
Acrylic Painting for Beginners: A 3-Part Series with Lisa Solomon

Chapter 1 - Getting Started

Overview

- Hi, my name is Lisa Solomon, and I'm a mixed media artist that lives in Oakland, California. I'm also a professor. I've been teaching painting and drawing at local Bay Area colleges for over 12 years. This class is going to be a general overview of how to become familiar with acrylics. We're gonna talk about brushes, palette knives, different surfaces that you can paint on. If you've never painted with acrylics before, this is the perfect class to introduce you to everything and how to use the media. And if you have painted with acrylics before, hopefully I will be able to show you some tips and tricks. (lively music)

Materials

- I'm gonna show you some materials that you need to get started painting. The thing that you can start with. Maybe you have some paints already at home which is great and you can definitely start with those. But if you don't have anything, it makes your life really easy to start with a basic set. This is a Grumbacher Academy Acrylic Set. It comes with one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten paints. Yay! Everything you need to get started. I am also going to recommend that you get a couple other colors. I don't know about you, but when I go into the art store I get really giddy. There's so many colors and they're so beautiful. And so I'm gonna recommend that you pick a couple that you really like. For today I picked up a crimson and a soft green. We're starting out with medium. You have to get at least a medium to begin with. You can get either a matte medium or a gloss medium. It's a really personal thing. It's whether or not you want things to end up looking shiny or if you want them to be matte when you're finished painting. The next thing that I like to use is pouring medium. I substitute this a lot for water. This is Flow Aid. This is actually really cool stuff that you put into your water. This here is gloss medium which we already went over. This is slow dry blending gel medium. This is really important if you're gonna be painting for a while and you don't want your paints to dry in your palette. This is gonna keep them wet and moist. And this is Art Guard. It's a barrier cream. I'm gonna use this instead of gloves. I recommend though that everyone put something on their hands. Either gloves or this barrier cream. Even though acrylics are technically non-toxic and they're safe. You're skin is the biggest organ on your body and there are some chemicals that have some toxicity level in them in the paints. There's a little bit of formaldehyde. Certain pigments are a little bit toxic. So you don't want them seeping into your skin all day long everyday all the time. This is an enamel tin palette. This is actually my personal favorite. Because you can put the paints out. You can even let them dry and you can just soak this in water and the paints come off really easily. I also like that it has this big lip so that you can actually put water in here and it's not gonna affect anything. This is palette paper. This is what I recommend to my beginning students because it's super easy. It's got a waxy surface so the paint is slippery and you can just throw them away when you're done which is really nice. The ubiquitous plastic palette that you can get. I really like these as well. It's got space for you to put every color in so you can keep your paints really clean. It's also got little spaces for you to mix in. I like to use these spaces for extra medium matte, maybe on gloss mediums, some retarder whatever. So you can put it all in here and it's all in one place. You'll need something to paint on. This is sort of your basic canvas board. These are pretty inexpensive at any art store. They have a cardboard backing. They're already

pre-gessoed and ready to go. They come in all kinds of sizes. This is canvas paper. This is a really inexpensive easy way to get started. One of my favorite surfaces is mixed medium paper. It's really great. It's got a super smooth nice vellum surface. This is Bristol paper. This is also an excellent choice. A fairly inexpensive choice. The only thing that you have to keep in mind with both kinds of paper is that the paint may make the paper curl. If you don't have any brushes at all. Then you should start with a really basic set. You can get like a six piece set that has a nice array of brushes to start with. You want to get brushes that are specifically for acrylic painting. So you don't want to use water color brushes with acrylic. You also, if you already have brushes. Don't want to mix media with your brushes. So one type of media with one type of brush. This basic set is a really nice way to start out. It's got teeny tiny round brushes. A flat brush, an angled brush. Which is really great to get into certain spaces. I also recommend that you get like a cheap two inch hardware store. Really inexpensive brush. This is good for laying down grounds or gesso. Just be aware that you're gonna get bristles into your surface. If you're starting with the basic set I also recommend getting at least the medium or larger size brushes as well. This is a 12 flat brush. This is a four round brush. This is a half inch flat brush. This is a filbert, this is an eight filbert. This is a good sort of sample array of what you might need and you'll see that they're a little bit larger than what's in your basic set. You can also start getting crazy. This is a fan brush. I'll show you what this does later in the class. There are so many brushes. You really have to go and figure out which brushes are good for you. Just make sure you have a little bit of variety when you're starting out. So that you have stuff to work with. These are palette knives. This set is a basic again, it comes with all of these plastic ones. This is a great way to start. It has different shapes and different sizes and this will give you a good idea. You may end up wanting to paint with your palette knife. Which is why I recommend getting a variety to start. And plastic is the easiest and cheapest way to get going. Once you know what kind of palette knife you like. You might want to invest in some metal palette knives. These are a little bit easier to clean, although you'll see I didn't take such good care of this one. I've had this one for years, right. Look at all the paint on this handle. But it's still going strong and I can still use it. And it's great. These guys do have a tendency to break if you push too hard with them. So eventually you'll want to invest probably in some metal ones. Because they're easier to clean and they'll last longer and they won't break. So obviously, you need water. I actually like to have two containers of water. One for cool colors and one for warm colors. But if you just have one that's fine. I also like to use or have around a spray bottle. Because you can spray the paint on your palette and that will help keep it from drying out. You'll also want some paper towels. I really also recommend a real rag. A clothe rag. There's nothing like using a clothe rag to wipe paint off of a brush. It's a much cleaner clean than with just a paper towel. You're gonna want to clean your brushes at the end of the day. That's what's gonna make them last. This is my favorite brush cleaner. It's a little bit expensive so if you don't want to invest in something like this. Dish soap is gonna work just fine. This other brush restorer cleaner that I have is great if you have some old brushes lying around. You can also use it as a general cleaner but it's even better for just getting rid of caked on yucky paint that has been sitting in brushes for a long time. There's a lot of materials. You don't have to get all of these. You can definitely get started with like two paints and two brushes and one medium. But I wanted to give you a little bit of an overview so that you have an idea of what's possible with all of these kinds of materials.

Paints and other mediums

- The first thing that people ask me about is what kind of paint that they should use to start their

paintings. And there's so much paint out there, it's crazy. There's craft paint, there's expensive, professional grade paint. So I just want to go over, sort of, what kind of paint options you have, and what they can and can't do, and what the differences are. The first thing you should know is that you can use any acrylic paint together. It doesn't matter brand-wise, or consistency-wise, or type-wise, they all can live together in the same painting, so there's no problems mixing acrylic paint. So I have a little card here where I've have poured out different kinds of paint. The first thing I want you to see is that these are all cadmium yellow medium hue. They're all basically the same color, and you'll see that there is a difference in each of these, even though they're labeled the exact same thing. When you go out to buy a cadmium yellow hue, it may be slightly different from one brand to another. The first one is a 99 cent craft paint, and the last one is the Liquitex professional grade \$10 tube of paint. You can see the difference in the quality, and sort of the sheen of the paint here on the card. I've also sort of watered it down, so you can see what happens when you add medium to it and what's gonna happen to the pigment. The difference between student grade and professional grade is that student grade has a lower pigment load. It means that there's less pigment in the binder of the paint. Professional grade has the most pigment, which is why it's so expensive. Some of these pigments cost a fortune, and so that's why it comes down to you when you buy the paint. You can mix them all together. There's also a difference in consistency. This is acrylic heavy body, it's gonna be the thickest and most goopiest kind of paint that you can use. Craft paint is more similar to a soft body or a more flowy type of paint. There are different instances when you need to use different kinds of paint, and it just takes practice to figure out what kind of paint feels the most comfortable for you and is gonna give you the end result that you want. You're gonna drive yourself crazy trying to turn something like this into a thick paint, so I'm just going to show you the difference between them when they're not dry, so you can actually see how it works. So this is a craft paint and you'll notice that it's really liquidy. I mean I could even make a surface painting with it directly on the surface. This is a heavy body thicker paint, and this you'll notice has more oomph to it, it's not flowy, it's really thick, and you can tell right away, the difference between the two. After you have your paints, you're going to need some medium. And I want to go over this a little bit in depth, because acrylic paints, it's kind of important to understand why you need medium and why you can't just use water. So here's the deal, acrylic paint is pigment in a polymer binder, it's like a plastic binder. And if you add too much water, the polymers in that paint are not gonna stick together. It's totally fine if you want to play and add a ton of water and make your acrylic paint look like watercolor and have it move all over the place, that's great, knock yourself out. But you have to understand that it could potentially fall off of the surface that you're working on. That's because if you add water, the polymer pigments are too far away and they don't lock together. So instead of using only water, and you will use water, but you want to use about up to 20% water when you're mixing paint. So when you go over 20% you're in that danger zone of the polymers not getting together. You want to use mediums instead. So I'm gonna talk about a few mediums that are actually more than what I have out there, but I want to go over some of the basic ones and what they do and what the differences are between them. So the first one that I have here is matte medium. You'll notice that it's not shiny. The paint itself doesn't have a lot of gloss to it, some of them have a little bit more gloss than others, this one does not, and the matte medium maintains that lack of glossiness. The second one that I have here is gloss medium. Gloss medium has a little bit of sheen to it, and it's very different than the matte medium. So if you want your paintings to be shiny or if you're painting water, you might want to use gloss medium instead of matte medium. The last card that I have is actually one of my favorite mediums, it's pouring

medium, and it's made specifically to pour paint, although I don't use it that way. Pouring medium is my favorite medium, I use it pretty much instead of water. I still use water but I'm so fearful of going over that 20% of water usage so that my paint won't fall off my surface that I use pouring medium a lot instead. It waters down, waters down, the paint really nicely, and it creates a really nice flow so that I can move the paint around. I want to show you what these mediums look like out of the tube. I've used this palette. I've labeled them so that I know what they are, I don't get confused when I'm painting. This is the gloss medium, you'll see that it's goopier and thicker, kind of sits in the middle of the palette there. This is matte medium, so it's more like water, but you'll see it's got a slightly thicker consistency than this, which is the pouring medium, which I've labeled with the P. So you can see out of the tube, sort of how they act and how they relate to the cards that I just showed you. The next thing that I want to do is show you what the paint looks like. One thing to know about acrylic paints is that they are lighter out of the tube than when they dry. So when they dry they're gonna look a little bit different than when you first pour them on to your palette. So this is cerulean blue, it's the same color that I have here on the cards and I'm just gonna show you the difference really quickly. I'm gonna take it, and this one's glossy, so I'm gonna mix it with a little bit of gloss just so that it ends up looking the same on the card. And I'm gonna place it on the card here. And you'll see that it's a little bit lighter than what you'll see when it dries. And then if you want to see how I water it down, I just use the pouring medium, and... So in the end, it'll end up looking like this. Right now, it's a couple beats lighter. A lot of times students ask me if there's a formula for how you mix the medium and the paint together and really there isn't. It's really about look and feel. So you'll notice that when paint comes out of a tube it's of a certain consistency, if you want it to flow more, you add more medium. The danger with adding a lot of medium is that it thins out the paint and it makes it more transparent, so you can see the difference on the cards here, where I have the paint pretty much at full strength and where I have it flowed out with the pouring medium. And you'll see that it's a little bit thinner, it's less saturated and you can see through it. If that's a look that you like, then knock yourself out and add as much pouring medium as you want to your paint. If you don't want that and then you want to be a little more conservative and not add as much medium to what you're doing. There's no science to it, it's really just you working with the paint and figuring out what you like in terms of consistency and what it looks like when it's dry and what you like in terms of that as well. So the last thing that I wanna talk about is Flow Aid. A lot of times, particularly if you have used watercolors or oil paints, you are gonna be really frustrated with acrylics, you're gonna be painting and you're gonna say, "Ooh, it's not moving, it's really sticky." So Flow Aid is the magic solution to that. You put a couple drops in your water, ooh that might have been too much. It tells you on the package sort of what the ratio to water to drops is, I usually just put a couple drops in. You just kind of stir it around with a clean brush or a clean palette knife, and what Flow Aid does is it really changes the consistency of the paint. And again, you're not feeling this, so it's really hard for me to explain to you that this paint is now moving a lot more smoothly and is flowing more because of the Flow Aid in the water. As you can see there are a lot of paint options and a lot of medium options. You should definitely figure out what's most comfortable for you. Rummage around and see if you have an acrylics or any mediums hiding out in your closets or craft cases. Maybe go and paint with a friend, and you guys can swap mediums so that you can figure out what they do and how they work. It's really a, you have to use it in order to understand it kind of experience, so this is not necessarily the best way to demo it. The best way to demo it is for you to go out, and buy it and try it.

