



NORMAN ROCKWELL'S SANTA CLAUS



Norman Rockwell's art is as unique as a fingerprint.

A "Rockwell" is an image that only Norman Rockwell could have imagined.

It was his vision, his concept of reality, and interpretation of life that makes a "Rockwell" a Rockwell.

His paintings are instantly recognizable and not only defined a generation, but arguably defined what American life looks like.

His influence and impact on art as a whole and on pop culture in general cannot be overstated.

But more than a visionary or an influence, Norman Rockwell was above all a consummate craftsman. From the way he developed a concept to the techniques he used to complete his work his paintings represent the very best that painting has to offer.

Each of his images are an exquisite exploration of some larger artistic concept. In short, he was a master painter.

With that said, it brings me a lot of pleasure to bring this class to you.

Rockwell was and is one of my major artistic influences. Many of the techniques I use in my own work I learned from studying his, so it is with great pride and no small amount of humility that I present this class to you.

I will never be to the same caliber as he, but this class represents my best efforts to mimic his artistic ideals and to create a work that looks and feels like a real Rockwell. I have given this class my best effort, and honestly that's all anyone can do. In the end I think he would be proud.

In closing, all of the images in this class are in the public domain and no copyright infringement has occurred. I take no credit for the images themselves nor do I claim any ownership. All rights remain with their respective owners wherever applicable.

Copic Colors Used For The Class Page

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

E00
E01
E02
E11
E19
E33
E40
E41
E42
E43
E50
E51

R20
R35
R85

W0
W1
W2
W3
W4
W5
W8

C2

YR09
YR16
YR18

YG67

G0000
G17

White Gouache
0.3 Black Multi Liner

Chapter One:

Coloring The Claus



For this class our primary goal is to make our coloring page "feel" like an authentic Rockwell painting. We won't be creating a "forgery" that is trying to mimic every brush stroke and color passage, but we would like when we are done for our image to look as much like his original as possible.



We will be using a colored line drawing. Mr. Rockwell didn't paint in strict "realistic" styles, but none of his images have continuous black outlines, so it's important that our doesn't have them either.

My image is printed on plain copy paper.



I begin by laying in a base tone on Santa's face with E50.



I add E02 to the nose, cheeks, forehead, ears, and around the upper borders of the eyes.



After the E02.



I add E11 to the inside corners of the eyes...



Along the edges of the cheeks...
(E11)



...and to the wrinkles on the forehead. (E11)



I add W3 to my "receding planes" on the side of the nose and face...



...under the cap... (W3)



...and on the ball of the nose. (W3)



After the W3.



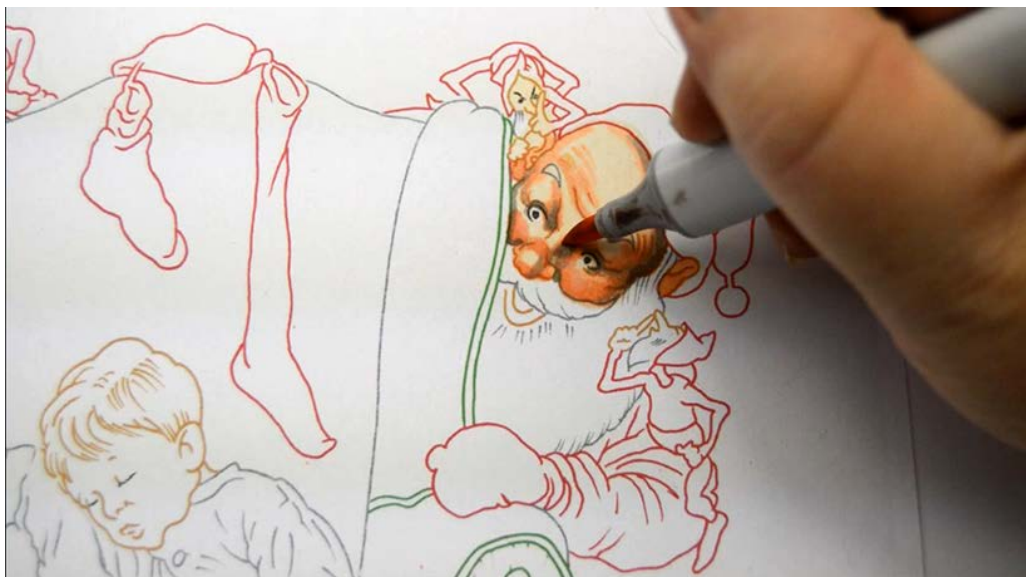
I add darker accents of W4 around the eyes and in the corners of the eyes...



..and along the sides of the face. (W4)



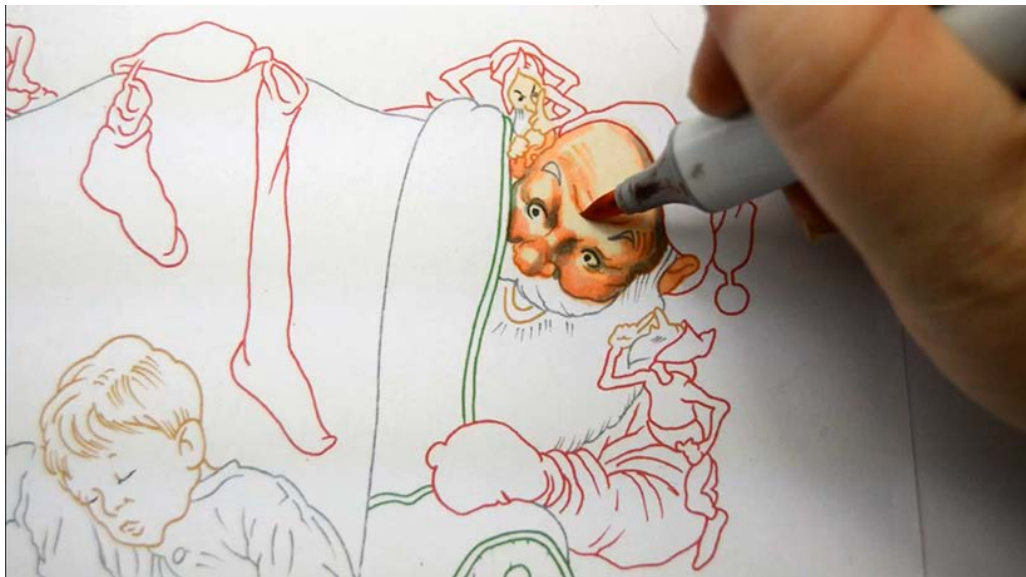
After the W4.



I add strong pinks with R20 across the cheeks and nose...



...to the ears... (R20)



...and forehead wrinkles.
(R20)



After the R20.



I blend it all together with E51.



E51



E51



After the E51. Notice the original E50 base is still visible in some areas.

Colored pencil users should use medium pressure for these steps.



I add another blend layer of E50 to pull it all together.

Colored pencil users - use this as a burnishing layer.



I add W8 to the eyebrows and the face is more or less complete.



Turning my attention to the cap I add E40 as a base for the "furry" brim.



I color the cap itself with a layer of YR09.



I add shadows with W4.



I add shadows to the fur brim with W3.



I use W1 to add a "nap" texture to the brim.



