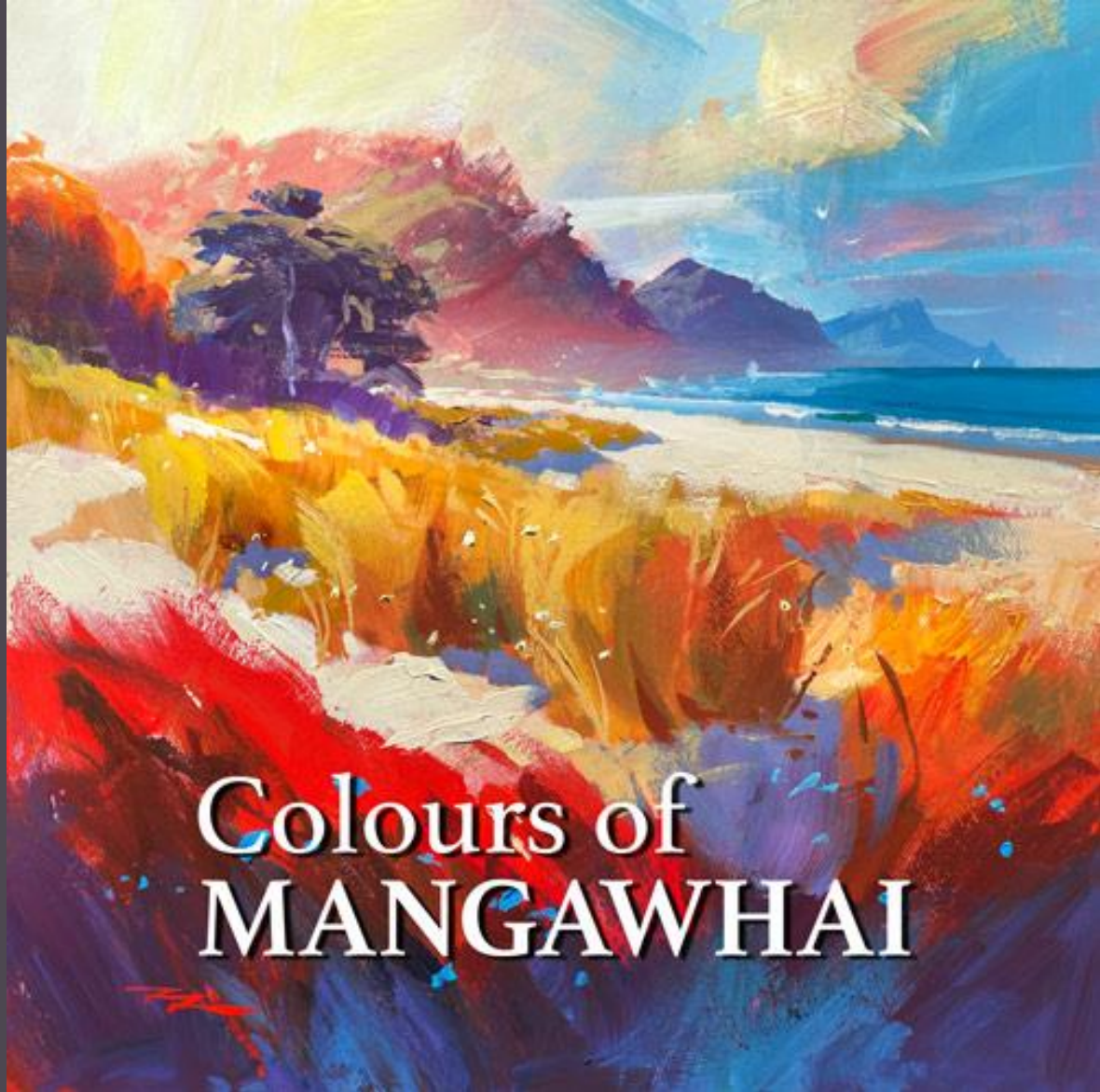




Colours of MANGAWHAI

Colours of Mangawhai

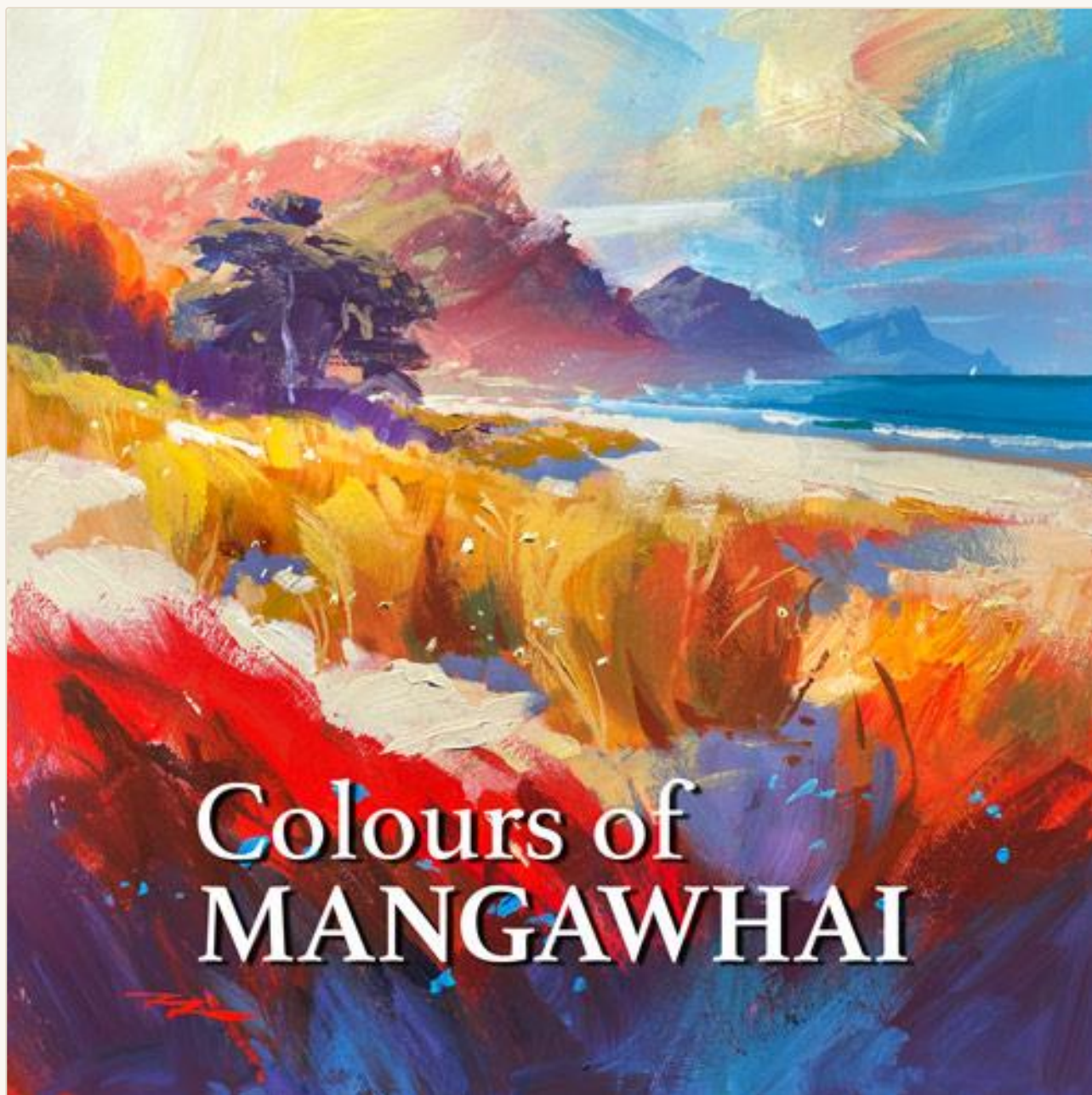
A step-by-step painting guide by Richard Robinson

Watch the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/226-Colours-of-Mangawhai>

MY PAINTING CLUB

Introduction

As we embark on this painting journey together, I invite you to immerse yourself in the vibrant beauty of Mangawhai Beach, captured in the glow of an early summer evening. This scene is a treasure trove of color and light, offering a rewarding challenge for any painter eager to explore expressive techniques. In this chapter, I will guide you through the process of translating this stunning vista into a passionate, vibrant artwork. We'll delve into the art of designing for a large light effect, and I'll show you how to underpaint with acrylics to boost vibrancy and how to let your brushwork express the scene's dynamic energy. You'll learn the importance of undermixing your paint on the palette to achieve rich, textured results. We'll also explore how to enhance a photograph to better serve your painting's needs. With a few trusty synthetic brushes, a palette knife, and a couple of water vessels—one for cleaning and one for fresh water—you'll be well-equipped to tackle this scene. Follow along step by step with the resource photos, or use these techniques to create something uniquely your own. Let's bring the colors of Mangawhai to life on your canvas!