Using and caring for brushes

- Now we're gonna go over different kind of brushes and what kind of strokes you can make with them but before we get started I'm going to practice what I preach and put some Artguard on my hands since I'm about to touch paint. Okay, I'm gonna close this up so it doesn't dry out. So, I'm gonna show you the different kinds of brushes that we're gonna try out. These are round brushes and you'll notice that they have super fine nice tips. These are really great for doing line work. They're not so great for filling spaces in. These guys, the flat brushes, these are better for filling spaces in. So, this is a small one, this is a six, and this is a pretty big one, it's a 12. I'm also gonna show you the difference in terms of what kind of line quality you can get with, this is a Filbert and this is a eight and this is an angled brush and for some reason they changed the marking on these so this is a 3/8 inch. They don't give you a number. I don't know why they do this. I'm not in charge of brush sizing, but this is how it works. This is a fan brush and this is a one, so it's not a huge one. This is particularly good for blending, especially two colors together and it also makes some pretty interesting marks that the other brushes can't make. I'm gonna start with the sap green 'cause it's such a pretty color. I'm gonna put it on my palette paper. I'm using palette paper for this. I'm just gonna do this really quickly and easily. I'm not gonna use any mediums. I do however have Flow Aid in the water so that the paint will move a little faster and easier. I'm gonna dip my brush into the water. This is a brand new brush so you'll notice the bristles are stuck together. I'm just gonna break the bristles apart. They put a little sizing in there. I'm gonna dip it into the paint and I'm gonna make sure that I get pretty good coverage on my brush. There's nothing worse than running out of paint when you're trying to make a line. You'll see it's a pretty skinny line. So, you wanna put your brush in the water. In fact, you wanna leave your brushes in the water. You don't want them sitting out because the paint will dry really quickly and then you'll have to use that brush restorer in order to fix them so you can use them again. When you're not using a brush and it has paint on it, be sure and just leave it in the water. You don't wanna do that long-term, but you wanna do it while you're painting. Then we're gonna take this larger size round brush so you can see the difference between the small thin line and the line that this is gonna make. I'm gonna dip it in my water, make sure the bristles aren't sticking together, wipe off the excess, run it into the beautiful sap green. I'm right next to it so you can see the difference in size and if I push down harder, you'll see that it's getting thicker and thicker and thicker and thicker. Voila. Let's try the small flat brush. This makes a kinda square mark, right. So, you can see how you can get a point with the round brush. It's really hard to get a super thin, steady point with the flat brush but you can. The flat brush is also really great for this kind of filling in and like painterly strokes. For comparison, we'll do the larger. This is gonna get me huge coverage, especially in terms of comparison to the other guys. Oh, look at that beautiful, big line. So nice. If you're trying to do a landscape and you want, you know, a grassy field, this is a great brush to make all of it green really fast. It also just fills in any kind of space and you can also make really pretty bigger painterly strokes. Next up, we've got the Filbert brush. This is really similar to a flat brush except it has a curve at the tip here and this makes a slightly different mark than the flat brush does. Maybe I'll do one here just so you can see the difference. It's really hard to see but it feels different when it pulls. I can pull up. It doesn't make quite the same kind of choppy marks, so you'll see the tops are rounded, right. So, this is flat and this is rounded. Particularly people who like to paint flowers, really make friends with their Filbert brushes because it's really nice for doing foliage. You get those, like, nice rounded corners for leaves and things that you can't necessarily do as easily with a flat brush. This guy is the flat angular brush. What this is really good for is if you have a box or an area and you wanna fill that in and you wanna be really neat and clean with it, this

is your brush, 'cause it's very easy to get into a corner because of that angled tip, right. A flat brush or a Filbert brush will not do this. This is the fan brush. This makes a completely different mark. You can also use it on its side for a really interesting texture that you can't really get with the other brushes at all. This brush in particular is really nice when you get into blending to blend two colors together. You can even kind of load the brush with one color on one side and another color on the other side and then you can have them meet in the middle. It's a really cool trick. Keep in mind when you're buying your brushes that you wanna get a set that's only for acrylics. You don't wanna mix your watercolor paints with your acrylic paint brushes. The problem is that watercolors have a different base. They have gum arabic base and acrylics have a polymer base, so you don't want those two to interact 'cause it will not make for a happy painting.

Blending color tints with palette knives

^- Now, let's talk about palette knives, ^and a lot of times people say, ^"Why do I need a palette knife?" ^And the answer is that you don't want to mix ^a big batch of color with a brush ^because you will very quickly ruin your brush ^if you keep pushing really hard against it. ^And when you're mixing and you want a really ^nice, even tone of color, you don't want any streaks ^or anything, that's what this guy is for. ^So I'm gonna take some crimson and some white. ^This happens to be titanium white. ^Do I wanna make a dark pink? ^Do I wanna make a light pink? ^Let's go with a light pink, which means ^I'm gonna take a little bit of this and add it to this, ^because it's really hard to get lighter, ^but it's really easy to get darker. ^So I'm just gonna take a little bit on my palette knife. ^I'm gonna smooch it into the white. ^It's like baking. ^It's like frosting. ^Smooch, smooch, smooch, and you'll see the streaks. ^That's what I'm trying to get rid of. ^Don't want the streaks. ^This is easier to do on a softer surface, ^like this palette paper. ^You can definitely do it on those plastic palettes, ^but it might be a little bit harder. ^Okay, I'm just about done. ^The really cool thing about palette knives, too, ^is you can actually paint with them. ^You can make marks with them, especially if you want ^thick, impasto coverage. ^So, here we go. ^I'm just gonna put it on here so you can see it. ^And so you'll see, whoo, I've got a streak. ^Let's get rid of that. ^Okay, that's the light pink. ^Let's mix a darker pink, just so you can see the difference. ^And I'm just gonna use a different palette knife. ^Again, it doesn't really matter which one you use. ^It's personal preference. ^This one can make a wider mark. ^I'm gonna make a darker pink with this one. ^So I'm gonna add a little bit more red, ^and I'm just gonna go ahead, it doesn't matter, ^I'm gonna have it marry the last pink that we made. ^And it's really about smooching it down ^and getting rid of those streaks. ^So I kinda sweep it all off and then push it back down. ^So because this palette knife is flat, ^it doesn't have quite as much bendability ^as the one that I used last time. ^It still works, but it definitely feels different ^when you're doing it. ^Let's try this one out, and we'll move over here ^and paint a little bit with this guy. ^And then I'm gonna show you how to use the palette knife ^to mix in your medium. ^If you know that you want to use a certain consistency ^of paint, you can mix it ahead of time, ^and the palette knife can help you do that. ^So I'm just gonna mix some matte medium into the red ^that we've got going on here. ^And just try a good little dollop. ^It's gonna be a little bit pink, ^'cause it has pink in it. And so, this is a little bit easier to mix, ^because the medium helps the paint move around a little bit. ^But you'll see it's becoming ^a pretty nice, even consistency. ^And again, this is not something you wanna do ^with your brushes, because you'll ruin your brushes. ^If you keep pushing down with your brush, ^you're gonna splay your bristles, and there's a danger ^that they could get stuck like that. ^Also, you're gonna get paint really far into the grooves ^of your paint brush if you keep mixing with your brush ^instead of a palette knife, and that's the hardest part ^of

the brush to clean. ^So there's the basics on palette knives. ^I didn't demo a metal one, but it's basically ^the exact same thing. ^They're just a little sturdier. ^They'll be less chance of you breaking one, ^if you have a metal one, ^but the plastic ones are gonna do just fine. ^Don't forget that you can paint with your palette knife. ^You can use it just like a brush on your painting, ^and make some really cool things. ^There's different textures and thicknesses of paint ^that you can only get with a palette knife. ^It's really hard to achieve them with a brush. ^So be sure and try that out as a technique ^when you're painting.

Blending to create new colors

- Now we're gonna talk about blending. And blending is one of those things that people always ask about, and how to do it so that it's nice and smooth, and to transition from one color to another color. This is one of those techniques that you're gonna use probably over and over again in painting. So, we're gonna go from a yellow. This is a cadmium yellow hue, to a blue. This is a phthalo blue. And I'm gonna start one on each end. And get you all the way to the center. And have a green. So we're gonna do it full strength. Smooth at first. So I'm gonna use two brushes. Just to make it easier on myself. They are not the same brush. It does not matter. Not for this. I'm gonna start by dipping one brush into the yellow. This brush is already wet. Otherwise I would've put it in the water. I'm gonna paint this on my paper over here. Now, it's gonna dry really quickly on the paper. And in fact I'm realizing, I might wanna add some of this stuff. Which is the slow-dry blending gel medium, in order to prevent this paint from drying really, really quickly. So I'm gonna add some and go back over here. And I'm gonna quickly switch hands. And switch to the blue, and I'm gonna add some of the gel medium into that as well. And I'm just gonna start over here so I can get to the middle. So we're gonna go this way. And we're gonna go this way. We're gonna get them to touch. Okay, so here we go. We're making a green. So exciting. Yellow and blue make green. Okay. And this blue brush is now getting dirtied with the yellow. So I don't wanna go too far. The biggest trick with blending is using a dry brush. So I have this other brush that I've kept dry. It doesn't have any liquid in it at all. And that's really important, 'cause that's what's gonna help make the blend happen. So I'm now gonna go over the blend with this dry brush. And you can see that I'm pushing the blue into the yellow, to make the transition of the green a little bit smoother. And it's feeling a little stiff. So I'm gonna add a little bit of the pouring medium, which I also already have on my palette, 'cause I don't wanna add water. And I'm gonna use the pouring medium to help me move it along. Yep. Dirty now. Can't get into the yellow. So if I wanna smooth that yellow out, I would need to use a brand new, clean, dry brush. So you'll notice that the paint is starting to peel onto the paper. And that's fine. I could've prevented that by adding more of the medium to the paint before I started this process. It's something that paper does. It soaks up the paint really fast, which is why a lot of people like to use canvas paper, or a canvas board to start with. I happen to like the texture that it creates so I'm okay with it. But if you wanted like a super smooth, really nice transition. You might wanna start trying this technique on a canvas. It will make your life a little bit easier. On this card over here, you'll see I did a much slower and more careful transition, from full strength red to full strength yellow, and I made a really nice orange in between. So with this one I used a lot of the slow-dry, blending gel medium to make sure that it didn't dry out. As I was getting from one side to the other. So next, we're gonna do a sort of watered down version. But again, we're not using water. We're gonna use pouring medium. I'm gonna do it with the blue and the yellow again. So I'm gonna take two more brushes. Start with the yellow, and I'm also gonna re-add some of this blending medium to keep it from drying out. And I'm just gonna add a lot of pouring medium. So this is me changing

the saturation of the color without adding any water. I'm just adding the pouring medium, to sort of thin it out. And I'm gonna do the same thing with this other brush in blue. So here's the blue, and I'm gonna add more... If I was gonna do a big batch of this, I would be using my palette knife. But because these are small batches, I'm gonna just use the brush. Breaking the rules. And I'm adding pouring medium to that, to thin it out. So it's super easy to cross mix your colors which you may or may not want. Totally depends on what kind of painting you're making. If you don't want them to touch, you'll notice how I went off of different sides of my pile of medium. So I'm gonna put some blue down, and I'm gonna put some yellow down. I'm gonna make them a little bit closer. So hopefully we won't dry out too much this time. And that doesn't have pretty much paint in it at all. Make that a little bit darker. Okay. And you'll see that the paint is a lot thinner. It's more ghostly than the above version. Okay, they're starting to meet. And they're gonna start to turn a little bit more green. I'm gonna go ahead and put the yellow in here. Get that to happen. There we go. And then I'm gonna use a dry brush again. This brush is a little wet, so we're gonna hope it's gonna work, to smooth out the transition. So if I want it to be a little more green, I can add a little bit more yellow in the middle part here, until you're happy with the way that it's blending. So you can see how we got to a yellow to blue, with the green in the middle here. Again, I have a card over here which I did with a red and a yellow and it's a little bit smoother, 'cause I took more time to do it. But, you can see how it's a little less saturated than the card above. Lastly, I wanna demo for you how to do blending with a palette knife. Because you'll see it's a completely different texture and a different look than the other two. And you don't need a dry brush to do this. It's a completely different technique. So I'm gonna take just this nice, little, pointy palette knife guy. I happen to like this one. I'm not gonna use any medium for this. I'm just gonna for it with the paint. I could put some slow-dry medium in there if I wanted this to stay wet for a little bit longer. But since this is just a quick demo, I'm gonna go for it. So, I'm gonna use yellow, and put this down here. And I'm gonna use blue. And I'm using a separate palette knife so that it's clean. And I'm gonna put this down here. And I'm just gonna start to smooch them together. So you can leave your big, thick palette mark knife in there. Like, you can leave a lot of texture. Or you can smooth it out like cake frosting. You can do like a zigzag thing if you want. You can do whatever you want with the palette knife. That's what's really great about them. I can try and smooth this over with the clean. 'Cause I don't like that little line of green. Not left handed. Ooh, look at that. Fun stuff with palette knives. So, you can also change the direction. I was going vertically but now I'm going horizonatally and you'll see that the way the color interacts is completely different. It's really fun. Palette knives are fun. So over here, again, you'll see I did a much smoother scale with a palette knife from the red to the yellow and making orange in between. And you can get as crazy as you want. I mean, there are a bunch of shades in here that you could get to. Or a bunch of shades on this side that you can get to. If you want to, you can, you know, extend the gradient so that it goes a little bit further, or you can make it really short like I did just now. Blending is a really good way to start learning what paints can do, and how brushes work and how your palette knives are gonna work. So I would really recommend starting out maybe with this technique especially if you've never painted before. This will be a really good way for you to get a feel for how the paints work and how your materials are gonna work. In fact, often times when I get a new material, I do a little gradient scale like this so that I understand how things are gonna work when I try and do a real painting. Also, we use blending a lot in paintings. When you think about transitioning, say a sky from a dark blue to a light blue it's gonna be this kind of technique that you're gonna use in order to make that happen.

