
Botanical Watercolor Illustration with Jess Park

Chapter 1 - Botanical Watercolor Illustration

Overview

(upbeat music) - Hi, I'm Jess Park of Jeshy Park. I'm a watercolor and illustration artist. In this class, I'm gonna teach you how to use a monoline pen to create botanical illustrations. We'll start with basic stems and leaves, move on to flowers, and end with a complex floral wreath surrounding a hand lettered quote. A monoline pen is a simple tool, but you can see how bold the results can be on its own or with watercolor accents.

Materials

- For this class you'll need, Micron pens in O3 and O1. A Tombow Fudenosuke Hard-Tip Brush Pen. Watercolor brushes in various sizes. A pencil. An eraser. Watercolor paint, I like to use tubes and squeeze them into my palette and allow it to dry overnight. Legion Stonehenge Aqua Cold Press 140 pound paper. A laser level to keep my lines straight, but you can use a ruler if you'd like. A paper towel and a jar of water. And don't forget to print out your PDF which contains the reference photos for the florals as well as the quotes that we'll be practicing.

Basic drawing techniques

- Let's talk about the supplies we'll be using today. So the pen I'll be using is the Sakura Pigma Micron O3. I like to use these pens because they have archival ink, that means that if I draw something today, it's not gonna change color, and it won't fade over time. The great thing about these pens is that they also come in various sizes and are waterproof, so I can always paint over them as well. The paper we're using today is watercolor paper. It's thick enough to allow paint, but it also has a nice, smooth surface so I can draw on it. So let's test out our pen and see what the different sizes look like. The O3 has a thicker tip. And let's see what the O1 looks like. The O1 has a thinner tip. So I like to use the O1 for thinner details. Let's practice making some marks with our pens. I like to do a curved up and down motion when I'm doing a stem. You can also practice a shape like this, which I'll use both for leaves and for stems. When drawing the center of a flower, sometimes we have a circle or an oval right in the middle, so let's try practicing those shapes. Remember to draw slowly. So let's try this shape, which is the shape of a petal. And we can also go up and down this way, in the shape of an S, or in the opposite direction. I like to do curved shapes, especially when I'm drawing petals. And you can practice a shape like this. Sometimes petals have frilled edges. And we can practice those too. And let's practice one last shape, just like that. Mark making, which is what we just did, is important when learning how to draw. Practice these shapes, see what other ones that you can make using your pen. Let's look at our PDF to talk about proportions and shapes. I'm gonna start with this one right here. Looking here, we can notice the shape of this branch. It's not a straight line, and it's more of a curve. So you wanna notice that whenever you're drawing or referencing a photo, you wanna really pay attention to what angle that branch, or flower, or petal is making so that you can duplicate it on your paper. Don't worry about making an exact replica, but just kind of keep in mind that when I draw this, I wanna keep that S-shaped curve. The next thing you wanna look at is the angle of the leaves. For example, let's draw out that S-shaped curve. If I'm looking at the leaves here, I notice that it's making an angle that looks just like this. You can hold that angle and move onto your branch, and then draw that same

angle when you come over on this side. Over here, I'm looking at this leaf. It's more horizontal, and I wanna keep that in mind when I draw it over here. When I reference photos, I don't try to make an exact duplicate, but I do notice the way that leaves are growing, the angles that they're producing, and that's what I try to replicate onto my paper. The next thing I wanna look at is proportion. So I'm going to go ahead and look at this reference photo over here. I'm gonna take a look at this flower, and looking at it, you notice that it's about the shape of a circle with a smaller circle in the middle. When I wanna draw this flower, what I would do is really think about that circular shape, and how the center of it takes up about this much space within the flower. Let's look at this flower over here. We can see that it's not really a circle, it's actually an oval. If you were to draw that flower, it would be more of a shape like this. Next we wanna see where we would put the center of that flower. If you look back at the picture, you can see that it's not really at the center of the oval, it's actually a little bit off center. So that flower might look something more like this. Whenever you're drawing botanicals, pay attention to the angles and proportions that you're referencing.

