



RAINDROPS AND ROSES

Introduction

There are few coloring effects that are more spectacular than water drops. There's just something about creating the effect of water that makes us go, "wow!".

Perhaps it recalls stored memories of early morning sunrises and the smell of fresh dew on grass. But whatever the reason, whenever an image has well rendered water drops in it, the picture seems overwhelmingly satisfying both to the colorist and the viewer.

In this class I'm going to show you everything you need to know to create beautiful water drops. We will look at a variety of methods and techniques, and in the end we'll create an image of stunning beauty.

So let's get to it :)

Copic Colors Used For Coloring The Page

(Refer to the color conversion chart for non Copic alternatives)

T4

T6

RV00

RV02

RV25

RV34

V04

V06

0 Colorless Blender

Black Sharpie

White Gouache

Note for colored pencil users:

Throughout this class I'll be using colorless blending fluid to lift, lighten, and manipulate colors. You can do this too. Copic's colorless blending fluid will dissolve colored pencil to a greater degree or lesser degree. Additionally, a good odorless mineral spirit will have a powerful effect on colored pencil and will allow you to mimic the effects you learn in this class perfectly.

Colorless blending fluid and odorless mineral spirits can both be applied with a cheap but stiff brush to achieve awesome effects. As always, when using a solvent of any kind be sure to have adequate ventilation!

Further, in researching this class I came across two relatively new materials specifically for colored pencil users.

Brush and Pencils Colored pencil powder blender is a non toxic dry lubricant for colored pencil that allows colored pencil users to achieve fantastic blends with minimal effort. It works best with oil based pencils but it also works well with wax based pencils. It's relatively inexpensive and available in the US from dickblick.com.

Brush and Pencil also make a special white for colored pencil users called colored pencil titanium white that looks freakin' awesome.

Finally, advanced colored pencil (ACP) textured fixative and ACP final fixatives are two new fixatives designed specifically for colored pencil users. The textured fixative allows for nearly endless layering and is really very exciting!

None of these additional materials are needed to complete this class, but they are super cool and I thought you'd like to know about them :)

Chapter One:

Basic Coloring Procedure



A quick look at this class page and you'll notice it's simply a number of rose petals stacked on top of one another. Consequently, we will be applying essentially all the same colors and techniques throughout the entire work.

In this chapter we will take an in depth look at the basic coloring procedure we will be using throughout the entire work.



Because this image represents a very close look at a rose, the drawing itself is rather abstract. When dealing with images that have very little "deep space" cues, it's often best to establish our dark shapes up front. This helps "lock down" the drawing and keeps us from getting confused later.

I indicate my darkest shadow shapes in the top part of the image with T6.



Continuing with the T6, I indicate my dark shapes in the lower right hand corner...



...and then on the left (T6).

It's important to get the shapes in early, so copy this image as closely as you can.



For the rest of this chapter, we will focus on this "center" petal and bring it to full completion.

I add T4 to the leading edge of the T6 to help soften the transition of the shadow to mid tone. I also create the cast shadows of the raindrops and indicate the core shadows of the drops with this color.

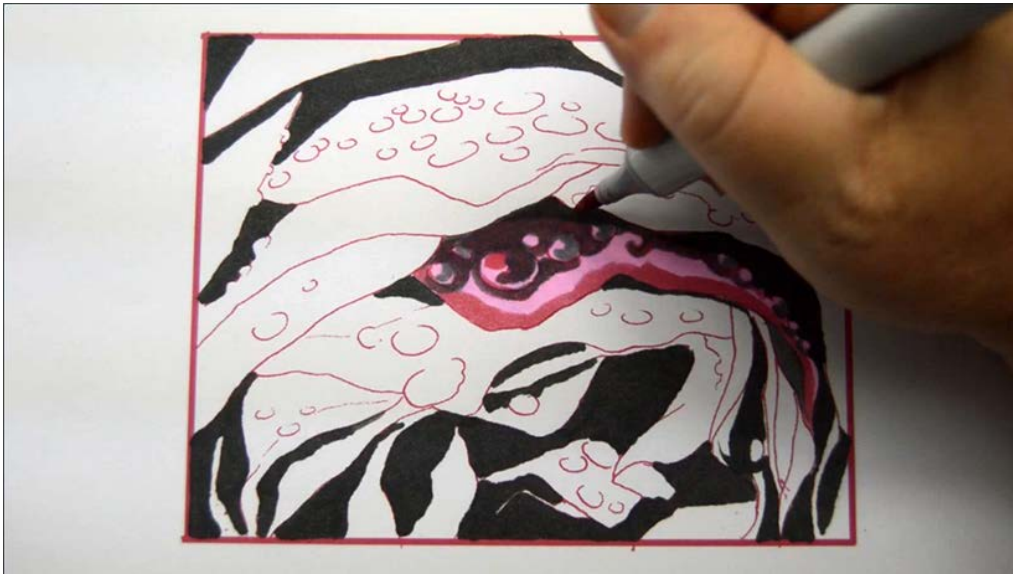
Again, try to mimic these shapes as closely as you are able.



