



Hello lovely!

Thank you for being here today, I want to wish you a groovy Christmas, wonderful holiday season and a spectacular New Year! :D May the New Year bring you lots of creative inspiration, love, abundance and beauty!

In this mini workshop I share with you how I created a cute little whimsical **Christmas Girl** on a snowy/ wintery background. I also go over how you can use your painting to create fun and personalised Christmas cards over at moo.com.

I hope you enjoy this little workshop and I hope it gets you in the mood for the festive season.

Lots of love!

Tam x

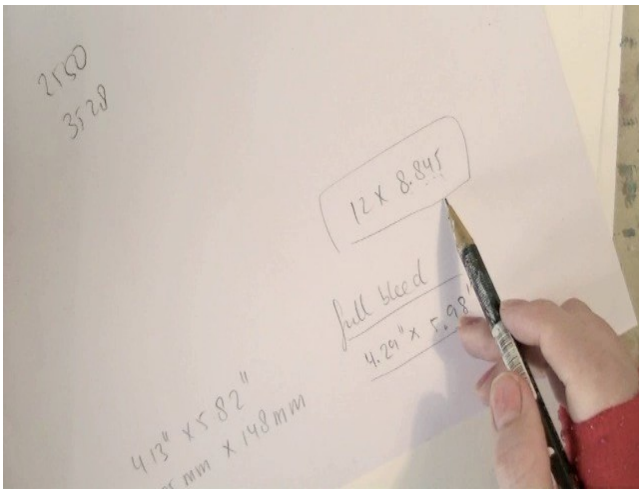




For this lesson I have used the following supplies:

- 2 Pieces of hot-pressed watercolour paper by Daler-Rowney – The Langton – 140 lbs
- Graphite Mechanical Pencil: 2b/ Graphite Crayon
- Water-soluble Crayons by Caran D'ache – Neocolor II
- Acrylics paints – Daler Rowney & Golden
- A mix of watercolour pencils by Derwent & Caran D'ache
- Gel pens by Uniball (black for the eyes, red for the mouth)
- Gel Medium: Impasto Matt by Daler-Rowney
- A toothbrush or brush with white acrylics ink (or diluted acrylics) for splatter effect
- A variety of other paint brushes, my favs are: “Pro Arte Acrylix – England”
- Gold shimmer paints by Golden, Pearl Mica Flakes by Golden (but glitter works too)
- Collage materials: scrapbooking papers, old book pages
- Transparent paper and tracing paper to transfer the background
- Letraset Aquamarkers
- If you want to add glitters digitally, you'll need Photoshop

Please note: you do not need all the same materials I have listed in order to do this course. Many of the materials are easily replaceable with other materials. For instance, you can use standard watercolour paints instead of the crayons, or you can use modge podge instead of gel medium. If you are on a low budget, check if you already have some supplies you can use instead of the ones listed above. The only item I would not compromise on is the type of paper. It doesn't matter if you use hot-pressed or cold pressed, but the weight of the paper is important. Because you will use a lot of collage/ glue and water on your page go for at least 140 lbs to prevent warping. It's also a good idea to go for a medium good brand of watercolour paper (recommended brands: Daler-Rowney/ Windsor & Newton/ Fabriano/ Canson/ Strathmore) as some of the lesser quality brands produce paper that really does not withstand the amount of layering and painting we'll do in this lesson.



Before we start on the art creating, if you want to use your art to create Christmas cards on [moo](#), you may want to adjust the size of your paper so that it matches your cards exactly. I didn't, but 12 x 9" means that [moo](#) will crop my painting just a tad. If you're cool with that too stick with the 12 x 9 size, but if you want to make sure your exact painting is used, you may want to cut a little bit of your paper before starting. To get an exact match, cut your paper to: 12 x 8.845 inches.

Let's start with sketching our whimsy girl.

2 Things that make your characters more whimsical looking are:

1. Distortion/ Exaggeration of features: ie: larger heads/ smaller mouths/ noses/ round head shapes, more elongated head shapes etc.
2. Using simplistic shapes: rectangles for bodies, simple circles for heads etc.





We will be cutting out the girl to avoid her getting splattered later on, nevertheless, I sketched in the background and the river to get a feel for where everything would be. I recommend you do the same, but just do it 'sketchily' (ha), rather than all detailed as we're going to replicate the background on your other piece of paper, we're just sketching it at this point as a guidance.