Create a painting

- So let's make a painting. I wanna try and combine all of the stuff that we've done earlier to make an actual real-life painting. We are going to paint a nectarine. Well, maybe you won't paint a nectarine, but I'm gonna try and paint a nectarine. I'm gonna use this teeny little round brush to start sketching so compositionally I know where I'm going. I don't wanna just blindly go into it. I'm really looking at the nectarine and trying to figure out what I want my base color to be, what I want to be the first thing that I put down. And I really think it's going to have to be yellow because underneath all this red and orange and polka dots and stuff that I see, it's sort of this tone of yellow. So I'm gonna start sketching with yellow so that I'm not fighting with a darker color. I like to work from light to dark if I can so that I don't try and cover up dark colors with a light color. That's not the easiest thing to do. So I'm gonna start with this cadmium yellow here, and I'm gonna mix it with a little bit of pouring medium and a little bit of matte medium so that it's kind of nice and thin and easy for me to draw with. I don't want it to be really sticky. In fact, I'm gonna add just a teeny bit of water. Beautiful. Okay, and now I'm thinking about where I want it on my canvas. And this is all practice, so it doesn't have to be a super masterpiece, but let's sort of draw out a circle. And a little (humming). Okay, very good. And then I'm gonna fill that in with the cadmium yellow. One of the great things about acrylic is it's gonna dry really fast, so I don't have to wait a super long time. So I'm gonna go back in to the cadmium yellow, put a little bit of medium, pouring medium in, so that I can move it around. And then just gonna put a layer down of color. And this is just so I have something to start with. I know exactly where my nectarine is gonna live on the canvas. And I'm just literally filling it in. So I'm gonna dip my brush into the medium when I feel like the paint is getting a little sticky. I'm gonna add a little more paint when I run out of paint on my brush. I don't want, at this point, to add too much texture. I'm just kind of laying down a first coat. There we go. And while I'm here I'm just gonna check the shape. He's got a little bit of fat there. He's got a little bit of a bump there. He's actually a little flatter here. And this comes out a little bit more. So now I have kind of a groundwork. I know where I'm gonna go next. I have the shape sort outlined and filled out and I'm pretty happy with it. I might change it a little bit as I keep going. So now I'm gonna take another look at the nectarine and kind of see what color I want to make next. And it's kind of this orange-y nectarine-y color. I'm gonna save this dark maroon red stuff for last. And I'm gonna do kind of the middle guy last, too, the little stem nub guy. I wanna try and mix that color, or something close to that color. And I wanna mix a different couple shades of it so I have it on hand, so it'll be easy for me to do. While I'm doing that, I'm gonna put my brush in the water, so that it doesn't get ruined, so that the paint doesn't dry on it. Grab a palette knife, and I'm gonna try and make a couple different shades of orange that I like that I think relate to that. So I grabbed a little bit of cad red light and a little bit of cad medium yellow, and I'm gonna mix them together so that I've got a nice orange. If you wanna be super scientific, you can bring it up to the nectarine and go, "Hmm, are we close?" We're pretty close. That's good, I'm liking that. And then I'm gonna take some more. I'm just gonna take a little bit on my palette knife, scooch it over here, and add some more yellow so that I can make an even lighter version. When I'm looking at the nectarine, I kind of see like this swoops, so I'm just gonna go ahead and use my palette knife and put the swoop in. Kind of think about that. And I'm gonna just start to blend it in. Again, I'm starting with the lighter orange, because it's easier to go darker. It's harder to go lighter. And I'm trying to leave some of the cad yellow that I originally put down on there. But I'm gonna go over it again, because I want more texture. Okay, I'm just gonna just switch to the darker color and start to build this up a little bit more. I'm gonna smooth out some of the brush strokes that are a little bit too texture-y for my taste. Now I'm gonna try and

work on the spots on the nectarine. It looks like there's a couple of darker shades. I want there to be some tonality, so I'm gonna mix a little yellow ochre into the orange that I already have and start kind of tackling that to try and make it a little bit more textured. I took the orange and I've added a little bit of yellow ochre, and I'm gonna add a little bit of medium, because my paint is starting to dry out. I'm literally just gonna start poking around the nectarine, trying to mimic the spots that I see. And now I'm also starting to think about how I want to build up texture on the painting. One of the things that I'm noticing is that as I'm doing this, the spots are super even, and they're more like long spots, not little spots. So I might go in with this teeny little round brush and start to do a little bit more polka dot stuff. And now I want an even darker orange. I'm just gonna take the yellow ochre. I'm gonna add a little bit of cad red to it. I'm gonna see what color I end up with. So if you haven't guessed by now, I'm not going for a photo realistic version of this nectarine. It's much more painterly. Just gonna make it a little bit more brown. Now I haven't cleaned off this brush because I'm okay with all the colors kind of mixing in. For this particular painting, I think it works. If I was being really picky, then I would clean off my brush and start over, if I wanted each color to be really singular and unique and fresh. So I'm gonna smooth over some of what I've done with a little bit of water. Not a lot, just a little. This is like the blending technique that I showed you. This is helping to blend the colors together. You can see the edges are kind of getting smoother. They're not so rough. I'm forcing them to marry. It's easier to add texture, but it's really hard to take away texture, and acrylic dries really fast. If you're not liking something that you see and you want to smooth it out, get to it while it's wet. I think now I am set to try and tackle the red. There's a little swoop here with the nectarine, and I think the flat angle brush is gonna help me get to that, so I'm gonna use this brush. I also need to figure out which reds I want to use when it looks like there's kind of a two-tone. And I'm gonna use kind of a lot of medium now, because I want it to be a little bit more transparent. So I'm gonna go ahead and scoop some of that medium and I'm gonna add some pouring medium, just because I like it. I'm gonna go with the crimson, not the cad. I just wanna see what this looks like. Okay, so that's a little too, so add a little bit of cadmium. Ooh look, there we go. I'm gonna leave this really transparent so I can see it. And if I don't like it, it'll be easy to paint over it. Angle brush is perfect to get that swoop. Okay, I got the swoop. The nectarine is doing this thing where the color kind of fans out. And this angle brush is actually really great for that, too. And then I'm gonna build the color up there. This is less transparent. You can see the colors landing and it's getting a little darker. And I'm gonna move around, try and get to that edge. Pretty much the whole side of that nectarine is this color. I need to reload the tip of the brush, because the tip ran out of paint. There's a little horizontal mark area on the nectarine. So that's what I'm trying to do now. Let's get that in there. So while I'm here, I'm gonna grab this teeny tiny round brush, and I'm gonna dip it in some water. And I'm gonna try and smooth this edge out a little bit. So you can see the tooth of the canvas, and I just wanna cover that up a little bit. I've got this nice, smoother edge of the nectarine. You do, when you're painting, you want to think about the direction of your brush strokes. I don't want this to look like I outlined it. So you'll see that I'm kind of mimicking the shape of the nectarine. I'm trying to pull the paint in the same direction. Because I'm cool with texture, but I don't want it to necessarily look totally weird. And while I'm here I'm gonna start doing the same on this side because I have the little brush. I'm gonna go for the water to get that edge nice and smooth. So I'm looking at the nectarine to see if there's any red up top, and there's a little bit. But it's more like the polka dots again. And I'm gonna go back in, kind of just making some polka dots, because I don't see any real solid red there. So now I need to make a darker red, an even darker red. So I'm gonna go back, go back to the crimson. Gonna add the cad. I'm gonna try a teeny bit of Theo

violet. 'Cause it's getting a little maroon-y. And how about some burnt sienna to darken it and make it a little richer. Go back and get this area even darker. I need to get this area. So I'm getting this dark color in here. And while it's still wet, I'm gonna do a little dry brush technique and try and blend that a little bit into the lighter color, so that the transition is a little bit smoother. And now I think I'm gonna go for the stem. So I'm gonna use this little brush, so I'm gonna clean it off. I don't want anything on there. And I'm gonna start with a little bit of yellow ochre. Just gonna try and figure out where it lives. And then I'm gonna use a little bit of the burnt sienna and do like a couple of dots to try and start to get the shape of the stem. I'm gonna end with burnt umber. Add a little medium to the burnt umber, so that it flows a little bit nicer. Here we go, here's the center here, hopefully. And let's get a little bit to the side. And then it does this little thing in there. So I think we're pretty close to done with our little sketch painting of a nectarine. I am looking at this yellow, and it's kind of the original yellow that we put down, and it's really bright. So I wanna bring that back up on the painting. I'm gonna go into my cad yellow again. And I'm gonna use it pretty straight, because it's kind of the end, last touches here. I'm just gonna start to pull it into these areas. And you'll see I just like how putting it back on, it no longer looks like an under painting. It's sort of becoming part of the painting. And I can dry brush with the side of my brush into the other painting area to kind of make it blend in. Okay, voila, we have made a cute little sketchy painting of a nectarine. You can use whatever you want. This is a really great way to start out figuring out how paint works. To mix colors, not too many colors. We didn't use an entire palette, although you'll notice that I did use some browns and some of the other colors that I put out there in small amounts. Hopefully now you will go and find something to paint. It should be really fun. Just grab something that holds your interest and throw some color around. Use your brushes, try out different medias, and have fun making paintings.

Chapter 2 - Value, Light and Shadow

Overview

(peppy music) - Hi, I'm Lisa Solomon. I'm an artist, I'm a professor, I'm an author, I'm an illustrator. When I teach beginning painting, I do not allow my students to use color for the first four paintings. I make them paint in black and white. It's a really good way to introduce them to painting. It's particularly a good way to learn how to use acrylics if you haven't used them before. We're gonna do a lot of value and light and shadow in this class, because it's a really fundamental aspect of painting. You need to be able to get from a dark value to a light value and understand how that works to make a really good painting. We're gonna be mixing grays. We'll be working from a still life. And finally, we'll be painting from a photograph.

Materials

- These are the materials that you'll need for this class. You're gonna need a pallet, I'm using a plastic pallet with lots of little cubbies and bins. We've got a couple pencils, because we're gonna be sketching a still life. I've also got a gummy eraser in case I want to erase a horrible line. And we're gonna be sketching a photograph. So this is the photograph that we're gonna be using for this class, it's available in the PDF, but you can use any black and white photograph, it doesn't have to be this one. I've got mixing whites, I've got titanium whites, I've got unbleached titanium, this is optional, you don't necessarily need to use this, but I wanna show you the difference between these whites because they function really differently. We've got ivy black, and mars black, and slow dry blending gel medium, this is gonna slow down the paint drying and also help me to blend when I get there.

We've got a variety of acrylic paintbrushes. We've got a variety of pallet knives. We've got some water, and we've got brush cleaner for the very end, we've got a rag and some paper towels. We're gonna be doing the bulk of the painting today on Bristol paper, and I'm gonna show you how to gesso it, so we've got some gesso here, we've got white gesso, there's also this really cool stuff, clear gesso that you can use, that functions a little bit differently. I've got the barrier cream to protect my hands so they don't get icky toxins in my skin. We've got matte medium, pouring medium, and flowy which we need to put into my water. You're also gonna need a lamp and some props to set up a still life. You can use any objects that you have lying around, it'll probably make it a little bit easier if they're black and white and gray. I would say anything from three to 10 if you wanna make a really big still life, will be all that you need. Okay, let's get started.

