
Watercolor Workshop: A Daily Practice with Sasha Prood

Chapter 1 - Watercolor Workshop: A Daily Practice

Overview

(upbeat music) - Hi, my name is Sasha Prood and I am a graphic designer, illustrator, and hand letterer. I also authored a series of three art workshop books. One of them being "Watercolor Workshop" which has inspired this daily practice. We're going to be exploring watercolor, which is so exciting 'cause it's filled with color and texture. It's also one of those mediums that you can only control so far before it wants to do its own thing. So it gives you an opportunity to let go as you paint. We'll explore a variety of watercolor techniques, some a bit more basic starting with wet on dry, a little wet on wet, getting into some ombres, and then getting a little more experimental. We'll do some lifting and some layering techniques throwing in a little salt and a little stamping. Join me as we build our skills and we try out all these different experiments, allowing you an opportunity to find your personal favorite and find your own aesthetic within this medium.

Day 1 - Materials

- The materials that you'll need for this daily practice are, of course, watercolors. You can get watercolors in tube form, like I have here, or in cakes, or even in liquids. I like tubes because you can mix professional and student grade, you can mix different brands, and you can set up your own palette. Cakes are great for a beginner 'cause you can just get yourself a set little palette and you don't have to worry about picking and choosing your own colors. If you do wanna pick your own colors, going with tubes is another way you can go, and you can start with some student grade ones to keep it inexpensive as you're testing them out, and once you discover that you just love watercolor so much that you wanna invest more money in, you can slowly add on professional grade paints and mix them up. The big difference between professional and student quality paints is the archival quality. So, a student paint will fade over time. If you wanna create a masterpiece and sell it to someone and have it hanging on their wall for all of time, I would definitely go with the professional grade quality. And when you're setting up your palette, you just wanna pick a palette that will fit all of your growing collection of watercolors, and you can take each of these tubes and just squirt a little bit out in whatever arrangement works for you. I went for a little bit of a rainbow theme so that I can pick all my greens at the same time if I want, and then have everything kinda close to each other when I'm working through a project. After you've gotten your palette set up, you'll wanna think about your brushes. Brushes also come in student and professional grade, and they can run up to very expensive prices. I would say as a beginner, just start off with a kit of different sizes and shapes that's a cheaper kit, and you can play with them, figure out what you love. I tend to go with these sort of round brushes. There's also square brushes, or flat brushes. There's fans, there's lots of different shapes. And I tend to also prefer to go pretty small with my round brushes. Depending on what size painting you're planning on doing, you'll wanna fit your brush to the size of objects you're painting. I store all my brushes in this roll case, and it's pretty old. You can find all different shapes and sizes, but one thing that annoyed me about this case was how they're all the same length, and different brushes are different lengths. So, you've got something that's a lot longer and a lot shorter, and the shorter ones are gonna disappear down into here, and as you try to pull them out you're just gonna start to damage the end. So, to keep them really nice and safe and straight I've used these pins to just clip off the different ends at the length I want them to keep all

my brushes right at the top. Once you've got your brush selection under control and you've got them housed in a case, you'll wanna think about what paper to purchase. There's three different types. There's hot-pressed, which is the smoothest, cold-pressed, which has a little bit of a ripple, and then rough, which is very textural. I personally like a smooth hot-pressed paper, which is not the standard way to go for a lot of watercolor artists, but I like to do a lot of little details, so I wanna have as few ripples as possible so I can get in all those details. And I also scan a lot of my work, and trying to get rid of that paper texture can be a challenge. Currently I've been using a lot of 140 pound hot-pressed Strathmore paper. And the 140 pound is something that you have to think about, what weight you wanna go for. I like something that has some flexibility, 'cause sometimes I'll have to run my paper through the printer to get some guidelines down before I start painting if I'm going for something very precision, but you also want it to be heavy enough that it will hold up to water. And the water factor is important to consider, whether you're gonna pick a student grade or a professional grade paper because if you have more tree pulp in it, it's going to be a little more challenging with the water, and the more expensive the paper is, the more linen or cotton fibers are integrated into that paper. I cut my paper down to 5 1/2 inches square for this class. I actually like to buy large sheets at 22 x 30 inches and then cut them to whatever size I want. You can also just get a nice pad of paper for this practice. You'll also want to have some water, and I like to have just one cup of water, but some watercolor artists like two. It would be one clean and one dirty. I don't mind having to clean my water every once in a while 'cause it gets me up and out of my seat and an opportunity to stretch. You'll wanna have some different stamping tools. I went with some different sponges, some that are more natural and some that are synthetic. You can get some different markers, whatever you like, whatever colors you like. Some colored pencils, too. A graphite pencil and a standard and kneaded eraser. I just use the eraser at the end of my mechanical pencil. You'll want some different masking fluids. You can get masking fluid in a jar, you can also get it in these Fineline squeeze tubes, so then you get a little more control. And even more control, these markers that are masking fluid markers. I don't like to use my masking fluid with my paint brushes just 'cause it can really ruin them. So, I have some toothpicks, but you could also use Q-tips, or whatever you want that's disposable and that you're not worried about ruining with your masking fluid to apply it to some of your designs. You'll wanna have some different salts. I've got table and sea salt. You can use kosher salt, too, or any other interesting salts. Something that's a little chunkier and something that's a little finer is nice to get some contrast. And we've got an X-ACTO blade. I have some Scotch tape, but you can use an artist's masking tape. Just make sure that the tape is not too sticky so that you'll be able to peel it back up off your paper when you're done with it. You'll want a rubber cement pick-up, which you'll use when you're trying to remove some of your different masking fluids. And just a ruler to get some straight edges and to cut your paper to size. Take a little time to gather all these materials, set up your palette, and maybe even throw a little bit of paint on the paper to get oriented with your brushes and your paints.

Day 2 - Color chart

- Once you've got your palette all set up, you'll want to get oriented with your paints. I always find that getting into someone else's palette is like trying to navigate someone else's cell phone. It's just a little discombobulating 'cause you don't know how each of the paints reacts to the paper and flows and all the different details of it. They all have their own personalities. So you wanna learn what that is before you make big decisions on final art. So I've got a chart here that I've set up. And you guys will get a copy of this as well that you can fill in with each of your colors. You can also

freehand it. Do whatever you feel is most natural to you. I like a little bit of order. I'm gonna test out each of these colors. And you'll wanna pay attention to how it flows on the page and how it dries, if it sinks into the paper or sits on top. All of these little details make a big difference in how you'll use the paints later, and if you'll need to mix them or if they're great on their own. To start off, I'm gonna throw a little bit of this white on. I just like to kinda follow a little bit of a rainbow. And as you start working with your palette, it might be perfectly clean to start. And oh no, you're, you know, getting it a little dirty now. Don't worry about cleaning it off all the time. Keep all these paints until it gets muddy, because you can reuse them again and again. No need to waste all this lovely paint just because it's not in its perfect little spot. I'm just getting this nice and wet. And white's a little bit of a controversial color. Some people don't think you should paint with it because white should be the white of the page. But you never know when you'll wanna mix a certain color and white will be that perfect addition, or if you want to add some little white snow sprinkles on top of your final landscape design. There's always that opportunity that a color like white could be useful for. And I'm gonna just paint a row of them and then label. And if you've got your tubes handy, you can put in all the little details with your label. I have a little code system for if it's Winsor Newton, if it's a higher quality or a lower quality, so if it's a student grade or not, and then what the color is. So this is Chinese White. And then we're moving onto a little Davies Gray. And depending on how much of the color you pick up, you're gonna have a really light swatch or a dark swatch. So it's nice to really throw a little bit of the color down. And if you are using my little grid that'll be provided, you may notice that a little bit of the ink can pick up if you've printed it out onto your watercolor paper. It's not a big deal. It'll dry with maybe a little bit of a soft edge. But this is just for your knowledge. It's not final art for anyone. And this actually is neutral tint, which I might put my other gray here and then neutral tint after. Sometimes I just will kind of freehand which one I want right next to each other, even if it's a little different than my palette. Neutral tint is an interesting tone because you can add it to any other color to just darken it up. I will actually often mix it with my black to just make my black a little more interesting. Some people would say you shouldn't have your own black and you should only mix your blacks. But you know, it exists in the world. There's occasional uses for it. So it's fun to just have all these different colors available to play with. So as you're filling these in, you can then start to label. And eventually you'll get to a point where you've got your whole palette set up and you know what each one is all about. And you could even, beyond labeling whether it's Winsor & Newton and it's artist quality, this one's Winsor Orange, you may wanna write a few other little details, like how it's sitting on the paper and what you're noticing, how this one just very quickly wanted to create all these textures in it, whereas others paint a lot more smoothly. So all these little details, learning about your palette is just really good to know. So take a little time to explore your palette and set up your own color chart.

Day 3 - Wet on dry swatches

- The first and most basic technique you'll need to know as a watercolor painter is wet on dry, and that's the technique you used as a child. And it's actually the only technique you really need to know and one that I've used for years before I started to add more complexity to my work. You can paint just about anything you can dream of, wet on dry. And it's simply having a dry piece of paper, and taking your brush, dipping it in some water and some paint, and having wet paint that you apply to the paper. For this daily practice, I'm gonna be using all five and a half-inch squares, and I've marked out a two and a half-inch border around that. The swatches will go in and any compositions that we create along the way as well. So we'll get started with a pretty simple swatch. I'm just gonna use

some Opera Rose and paint it wet on dry in here. And you can always throw in a few more colors if you wanna get adventurous, paint a few different swatches, since this is a pretty quick class today. Just getting us started. So take a little time to get your paint blowing. You can do a little test on your palette. Once you feel like it's ready to go, just start applying. I like to start at the edges and work my way around. I feel like it's a little light right now. I wanna get a little more color in there. There we go. And you wanna have a decent amount of water going to keep the paint flowing. One of the things beginners often have trouble with is really getting enough water into their watercolors. So if you feel like you're seeing a lot of paintbrush strokes, throw a little more water in. And take your time, this isn't a rush. And if you're not someone that likes perfect edges, you know, you can go a little more organic with it. Now notice a few little splashes here and there as you're painting potentially. That happens to me since I do use a lot of water. You'll be able to clean those up later. So just let them dry and then you can take your X-ACTO blade and just lightly scrape them off. So I tend to babysit my watercolors as they're drying because you never know how they'll dry, and sometimes they'll do some funny little things. I've got two different examples of how this same swatch has dried. And you can see that both are a little different, even though they're the same brush, the same paper, and the same paint. So that's one of the beautiful things about watercolor is you have just so much control over it, and then eventually, it's gonna do what it wants. In addition to these single color examples of wet on dry swatches, in my "Watercolor Workshop" book, I have some further examples where you've got multiple colors, playing with large mixes of colors. So I would take a little time to play with this and create a few additional swatches, where you mix up a bunch of different colors, some that you think will look beautiful together, some that you question. Maybe they won't even look that nice together, 'cause you'll never know what colors will just meld beautifully into one another.

Day 4 - Wet on wet swatches

- The wet-on-wet technique is another great foundational technique that you can bring into your water color. To get going on the swatch, you'll want to take a little time to wet your paper. So that's the wet-on-wet, is you're applying water, clean water, to your page before you paint on top of it with your wet paint. And you'll wanna be super careful with where you place this water, because wherever you wet the surface, the paint is just gonna wanna flow. So I'll kinda go at an angle to see where the surface is just nice and shiny, and try to get an even coat of shine across all of the swatch where I want the paint to end up. And a section may dry, and you'll just continue to wet until you've gotten that even coat. You don't want it so at that it's running, you just want a nice shine across the whole, the whole area. I'm using a slightly bigger brush for this just to fill the space quickly. Once I've got it filled up, I'm gonna go to a smaller brush to start adding my paint on top. That looks pretty good. So now, just to have a little more control, I'm gonna do little dots into this with my other tones. I'm gonna go with a little bit of cadmium red, dotted on, and you'll see it just bleeding out, creating all these really pretty little, flowery bleeds. You can stripe, you can do squiggles, whatever you can dream up. But one of my favorites is to create these sort of ethereal dotted designs. Maybe I'll add a little bit of alizarin crimson. Just play with whatever colors you think might be interesting together. Pick a few colors that you might even think might not work together too, because sometimes those are the colors that end up being your favorites. You might need to go back into this with each of the colors a few times to build them up. I think for my last color I'll add a little bit of cobalt blue. Pop it in around wherever you want them to go. And you can let it have a freeform edge if you want. One of my little things is I like to, once I've got in the center where I want

it to go, I'll go around the edge and just try to clean it up, because they're gonna, the colors are gonna eventually wanna bleed out to wherever the edge is. So I might take an even smaller brush, and just start working around the edge a little bit just to make sure that the paint is gonna just really nicely go to the edge. And then you can go back in and do a few more dots. I'll spend a little time working through this, going back and forth around it. Cleaning up the edge, adding some dots until it feels just right. And anywhere that the water is kind of pooling, like towards the edges and corners, it might be harder to get really clear dots. So you might need to wait until that dries a little more to add a few more dots into those sections. But no matter what you do, the watercolor is gonna wanna do its own thing in the end. So you only have so much control, eventually you just have to let go and let it be what it is. Think I'll just add a few more dots before I do that though. Just to go back in all of these sort of orangy red dots have started to fade, so maybe I'll pop them out a little more. Eventually you get to a point where you're like, I think I'll just let it dry. See what it does. And you might end up with something a little more open, like this is kinda looking, or something that's even more filled, like this guy. There are lots of different types of wet-on-wet swatches that you can make. In my "Watercolor Workshop" book, I show some that are striped, some more of these dots, some that are single colors, some that are additional multiple colors. This is something where you can really take some time to play. Some that have some horizontal and have kind of a half-on-half feel. I'm sure you guys can dream up even more ideas than I even have here. So take some time to apply some paint to your wet paper.