Plant components

- We're gonna address some stems and leaves, but first let me show you how to remove the paper from your pad. The size of the block are glued. So what you want to do is find the top or the bottom and just gently put your finger under there and lift. You can slide your finger upward and then remove the other side. I'm gonna show you all different ways to draw stems and leaves. I'm gonna use the Micron 03 today. So let's start with a stem. When you're drawing a stem, you can have a basic straight stem just like this. Or you can curve it. So I like to give it a little S-shaped curve. Then you can decide do I want one stem or do I want multiple? If I wanted more than one, what I like to do is just have them cross this way. The next thing you want to decide is about the branches. Sometimes you'll have branches that are paired, meaning that the branches will be right next to each other on either side. Other times you'll have branches that are alternating. So we'll do one here, and then the next one on the other side. Next we can talk about the shape of a leaf. You can have a basic pointed leaf just like this. Or both sides of the leaf are pointed. You can have a rounded end, where one side is pointed and that's the side that would be coming closest to the branch and then one side is rounded. Another shape you can have as little heart shape, so it's opposite of this, and it looks just like that, where it's rounded up at the bottom and then pointed at the end. The next thing we can talk about is the length of your leaf. You can have a short leaf or a long one or just a regular sized one. You can also do that with the other shapes as well. A short one, a longer one or in the middle. And again with a heart shape. Next, let's talk about the width. We can have a wider leaf just like this. And for that shape, it would look like this. And for that one, it would look like that. The next thing that we can do to vary the leaves is to add veins. Sometimes you'll have a leaf that looks like this and it doesn't appear to have any veins. Other times you can have a leaf with a vein that just comes partway or you can have one that goes all the way through like this. Or you can have one that has multiple and it would look like that. When you're adding details, you can stick with the 03, or you can switch to the 01, it's up to you. The next thing you wanna look at is the edges of a leaf. We can have smooth edges just like how we've been drawing. We can have ones that are a little more wavy. There are some that look like they are loped and then some that look like they have spiked edges. Let's look at some of our references so you can see what I'm talking about. Looking at this reference here, we'll pay attention to some of these branches. Here you can see this one really looks like it's very straight, just like how we drew there, whereas some of them are more curved, and we can see that here. We can see that these leaves here are paired, whereas this one looks almost

like it's alternating. In this section right here. We look at the different shapes of the leaves, some of them are pointed at the end. Some of them have more rounded and some of them are longer with curved edges, and others are shorter with smooth edges. Looking at this reference photo, we can see that this leaf here has lots of veins on this leaf. Whereas the other page we were looking at really didn't have very many veins at all. The next thing I want to look at is what I call extras and it's my favorite part. If you look at some stems and leaves, sometimes they have berries just like this, or long things just like that growing. And looking at this reference here, we can see these little buds here that look like circles. So we're gonna draw some of those. The first thing I want to do is draw a branch. So I'll have a curve out just like that. And on the ends, let's do some little berries. Just little circles, and it has a little dot on top and what I do is find where that branch is gonna lead to and where it ends is where I add that little detail there. We can have some that are colored and just like this and maybe a branch that has multiple that are all alternating and will vary the size by making these ones really small and sweet. We can also make the berries longer and actually they look like little reeds kind of what you would see growing from a pond. Let's do one that looks like a little puff and I do that just like that. And we can do ones that have little leaflets at the ends and maybe some pollen there. And my favorite extras are just tiny flowers. This one has a black center and looks just like that. Let's try some examples using what we learned just now. The first one is going to be a stem that looks like this and let's give it some pointed leaves. We're gonna have paired branches and I like to have the leaves bigger towards the bottom of the plant and smaller towards the top of the plant. Next, we can do one that looks like this. I'm gonna give it three branches. And they're all going to have this shape of leaf and we'll also make those paired. Let's give all of these leaves a little vein. Next, let's try some of those reeds that we did earlier. So we'll put the reeds here and maybe another one going this way. And next to it, we'll have tall leaves coming out this way, with a vein all the way down the middle. We can draw some wild flowers with tiny leaves just like that. You can see these leaves are a little curved. Next, let's use that heart shape that we learned earlier. And maybe I want these to come over just like this. Maybe a few that come out like that. So we'll have one here, here. And I'm just going to fill in the rest of this branch with tiny leaves. You can see we're getting so many different variations of leaves and stems and branches just from what we learned previously. Let's do another with berries. We'll draw some berries coming up this way, maybe one over here and an alternating branch here. We'll give it some leaves. That leaf is going behind the other one, so we'll stop it like that. The last thing I want to do today is teach you how to draw a lavender. So let's reference our photo here. Now we're not going to reference it exactly, and I don't want to draw it exactly as it's seen in the photo. What I really want to pay attention to is just the shape of these little flowers right here. That kind of shape in a teardrop shape, and cluster together. So that's what we're gonna depict when we're drawing our lavender. So we'll have a long branch coming this way and another going this way. Let's draw that shape we referenced earlier. And you see how sometimes after the main area of flowers you have a gap and then another area of flowers so that's what we're gonna draw here. And another on this side. At the top of the lavender, you'll notice that there are little flowers here. I'm gonna draw that right here and again at the top over here, and maybe on the side right here as well. We're almost done with our lavender. Let's go ahead and add some leaves. I know our picture didn't have any leaves, but I think it would be nice to add some just here. A lavender tends to have very long leaves that are skinny just like this. As we just learned most botanicals can be broken down into simple shapes and forms.