I add RV02 to the center area of the petal, coloring in the raindrops as I go.



I add RV34 along the edge of the petal...



...and then layer the RV34 over the T4 areas I colored previously.

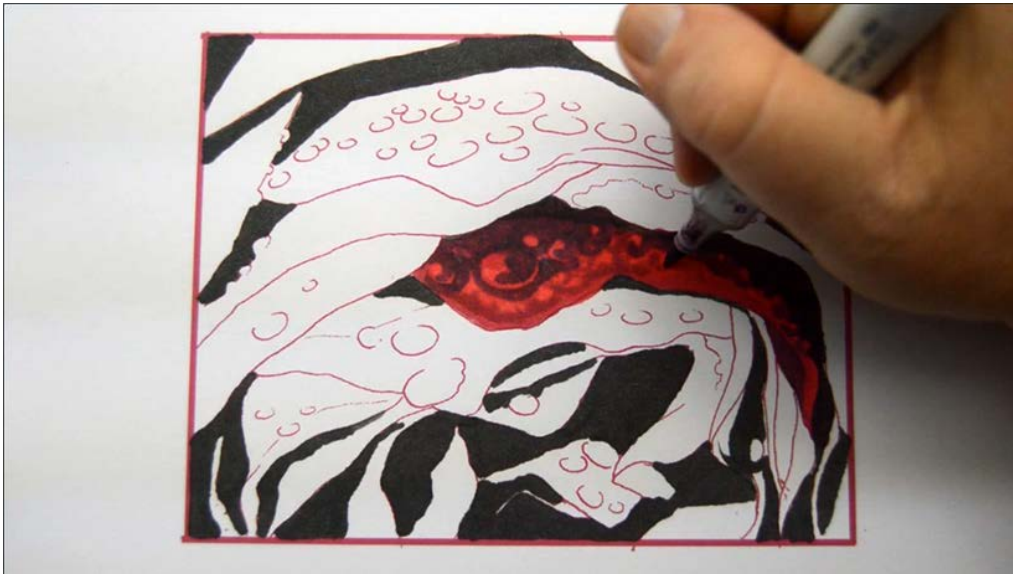


I add areas of color to the largest raindrop, then add texture dots to help the transition between the RV34 and RV02.

This texture is simply used to "rough up" the edge of the RV34 so that it disappears in later blending layers.



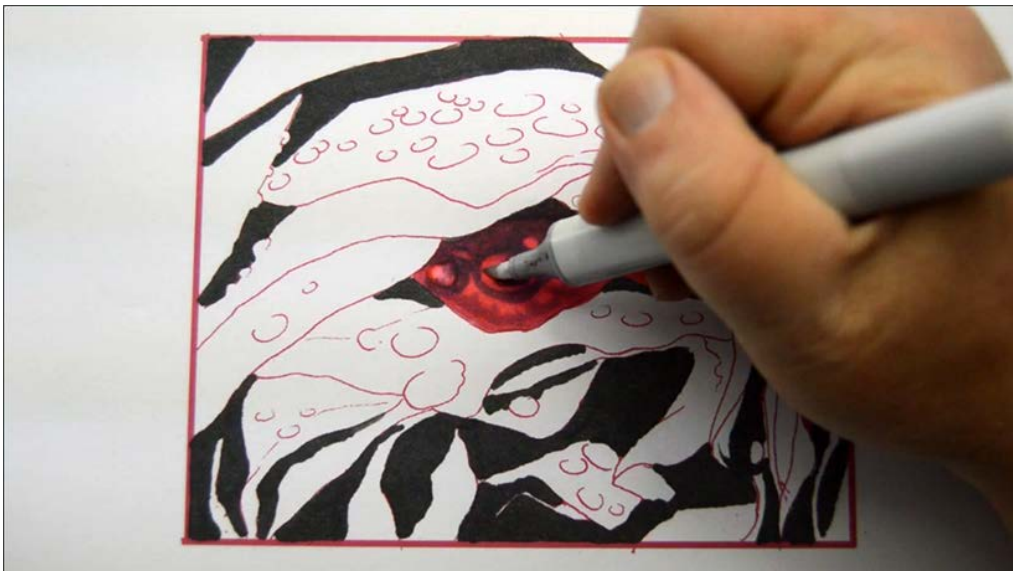
I add an overall glaze layer of RV25 to the entire petal, including all of the "T" shadow areas.



