DON'T BUG ME

Introduction

Let me ask you a question... Do bugs bug you? If you are like most humans the answer is "yes", at least to one degree or another. Let's face it, for most people as least some bugs freak them out. I guess they don't call 'em creepy crawlies for nothing!

Just as some bugs seem to naturally creep people out, others are fairly universally accepted as cute or pretty. I've never met anyone who was afraid of butterflies or ladybugs!

But where ever you land on the spectrum, I think there is one thing we can all agree on... When someone grabs a great big lens and takes a super close up photo of a bug, it's pretty damn cool looking.

So in this class we are going to explore the world of bugs close up.

Copic Colors Used For The Class Page
(Refer to the color conversion chart for non Copic alternatives)

T1	E13	
T2	E27	B01
T3	E49	B02
T4		B04
T5	Y38	B24
T6		B26
T7	YR68	B28
T8		B45
	R27	

NOTE: You can use cool, neutral, or toner grays interchangeably in this class, but I wouldn't recommend using the warm grays unless that's all you have.

Chapter One:
Coloring The Background

When I started this class I was working from the reference photo provided. However, once I had the image completed I decided there wasn't enough contrast between the fly and the background, so I added darker colors at the end. Copic colorers should go ahead and follow along step by step, but **colored pencil users should skip this chapter entirely** and go to the back of the book to find out how to color the background.

For this class I'll be using a black and white line drawing on bristol board. Recently I've been coloring a lot on regular copy paper, but the last time I purchased copy paper (I go through a lot!) I got the super value pack from my local big box store. In this case, "super value" means super cheap and terrible quality. It absolutely sucks for use with Copics. So bristol it is!
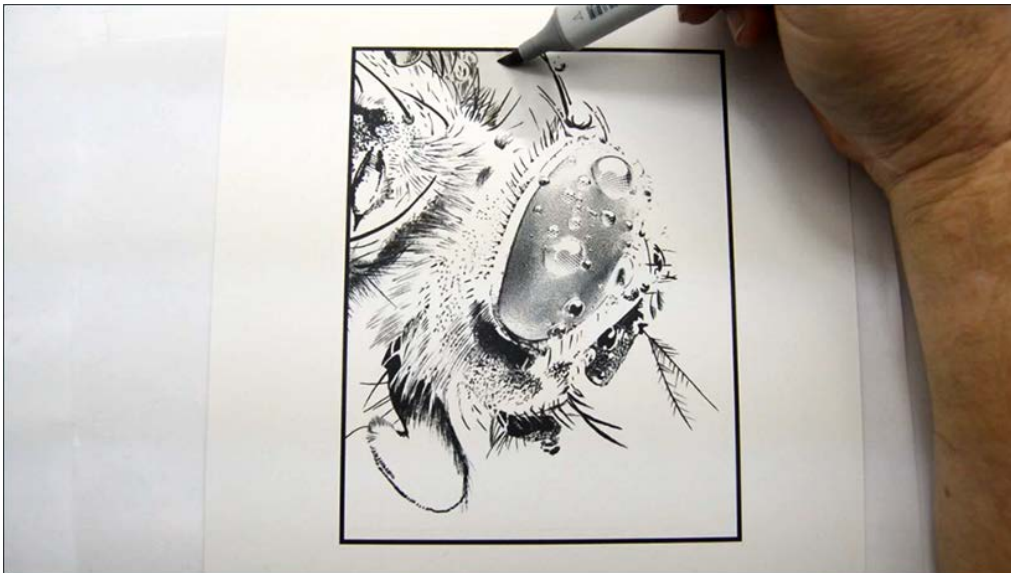
For the background I want to create a smooth(ish) gradation from a light value around the fly to a darker value at the edges of the image. I could do this with color but the color values with Copic seldom make even value steps. The grays however do! So I'll color the background gray then glaze color over it. Colored pencil users should skip the grays and go straight to color.