I add very dark accents to the area of the brim behind the ear and to the red cap with W5.



I add E19 to the inside of the ear and to the transition areas between the W5 and YR09 on the cap.



I do a blend layer of R35 to soften the colors on the cap and pull them all together.



I add white gouache to the furry brim in a random "texture-like" pattern.

For this layer the gouache is very wet...



...and nearly disappears after just a few seconds. This is a good thing! We will be using multiple layers of gouache throughout this image to help us capture all of the different variations of white.

To achieve the layering effect, our first layer is "wet". Dip your brush in water and then directly into the paint without removing any water from the brush. The excess water in the brush thins the gouache and makes a semitransparent layer of white.



For the second layer, again dip your brush in water, but this time give the bristles a quick drag over a paper towel to remove SOME of the excess water. Then dip the semi-wet brush into your gouache and apply your second layer of white.



Now we have two layers - a semi transparent and a semi opaque.



For the next layer dip the brush in water to clean it, then wipe it over the paper towel to remove ALL excess water. Then apply your gouache fully opaque.

Colored pencil users - if you leave your colors in the white areas "open" with plenty of tooth and no burnishing you can use the white gouache as described above with awesome results.



Since I have my white gouache open I might as well add highlights to Santa's face.



White gouache



White gouache



White gouache



After highlighting I feel like I went too far on the forehead wrinkle highlight... so...



...I dip a cotton swab in clean water and dab it over the offending highlight to remove it.



That's better!



Moving on to the beard I use E40 to lay in an overall base color. Don't forget the elf's beard while you're at it!



I add hair texture to the mustache with W4.



Continuing with the W4 I add a cast shadow where the beard and the chair meet...



...then add a hair texture to the rest of the beard. (W4)



I soften the edges of the W4 with W1.

Colored pencils users - skip this step.



I add dark accents with W5...



...then soften the edges of the W5 with W3.



After the W3.



I add "wet" white gouache to the beard.



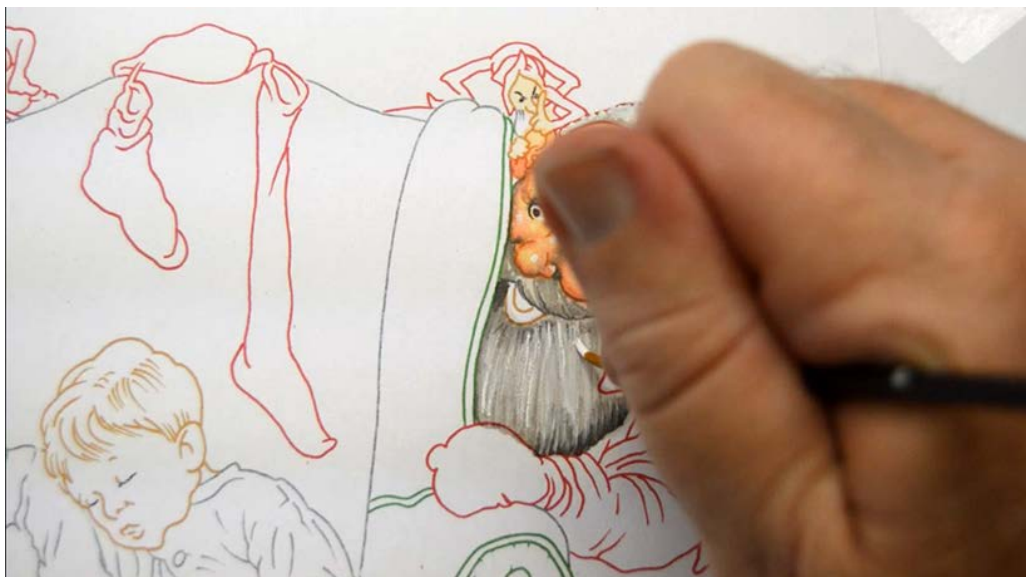
See how it almost disappears?



My second layer of wet white...



Second layer dry.



A third layer of semi wet white...



Don't forget the mustache!



Semi wet layer after drying.
(Approx. 15 seconds.)



My fourth and final layer of
opaque (non-wet) white...



Layer four



Layer four



Layer four



The finished beard.

Again, colored pencil users - you CAN do this too! But you could also achieve a similar effect with white pencil.



I add R85 to the bottom lip.



I darkened the opening of the mouth with W5...



..then desaturate the R85 with W3.



That looks just right :)



I add a cast shadow under the bottom lip and mustache with W4...



...then add a few hair strokes to the beard. Very few! Don't overdo it! (W4)



The beard is finished.



I'll be using several different "reds" to distinguish the various parts of the elves.

I begin by coloring the cap with YR16.



I add a tiny shadow to the cap with W5.



I color the shirt with R35...



...and the pants with YR09.



I add shadows to the pants with W4.



I add shadows to the shirt with E19.



Easy peasy.



I color accents to his face and hands with E11.



Don't forget his little nose!



So far, so good.



I add touches of "blush" to the cheeks, nose, and hands with R20.



I color his beard with E41...



...then blend his face with E51.



All done with colors!



Using a 0.3 black multi liner (colored pencil users - use black pencil), I darkened the dots of his eyes and eyebrows and add small accents to various areas of his clothes.

Where you put your accents isn't critical. We just want to help separate the clothes and accentuate the shadows. Use your best judgment and watch the video to see exactly where I placed mine.



Let's color the other elf!

I color his cap with R35...



...his shirt with YR16...



...and his pants with YR09.

These are the same colors I used for the first elf, but they are put in different locations to add variety.



I add shadows to the pants with E19.



I add shadows to the shirt and hat with W3.



E51 for the skin.



E11 for accents on the skin.

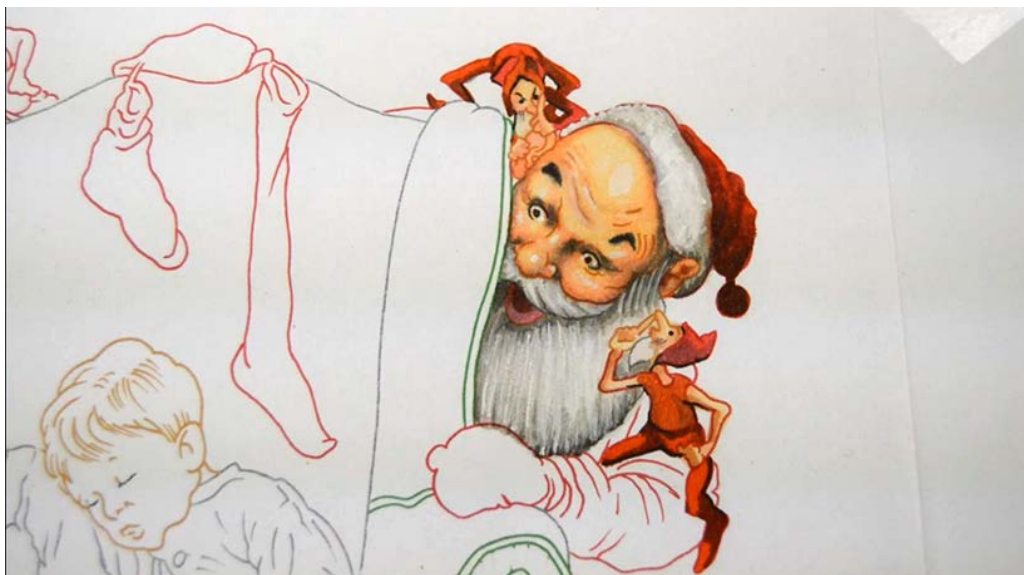
Looking good so far!



