and that might be a little better. So somewhere between the two of those, I think is good. All right, let's just block in his face. I often will draw people's faces from life, but I never paint people's faces from life. Someone would have to be really patient to sit for many, many hours on end to achieve that. Even artists who paint from life also, before cameras they would do lots of sketches, and then when the camera came along, people take photos. So. Everything else we've painted from life, but for this we're using photos. I'm just gonna smooth out where that really kind of indentation is. Don't want any gaping white space, so we'll just kinda generally block in. His chin is probably a little bit squarer. His neck also comes in here. Let's paint it a little bit further down. All right. General, the shape. Now, I'm gonna come in. I'm using my bright, that half inch one just to start. I think we started Charlie with this one, too. There's some lighter tones, just like in the apples of his cheeks, right in between his eyes. There's this little part in the forehead that's a little bit lighter. Things look a little different too as they dry, as we've learned. Adding a little bit of navy and burnt umber, a little bit of berry wine to create a more shadowy tone. Kinda block in some shadow here. Let's bring in his jacket also. This is like an army green color. It's much darker there. So is that pink shirt I don't wanna forget about. Let's put in his ears, and then we'll do his hair. I've used up all my flesh tone, I was mixing into it, so I gotta make some more. The ear's really kinda like two dots, kinda what we're seeing, so I'll just place those. Gonna make them a little bit bigger than they are. This side is a little bit bigger. Like that. There is some. And I guess this is where his nose is, I'm not 100% sure yet. His hair is really dark. I'm just gonna do as dark as we can get it. It comes down here. Probably need to switch to my filbert soon. This brush is a little large, but, maybe I can block in his eyebrows. Feel like they're about here. It's kind of like where we did the eye, sorry, where we did the ear. Top of the ear. Yeah, I'm gonna switch brushes. Okay, working with my filbert. That's better, that's more like it. Hm. I clearly have my favorite brush. You will have yours too. Just get familiar with the marks it makes. Feels comfortable in your hand. In painting in his eyebrows, which I think are in the right place, I can see that I've totally shortened his forehead. So we're gonna extend that in a minute, too. I mean, you can leave it. You can tell this is a human, and a male human probably, a guy. So if it doesn't bother you, you can leave it. Maybe you haven't foreshortened it like I have. But I do wanna change it in just a minute. Also need to move his lip a little. Okay. Just gonna go back to that bigger brush. And his forehead actually is like all the way up there. (laughs) It's so funny. Extending the forehead. Maybe we want something a little more purple. We're gonna blend this all back together and wait. When everything dries, we have to cover up that dark part, which, you know requires a little more paint.

You're putting light on top of dark. And his hair is more… It's kinda more like that. The way I could tell that forehead was probably too short was I had placed these dark marks, and my eyes and everything were lining up with the ears, but these dark marks are actually like, there's this light part where the brow comes out and then goes back for the forehead, so I need to make room for that light part, so I could tell that everything needs to move up a little bit, so, this really should be lighter. Then we'll add the dark part back in. So lighter. Not quite that light. Highlight what's happening there. This is the part where I might have to make things lighter than they appear, and some things that are darker than they appear, because I'm trying to get more contour and texture and interest into this face that there's not a ton of, just because of the lighting, it's kind of muted, things are looking a little flat. You'll gain a confidence to, with what colors to use in what scenario. I think this actually needs to go up a little too. I'm kinda making him more purple than rosy toned, which I like, I'm gonna kinda stick with that. I think that's working. This is maybe too purple. It's like… Let's go back to our filbert. I might just put in a little bit of shadow here. Let's try to bring the nose out a little. So, the mustache goes almost right up into his nostrils, I think it's just the angle. (laughs) I think it's actually kinda going more like that. There's some kinda hair here. Think the eyes are little bit longer where the eyelids are. Oh yeah, this upper lip, we don't want to forget about him. I'm kind of like working on all the parts, you know? If you get one part to this