I begin the work with T1.

I use this color above the fly, down between the head and abdomen...
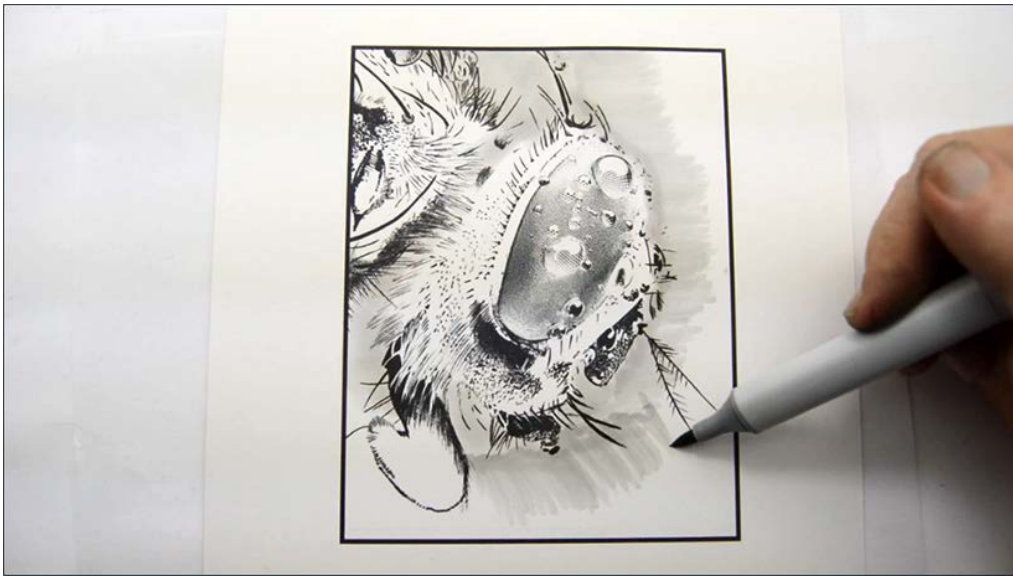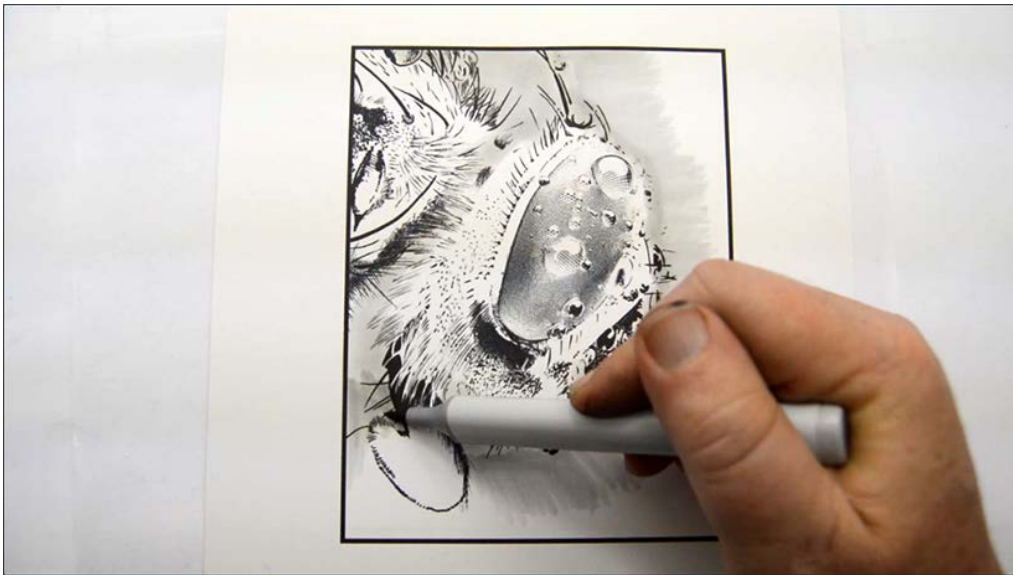