I add V06 among but inside the leading edge of the petal...



...I also create some additional open "C" shapes with this color to indicate smaller water drops. (V06)



From here we will use a solvent to "open up" the raindrops.

Colored pencil users - you should burnish your color blends smooth before proceeding to the next step.



I begin to lift and lighten the colors in the raindrops with 0 colorless blender.



I use different parts of the nib and vary both pressure and the length of time I hold the blender in any particular spot to achieve a variety of effects within the drops.

Experimentation is key here! Play, have fun. You really can't go too far since you can always add more color if you remove too much!



I add small specular highlights with white gouache.



I also add small white reflections to the lightest area of the petal... (white gouache)



...and a thin highlight to the leading edge. (white gouache)



The finished petal.

Resist the urge to make it "crisp" or detailed. Remember, the whole image looks like this so keep it soft! If you get too crisp it will look artificial, and we can always add detail to the whole image at the end.

Chapter Two:

Coloring the Other Petals



The rest of this image is comprised of petals and raindrops of similar size and shape. We will be using the same colors and techniques as we used in chapter one. Throughout the rest of this class I may vary the sequence and order of colors, but the essential lessons learned in the previous chapter are still my guiding principles.



I add T4 to create the transition from shadow to mid tone and to create the shadow areas of the raindrops.



I add RV00 to the center section of the petal. I could have used the RV02 as I did before, but I'm told variety is the spice of life :)



I add RV34...



...leaving just a little bit of the RV00 to show through.



I glaze over all my mid and dark values with RV25...



...again leaving just a little RV00 exposed.



I add texture and smaller drop shapes with V06.



I also use this color (V06) in the drops and to accentuate the shadows the drops cast on the petal.



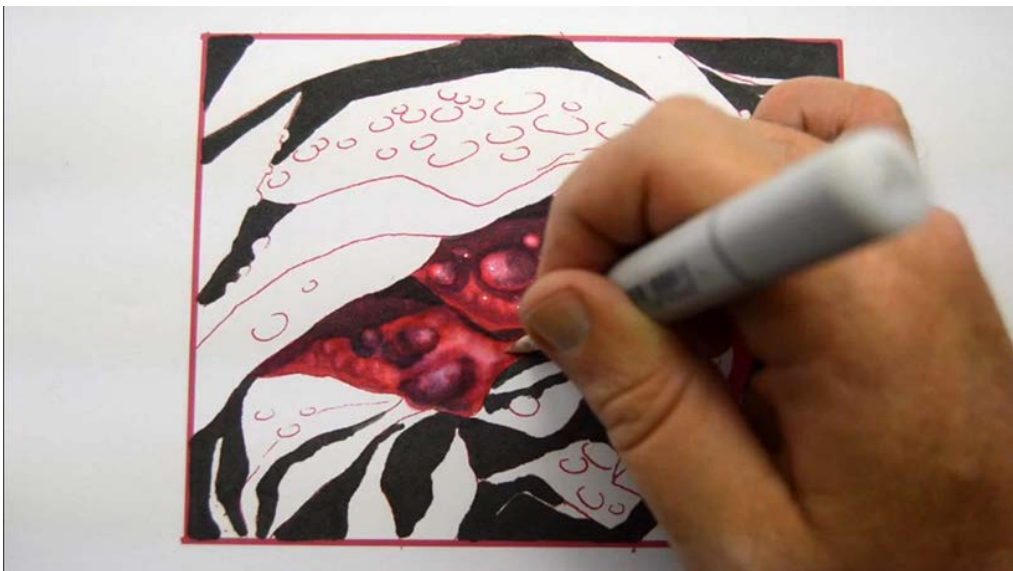
I add RV02 to the lightest areas to help blend them in a bit more...