I add a darker E33 to create shadows on his neck and arms.



I then add my eyes and black accent lines with a 0.3 multi liner.



Again, add these accents where you think they should be and watch the video to find out exactly where I added mine.



I color the tiny area behind the elf's head with E19...



..then add shadow shapes to Santa's arm with the same color. (E19)



I add YR09 to the rest of the arm and hand...



...then work the transition between the E19 and YR09 with W4.



After the W4.



I "tone down" (desaturate) the YR09 with W3, leaving only small areas untouched to act as highlights.



I add shadow accents with W5 to finish off the arm.



Returning to the elf on the elbow, I add R20...



...to various areas... (R20)



...to act as a reflected light from the red on the arm.



I strengthen some of his contour lines in accordance with my reference image with E19 to finish off this area of the coloring page. Looks nice, huh?



Turning my attention to the stockings and Santa's other hand at the top of the chair, I color in a base color of YR09. Don't forget Santa's shoulder under the elf's foot!



I add shadows with W4...



...then desaturate some areas with W1.



I add shadow accents with W5.

Notice the cast shadows under the glove on the right side of the stockings - that's W5 too.



I add W4 accent areas to the stockings...



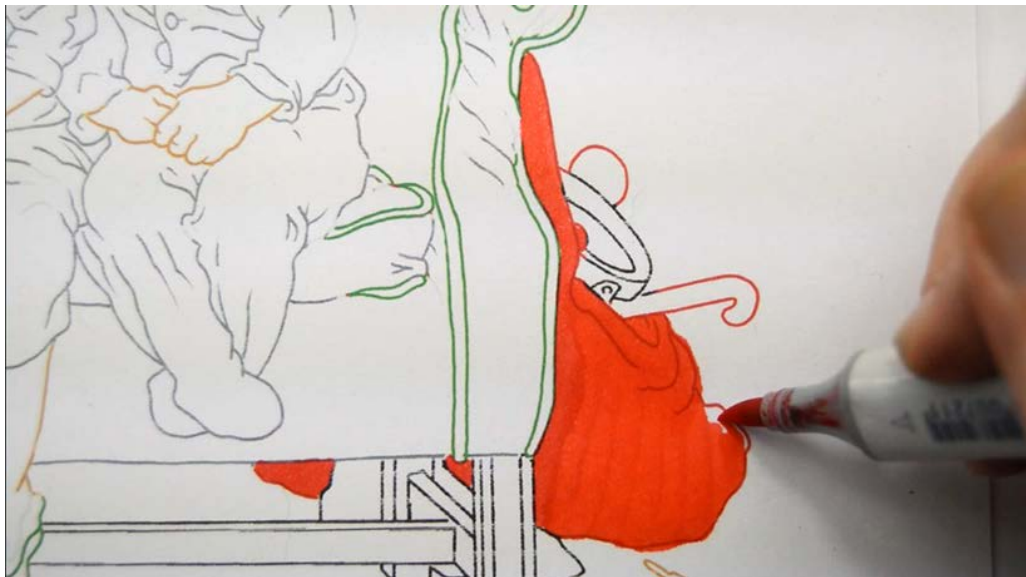
...and to the transitions on the glove... (W4)



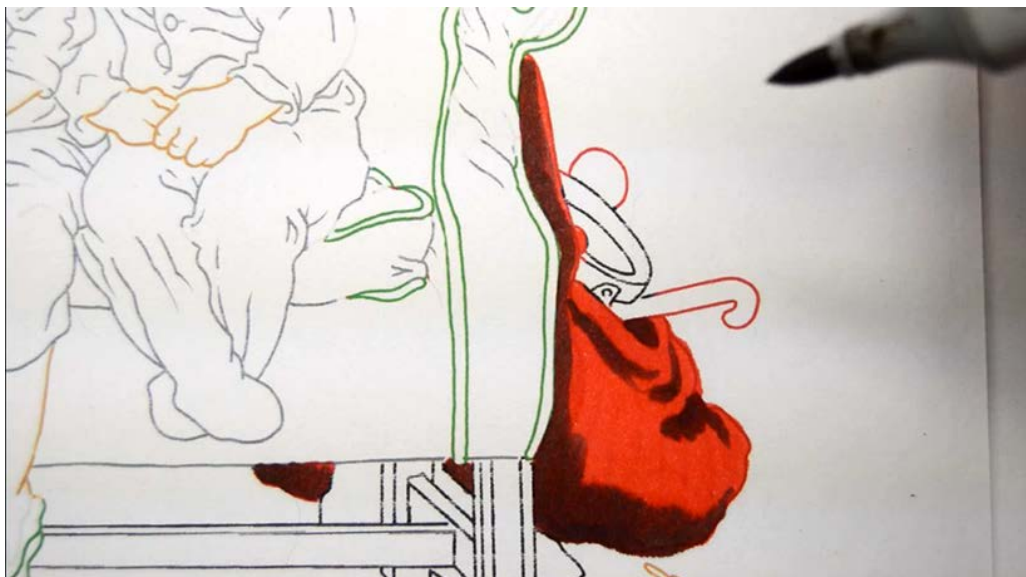
...to finish off these elements of the coloring page.



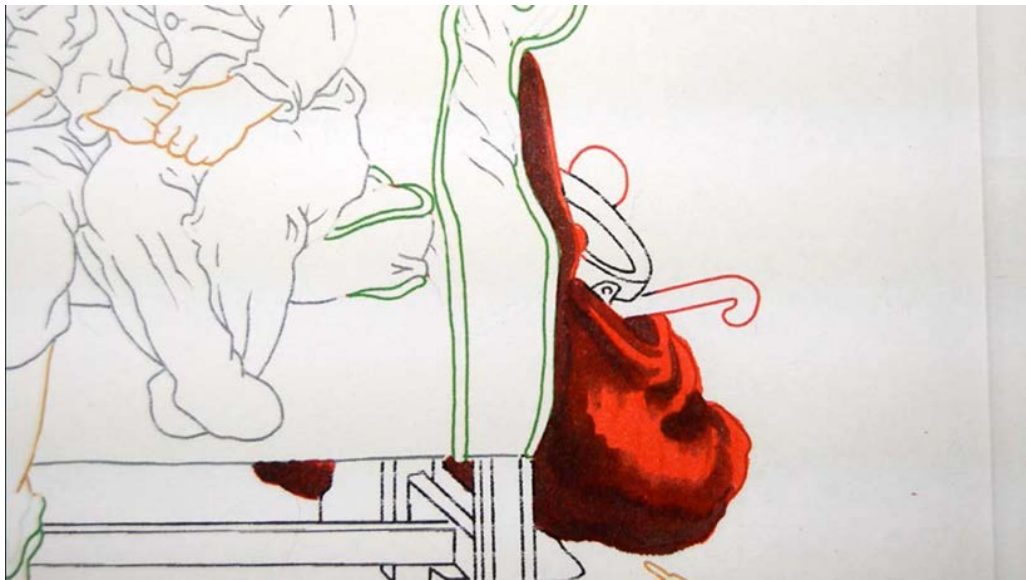
Let's take a look at the toy bag now.