Complex florals

- Let's draw some flowers. We'll start with a simple anemone and then move to some more layered and complex flowers, like a peony. Let's start with an anemone. I have these two reference photos, one with more layers and a more simple one on the bottom. So we'll be referencing both of these here. For this I'll start with the Micron 03. Whenever I draw an anemone I always start with the center of the flower, which looks just like a little circle. You can start with a simple oval like this and just color it in. Or you can make it a little more complex and fill it in with little details that looks like that. So what I'm doing is just drawing this type of shape, but very small within this little oval. But again, if you wanna keep it simple just color it in. The next thing I wanna do is add the petals to this anemone. I know that the anemone have lots of layers, looking at the reference photos, but I wanna keep it simple and sweet, so I'm just gonna add five petals. The way they look is that they have this little frilled edge, so I'm gonna draw the first one just like that. If you're not sure take a look at the reference photo and you'll see that they have little edges, just like this, where they're curved and frilled. The next thing I'm gonna do is continue with the petals. So here I drew an anemone that's more head-on. Next I'm gonna add the details around the center of the anemone. The way I do that is I draw little shapes that look like this. It looks like a little tear drop or you can do a circle. You wanna have those radiating from the center of the flower. When you're done with the center you can leave the flower like this or you can use the 01 to add more details. When you look at the reference photo you'll see little folds in the petals and that's what we're going to depict here with the 01 Micron. Find a little ridge on the edge of the petal that you drew and just draw a little line coming towards the center of that flower. You don't need to do too many, just doing a few gets the point across. You can vary the length of the lines, because some folds are longer and some are shorter. You can also start from the center of the flower and move out as well. We just drew a head-on anemone, meaning that it looked just like we were looking above the anemone. So the way that we drew the petals they're all about equal lengths radiating from the center. This time I wanna draw an anemone that's a little off to the side. So what that's gonna mean is the center's gonna be a little more oval shaped, just like this, and the petals will look a little curved as we draw them. The ones in the back will look a little longer, the ones in the front will look a little shorter. So let's go ahead and try drawing that. I'm gonna switch back to the 03. Draw the center of the flower just as we did before. This time I'm gonna color it in. Now that we finished the center we can draw the petals. So first I'm gonna draw the one that's in the back and I'm gonna have it look like that. Next, I'm gonna draw the ones that come off to the sides. Then I'm gonna have the ones that are in the front. I'm not loving how this one came out, so let's start over. But this time what we're gonna do is make this petal a little smaller, so we can fit this one in here. And that happens when you're practicing. So we'll start again with the center this way, just like we did before, and I'm gonna color it in. Next, we're gonna do that back petal just like we did. And then a few to the side. And then some in the front. Just like that. We're gonna add the center details next. For the ones in the back we want the lines to be longer and then ones coming towards us will be shorter. Go ahead and add in all the details. When you're happy with how it looks go ahead and switch to the 01. Again, I'm going from the edges of the petals towards the center of the flower and vice versa. Now let's move onto drawing a rose. When looking at a rose at first it can look really intimidating to draw, because there's lots of layers and petals and it's hard to know where to start. But, just like with the anemone, we're gonna start at the center. Let's start with the Micron 03. The way I start the rose is that I start all the way in the center. So let's look at the reference photo of the yellow rose. When you look at the very center you can see it almost looks like it starts as a spiral. So we're gonna draw that when we're drawing our rose. And the same goes for the red rose as well. If you look at it it almost starts

