



# Art Through the Year

with Sharon Jeffus

## Lesson 12: Flowers & Canvas Painting

In this lesson, we are going to cover various canvas painting techniques, such as how to mix, blend and control color while painting beautiful flowers. First, we'll look at flower and garden paintings by master artists and then learn how they interpreted these subjects and the techniques they used to create their art. In Projects 1 & 2, we'll first try some painting techniques on canvas, creating a monochromatic flower and butterfly. Then we'll practice dry brush techniques to create colorful feathers. In Project 3, we'll explore the world of acrylic paints on canvas and copy a master work of art.

### Masterpieces Referenced:



*In the Meadow*, by Claude Monet, 1876  
<http://www.wikiart.org/en/claude-monet/in-the-meadow>



*Stiefmütterchen*  
by Anton Mollis,  
19th Century  
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anton\\_Mollis\\_Stiefmutterchen.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anton_Mollis_Stiefmutterchen.jpg)



*A Bed of Poppies*, by  
Maria Oak Dewing,  
1909  
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A\\_Bed\\_of\\_Poppies-Maria\\_Oakey\\_Dewing.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_Bed_of_Poppies-Maria_Oakey_Dewing.jpg)



*Meadow with Poplars*, by Claude Monet, 1875  
<http://www.wikiart.org/en/claude-monet/meadow-with-poplars>



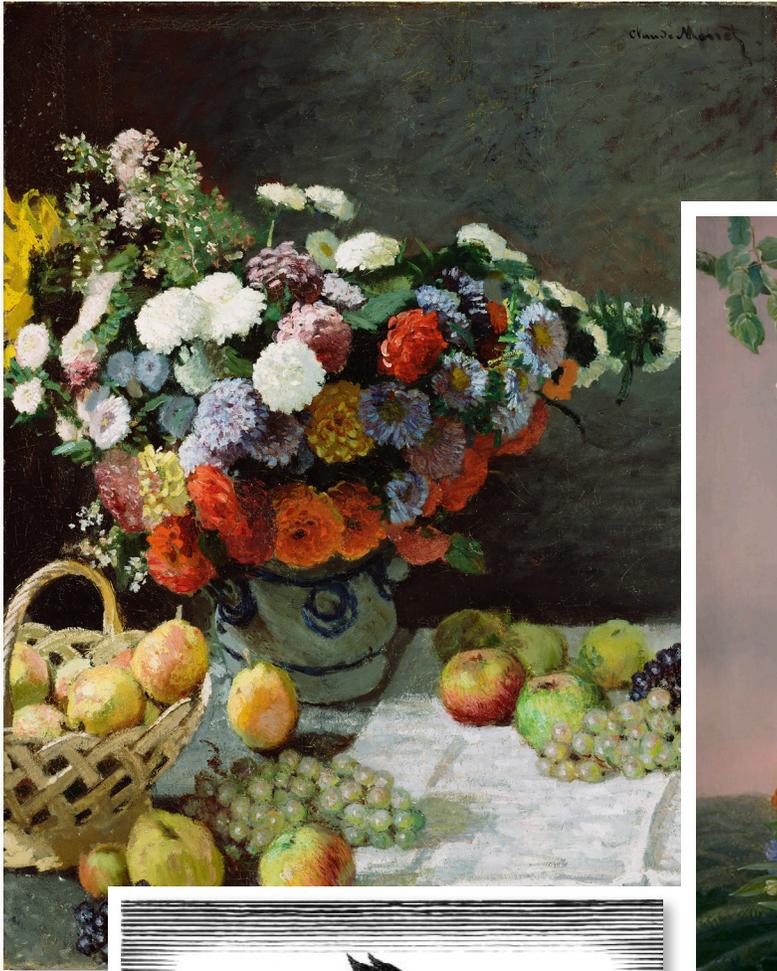
*Iris at Dawn*, by Maria Oak Dewing, 1899  
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Iris\\_at\\_Dawn-Maria\\_Oakey\\_Dewing.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Iris_at_Dawn-Maria_Oakey_Dewing.jpg)

“I perhaps owe having become a painter to flowers.”