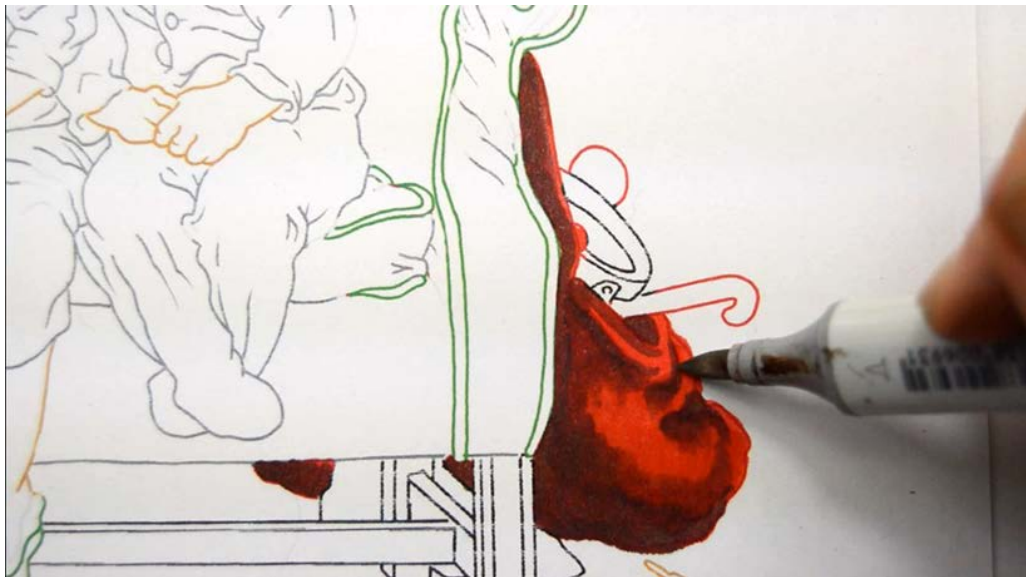
I use R35 as my base color.



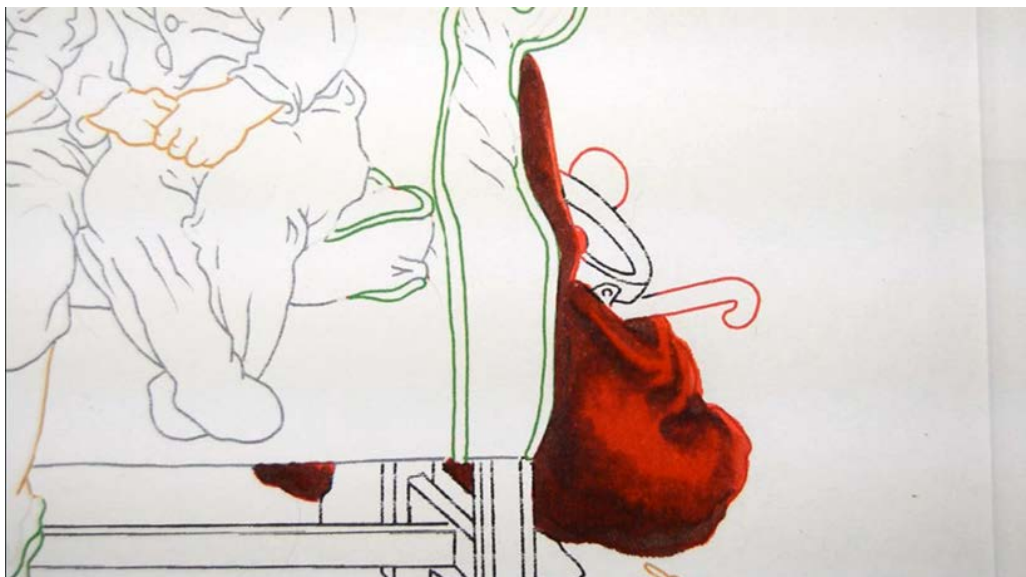
I add my shadow shapes with W5.



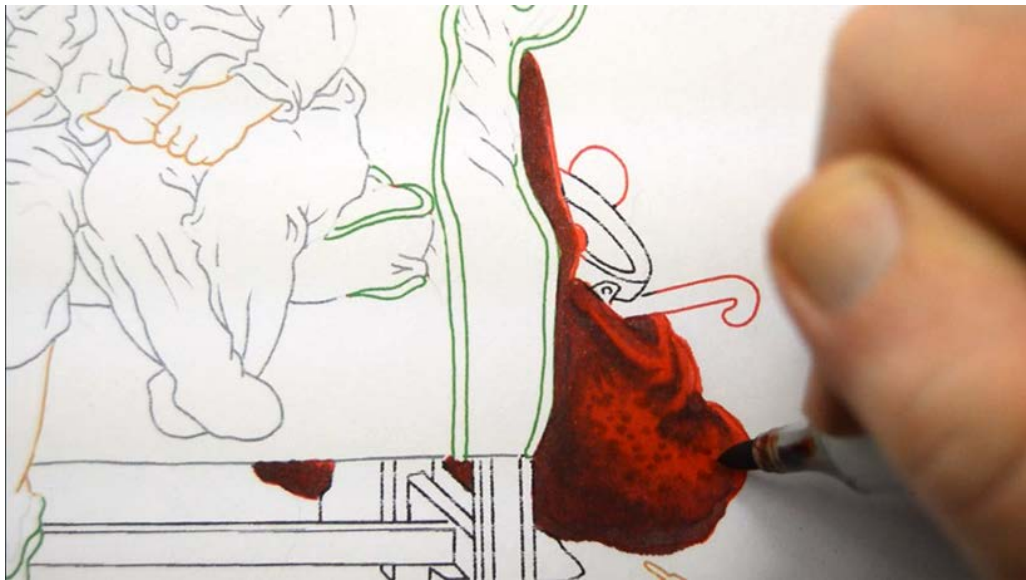
I work the transitions between the R35 and W5 with W4.