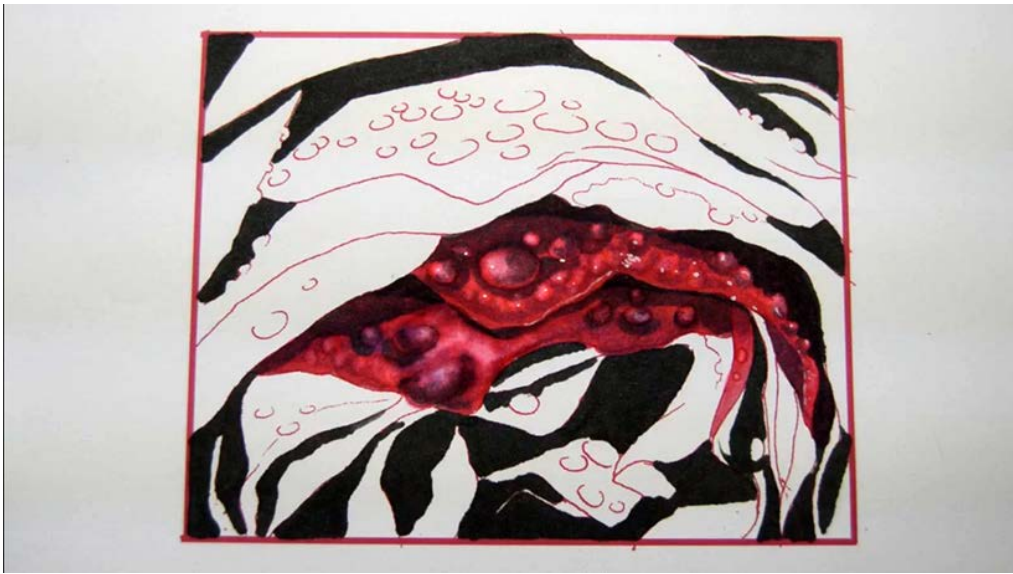
...and then go to work with my colorless blender...



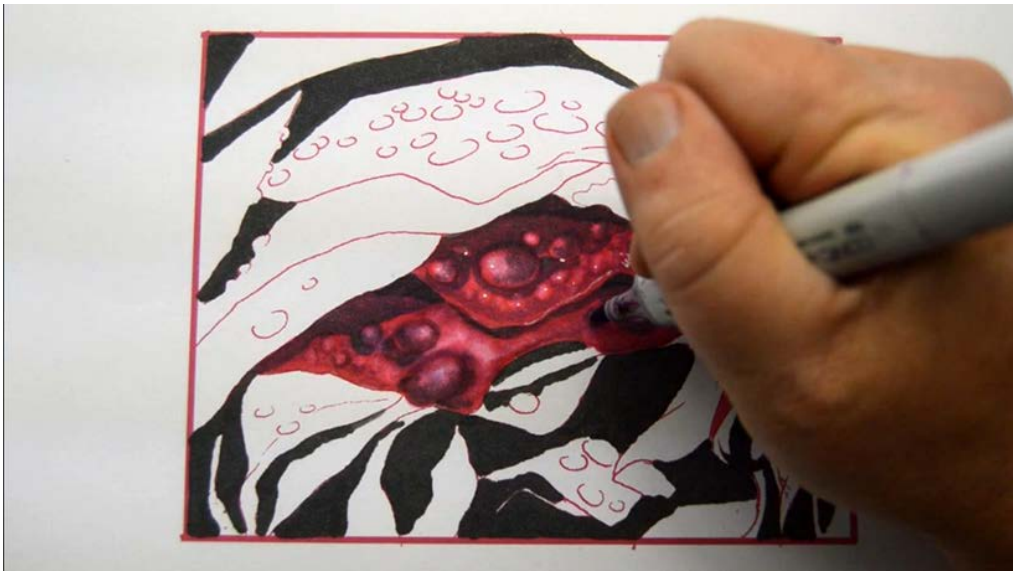
...lifting...



...lightening...



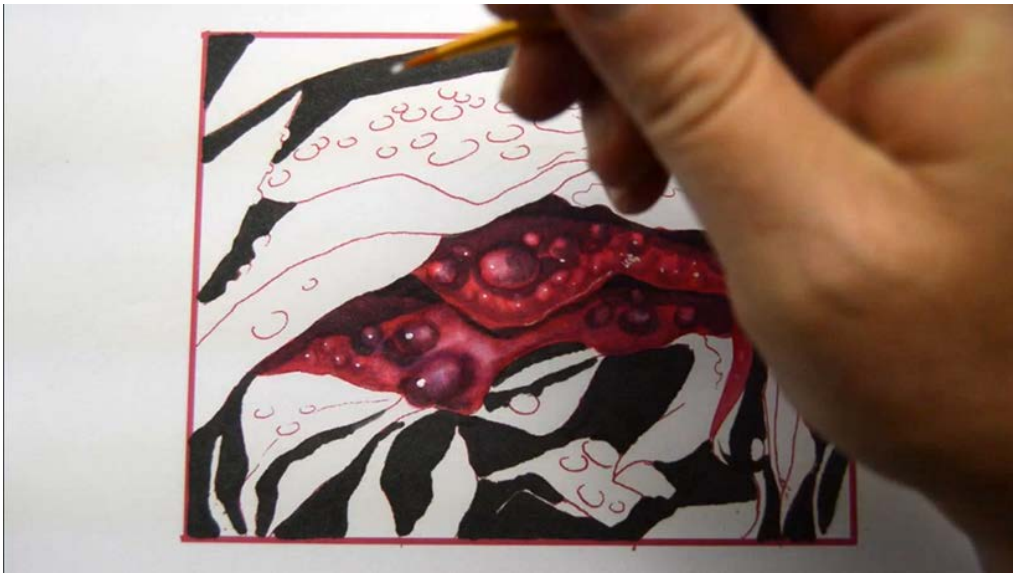
...and adding smaller drops.