Girl Sketching

Step 1. I first started with a head, I used a circular shape, but you can play with different shapes like more oval or elongated.



Step 2. I drew a warm wintery coat for her with a big collar and a scarf around her neck. I added fun accessories to her coat, like buttons and a ruffle at the bottom.



Step 3. To sketch her facial features in, I drew a slightly curved line vertically through the circle a third into the circle (this is because her face is 3-quartered rather than facing us).



Step 4. To determine the placement of the eyes, I drew a slightly curved line horizontally through the middle of her face.



Step 5. For the nose and the mouth, I drew 2 more horizontal lines through the bottom half of the her face and then through the bottom of that half too.

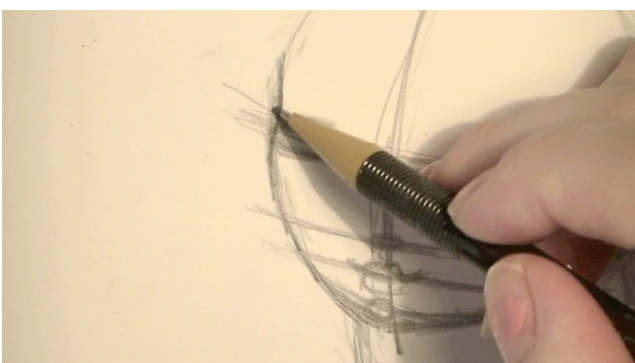


NOTE: if you want to develop your own whimsical style, play with the placement of the facial features. On a practise piece of paper, try different placements, for instance: place the eyes higher in the face, or the mouth lower etc. See what you like and don't like. This is how you develop your own style.

Step 6. As we're doing a 3 quarter face the left eye is placed quite closely to the left cheek on the first horizontal line and the right eye is placed in the middle of the right half of the face. As there are no real rules in whimsical creation, you can play with these placements, but those are how I like it. The nose and the mouth are placed on the crossings of the horizontal and vertical lines.



Step 7. A 3 quarter face often shows a little 'face dip' by the eye, so I drew that too.



Step 8. I then erased my sketch lines and started building up the eyes, nose and mouth. For eyes: make sure not to fully expose the iris and pupil. They are usually partly obscured by the upper eyelid.



Step 9. Hair doesn't usually sit straight on top of the skull line. There is usually a bit of extra space between the hair and the skull line. I went for cute little buns, but you can go for another hair style.



Step 10. I also added ear muffs and firmed up the pencil lines of her body.



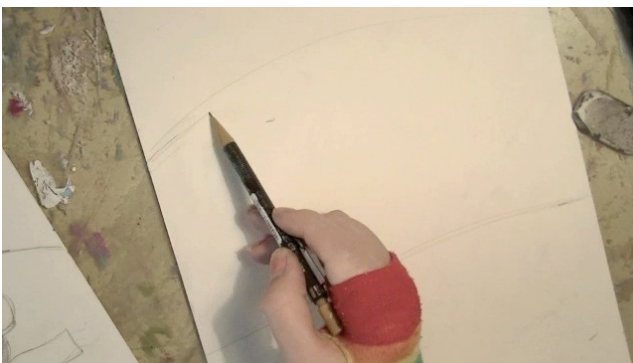
Once you are done with sketching your girl and you are happy with her, we will be starting on the background. We are going to replicate the background sketched on the page with the girl onto your other piece of paper.



Step 1. The easiest and most accurate way to transfer your background to your other piece of paper is by using some transparent paper and some tracing paper. I couldn't find my transparent paper, so I re-sketched the background simply based on eye sight, but if you have transparent paper, do it that way for most accuracy.



Step 2. Add some collage. Choose some scrapbooking paper that you like the look of to collage into the hill.



Step 3. To get an exact shape of the hill use the transfer technique again so you can trace over your scrapbooking paper. My piece wasn't quite big enough to cover the entire hill, so I used some torn pieces as well which I liked the effect and texture of.



Step 5. I used some book pages for the river and added some colour to the river and the sky. I used watercolour crayons and the letraset markers for the colours.



Step 4. Glue down your scrapbooking papers.





Shading the Face



Step 1. I usually start with a layer of watercolour crayon or pencil in a light colour like salmon or light pink.