perfect place, then you're gonna be reluctant to change it, and as you're working on things, pieces or parts of the painting might need to change, so, you don't wanna overwork one thing to this preciousness level. Some scruffy hair here. Oh yeah, we didn't do the pink! This is really fun because it will reference all these pink tones in his face. This is a little lavender, I mixed blue into it. I'll bring it back to pink in a minute. I might just bring it, I can't see all of his shirt, but, might just do like that. Imagining it's under there. So I am tempted while I have this color on my brush to like go in, might add a little pink, and just add a little tiny moment of that somewhere else. Maybe in the lip here, even though this isn't finished. Oo, I love that. Okay, I think he's pretty close, just because I could fiddle with this for a while. Okay, I don't want to do everything that pink color, so maybe too much. I do wanna keep doing the mouth, 'cause that's what I was doing, and then I got distracted. The lip actually comes down a little lower, like that. I'm using the filbert again, I've switched back to that. This obviously has a lot, this painting has a lot of color in it. I warned you before that I would be doing that. Because the photo reference doesn't have a ton of color, and it's leaving me to imagine some of my highlights and shadows and things. Gonna focus a little bit on the eyes. Still using my filbert. Actually maybe just kinda finding the lip here. Oops. Might come in and add a slightly lighter tone right like closer to the eye. Little bit of a kinda highlight happening there. Not too much. It's like the lightest parts. It's like really the lightest part. Yeah, yeah, that's good. I feel like that one came together a little more quickly. Sometimes they will just speak to you, the colors, I didn't really have to think like, oh God, what color is this gonna be, because it can't really see it in the photo. Kind of a palette started to evolve. Maybe I was pushing this a little bit towards like these cool pinks instead of these warm pinks like it was in the photo, but I really liked it, and I went with it, and you should do the same, if you have this intuitive color sense that's happening in a painting, then go with it. The only thing you can do is learn from it, you're never gonna make a mistake, there aren't really any mistakes, they're always opportunities to learn new ways in color mixing or brush placement or observation, so I would encourage you to throw in a weird color maybe now and then and just see if it works, and if it doesn't, mix a new color.

Day 28: Portrait of a Woman 2

- It's our last day together and I saved this portrait for last because I really love this woman's face. I think she's gonna be really fun to paint. I think I'm just gonna start with my bright, my half inch flat. I'm gonna paint her larger than she is as in the image. I kind of, I feel like I want to go light because so much of her face is light. And then we're gonna do the darks. You could go either way. You could do the lights as your base and then go in with your darks. Or you could do dark as the base and go in with your lights. I think actually let's do the dark as the base. I think sometimes that looks really nice. (splashing) I have I think too much white paint in there so let's mix another color over here. So this is like the darker tones in her face. But we'll come back in, add the highlights and such. (paintbrush tapping) This little random bit. (splashing) Her hair is awesome. It's gonna be really fun to paint. And we want to also block in her garments. So she has this really cool scarf that's coming up behind her ear. It's really pressed up against her face. (paintbrush tapping) It's kind of tannish but then it gets really dark, closer to her neck. (paintbrush tapping) I need more of the umber. (squirting) (splashing) Let's block in her hair also. I'm just gonna do the umber right out of the bottle because I can do lights and darks from here. I might just do the general shape and then add kinda brush strokes off it. (paintbrush tapping) Right now she has Beethoven hair but we'll change that. Okay, let's start to add some other tones into her face. Just refreshing some of my colors on my palette. (paintbrush tapping) So everything has dried and I actually wanna kinda work in to things a little bit. So I might just add a second layer here quickly. (paintbrush tapping) This is really a strong cheekbone. (paintbrush tapping) Actually her hairline goes more like that. (paintbrush tapping) It's just like everything else, we're kind of finding the shapes. And eventually she won't look like Beethoven. She'll look like her. As close as we can get it. I think the face actually comes more like that. (paintbrush tapping) There we go. (splashing) I'm mixing kinda these orangy tones because I don't think that