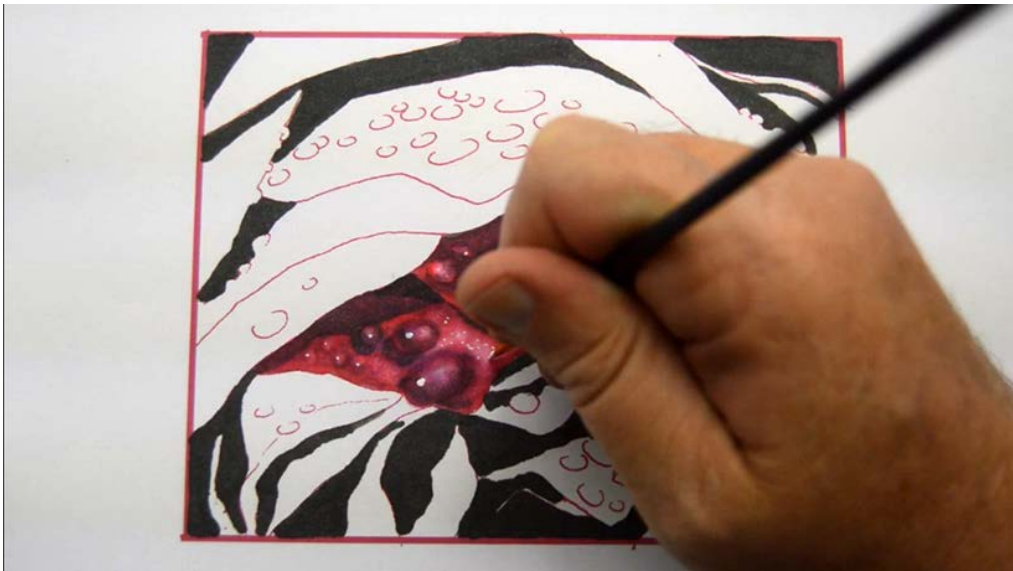
I redefine my drop shapes with V06, accentuating the shadows on the bottom edges and giving a thin line indication of the tops of the larger drops.



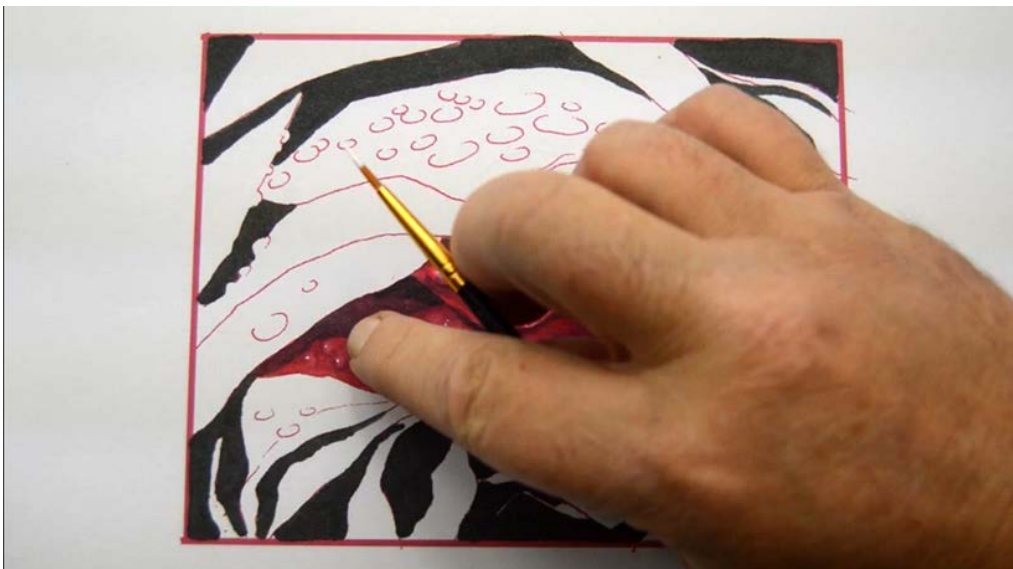
Ready for highlights!