Mixing greys

- Let's talk about value. So, value is what you see from light to dark. Today we're gonna be working from white to black. Value is something that's gonna help you create depth in your paintings. It's going to do stuff like make things look realistic. For example, see this container on the table? It's on the table. It's casting a shadow. So, if I'm making a painting and I want it to look realistic, I wanna paint that shadow. And the shadow might even have several tones in it. Some shadows are darker around the outside edges. Some things, when they're sitting on a table, have a darker hue right at the lip of where they're sitting. When you represent those things in paintings, it gives your painting more realistic feel, it adds depth, it adds layer, and it allows viewers to understand what it is that they're looking at. You can not put a shadow in and then you're gonna have a lovely little container just floating in space. So, it's a choice. But, it's something that you should learn about and so, let's figure it out. So, before we get started painting, I'm gonna put some barrier cream on my hands really quick to protect them from the paint. And it didn't put any Flow Aid in my water, so I'm gonna put a couple drops in there. Good. I've got my palette set up. I've got the blending, slow dry medium, matte medium, and pouring medium in these guys and I left these guys in the order down here, so I don't get confused. So, I've got Titanium white on this side. I've got mixing white on this side. This is the unbleached Titanium. It's a little bit yellow. You'll see it has a different look to it. So, if you use this, it's going to end up looking slightly different than if you use white. I've got both Ivy Black and Mars Black. They're slightly different in consistency and, if you use them, you'll see how that works. We're gonna use Mars Black and Titanium white and create a little grayscale. So, I've set one up here, so you can see what it looks like. This is a ten-step grayscale, from white to Mars Black. We're gonna do something similar. I would recommend to do all of these colors in the same way. If you have all of them, do grayscales in all of them, because it'll teach you how the paints work and it'll help you when you're actually making a painting. So, just to get started, I'm gonna grab a brush. Dip it in a little water. I'm going to show you the difference, hopefully, it'll show up on this brown paper, between mixing white and Titanium white. Mixing white is more transparent. It has a lot less coverage, so when you're mixing colors eventually, it will make less of a pastel color. Titanium white is a lot thicker and is gonna give you more coverage. Oh, yay. You can see the difference on this brown paper perfectly. You can see through the white here, the mixing white. And you can't really see through the Titanium white. I'm also gonna show you the unbleached Titanium and you'll see that this is much creamier, much more yellow, but it does give you good coverage, so it's not as transparent as the mixing white. Unbleached Titanium white you'll see is tanner. It's yellow. So, if you were using a warm light with your still life or with anything else, it would get you to, like, a yellower white faster, but it's totally a personal preference. I mean, it kind of gives, it could give you

this antique, nice sepia tone that you can't maybe accomplish with the regular white, so you might wanna use it for that too, but it's up to you. You get to decide what kind of white you wanna use. I'm gonna show you now the differences between the two blacks, before we do our little value scale. This is the Ivy Black and, again, just like the mixing white, you'll see that it's much more transparent and will give you less coverage. This is the Mars Black. It's a lot denser and thicker and richer. Voila! I'm gonna stick all these brushes in the water, so they don't dry out. So, let's try and make some different shades of gray. I'm gonna use a palette knife to help me mix my paints. I'm gonna use the Titanium white and I'm gonna make a little puddle over here. And I actually might just make a series of puddles. It might make my life easier. So, the thing to know about mixing gray is it's super easy to get dark really fast. Not so easy to make it lighter. So, I'm gonna start with this and I'm gonna try to make a really, really, really, really, really light, light, light gray. So I'm just gonna take the tiniest bit of black. Teeny tiny, very small amount. And mix it into my white. It's hard to see on the palette, but this does actually have a tone to it, so I'm gonna put it on the paper and let you see. Okay, so it's a super light gray. That's what we want. We want to have at least 10 steps. We wanna get to 10 steps. So, I'm gonna take a little bit more than I did last time. Some people like to think about this in percentages, so if that was like 5%, maybe I'm gonna try for 10%. And I'm feeling like this is a little bit darker than I want, so I'm gonna scrape a little bit more white and add it to it. Okay and I will demo that. Now, I'm gonna try to get about 20% black approximately. Let's see what we got. That looks good. It's darker than the last one. Not so dark that I'm gonna get to black really quick. Okay, let's go for the next level. You don't have to mix these separately. You can just continually add a little black and do this with one pile of white. I'm doing it for you so that you can see the gradation between the steps. Continue doing this until you get to all 10 shades. So, I've made it to nine different shades of gray and I'm just gonna add the black here, so that you can see the full spectrum. Ta-da! So, you've gone to the trouble of making all these grays and it's acrylic paint, so it might dry fast, so here's a couple things you can do to try and prevent your paint from drying out. You can have a spray bottle on hand and you can spray each of these with a little bit of water. That's gonna keep them from drying out. The pooled paint is gonna last longer than the paint that is spread apart, so you can also take your palette knife and add a little dollop of the slow-dry blending medium to each of these. So, I'm gonna try and re-puddle the paint so that it's close together and it won't dry out. In between the different grays, I'm gonna keep my palette knife clean, so that each gray is the color that I want. I'm gonna, ooh, I didn't grab a little bit of that. I'm gonna add a little bit of the blending medium, so that it stays wet. And I'm gonna try and re-form it into as much of a puddle as I can. So, as you're painting, you're gonna run out of some of the shades that you made. That's fine. You're just gonna have to remix them. This is why it's really nice if you make a scale and you keep it off to the side, because then you can match to the scale and it'll be great. So, remix your shade of gray and do a little dab test. Put it right next to the shade that you're trying to match and then you'll know that if you're close or far away. Keep in mind that when you're doing this, it's gonna dry a little bit darker, so when you put it down, just make sure that it's a tad bit lighter, so that it'll dry to match.

Working from a still life on paper

- Before we set up our still life, we're gonna set up our paper. So, for this project I'm gesso my paper, you can definitely paint on un-gessoed paper, it doesn't matter, but what will happen is the paper will soak up the paint, it'll kinda go (slurping) and it'll take a little bit more paint. What gesso does is it seals the surface and it makes it really nice and easy to work on. I have a little card here

that shows you the difference. Over here I've got white gesso, which is in this bottle. And over here I've got clear gesso, which is in this bottle. I'm using white paper, so it doesn't make any sense to use clear gesso, but if you were using a colored paper or a colored surface you would definitely wanna use the clear gesso. It ends up with the same effect. I've got three sort of stripes here. I did a really messy job with the gesso, so you can see how it comes through the painting and you can also see this is two layers of paint. So, you can see what happens. The paint gets darker faster when you got gesso on there. Without the gesso it would take more than two layers to get to this saturation of paint. And up here at the top I've got a little area with no gesso on it, so you can kinda see the difference when an area has gesso and when an area doesn't have gesso. Okay, so I'm gonna pour a little bit of gesso into the palette. This is when you wanna use a bigger brush. So, I'm gonna use this cheap two inch brush. Gonna dip it in a little bit of water, not a lot, you don't wanna water the gesso down too much. Gonna get into the gesso, hold the paper, and just smoothly apply it across the surface. I'm gonna be really mindful of the edges. Ideally you would just kind of paint over every side, but I don't wanna get my table dirty because I'm gonna be painting on it in just a second. You want even coats. You wanna try and get rid of any bubbles, you don't want the bubbles 'cause they will dry like that and when you're working with a brush like this be careful because you might lose some bristles and you might have to pick them out. Unless you want the bristles in there. Added texture. On a canvas surface you definitely want more than one coat of gesso. On paper you can probably get away with one or two. If you wanna really smooth surface, you're gonna sand the gesso in between coats and then you'll get a really nice, silky smooth surface that you can paint on. So, I'm gonna take my brush and put it in the water, so I don't ruin my brush. We're gonna set this aside and let it dry. Again, you could put a second coat on it, but for now we're just gonna put this over here, let it dry, and we're gonna start to set up our still life. What I've got here is an arrangement of different objects. I looked for things that were super white and something that was really black. I'm trying to stay in a black and white and neutral tone, so that'll be easier for me to translate it into a painting. I would take some time and start to arrange my objects. You wanna think about having a light source of some sort. You really ideally wanna do this in a dimly lit room so that you'll get some really nice long cast shadows. What we're talking about is value. You wanna practice painting value and you need a light source in order to make value. You wanna be sure that your light source is gonna be consistent, you don't wanna do this in the sunlit room because if this painting's gonna take you a couple days or if you wanna do it again, the sunlight's gonna change and your shadows are gonna change and you're gonna get really frustrated. So, make sure you can do this in some kind of spot where you can recreate the lighting and make sure that it's really consistent. You'll wanna move it around, figure out what's creating the best shadows for the objects that you have, and then you'll be all set and ready to go. Now that I've got my light in a good place, I have some really good shadows going on, I'm gonna start thinking about how I wanna compositionally arrange the objects. I wanna make something that going to hold my interest. A lot of times students say to me, "Still life's are boring." And I say to them, "No, they're only as boring as you make them." I think for today I wanna try and find some cool textures that go together. You can think about arranging things by height, so we can have tall guys to short guys, little guys in the front, little feather interacting like that. So, you could arrange things so that they're really perfectly balanced, two tall things on each side, short things in the middle. You could think about stacking things, so put the cup inside of that. You could think about making little families, if you guys are familiar with a painter named Morandi, he's really well known for putting all these little families of objects together. So, you could think that way. I think for today I wanna keep things kinda simple. I

wanna couple contrasts in texture, I'm really liking this guy. I really like this feather, it's perfect, it's got black, it's got white. I like the juxtaposition of its texture with the trophy texture. I'm gonna stay away from this guy, he's a little bit complicated. I really love the air plants, but I've already got a feather, so I think I'm good with one nature thing, you know. Super simple, but it's kinda nice. I think I'm gonna go with this, so I'm gonna get my paper that the gesso has dried on. I think in terms of composition I'm going to think about the shadow that I really wanna include, which is the shadow of the feather because I really like it as a shape and I like what's going on with it. So, I'm looking at my paper and I'm thinking about where I wanna place it and I don't want it all the way toward the edge, so I think I'm gonna place it right around here. Okay, so that gives me an idea and I'm gonna have the feather just kinda go off the page and I'm totally fine with that, I like compositions that go off pages, they tend to be more dynamic and more interesting anyways. So, I'm just gonna roughly give myself the shape of the feather and where it's going, so that I know when I get to the paint what I wanna do. So, I'm not gonna treat this as a really tight painting, I'm not gonna try and make it photorealistic, I really wanna go for something sketchy and fun. I'm just interested in how the values are bumping off one another and what's gonna happen when I push a bunch of gray around. So, it's not gonna be super tight. And now that I'm looking at this and the size of the paper, I don't really have a lot of room, so I'm just gonna take these guys away, I don't need 'em. We're good. And I'm going to finish laying down a very rough sketch. Gonna run out of room at the top, too. Okay, so I think because I started sketching with the feather I'm gonna go ahead and start with the shadows 'cause I'm really interested in them. I'm looking over at the grays that we made for the value scale and I'm trying to figure out where I wanna go with them. I'm looking for the darkest darks. And the top of the feather is the blackest black. We've a dark over here. The shadow is kind of a medium gray, I think I'm gonna start with that. So, going from white to dark is definitely non-traditional. A lot of times people like to save white for last to keep it really clean. But I say be a rule breaker, do what feels good for you. If you wanna paint white first by all means go for it. Think I'm gonna use this medium gray for my shadow. Too dark, it's not too light, I'm gonna start with the shadow. And I'm just gonna do really a super fast, sketchy, gestural painting. It is magical painting. Okay, and I didn't draw the shadow in, but I'm gonna go ahead and kinda sketch it in really quick. I feel like the side of this urn is a little bit lighter and I'm gonna go to a lighter shade. And I'm just gonna start filling this area in. There a little bit at the top here. And while this is still wet, I'm going to try and bring in a little bit of the dark. So, I'm not gonna wipe my brush because this is kind of sketchy. I am working while the paint is still wet, so that I can blend the color and I can kinda see if it's mimicking the urn and what I see going on there. And now I'm kind of laying down a base coat because I'm gonna get a little bit darker. It's got a little rough texture, so I'm gonna go back even while it's still wet and just put some lighter stuff in there, so that I can kind of brush it out. There we go. And gonna go up here. Then I'm going to work on the bottom because it's kind of also a medium. And I've kind of shortened the perspective of this urn, but I'm not gonna worry about it. Just trying to get some texture that sort of feels like what the metal feels like, or kind of like what's going on, keeping it gestural and loose and not super accurate, not here for accuracy at the moment. I'm gonna switch and get a little teeny round brush. I'm gonna try and get a little bit of the groove that's going on in the base of the urn. I'm gonna use a darker gray for that, just gonna kinda hint to it. I think there's three of them, but I'm gonna two of 'em in. Don't care, just kinda wanna get the idea of them. Sketchy, sketchy. And while I'm here, again, 'cause I'm gonna be a rule breaker, I'm just gonna go ahead and add a little bit of these white highlights with my dirty brush. Just looking for where the light is reflecting. So, you notice the light is hitting in the same spot on the urn, so I'm just kind of,