Day 5 - Preparation process

- Now that we've done a few practice swatches, we're gonna move into a composition. So I just wanted to talk you through how I get started on a piece of art. 'Cause just having a blank white piece of paper can be a little intimidating. So I start off with a bit of visual research, maybe a little Google search, just trying to understand what my topic is, not trying to get a specific picture to copy. In this case, we're going to do some lips and a tongue. So after I've done a little visual research, I might start just doing a few different sketches. So when I get started with some sketches, I'll just kind of rough things out. I think I want to do a bit of an open mouth. So I'm just trying to think about the shapes and how they might fit together. And you can use a little tracing paper if you want, if you've gotten a sketch that you're kind of liking and you want to adjust a few things. Or you can just continue to try a few different sketches until you get something that's pretty roughed out and that you feel is ready for guidelines. So maybe I'll want a little tongue coming out. Just playing around with how the shapes might fit together, thinking about where the teeth would go. Do these lips feel a little big, a little small? Trying to think about centering, too. Like, we're a little off-center, but we can continue to grow our sketch and evolve it, too, to fit what we're thinking about. And as I would continue to develop this sketch, eventually it might be something like this. I might even throw down some guidelines just to get it into the exact size I want. And at this point, this is the type of sketch I might show to a client to get approval if I'm working with them on this project. And once it's approved, I would start throwing it down onto my final paper. So I've put some guidelines here just to continue to mimic the size I want it to be. And at home, I have a light table. You can also use a window. And since we don't have either of those for this situation, I'm gonna do a transfer process. So I'm going to apply some graphite to the back of this. And then you just can line it up, they're both the same size, and we'll transfer it on. So let's just get a little graphite going. And this doesn't need to be beautiful. This is just gonna be to make sure that we've got some graphite to transfer to our final paper. This'll give you some rough guidelines that you can then refine a little

more. There's all different ways to transfer your rougher sketch into a nicer set of guidelines to work from. Maybe just a little more. We'll throw in a few other directions just to try to fill in a few more of those little blanks. Line this guy up and transfer, hopefully. See how it goes. Just take a little peek. Yep, I've got some little, very light lines coming through. You'll want to press pretty hard just to make sure that you're transferring some of that graphite onto your watercolor paper. Just giving a hint of the 3D that I'm gonna try to create later with the paints. See if we did it. Not too bad. Then you can go back in and just clean those up a little bit and get a little darker so you've got more to work from. As you continue to refine this and get it just to where you want. You'll end up with something like this. And I even threw down a center line to try to get those teeth nice and centered and the little divots in the lip. And before we get going with painting, I might erase a few of the lines that are gonna be under the paint, just lighten them up and taking any of the really dark spots. I'm just trying to lift off some of this extra graphite. You can get a lot of graphite erased out of watercolor once it's dried, but you don't want too much. You don't want to have graphite that darkens your water color and changes the colors you're going for. It's a good idea to try to eliminate some of this extra graphite before you get too far along. Just clean it up. And if you're not finding that you're kneaded eraser is lifting everything quite as you want, you can always come back in with your standard eraser, too. And just get out some of these center lines that you don't need anymore. These marks will lift later once your watercolor's dried so don't go too crazy. You want to make sure that you still know where you want to paint things and what the shapes are. So that's pretty good.

Day 6 - Wet on dry and wet on wet composition

- We'll now combine our wet on wet and wet on dry techniques into a single composition, creating this lip painting. And I'm thinking I'm gonna do wet on wet for the lips 'cause then we can use some line strokes to get a little 3D pop and wet on dry on the inside. So let's get going. To get started on this, I'm going to paint the lips. So we're gonna do the wet on wet technique. You're just going to paint around and just get this whole form nice and wet. And I'm going with a bit of a bigger brush for this. I'm going with my round six. Just take your time, and make sure you're getting just right to the edges. If you paint a little water beyond them, the color will extend into, into areas that you're not really wanting it to go. So this is a part where you really don't wanna rush it. And if part of the lips start to dry a little bit as you're painting around, you can just continue to wet them and I like to look at a bit of an angle to just see where it's shining. Rotate my paper as I go, just to make sure I'm getting into all the little crevices. Just throw a little extra water in just to make sure you're keeping it nice and damp, until you're ready to add some paint. Just finishing up around this last bend. Now that you've got it nice and wet, I think I'm gonna switch to a thinner brush. I think I'm gonna go with my round three and I'm gonna pick up some Windsor red for this, just get your red going and just like you can do dots, you can do stripes. So I wanna kinda get a 3D pop with these lips. So I'm just gonna very little at a time, just start to play around with, actually I think going smaller is even better now that I'm seeing how the big brush is reacting, and that's just fine. We'll be able to work with that. Can just start to throw a little color down as it dries, so we'll continue to add more. Just trying to create a bit of the, these contour lines. And then you can start to just bring some color around the form and you're just gonna wanna have like a nice light red in the end, so some of this will just be filler to just bring red around the whole lip and some will start to make those lines that we're trying to get so in between, throwing some lines down, I'll just work around the form, going into all of the little edges and try to spread the red around a little bit. And as it's drying, I'll continue to add some of these little stripes just to try to bring in that 3D feel. And if you feel like any of them are just

looking a little wonky, you can always just wipe them out a little bit with your water. Go over them and smooth them out. So this is a little bit of a back and forth process. Take your time. Don't worry if it's looking weird. It'll continue to improve as you're working through it. So I think I'll throw even a little more red up here and just start to get a little bit of some of that shape going again. And if you don't want to go for the 3D pop, you can do some dots or whatever you want these lips to, to look like. I'm not trying to throw in a lot of color. I want them to still be a little bit of that nude lip type of look, but you could saturate this with lots of color and have like a bright red lip. So I'll just continue to play with this until it's kind of looking as I, as I want it to. Continue to throw a little bit of this red in. That's a lot right there. So that's a spot where you could just kind of smooth it out. Get rid of a little bit of that and as you're working your way through, I'm noticing that all my little lines still in there have started to dissipate as well. So you can just throw a few more in and it does start to have that 3D feel. And you don't want it to be too over the top. You can just also let the water color do its thing. I am noticing that there's certain areas like over here that aren't quite as colorful. So just trying to get a bit of that pink, everywhere. A light red. And make sure that you've got a nice defined edges and as this starts to dry, it will transform and the edges will get a little bit more of a hard-edged feel and it will look like this guy. However, many of these little lines you want to throw in and as it gets more and more dry, they'll hold a little harder and you can get a bit of this pop. So now, I'm thinking I want to go with wet on dry, filling in a little bit of black and then do a bit of a darker pink red type of tongue coming out. So I'm gonna start with these little black areas. There's a teeny little spot there to fill in. And I think I'm gonna go with my little round one and I will just fill in and I'm just gonna give a little indentations around the teeth just to hint at them. So I'm gonna do a bit of a mix of my black with some of my neutral tint, just to really amp up the black. And if you're using the little brush, you've got a bit more control. So you can decide just how close you wanna start getting to each edge. And I like to just start in the middle, just in case there's too much water in my brush. You don't wanna get too close to any of these edges with a lot of water on your brush. It can be a little out of control, so just to keep control. Just trying to create a nice clean line. This is a chance to smooth out if there's any little spots on the lips that look a little rough. You can just overlap them a little bit with your black to clean them up. Just take your time. You definitely don't wanna rush this. And if you get any spots where you start to get a hard line, you can just soften them up again with a bit of water. And you can kind of decide how you want the teeth to look. Just go little indents. Rotating to get the right angle so you don't have to always be moving your hand in awkward directions. Just thinking about the shape of the tongue and exactly how you want it to look. You're defining some of these edges for objects you'll be painting next. So you can go around and do all the little bits of black, all at once and then we'll let those dry before we get into painting the tongue. So I'm gonna go to this side now. And there's a lot of water in there, so I'm just trying to take a little water off my brush, so I'm not adding to it. Then there's just one teeny little spot under here where I just wanna accent that the tongue has this bit of a of a 3D shape to it. There. And you can also indicate that there's a, there's the teeth down there with a little indent. And I'm gonna erase away at the end a lot of the pencil, but I might just leave a little hint of pencil where the where each of the teeth line is, 'cause you could go in with paint for that, but I think it's subtler just to keep some of my pencil marks. It's kind of a preference thing. If you want a little bit of a bolder look, you could definitely paint each of the teeth a little more aggressively. Adding a line, or even coloring them if you're going for some crazy colors out there. So next we'll let this dry 'cause we don't wanna start painting the tongue and have all the black bleeding into it. Now that the black sections have dried, I'm gonna go in and paint the tongue. So I think I'm gonna use a slightly larger brush.

You kind of have to think about what shape, what shape brush really fits the the object that you're painting. I'm thinking I'm gonna go with the three in this case. And I'm gonna do a little bit of a mix of Opera Rose with Alizarin Crimson, 'cause I want a bit of a poppier pink, but I also wanna keep some of the red feeling from the lips. So just trying to think about what colors will, will work best together. And I also wanna bring in a little bit of that feeling of the 3D-ness of the tongue. There's the line down the center, so just trying to think about that as I paint. I'm gonna try to bring a little bit of a darker color in there and lighten it, going out. You can't always control this. Every time you paint the same thing, even, you'll see little, little changes, but just trying to think about it and get a little darker with your brush when you start there can often give you a little bit of that hint. And I'm also gonna try to go into each of these little teeth and give them a little indent. So let's just start in the middle, thinking about our darker tone and work our way out. It's starting to fill in these guys. You might wanna go in a few times with color as you work through this. You don't, the first color you lay down is not always perfect. So I'll often be kind of babysitting my work as it's drying and maybe add a little more color here and there, depending on how I feel it's adjusting as it dries. So just following around the edges, your black, adding a little more water on your brush where you want it to be a little lighter, blending out any little hard lines that you're seeing. I'm kind of letting this hard line set up a little bit more just in the hopes that I'm gonna blend it out but I wanna keep it a little darker. So I maybe will stay a little darker that way. Some of this is just a little bit of trial and error, no matter how long you've been painting depending on the temperature around you, the humidity, how your painting skills are that day, all different factors can decide whether you're gonna be painting as you wish or as the watercolor wishes. Maybe I'll even go back in and try to add a little more darkness in here. Let me just continue to keep an eye on it as it's drying and see if it's doing what you want. And as it dries, you might end up with something a bit like this. And you can go back in and do any little touch ups at this point. If you wanna darken a little more, even add a little more black in here. I've erased around the edges and I have gone in and I'm erasing most of the little sketch marks from the teeth, but I do just like to keep a few little hints with the graphite. I don't mind a little mixed media happening. Sometimes your sketches are, are the best part of your work. You have a little more of that freedom. In addition to painting both wet on wet with wet on dry, you could just use these techniques separately. So here are some examples from my watercolor workshop book of some wet on dry compositions. Just a variety of different, organic and geometric designs that solely use wet and dry. You can paint just about anything you can think up with the most simple of wet on dry techniques. And you can also go into a bit of just focusing on wet on wet. So this uses the wet on wet to create a lot of texture in the snake. Do something a little more graphic. All of these little guys use wet on wet to create all their different textures. And some type of treatments. Separately or together, wet on wet and wet and dry are great techniques to bring into your watercolor as you get started and a quick note on paper, especially with wet on wet, where you're using a lot more water, you'll wanna invest in a slightly higher quality paper. If you're gonna spend money on any of your materials, I would put it into the paper.