I add strong, bright reflected lights with white gouache...



...then add smaller reflections on the light areas of the petal...



...and soften them with my finger.



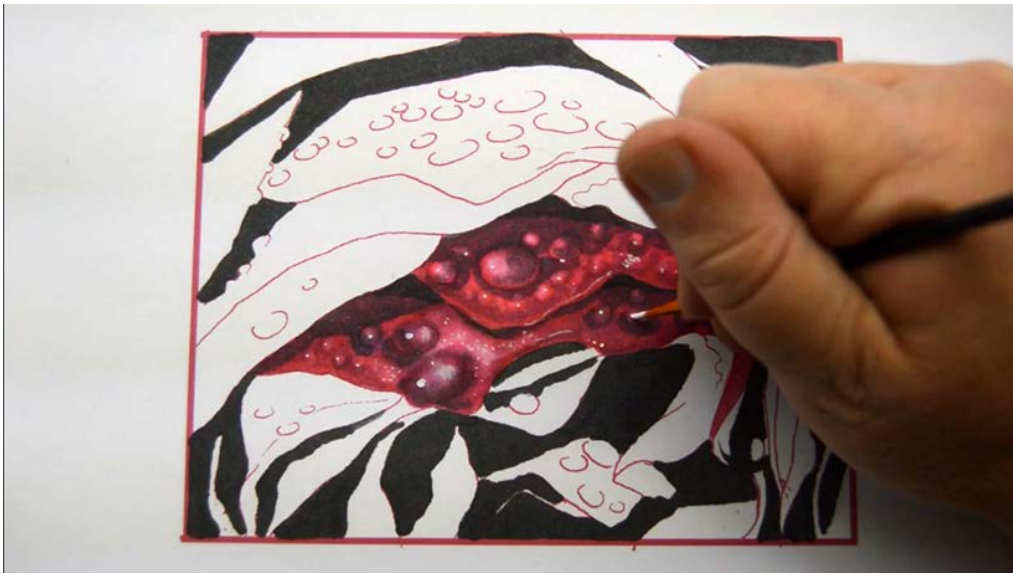
I add larger areas of white to the main water drops...



...and then soften...



...to give them just a bit more interest.



More specular highlights...



...and a little bit of white line work...

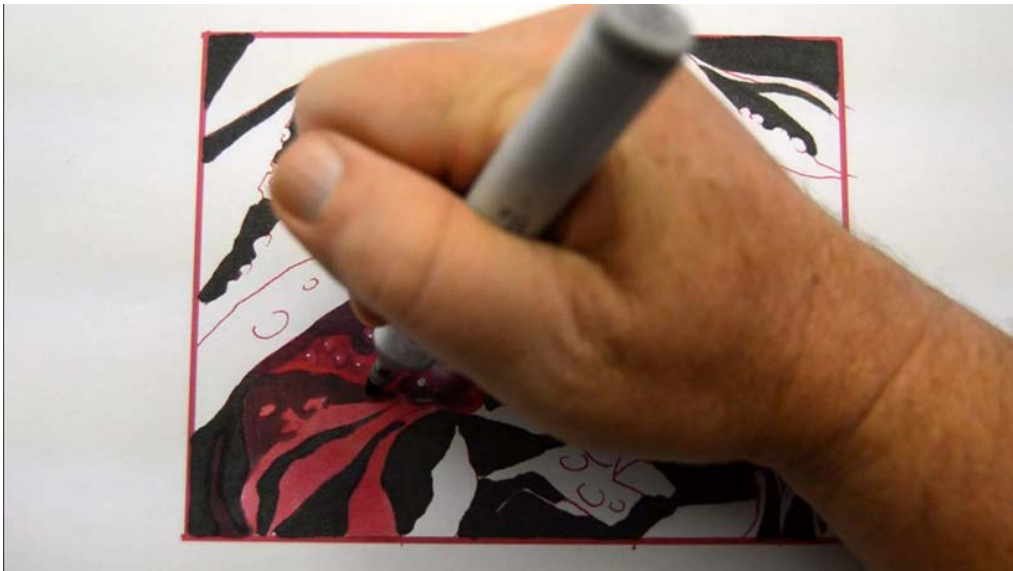


...finishes this petal off.



Because the petals on the bottom part of the image are under the petals in the center, I'll treat them a little differently.

I add a base color of RV34...



...then add my mid tones with T4...



T4



T4



I glaze the entire area with RV25. It should look something like this :)



I accentuate my darkest darks with T6...