...and then down around the face and back up. (T1)
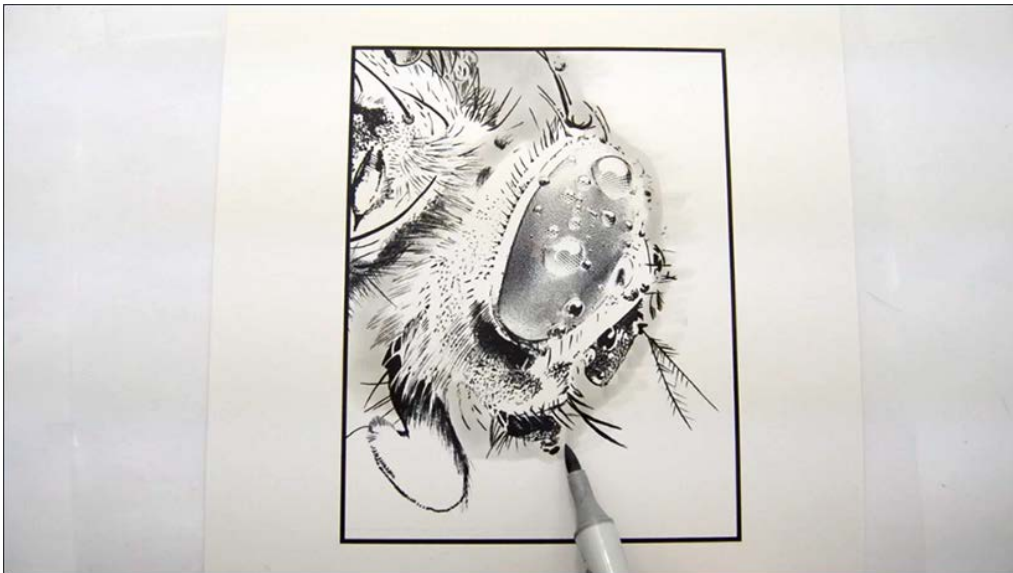
I then use the flat of the marker (T1) and make quick light strokes to "feather" the edges.