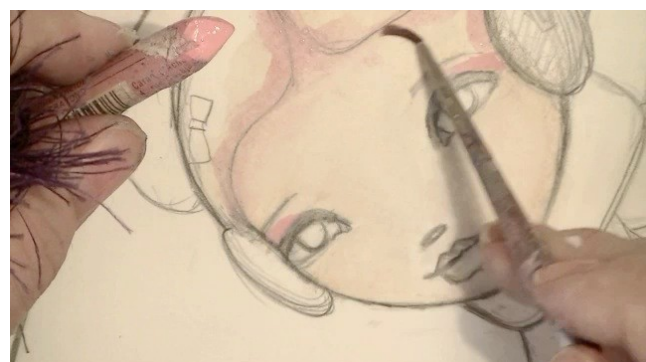
Step 2. Activate your layer with a brush and water.



Step 3. I then added some white acrylics while the layer was still wet, I don't always do that. I go with what I feel like on the day. You may want to play with these steps too.



Step 4. I then started building up the layers by adding darker layers in the areas where I expected darker shading to be.



Step 5. I used a Derwent pencils for the mouth and I used that same pencil for some more darker shading on the face.



Step 8. I used a black fine line pen to darken the pupils and the upper eyelid.



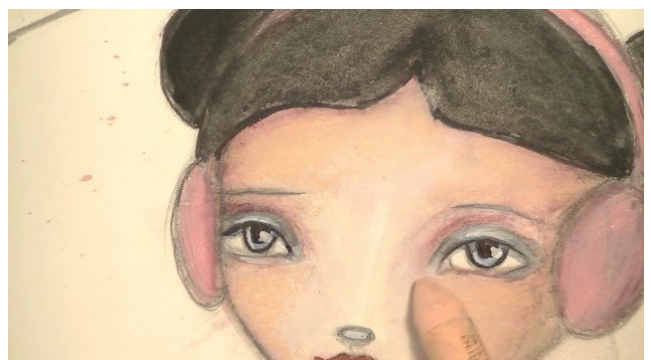
Step 6. With a letraset marker I coloured the eyes.

Step 9. I created highlights with a thin brush and some white acrylics. Add highlights to the eyes, nose, chin and nose bridge for depth.



Step 10. As a final touch I added back in some salmon again as I thought her face was a little too red, but you may not need to do that depending on what colours you used for your shading.

Step 7. I used a black watercolour crayon for the hair.





Step 12. I add some highlights to her hair with white acrylics.



Step 13. I added colour to her clothes with watercolor crayons and added depth with watercolour pencils. The shoes and skates were done with a fine liner pen.



Continuing on the background

Step 1. Once the background was dry, I drew some extra elements like the little houses and the tree.



Step 2. To make the background more snowy/ wintery looking I added a layer of gesso over the entire page (don't be scared!) and then used a baby wipe (or a wet rag/ cloth) to wipe off most of the gesso again. This give a milky/ snowy look to your background.



Step 3. Once I was happy with how 'snowy/ wintery' the background looked I added more colour to the background/ sky/ hill/ river/ the houses and the tree. I also added baubles to the tree and gold paint onto the stars in the sky.





Creating a snowy splatter effect



Once you are happy with the background you've created, you can create a white snowy splatter effect using a toothbrush or a paintbrush by dipping it into white acrylic inks (or water/ diluted acrylics) and scraping the brush with a blunt implement. Note: scrape the implement toward you and the splatter will splatter *away* from you. For bigger splats, simply dip your brush into the ink/ diluted paint and shake the paint brush over the area you want the splats to be.



Step 1. When you are happy with your background and your girl, cut out your girl and glue her down onto your background.



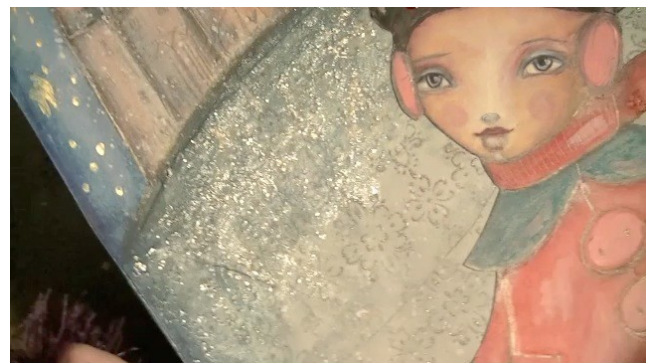
Step 2. I added the skates separately to her shoes again as the cutting out was too fiddly! I also added a shadow under her.



