

Painting A BLUEBIRD



The Sam Sidders way !

Materials:

- 1 sheet of 300# paper 11"x15"
 - Masking Fluid
 - 1" flat brush,
 - #2 pointed round brush
 - #8 pointed round brush
 - #2 liner brush
 - Small natural sponge
 - pencil

Suggested Colors:

- Cobalt Blue
- Cadmium Orange
- Cadmium Yellow
- Alizarin Crimson
- Burnt Sienna
- Yellow Ochre
- Raw Sienna

Using the pencil, loosely draw the basic shapes. The idea is not to carefully draw every detail then fill it in, but to get a rough guideline for the major shapes. Don't worry about accurate details, but concentrate on accurate proportions and subject placement. Place the bird in a good place on the paper and add a few branches to help balance the overall composition.



Once you are satisfied with your drawing, you can begin masking out the bird and the major branches.

These areas will remain covered until the final stages of the painting. **Do not use your good brushes for this masking process.** And, be careful not to get the masking fluid on your clothes. *If you find it necessary to use your good brushes, you can help to preserve them by dipping the brush into liquid detergent, wiping off the excess prior to dipping the brush into the masking fluid. Be sure to clean the brush immediately following use.*



Allow the masking fluid to dry completely before moving on to the next step. When the fluid is completely dry, use clean water to wet the paper from top to bottom. Using Cobalt Blue, lay in a light wash in the upper part of your paper to indicate the distant sky. Add a touch of Cadmium Orange to give the feeling of warmth. Moving down the paper, introduce a thin wash of Cadmium yellow and Burnt Sienna to indicate the grass and also the distant trees.





Using stronger mixtures of the same colors, begin to indicate brush and foliage in the foreground. Add a bit of Alizarin Crimson to the mix to give the feeling of Fall



colors. Continue to develop the foreground and also add some trees and branches



to the middle area of the painting using light washes of the same colors. Pay close attention to the placement of the trees to maintain a pleasing arrangement in the composition. Vary the sizes of the trees and also the strength of the washes used. This will help to create the illusion of depth. Use the script liner brush with a very thin color wash to indicate the tiny limbs and branches in the trees. Allow the painting to dry before proceeding.



Using a brush with long hairs and various dark mixtures of the colors used in the foreground, spatter a few specks of color into the branches of the trees and also into the foreground. I use the old, worn out, fan blender brush pictured above for the spatter technique, but most any brush will do. This technique will soften the starkness of the trees and help to promote unity in the composition. A few spatters of lighter colors will do the same for the foreground.

Do not over use the spatter technique.

Once the painting has again dried, remove all of the masking film and restate any of the pencil lines in the bird that you feel will be helpful to you as a guide in painting the bird. At this point, you may wish to re-mask areas of the bird that you want to remain white, such as the highlight of it's eye, or any highlights on the feathers.



Begin introducing the colors to the body of the bird, paying close attention to the contours and shadowing.

From this point, it is a matter of closely studying your reference photo and adding detail to the entire composition.





To create increased unity in this composition, a light mixture of the autumn colors was applied to the trees and branches with a natural sponge.



When you are satisfied with the painting, sign it, mat it and enjoy it !





A few reference photos for painting Bluebirds. These photos were found by doing an image search on the internet. Many more are available online