

# painting a flower with acrylics

WITH REBECCA WELLER

## MATERIALS:

- 5 acrylic paint brushes
  - medium flat 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 (9"x12")
- 1 disposable palette
- 1 rag or paper towels
- 1 cup with fresh water
- 1 pencil
- 1 sketchbook or scratch paper
- 1 flower in bottle photo

## GET PREPARED

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1. Set up your painting materials on a flat surface and your flower in a bottle photo where you can easily see it.

## TINT YOUR CANVAS

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2. Put a penny-sized blob of burnt umber paint on your palette and a bit of cadmium red light and yellow ochre. Using your palette knife, mix to create a rich, warm brown. Using your largest flat brush dunked into water a few times, mix up your paint until your tint is milky in consistency. Wash paint all over canvas. Set aside to dry.

## SKETCH YOUR STILL LIFE

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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 flower in the bottle inside each window in slightly different areas. Decide which one you like the best and make the same basic sketch on your tinted canvas.

## GET YOUR PALETTE READY

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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 plenty of room for mixing color.

## BLOCK IN THE CANVAS WITH COLOR

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5. In this step you are looking at and painting big shapes of color and creating a basic color "map" on your canvas. Observe your photo. 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. Don't worry about painting over your pencil marks for the stem and parts of the flowers. Using a palette knife and the same process, mix the base color and shadow for the table and paint with a medium flat brush. Using a palette knife and the same process, mix the base color and shadow for the bottle and paint with a medium filbert brush. Using the palette knife and the same process, mix the base color and the shadow for the flowers and paint the flowers (but not the stem) using a medium or small filbert brush.

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## ADD THICKER PAINT

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6. 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 table, bottle, and then the flowers. Now you can mix up a pale green and add the stem with a small round or liner brush.

*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 table, bottle, and then the flowers. Once you feel like your piece is finished, it's time to sign it!

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