— Claude Monet



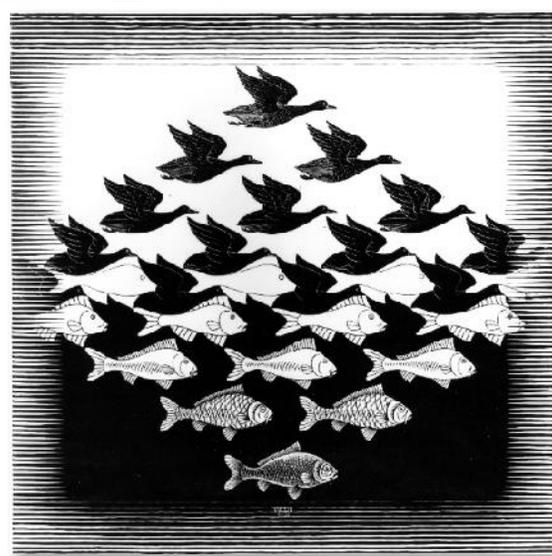
**Masterpieces Referenced:**



*Still Life With Flowers and Fruit*, by Claude Monet, 1869  
<http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/709/claude-monet-still-life-with-flowers-and-fruit-french-1869>



*En buket blomster ved foden af et træ*,  
by Christine Løvmand, 1832



*Sky and Water I*, by M.C. Escher, 1938  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sky\\_and\\_Water\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sky_and_Water_I)

**“I believe that producing pictures, as I do, is almost solely a question of wanting so very much to do it well.”**

— M.C. Escher



### Project 1: Flowers to Butterflies

Create a beautiful monochromatic picture (using 9 shades of blue) of a flower and butterflies. Learn and practice canvas painting techniques along the way, including mixing colors and blending them on the canvas.

#### Materials List:

- Canvas Board or Paper (9"x12")
- Paintbrushes (flat & round)
- Pencil
- Acrylic paints:
  - blue
  - white
  - black
- Water in cup
- Paper plate for paint palette

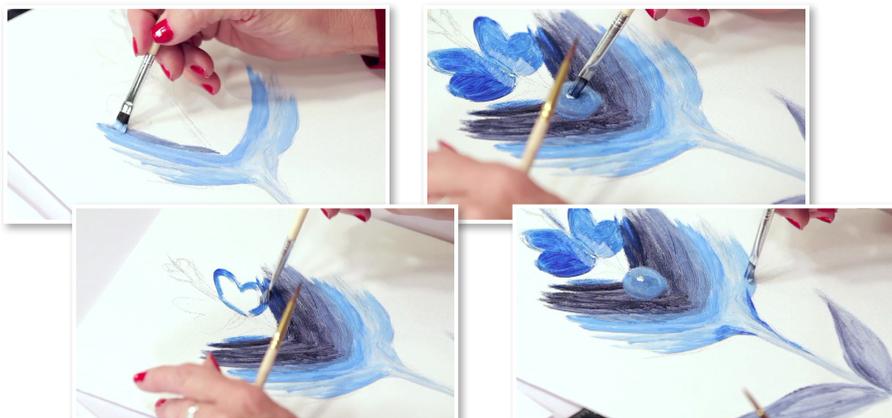


#### Let's get started...

1. Make a rough sketch of a flower and butterfly, similar to the image above.
2. Mix a light blue tint by adding some white to blue paint and start the stem and base of your flower. Blend and mix in more blue as you work your way painting up the flower to eventually mixing in some black to create 9 shades of blue. It's important to make sure the shades of blue blend smoothly on your canvas.
3. Paint the leaves of the flower in shades of blue. Then paint a blue butterfly above the flower. Work with white paint to add details to the butterfly.
4. Paint blue spheres on the flower and butterfly, then create a 3D look by adding black to the blue paint for shading and make highlights with white paint.
5. Finish the painting and keep blends as smooth as possible on the canvas.



#### Flower & Butterfly Variations:





## Project 2: Colorful Feathers

Create a colorful rainbow feather, exploring canvas painting techniques and dry brush effects. Also explore warm and cool color palettes in feather paintings, then create pastel feathers by adding white paint to create tints of a color.

### Materials List:

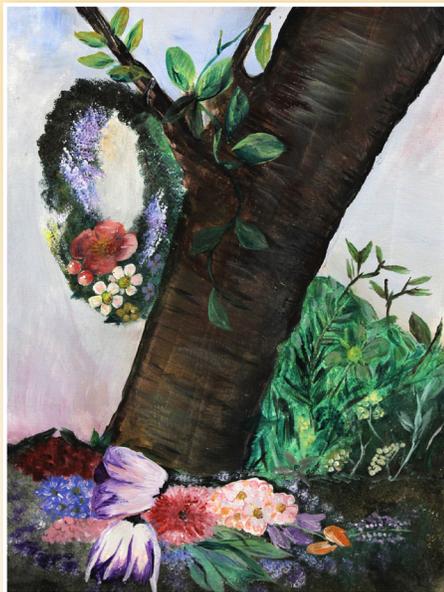
- Canvas Board or Paper (9"x12")
- Paintbrushes (flat & round)
- Acrylic paints
- Water in cup
- Paper plate for paint palette



### Let's get started...

1. Start with red and paint a letter "v" on the canvas. Continue with orange making sure your colors flow and blend together.
2. Paint the rest of the rainbow colors (yellow, green, blue & purple) working your way up the feather making the letter "v". Finish the feather's stem with purple.
3. Try variations of the feather by using only warm colors (red, orange & yellow) and then make a cool color feather with green, blue & purple.
4. Mix red and white together to make a pastel pink feather or blue and white to make a light blue one.
5. Go back with paint on a dry brush and create soft feathery effects on your feather tips and center.