Day 7 - Ombre swatches

- Bringing multiple colors together with watercolor can be tricky. So you'll want to take some time to practice developing gradients or ombres, as I like to call them, just to get control of your colors and work on those transition points. So getting started today, we're going to create a swatch transitioning between three different tones. You'll wanna just think about what colors you're gonna use. I'm gonna use carmine, and I'm gonna then transition in the middle to opera rose and then I'm

going to transition at the end to ultramarine violet. So I'm gonna go with a slightly smaller brush. This is a big swatch, so you think, oh, I wanna use the six but I'm gonna go with the three, just so I have a little more control over the colors and I don't have quite as much water going on. The bigger the brush, the more water it's gonna hold. Let's get some of our red. We'll just start at the top, getting a little bit of color down. And you don't have to have perfect edges. I always like a nice clean edge, but this is not always the thing to do. Not everyone loves the clean edge. And you also don't have to have your swatches be perfect squares. In some of the classes I teach, people will do circles or squiggly shapes, whatever you like. Rotate as needed. Just working my way down, trying to establish some nice red going before I start thinking about transitioning the color. Get a nice damp edge here and maybe I'll start to throw a little bit of the opera rose in with the carmine. Just to get a little bit of a mixed tone first. See how that goes. That looks nice. You can definitely see the subtle difference starting to develop and take this nice and slowly. And I think I wanna go all out pink pretty soon. Starting to bring the brighter pink in. Trying to get just nice, smooth flow of color. None of the harsh lines that you can get if it starts to dry. If you do get a harsh line, you can just soften it and buff it out with your brush. I feel like I'm gonna... It's time to start to think about the purple now. Can take some of our ultramarine violet. Let's see how that mixes with our pink. Start to bring that in a little bit. We're going to try it then here to get really purple-y. We've got a transition between these colors pretty quickly in this shape, but you could do a longer rectangle, if you want to have more colors or more time between transitions. Just clean up some little spots and you can let this dry completely. And each time you do these swatches, you'll find that the colors will change. These are the same colors, the same paper, and even using the same brushes and there's just differences between them. This one has a lot of pop of pink and that one not quite as much in the center and there's little spots where it dries a little bit more textural. That's just the nature of water color. And I'll show you some more examples of ombres from my book, "Watercolor Workshop." I start off with just a single color that transitions from the darkest to the lightest version to start, which you can give a try and then start to add in two colors and bump it up to three, which is what we tried out. And I then start challenging people to throw in a fourth color and even a fifth which can get really wild. And they all have their own little nuances of watercolor texture, which is something I love and embrace.

Day 8 - Ombre composition

- Let's apply our ombre skills to a composition today and we'll make this graphic peace sign into a series of ombred sections. To get started, we're going to think about our colors and consider how we want to fill this in. I'm gonna do a bit of a circle motion and have each of the colors kinda coming into this center point. In each section I wanna have a slightly different ombre so that you can see the difference between each one. If I've got some yellow up here, maybe I'll put the yellow down here in this one, just so that they're not in the same spots, and blending each section together. I'm gonna play around with a bunch of different colors. You choose what you want, but I think I'm gonna go with a bit of Winsor red, and Winsor orange, a little bit of this chrome yellow, some Alizarin crimson, some Dioxazine violet, and some ultramarine. And I'll just mix them up throughout, creating some different fun blends of color. I'm gonna stick with a smaller brush, I think. Again, I'll go with a three, just to try to have some more control. I might go even a little smaller in these sections, but we'll start here. I'm gonna do this section and this section to start, so then they can dry before I do the opposite side. And I'll start with a bit of the ultramarine into a little bit of the purple, moving down through the colors. Play around, see what we like. You definitely wanna be careful with how much

water you're putting onto the page, because the more water, the more the colors will start to flow into each other. So this is a bit of practice. I'm gonna sweep around this outer edge with our first color and then work my way in. Just take your time with it. This is definitely not something you need to rush. Start throwing a bit of your purple in. You can do as many or as few colors as you want and have them do more of a rainbow effect, or think about colors that you wouldn't naturally blend into each other. This is a chance just to play around. And they'll bleed a little up into each other, which is nice, I think. Just getting a little bit of your darker red mixed with the purple. Start a bit of a blend, softening any hard edges. You can have some of these be almost invisibly tiny and some of them be a little wider. You can just play with proportions. Throw a bit of the brighter red, or Winsor red. Transition over to some of your Winsor orange. And then end on some of your chrome yellow. It's not too shabby, so maybe I'll move on to this guy now. You don't wanna do any that are directly next to each other while they're drying, 'cause the colors will start to bleed into each other and you won't get that differentiation. So I think I'm gonna switch over to my round one brush, because this little point's pretty tiny. And I'm going to go in a bit of the opposite direction of colors, starting in the corner with the blues, and working my way out to the yellow over here. So let's see. Now we're transitioning to our orange and our yellow to finish this little one up. If you do have some wet spots on your painting and you're painting another section, you do have to be really careful where your hand goes, so you don't end up smearing any wet areas. I do like to just let things dry as much as possible, but sometimes you've got to speed the process along, so you pick and choose where you're gonna paint. Try to make it a little easier. So now we're ready to let this guy dry and then we can paint these two. A completely dry version is this guy, which you can see, every time you paint it, the colors will change a little bit. You're never gonna get the exact same painting over and over again. So with this dry one, I'm gonna now consider which colors to put in these two spots. And I'm gonna keep them the same tones, but do different arrangements. So I think maybe this one will have a lot of bright yellow up here, since this has a lot of orange. And then I might do something with even a lot more blue, so it'll pop out separately over here. I'm gonna start with my round three brush and go for some yellow. Keep going along the same ombreing techniques you used on the others. Keep in mind how the colors are going to intersect with each other and try to have a little differentiation, so you can see the peace sign in the end. I think I'm gonna have a really nice chunk of glowing yellow up here before I transition to my next color. Throw in some of the Winsor orange. I'm keeping it a bit lighter, so it still contrasts with the oranges over there. Get into our red. You have to be careful. There's a little bit of red here too, so I might not do a ton of red, so that I can keep the contrast and transition into the next color. We're gonna be ending on purple, so I'll just try to have one be a little darker than the other. Just trying to consider how all these colors will match with each other. Trying to keep clean edges as much as you can. If you make a little mistake here and there, you can come back in with a teeny little brush later to touch it up if you'd like. But I don't think it's too bad in that case. Let's get a little bit of our purple in here. And I might just go for a brighter purple all the way to the end, so that it contrasts with that ultramarine blue that is at the tip of this corner here. Then we have one more to fill in over here, but I think I'm gonna have this one be a little bolder, so I'm just going with the red to the purple to the blue, just to have a little bit of difference. Each one can be their own unique combo. You don't have to have every color in every one. Transitioning over to my round one brush to get into this little triangle here. Trying to define our edges as nicely as we can as we go. I'll toss a bit of the purple into the red. You can really start to see that peace sign popping out, which is cool. And I think I'm gonna just have a really big chunk of blue here. Get some of the ultramarine, 'cause the blue is pretty subtle, so I might as well have a

spot to shine. Again, you've got to start to be careful with where your hand's hitting, because this is a little wet still. You don't wanna smear your work after you've gotten this far. While it's drying, I'll show you a final variation of this. It's a little different when it's all completely dry. I end up with this sort of playful interpretation of a peace sign. And some examples of other ombres from my book "Watercolor Workshop." Here's one with all these little petals that's very subtle, with each petal having just two colors transitioning. This is a fun combination of colors in this graphic piece. These are actually some of my favorite colors to combine in watercolor, pinks and oranges. I like that sort of sunset feeling. And we've got this little lake with a fish piece with some very subtle ombres. And then this very graphic A with ombres all around. And this last one, if you can see it, it says nope. It has all these different neutral-colored ombres running through it. Ombres can be used really subtly, or more boldly in your work. It's good to take some time to practice this skill, so that you'll have control over the transitions between your colors as you grow your skills.

Day 9 - Bloom swatches

- Next we'll explore texture techniques, the first one being blooms, which many artists, watercolor artists will say is a big no-no. But I think they're really beautiful. So I just want to show you how to do them with purpose so you know when you're doing them and you know when you don't want them and you can make whatever you envision happen, bloom or not. So we'll get started on our swatch and I'm gonna go with the round size six brush because we're gonna be filling this guy in first. And I'm gonna go with a bit of a Scarlet Lake today. You can choose whichever color you like. Some colors will bloom better than others, though. So you might have to, as you get more and more oriented with your palette, figure out which colors are really going to bloom and which ones are just gonna want to stay where they are. So the first step is just to lock in your color, just filling this whole swatch. So I always like to go around the edges first and you want to keep this whole thing wet. So we're gonna really try to get a little wet here. And with that comes some of these little spots, which I've mentioned before, and I can show you how to remove them with an X-Acto blade, just to clean up your work at the end. So now that we've got this filled in, you want to wait until the surface is just slightly wet as it's starting to dry. And blooms are when you go into this wet surface with some more water and you're pushing the pigment away. I would say these areas are just gonna fill with water, but maybe right in the center we can get a nice bloom going. Yeah, we'll add a little more water. It's definitely happening. You can see where you're creating these different floral-y type bloom shapes. And we'll get some big texture there. Sometimes more water is good to get them and sometimes it turns into a puddle. So it's a little bit of a hit or miss with blooms as you're figuring them out. And you might want to continue to kind of let parts of it dry and then try to add a little bloom as it's going. But these are some good ones that are developing and as you continue to throw a few more blooms in there and you let it dry, you'll end up with something like this one with all these beautiful bloom shapes. And I love just lots of texture in water color. To me, that's what makes watercolor just so brilliant is all of this beautiful texture. So speaking of all those little dots that we were possibly unhappy with, I'll show you quickly on this dried example how we can get rid of a few of those guys. So you'll take your handy X-Acto knife. Very gently with the tip, start to scrape away at the surface. And it'll take just a little bit of time. You don't want to destroy your paper. And some of them will pull off better than others, but you can definitely make them more subtle, if not gone completely. Taking a few different angles so that you're not just ripping a straight line into your paper. That one's not too bad. So we'll give one more a go, this big guy. You've just got to have a little patience. Those are improved. It's never gonna be perfect, perfect, but I think

that makes a big difference. Some more examples from my "Watercolor Workshop" book are these blooms. And this one looks just like the one I created. So just single-color blooms. And this has two colors mixed together in the bloom. And then I've upped it to three colors. And you just paint your ombre or paint your wet on dry and then add the bloom after, as your paint is drying. And within the book, I pushed to do four colors with your blooms and even go as far as five colors.

Day 10 - Flat wash swatches

- The opposite texture to blooms would be a flat wash, which is what we're gonna try next, and that's just trying to get the smoothest, evenest wash you can come up with on your swatch. I'm gonna pick out our color, and I'm gonna go with gamboge, this warm yellow. Wanna create really smooth, even strokes across the surface. And once we get to the end, we're just gonna wanna stop and let it go. We don't wanna start adding more paint and create any blooms. So, this is an opportunity where you normally keep your paper just flat on the table, but you're gonna wanna just have a little tilt because as you start here, you're gonna want that nice bead of water to be continuing to flow down to create as smooth of a wash as you can. And watercolor just wants to have texture, in my opinion, so this is a little bit fighting its nature, but you can get a pretty even wash. It doesn't have to be perfect perfect to still be a flat wash. So, getting started, I'm just gonna try to work from corner to corner, zigzagging a bit. And you can see that bead of water. Just gonna wanna try to keep it going. You might need a little refill in your brush, and then you can keep painting along. You don't wanna backtrack at all, you just wanna keep moving forward. This is something people use for backgrounds a lot. There's different places where you'll want that smoother effect. Some colors will want to do this more than others. Some of your pigments will want to create texture, which, if you're trying to create a flat wash, you'll wanna just avoid those colors. I find that yellows are particularly great for flat washes, they just tend to be a bit of a smoother pigment. Once you're done, you just wanna stop. You don't wanna mess with it. Let it dry. And once it's dry, it may look something like this, where there's still little tiny moments of texture, but the overall appearance is pretty smooth. Some more flat wash examples from my "Watercolor Workshop" book include some additional single color options, but then I also start playing around with some red to purple, some more graphic blue to brown, and then adding in more and more colors. So, you can push yourself with these flat washes. You don't even have to have the colors going from one end to the other. You can do this sort of gridded feel. And if you notice a little spot that you just decide, I don't really like that, I want to fix it, just wait until your wash is fully dried before you go in and try to do little touch-ups.