like a little spiral. So we're gonna go ahead and draw that on our paper now. When you draw your spiral you wanna give it little corners and edges and bring it out just like that. And so we'll stop there. Maybe I'll add a little more in the center here. So that's the beginning of our rose. For the next layer of petals I'm gonna look at the red rose here and see how those petals are shaped. You can see that they're a little straight on this side with curved petals on the outside. The inner part of the petal touches that spiral and that's what we're gonna depict in our picture over here. So I have kind of a straighter edge here and then a more frilled edge on the outside. I'm gonna continue again on this side over here. And again over here. I'm ready for the next layer of petals, so I'm gonna look at my reference photo. You can see that the next layer has bigger petals, so we're gonna go ahead and draw that on our picture. We're gonna have the inner part touching that first layer we drew and then, draw just like that. And maybe I'll put one over here. And some back here. Okay, I'm ready for the next layer again. Looking at my reference photo I can see that they're even bigger now, so that's what I'm gonna show on my picture. Sometimes they have little points and dips, so I wanna show that in my illustration as well. I'll put one more over here. And maybe I'll round it out and put one right here. The next thing I wanna do is add some leaves to this rose. If you look at a rose leaf they kind of have jagged edges, so that's what I'm gonna draw when I draw my leaf. And I'll draw another one next to it here. I'm gonna make a little vein coming down the middle of both leaves. You can leave it as-is and be done, or you can switch to the 01 and add some details, which is what I'm going to do now. Just like we did with the anemone, you wanna make sure that the lines of your details follow towards the center of the rose. And I'm just gonna add a few, 'cause we don't need very many. Maybe some over here. And remember, again, to vary the length of some of the lines. You want some to be short and some to be long. I'm happy with how the rose came out and I'm gonna move onto the peony. So let me grab a pencil. When you're drawing a peony you can use a pencil to guide you. So what I do is just draw out the overall size by sketching a little circle. Then you can think about where the center of that peony is gonna be, so I'm gonna put mine here. Now this is just a loose guide, you don't have to follow it exactly. If you wanna change it while you're drawing that's fine too. I'm gonna grab the 03 and look at my reference over here. In the center you'll see that there are yellow parts of the peony and I'm gonna show you now how to draw that. A little bit like this and that's how I like to draw them. You'll have them going in different directions, some taller and some shorter, and we're gonna draw that right here in the center. So let's go ahead and do that. I'm gonna use the center circle here as a guide to draw my first petals. From the reference photo you can see that the peony petals have little ruffles on the top. You'll also notice sometimes that the petals have little folds, which is what I drew just right there. Let's look at this other reference photo. You can see that this looks similar to what we drew. The petals in the front are more round, while the ones in the back look a little more linear. And that's exactly what we drew. Next, let's add more petals in the center. I wanna make the center look a little more full, so I'm gonna add petals between the ones that we just drew. Now we're done with the center of the peony, let's draw some of the surrounding petals, but let's reference our photo first. The center petals are more curved inwards, while as we move out the outer petals are curved more outwards. So we're gonna go ahead and draw that in our picture. What I did here was I ended this petal here, so that I can draw the one that is covering it. And then I add a little fold at the edge of the petal. Continue like this with all the outer petals. Next I'm gonna add some leaves to this peony. When you're done take a look at your peony and see if you need to add any petals or any more details to it. I can see that the center here looks a little bare, so I'm gonna add a few more of these yellow pieces here. Now I'm ready to go in with my Micron 01 to add some more details. Follow the curve of the petals when you're

adding in these little details. Just as with before, just add it in a few spots. You don't wanna overwhelm it with a bunch of lines. I'm pretty happy with the amount of detail and now I'm gonna take an eraser and erase my pencil lines. When drawing any flower pay attention to the overall shape and angles that you're depicting.