### Project 3: Flower Painting on Canvas (Ages 10+)

Copy a masterpiece by Christine Løvmand and develop your canvas painting techniques. This project is very time consuming and detail-oriented, so it is recommended for older students. (See page 6 for a similar project for younger students.)

#### Materials List:

- Tube acrylic paints
- Canvas Panel/Board or Paper (9"x12" or 11"x14")
- Pencil • Ruler
- Paintbrushes:
  - 1.5"-2" flat brush
  - .5" flat brush
  - #8 or smaller detail brushes
- Sponge (artist)
- Paper plates & water cup



#### Let's get started...

1. Print a copy of *En buket blomster ved foden af et træ*, by Christine Løvmand (page 9) to use as a reference.
2. Draw a 1" grid on the masterpiece copy to make a duplicate drawing on the canvas working square by square. Draw a grid on your canvas to copy the masterpiece or go without a grid if you feel confident. Lightly sketch your copy of the original leaving an edge around it to accommodate framing. Don't worry about exact details, you are making an outline of the painting's composition.
3. Start with making an underpainting on your canvas. Paint the sky with smooth strokes. Then paint the underpainting for the ground with a sponge creating a nice texture.
4. Paint the tree's underpainting with a wide flat brush creating a base for the bark texture. Go back in and add texture over your underpainting on the tree. Work on the wreath's underpainting with a sponge building up a rich color.
5. Go back with a detail brush and paint your leaves along the tree and flowers on the ground and wreath. Take your time and know this can be a long process to finish the painting. Have fun working the paint and adding highlights with white.



#### Using a Grid:



Making a grid of 1" squares when sketching a copy of masterworks of art helps maintain correct proportions by dividing the large picture into smaller units and allowing you to focus on one square at a time. This is especially helpful when the original artwork has a lot of detail and accuracy is important. Draw a grid on your canvas with the same number of squares, then copy the details from the original onto your canvas. Note: if the original is smaller than your canvas, your squares will be larger than 1".





### ***Bonus Project: Sunflowers (Ages 5+)***

Vincent Van Gogh's picture of "Sunflowers" is one of the most famous paintings in the world. He did several varieties of sunflowers. We will look at one of these and paint it step by step. Van Gogh was a Post-Impressionist with a very unique style. He painted using many lines. Line is the first element of art. Can you count the sunflowers? They are not exactly the same. When we make our sunflowers, we can make each one different. Van Gogh was a master of color. He uses cool colors. What are the cool colors? He also uses warm colors. What are the warm colors?

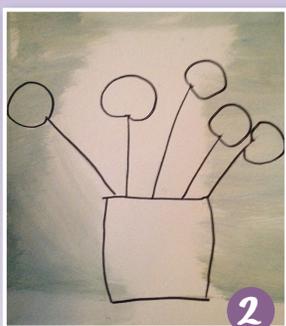
#### **Materials List:**

- White paper
- Black marker
- Paintbrushes
- Sponge
- Tempera paint:
  - Yellow
  - Orange
  - Brown
  - Green
  - Blue
- Paper plate for paint palette



**Let's get started...** Print a copy of *Sunflowers* (page 11) to use as a reference.

1. Paint washes of blue for your background. With a marker, draw vase shape and 5 lines as stems coming out of vase.
2. Draw a circle on the end of each line.
3. Draw leaves on the stems and lines between each flower.
4. Draw little triangles around each circle for the flower petals. Then draw a line halfway up the flower pot and a horizontal line across the page for a table top.
5. Sponge the centers of the flowers yellow and brown.
6. Color the triangles with shades of yellow and orange. Then color the leaves and the stems shades of green.
7. Divide the vase and color the top half yellow and the bottom half yellowish-brown. Color the table yellow. Then add green lines on the extra stems between flowers.



#### **Finished artwork:**



*Project 1: Sharon's Final Painting*



*Project 2: Sharon's Final Painting*



*Project 3: Copy a Master*



*En buket blomster ved foden af et træ, by Christine Løvmand, 1832*

*Project 3: Sharon's Final Painting*



*Bonus Project: Copy a Master*



Sunflowers, by Van Gogh, 1888-1889