Day 11 - Texture-focused composition

- Let's combine the flat wash and bloom techniques together into a composition. Today, we're going to do this yin yang composition with one half being very textural, filled with blooms, and the other half being smooth with flat washes. I'm going to use a bit of manganese blue for the flat wash side, and then use some cobalt magenta for the bloom side. And we have to think about each of the dots too. To start off, I'm gonna go with flat wash. I'm trying to decide if I should go with a bigger brush. I'm thinking maybe I'll actually transition down a size and go with a round three. And this is one of those kind of move quickly type of things. It's one thing to create a large, even spot of flat wash, but when you're trying to create such a unique shape you've got to move a little differently. So we're gonna roll with it and see what we get. Working around this circle to start, and then I'll go to the edges. Just wanna try to get through this section first and then we can do a little more of that

wet edge technique, moving through the rest of it. We'll try to do a little tilting once we have gotten past this little circle. It's definitely tricky to create flat washes in strange shapes, but it can be done just with a little patience, maybe a few touch-ups. Now we're trying to get a little bit of that tilt going. I always find flat washes to be one of the more challenging things. My natural instinct with watercolor is to create texture but occasionally, you need a smooth surface. In this case it will be really cool to have the textured side and the smooth side. A bit of a blue to purple. So you do a little tilt, you have to kind of move the angle as well. It's a tricky one, but it's a nice, big graphic shape so that kind of helps the challenge of it all. And it doesn't have to be perfect. We'll make sure that the other side is extra textury so that it really contrasts this side. Let it dry and see how smooth we've gotten it. You can always adjust it a little bit, if need be. Just throw down a little flat wash into this circle. Just wanna make sure to keep it nice and wet and we'll step away and let it dry. And if you get a little off there you can always fix that when you put the purple in. Can go in a little closer to make it a nice, perfect circle. It can end up with something a bit like this guy. You can see that this is quite a bit lighter. So this one, I threw an extra layer in just to smooth out the surface and bump up the color. And if you wanna go a little lighter, then you can keep it that tone. If you wanna have it be a little bit of a bolder color, you can throw in that second layer to try to get a little more even tone across as well, if you ended up with a few little textural spots. So at this point, we're gonna wanna get our purple in. And this one for me is a little more fun because you want to create texture, so you're not trying to make it perfect smooth. So we'll get into our light purple over here. And I think I'll start with this big one. It's a little easier to do that dot after. You don't have to worry about hitting it with your hand as much as with this. Just trying to go around the edges, really get nice, clean edges. It doesn't matter as much where you start 'cause you wanna create texture. So going around this little dot first, you can go that way or you can start on this edge like I have. You've already got lots of texture. This particular color wants to create texture. It's not really the best one if you're trying to create a flat wash. Some of the pigments wanna be textural. It actually has a bit of a gel-like quality to how it paints. Some paints feel a little different than others on your brush. You may start to notice that as you get more and more comfortable with your palette. And I might even go in, try to amp up some of the textures as I'm going, just because this could dry by the time you've gotten all the way around to this other end. Might as well start adding some blooms as you work through it. Going back and forth between continuing to fill in and bumping up the texture. Try to keep a little bit of an eye on everything. That balancing act is a big part of watercolor, balancing how much paint is on your brush, how much water is on your brush, looking at how parts of your painting are drying, keeping the wet spots going, avoiding any of those sharp lines if you're not after that aesthetic. Something you'll get more and more used to as you paint more and more pieces. Just trying to get a nice little tip on this guy. I might even quickly switch over to a round one brush just because I want this little corner to be super tight and clean. You really need to pick the brush to fit whatever you're painting. If you're painting something really big, using a small brush is gonna be frustrating, and vice versa. It's already looking super textural. You can go back with your slightly bigger brush and continue to try to add some water in here and there to amp up the blooms. Then I'll go into this little dot. I think I'm gonna go with trying to pull out a little bit of the water so that I can add more texture. If you just plop a nice bit of pigment and lots of water, it's gonna just wanna flatten out, and I wanna get a bit more of that textural feel so it matches with this other side. It's just messing with it a little bit so that it's not gonna be smooth and flat. You then go back to your little brush just to get these little edges. Sometimes a smaller brush is good for those fine edges. And as it continues to dry, will eventually look like this with this very textural side and

then a smoother side. And you know, even the smooth side's not perfect but it definitely contrasts. And the dots really contrast as well. You can combine flat washes and blooms in your work but you can also have them be separated. In my "Watercolor Workshop" book, I have some different compositions that are very bloom-filled, like this flower and this graphic geometric-shaped piece. A bit of cut of wood. And getting into a little bit of type treatments. And you can also have some flat washed compositions that are solely focused on being flat washed, like this geode. And the point of it is to have that sort of smooth surface. So you want the overall effect to feel quite smooth and shiny and flat washed. Something a bit more geometric. (pages rustling) Got a little landscape-type composition. And then getting into a bit of type treatments, all with a super smooth finish.

Day 12 - Lifting with a damp brush - swatches

- Next we'll get into a few of our lifting techniques. There's a bunch of different ways you can lift paint off of the paper once you've applied it with watercolor. The first one we'll explore is lifting with a brush to add more details to your work. I'm getting started with our lifting technique. We're gonna first want to apply some paint to our paper and I think I'm gonna go with a bit of this turquoise. You're just gonna do what you've done before, just a little wet on dry. Figure out what your angle is. Start filling in the swatch. Get a nice amount of pigment down, so that we've got some pigment to lift back up when we start creating our lifted design. I'll dip back into my water or my paint if I notice that the paint isn't flowing that well, or it's getting a little bit less saturated and I want a little more color. So just a little bit of a dance between your water, your palette, and the paper as you're painting along. We'll just let this dry and we'll then get to go into our lifting technique. Now that this has freshly dried, we can start going in and lifting out. One thing to really keep in mind is if you wanna lift out of your painting, you want it to have only freshly dried. If you let it stay overnight or longer, the longer that the paint is on the paper, it'll just start to set in and it will become harder and harder to lift out your designs. To lift, I'm just gonna take a, I'm gonna take my round three brush and some clean water and I'm just going to bring it in and I'm gonna create stripes across. So you just wanna start to work out the paint. And you can even see it's just starting to lift up perfectly. You can create these stripes across. Clean off the paint here from your brush that you're lifting away. Work your way across. Then you get, not the total white of the page again, but it's definitely lighter and it's clearly defined. You can create lots of different designs. It doesn't have to be a stripe. It can be whatever you can think of, any pattern or texture. And some paints will lift better than others. I particularly know my palette well, so I knew this turquoise would lift really nicely. Some of my pigments will really just set deep into the paper and not lift as well. So this is something you might wanna play around with and do some tests before you fully commit to it on a final piece of art that you're painting. And as you continue to fill in the whole swatch with these stripes, it will end up looking something like this, with a really nice sort of ribbed texture to it. A few more examples from my "Watercolor Workshop" book include these guys, these dotted ones and another striped one, but this time using a wet on wet technique to apply the paint before lifting out some stripes, so it creates a bit of this two patterns merged on top of each other effect. Each of the pigments on your palette will lift a little differently, so it's a good thing, before getting started on any major pieces of art, to test a few of them out in these swatches before getting going on painting.

Day 13 - Lifting with a damp brush - composition

- Now that we've tried out a test swatch of lifting, let's try making a composition. This time, I'm

going to develop a poppy flower design with lifted details. And we're going to use a little bit of intense green in the middle and surround it with some cadmium red to pop it out. I'm gonna be painting the center section, as I mentioned, in intense green. And I'm thinking I will go with a little brush just to have a little extra control. So round one and grab some of our intense green, get that flowing. Again, find our angle, get to filling this in. I'm gonna just try to emphasize these little bumps in the design. Just trying to get as close as I can to the original sketch. If you see any spots that start to get a little like a hard line going, smooth them out and just try to get nice clean edges. You're gonna be going back in with your red so you can always smooth out your edges a little more with your red pigment. But it's nice to start off strong and get all your edges looking good from the beginning if possible. Filling in this little stem section. Now we're gonna want to let this guy dry before we get going on the red so that the colors don't bleed into each other. Now that this green has dried, we can go around with our cadmium red and fill in the rest of the flower, and we're just gonna block it all in 'cause the plan will be to go back in and all these details that we've sketched out we'll pull out with our lifting technique. Just wetting our cadmium red here, getting it flowing. I'm going in with a pretty big brush, my round six, 'cause there's a lot of space to fill. And if you find that getting around to these little details, you want a smaller brush, then you can switch out after you filled it in a bit. Trying to stay as true to the sketch as I can, just working around all these little wiggles. I just work a little bit on one side and then the other just trying to avoid too many of these hard lines. We're gonna be going back in and lifting, so a lot of the texture in the paint won't even show once we've lifted out all the details, we're kind of creating our own texture over top. But it's good to have a nice base to work from. And try to be careful not to push too far into your intense green 'cause you could lift it out into your red since it's still pretty flexible, which is what we want, but you don't want to muddy your red with the green. Just lightly touch the edges when you're trying to get the red all the way to them. Don't rub too hard with your brush. I'm shifting this around a lot to try to get all these different angles. I'd rather angle the paper than continue to move my wrist in lots of weird directions. It can start to get tricky trying to avoid rubbing your hand into the wet paint, so keep an eye on that. You need to keep your hand off to the side. There I got a little bit of the green in there. So once it dries, I could always go back in and brighten up the red in that spot if needed, but I'm gonna leave that alone for now. Don't want to mess with it and make it worse. Just finish up this last little bit. Actually that spot where the green had started to run is looking pretty good. So probably don't need to even touch it, just let this dry and move on to the next step. All right, and if you see any little tiny tweaks, fix them, but, it's pretty much ready to let it dry before we start lifting. And I'm gonna go seriously small just to really try to get some fine details in with my round zero, zero, zero. Just take some clean water and I'm just gonna start following some of these guidelines that I had created originally and see if I can get some paint out. It'll take a little working to get such a little details out. This is one of those things you can futz with for quite a while. You can start to see some really defined lines popping out. You can go around the outside of the flower and then into this little center, work your way around creating whatever types of details you want this design to have. I'm gonna go on to this little green guy and just separate out the little circular section from the stem. Some of this stuff you have to futz with a few times, but I'll let it dry and see how that looks. Some of these, you have to let dry 'cause it'll look a little more defined once they're dry and you can decide if you want to go back in again. Some of these later sections will take a little more work to lift out of than these darker sections, but you should be able to lift out all of them. You can go into this guy and separate out this little bit of petal. As you continue to work through it, you'll just want to be careful, you can potentially drag a little bit of the green into the red, if you

aren't paying attention. And as you continue to create these bits of definition, you may get to a point where you've got detail like this or whatever you've come up with to create a bit of this 3D effect on the flower. Another fun example of lifting from my "Watercolor Workshop" book are these feathers where I filled in them with the paint and then I went back in with a little brush like I did with the flower and just lifted out texture. So you can see all these little strands of the feather and the little downy bits down here.

Day 14 - Lifting with table salt - swatches

- Another lifting technique that we can try out is lifting with salt. And you can try all your different salts. Some will lift in different ways than others. First, we're gonna try a really fine table salt. Again for this swatch experiment, we're going to fill this with paint, and then we will use the salt to lift out a texture. You'll wanna make sure that the paint stays nice and wet, so we're going to really try to go for a little extra water in it. I'm going to keep my brush pretty big, going with the round six, and I'm gonna go with a shade of purple, I think. We'll use a little ultramarine violet. Find our angle and start painting away. Gonna try to get a little more intensity of color. There we go. Just make sure to keep your swatch nice and wet as you're going 'cause you're gonna want to sprinkle your salt onto a very wet swatch to really get the full effect. So I see a spot that's starting to dry up, I'll just re-wet it as I'm going, just a little bit of a balancing act since this is a big guy, but it'll be well worth it. Now that we've got this fully painted, we wanna quickly go into our salt, and we're gonna start sprinkling it over. And we know it's working because I see the salt starting to turn purple, which means it's lifting out the pigment, which is perfect. Sprinkle a little all over. I don't want too, too much 'cause then you're not gonna really get to see that texture if it's just a giant blob of it. It's just gonna pull everything up and not leave a nice salt texture. Use your judgment. Think I'm pretty ready to step back and let it dry. It can take awhile for your watercolors to dry, even without salt on it, but salt will add a little more time to the drying process. You'll just wanna be a little patient and let it stay there and don't touch it until everything looks fully dried, especially around each of the little pieces of salt. And once everything looks dry, you can just go in with your finger and start rubbing the salt off. It'll take a little bit of time to remove it all, and you might wanna collect it on a piece of scrap paper or do this over top of your garbage at home. You'll get this really cool texture appearing as you scrape all these little pieces away. It can take a little bit of effort to get them all off. I keep going until the paper feels smooth to my fingertips. You can see all the little spots where the salt has lifted away some of the pigment. It's very organic texture that could be used in a lot of interesting ways. Almost there. There's always just a few little last pieces of salt left behind. It will look a little something like this. Another example using all the same materials that has similar but slightly different effect is this guy. So every time you apply the salt, depending on how much you apply and how wet the paper was, you'll get just a slightly different effect, which is pretty cool. A few more examples from my "Watercolor Workshop" book include this orange version like we just did as well as a wet-on-wet technique version where you've got the texture from the wet-on-wet painting as well as the texture from the table salt.