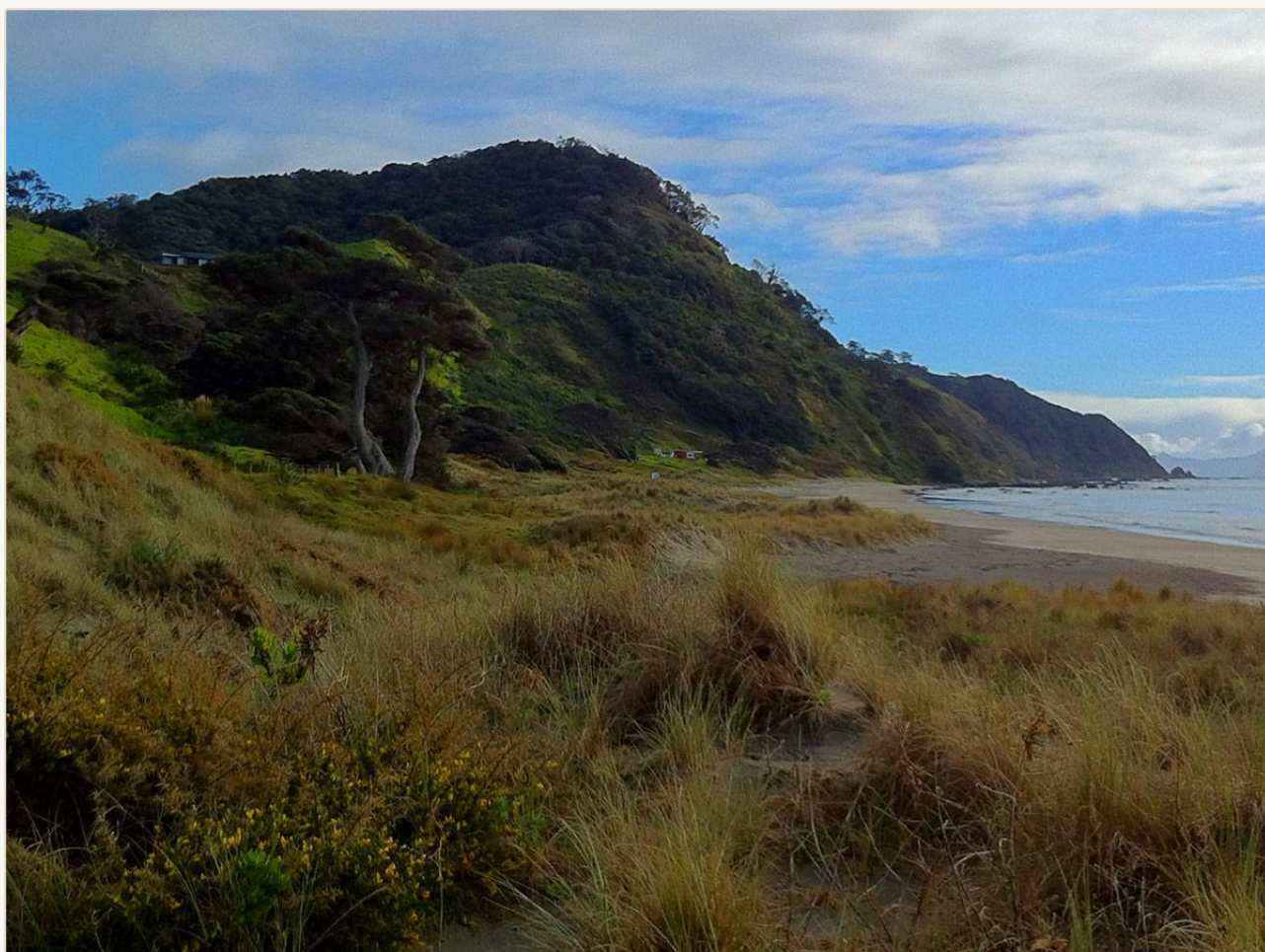
Colours of MANGAWHAI

"Colours of Mangawhai" 14x14" Acrylic on Board by Richard Robinson



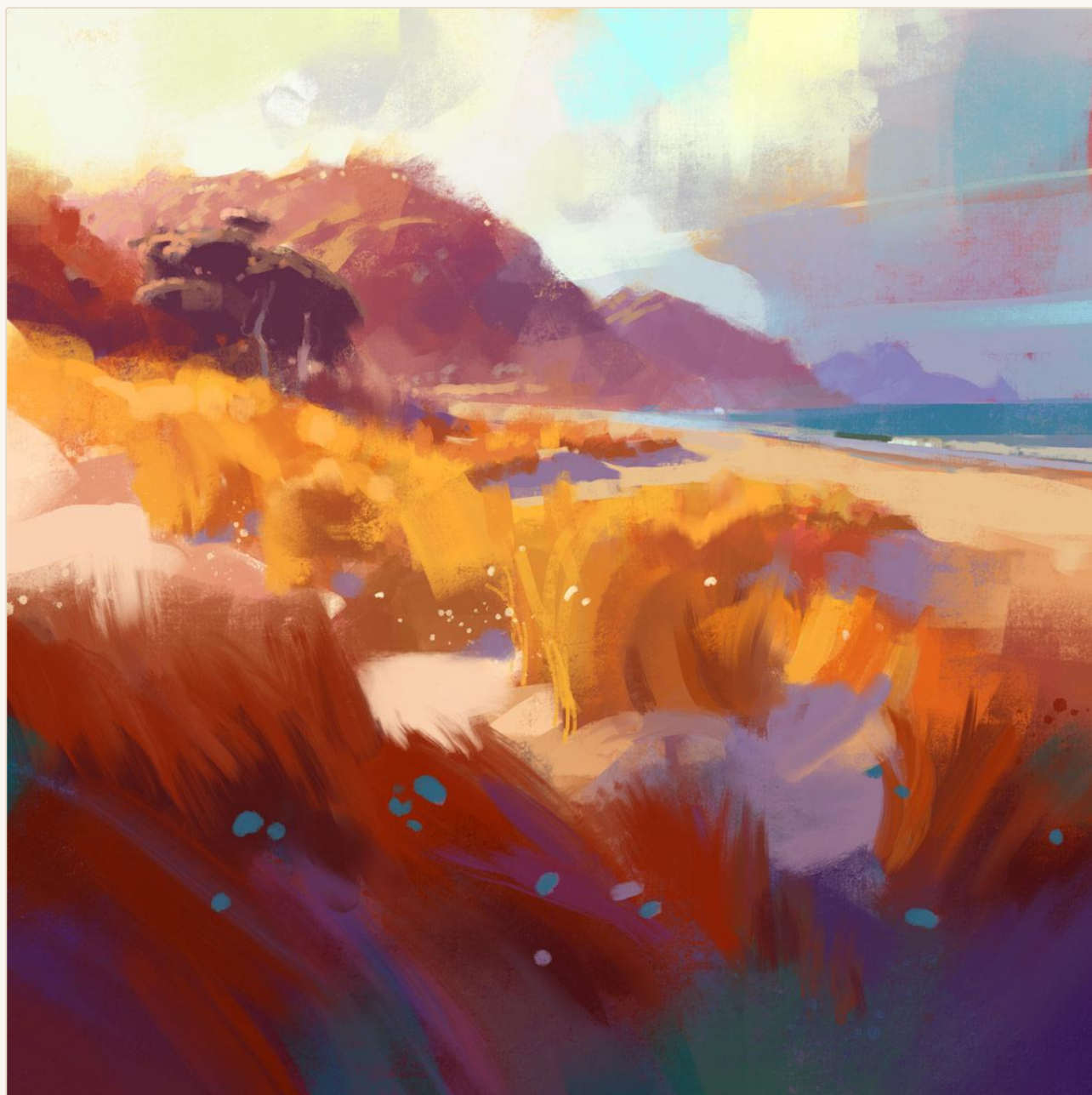
REFERENCE PHOTO 1

The scene as Richard found it.



REFERENCE PHOTO 2

The scene as Richard found it.



REFERENCE PHOTO 3

The scene as Richard found it.