I've only got two tiers, the real urn has three tiers, but I'm putting the light in the same area. I'm trying to make it curve in the direction, so it kind of looks like those grooves. Okay, so I have this teeny brush and I really like these sort of dotty things that are going on and I'll dot them in. And, again, I might break some rules. I'm not gonna try and get the dent in, seems too complicated. I'm working back and forth with lights and darks, trying to visualize what I see and get it on paper and I'm working really intuitively. That's why I'm not only sticking with one color, I'm going back and forth, going in the dark gray, going in the white, I'm using my brush to move it around. I just wanna get it to a point where I can then look at it and put in a few fine details. So, I'm gonna get there. I'm working with the lights and darks, I'm mixing them around, I'm pushing them together, I'm changing my mind about the direction of brushstrokes, I'm just trying to kind of fill in some areas. It's kind of fun to work wet on wet because you can move the paint around and kinda change how it's working. The great thing about acrylics is that they dry really quick so if you don't like what you're seeing, wait a few minutes and you can paint over it. No problem. Gotten into a point, but I'm pretty happy with it. I'm looking over a few details. So I'm gonna use a round brush to get this little lip in here, I didn't quite get it in my painting. Okay, so where, right about here. Nice one swoop and the inside is a little bit darker than what I have, so I'm gonna make the inside of mine a little bit darker. I don't want it as dark as I got the handle, that's kind of the darkest spot, so I'm gonna try and make it a teeny bit lighter. So it kinda coordinates with this area and it's getting cut off, but that's fine. So, I'm just gonna get it to the edge. Okay, pretty happy with it, sketchy, painterly, whoo-hoo. Gonna move onto the feather. So, I'm gonna use a teeny round brush because I wanna get to the little single lines of the feather and I don't wanna have to paint them out, so I wanna be really careful with what I'm doing. And I want the paint to be really flowy and nice and easy for me to use so I can do it in a single stroke. So, I'm gonna make sure and use a lot of medium. I'm gonna use pouring medium and I'm gonna use some matte medium, I'm gonna mix 'em together before I run my brush through the black. I'm just going to start with the stem because it's nice and I wanna figure out where I want the black to stop, just right about there. That little bit of water, I really want this to be flowy and smooth and easy. I'm not even really gonna look at the feather. I'm gonna look at and get a general idea of shape and then I'm just gonna paint some lines in because it's not supposed to be perfect, it's a painting. I want it to look like a painting. But I just wanna have a general idea. So, looking and I'm just gonna go for it. I'm gonna switch to a flat brush and I'm gonna use it kinda dry so that I can fill in some of the areas here that I want a little bit denser than what I've got going on and I don't want it to be as flowy, I want it to be a little stiffer 'cause it's gonna have a little more texture. I am drying it off and I'm gonna dab in the paint. I'm just gonna kind of test the consistency, see how it's feeling, I don't want too much paint. I just want a little bit. I'm just gonna fill in some of these with like some bigger marks 'cause I'm noticing that the feathers kind of change in density and I'm just trying to mimic some of the curvature. And then I wanna get to the spine of the feather, which this is a great way to use texture. I'm just gonna make a thicker line so that it actually physically lives taller than the rest of the paint, which is what it does in real life. I'm gonna keep using this little round brush and fill in and get to the rest of this feather and then I'll see you on the other side when I'm all done with that. So, I'm working in this and I'm realizing that the feather is white on white because I didn't put anything down in the background, so I'm gonna use my unbleached titanium, the kind of creamy white in order to make a little bit of a differentiation between the pieces of the feather and along the sort of stem of the feather, so that it pops out a little bit more. I'm gonna call it a day with this, it's a pretty nice basic sketch, no means perfect. But I feel like there's a really good range of values. I have some black blacks, I have some white whites, I've got some nice midtones, feel like I captured

some of the essence of the objects, so I'm gonna stop for now. What I do wanna do for you is kinda go over the different areas in the painting and show you the brushes that I used 'cause I know that you are gonna be painting different objects and you're going to be doing this very differently than the way that I just demoed it. So, I wanna show you how I did this 'cause maybe it will help translate when you try and do your own. So, here are the different brushes that I used and what they do. For this area and the shadow down here, I started out with the filbert, it made a really nice wash. When I wanted to smooth it out, for the big shadow I actually used the big flat brush. And you can also use a smaller flat brush. I used a combination of the filbert and the flats to sort of fill in the vase. Going back and forth, just mixing grays while I was working at it. I used the teeny little round brush to get the fine lines and to go back and add the highlights at the very end. I used the teeny little round brush to also get started on the feather to make sure that I had sort of each line differentiated, and then I went back in with a little flat brush and filled in some of the bigger spaces, making sure not to go over these guys so that you could still see the delineation in all of those. Okay, that's it. We've just completed making a still life. You should do lots of these. Practice, make different still lifes, change the lighting around, change the shadows, have one with really long shadows, have one with really short shadows. Also, change the way you're looking at the objects, you could put them up high, you can go down low, there all different things you could do. All of this is gonna help you understand how the paint works understand how blacks and whites work and how to get to all these different grays. Really, the best and quickest way to learn to paint is to paint and to paint a lot. So, just go do it. Go have fun, make lots of still lifes.

Painting on canvas, working from a photo

- We are ready to do a painting from a photograph. I've printed out the photo that we're gonna use. It will be included in your pdf. I've also done sort of a quick sketch and I've sort of marked where I think different lights and darks are in the photo just to kind of preplan and get an idea of what I'm gonna do. I also have made a clean sketch so I'm ready to start to work. You should sketch the photo out for yourself. If you want to go ahead and start labeling things just as practice, go right ahead. If not, then you could just sketch it out. If you're uncomfortable sketching, just drawing from sight, feel free to trace the photograph, that's totally fine. It'll make your life a lot easier, you'll get the proportions right, everything will be ready to go, and you'll have something to work with. Okay, so I have everything around me, so I can see and reach everything, I'm gonna start with my biggest flat brush. For this painting, I want to work kind of traditionally. I don't want to have this big white sheet of paper staring at me, so I'm gonna lay a ground pretty much over the whole thing. I'm gonna be mindful of the edges and make sure that I can still see my pencil marks but this is kind of layer number one. I'm just gonna start with this layer, and then I'm gonna work from the back of the painting, so what's the furthest away to the front of the painting, what's closest, and from dark to light. So I'm gonna start with the darks and I'm gonna leave the white for the very end, it's gonna be the very last thing that I put on the painting. I'm gonna pick a medium tone to lay my ground. I think this is kind of a nice medium. So you'll see I've already set up a bunch of grays just like we did when we were doing the value scale. And I'm gonna mix some medium in it so it's nice and flowy. And I have flowy in my water. And I'm just gonna start really fast. I just want some color down here so that I'm not just staring at white. And I'm gonna be mindful of the chair, I don't want to lose the marking. My drawing. And I'm okay if it changes tones and values, it's fine. I'm gonna water this down a little bit so I can still see the pencil through it. So this paper is not gessoed, and I can definitely feel a difference between the paper that has been gessoed and the paper that has not. It's

soaking up the paint in a slightly different way. But I like it, I like the texture of the paper so I'm just gonna go with it. Okay, this is pretty much mostly gonna get covered up anyways, so I'm gonna try and do this fast. I am just trying to make sure that I get a pretty even coat, because there are some places that I might want to leave some of this peeking through as texture, and so I don't want too much brushstroke at this point. I'm gonna actually make the marks on the floor in a direction of the floor that will help me remember where the pencil lines are. I may leave that shadow, because it's gonna get really dark and I want to know where it is. And this area is super dark too, so I'm gonna leave that for later, I'm not gonna fill that in right now. So at this point I'm pretty happy with the ground. The ground is gonna help me not just have nothing to react to, I really like how paint works when it's layered upon itself, it gets a nice thicker texture, it's a little bit more dense. Especially cause you'll notice when I first try to put the paint down on the paper some spots don't get even coverage so this is gonna help me get even coverage over the entire surface. I'm not gonna worry about the areas that I left blank, I'll put enough paint on them but it's really nice to have a little bit of paint to react to instead of absolutely nothing. So, I painted over my line. Stupid me. I'm gonna go back and draw it in just so I have it because I want it, I want that corner. I want this corner. So, it starts about here... And... Doesn't have to be big, it's meeting up with the curtains and it's going this way. Okay, now I got my ceiling so I know what I'm doing. Okay, so since we've working from darkest place I'm gonna work from here and here in this corner, and I'm gonna get down to here which is super, super, super black. I'm gonna use this flat brush because I want to fill in space, not doing anything fancy, not doing fine lines. But I do want really dark, so I'm gonna go to the darkest gray that I made and I do want this to be pretty flowy so I'm gonna add some matte medium and a little bit of pouring medium to make sure that it will move around the way that I want. Okay, now this photo has a bunch of texture and stuff going on on the floors and the walls and I'm not gonna deal with that, I'm just gonna look at it like it's almost a flat surface. Okay, I'm not gonna deal with that curtain yet, I'm just getting down. To here, or the window panes. I am I'm gonna get up here cause this is pretty similar. I might just dip into the slightly lighter gray to get to the ceiling. You will see brushstrokes when they dry, so that's why I'm trying to be conscious about what direction they go in. I'm trying to make them go in the same direction so it helps to emphasize the sense of space. And then to the right of the window is pretty much the same, it's really nice and dark so I'm gonna go back into my dark gray and get this filled in. And I'm gonna look here and see how far I go down, it goes all the way down to the bottom. I can see in the photo that there's a little bit lighter tinge in the ceiling where it meets the wall. So I'm gonna go back in I think while it's wet, and lighten that up a little bit. So, I'm gonna rinse this off, dry it... And I'm gonna pick this lighter color and I'm gonna see if it's wet enough for me to blend it in. Nope, add a little more medium. There we go. I'm gonna just try and round out, finish out this ceiling area so I don't really have to touch it anymore and I notice in the photo that it gets a little bit lighter, right at the edge. So I just did a quick rinse, and I'm getting one of my lighter values and I'm gonna try and blend this in too. And I'm gonna grab another brush and do a little dry brush to smooth this out. So there we can see a subtle shift from a lighter gray to a darker gray. And in order to really get those edges smooth I'm gonna grab a little bit more matte medium and go over those. Okay, I'm calling the ceiling done. So, I wanna be pretty careful in here cause the legs of the desk are light and they sort of blend into this nothingness blackness and they meet up with the shadow that goes onto the floor, so I want to make sure that I know where the leg is gonna end up so I'm gonna use, and this is... The flat brush is really good for this. I'm gonna use the flat brush to push up against the end of that line. I'm gonna use the smaller flat brush to get into here. And I'm checking to look and see if the dark continues to the chair, and it