the burnt sienna is quite what I want. It's worked for some things but it's only gonna get me so far. I'm kinda mixing up a slightly different color. (paintbrush tapping) Let me do her ear here. I made her hair not big enough. It actually would be going off the page. And I think her hairline actually comes to here. Now that's feeling better. (splashing) (paintbrush tapping) Now as we're looking up from below. So her nose is kinda this little shape. (paintbrush tapping) (splashing) Oh boy, too light. It's like her lip, so a pink, pinker. This is more like this. (paintbrush tapping) (splashing) (paintbrush tapping) (splashing) Let's add some, a little bit of darks just so we can kinda see more things happening and more reference points. She has really a beautiful arched eyebrow. (paintbrush tapping) Her hair needs to be much bigger. I kinda squished her hair to get it on the page. (paintbrush tapping) Just using my Filbert. I'm kinda looking. (paintbrush tapping) The darkest color is warm there. And her hair is just gonna go off the page. (paintbrush tapping) Now she doesn't look like Beethoven! I don't think. I'm just going to place another piece of paper behind her so I can just really go off the page here with her hair. It's too bad, I like all her hair. I want to get all of it. Got this really deep tone. I can come in and start to place some of these darker elements like her eyes. She's kind of like looking up and to the right. I think I've made her face a little short. But at this stage I'm just gonna keep with what I have. It's just something to know for next time. Let me make that part of her face deeper in tone. (paintbrush tapping) (splashing) All right, I want to do her top lip. This might too similar to what I already have here. Sometimes you'll mix a color and you'll mix it and mix it and every time you put it on the paper you're like okay that's the same color. I keep making the same color. And maybe it's the right color but maybe relative to everything else it needs to be darker. So like that, I keep mixing kind of the same color. I think actually this part of the mouth goes down a little bit more. The end of her nose is like this really, it's like really pink. I really like that. I don't want to lose that. Just a little bit on her mouth too that it's like, it's very pink. So this

is where I basically start to do the thing that I always do which is like add these tones that may be exaggerated from my original image. But that's how I paint and you will do something different. You will have something that you do. The bridge of her nose has that. This, kinda the apple of her cheek, is definitely like rounder than how I have it painted. I can change that a little. (paintbrush tapping) I'm losing a little bit of her ear. This side. (paintbrush tapping) There's a lot of orange in her face too. (paintbrush tapping) (splashing) Just refine the eye shape. Maybe I'll refine the nostril a little. Let's do more of a shadow there. (paintbrush tapping) I still think she has more hair than I've even painted. (paintbrush tapping) I might switch to my one just to get those little details in the eyes and I think we'll probably be close to done. Refine the nostril, it should go a little... And that little curve that I put in her mouth made her look like she's kinda smiling more than she is. She has these earrings also. (splashing) There's like a little bit of white in here. It's not whitest white. It's a little less than that. Just little places where we can add some highlights. Of course there's in the eyes, a reflection. Oh, and her earrings. That's what I said I was gonna do. Oh, that's very white. It's like using my finger as a tool. (laughs) Just looking back over and seeing if there's anything I want to just include that I didn't get. So I think it's pretty much there. Yeah. Regardless of what it is that you want to paint, if you set up a practice for yourself you will get better. No one will argue that. The more you draw, the more you paint, the better and more confident you'll become which is a huge part of the puzzle. Just being more efficient with your strokes, knowing when to mix one color, where to place that color, how to enhance colors or take things away and really hone your observational skills and your artistic eye. And really making your painting practice your own. You have to start somewhere. Everyone has to start somewhere. I started somewhere. Regardless of whatever paining practice or drawing practice or artistic practice that you want to start, it all begins with one step. You're gonna wish you started today. Pull out your paints even though it's the end of the month and you've been joining me all month, and awesome. Figure out what you're gonna paint tomorrow because keeping your practice up and just honing your craft and exercising that muscle of painting will only make you better.