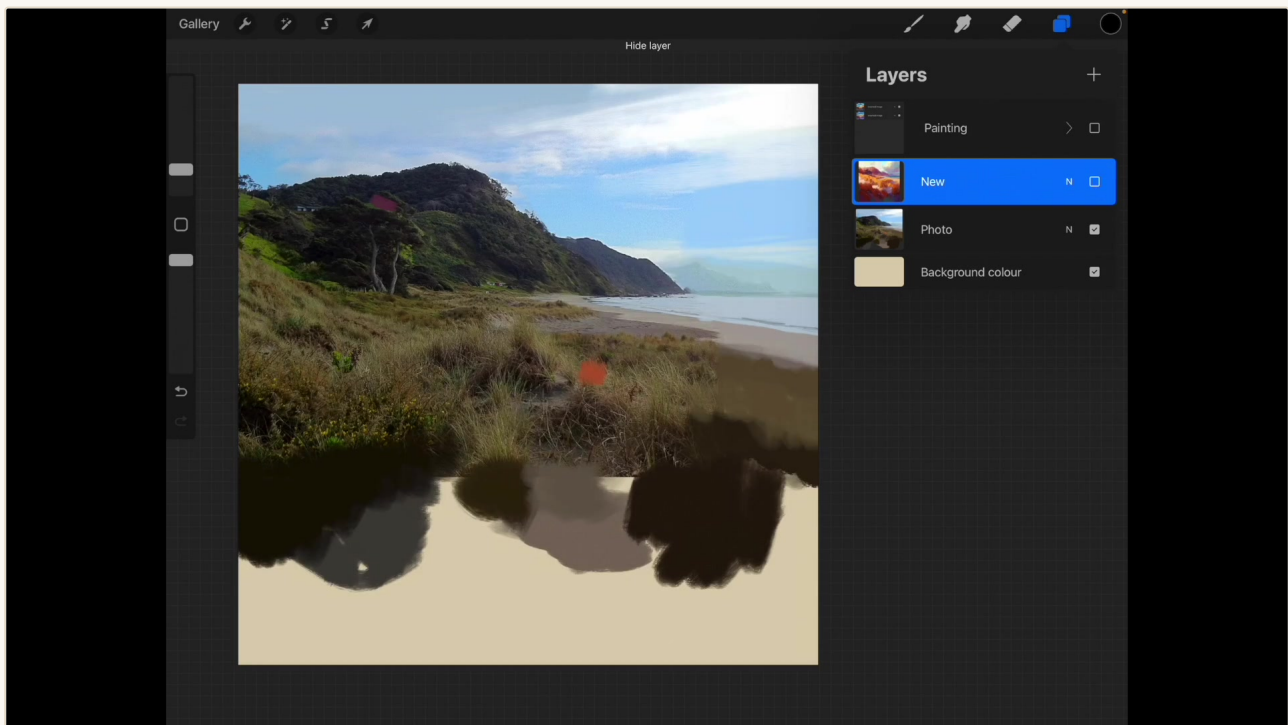
Materials

Gather these materials before you start. If you don't have the exact same supplies, use what you have and substitute freely.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Atelier Interactive Acrylics
- Phthalo Blue
- Quinacridone Magenta
- Cad Red Light
- Yellow Ochre
- Cad Yellow Light
- Titanium White
- Board
- 15×15" MDF or Hardboard with 2 coats of acrylic gesso.
- Brushes
- [Rosemary & Co. Richard Robinson Brush Set](#)
- Paper Towels
- Water Jar
- Water spray bottle

1 Photo Manipulation for Design



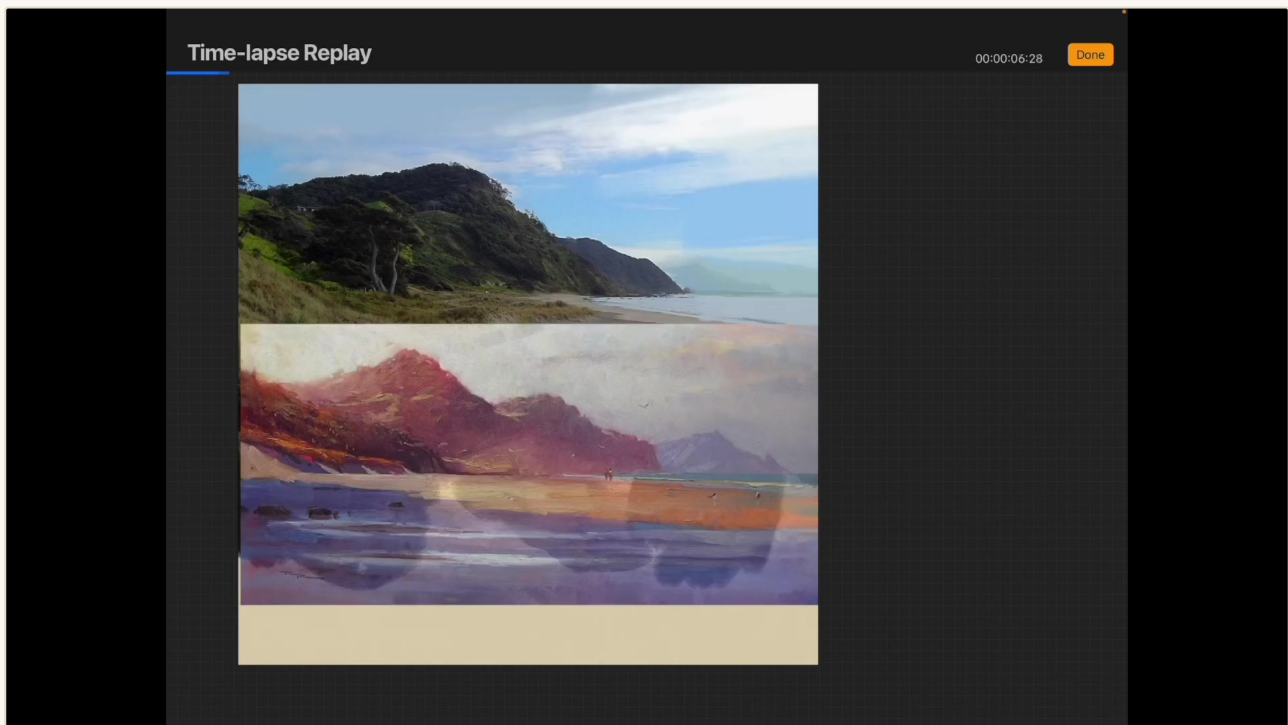
Adjust Mountain Size

Increase the size of the mountains in the distance within your digital sketch. This adjustment compensates for the distortion caused by a 35mm camera lens, which tends to shrink distant objects. Enhancing the mountain size creates a more true-to-life perspective in your artwork.