...then add a mid tone with V04.



Reversing the color order like this has the effect of reducing the over all color saturation of this area which helps it appear to be under the other petals.



I add highlights with 0 colorless blender, intentionally using less pressure than before to make darker drops.



Rather than use white gouache for my lightest lights, I concentrate the tip of my blender to small areas to create my specular highlights.

These raindrops are in the shadows of the other petals so their highlights are darker!



I add a base of RV25 to the petals shown.



I add mid tones with V06...



...and T4...



...then lift out my lights
with 0 colorless blender.



Notice there are no strong
lights on these petals!



Moving down to the next bunch of petals, I add a mid tone of T4.



I color a base of V04...



...then glaze with RV25...



...making sure not to forget to glaze my darkest areas as well.



Ready for solvent!



I lift and lighten with 0 colorless blender...



...using varying pressure to get interesting results :)



I add darker cast shadows to the bottom of the drops...



...then add my lightest highlights with 0 colorless blender.



.I add a base color of RV34 to the next group...



...add mid tones with T4...



...glaze with RV25...



...then lift and lighten the edges with 0 colorless blender.



I add texture with V04...



...then lay in a base on the corner petals with this same color (V04).



I add T04, leaving small areas of V04 exposed.



I add darker shapes with T6...



...then glaze the whole area with RV25 to finish off the lower half of the image.



Notice how variations in the color orders produces slightly different results and adds a nice, natural looking variation to the work!



T6...



T4...



V04...



RV34.



T6...



T4...



RV34...



V04...



RV25.



I add additional raindrops with T4...



...then lift and lighten with 0 colorless blender.

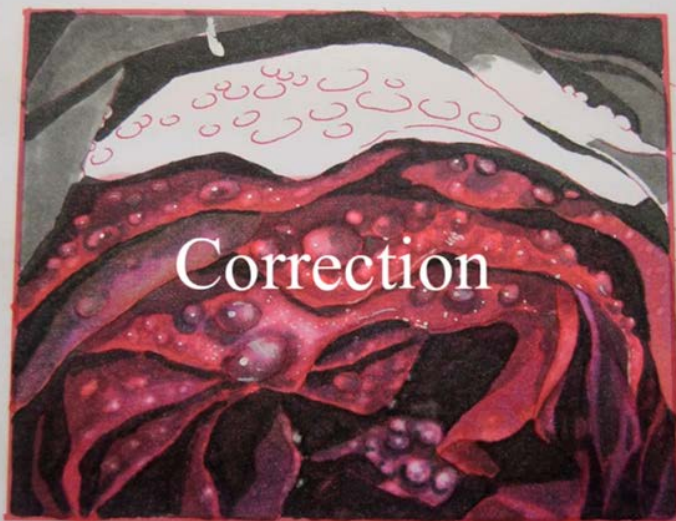


Because this petal is near the center of the image, I add highlights with the white gouache to finish it off.



In order to maintain my focal point in the center of the image, I altered the color order of the lowest petals to make them less saturated.

For the uppermost petals I again want less saturation, so I start with a base color of T4. I cover nearly all of the upper petals with this color, leaving only a small portion uncolored on the right hand side.



Did you notice that blob of white gouache at the top of the image? I have no idea how it got there, but it doesn't belong so let's remove it!



To remove white gouache from any image, simply dip a cotton swab in clean water and dab the area...



...until it's good as new :)



With the offending white blob removed, I glaze the whole upper portion of the image with RV34.



I add V06 to the only area of pure color to create a bit of texture and indicate small water drops.



I glaze the entire top portion of the image with RV25...



...then lift and lighten with 0 colorless blender creating water drops as I go...



No white gouache for this petal, but notice the "drops" in the shadows on the left!



I add T4 to the last petal...



...then RV20...