Day 15 - Lifting with sea salt - swatches

- We've tried some of the finer table salt in our last experiment. So this time we'll do a little bit of a chunkier sea salt to see what the contrast looks like. To start this swatch off again, we're just gonna fill this with our pigment before we sprinkle our new sea salt onto it. I think I'll go with a bit of burnt sienna and I'm, again, using my round six brush. Get a little water going on it. And just to make sure

that it's kind of the flow and color I like, I always just do a quick little test before I go too close to the edge. Once it feels pretty good, I'll start filling in and getting these edges done. And again, you wanna really make sure to keep your whole swatch nice and wet so that when you apply the salt, it will lift away some of the pigment. You'll know that you didn't keep it wet enough. If your salt isn't changing color, which is not a big deal. Cause then you can just paint another swatch and try again. Let's finish this guy up. And you wanna pretty quickly start sprinkling your sea salt. Hopefully you start to see the color changing which I'm seeing some of which is excellent. Definitely means we're gonna get a little bit of lifting action. So you can just kinda sprinkle away. They're pretty big chunks so you can almost put them just where you want. Just trying to get a little bit of an even distribution. And then you just let that dry. The larger, the chunks of salt, the longer it will take to dry. But now that it's all dry, we can then go back with our fingers and just start to pull them off. You can already start to see these little patterns that are being created from each of these pieces of salt, which is pretty awesome. Oh, there's a teeny little bit that was a little wet. And any spots that extended, you could clean that up if you want to, with your X-ACTO knife. The table salt is definitely a little easier to see when it's fully dry. The sea salt can be a little deceptive because you don't quite know what's underneath. So that's this one where it's really good to just let it sit, walk away, do some other projects and come back. And when it's dry, you can scrape it all off. This is a bit more of a haphazard type of texture whereas the table salt creates so much more even texture. So it just depends on what type of aesthetic you're going for will determine which salt you choose to use. And even salts that are a little more flaky, like a kosher salt, will create a slightly different texture. So you can try all different types of salts and see which ones speak to you. Once it feels pretty smooth. Got it ready to go. So you've got this pretty cool textural swatch and I have another example where you can see some variation. This one I've got a little more pigment, so it's a little darker, but they both have some of these pretty cool flaked textures across them. A few more examples of using sea salt from my "Watercolor Workshop" book include these guys with really rough textures, this purple one and this is another one that was wet on wet. So it's got the wet on wet texture, plus the salt lifting texture over top.

Day 16 - Lifting with salt - composition

- Let's make a salt composition now. This time we're gonna do a donut and use the salt to create a sprinkle-like effect. Getting started with this composition, I'm thinking about the colors and what salt I'm gonna use. I'm gonna go with a bit of table salt 'cause it's finer and we're doing a little composition. If you're gonna go with a bigger composition, maybe you'll want the chunkier sea salt. And I'm thinking about going with a round three 'cause I'm gonna start off painting the baked brown sections, and then we'll paint the icing on top. And for this baked sections of the donut, I think I'll go with a nice raw sienna just to get that golden brown color. So you'll just wanna go in here and find whatever angles feel right to you, and fill this guy in. Just trying to determine the line of where I want the icing to go. I might even try to get a little bit more pigment towards the outside of this and let it lighten up in the middle. 'Cause you'll see that sort of darker outside and then just a lighter line for a fried donut. If you feel like you need a little bit of a finer brush to get into some of those little spots, feel free to switch it out. I think I'm just gonna roll with it this time. We will be going back in with our topping, so we can clean up any edges if we're unhappy with them. I also wanna go into this intersection of the donut and fill that in as well. I might go with a smaller brush for that. A round one I think should fit in there a little better. So just be careful not to knock into this wet spot with your hand. Go in here, fill this guy in. Once you've got this filled in, you'll wanna wait

for it to dry before you start painting your toppings. I've got one that's already dry and ready to go. So I can keep going and start filling in this. And I wanna do a bit of warm oranges, and reds, and yellows type of thing. So I'm gonna go with my bigger six brush, and I think I'm gonna dip into a bit of cadmium red, some Windsor orange, and some chrome yellow. And try to get a little bit of a flow of colors throughout this. Start wherever you feel comfortable. And you wanna make sure to keep this all nice and wet because you're gonna go back in with your salt after. Just keep that in mind as you paint around this little guy. Just trying to get a little bit of color variation here and there. And really try to get a nicely defined edge where that icing meets the baked donut or fried donut. You have to work pretty quickly if you wanna go back and forth between some different colors. But it can add a really cool effect, so it's something to just practice. It can be a little challenging at first, but it's rewarding once you get the hang of it. Go freehand about it when you wanna switch between the colors, how much of each color you want. It's just a little bit of a quick decision-making thing. Making sure to keep everything wet. Don't want to have it dry out on you. Then the salt won't do its thing. Quickly before I throw salt on, I just wanna amp up the color over here a little bit. Make a few last color decisions. And then come over and sprinkle your salt around. And I'm trying to keep it where sprinkles would go, just at the top if possible. It can be a little hard to control, but... Do your best with it. And then just let it dry. Now that your salt has fully dried and your paint is all set, you can use your finger again to just start lifting it out. I've noticed that I sprinkled all the way around with the salt, but maybe the paper was a little too wet over here and it melted all of the salt. So we've got a little more salt on this side and a little less on the side. Which is just one of those things that can happen in the process. We'll still get a lot of cool texture going even without that. Just make sure there's no last little bits on there. And you end up with this final piece with some sprinkled texture all the way around. A few more compositional examples of using salt lifting from my "Watercolor Workshop" book include this table salt geometric shapes piece and this cute little guy using sea salt to create a really crunchy texture for his fur and spikes. So there's a lot of different options you can do compositionally with salt.

Day 17 - Lifting with a blade - swatches

- We've already is an X-Acto blade to lift out little imperfections in our designs. Now, we're gonna take that same X-Acto blade and use it to create patterns and details within our paintings. To get started on this, we're going to fill our swatch with paint as we've done before. This time I'm going to again use my larger round six brush and I'm going to go with a bit of our permanent magenta, one of my favorite colors, it's very rich and saturated. Find your angle as we've done before and it's test it out, feels pretty good. Going with a little more saturated tone will show up better with your X-Acto blade lifting, but you can use any tone for this. It's just depends on if you're looking for something subtle or something a little more dramatic. We'll let it dry so we can start lifting with our X-Acto blade. So I've got a variation of the swatch that's already dry and ready to go, so we'll switch it out. Now, you'll just take your sharp blade and you're gonna wanna focus on using the tip of the blade. Just as you would remove any little spots that can happen to fall onto your paper. You'd lightly scrape away, create whatever designs you would like, I'm gonna do just a series of little contoured marks that will form just little bursts around the swatch light little texture. This is something where you've gotta be pretty patient. If you scrape too hard or too fast, you could pull up too much pigment, or you could even scrape into your paper in a way that's not gonna look very cute, take your time. At first it might look like nothing's even coming up, but you're just scraping through layers of pigment to get to the white, so it's a little tiny scrape marks. Sometimes rotating

around to get a different angle. I can see that a little bit of the paper is pulling up where I don't want so take a little bit of a different angle for that. And create any details you want in your work with this technique, it's pretty cool, very useful. It's quite a zen technique actually, you just can kinda start scraping away and lose track of time. And just continue doing that around, creating different bursts around your design. Eventually, you can end up with something like this, this pigment is a little lighter but it's the same paint and the same paper and even the same brush. A more saturated pigment and I'll slightly lighter pigment. And here's just a few more examples from my book, something that includes some striping, something with tiny little dots. You can create all different types of marks with an X-Acto blade.

Day 18 - Lifting with a blade - composition

- Now let's make a little townhouse composition with our lifting technique. We'll use the little X-Acto blade marks to define all the little details in this home. To start this composition off, I'm just going to block in all of this design with one color. You could go with multiple, but I've gone for a little bit of a blueprint inspiration, so I'm gonna go with this manganese blue. And I'm going to use a size three round brush to fill it in. And I might switch over to an even smaller brush for some of these little details. We'll see how it goes. So when you feel like you've got your paint flowing, again, just figure out which spot you wanna start with. I'm just gonna fill this guy in, just nice and clean. Trying to stay as close to the original design with all of these edges. You can always go back in and touch up with a smaller brush if you're having a little trouble getting into some of the corners. Just trying to get nice and tight, clean edges in this little house. Take your time. You don't have to rush it. But if you do make a little mistake, you've got your X-Acto blade as your next tool, so you can always clean up any little spots. So I think I'm gonna switch over to a slightly smaller brush to just add in these little trees. I'm gonna go with the round one. Cleaning up a few of these details. Add in these little trees to our design. Just trying to eyeball to get the trees even. Then you'll let this dry before you start going back in to add your X-Acto blade details. And I've got one ready to go. This is the same guy, but dried and ready for your blade. And you'll notice that you can see a lot of your guidelines under here, which is just fine, because we're gonna be carving right on top of them. So it might look a little messy at first, but the more you carve out details, the more you'll see a clean design. So you can start anywhere you want. Just nice and slowly. If you rush it too much, you might rip your paper. Just using the very tip of the blade. Pull out all those little details. It's a very subtle design. A tiny little house with tiny little details in it. If there's a little spot that you wish you had smoothed out a little more, you can, when you painted it, you could just clean that up too. So you can start going around the outside a little, in addition to creating these inner designs. And you can create whatever sort of windows and doors you want your house to have. Add more plants. You can even add details into each of these windows. It just depends on how ambitious you feel like being. Sometimes it can take just a teeny bit to get enough paint off to start really revealing the white. Keep at it if you find a spot that's a little tough. You just have to do little strokes over and over until you have pulled off some of the paint and created your lines. Sometimes switching angles helps too if it just doesn't seem to be budging. And as you work your way around this design, you'll eventually get to something like this, where all these little details are all pulled out. Definitely is one of those slow and steady pieces. You can always continue to futz with it. So our house was a pretty subtle detailed design. In my book, I've got this much more bold and graphic option as well. So you can do more subtle and more in your face lifting techniques using an X-Acto blade.

Day 19 - Lifting with masking fluid from a jar

- Masking fluids are another way to lift watercolor off of your paper. This is particularly efficient because you're applying, as the name sounds like, a mask onto your watercolor paper. When you lift it back off, you've got the exact crisp, white paper that you started with. We're going to play with a few different types of masking fluid. One of them being jars of masking fluid, to start. We're gonna wanna apply our masking fluid to the paper. This masking fluid comes in a jar, so you have to apply it with either a brush, which I hesitate to do, because you can ruin a brush. You wanna make sure if you do use a brush that you're using an old one, not one of your favorites, and that you wash it off quickly. I like to use Q-tips, or in this case, I'm gonna play with toothpicks. It's a little thin today, but we're gonna work with it. So you've got a little drip of it, and we're gonna create just some drips along the page and see how they go. Just gonna create a series of these drip marks. And we're gonna create our design. If you get some masking fluid somewhere that you don't want it, just wait for it to dry, and then you can peel it right off. And once we have the design we like, we can go back in and paint with watercolor. And then reveal our design once the watercolor has been fully dried. So get your drips going, or whatever design you've decided to play with. This masking fluid can sometimes be a bit more chunky. I'm used to it being a bit more chunky, but today it feels like being very flowy, which is interesting, something to work with. It should drive a bit faster since it's more flowy, actually, I think. When it's very chunky and thick, there's a lot more of it to dry, so that might be a bonus. Throw these little designs wherever you like, let them cross over the boundary we created with our guides, because that doesn't matter, we're gonna peel it right off. Maybe I'll put just one more on, then we'll let it all dry so we can start painting. You're gonna wanna let your masking fluid completely dry before you start painting over top. And at least with this brand of masking fluid, Winsor & Newton's Art Mask Fluid, you can tell when it's dry because it goes from this milky white to this translucent yellow. Now that our masking fluid has dried, we can paint over top as if we didn't even have it on there. So just create whatever painting you want. I'm gonna fill in this swatch with some green, some oxide of chromium, because to me these little drips look a bit like tadpoles. Just getting your paint flowing, and make sure that you got the level of darkness that you want and the amount of water in it that you need, and paint as you normally would. And the paint will flow right around your design. And the chunkier sections of the masking fluid can be a little hard to get all into, so you just might need to angle your brush in different ways to get all the way up to them. Now that you've got your swatch painted, you'll wanna let that dry again before you start peeling off your masking fluid to reveal your design. So now that your watercolor has fully dried, you can try your hand at peeling up all of these little guys. And you should be able to peel them off the page with your fingertip. Revealing your design. If any little bits get stuck behind, you should be able to just scrape them away. Since this is chunkier masking fluid, it's easy to grab. And once you peel them all off, you'll have something like this. Masking fluid's particularly good if you want a really clean, crisp white. None of the other lifting techniques get such a bright, white result. A few more examples of using masking fluid to mask off different sections of your design, are this dotted pattern, which is using Q-tips to create these little splotches. And this is another design that actually uses the toothpicks. And this masking fluid was just a little thicker when applying, so it created a bit of a chunkier feel.