PRO TIP

Increase the size of distant objects in your digital sketch to correct camera lens distortion and achieve a realistic perspective.

2 Digital Sketch Process



Prepare Your Digital Canvas

Increase the size of your digital canvas to give yourself ample space to work. Use a photo of your previous painting as a reference and color pick some of the colors to start your new piece.

Create the Background

Add a splattery background on a separate layer over the photo. Focus on capturing the big shapes to set the stage for your painting.

Design an Interesting Foreground

Sketch interesting organic shapes in the foreground. Aim for a design that captures attention and complements the background.

Lay in the Colors

Begin laying in colors with a blocky approach, selecting from the reference painting. Increase the saturation of the colors to make them more vibrant than the original.

Work on the Foreground

Continue blocking in big shapes in the foreground. Regularly check your colors against your reference photo to maintain consistency and vibrancy.

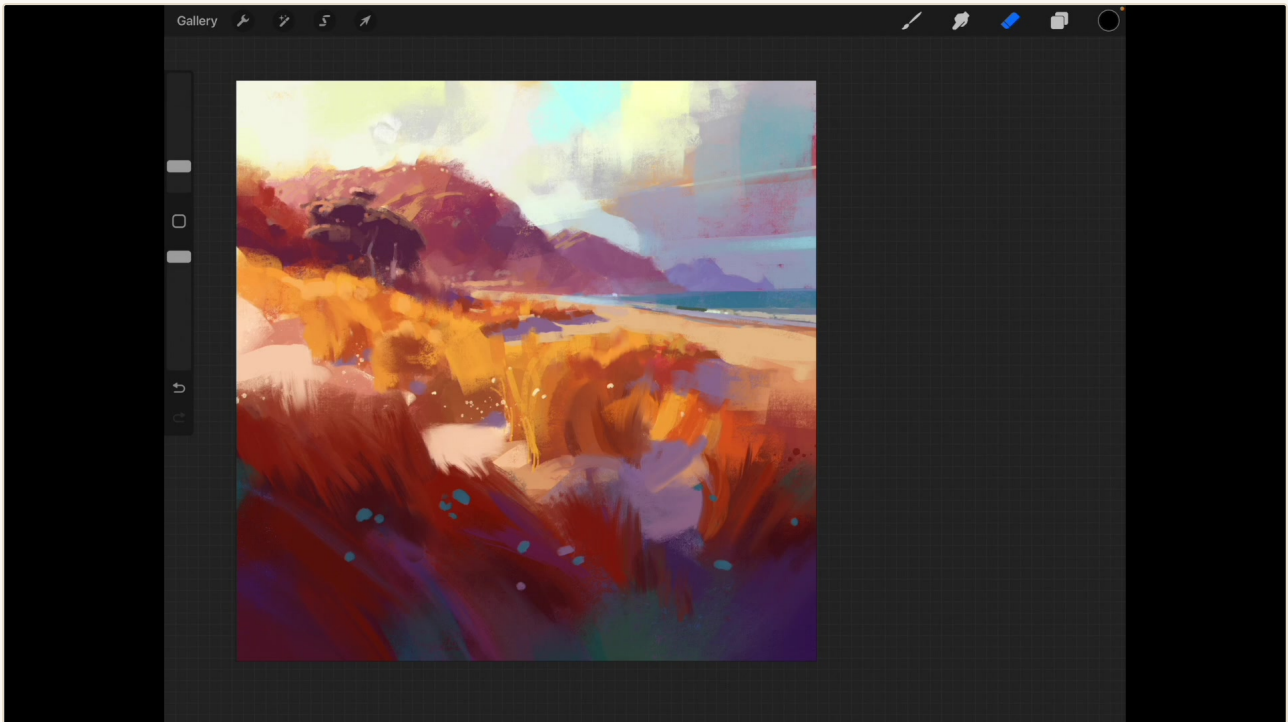
Maintain a Loose Style

Keep your style loose and painterly, avoiding the tendency to get too tight with digital tools. Compare your work with previous paintings to ensure stylistic consistency.

PRO TIP

Increase the saturation of your reference colors to achieve a more vibrant look in your digital sketch.

3 Digital vs. Traditional Painting



Understand the Differences

Recognize that traditional painting allows for 'happy accidents' with physical paint, leading to unexpected creative directions. Digital programs are improving in simulating these effects, but each has its unique characteristics.

Explore Digital Tools

Experiment with digital painting apps like Procreate, which offers a texture-based approach with layers. While it lacks the physics of wet paint, it provides a brilliant workflow for quick changes and ease of use.