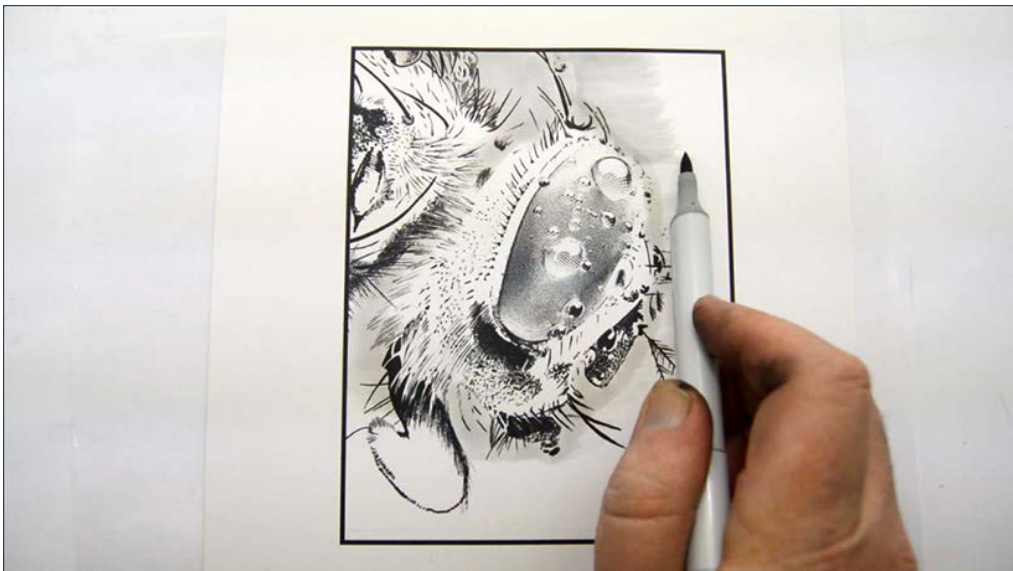
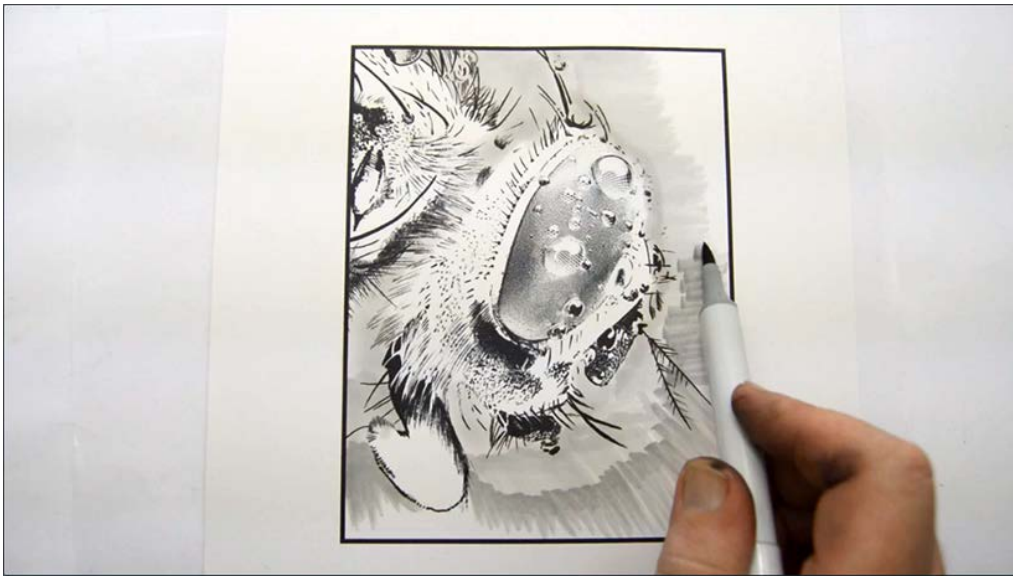I add my next, slightly darker value (T2) along the edges of the T1.