Day 20 - Lifting with masking fluid using a fine-line application tip

- Another way you can apply masking fluid is with a squeeze bottle that has a fine line tip, and this will allow you to create more precise details with your masking fluid designs. For this swatch test, I'll

be using Finesline Resist Pen Masking Fluid and a rubber cement pick up to remove it off the page. To get started, we will open up our Finesline Resist Pen. There's two different types of openings, depending on what sized line you want. We're going with a nice skinny one at the top, masking fluid. So you can do a few tests on the side if you want, just to get going with this. It's just a squeeze bottle. I'm gonna be doing a series of crisscross lines across this design. So just to make sure that everything's flowing, I'm just gonna do one over here, 'cause you can just pick it back up and then you can start crisscrossing them across your swatch. Whatever design you want to create. I'm going for something a little bit organic, just filling in all the little spots to try to get a bit of an even selection of lines here. When you step back, you just wanna look at it and feel like they're pretty evenly placed. Some are a little smoother than others, but I think the overall appearance is pretty good. So then once you're done with all your little stripes, let this dry and then it'll be time to paint your watercolor on top. Now that the masking fluid has dried, we can start applying our paint. You can tell that's it's dried, because it went from this milky white to a slightly yellowed, more transparent color. We're gonna paint, just as we normally would. I'm gonna fill this in with a single color. And I think I will go with a little bit of this cobalt magenta. You could paint this any way you want. Fill it in exactly as you would if the design wasn't on here. And I really like how the cobalt magenta creates a texture within this texture, so I think that'll be pretty cool, once we reveal the final design. Once it's dried, we can peel off our masking fluid to see what the design looks like. Now that our paint's dry, we can start lifting up this masking fluid to see what's underneath. So I'm just gonna brush my rubber cement pick up tool across the surface and it will ball up the masking fluid, and then you can remove it off of your rubber cement pick up as you go along. It's pretty cool, it reveals a pretty crisp design coming off. You can see how precise you can get. All the little details you create with your masking fluid will find their way into your final painting. And as you continue to lift this up, you will get something like this guy, which is looking pretty cool in my book. I love the combination of the paint texture with the masking fluid texture. It feels very organic.

Day 21 - Lifting with a masking fluid pen

- A third type of masking fluid that you can play with is using a masking fluid pen, which is a slightly different way to apply it and has some additional benefits of it being very thin on the paper, so it dries faster. And you've got a little more control. This is also one of the few masking fluids that you shake to get it going. For this swatch, we're going to be using the Molotow masking fluid. And again we'll be using a rubber cement pick-up to pull it off the page. When you've got such thin masking fluid, you definitely need a tool to get it back off. So I'm gonna do a series of dots, after I shake it up to get it going. It goes from kind of a white marbled with a little bit of blue, to all blue when it's ready. So this has a pretty thick applicator tip. Some of the other brands do have finer tips, so you can try a few different brands to see what you like. For this design, I think I'm just gonna do a series of dots. Just play around with an arrangement of dots. You can get a little more adventurous if you like. And you don't have to worry about them being within the border, because we're gonna remove the blue masking fluid after we're done painting. Just throw a bunch of them down. Just trying to get an organic, yet even arrangement of the dots. Once you feel like you've got it where you want it, let it drive before painting over top. And this should dry quite a bit faster than any of the other fluids. And you'll know when it's not quite so shiny anymore. It doesn't have quite as obvious of a change of appearance to let you know it's dry. The appearance hasn't changed much, but now it's dry and you can touch it and it doesn't come up on your hands, so that's always the best sign. So we're ready to paint, and just like the other masking fluids, paint away without worrying about it at

all. Pretend it's not there. So my plan for this swatch is to get a little more wild. Since I've got all these dots in here, I think I'm gonna do a wet-on-wet technique and dot a variety of different colors. So I'm just gonna quickly fill this swatch with some water, getting every inch of it wet so we can dot away. And I'll look from the side to see where it's shiny and where I need to fill with some more water. And currently I'm using my big brush that we know is the round six, but I think once I start dotting, I'll just go with a slightly smaller brush. Switch over to my round three. And I think I'm gonna start dotting with a bit of Winsor Orange, and maybe throw in a little bit of Opera Rose, and maybe some lemon yellow to get a bit of a sunset type of thing. It's pretty cool to see how the dots interact with the the watercolors. You can see them resisting. You can add a few more dots of pink around here and there and then work your way around the edges to clean them up a bit. Continue to add different colors till you feel like it's where you want it, and then you can set it aside to dry. This looks dry now, so we can start peeling up some of it and see how it looks. So just taking our rubber cement pick-up, working it into the dots, they're just coming up so nicely, revealing really pretty clean dots. And once you've worked your way around the whole piece, you'll end up with something like this guy, with all the dots are revealed, and you've got this cool dot on dot texture going.

Day 22 - Lifting with masking fluid - composition

- We've explored a few different types of masking fluid now, so I think it would be a great time to work on a composition. Before we get started with that, though, I'd love to give you a few extra tips about masking fluid 'cause it can be a little tricky. Be careful not to heat up the masking fluid while it's drying, using a hairdryer or something of that sort, because it will make the masking fluid really hard to peel off and it might rip your paper. I would also consider not keeping your masking fluid on the paper for too long. You want to put it on, let it dry, paint away and then peel it back off as quickly as you can. The longer it sits there, the more it'll set into the paper. Again, as you try to peel it off, you might rip your paper. And lastly, when you're painting with your masking fluid, if you make a little mistake, don't worry about it. Just let it dry and you can peel it off and start again. For this pizza composition, we're gonna use a different type of marker, the Pebeo masking fluid marker because it has a slightly finer tip so we can get into all these little topping details. And to peel it off, we're gonna again use our rubber cement pickup because it dries very flat onto the surface. To get going with it, this is another marker that you wanna shake. We're gonna focus on filling in all these little toppings with masking fluid, so that when we paint our sauce on top, we've masked them off. Start filling in your different toppings. And it's a little bit more of a subtle blue color, this masking fluid. So you just kind of have to eyeball it. It's not quite as precise as some of the others, but it does have a really nice, fine tip. So there's some trade-offs with each of the masking fluid, you just have to figure out which one works best for your needs, and your project's needs. And they dry super quickly, so that's a bonus of this brand of masking fluid. Just work your way into each of these little tiny toppings. It takes a little while to get them all filled in. Take the time you need. I'm going for a little bit of a rougher look. I think it's kind of cool that masking fluid has that quality sometimes of like a woodblock print's. Keeping these a bit more graphic and rough will give a bit of that woodblock print type of aesthetic. Just finishing up the last one. And check to make sure there's no little spots you wanna fill in. Then you'd let it dry, which it's practically dry. The top ones have already pretty much dried. So this is one that's good if you don't have a lot of time to waste. Now that we've got these dried toppings ready to go, we can start applying our sauce, before we peel everything up. So we'll start with some Carmine Red, I think, to paint up the sauce on this piece. I

think I'm gonna go with my round six brush 'cause we've got a lot of space to fill. So you can go just a bit organic like a pizza, what the edge of a pizza slice might look like. Now some sections that are a little more dark red, I know some that get a little bit lighter. Have a little variety in the sauce. Maybe dot on just a few more dark spots, just to have a nice variety in the sauce. And then you'll have to let that dry before you can continue on with the crust and the toppings. Now that your sauce is dry, you can start pulling up the masking fluid with your rubber cement pickup. Just gently rubbing it along. You have to be extra gentle with this particular brand because it can really rip your paper if you're not very gentle with how you lift it away. So trying to work inward kind of helps with this particular brand. And once you've gone through and gently lifted all of these toppings out, you can take a little time to also paint your crust, and that will look a bit like this guy. Then we'll be ready to add a little more detail to our toppings. So the crust was painted with a little bit of burnt umber and raw sienna just mixed together to create a little bit of that grilled on the fire type of feel. And I think I'm gonna just add a little bit of color into several of these toppings. I'm going to do a little bit of the same burnt umber and raw sienna into the mushrooms. I'll throw a little bit of intense green and into these peppers, and then dot a few of these little circles with some gamboge. So we'll get started, and I'm gonna use a little brush for this. I'm gonna use a round one. Start mixing a little bit of your browns for the mushrooms. And I like the feeling of this, like, print feel, so it's a little bit rougher than some of the other masking fluids. And I think I'm just gonna go with that, and I'm not gonna try to perfectly fill them in. I'm gonna try to do a little bit where it's you see a little bit of the white and then maybe there's a spot where it overlaps the red a little. Just give that kind of block printing feel to it. Then maybe we'll see what one of the green peppers looks like. Again, leaving a little bit of the white here and there and overlapping some of the red sauce a bit, just a little bit of a rougher look. It's pretty cute. And just 'cause I like to see all the colors together, I'm gonna throw a bit of the warm yellow that we picked into one of the dots. I'm gonna leave some of the dots white, too, some of the bigger ones, to give the sense of cheese. But maybe some of them can be yellow too. And as you continue to work around with all these colors, figuring out which toppings you wanna fill in, eventually you'll end up with something like this guy, which is pretty cute and making me a little hungry. One more example of using masking fluid in a composition is this little guy. Just a fun little textured typographic piece.

Day 23 - Layering with pencil - swatches

- Layering is another great way to add some detail and interest to your watercolor work. There's lots of different types of layering techniques, one of them being mixed media. And we're gonna start off with a swatch test using pencils over top of our watercolor to add some playful designs. To get started on this swatch, we're going to paint two thirds of it with our watercolor. So I'm gonna start with a little bit of nickel titanate yellow. It's just this pretty light yellow. And we're gonna fill just two thirds. So then we can have an overlap and see where the mixed media overlaps and get a sense of the watercolor and the pencil separately. So you can just get your paints flowing, and you can use any color or combination of colors for this, but I think I'm gonna keep it nice and bold and simple with a bright yellow. Just get in your corners. Some clean lines. You of course don't have to have clean lines, you can go for something more organic. You can do any sort of shapes you want. You could have two overlapping circles for this. So once you've painted two thirds with your yellow, you'll just let it dry. And then they'll look something like this. And you can start incorporating your pencil art. So I'm gonna be using one of my favorite pencils, which is my mechanical HB. And I've got my kneaded eraser handy, just in case I make mistakes. And I'm going for something a bit more

geometric. So we'll clear a little room 'cause I would like to add a few guidelines to get me started. So I'm gonna just put a few marks to help me get some straighter lines going. I wanna do a bit of a stripe that mixes with some littler stripes. You can create something more organic if you'd like, it's totally up to you what this overlapping design looks like. I'm making these marks a quarter of an inch apart, just creating a design that fits into the parameters of the square that we already have. Some of them might be a little wiggly, it just depends on where you placed your marks. There's always a little bit of eyeballing. There we go, these should be a little more on point. You can kind of see where, when you look at this line, whether you have actually made your marks accurately or not. And now eyeball that to be straight as you want, these are still gonna be drawn by hand. This is just an initial guide. So anything drawn by hand has a little bit of that nice hand feel, so we don't have to be perfect perfect. Just trying to eyeball them a little bit too, since the guidelines are a little crooked to each other. Could always go back and continue to refine the guidelines, but we're going for something that's pretty easy going here. It doesn't have to be, you know, robot perfect. Just cleaning up some of our marks. And then I'm going to just start to doodle by hand now, so that we've got more of that hand feel, we don't want it to all look like it was done with a ruler. So working my way around. Some organic lines, they'll go in and out a little bit and it kind of plays off of the watercolor. Playing off of this two thirds, I'm going to create a line down the center here too. And I like to see things sort of coming together all at once, so my plan is to do additional stripes every other in here. So maybe I'll throw a few of those down as well, just to start to get the full picture of the design. Some can be a little closer together and further away, thicker and thinner. This is part of that hand feel, it's kind of nice. Then I'm gonna go into this one with some stripes as well and go every other. And then you can really see what the watercolor is looking like against the beginning of the pencil, and then the pencil alone. As you continue to fill in all these sections and lay down these edge lines and stripes, it will eventually turn into something like this, which has a nice graphic, playful feel. Another example of some mixed media with pencil are these two, which both include a bit of a stripe like we've been playing with. One using a wet on dry technique for the watercolor and one with a wet on wet that really is kind of fun 'cause it plays with two different types of striping. When playing with mixed media, you can use graphite pencils like we played with today, or you could even throw in some colored pencils. Just be careful to not layer your pencil under your watercolor. Always put your watercolor down first and your pencil on top, because you don't want the pencil to smudge into your watercolors, muddying everything.