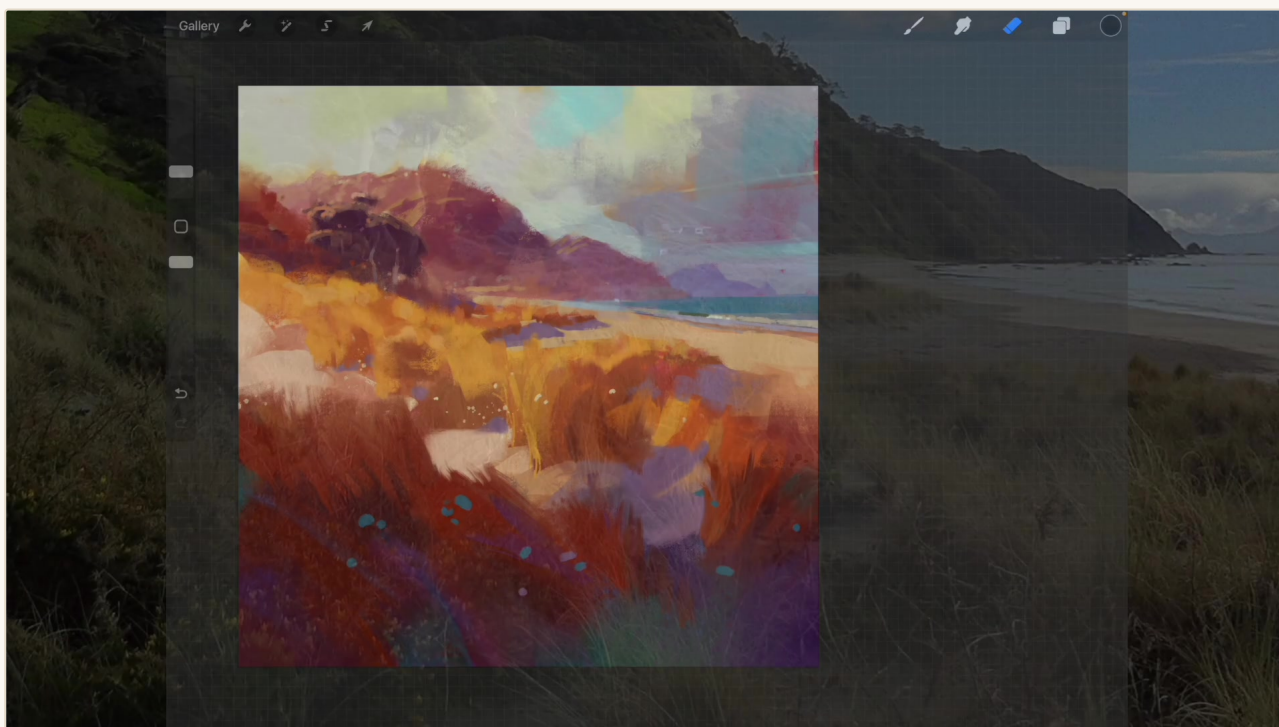
Experiment with Various Programs

Try different digital painting programs that simulate wet paint with drips, thickness, and texture. Each program offers unique features and can enhance your digital painting experience.

PRO TIP

Experiment with different digital painting programs to find the one that best suits your style and workflow preferences.

4 Base Coat and Underpainting



Prepare the Canvas

Ensure your 14-inch square board is triple primed with acrylic gesso to create a suitable surface for painting.

Apply Base Coat

Mix Quinacridone magenta, arillamide yellow, and white paint. Use a big brush to dash the paint onto the canvas, adding water to achieve a vibrant, punchy undercoat.

Enhance with White

Mix in a bit more white paint to the base coat to enhance the brightness and allow some colors to show through in the final layers.

Let the Base Coat Dry

Allow the base coat to dry completely. If using acrylics, this should take about half an hour. If using oils, expect a few days for drying.

Add Texture

Use a palette knife to create interesting textures while the paint is drying.

PRO TIP

Use a palette knife to add texture to the drying base coat for a more dynamic underpainting.

5 Painting the Sky



Prepare Your Brush

Use a one-inch synthetic brush with long bristles to hold plenty of paint. Wet the brush before starting to ensure smooth application.

Block in the Sky

Begin painting from the top down, using a mix of white and a little yellow for the brightest patch. Apply this mixture thickly, adding pure white in the corner with a hint of yellow to vary the brushstrokes.

Add Magenta

Introduce a small amount of magenta or alizarin to the sky. This color is potent, so add sparingly to achieve a strong effect without overpowering the other colors.

Incorporate Phthalo Blue

Switch to a clean brush and add a tiny touch of phthalo blue. Mix it with the existing blue to create depth, using quick, rough strokes to allow the background color to peek through.

Adjust Colors and Add Details

Switch back to the original brush and mix more white, yellow, and a touch of red. Vary your brushstrokes to create texture, then use a smaller brush to add a zippy white line connecting with the mountain's base, softening edges quickly to maintain softness in acrylics.

PRO TIP

Use quick, rough brushstrokes to let the background color show through, adding texture and depth to your painting.

6 Painting the Distant Hills



Darken the Hills

Use a slightly darker mix for the distant hills, as acrylics tend to dry darker than they appear when wet. This will help maintain the depth and contrast in your landscape.

Paint Sunlit Bushes

Mix white with a touch of yellow ochre to capture the sunlit faces of the bushes on the hillside. Apply the paint sparingly with gentle brushwork to suggest light and texture.

Define the Headland

Mix white and blue to paint the iconic Whangarei Heads. Ensure this mix is darker than the very distant hill to create a sense of depth.

Add Sea Spray

While the paint is still wet, add some white and a little blue to the bottom of the headland. This represents sea spray and softens the edge, blending it into the ocean and beach.

PRO TIP

Acrylics dry darker, so adjust your color mixes accordingly to maintain the desired contrast.

7 Foreground Bush and Trees



Add Sunlit Color to Bush

Mix a bright yellow with a touch of purple and some white to create the sunlit color of the bush. Apply this mixture to the bush area, focusing on improving the shape.

Darken and Adjust Colors

Spray your palette with water to prevent the paint from drying. Adjust the color by reducing the blue content to achieve a punchier look. Be mindful that adding white can lower the saturation and intensity.

Blend and Soften

Start with the punchy color and blend outwards while keeping the edges soft. Clean your brush frequently to maintain interesting brushwork and add a subtle glow at the bottom.

Add Sky Holes and Foliage

Create sky holes in the trees at the top, ensuring they vary in size and shape. Mix a hint of blue and green for the foliage, considering the backlighting and rim lighting effects on individual trees.

PRO TIP

Keep your palette and painting surface moist to work effectively with acrylics, especially on hot days.

8 Foreground Hill and Foliage



Mix Vibrant Hill Colors

Use a brush to mix a vibrant orange for the hill. Add a little more magenta to the mix for richness. Gradually incorporate a touch of blue and a hint of white to soften the strokes.