does. So I'm gonna go right around the chair with this nice little flat brush. I'm going all the way to the floor. I know the shadow blends in with the floor but I'm gonna do that later. Just gonna get to the floor right now. And then there's these little drawers that live in the desk, so I'm gonna get those also with this little guy cause I think it's the perfect size for that drawer. It is, yay. So I don't how many drawers there are in real life, but I think I'm gonna do three, maybe three. I didn't even use the smaller one, let's use the teeny round brush. So I can really get in there. Yay. Okay. So it looks also like there's a little bit of dark on the other side of this wall, there's kind of a light line where the wall meets and then it gets a little bit darker on this side so I'm gonna work on doing that, and I'm gonna use the round brush so that I can leave the light space and I watered down my paint a little bit so that it flows really nicely. And this goes all the way down to the chair so I'm just gonna take it down. And it kind of stops... Right around there. I'm gonna grab a dry brush and brush that out so that the transition is a little bit smoother. And that's kind of how it looks in the photograph. So the dry brush is giving me kind of that nice texture that's similar to what I see. So you'll notice as I'm painting I'm switching between brushes. I'm using whatever brush I think is right so teeny tiny brushes to get to the details, bigger brushes to fill in spaces, and you'll see that I actually hold them in both my hands, so I kind of end up collecting brushes that I'm using in my left hand, and then I switch them over to my right hand. I know that since I'm working pretty fast the paint isn't gonna dry out on the brush. If I wasn't gonna use it pretty quickly I would put it back in the water so that the paint wouldn't dry while I'm working. But I really like having them in both hands so I can go back and forth and just kind of make decisions on the fly. You may or may not want to work this way, you may want to have your brushes all laid out, you may want to keep them in a jar, it's really what is comfortable for you. So I have all these brushes, they're all loaded with the dark paint. I'm gonna keep looking for the dark areas, I'm gonna outline the shadow that I see here and fill it in, I'm gonna get to the little dark area on the chair and on the side of the chair, and I'm gonna get to this, so I'm gonna start in the back and work my way to the front, but I want to find everything that's this sort of same similar tone of gray and then I'm gonna move on to the next tone. I'm working in an area where I'm trying to understand how the darkest dark is meeting up with a lighter gray and so I'm kinda scumbling the brush on top of the ground that I already laid over, that's why I also wanted a ground, is because then I have something to react to, it's not just white. So I'm kind of moving the brush and trying to figure out exactly how these shadows are working and eventually I'm gonna have a slightly darker tone than what I already have here meet up with that tone, and I might at that point try and work wet on wet to make them mush together but right now I'm just kind of scumbling around trying to get the texture and figure out how it works. So, here's the super dark tone that I'm working with and then here's the shadow, like it's got a ghost and it's the same tone, it's just kind of thinned out. So I'm taking the matte medium and I'm using the exact same shade of gray and I'm just kind of pulling it out next to the darkness to try and mimic what's going on with the shadows. I'm gonna move on to the next tone, so I'm gonna rinse out all these brushes so they don't have any of the dark tone on. I'm looking to see kind of where the next tone is and it feels like it's the floor over here and the chair. And... This wall here and maybe the windowsill, they're all kind of related. The top of the curtain here is a little bit dark, but I want to do the curtain all in one fell swoop. So, I might put this next medium light tone down and then go back and do the dark and do the edges on it. Okay, medium tone, so I was using that one. So I think I'm gonna switch to this one, this one feels still a little close to that, I'm gonna switch to this tone to get to the next areas. And cause the paint's been sitting out for a little bit, I just want to test and make sure that it's moving at a consistency that I like. I'm just adding a little pouring medium, a little matte medium... Okay, so... If I'm starting from the back, I'm gonna

start kinda from the top of this. Yeah, that's good. And this wall kind of shifts, it's dark and then it gets really light, so I'm just gonna hit the top part of this. And I'm gonna have it meet up with that dark area that we just painted. And now I'm kind of scumbling it along behind the chair. And the wall is actually right about there maybe. Close to that. Okay. I'm gonna fill in the rest of this chair. And I'm gonna get the legs. And I think I'm gonna switch to a smaller brush. So I'm gonna find all the areas that have this tone and I'm gonna fill them all in and then I'll get to the lighter tone after that. So let's get to finding everything that's this shade of gray. And I'm painting, and I'm looking at the photo and I realize that I didn't paint the dark tone all the way to the leg which is what I wanted, so I'm just gonna quickly do that. I'm gonna go back cause I already have this tone and I have a lot if it made, so I don't have to re-mix it, and I'm just gonna go back in and get it all the way to the leg. So, you'll notice that sometimes you may think that you're done with the tone and then you have to go back, and that's the beauty of having all of your stuff pre-mixed, is that you can just get back to it really quickly. And correct anything that you think may be a mistake. I've been working on this for an hour, and I've gotten to all the areas that I feel are sort of similar in tone, I'm about to skip to the next tone. You didn't get to see everything that's been going on, so I filled in all the window panes area, I worked on the floor a little bit, got to most of the chair, it's gonna look really different than when we started. An hour is kind of nothing, so you could spend as long as you want on this, I could probably spend, I don't know, a good couple days on this to get it to where I want, but we're just working, we're working through it, we're figuring out different lights and darks and tones and so let's jump to the next tone. So this is where I filled in with all the medium tone, so I started with the dark tone and then I kind of moved in to this medium tone and I got to the chair and I got to the floor and I got to all the window panes. So I'm now gonna move in to more of a lighter gray and I'm gonna hit the rest of the chair and the arms of the chair and these particular panes that have foliage in it, I'm not actually gonna try and mimic the foliage because that just seems a little crazy, but I'm gonna put a different tone in there because you'll notice that these windows are so bright and white and these ones are not, so I want to make sure we take care of that in the painting. So, let's pick kind of a light... Oh, I want a smaller brush. A lighter tone and the paint's been out here for a while so I might spray a little bit to make sure that it stays wet. And I'm gonna mix it with some medium. Okay. So it's basically this window... And I'm okay with it kind of mixing in with the panes... I don't mind, I kind of like the fact that it looks paint-worthy and messy and brushy. This one and this one... These two are white. The bottoms of these guys are white. I'm gonna go ahead and hit them with white afterwards, I'm gonna fill them in. And if you wanted to make it look a little bit more like what we see in the photo, I could take a really small brush and I could kinda mix a bunch of others grays, not really kind of randomly, and just kind of go in here and do like a little bit of dabby dab. Stuff. So it looks a little bit more like that, and with a clean brush I'm just gonna kind of tone that down so it doesn't look so much like polka dots. I see polka dots out my window! Great. Now, I'm gonna go back to the tone that I was working with and fill in the rest of the chair. So you can get super detail oriented and try to kind of re-mix the colors in place, you can work wet to wet to get them to blend together really nicely. I'm just gonna leave them, because I kind of like how it's looking, it's looking kind of more like a drawing. I'm gonna use a teeny brush to get into those guys. Okay, here we go. We need to get a floor in here. And again, I'm kinda scumbling around to have it interact with the paint that's already on there, so it looks more like a shadow, less like brushstrokes. Get in here. And this kind of actually goes out to the floor. And I need to hit the top of the desk. It's pretty white, but it's also interacting with the windowsill so I want to get that. And then I'll hit it with white at the very end. So I'm getting to the end of the floor and I'm just gonna start using my finger. I have Artguard

on my hand so I'm not actually letting the paint touch my skin, and I'm just using my finger to move the paint around, it kind of gives it a little bit of a different texture than when you just use a brush, and I kind of like the coverage that I get. You can use a cloth or a towel, I'm just kind of trying to make the edges of the light area and the darks blend together a little bit more seamlessly. Okay, so I'm gonna do just the final round of highlights and any little last little details with the teeny little round brush, and I'm just gonna fill it in and try to bang the rest of it out. So, I think you'll be able to see the difference between when the white hits the white paper and when it reacts to something that's underneath. I always tell students that paintings have history. And yeah, you could paint something over and change it, but there's always some sort of reaction to what you left underneath. Which is why I was super careful in trying to leave these areas really white because I want them to be really bright white like they are in the photograph. So, hopefully you can see a difference between when I paint white on the white that I left, that's pure white on the paper, and when I paint on white that has a history that has a little bit of gray. There's just a difference, you can see the tonal difference in the white, it's super bright white and clean which is why I drew it out and why I planned ahead and didn't put any ground on these white areas, I wanted them to remain really bright white like they are in the photo. In this photo the contrast in those windows is so high, it's so white and bright where that light is coming in. Before I finish, I actually want to look at this from a different distance. I've been staring at it from one distance, right here. So I want to hold it up and kind of look at it and try... You see a whole bunch of different stuff when you hold it away from you. In fact, you might want to pin it to a wall, you might want to like actually walk out of the room and come back in and take a look at it. Some people like to do things like they play music and every five songs they back away from their painting and they take a look, that's a really good thing to do. You just need to change your point of view every once in a while so that you can see things clearly. So before I do any final details, I'm just gonna take one final glance at the photo, look at what I've got going on here, I'm pretty happy with stuff. I'm gonna add a few little details to the curtain in white, and maybe a few little outlines in dark just cause I see a couple places that I didn't get to, and then I think I'm gonna call it a day. So, there's a little light line detail in here that I want to grab. It's a wiggly wine because it's following the pattern of... The fabric, so I'm gonna turn it upside down so I can see a little bit better. Okay. I'm gonna stop here because I could do this forever. I could just keep going and find things that I want to change, that I want to alter, so I'm gonna stop and I'm gonna say it's done. What we went over is... Figuring out how to make a painting from a photograph, drawing it, translating it, tracing it. Working from dark to light and from pretty much back to front there was a little bit of back and forth on that but that's totally natural and you're gonna have to do that when you paint. You could think that you're gonna go step by step by step but part of it is really intuition and figuring out oh no, I forgot something and going back and fixing it as you see fit. We talked about blending, you saw me use my finger, my hands are now... Look, I'm really a painter I have paint all over my hands. And we did a couple different kinds of scumbling. We did dry brush scumbling, you saw me dip back into medium, different mediums, pouring medium and matte medium in order to make the paint flow as I needed to. And so yeah, you should go out and look for things that are going to interest you that create space. So, you could look for photographs of architecture, you could take your own photographs of architecture. You could find a corner of a room that really interests you. Try to find things that set up angles and have really strong contrast lighting in order to practice these techniques. Remember, have fun with it. Go out, find stuff, make paintings, practice!

Chapter 3 - Understanding Color

Overview

(funky ethereal music) - Hi, I'm Lisa Solomon. I'm a Bay Area artist and art professor and I love color theory, so I'm super excited to show you how to make a personal color wheel with acrylics, and we're also going to be matching some candy, so you'll be learning how to match colors and mix colors and put them together, and then we're gonna end on making a tiny little painting. (funky ethereal music)

Materials

- These are the materials that we're gonna need for class. We've already gone over a lot of these, so some of this you've already seen and you're familiar with, but I'm just gonna go over it again, just to make sure that we're ready for what we're gonna do. This is in the PDF. You'll wanna try and print this on card stock, if you can. I've printed it on Bristol paper, but something a little bit thicker than regular paper, 'cause we're gonna be getting paint on it and it's gonna get wet. So you already have your basic set, that's perfect. You can only use that, if you want. But you'll see here, I have a bunch of colors. I'm not gonna go over them all. I just went and picked out colors that I really like. And in particular, like for example, this is a brilliant yellow-green, and I can't get to this green from the colors that are in the basic set. I just know this from practice. You'll get to know that really soon when you start painting a lot. Just go out and buy some colors that you like, so you have them on hand, especially for what we're gonna be doing in class. You wanna have, if you can, you wanna have more than this basic set. But if you only have the basic set, no worries. Just go with it, you'll make it work. I have my pallet here that has all of my colors out. I've marked which is ivory black and which is mixing black. I've also got my pouring medium and my matte medium, and my slow dry blending medium, all these guys. The flow aid is already in the water and ready to go. Already got Artguard on my hands. We've got a bunch of pallet knives and some brushes. I've got two things of water. I'm gonna really try and use one for warm colors and one for cool colors. You will need some candy. So, we've got some Starbursts here. I really like the ones that are kind of off-color. This is what we're gonna try and mix to. It's gonna be really fun, and you'll see that the outside wrapper is different than the inside wrapper, and so it'll be good practice. I've also got some spray bottle water so I can keep my palette nice and wet. I've got brush cleaner and the paper towels and a rag, and I think that's it. We're ready to go. We're rea--