Day 24 - Layering with marker - swatches

- Another type of mixed media that I really like to play around with is combining my watercolor paints with markers. I like to use water based markers, but you could certainly use alcohol based markers if that's something you prefer. To get started with this study, I'm going to paint two thirds of the swatch with watercolors, and then we'll do an overlap with our markers just as we did with pencil. And I'm have a little bit of a dot theme in mind, so I'm going to use a wet on wet approach and dot the paints and then do some stipple dots on the other side to match it. And we're gonna go with some watercolors that match some markers that we're going to be playing with. I'm gonna use my round six brush, a little larger, to fill in the space with water to start. Trying to get a nice shine across the whole section that we want to fill with our watercolor paint. Just take your time to get to each of the edges. You don't have to use dots of course, but I always love that aesthetic. So I think I'm gonna switch over to a slightly smaller brush to start to put down some dots. I'm going to go with my round three, and I think I'll start with a little bit of windsor red. Whoa, it's really going for it

today. We'll throw a few in, and then we can always come back and add some more later if they start to fade away. And then I'm thinking maybe I'll go with some ivory black. Just work around with whichever colors you're feelin'. It's just the nature of these different pigments in watercolor that some of these dots will explode out and some will stay nice and little. As you figure out your watercolor palette more and more you'll know which ones are gonna do different things in different circumstances. And I don't mind having some bigger and smaller, it's very organic. I think I will add some dioxazine violet next. Dotting it around. Keep throwing some dots into your design until you're happy with it. I would like to add just one more color. I wanna go along with a bit of the color scheme of the markers that I pulled out. To round out the colors I'm gonna add a little bit of ultra marine. I always like to go around the edges and just make sure that the color is hitting them. Keeping it nice and clean, but if you want a more organic feel you can let it dry as it will. And I'm noticing there's not as much red now that it's spread out so I think I'll add a little more of the red before finishing this guy up. Just try to pop it out in a few spots. Once you're happy with your design, you can let it dry. This is the finished result. We'll be ready to throw some marker on to two thirds over here. My favorite markers, or one of my favorites is STABILO. And we've got a thin tip today, 88 and I've got number 46 black, 96 which is the gray, 41 which is a bit of a navy, 32 which is a bit of a bright blue, 59, the purple, the light purple, 55 is a darker purple, and 40 is this red. And I picked them to kind of match with the watercolors. And since we've got this dotted design on one side, I wanna do the stipple dots on the other to play off of that. I often like to go brighter to darker with my stippling. I just like to kinda define sections with the bright and then slowly build up the dark around them. Get going, throw some dots around. I like to do kind of bunches that flare off. There's no right or wrong way to do this, just play around. You don't even have to do dots, you could do anything you want with your markers. We're just wanting to see a little bit of watercolor, a little bit of an overlap of the watercolor in the marker, and then some of the marker on its own, just so we can see how they are interacting with each other as they're layered. Figuring out where I want some of these red dots, keeping them within this central section and this right-hand section. But letting them just go free. Whenever you feel like we've got enough red dots you can switch to the next color. I'm gonna work through the red, to the purple, blue, gray, and black, Just going bright to darker, throwing a few onto the guideline here just to remind myself where it is. Noticing that I've gotten a few little rub marks from my finger so be careful if your hand's a little wet from your watercolor still to keep it off of the marker. Not a big deal, you can just throw a few dots over those little spots if they happen. And you can always move to your next marker and then decide that you wanna throw some extra red in later. So I think I'll grab my purple. Start dotting away, taking a chance to step back and assess where everything is and what you're liking, and what you wanna continue to refine and build up. Throwing a few of these purple dots on to my little red splotches to hide them. I like to bring some of my darker colors slowly into the brighter colors. I'm throwing some of the purple just around the red too. Creating kind of a playful variation on what the watercolor is doing. It's very calming to just dot away. You can do this for an hour without even noticing it. And then you just keep going through each of your colors, building them up. And I've got an example of how it can end up looking. So something in this realm. Which has a really fun play of two different mediums creating different dotted effects combined together. A few more examples from watercolor workshop are these sort of lines, and this sort of fish net type of texture. It can be anything you can think up.

Day 25 - Layering with mixed media - composition

- Now that we've tried a few mixed media layering swatches, let's try out a composition. This time, I'm going to do a ladybug, and we'll be combining our watercolors with some graphite to add all the little details to our bug. To get started with this, I'm gonna be putting some watercolor down into these three main sections of the ladybug. And I think I'm gonna go with a yellow aesthetic, just 'cause I think it'll really pop against the graphite that we're gonna be using later. So I'm gonna go with a bit of cadmium yellow, and I'm gonna mix it with a little bit of raw sienna, just to get a bit of a warmer look on the little bug's shell. Just figuring out what that right proportion is. I think that's gonna be nice. I don't want it to be all mixed together. I think I want it to be a little bit of yellow, then a little bit of the raw sienna in and out of this little section of the shell. I'm gonna go with the round six brush. This is a pretty big space to fill. We can go with a little bigger brush to get it, get the job done. Just take your time to follow your guidelines, trying to get as close to your original sketch. And go a little more brown towards the edges and a little warmer in the middle to add some dimension. I think I'll add a little yellow to the center to just brighten it up, and then maybe I'll go in and do a few little last touch-ups around the edges, adding a little more brown. And once you've got this where you want it, just let it dry before we start going back in with some of our ivory black to paint additional sections of the bug. Now I'm gonna go in to this section here with a little black. And I'm gonna keep these two spots white, so we're gonna go around them. And I think I'm gonna go with a smaller brush, just to make sure I'm really getting the details with a number one. So for each of these next sections, we're gonna use a little ivory black. I'll just kinda start in the middles to make sure I don't have too much water on my brush as I get into these edges. Take your time, and work your way around. You want to get nice and close to the yellow. You can clean up any little bubbles that you had with that by getting a slightly more refined line with your black. It's getting different angles to get the right direction for your lines. I don't like to rotate my wrist too much. I like to keep the paper rotating instead. All the little corners can be tricky, so take your time. It doesn't have to be perfect. This is done by hand, so it should look like that. Again, let this section dry, and then we'll get to the little head. Going again with my round one and a little more ivory black, we're gonna try to keep the little eyes white. So it's kind of the same sort of shape we're trying to make as the section before, just a little smaller this time. So finding the angle that feels right, and I always like to first put down my paint in the center so that if there's a lot of water on my brush it doesn't mess up one of the edges. And then I'll start, when I feel confident, working my way to the edges, just starting to fill this in. If you have a little too much water on your brush, you can take some off, just so that you don't get too much water flowing where you don't want it. Just slow and steady. Nudging the paint around. This, once you get this small, you don't want to do big strokes. You just kinda keep nudging it out. Once you feel like you're ready to let it dry, can set it aside. And I've got one ready to go that's dry for us to start doing a little mixed media on. We've got some different defined sections of guidelines to get us started with some pencil work. And I like to go in and just start with my eraser, cleaning up some of the guides that I don't want there anymore. Bit of pencil, a bit of eraser, once I start working with graphite. But it's great to have some of these guides in here 'cause we're going to be drawing right on top of them. You won't see them anymore once we work into them. This is a lot a little shading to add whatever details we want. You can create a more realistic-looking bug or do something a bit more stylized. I'm gonna go kind of in between. Now that I've erased away some of the guidelines I don't want, I'm going to start to add some graphite, building up the design. Think I'm going to define this center section to show each of the wings, add a little shading to some of these white areas, and then just really try to build up the legs and the dots. So we can just start in the middle here. Keep building up color wherever you see

fit to add all the little details to your bug. I'm just going right over these guidelines, getting rid of them, utilizing them, and hiding any, the sketchy marks. And if you find that there's a sketchy mark that you don't like, you can go back in with your kneaded eraser or your standard eraser to pull it out. A lot of times, you can get out these little guidelines with an eraser, even after you've painted on them. I'm just using some harder lines to define the edges and then softer shaded marks to fill in. I like to see how everything's coming together at once, so I will tend to work through different sections. I think I'm gonna start to add some shading into these dots too. I don't want to use too much, so I'll kinda do a light wash of graphite and then pull a little back. And you continue to push and pull the graphite to figure out what you're liking. Do one of these little eyes to see how that's looking. I even like to start to go into some of these little limbs, just starting to build it up. Now these antennas have a lot of little sections to them. Just playing with that idea in a slightly more graphic way. It doesn't have to be super realism, can be whatever you want. Maybe we'll play with one of these limbs too. Just defining each of the sections. You can go for something a little more graphic and straight if you don't want to have so many little sections in your design. Work your way around, building up color into each of these limbs and dots. And as you keep building it up, will start to look like this guy, with a really nice balance of pencil to watercolor textures, all combined together to create a ladybug. A few more examples of mixed media compositions are this sliced grapefruit, using a bit of marker over top of the watercolor, and then this graphic pinwheel, where I've combined the watercolor with some graphite shapes, some that are separated and some that are layered, which is a similar technique to what we did with the ladybug.

Day 26 - Layering with paint on paint - swatches

- Another useful type of layering technique that we'll explore is layering paint on paint, which is also known as glazing. So we're gonna keep this pretty simple today, and we're going to use one color in this section, and then we'll let it dry. And you'll wanna let it set for quite awhile, at least a few hours, before we paint in this section. Otherwise, you'll be using your lifting technique and not your layering technique. So I think for this first 2/3, I'm gonna go with a bit of Prussian blue. And we'll just do a little wet on dry painting, but you could use multiple colors and any of our painting techniques for each of these sections if you would like. Filling this guy in. Just using a steady hand to get all the edges. You don't have to be so precise if that's not your painting style. And you're gonna wanna let your painting dry for at least a few hours. I like to let mine dry overnight before I start layering or glazing paint on top. A dry version of this is this piece. And now we're gonna paint our second color over top. And the longer you let it dry, the more the paint will set into the paper, just allowing you to create those pretty layered colors. For this second section, I'm gonna use a bit of vivid green. You can play around with all different colors. They'll overlap in their own unique ways. You can see how the vivid green interacts with this blue. Find your angle, and get a little color on. You can already see how they create their own new sort of shade of green together in the layered section, which is pretty. You wanna move quickly on the layered sections. You don't wanna rub too much, just some nice, light strokes. Even if you've let it set overnight, if you futz with it too much, you might start pulling up paint. And we'll fill in this final third. See a little bit of a hair in there. If you can't get it out, you can always wait for it to dry and then pull it out after. They can be a little tough to get out, and you can just use your kneaded eraser to lift it off. We would let this dry, but I've got an example of it completed, which is quite dramatic, I think. The overlapped section is a really pretty dark green. A few more layered examples from my book include these two purple and blue designs. This is pretty similar to what we've already done, but you can also use your wet on wet technique to

create some cool sort of striped designs as well. It's pretty nice how it overlaps in the center with the two stripes interacting. These little swatch studies I find to be pretty enough that I would frame them and have them around my house. So maybe you'll like to use some of yours as art as well.

Day 27 - Layering with dry brushing - swatches

- Dry brushing is another layering technique that you can use. It's similar to paint on paint, but you're just focusing on using a brush with slightly tougher bristles and you're using a lot less water so that you can create strokes that showcase each of the bristles of your brush. We'll start this off by painting, just as we have before, a section with whatever color combos or a single color you want. I'm gonna go again with a single color. I think I'm gonna use a little Naples yellow, which actually is a bit more of a peach. Fill this in as we would have before. Since we're gonna be going with a very textural dry brushing technique, I'm going with a pretty simple, clean section over here just so we can really see all the details of the dry brushing overlapping it. Once you've finished this part of your swatch painting, you can just let it dry. I've got an example here of it, ready to go for some dry brushed layering. I'm gonna grab an additional piece of scrap paper for us to do a few tests on, as we're preparing to add some dry brushing to this swatch test. So take your brush that's got a little bit of firmer bristles, and you want to get it wet. And I'm gonna use a bit of Scarlet Lake for my dry brushed section. And you get your brush going. And at first it's gonna be a little too wet so you don't want it to have this much water on it. You really want to just work that out until you're really starting to see the strokes. And I want it to be a little darker even, so that's pretty good. So now I'm gonna do some strokes across this guy, trying to get nice, straight lines. Can get even a little drier here. And if you didn't get all the way to the end, you can throw a little touch-up in. It doesn't really matter. This is very textural. And it's all about these individual strokes of the brush. You've got just enough water to let the paint flow, but not enough water that you're drowning out the brush strokes. It's a little bit of a balance. You definitely want to have a page to test on before you dip into your final swatch here. And you know, it doesn't have to be perfect, perfect. Sometimes you get a little edge that runs off. Another example of this where I got a little closer to an even edge is this. And it's just about having a little more patience. This one I did rush through, maybe a little bit faster than I naturally would, but you end up with this really cool texture and it's nice to see it overlapping as well. And in addition to striping, you could even throw some stipple dots down. You don't have to always go with the natural brushstroke that you would normally do. You could, you know, dot away. A few more examples from my book are a striped one that was similar to what we did. And this is an example of using the dotting technique that I mentioned to stipple your brush along and create lots of organic textures.