Blend Hill and Grass

Soften the brush strokes by blending them downward to represent grasses merging into the hill. Add a little more white, magenta, and blue to achieve a harmonious transition.

Enhance Tree with Darker Tones

Work on the tree using a slightly darker mix. Use a combination of large and small brush strokes to build a family of textures. Carve out interesting shapes by pushing back into the negative spaces.

PRO TIP

Use a combination of large and small strokes to create texture and depth in foliage.

9 Painting the Ocean



Mix Light Foliage Color

Combine yellow ochre, white, and a bit of purple to create a light foliage color. Add a touch of blue to enhance the mixture. This combination will capture the sunlight striking the top of the tree.

Apply Foliage Highlights

Dab the mixture onto the tops of the clumps to simulate sunlight hitting the foliage. Use a smaller brush for precision and to add catch lights that suggest the sun's presence.

Prepare for Ocean Painting

Ensure your brushes remain wet to maintain fluidity in your strokes. While the foliage is still slightly wet, prepare to paint the ocean, allowing for a seamless transition between elements.

PRO TIP

Keep brushes wet to maintain fluidity and ease of blending.

10 Beach and Water Details



Mix Blue and White

Mix blue with white to create a shade slightly darker than the headland in the background. Use a crisp flat brush for interesting brushwork.

Add Yellow for Green Tint

Add a tiny touch of yellow to the blue and white mix to push it towards a green tint. Keep the application flat and horizontal for a natural look.

Highlight with White

Add white to the mix using just the very edge of the brush. This will create the effect of sunlight catching the spray, adding small chinks of interest.

Create Grey for Wet Sand

Mix some purple to create a grey tone for the wet sand. Ensure the tone is distinct from the water to highlight the wetness of the sand.

Add Yellow Ochre to White Foam

Mix clean white with a touch of yellow ochre to mimic the golden light on the white foam. Flatten the paint and gently drag it to create a ridge effect.

Reflect Foam on Wet Sand

Use a slightly dulled down color to make little down strokes, reflecting the foam in the flat wet sand.

Add Thin Wave Details

Mix a little yellow with blue to create a thin wave line, adding subtle interest for the viewer's eye.

Create Brown for Distant Marks

Mix purple and orange to create a brown. Use this for very thin marks along the distant beach, gradually thickening them as they come closer.

PRO TIP

Use the edge of the brush to create sunlight-catching effects on the spray for added interest.

11 June Grasses Base Layer



Block in the Base Shape

Use yellow ochre to block in a large shape for the June grasses. Add more red as you move away from the light to create a soft shadow effect. Pay attention to the direction of your brush strokes to mimic the appearance of grasses.

Consider Brush Stroke Layers

Think about both the top and bottom of your brush strokes, as they can represent grasses or sand. This will help in creating a more realistic texture and depth in your painting.

Add Stronger Colors

Mix yellow and white with a bit of yellow ochre, and possibly some red, to add stronger colors to the grasses. Use brisk strokes to convey the feeling of grass, varying the size of the strokes to create different levels of detail.

PRO TIP

Use brisk, varied brush strokes to create the illusion of grass and depth in your painting.

12 Adding Color Variation to Grasses



Load Your Brush with Paint

Load your brush with more paint and avoid over-mixing on the palette. This technique creates more interesting brush strokes with varied textures.

Introduce Cooler Tones

Add a little greener feel to the grasses by incorporating cooler colors. This adds interest by contrasting with the warm tones.

Enhance with Warm Colors

Mix a lot of red with some magenta and a touch of blue. Apply these colors in big, thick brushstrokes to create a dark, rich texture.

Add Water for Texture

Add some water to the paint and let it dribble down the canvas. This technique enhances the textural feel of the brushstrokes.

PRO TIP

Load your brush with more paint and avoid over-mixing to create varied and interesting brush strokes.

13 Shadows and Details in Grasses



Mix Blues for Shadows

Switch to a different brush to work on the blues. Add a little magenta and white to the mix. Merge this into the dark areas to create interesting shadow tones.

Enhance with White

Add more white to the mix and a bit of water. Brush upwards into the dark areas to blend smoothly.

Switch Brushes for Detail

Wash your brush and switch to another one. Use a touch of white to highlight specific areas.

Refine Shadow Tones

Add more white and blue to your mix. Use this to paint shadows and refine the sand around the area.

PRO TIP

Use a touch of white to highlight specific areas for added depth.

14 Painting the Sand



Mix the Darkest Sand Color

Begin with a base of white and add a small amount of orange to create the darkest version of the sand color. Adjust the mix by adding more orange and a touch of blue to make it slightly greyer as it transitions into the shadow areas.

Create the Lighter Sand Color

For the lighter sand color, mix more white with a little more yellow. Use this mixture to brush down into the tops of the dune grasses, sweeping up to suggest light filtering through the shadows.

PRO TIP

Use a combination of orange and blue to adjust the sand color as it transitions into shadow.

15 Final Touches and Accents



Add Thick Impasto Strokes

Apply thick impasto strokes at the same angle as the grasses. This will ensure the texture aligns naturally with the direction of the grass, avoiding any awkward appearance.

Create Dark Accents

Mix red, yellow ochre, and a little bit of blue to create dark accents. Use the edge of the brush to add these details among the dune grasses, enhancing depth and contrast.

Add Light Accents

Switch to a smaller brush and mix white and yellow for warmer accents. These lighter strokes should be applied where the grasses are in the light, adding a sense of sunlight and dimension.

PRO TIP

Use the edge of the brush to add fine details and accents for a more natural look.

16 Takeaways and Encouragement



Enhance Vibrancy

Don't settle for the vibrancy in the photograph. Increase the saturation of the colors on your device and paint from that. Experiment with these settings to find the level of color that suits you and aim to achieve that in your painting.

Push Color Further

Once you've reached a level of vibrancy you like, push it even further. For example, enhance areas like the red in the foreground to add more expressiveness to your work.

