

# painting an apple with acrylics

WITH REBECCA WELLER

## MATERIALS:

- 5 acrylic paint brushes
  - medium flat tipped brush
  - small round brush
  - medium filbert brush
  - small filbert brush
  - small liner brush
- 8 acrylic paints
  - titanium white
  - cadmium yellow light
  - yellow ochre
  - cadmium red light
  - alizarin crimson
  - ultramarine blue
  - raw umber
  - burnt umber
- 1 palette knife
- 1 canvas board (8"x10")
- 1 disposable palette
- 1 rag or paper towels
- 1 cup with fresh water
- 1 pencil
- 1 sketchbook or scratch paper
- 1 apple
- 1 neutral colored tea towel

## GET PREPARED

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1. Using a flat neutral wall as a background and a folded tea towel under the apple, arrange your still life. Set up your painting materials on a flat surface close to your still life.

## TINT YOUR CANVAS

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2. Put a quarter-sized blob of yellow ochre paint on your palette and a bit of white. Using your palette knife, mix to create a nice buttery gold color. Using your largest flat brush dunked into water a few times, mix up your golden paint until your tint is milky in consistency. Wash paint all over canvas. Set aside to dry.

## SKETCH YOUR APPLE

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3. On a scratch piece of paper, sketch a few matchbook-sized window shapes in the basic shape of your canvas. Draw your apple and tea towel inside each window in slightly different areas. Decide which one you like the best and make the same basic sketch on your tinted canvas.

## PREPARE YOUR PALETTE

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4. On a fresh sheet of palette paper, prepare your palette! Put a quarter-sized blob of each color of paint in a basic rainbow order around the outside edge of your palette paper. Leave yourself plenty of room for mixing color.

## BLOCK IN THE CANVAS WITH COLOR

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5. Observe your still life. Using a palette knife, mix a good amount of the overall background color you are seeing. Using the palette knife, grab some of that color and mix a darker shadow color. Using your largest flat brush dunked in water, mix the background color to a milky consistency and paint in the background, then paint in the shadow. Using a palette knife and the same process, mix the base color and shadow for the tea towel and paint with a medium filbert brush. Using the palette knife and the same process, mix the base color and the shadow for the apple and paint using a medium filbert brush.

**TIP:** *In this step you are looking at and painting big shapes of color and creating a basic color "map" on your canvas.*

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## ADD THICKER PAINT

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6. Now you will use the same process you used for blocking in to add thicker paint and beginning details to your still life. Starting with the background and using either the paint you have already mixed or fresh paint, paint a thicker layer (about the consistency of thin yogurt) to the background and background shadow. Continue to the tea towel, tea towel shadow, and then the apple.

*TIP: Now is a good time to take a mini break!*

## COMPLETE THE FINAL DETAILS

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7. Starting with the background, look at your piece and observe any areas that need more detail or tidying up. A small round brush or small filbert is great for this work. Move on to the tea towel and then the apple. Save painting the apple highlights and the stem for the end. Once you feel like your piece is finished, it's time to sign it!

8. Now admire your work! Painting takes practice—every time you paint you will learn, grow, and discover your own painting style.