Writing phrases

- Let's write some of the phrases that will go inside of our wreath. If you find that you need some guidance on lettering, check out my daily practice. I'm gonna practice with a Tombow Fudenosuke hard tip brush pen. Modern calligraphy, or hand lettering, is made up of thick downstrokes like this one here and thin upstrokes. We're gonna go ahead and practice some of those strokes now. If you're right-handed, you wanna tilt your paper counterclockwise. If you're left-handed, you'll do the opposite and rotate it clockwise. I'm right-handed, so I'm gonna start like this. Starting at the top of the line, with a full pressure downstroke, you're gonna draw the slanted line. Let's continue that across this line here. Remember to keep even pressure as you go along. And maintain a steady speed. Try to keep your lines parallel to each other. Now, let's practice writing some thin upstrokes. To do that, you're gonna start at the baseline, which is the bottom line here, and with very little pressure, you're going to move upwards. You can see that these lines are thinner than the downstrokes because they require little to no pressure. Let's practice a few curved lines. I just wrote the letter C. To create this letter, you wanna start with a very light pressure as you're moving upwards, and then continue with a thick downstroke, and release pressure as you come around. Let's practice writing a few of those letter C's. Now that you understand the basic concept of lettering, let's practicing tracing some of these phrases. I'm gonna start with this phrase here, "Stay Wild". As I'm writing the S, I'm using very little pressure, adding pressure as I move down, releasing pressure again. All my downstrokes have heavy pressure, and all my upstrokes and horizontal strokes have light pressure. Continue like this for the rest of the word. Continue writing the rest of the phrases and be sure to lift your pen after every stroke.

Floral wreath and lettering

- Let's combine some of the techniques that we just learned to create a floral wreath surrounding a hand-lettered quote. I've already penciled a circle on my paper to help guide me while I'm drawing the wreath. I'm going to start with the Micron 03. When drawing a wreath, you wanna think about the different sections that you're going to be drawing. Maybe you'll draw a certain type of leaf branch here, and then another here, and so on and so forth. So for the beginning, I think right here I'm gonna draw a rose, surrounded by some anemone, and then fill the rest of the wreath with leaves and branches, but you can choose what you like best. I'm drawing my rose as I did before, starting with a spiral in the middle, and then the surrounding petals. I'm going to finish the rose with these wide pedals on the outsides. Next, I'm gonna add some leaves here, and maybe another one over here. Next to the rose, I'm going to draw some anemone. I'm going to start with the center, and then the petals. I'll draw another anemone on this side, starting with the center, and then adding the petals. I think I'll add some leaves near the anemone. I see a little blank space here, so I'm going to add another leaf to the rose. Now I have the rest of the wreath to fill. I'm going to go ahead and do that with some branches. Think back to the first part where we learned about drawing different branches, and just choose the ones that you liked best. I'm gonna continue all the way around this wreath. As you move around the wreath, you can rotate your paper to make it easier to draw. Now I'm going to look around the wreath and look for areas that look more bare. So here I can see that it

can use a few more leaves, so I'm gonna draw some here. And maybe in this section here. And I'm just continue to look around for areas that look a little more sparse. I think that looks pretty good, and I'm ready to letter inside. I'm gonna use my laser level to letter a quote in the middle of this wreath. You can definitely use a ruler or any straightedge to do this part. Because you're writing on watercolor paper, you may notice some rough edges on your letters. Just go back and fill them in with your brush pen. Now that I'm done lettering, I'm gonna get my 01 Micron and add some details. I'm also gonna go through the lettering and fix any areas that look a little rough. If you'd like, you can stop here, 'cause I think it looks great as is, but in the next section, I'm gonna show you how you can add some splashes of color.