Again, I'm using rough "feathery" strokes to facilitate smooth blending later on.

T2...

After the T2.

I get a little bit darker with T3. Notice how I'm not blending! The values are close enough that they will blend later.
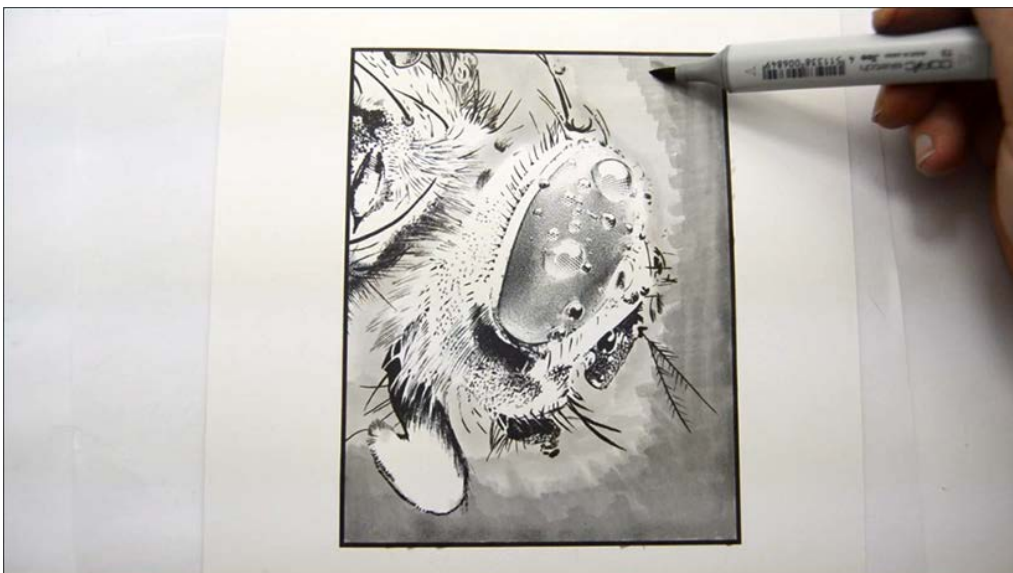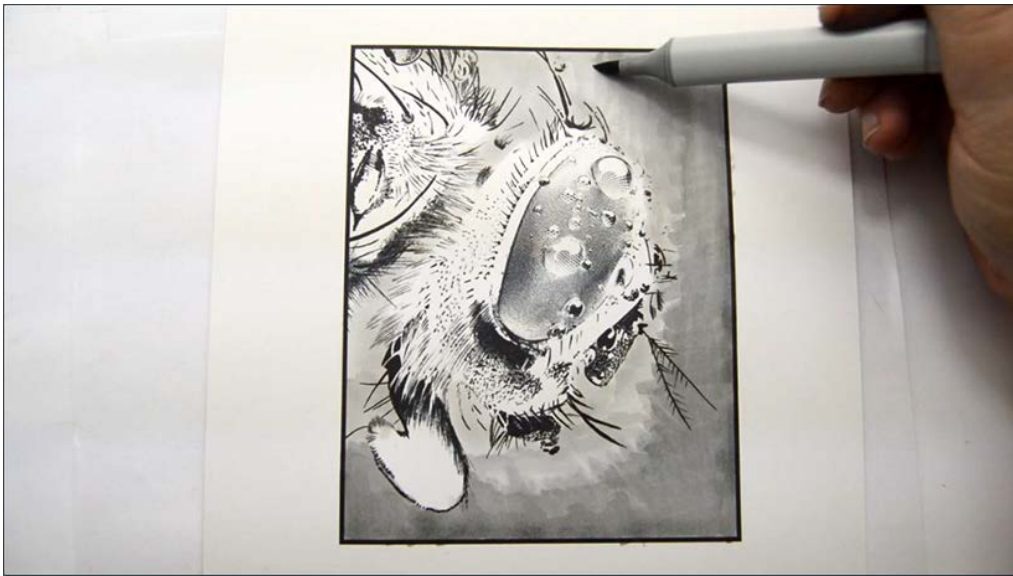

After the T3.

I add T4...

After the T4. Right now it looks super rough, but no worries!
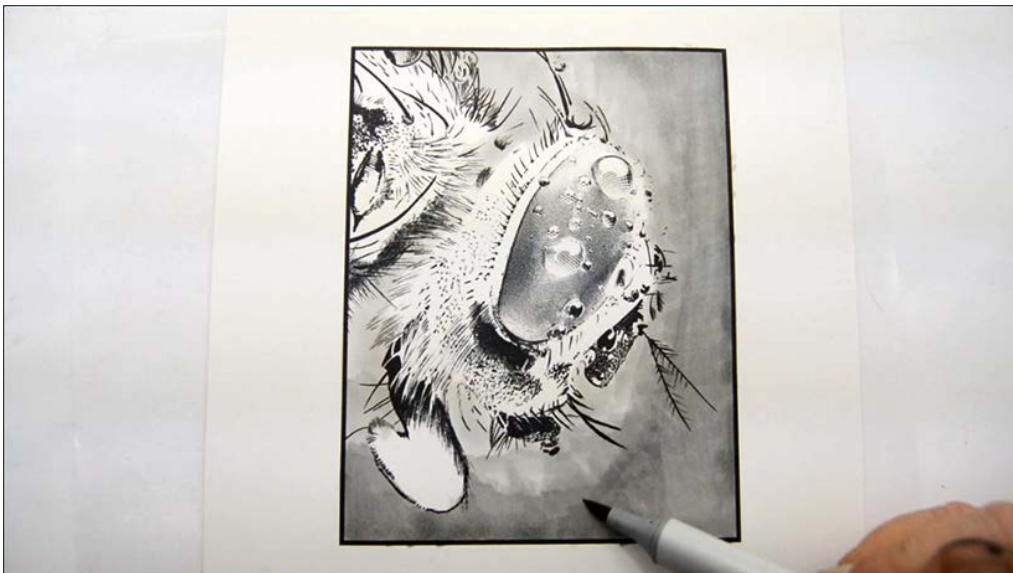