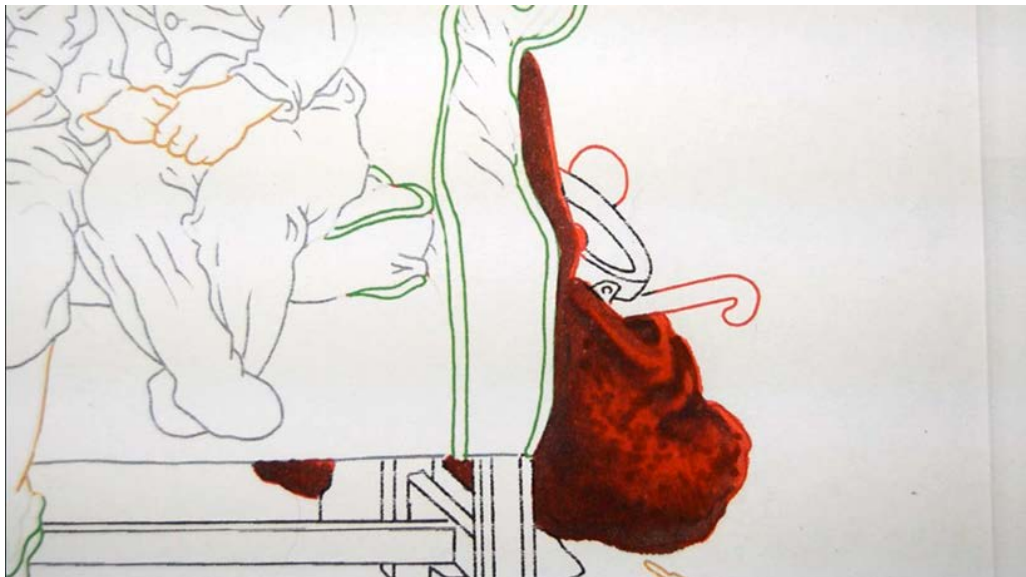
I desaturate the remaining R35 with W2...



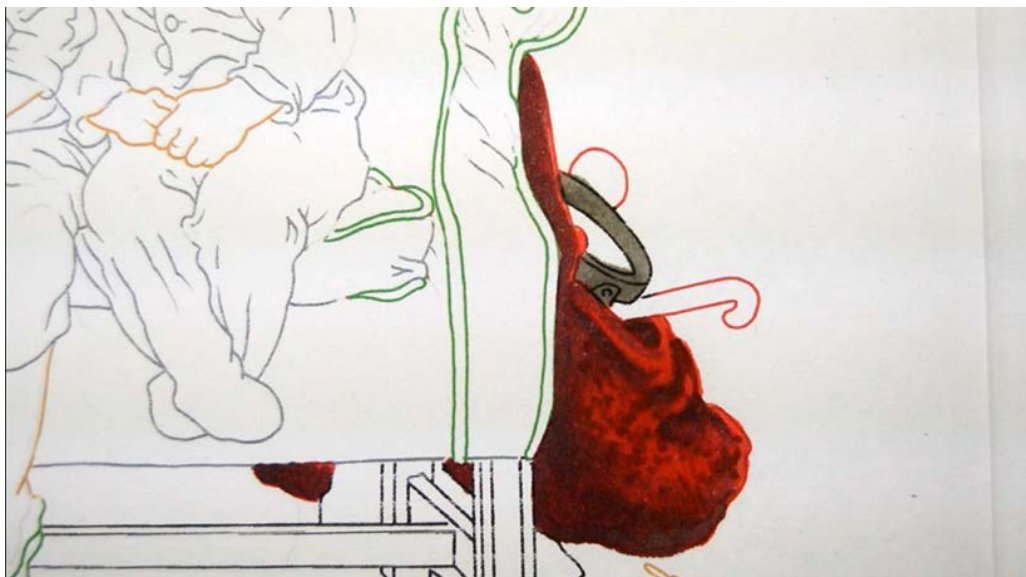
...then color another layer of R35 over all of it.



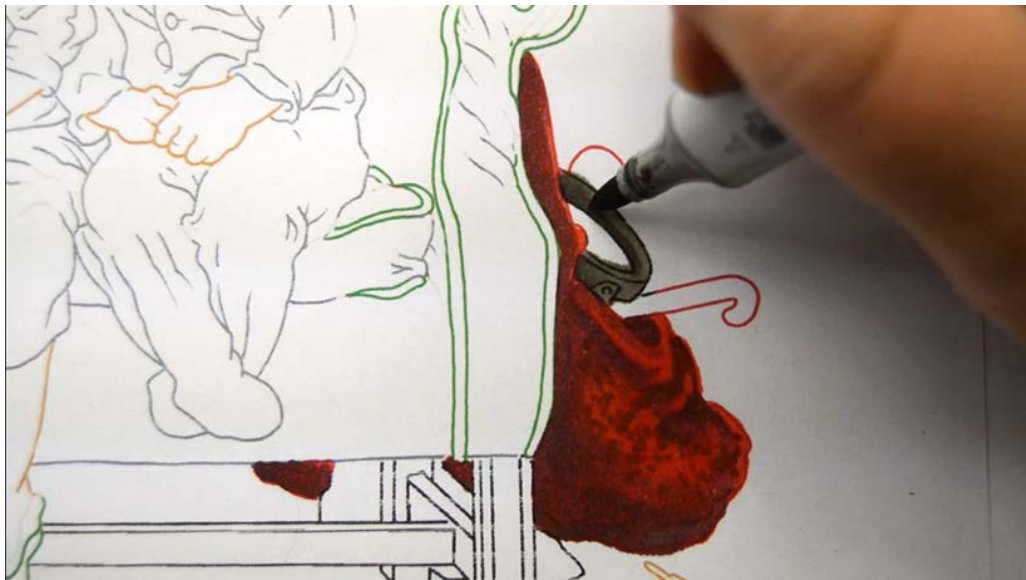
I add a crushed velvet texture with E19...



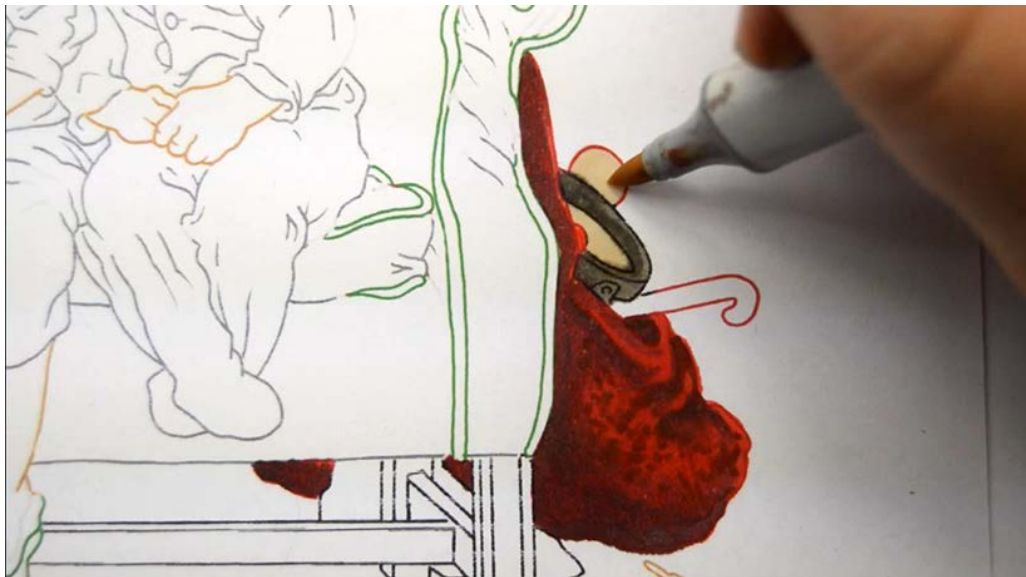
...to finish it off.



I color the rim of the drum with W4...