Creating a personal color wheel

- You've probably already done a color wheel at some point in your life. If you haven't, you definitely should do one. You should try to do a basic one with the three primaries, with a primary red, a primary blue, and a primary yellow. If you have done one of those, that's not what we're doing today. We're actually gonna do a personal color wheel. And so that will be a little bit more different and hopefully a little bit more fun. What we're doing today is making a personal color wheel. But this is actually an illustration of a primary color wheel. So you see I've got a primary red, a primary blue, and a primary yellow. The way this color wheel is set up, and you can see it through here, the yellow, the middle colors are your hues. So when you mention the name of a color like yellow or red or purple, and it's coming just straight at you, that's called a hue. What we have going on on the outside of the color wheel is a tint, which means that we've added white to the hue. When you do a color wheel, you want to just be consistent. So you can take 50-50 of your white and a hue to make the tint. Some people like their tints to be really, really white, in which case they put a big dollop of

white down and they add 25% of the hue. It doesn't matter how you do this. You just want it to be consistent all the way around, so you end up with a really nice, even color wheel. And that's what's gonna be helpful. If your tints are all different colors of white or different amounts of white, it's not really gonna help you when you're trying to refer to it when you're making a painting. The inside wheel here is a shade, which means that we've just added black. So it's the same thing as when you're making a tint. We're just swapping black for white. On this side, I've got sort of a crazier color wheel. I just decided that I have some fluorescent paint, so I thought it would be fun to see what would happen if I did a color wheel using the fluorescents. And you can really see a difference between the two and you can see how we get to these secondary colors. So in between the primary colors are secondary colors. So you're supposed to mix 50-50 of yellow and red to get orange. And then you're supposed to mix 50-50 of orange and red to get red-orange. And so that's what I've done for both of these examples, is that I've gone 50-50 all the way around the wheel. But when we make our personal color wheel, all those rules go out the window. We're really just looking for colors that when I say red, you have a color that's in your head, and that's the color that you want to put down on your color wheel. And when I say red-orange, you're not necessarily gonna mix 50-50. You might, that might be perfect. Or you might have something out of the tube that is the perfect red-orange, and you're just gonna place that on your color wheel. It's gonna be really fun. It's not gonna be as scientific. I've got a blank color wheel. I'm gonna look for my angle brush, if it's in here. There it is. Because this is gonna help me get into these nice, tight little areas. I'm just gonna start with red, why not? Let's start with red. The reason I'm starting with red is I don't really like any of the reds in my palette. None of these to me scream red when I think of red. So I'm gonna mix until I get a red that I like. I'm gonna wet my brush a little bit. This is closest to kind of what I think red is. I'm gonna scoop a little bit out, take it out. It seems a little dark. I'm gonna go ahead and a little bit of the cad light to it. It's a little bit better. It still feels a little dark. Go for a little bit of, this is actually called primary red, which is really funny because it doesn't look like primary red to me at all. But that's what the tube says. Okay, I think I'm liking that. So I'm gonna use a little bit of matte medium to help the paint move. And I'm finding my red spot and I'm gonna fill in. You do not have to be super neat on your color wheel. You can make a mess if you like. Because it's personal. So now I'm gonna move on to the tint. And I think the way I'm gonna do it is add it to white. So I've got a lot of extra white on this palette over here. I'm gonna try and make all my tints have about that much white. And I'm gonna remove some of the excess paint from my brush because I want the tints to be pretty light on this color wheel. So I'm just dabbing the extra off the brush. And then I'm just gonna go ahead and mix it into the white. I'm not gonna use a palette knife. I'm just trying to get the streaks out so I'll have nice, even. And then I'm gonna go into the tint section and fill this in. I'm gonna put this brush in water. And I'm gonna pick up one of the tinier flat brushes to get to the shade. I'm gonna leave the palette knife that I was using for the white with the white. I'm gonna pick up another palette knife. I'm just gonna go ahead and use this other section. And I actually think that's gonna be too much black. So I'm gonna take maybe about half that with my brush, and I'm gonna move it over here, because this is the red that I already mixed. And I like this red and I don't wanna remix it. So I'm just gonna mix the black into here. So again, I'm not using a palette knife. And in my head, I'm just gonna kind of remember what size dollop that was. And I'm gonna fill in the shaded area. I'm gonna add a little bit of matte medium because the red is not coming through. There it is. So I'm using the matte medium to kind of thin out the paint a little bit so I can more easily see the red tinge. I'm done with the red section. I'm gonna move on to the yellow section. You can go anywhere you want. But for ease, I'm gonna start with the primary colors, just to make it

simple for me to keep track of. So I'm gonna move on to the yellow hue. I'm just gonna show you a couple more hues, and then we're just gonna go ahead and fill in the rest of the color wheel. I like this yellow. It's not a primary yellow. If we were to ask me, "Is that a primary yellow?" I would say no. But I like it and this is my personal color wheel, so I'm gonna go for it. I'm gonna go for a little bit of the warm water and get into the yellow. Grab a little bit of medium. And fill in just the hue section. Ooh, I've got some red from the last time. I'm not gonna use that part of the brush. Clean your brushes really well between hues. Okay, so I've got my yellow hue down. So traditionally, to get to these secondary colors, you do a two-to-one ratio. You do one part of the darker color to two parts of the lighter color. So in this case, I'll be doing two parts yellow to one part of the red that I mixed that I really like. And I'm gonna go ahead and do that for the orange. So let's say if this is two parts yellow, this is the red that I mixed, so I need about one part of that red. And I'm gonna mix all that together. So when I'm looking at this, it actually looks a little bit dark to me. So I'm gonna add a little bit more yellow, because this is my personal color wheel, and I am not necessarily paying attention to the rules. There we go, I like that orange. Clean my brush off. All right, we've got orange. Traditionally you would mix 50-50 of the red and the orange to get the red-orange. But this is my personal color wheel, and I happen to really like this color that's on my palette. It's actually cad red light. And to me it looks like red-orange. So I'm just gonna use that and I'm not gonna mix anything. Yes. Just getting rid of the gloppy stuff. We've got a nice even coat. I'm gonna go ahead and work on the tints and shades of the colors that I just put down. I want to get to them before they dry out on my palette. So I'm gonna add the white and I'm gonna add the black, and I'm gonna get those down. Then I'm gonna get all the way around. And you should get all the way around, too. And then I'll show you mine when it's all done. I'm done with my color wheel. Hopefully you're done with your color wheel. I think part of what's really fun about doing a personal color wheel is you really get into mixing colors. You'll see the mess that I made on my palette over here. And you learn really fast that it just takes a little bit of another color to change a color entirely. For example, this blue, this is not what I would say is a standard blue. If they say blue, this is not the blue that's gonna pop into your head. But this is a blue that I like. And so I used cobalt blue and just a teeny bit of this yellow-green to get to this color that I really like. And it just takes a little bit. And it takes practice. It just takes a little bit of color. It takes a little bit of time to figure out that you don't need to necessarily have a lot of something in order to change a color immensely. So I'm gonna show the difference between the color wheel that I made and the two that I showed you earlier. So you've got mine, you've got the primary one, and you've got the fluorescent one. And you'll see it's just really, there's some subtle differences in the purples. There's some subtle differences in the blues. And that's why it's really fun to do a personal color wheel. So what is a color wheel good for? It's great when you're working on a painting to have it near so that you can understand what colors are gonna go well together. So on a color wheel, you'll notice that this is the warm side and this is the cool side of the color wheel. And the colors that live next to one another, they're called analogous colors. And they always harmonize really well. So you'll see on all three of these, they harmonize really well. So if you make a bunch of different color wheels, you'll understand how to use different shades of red with different shades of orange and how they're gonna work well together. The big tip I think with color wheels, though, is when you talk about complementary colors. Complementary colors live across one another on the color wheel. So there's yellow and purple, blue and orange, and red and green. And when they're across from one another, what happens is it's a really big contrast. So if you want something to stand out, you really want to start thinking about using complementary colors. The other thing that's magical about complementary colors is that you can mix them together. And the thing about

mixing them together is you're gonna get colors that are a lot more natural than if you add black to them. I think I said this before, but I'm gonna say it again. When you get a basic paint set, those colors in those tubes are very specific. And if you've been around them for a while, it's like ooh, that's ultramarine blue, and ooh, that's thalo green. And if you start painting with them, your painting is gonna look like you've just used introductory paint set. The way to change that is to alter those colors. And just a little bit of something else is gonna make all the difference. And just a little bit of a complementary color is really gonna make a lot of difference. So you'll see here I've got a green and a red that are complementary from one another. And I've slowly mixed them in 10 shades until they've reached these kind of two neutral colors. So I don't know intuitively, when I started painting, I would not have guessed that a mixture of these two would have given me a brown. But it does. And mixtures of complementary colors do that. It's really cool. And I really suggest that you try it out if you haven't before.

Matching color using Starburst wrappers

- Now we're gonna do something that I hope you find really fun. I do this in all of my beginning painting classes. This is one of my favorite days when I teach, because I get to bring in candy. I bring in Starbursts because they're really weird colors, no offense Starburst Corporation. What I really like about them is that the outside and the inside are completely different, and it's really fun to get my students to match both the outside wrapper and the inside candy. So what I do in class is I have them pick out five, and they have to match both the wrapper and the candy before they can eat them. And then once they match them and I come around and I check them off they get to eat the candy. So you could do that with yourself if you want, like as a little treat. "Oh I matched it, yay I can eat it." Or you could just go ahead and eat them, I'm not gonna know if you do or don't. So we're gonna get started. Here's a bunch of Starburst candy. Picked a couple of them out, we're going to start with one. So as I'm looking at the Starburst I'm really starting to pay attention to how the values or the saturations of the colors are shifting. I actually have a little card to show you. I've made one here that is of one singular color, and on the top row I've got it shifting in value and on the bottom row I have it shifting in saturation. So when I look at the inside of this blueberry candy, the inside is lower in saturation and darker in value than the outside wrapper. And I'm gonna bring in another guy just to kind of reiterate that. So we've got this pink, this is a strawberry-banana, and the outside wrapper is pretty saturated and low in value, and the inside is less saturated, and also low in value. One of the things to keep in mind, and hopefully this will help you learn this, is that there are two different kinds of white out there. We talked about this before. There's a titanium white and there's a mixing white. And I have a little card to show you the difference. And this candy exercise is something that really teaches this when I do it in my beginning painting class. When you take a color and you mix it with titanium white you get more of a pastel color, and it's pretty high in saturation and pretty high in value. When you mix it with a mixing white, it's not quite so pastel and it's a lot more transparent. So a little bit more of the original hue stays in when you're using a mixing white. And I've done this twice. I did it with the a pink, and I did it with a yellow. And then in this column over here, what I've tried to do is show you what happens when you put these two whites over a hue. So you'll see the titanium white gives you a really good coverage over a hue, and the mixing white does not, it's a lot more transparent and you can see through it to the color underneath. This is something that when you get further along in painting and you're layering colors, you're gonna want to pay attention to. So I'm realizing that this color is really close to the purples that I made on my personal color wheel. Yay for me, it's going to be easier for me to get to

that color really quick, because I have some of that left. So it's actually on this side of the palette. I'll bring that closer to me. I'm gonna take a little brush. What I have my students do, is test the color as they go along. So I'm going to put this down just to show you how close I think it is. And it is really close, the difference is that this is grayer in value, right? It's got, like, it's not as lavender. So I'm actually going to try and mix a complement into it, because I think that'll get me to the gray pretty quick. So I'm gonna take a little bit of yellow, I'm gonna see what happens. And I'm gonna find a cleaner spot on my palette. Okay, so let's try this out, I think it's a little bit off, but we're definitely closer. I just need it to be a tad darker. I'm gonna go and grab just a little bit more purple. And I might end up sticking the very small, teeny, tiny amount of ivory black in there. I'm just trying to get the paint to be a little bit thicker. I had water on my palette to keep my paints from drying out, so it's a little bit runny. You'll see the second I put the yellow in, it just starts to get gray, so nice. Magic yellow. I'm gonna take just a teeny bit of ivory black. Keep in mind that it's gonna dry a teeny bit darker. Oh I think we're good. I would give myself an A. So what I did was I took the pale, lavender-y purple that I had and I bumped up the value of it a little bit, I added the compliment yellow to gray it down and neutralize it, and then I added the teeniest bit of black in order to make it darker, in order to change it. I'm gonna work on the outside wrapper now, because it's completely different. So I'm gonna put my brush in water. I'm gonna grab another flat brush, dip it in some water 'cause it hasn't been in use. So I'm looking at the outside wrapper, and I think it's pretty close to cobalt blue, which is over here. So I'm gonna take a little bit of cobalt, and I'm just gonna show you what it looks like straight out of the tube so that you can see. So let's paint a little bit of cobalt, and we're gonna move this down. Okay, so it looks like it's a tint of cobalt, so I'm gonna add a little white. I'm actually gonna start with the mixing white, because I don't want it to get pastel, because it's not a pastel blue, it's just a tint. A light tint. Okay and with that teeny bit of white I just want to see where I am, so I'm going to paint it. Were pretty close, even with just that little bit of white. It's kind of crazy. I might add just a really minute amount of blue. So you'll see that I'm working in really small increments. This is not, I'm throwing in a lot of mixing white. Yep. And I think by the time that dries, that's gonna be pretty darn close. Okay, so we're done with the blueberry one, let's move on to the strawberry one and see if we can get these pinks. I'm actually not sure which one's gonna get me there faster, so I'm gonna start with this. This was primary red. It was actually called primary red. And I'm gonna put that in here. I'm just gonna test it out so I can see how it's looking. And I'm definitely going to add white to it, and I think I'm gonna add some titanium white, because this is more of a pastel color. Wow, look at that, two steps. I'm going to try to get to the inside pink. It's a little more peachy, it's not really pink, so I'm gonna try and make a couple different pinks first and start adding a little bit of orange and yellow and see if I can get there. We have that pink, I'm going to lighten that up. There's some white hanging out there. I don't know if that's gonna get me there. So I'm gonna rinse this off. Going to squirt out a little bit more titanium white, because I don't see any clean white anywhere. That was the primary red, so I'm gonna see what happens if I use this rose color, what kind of pink it makes. So I'm gonna take a little bit of that, and I'm gonna add titanium white, or actually I'm gonna do it over here. And then just for kicks, let's try a straight up cadmium and we'll add some white to that. Okay, so I like this cadmium. I think it's kind of closer, but I also like this rose, so I'm gonna mush them together. And I'm gonna see where I'm at. Okay, pink, so I need to get yellow and I need to get orange. I need to orangify my pink. So I've got some of this kind of red yellow orange, I'm going to try this out. Okay, and I'm gonna see where I'm at now. Oh, oh ho ho, so nice, okay. I think it needs a little bit more white. I'm gonna use a little bit of mixing white. I'm gonna scrape the sides, because I want that pink. (sighs) I think I went a little far. I

need a little bit more of that orange. Come back, orange. There we go. Yay! A lot of times what I have my students do is write little formulas down next to these guys and have them keep this in their sketch book. It's not really that they think they're gonna want to remix these colors over and over, but kind of keeping track to how you get to a color is a really good thing. It's gonna help you learn how to mix colors consistently. So when you're making a painting and you make this big pile of this really awesome turquoise and then it dries, and it's the next day and you have to remember how you got to that turquoise, if you have a little notebook that says, "Oh, I had this much cobalt blue, and approximately this much yellow green, and approximately this much of mixing white to get to that turquoise." Then you'll be able to get there a lot faster, and it's kind of like muscle memory. Once you start doing this and getting used to it and start thinking about this little dab of this and this little dab of this. When you do it over and over, it becomes really natural and second nature.