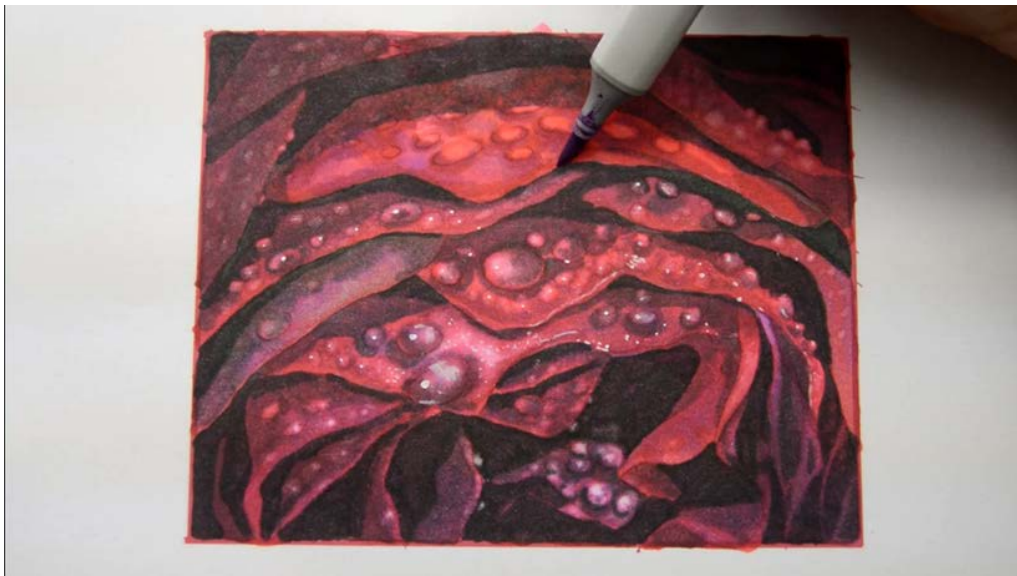
...RV34...



I add areas of V04...



...then glaze with RV25.



I accentuate the cast shadows of the raindrops with T4.



Ready for solvent!



A lift and lighten with O colorless blender...



...using different pressures and contact lengths.



Almost done :)



I restate cast shadows of the larger raindrops with V04.



After the V04.



Then I add highlights with white gouache.



For all intents and purposes the image is complete, but...



...this petal bothers me!

So I add a glaze layer of RV25...

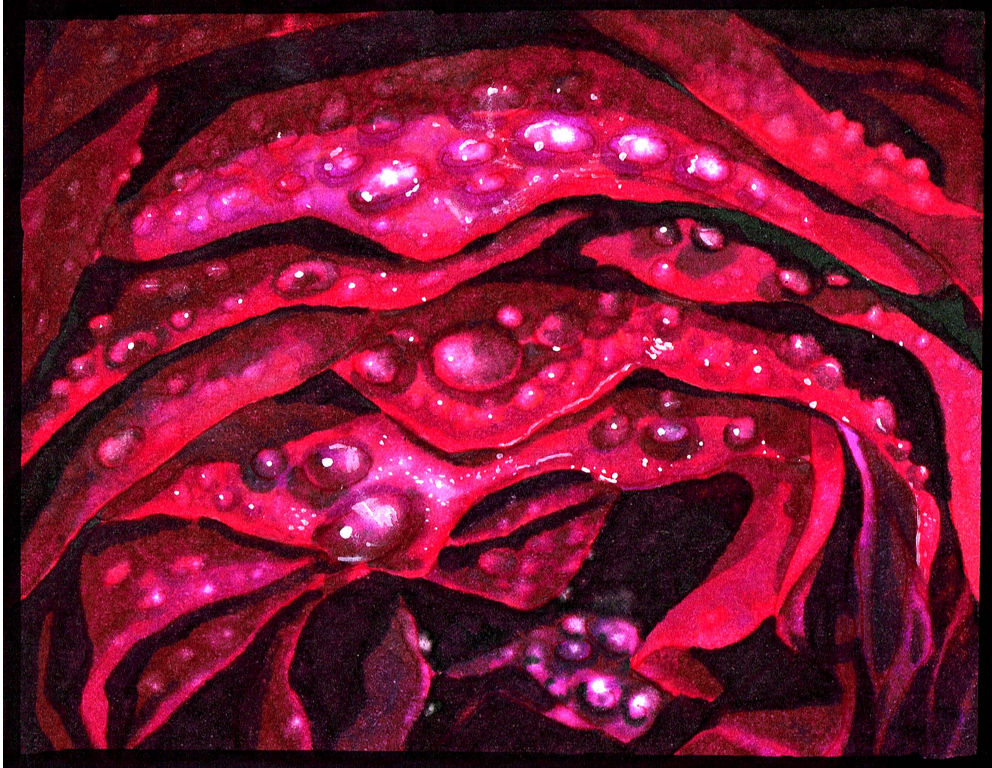


...and then add some raindrops with 0 colorless blender.



Yep, that's better!

The Finished Image



Conclusion

When creating an image like this that is a close crop of a much larger subject, the final result can be both realistic and abstract.

The abstraction comes when we focus on only a portion of the whole because in reality it would be impossible to see a rose this way in nature without the use of a mechanical aid like a camera or a viewfinder.

This combination of natural and abstract results in a very modern image.

It wouldn't surprise me a bit if you end up framing your finished work!

Until next time...
Christopher Kerry