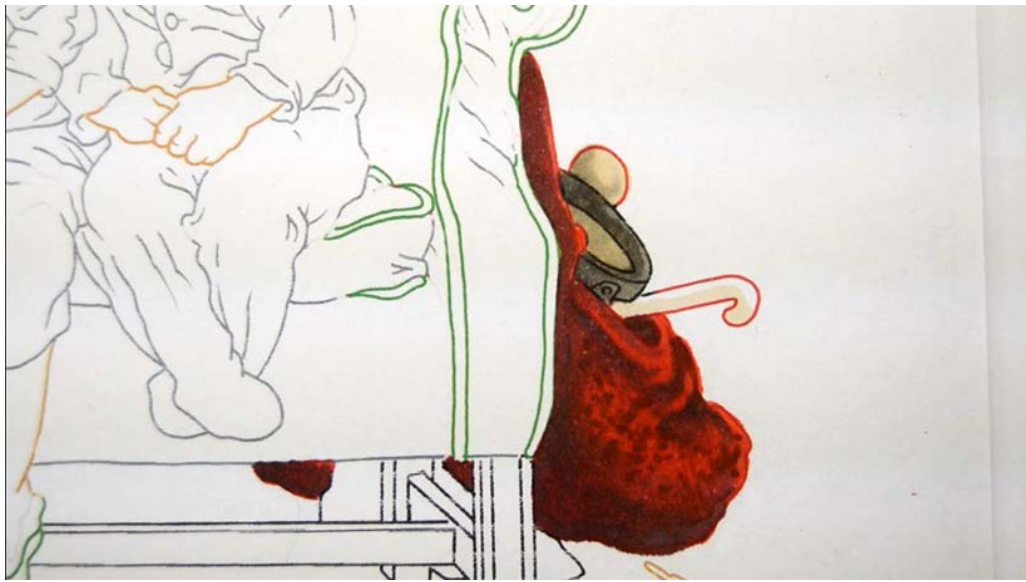
...then add shadow accents with W5.



I color the drum skin and thing in the back that I'm not really sure what the heck it is with E41.



I also run a quick shadow on the candy cane with E41.



I add W3 to the drum skin and thingamabob.



I then add stripes according to the reference photo with YG67.



I add YR09 stripes to the candy cane...



...then add darker accents with E19.



I use my 0.3 multi liner here...



...there...



...and everywhere I think it's appropriate.



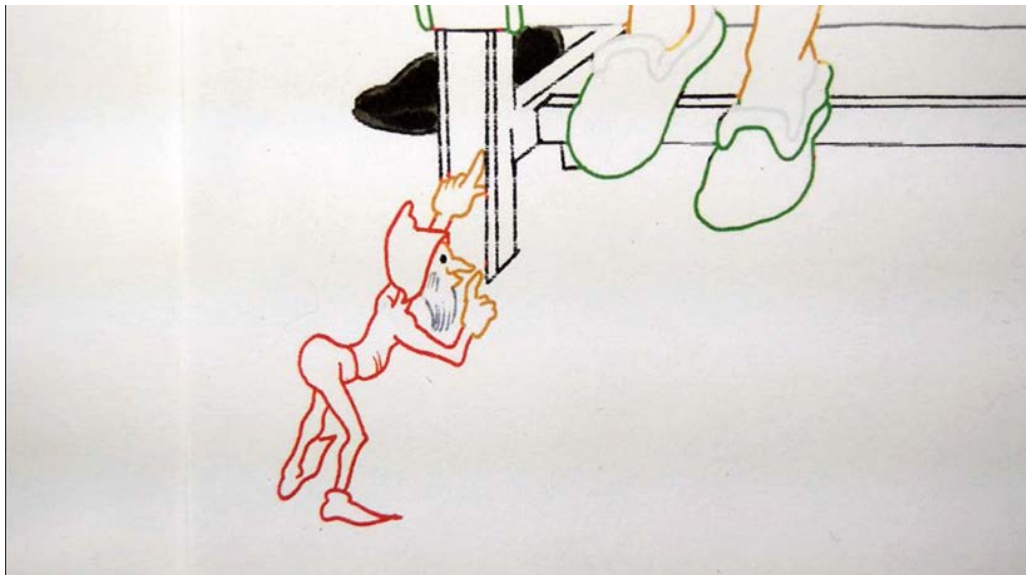
Refer to the reference photo and video to place your accents where you think they should go!



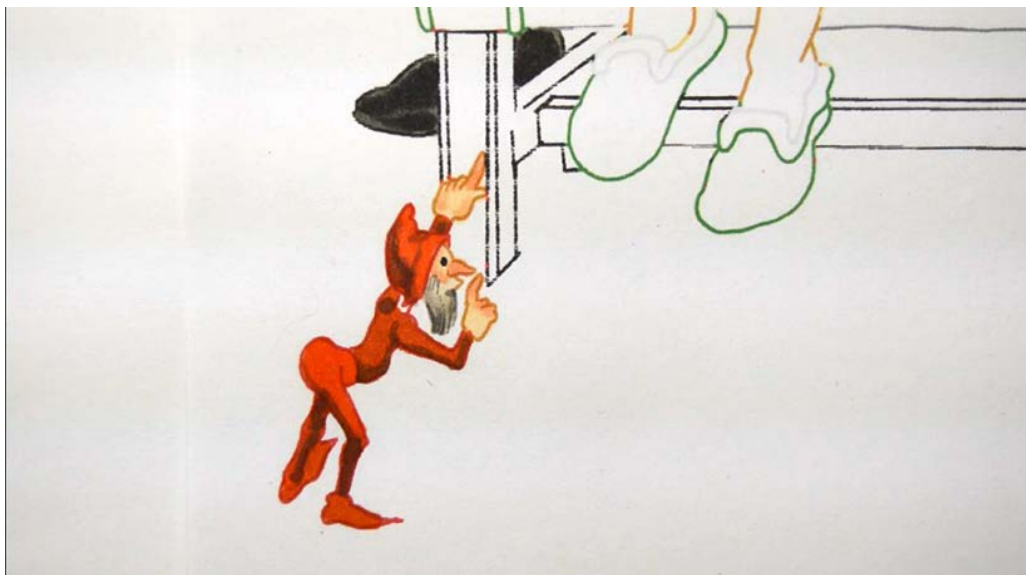
For Santa's boots I start with a base of W4...



...then add W8.



I do this on both boots!



I color this elf and the rest of the elves in this image using the same concepts as the other elves. Just use your different reds in different areas and you'll do fine. Trust me, you got this!

Chapter Two: Coloring The Chair



With Santa and the elves colored it's time to color the chair! The chair in this image is super interesting. It needs to look like a white chair but be a different white than Santa's hat and beard, the background, and the kids' pajamas. Geez, how many different whites are there??? Let's find out!



I color the ribbing on the chair with G17...



..then add darker accents with YG67.

Where you place your accents isn't critical, but if you study the reference photo and watch the video you get a good idea of where they go.



Since I've got my greens out and the little girl's slippers are green, I might as well color them now.

I add W4 to the tops... which is a mistake! It's WAY too dark! I should have used G0000 and you definitely should use G0000. The W4 doesn't suck but I think you should make the switch! See? Even professionals make mistakes!



I color the rest of her slippers with G17...



...then add YG67 accents.



I add a little W4 to the fluff at the ankle to finish it off.