Create a painting from Starbursts

- Now we're gonna paint a little still life with a few of the Starburst. So I've many a teeny little tower of Starburst over here. I've chosen them all in a pink colorway 'cause I think that'll be really nice and pretty. And I jumped ahead, I already laid a ground on a piece of paper so that you wouldn't have to see me just do this. I basically made a square, and I painted the ground over the line so that when I'm done, I'm just gonna chop it up and you won't see any of that. So I get a nice, smooth coverage. I've made a horizon line here, just for interest. Like, you know, this is white, obviously I chose completely different colors. I actually chose kind of a minty green and a minty teal because I was thinking about the opposites on the color wheel. And because these are candy, I really wanted to pastel them out. But we've got kind of like a red. And so I'm going across the color wheel to the green and yellow-green range, and that's how I chose this color. And we've got a pink, and so I went across the colorway here to like a blue-green. And that's how I arrived at these colors. And I already laid out a palette. I've got every single red that I have. I've got a yellow-green and some aqua. I've got the Ivory Black, the Mars Black, the Titanium, the Mixing. And I've got all my blues because I'm gonna use the blues as the complements to the reds and to help me get to that purple. I'm gonna use teeny tiny brushes 'cause these guys are tiny. Get a little wet. I'm gonna start out by just making some pinks because that bottom pink is really light and I'm not quite sure how I want to get there yet. So I'm just gonna use some reds and some Titanium Whites and make a series of pinks, see which one is closer, close to what I want. I might actually just use a couple of big brushes to save myself some time. There's some water on my palette. I sprayed all the paint 'cause it's been sitting here for a little while and I wanted to make sure it wasn't gonna dry out. So all these little beads are just that water. And let's see what kind of pink I get with this one. I'm actually thinking, oh, I should've put out some yellow because I think I need some yellow in order to get to that pink. So in one second, I'm gonna grab some. Okay, that's gonna be the closest, I think. And I'm gonna grab a little bit of Cadmium Yellow Pale. Stick it over here. I don't need very much. And I'm also gonna grab some Medium. I want this to be a little bit paler, gonna add a little bit more Titanium, and now a little bit of the medium, little bit of the light. Okay, I think that's pretty close. So I'm gonna rinse off this (liquid splashing) dirty, tiny brush. I'm gonna pick up my Starburst color. So when I'm looking at these, I'm trying to pay attention to where the light is hitting and which side is darker and which side is lighter. The front of the Starburst, from where I'm sitting, is the lightest part, so I'm gonna paint that first. I might need to do two coats to cover up the teal minty color that I have underneath. We shall see. And then I'm gonna get to these little folds, there's folds on the side of the wrapper,

'cause those guys are pretty light too. Okay. So you'll notice that I'm trying to go in the direction 'cause that's gonna help maintain the shape of the candy. The top part is a little bit darker, so I'm gonna add a touch of blue, which I'm probably gonna mix with a little bit of white first in order to try and neutralize and gray out some of the pink. So I'm gonna take a little bit of this blue that's the complement to this pink and mix it in. And you'll notice that it's shifting to a slightly darker tone, which is what I want for the top. It's not entirely different. It's the same family, it's just a little bit darker, which is exactly what I want. So I'm gonna paint in this area. Okay, and the little fold is even a teeny bit darker. But instead of adding more of the blue, I'm just gonna slightly dab into my Ivory Black because it's more of a shadow, and I want it to read more like a shadow. And I want that gray tinge to it. Kinda wishing I had an even teenier tiny brush (chuckles). They make 000s. Okay, this fold goes all the way down, so I'm gonna go ahead and do that. And this fold goes that way. And the very inside fold, it's a little bit darker, so I'm just gonna go back into my Ivory Black, not the Mars one. I want the more transparent black, and I'm just making an even more grayed out version. And I'm gonna use this grayed out version in this tiny little area right here, and I'm also gonna use it underneath the stack of the next guy 'cause that area is also a little bit darker. Okay, Starburst number one. I'm gonna rinse this out. (liquid splashing) I need to try and make the magentaey-purple color, so I'm gonna use the bigger brushes again to mix. The Thio Violet that I have is gonna get me there close, I think, so I'm gonna start with that. And I'm gonna start adding some blue. I'm gonna add a touch of the Ultramarine. Or is that Phthalo? That's Phthalo, I'm gonna add a touch of the Phthalo Blue. Okay. And that's a really nice purple, but it needs to be more red, so I'm gonna add some Cadmium. I'm a little unsure of what color this is mostly because there's a little bit of sheen on my palette paper. Since I'm gonna cut this off anyways, I'm gonna put a little swatch of it here so I can kinda see. And that's pretty close. I think I'm gonna add a little bit of Ivory Black to it. Okay, and I'm gonna test it again. Okay, I like that a lot more, just a little bit more black. So I'm gonna start with the front because it is kind of the brightest area of this color. So I'm gonna look around to the side to kind of see what the light is doing. It's actually really similar to the front, has a couple of folds, too, so I'll get those a little bit darker. I'm just gonna go ahead and fill this in. So anticipating putting in a darker fold in here, so I'm kinda making a little triangle with my brushstrokes. It's really funny how something like that can make a difference when you go in to add the dark. If the triangle's already there, it's gonna help you. Okay, and the top is definitely the darkest part. So I'm just gonna go back, and I actually think I'm gonna mix a little bit of the Mars Black in 'cause I want it to be a little bit dark and I don't think the green complement is gonna get me where I want it. Okay, so now it's a little bit darker. I'm just gonna go ahead and get to the top. Okay, and I'm just gonna hit the little fold in there. And I'm actually gonna make this point that's coming out towards us a little bit darker, so that it looks like it's coming out at us. Okay, Starburst number three. I might be lucky, and this Rose color might be pretty close. It is pretty close. I'm going to add a tiny bit of the purple that I made over here, to get to that magenta middle guy, into my pink. So from where I'm sitting, it's the top guy that has the biggest highlight. We're gonna paint it in first. If I wanted to be super nitpicky and I wanted this color to really punch off of the background because it's transparent, I could paint the Starburst white first, with Titanium White, and then put this pink on top, and it would really pop out. It meets up with that guy. Okay, and now I'm gonna get to the sides. This side also has a pretty big fold. And I'm just gonna go ahead and fill in the top, too, 'cause the differences in this one are a little more subtle. I'm gonna let this dry for a second. And while it does that, I'm gonna look around at the side and see how the folds are working and how many more tones of this pink I'm gonna make. So you need to make a slightly darker pinky

color for the folds and a little bit of the top. And so the complement is kind of a green, so I'm gonna try this yellow-green and see what happens. You might not like it, but it might be perfect. I think it's perfect. Yeah, it's pretty good. So maybe that and just a teeny tiny bit of the Ivory. Minutia, excellent. I'm gonna put that in the fold area here on the side, just to make it a little bit darker. And I'm gonna take a little bit more Ivory Black, try and get a really nice point with the brush, and just go over the fold like that so that it's got its dimension. And there's a little bit of dark on the left-hand side for me, so I'm gonna add a little bit here, like that, and a little bit in the back there. And again, I'm just gonna hit this area here to differentiate the front from the side. I'm gonna add the little white stuff that I see on the wrappers. When I'm looking down at my painting, it's a cute little stack of three square things. But I don't really know what they are, and I think it's the label that's gonna help me define these as Starburst. I am not going (chuckles) to try and spell out Starburst upside down and backwards. I'm just gonna put a little blob of white in places, just to mimic what I see and just to hint at it, so it looks a little bit more representational. So this part is a little bit tricky because I've got the label that's gonna go over on the top. And that's actually gonna help define the top, so I'm gonna really try and kind of mimic what I see a little bit more carefully, instead of just dabbing, dabbing. And I've got some text. So I'm gonna go ahead now and get the little white labels and stuff on the candy. And in looking at this, there's a shadow that's being cast on the plate that the candy is sitting on, and I'm not even gonna worry about that. I've set this ground. It's an imaginary ground, and I don't really want a shadow. I want them to be kind of like cute little candies, floating in space. So I'm not gonna even bother with that. We're done, I'm gonna cut this out, so we can look at it without the messy border. (scissors snipping) So here's our finished Starburst painting. It's so cute! Hopefully you'll have fun making one. I have a couple of takeaways for you. One of them is this PDF. It's a abstract painting, and I've gridded it out for you. If you've never transferred a painting with a grid, it's actually really fun and really easy. It just, the grid helps you know where you are in the piece and helps you transfer it to a bigger painting. I've got a sample of what I've done here. The PDF is already gonna have a grid on it, and the grid is gonna help you transfer this to a slightly larger scale. The grid on the PDF is going to be one inch, and you can make it two inches if you want to double it in size. The sample that I have is in 1 1/2 size, so this is 1 1/2 inches. And you'll see here, I just marked the numbers, and I literally just copied from square to square. Oh, I see this in this square, and it's this close to the edge. It really helps you measure and make sure that you're keeping everything to scale. So what I've done here is copied the painting in a set of complementary colors and black and white. And the reason why I think it's really great to try this out is because you'll quickly realize that with four colors, you can get a lot of colors. So you can choose any set of complementary colors. I happened to choose blue and orange. You can do red and green. You can do yellow and purple. And you're just gonna mix those colors with black and white and mix them together, and you'll see what a wide array you can get. The other reason why I chose this particular piece for you to copy is that it's a completely different style. It's an abstract painting. Everything that we've been doing in class has been really representational. We've done some still lifes. We did some candy. We did a feather. So this is not representational at all, and what I'm hoping it will do is allow you to understand how to make some different kinds of marks. There's some really good texture in this painting, and there's some really interesting layering. And if you look really carefully, hopefully you can translate it into your copy, and you'll learn a lot by doing that. Finally, I have a few books. I have a lot more books than these, but I want to share these three with you because color is like my thing. I can geek out on color all day long. So I'm just gonna show you three books that are really influential and have been really important to me. And if this is something that you really get

into, you'll want to check these out too. The first one is *Interaction of Color* by Josef Albers. He's really known for doing square within square paintings. And you'll notice on the cover that there's these two squares. And they may look to you like they're two different colors, but they're actually exactly the same color. And the reason why they look different is the surrounding color. It's a big part of color theory. There's a whole bunch of exercises in here, and it's really chock-full of information about color. This book is called *The Elements of Color*. It's by Itten. It's also a totally scientific, highly informational book about color and color theory and how color works. There's also some really great exercises in here. So if you don't, if you want to move forward, do more than just a color wheel, both of these books have a lot of information for you. And then finally, this is Victoria Finlay's book called *Color*, and this is just if you want to really know about the history of color and where pigments come from. You can learn about where Indian Yellow came from. Did it or did it not come from cow pee? Cows that only ate mangoes. You can find out if you read the book (chuckles). Color is a huge topic. There are so many books out there, but these are three that I really love and recommend. But go and find ones that are of interest to you. There are just gazillions of books about color and color indexes. So we've just gotten our feet wet in terms of color. I hope you've enjoyed it, and I hope that you figure out that you can go anywhere you want with color. You need to just find the palette that's right for you and go with it and have fun.