I blend the edges of the T4 and T3 with T3.

I'm basically glazing the T3 over the T4 and right up to the T3-T2 border.

I lay T2 over the border between the initial T2-T3 border.
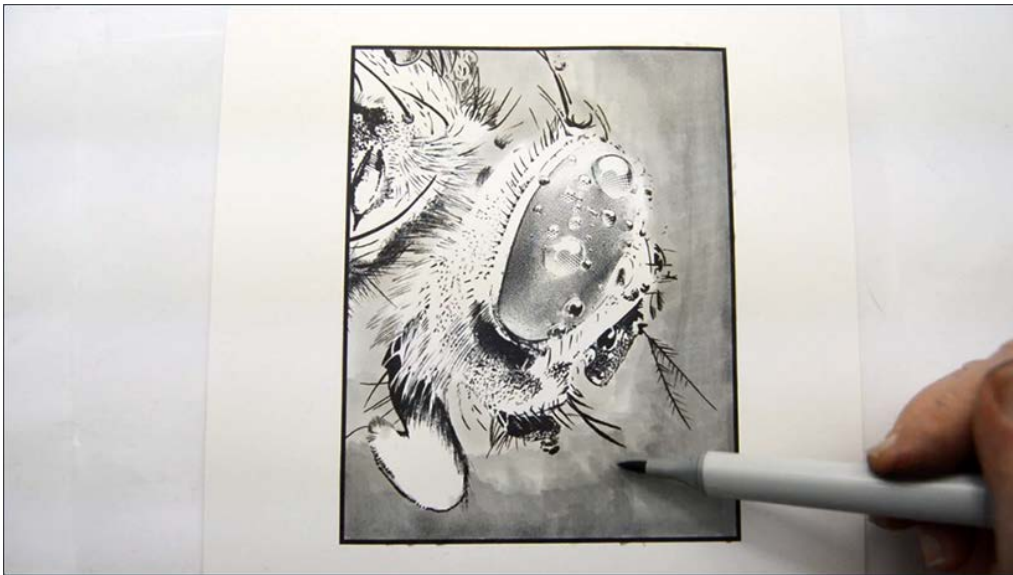
If I find an area difficult to blend out I'll make my strokes go horizontal over the edge... (T2)

...then cover the same area with diagonal strokes. (T2)

This "cross hatch" blending works pretty well. :)

I add T1 over the entire background to pull it all together.