Adding watercolor accents

- Now I'll show you a loose watercolor technique to add a splash of color and life to your ink illustrations. I'm using my Princeton Heritage Round 6 brush. This technique is very loose and I'm not trying to color and stay within the lines. So let's paint these leaves here so I can show you this loose technique. I'm gonna start with a green, and when I'm painting, I'm kind of thinking about where the light is coming from. So let's say the light is coming from this side of the page, and then falling on this leaf. Then we would want this left side of the leaf to be white, or have some highlights, and then darker on the right side. So I'm gonna depict that here. And we're really not trying to stay in the lines, it's very loose. And with this one, it might look something like that, and we're just adding some splashes of color. Let's move onto another leaf. You can also use multiple colors, so I'll start with the yellow, and then add in some green. And here, I'll start with a lighter green, and add a darker green. Now let's paint some of the flowers. I'm gonna start with this anemone here. If you're thinking about the light, again, these petals might be lighter, while the ones on this right side would be darker. I'm gonna start with just water here. And then drop in some color. Maybe I'll add some blue to that, and then just pat up and down to allow the colors to mix. I'll wait a second for that to dry a little bit, and then add some darker purple there. In the meantime, let's paint this one here. And this time you'll notice I'm adding the darker purple on this side, while keeping the other one light. I'm gonna come back to this flower here. So you see, we're just adding some splashes of color, and we're not really trying to stay within the lines. Next, let's paint this peony here. I'm gonna start again with just water, and then drop in some pink. I'll keep it darker in the center and on the right side, and maybe where the petals meet the center. Now I'll add some coral, followed by yellow. (water swishes) Next we're ready to paint the leaves. (water swishes) I'm gonna show you next how to paint the rose. Again, we're gonna start with just water, and think about where the darkest part of the rose would be. That would be the center. So I'm gonna get the paint and just dab it in the center. And then maybe again where those petals come and meet the center. You can always go back and add in more color. (water swishes) And next I'm gonna paint the leaves. (water swishes) I like using the wet-on-wet technique because it makes the flowers have a dreamy quality. Lastly, let's paint these berries. I'm just gonna dot generally where the berries are, and then paint in the leaves. I'll make some of the leaves darker, (water swishes) just to keep it interesting. Now that you understand the concept of loose watercolor, let's move on to our wreath. I'm gonna use my Round 6 brush again. If you wanna keep it even more loose, you can use a larger brush, like a 10 or a 12. (water swishes) I wanna start with this rose in the middle. I'm gonna start by wetting the rose and then finding the center, which will be the darkest. This time I want the rose to be pink. I'll dilute some of the paint, and then add color to the outer parts of the rose. That's still pretty wet, so I'm gonna let it dry a little bit and move on. Okay. (water swishes) I'm gonna wet both of the anemone.

I'm gonna start with blue and purple to paint the anemone. (water swishes) My rose is still slightly damp, but not too wet, so I'm gonna add in some more pink. (water swishes) Now I'm gonna paint some of the leaves. (water swishes) When painting the leaves, use different values and change up the colors to keep it interesting. (water swishes) (water swishes) (water swishes) (water swishes) (water swishes) I'm gonna paint this lavender here, starting with a lighter purple, and then allow it to dry just a bit before I come in again with darker purples. (water swishes) (water swishes) (water swishes) You can see that even though these are the same type of leaves, I made some of 'em lighter and some of them darker. (water swishes) (water swishes) (water swishes) Even though these are the same type of berries, I'm painting some of them red, some of 'em orange, just to show that they're all at different stages of ripening. And I think it also keeps it a little interesting. I'm gonna go back to the lavender now. Now I'm adding in different areas of darker purple, and maybe some that are even blue. (water swishes) (water swishes) (water swishes) When you think you're done, take a step back and look at your wreath. Here, what I really tried to do was have different colors of green all throughout my wreath. I had some pink here, so I wanted to put it over here as well, and yellows all around the wreath. I don't wanna keep one color just concentrated in one spot, and then another color in another. It's really nice to have a variety of colors and values throughout your wreath. We started with a simple line, and it became something beautiful. I'm excited to see what you create.