LESSON 4: SNOWY TREES IN WINTER

SUPPLIES:

Strathmore 500 Series
Ready Cut Watercolor Paper,
Hot Press, 5"x7"

Maimeri Gouache

Black	Titanium White	Lemon Yellow	Yellow Ochre
Scarlet	Sky Blue	Ultramarine Deep	

Princeton Velvetouch Brushes

1" Wash

¾" Wash

Filbert, size 8

Round, size 6

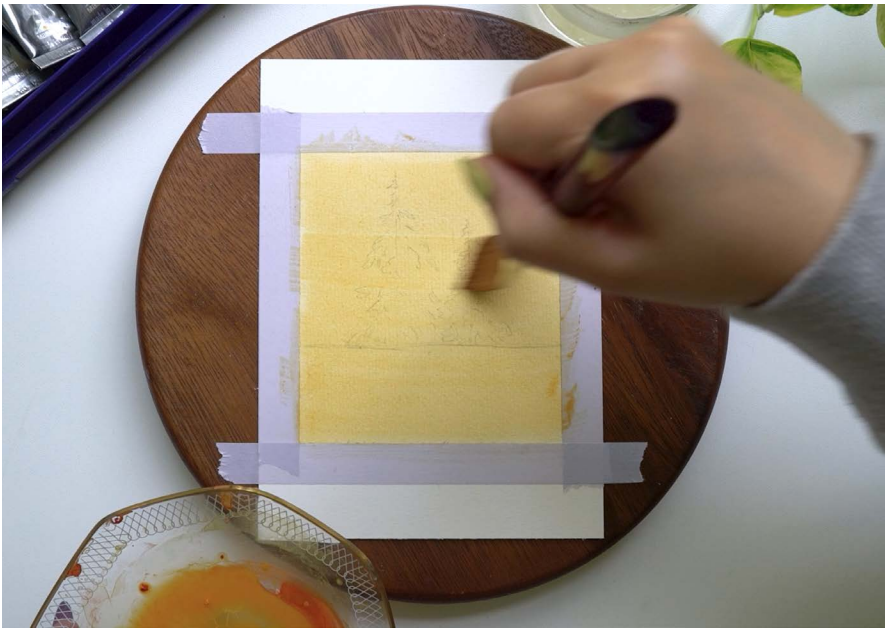Long Round, size 2
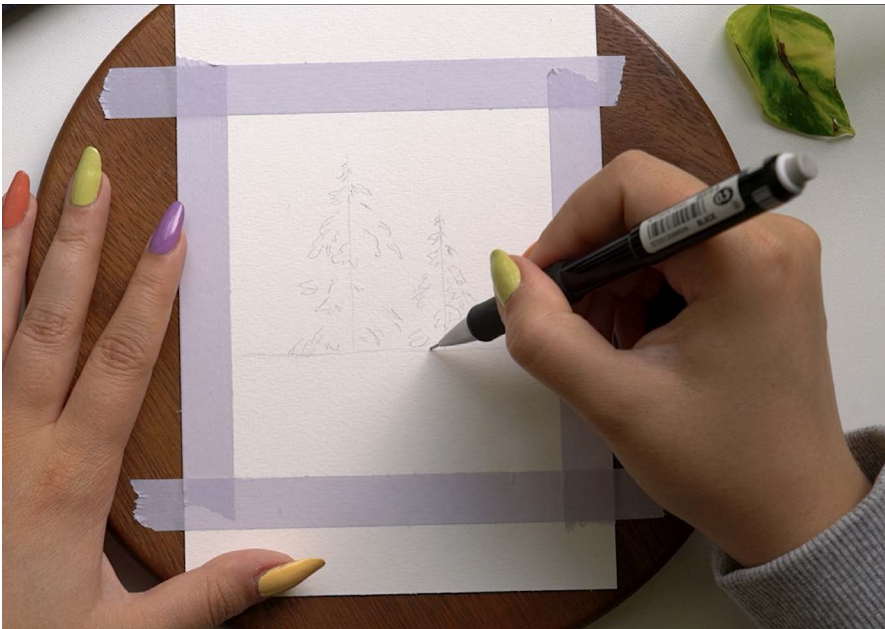
STEP 1: CREATE A SKETCH

I'm starting the process with a sketch to get to know my painting subject, mapping out the horizon line and tree shapes. The tree sketches will be covered with the first layers of paint, but doing a light sketch often helps you get to know your painting subject, which is why I always still do it!