That looks nice! Now it's time to lay in color over the gray.
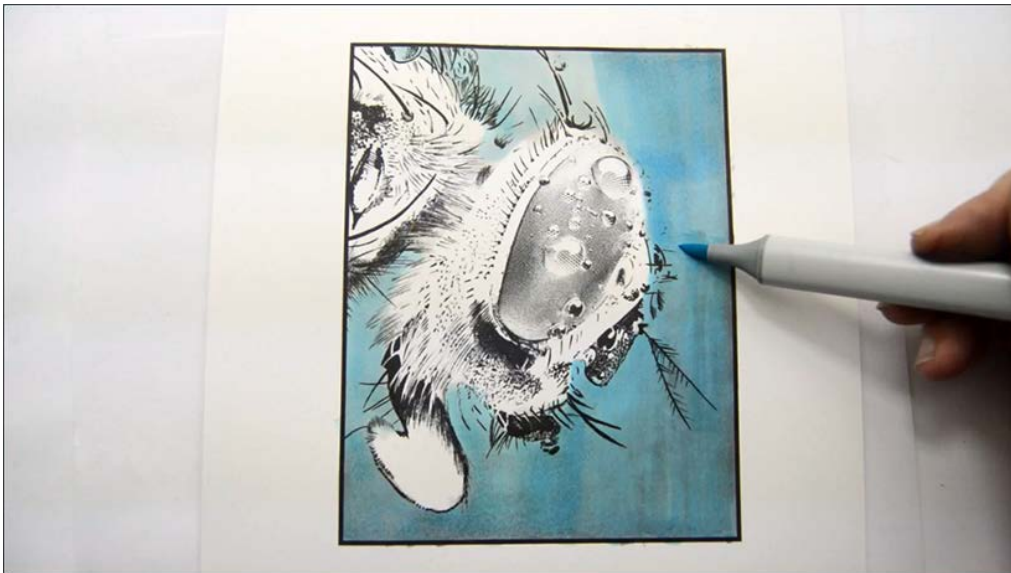
I glaze B01 over the entire background.

I actually like the way this looks, but I want to go further.
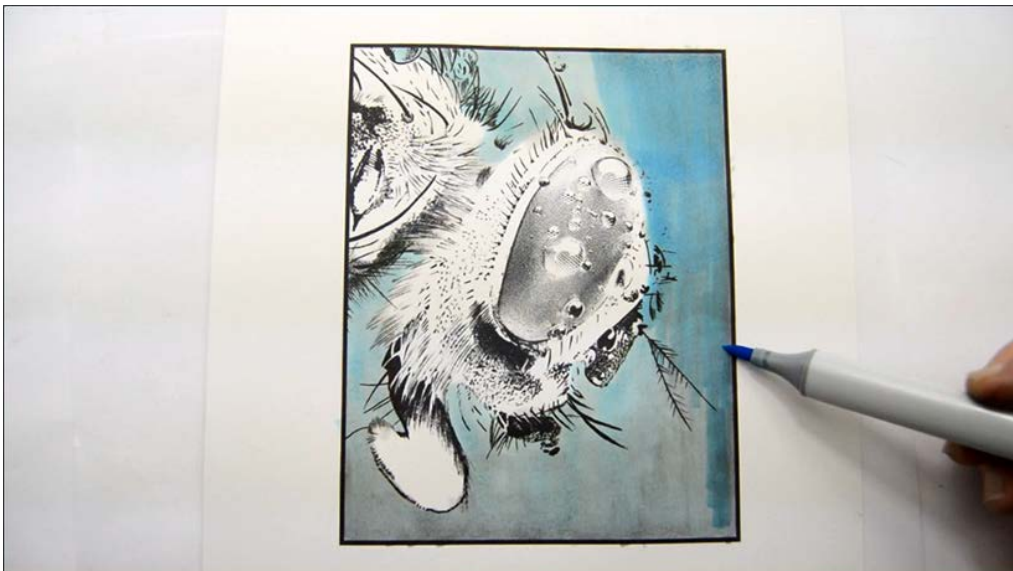
I add B02.

Notice that some areas of the B01 are left untouched.

I again glaze the entire background with B01.

Done for now.

I actually end up changing the background pretty drastically in the finishing stages of this class, but for now it does a good job, as is, of defining the contours of the fly and giving us a good value/ color structure to judge the colors of the fly against accurately.

Chapter Two:
Coloring The Fly

With the background colored in we can now turn our attention to developing the forms of the fly.

I lay in a base color of T2 over the head excluding the eye and the hard rim on the back edge of the eye.