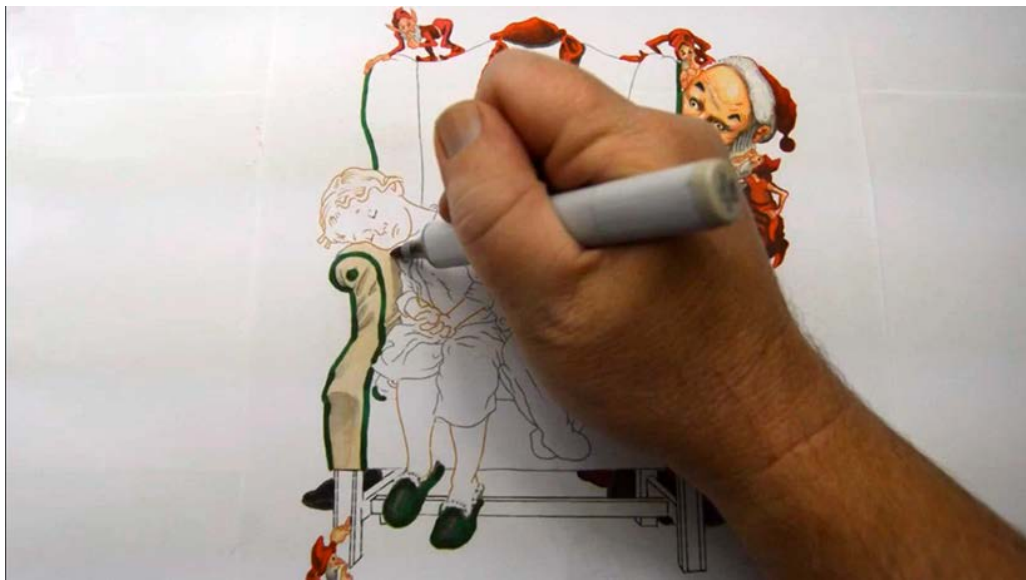
I lay in a base color on the arm of the chair with E41.



I add W0 to begin to "shape" the arm.



I add darker accents of W2...



...and "draw in" the cast shadow under the little girl. (W2)



I "cool" certain areas with G0000.



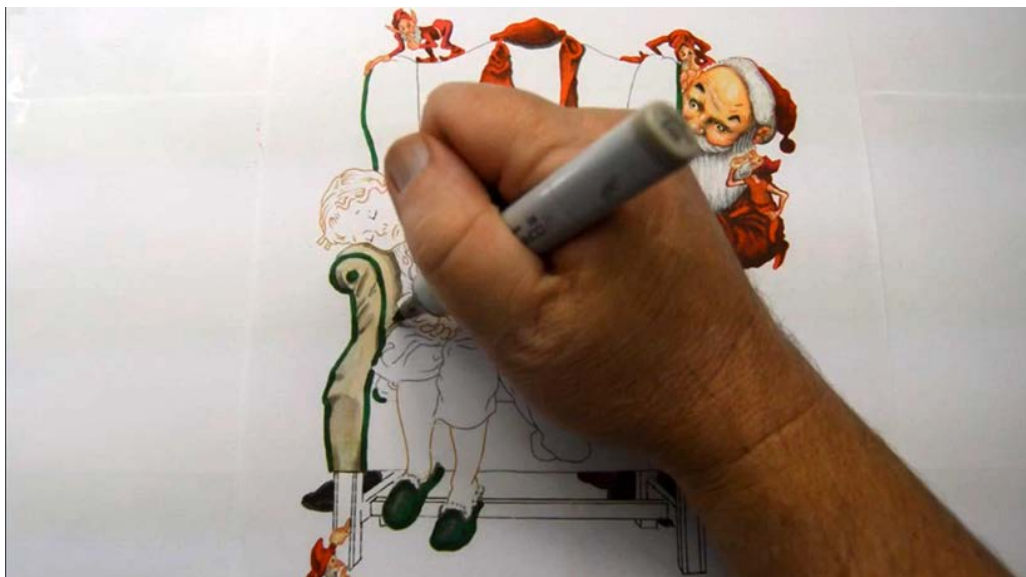
After the G0000.



I accent the areas where the ribbing meets the chair with W3.



...W3...



...and darken up parts of the cast shadow. (W3)



Lookin' good Mr. Cotter!



Now it's time to "whiten" it up and add wet white gouache using the same techniques as before.

Layer 1 is a wet white.



After layer 1.



Layer 2 is semi opaque.



After layer 2.



Layer 3 is fully opaque...



...layer 3...



...and done.



We will be using the same approach across the rest of the chair.

A base of E41...



Cools with G0000...



G0000



G0000



G0000



G0000



G0000



After the G0000 is complete.



W1



W1



W1



W1



W1



W1



After the W1 is complete.



I blend out the areas of W1 with E40...



E40



Notice how little blending there is at this point.



I add dark accents with W4 along the wings of the chair...



...and under Santa's arm.
(W4)



W4



I add a cast shadow behind the
little boy. (W4)



I also add a cast shadow under their legs. (W4)



W4



I add accents to the folds... (W4)



...and we are ready for white.



Applying the white gouache with a very wet brush...



...produces a semi transparent layer of white...



...that nearly disappears as it dries...



...but is just opaque enough to modify the colors underneath it.



Adding semi opaque layer 2...



Layer 2



Fully opaque layer 3.



Ta da! What a nice white chair that is!



I add accents with a 0.3 multi liner here...



...under the stockings...



...here...



...here...



...here...



...and anywhere else I think
it needs it.



I color the legs with an uneven base of E33.

The unevenness helps give the impression of wood.



I add shadows and accents with W4 letting my reference photo guide the way...

...and the chair is done.

Ok so that white gouache technique can seem a little intimidating over such a large surface, but don't worry! Keep it thin and you can add as many thin layers as you need to.

"Scrub" the brush across the paper to create textures and don't be afraid to cover up lines! Remember, it's removable! So go after it. Be bold. You're safe!



Colored pencil users can actually skip the gouache. Just lay in as many light blues, greens, and grays as you want using light pressure. Then blend and burnish with a cream or white and you're done!

Chapter Three:

Coloring The Children



Coloring the children is an interesting task. While they are front and center, smack dab in the middle of the composition, they are not the center of attention! Santa has that honor. So we need to color them so they stand out from the rest of the image but we must be careful not to make them too dominant. Fortunately Rockwell knew what he was doing so all we have to do is follow his lead!



I begin by laying in a base color on the skin using E50. Don't forget the hands!



I add R20 to the boy's lips, cheeks, ear, and hairline...



...then do the same on the girl's face. (R20)



I add E02 around the contour of the girl's face...



...then add it as an accent to her hairline. (E02)



I add E02 to the boy's nose...



...and along the contour of his face. (E02)



I soften the E02 with E00...



...on both their faces.



I do an overall blend layer of E50 on both faces to soften up the colors.



I add E33 to the little girl's lash line, nostril, and corners of the mouth...



...and to the shadow under her chin. (E33)



E33 accents in the ear...



...and on the hairline. (E33)



I add E33 to the little boy's
lash line...