Day 28 - Layering with added paint and a brush - composition

- We'll combine our different paint-on-paint techniques, which is the glazing technique we had learned as well as some dry brushing, to create a composition. This time, we're gonna go with a hot dog. We'll start this painting off painting these two buns. And I'm going to use my round six brush, and I'm gonna mix a little bit of burnt umber with raw sienna to get a bit of differentiation in the buns. Get your paints flowing, and get a little mix going. I want some of the paint to be different shades, so I'll put a little bit of the raw sienna and the burnt umber together but then have some sections of the mix that are separated. So I'm not trying to just perfectly mix them. And that gives me that change of colors throughout the painting. So I'll start with this bigger one. I always like to go kind of for the thing that feels a little easiest and work my way up to the more complicated

sections. Seeing how the paint's flowing. Feels pretty good. So I'll go to the edge here of where the bun will be. The toppings that are sketched on this guide are gonna be layered on, so we're just gonna paint right over those for now. So I'm gonna try to go a little lighter on the inside and then go for a little bit of this darker brown as I go around the outside, just to give a little bit of depth to the bread. I'll be subtle, but it's nice to have some changes in color. Can add a little bit more brights in here and there wherever you see fit. We're gonna be layering our dry brushing over this bread to add even more texture. So if you feel like it's a little flat now, don't worry about that. We can amp up the texture in our second layering of color. Okay, I'll move on to the other side of the bread. Just be careful with your hand not to smear. And paint just right up to the hot dog. And if you get into a little bit, that's okay. When we go back in and paint the hot dog on, we can correct any lines that don't feel quite right. Just refine any of these edges. It is a hot dog, so it doesn't have to be perfectly straight. The bun's gonna have divots in it. For a little more of a natural shape if you want, have a few little wiggles here and there just along the edge. Then you're gonna wanna let this dry before we paint the hot dog in the middle. I'm gonna go with a slightly smaller brush to have a little more control with the edges. So I'm gonna go with a round three. And I'm gonna do a bit of a burnt sienna maxed with scarlet lake combo to try to get that hot dog color. That looks pretty good. Trying to get the right mix. And then get in there, starting at the center before you go to the edges. And you can continue to correct any little spots along the bun where you want it to be a little more straight. Going right up to the edges. And hot dogs have a little bit of a natural texture to them. They're not a flat wash type of paint, so I like to go with something where you get a little bit of a brown and a little bit of a red here. Doesn't have to be perfectly mixed and perfectly flat. You can have a few little bits of texture here and there. Once you feel like the painting is where you want it to be, you'll wanna let it sit and set. We're gonna be painting our toppings over top of the hot dog, so I would leave it overnight, just so that you're not lifting up that red when you start painting down your toppings. I've got that ready for us to just get going on now. So here's our hot dog all dried and set. And we're gonna be doing a little bit of ketchup, some relish, and we're gonna use some stippling that I'd mentioned to dry brush along the bun to add a little more texture. I think I'll start with the stippling. I'm gonna grab a piece of scrap paper to test out my dry brushing before I start applying it to my final art. It's best to get a little bit of a test done here. Make sure it looks right before you apply it to your hot dog. So I'm gonna go with a little bit of the same colors we used before, the darker and the lighter brown for the stippling, but just try to go a little darker with it this time. We can see what we've got. This is gonna start off a bit wet, but we can get out a little bit of that water till we feel like it's looking right. Then I'm just gonna go along the edge. Not gonna go too far in. We just want a little bit more of that texture of the hot dog bun right up to the edge. We can do the other side too and maybe a few little touch-ups. And if you notice that your brush is making the same shapes over and over again, you can rotate to get a little more variety. Using a light hand to try to get some different forms. Something like that looks pretty cute. Got a little more texture on that bun. So you'll wanna let that dry before you get into the glazed paint-on-paint toppings, just so you don't rub it with your hand. Now that I've got that dry and ready to go, I'm going to get into the ketchup and the relish. So I'm gonna go with a small brush to get the nice little details. And so I'm gonna go with a round one. And I think I'll start with the ketchup. And I'm going to continue to use scarlet lake just to keep the reds harmonious, but this time really go for a more intense version of the red all by itself. Follow your guidelines, and do just a nice little squiggle of ketchup. It's natural. It's just squeezed out of a tube, so it doesn't have to have perfectly straight lines. Can just think about how that ketchup would naturally look squeezed onto your hot dog. And try to create

something a little like that. Again, rotating my paper to get all the different angles instead of rotating my wrist. Some spots will be a little thicker and thinner, which feels pretty right to me. Ketchup is not gonna be all one exact width. And then we're gonna get into these little bits of relish, and I'm gonna do a mix of intense and vivid green, this darker intense green with the brighter vivid green, because I feel like the relish has a little color variety in it. So some of them will be a little brighter, and some of them will be a little darker. Be careful if your ketchup isn't dry yet to not go too close to that. Take a little time, and begin to fill in some of these squares. And I like to fill in ones that are a little further apart, let them dry, and then go around and fill in a few more. If they're right next to each other, you wanna wait for them to dry before you paint the next one. Just keep filling in till you feel like you've got a nice selection of them and it feels like a nice density. And I've got one ready to go with all these little relish squares filled in. So it looks something like this when you're done and ready to step back and enjoy your hot dog. A few more compositional examples from my "Watercolor Workshop" book are another doughnut, since we've already painted a doughnut in this series. And this one uses our glazing or paint-on-paint technique to create all the different pieces of the doughnut from the baked to the toppings and all the little sprinkles. And then I've got an example here of using dry brushing to create different layers of this graphic H.

Bonus day - Layering with stamping - swatches

- The final layering technique that we'll explore is stamping, and you can stamp with all different types of objects, from leaves to sponges, which is what we're gonna use today. We'll start off this swatch painting this section in whatever way you want. I'm gonna go with a wet-on-wet technique, again, just to get a little texture on texture. As you may have figured by now, I love my wet-on-wet dots, so we're gonna go with that. Wet your surface as you have before, making sure you've got a nice shine across it. I always like to look at my paper from an angle to make sure it has an even shine of water. Now that I've got the paper wet, I'll switch from my larger Round 6 brush over to something a little smaller. I think I'm gonna go with Round 3, and I'll start dotting on a few colors. I think I'll start with some Winsor Orange. That turned out very light. I'm gonna try to get a little darker. Maybe I'll get a little pink next, get a bit of Rose Dore. And I like to mix unusual colors together, so I think I'll even throw in a bit of this brownish purple that is called Caput Mortuum Violet. There's a little bit of a vintage feel to the whole color scheme, I think. You can just dot on whatever colors you like or stripe or create zigzags, whatever you can come up with. And once you feel like you've got all the colors that you want and you've decided if you want to go around and maybe clean up your edges a little bit, set this aside to dry before we start stamping. So I'll do these edges to clean it up. Just pushes the paint all the way to the edge to give a slightly cleaner line. It may not look like you're doing a lot initially, but as it dries, it definitely changes the aesthetic. Once you feel like you have it where you want, as I said, let it dry and it'll look something like this guy, and then we'll be ready to start our stamping. So I'm planning on stamping within this section here with my natural sponge. I'm going to be using a little bit of scrap paper again, so we can test our stamp and you could go for a more organic feel of letting the stamp kind of do whatever it wants along the edges. But I like to put a little bit of tape around. I'm using a bit of Scotch Tape 'cause that's what I have. You could use some artist masking tape. Just make sure that it's not super sticky so that, when you peel it off the paper, it will not rip your paper. And I like to also fold the edge, so it's easier to grab an edge when you want to peel it off. You can press it down close to the edge, and I just let it kind of be a little softer everywhere else to make sure that it will peel off nicely, when you're ready to take it off. And if you're concerned about your tape having a little too much stick to it, you can

always take a piece of tape and put it on your pants to try to get a little bit of that stick off before you put it on your paper. This is to protect the edges, make a nice clean square. Ah, I missed a teeny little spot over there. Just throw another little piece. Actually, I'll fold it in half, so it's easy to pull off. There we go, prepped and ready for stamping. So I'm gonna use this little guy, and I think I'll just use this little end to create some dotted stamps all the way around, and you could dip it into your color if you want, but I like a little more control. So I'll use my brush and I think I'm gonna go a bit orangy with this, with our Winsor Orange again. And I just like to brush it on to make sure that it's just where I wanted and I'm not using tons and tons of my paint 'cause you've invested money in it. You don't want to throw it away having it soaked up into your sponge. See, it's a little wet, and the more you stamp, the more you get the textures of the sponge. So when you feel like you're ready, start stamping along. And it feels a little light, so I'm gonna up our pigment game here. Less water, more pigment. Do a few more tests, and I'm ready to go. Stamp away. If you stamped too much on one spot, it'll start to fill up and get a little darker. So if you want to keep a lot of texture, keep a light hand, and it's pretty subtle when it's overlapping our paint. But depending on which colors you choose, it could be more dramatic. And you can see, if you start stamping over top of some of the areas, you can add even more texture. When you feel like it's where you want it to be, you can just let it dry. And once it's dried, you peel off that tape and reveal your design. And I've got this little guy here that is ready to go where we've got all of our textures together. It's definitely quite subtle in the center, but depending on what pigments you've combined together, you can have a little more of a pop. A few more examples from my book include these guys, so something similar to what we've done here, also with sponges. This uses a more synthetic sponge versus what we used, the more natural sponge. So you could try different types of sponges with different types of textures, throw in a few leaves, or something else that I haven't even thought of.

Bonus Day - Layering with stamping - composition

- Let's wrap up with one more composition, using a little stamping to add texture to a piece of broccoli. So we'll start off this composition by filling in this whole form, just blocking it out, with a few different greens. I'm gonna mix several of my greens together to create a lot of interest and texture and depth to this form, so a bit of oxide of chromium, which is more like an olive type of green maybe or an Army green, and then a little bit of a darker, intense green, plus some of this very light more neon type of vivid green. I'm just gonna go with a little bit of a mixed section here on my palette, where I've got all the different colors together. And they can flow into each other a little bit and be a little separated so that I've got them all kind of working their way through this piece. So when you feel like you've got your colors ready to go, I always like to, again, not start too close to the edge, so I can see what's happening before I start defining my edges. And I've got a bit smoother guidelines here, but broccoli's pretty bumpy. So I'm just gonna really let it be bumpy along all these edges, pushing with my brush, using that tip to form the little ridges, and then filling in. I'm trying to get a little bit of color variation, get some of this vivid green pop in too. You can erase any of these guidelines once they're dry, so don't worry if they're not visible or if they're too visible. Work your way around, creating some different texture and color combos. As you get to the stem, you want to get a little smoother, but it can still be organic feeling. Having some nice smoother edges will give a bit of contrast between the different sections of the broccoli. As this is starting to dry, I might even go in with a smaller brush. I've got size three round. And just throw some clean water into some of these sections, just trying to pull out here and there, where there are gonna be these more bulbous areas to start to hint at where the guidelines were, just creating a

little bit of darks and lights. And I might even throw a teeny bit more dark where there's gonna be some dark in the stalks as well. And it's gonna dry a little more organically, but you can, once we're all the way towards the end of this, add in a few more details with your brush to enhance it. So I would let this dry before we get to the next layer, and I've got that ready to go. This is a dried version. Once your first layer has fully dried, you're ready to start playing around with some stamping, and you can even throw in a few little details with a smaller brush. So I'm pulling out a bit of paper again for us to test on, and I'm gonna again use my natural sponge and just find a little edge of it that I think will be nice to create some extra texture in each of these little circular areas. I'll brush a little bit of intense green, trying to go a little darker now onto my sponge, just to have a bit of control. We can test this guy out. When we feel like it's kinda looking like what we want, start stamping around, adding some texture, trying to keep it within the confines of this little shape. But if a little bit trickles out, it's not a big deal. You can either keep it 'cause it could look kinda cool, or if you don't think it's looking cool we've got the technique with our X-ACTO blade to remove a little bit of extra pigment off of our paper. So I'll do a little more dark, trying to get it really built up. I also just forgot to do a test. So it got quite dark, but that's okay. This is a very organic form. So you can have some darker spots, some lighter spots. Then you might want to let it dry a little bit before you contemplate any more layering of stamping. And at that point, I might go in and start to define some of these branches and define this edge a teensy bit with a little brush. Think about these forms and what you really want them to look like. And as this dries, you can see if you want to add a little more. Don't go too crazy, too fast. Give yourself a little bit of leeway to build up color. And as you continue to build up some color and maybe add a little more stamping, your broccoli will continue to develop and look a bit like this, with some nice smoother areas contrasted by these very speckly areas of paint. And one more example from my "Watercolor Workshop" book is this typographic piece, *BYE*, which feels quite appropriate as we're wrapping up this last compositional test. Now that we've explored all these different skills, some a little more basic, like some wet on dry and some wet on wet, and some a little more experimental, like lifting with salt or layering with mixed media, you can take all these different skills, combine them together, pull out the ones you're loving, do some more experiments, and go off and create some amazing art that has your style all over it.