Step 3. I tidied up her hair with a black pen and added some bows to her hair with golden fluid acrylics.



Step 4. I added glitter and mica to the background and the river for extra Christmas/ Winter sparkle.



Et Voila, here is your finished painting! :D)



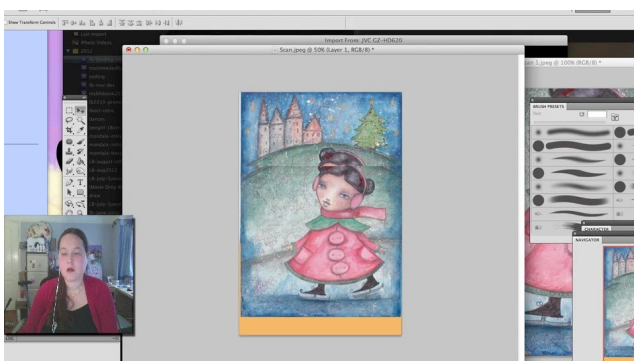


If you want to use your painting to make Christmas cards out of, you can do so on moo.com. Below I describe how to go about doing that. I also show you how I touch up my painting in photoshop a bit. You will need some photoshop experience to be able to do that too though, however if you don't have PS experience, if you can take a good photo of your painting and have someone help you crop it, you can still create some Christmas card with them without doing my touch up steps in Photoshop. I am unable to give detailed guidance on how to work Photoshop. If you want to learn more about that program please sign up to my Digital Dreams course in which I go into great detail on the ins and outs of Photoshop.

Step 1. Scan your painting in 2 parts.



Step 2. 'Knit' the 2 parts of your painting together in Photoshop. Tip: use the opacity tool to see through one of the parts to accurately put them together.



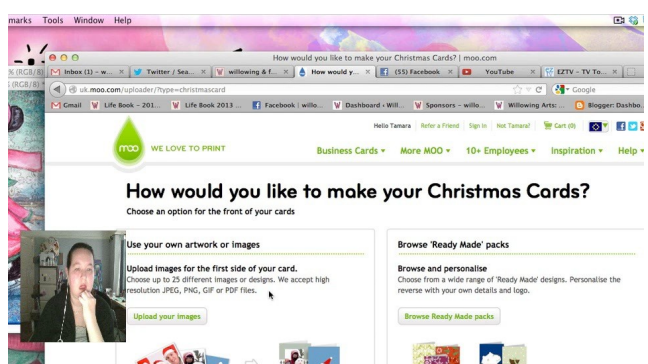
Step 3. If you want, you can add some more

glittery effects in Photoshop using some sparkle brushes (see the thread to download the brushes).

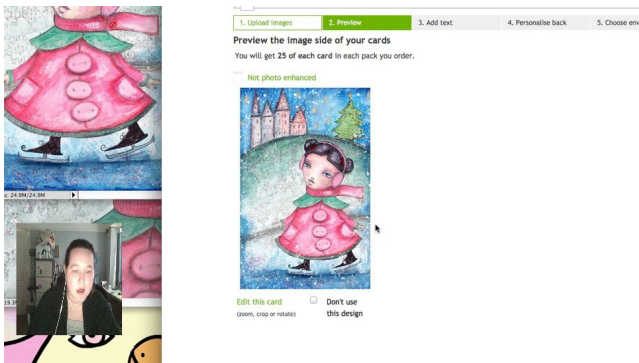


Step 4. Once you are happy with your painting in photoshop, save it as a large jpeg file.

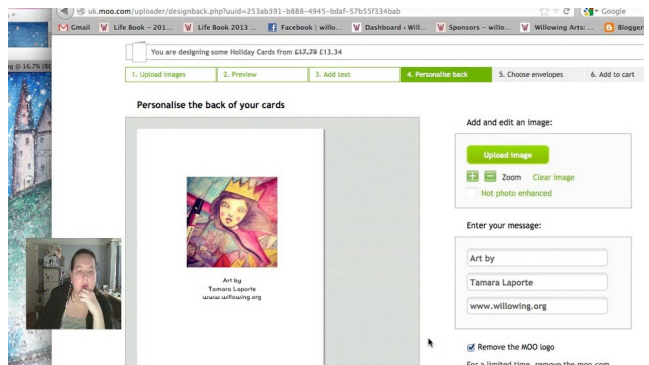
Step 5. Go to moo.com and choose 'make Christmas Cards'.