...and to his nostril, open mouth, and chin... (E33)



...and then to his ear and hairline. (E33)



Looking good so far :)



I add some cools to the inner eye sockets and corners of the mouth with W1.



Continuing with the W1 I add a cast shadow on her neck...



...and to the side of her face to add form. (W1)



I add W1 to the little boy's face as well...



W1



After the W1.



I soften the W1 areas with W0...



...on both faces.



After the W0.



I then do an overall blend layer with E00...



E00



After the E00.



I draw in the cast shadow on the chair under her face with W4...



...and continue this color along the contour of her chin. (W4)

Don't be scared, it's gonna work out fine!



I add W4 to the little boy's lash line...



...under his chin... (W4)



...and along the side of his face.
(W4)



After the W4.



I add E01 to her cheeks...



...and to his... (E01)



...to "pink" up the cheeks just a touch.



I add R85 to his lips and then color in a base color of E42 on both of their hair.



.I add middle tones to their hair with E81.



I then add E43 to the same areas, leaving some of the E81 to show through.



I add dark hair strokes with W5...



...then soften out the W5 with E43.



I add touches of E33 to bring in a little color and the hair is complete.

Honestly I could stop here but I think I want the cheeks a little "rosier". You may stop here if you like!



I add E02 to the cheeks...



...then blend with E00.



I add shape to the arms and hands with E11...



...then blend with E00.



I add shadows to the fingers and wrists with E42.

Be careful with the fingers in particular. Too much detail or too dark a dark will draw too much attention to the hands which we don't want!



I lay in a base of E51 on her legs...



...then add E43.



I add E01 to freshen them up...



...and small touches of R20 to give them some life.



I blend all the colors in her legs with E00 to finish off the skin tones.

Time to color the pj's!

I lay in a flat base color of C2 on both their pajamas.

Colored pencil users - use very light pressure here! You are gonna need all the tooth you can get!



Now is the time to add white gouache but we need to have a discussion first. To render the pajamas I use layer after layer of white gouache! I mostly use wet brush layers but also some semi opaque and fully opaque. Thing is, your layers are gonna be different than mine. You aren't using the exact same brush and each piece of paper is different and absorbs water differently. So... here is what you need to know. Add as many "wet" layers as you can before switching to the more opaque application. Don't stop too soon! Keep adding layers - wet, semi opaque, and opaque - until you get the effect you are after. You can put wet over semi opaque and fully opaque and vice versa. Don't get frustrated - it's gonna look awesome and the gouache is removable! And remember...

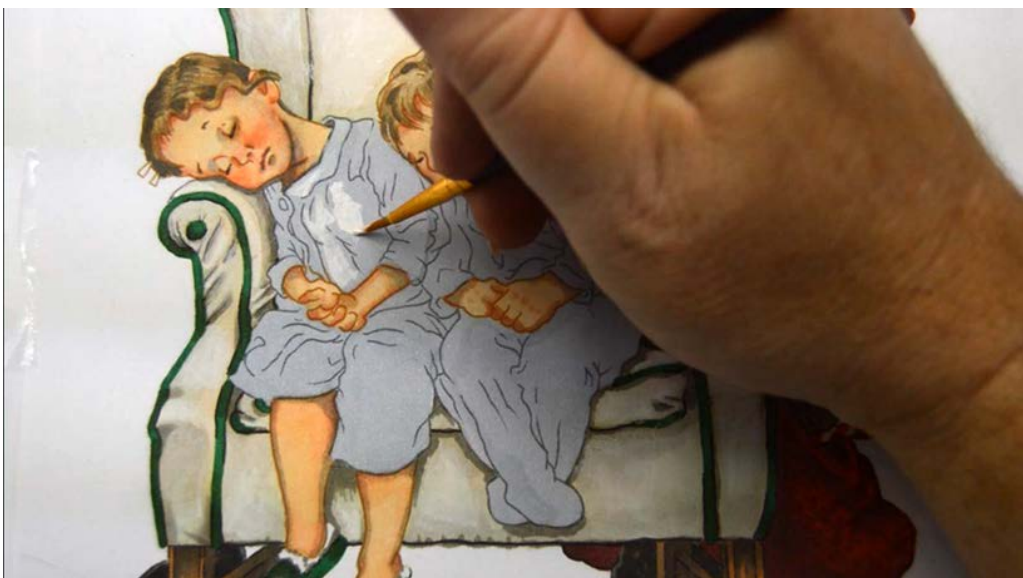




Wet white...



...nearly disappears.



Two layers of wet white...



...looks like this when wet...



...but now look at the same area!



Layer...



...after layer...



...after layer.



Again...



...and again...



...and again...



..until you get the effect that you want.



White gouache...



...in multiple layers...



...until it looks right.



...more white gouache...

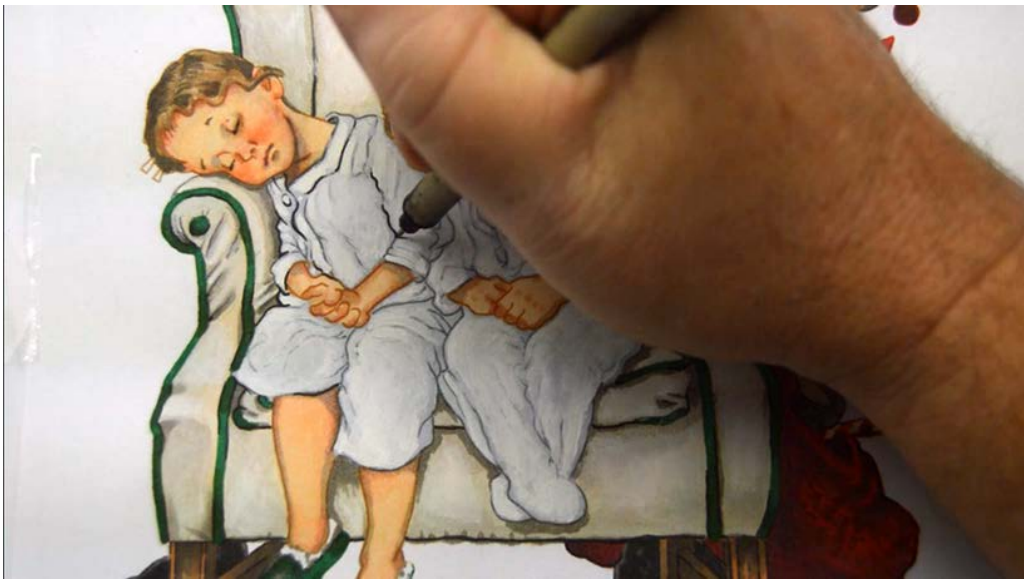


...and more layers...



...until the job is done.

For a complete understanding of how the pajamas were finished be sure to watch the video!



I add black line accents with my multi liner, again using the reference photo to guide me...



...hitting little areas here and there...



...until the work is done.

The Finished Image



The finished image is a faithful rendering of Mr. Rockwell's original and something I know you are going to be proud of when you are done!

As for those pesky whites, here's a thought - print out an extra copy of this image to practice on. The pj's only have one color and then white, so practice the technique on separate images until you are comfortable with it.

Oh, and Mr. Rockwell? I hope I did justice to your wonderful work!

Until next time...

Christopher Kerry