Paint in Series

Create multiple paintings of the same scene to understand how light and color interact. This practice helps you push ideas further in each subsequent painting, as seen in Monet's series work.

PRO TIP

Increase the saturation of colors on your device to find the vibrancy level that suits your painting style.

Summary & Key Takeaways

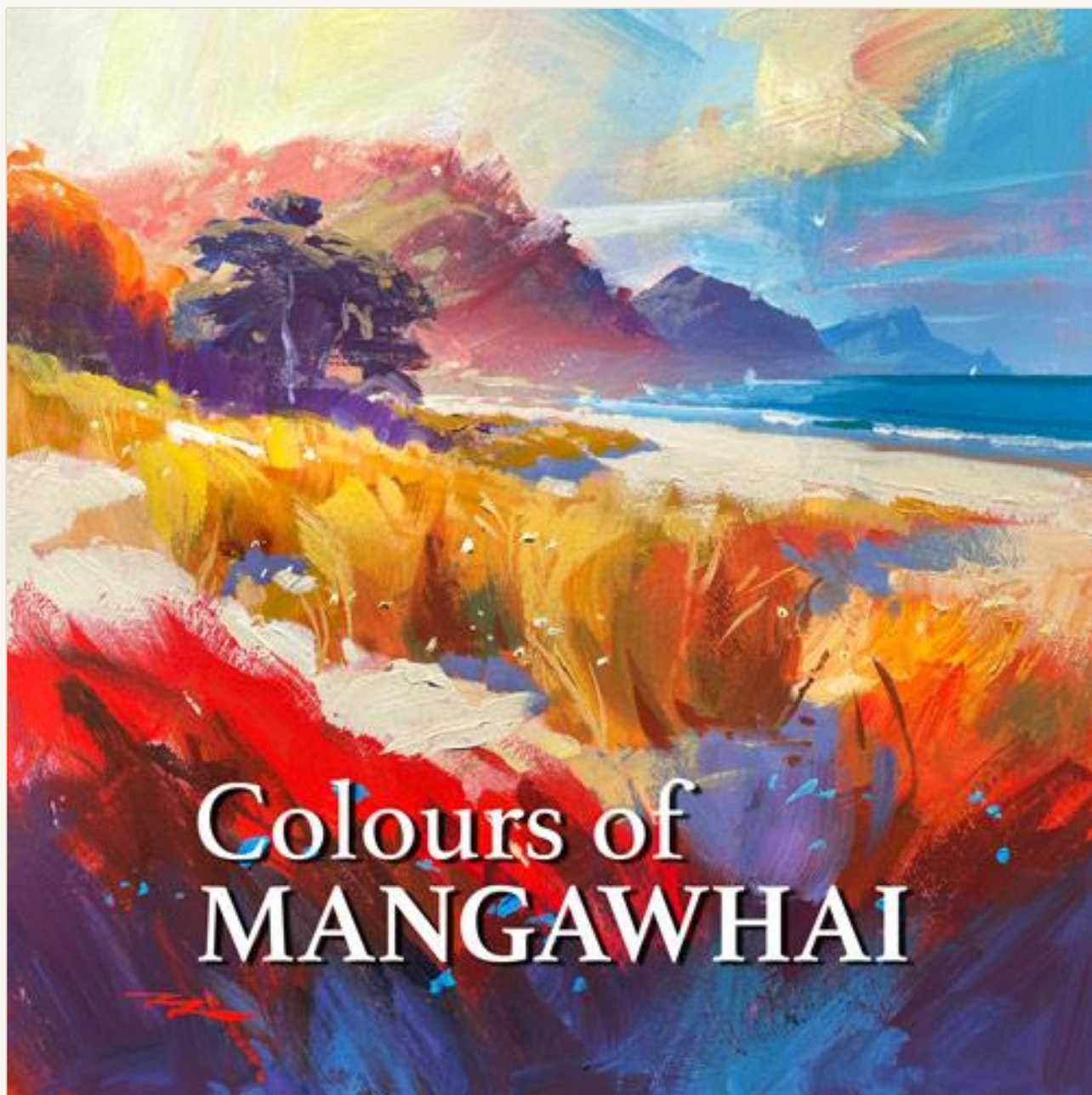
Embark on your painting journey by manipulating your reference photo to correct lens distortion, ensuring a realistic perspective. Begin your digital sketch with a vibrant and loose approach, focusing on capturing the big shapes and enhancing color saturation for a lively composition. Utilize digital tools to explore different styles and effects, maintaining consistency with your previous works while allowing room for creative exploration.

Transition to traditional painting by preparing your canvas with a dynamic underpainting, using bold strokes and textures to set the tone. As you paint the sky and distant hills, pay attention to color mixing and brushwork to create depth and atmosphere. Embrace the unique qualities of acrylics, adjusting your colors to account for drying shifts and using quick strokes to let background colors peek through.

In the final stages, focus on the foreground elements, adding texture and detail to the bushes, trees, and grasses. Use varied brush strokes and color variations to bring life to the scene, ensuring a seamless transition between elements like the ocean and beach. Finish with thoughtful accents and shadows, enhancing the natural look and feel of your landscape. Remember to experiment with color saturation and embrace the vibrant possibilities in your painting.

LESSON POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Increase the size of distant objects in your digital sketch to correct camera lens distortion.
- Increase the saturation of your reference colors for a more vibrant digital sketch.
- Experiment with different digital painting programs to find the best fit for your style.
- Use a palette knife to add texture to the drying base coat.
- Use quick, rough brushstrokes to let background color show through.
- Adjust your color mixes for acrylics, which dry darker.
- Keep your palette and painting surface moist to work effectively with acrylics.
- Load your brush with more paint and avoid over-mixing for varied brush strokes.



Colours of MANGAWHAI

"Colours of Mangawhai" 14x14" Acrylic on Board by Richard Robinson