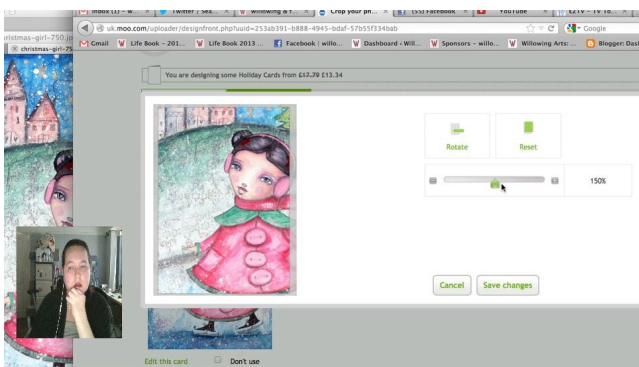
Step 7. Navigate to the folder you've saved your painting in and upload your painting.



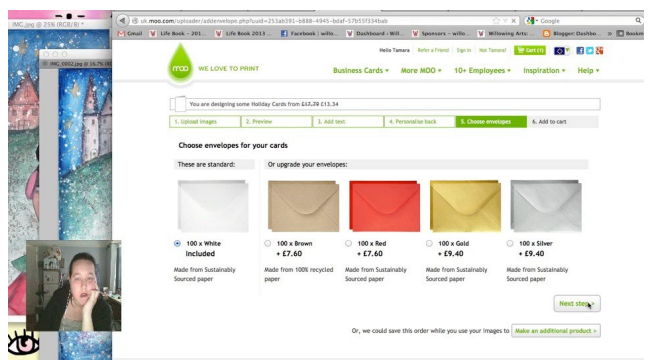
Step 10. Add your information on the back of your card and an image is optional.



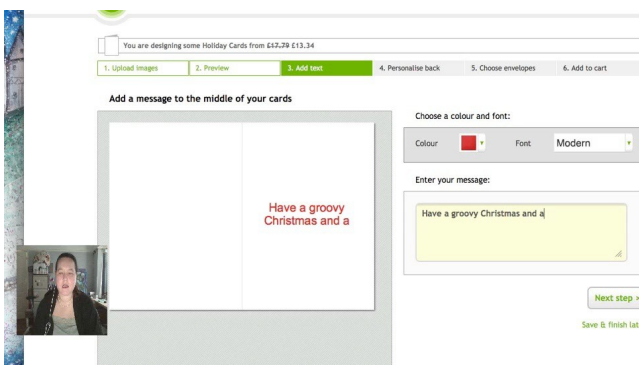
Step 8. Make adjustments to your images should you want to.



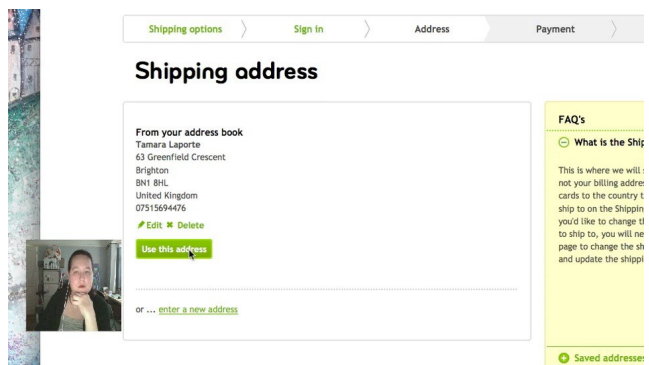
Step 11. Choose the type of envelopes you want.



Step 9. Add a festive message to your card.



Step 12. Enter your shipping address and pay! :)



[Enter the Christmas Card Swap by clicking here](#) if you want to swap one of your own card with another group member! :) Make sure though that you sign up before 10th December so that we have enough time to send out the cards. :)





Thank you so much for being with me today!

I deeply appreciate your contributions and you joining me on my courses.

I hope you enjoyed this Christmas Whimsy lesson today! :)

If you'd like to learn more in depth with me, I teach courses on how to do portraits,

whimsical creatures, journalling and digital art too!

For more information about my other courses, take a peek here:

<http://www.willowing.org/art-classes/>

Lots of love and gratitude,

Tam

xoxox