STEP 2: UNDERPAINTING

Creating an underpainting layer with watered-down gouache helps you find the correct colors on top and create a uniform color scheme for your painting. I always choose a color that matches the color of the light in my painting, and I most often go for warm yellows and oranges.
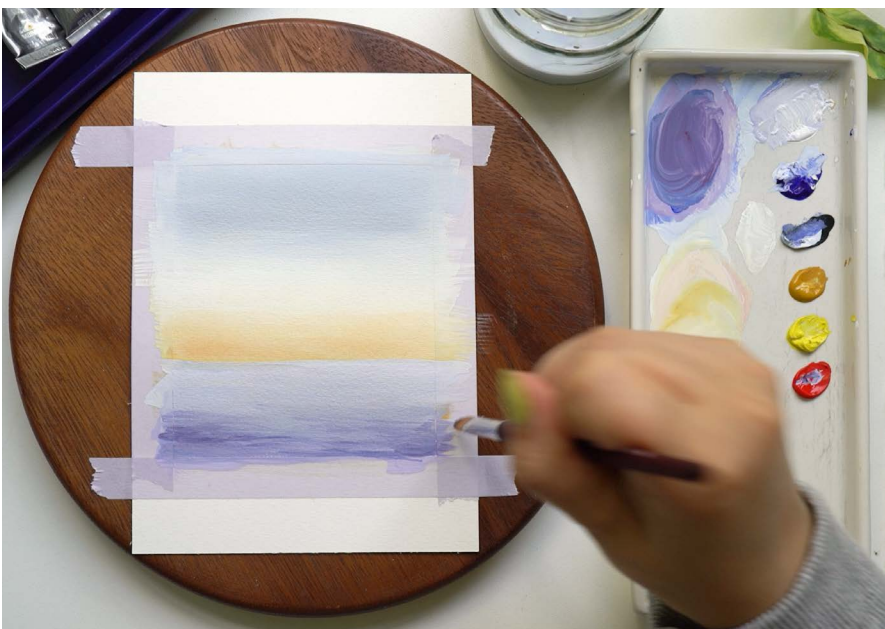
STEP 3: BASE COLORS

I first painted the base colors for the sky and ground in this painting. We have a soft gradient from blue to white to warm yellow in the sky, where I worked in small sections with a ¾" wash brush. Using my filbert brush, I'm doing a messier blend for the snowy ground from a darker, purple-blue to a light blue at the top.

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STEP 4: TREE SILHOUETTES

To create beautiful snowy trees, we are starting by painting the tree itself with dark brown, almost black paint. This will help to add depth and in my opinion, it just makes the whole painting process easier and more straightforward! After painting the dark tree silhouettes, I started adding warmth to the edges of the trees with red tones and lighter oranges in the branches closer to the warm tones of the sky.

STEP 5: SNOW

Adding the snow is truly the most satisfying part of the process! I took my size 2 long round brush and started adding purple-blue colored blobs on top of the tree silhouettes, making sure the shapes looked natural and asymmetrical, focusing on more rounded shapes, as well as thinner, longer shapes of the snow. It's still important to leave some of the dark and warmer red color of the tree showing underneath the snow so the look is more dimensional.

STEP 6: HIGHLIGHTS AND SHADOWS

This step is all about taking the snow to another level. With a bright and vibrant orange-yellow, I started adding warm eye-catching details to the branches underneath the snow piles, especially close to the yellow area of the sky. This step is very important in order to get that warm glowing look to your painting. To make the snow more realistic, I also added a lighter blue highlight to the tops of some of the blobs and softened the edges with a darker blue shadow.

STEP 7: DETAIL WORK

To create texture and make this painting look more interesting I added a few slightly darker spots and details to the snow on the ground, painted a moon in the sky, and some white highlights on top of the snow piles for the moonlight reflection. You can add more interesting details and elements to this painting if you want to, but I left this here in its simplistic beauty!