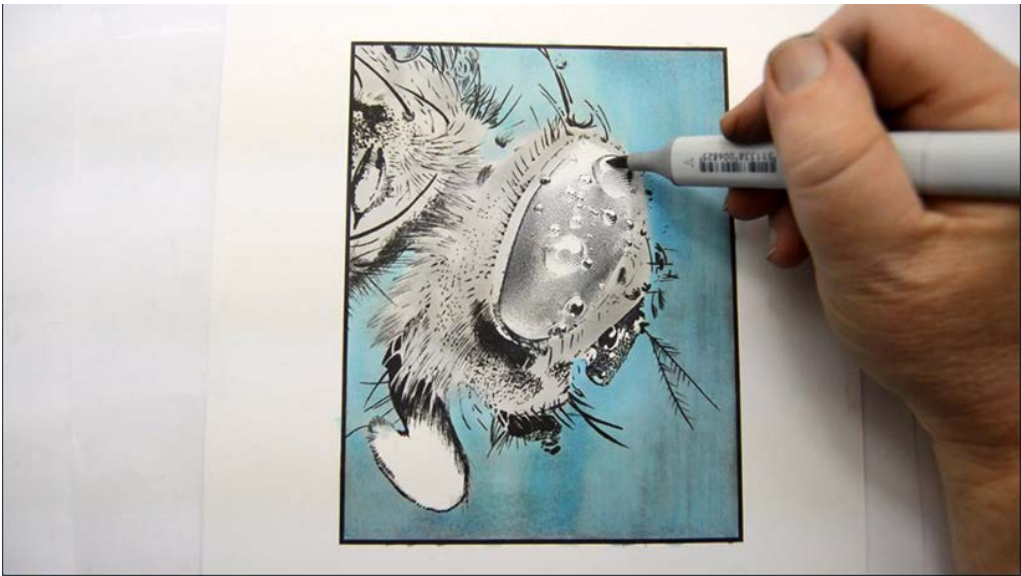Continuing with the T2 I color the base of the body...
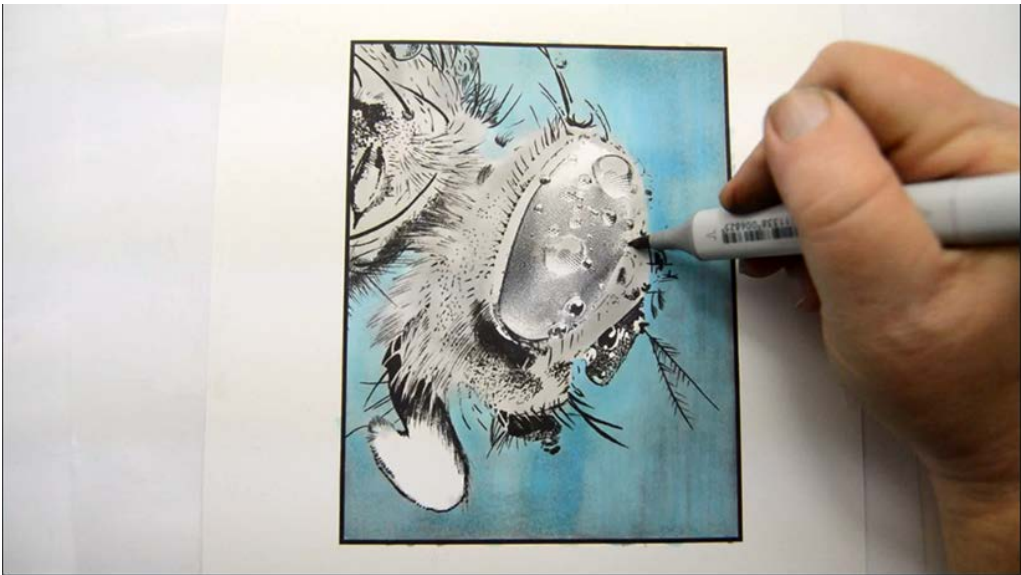
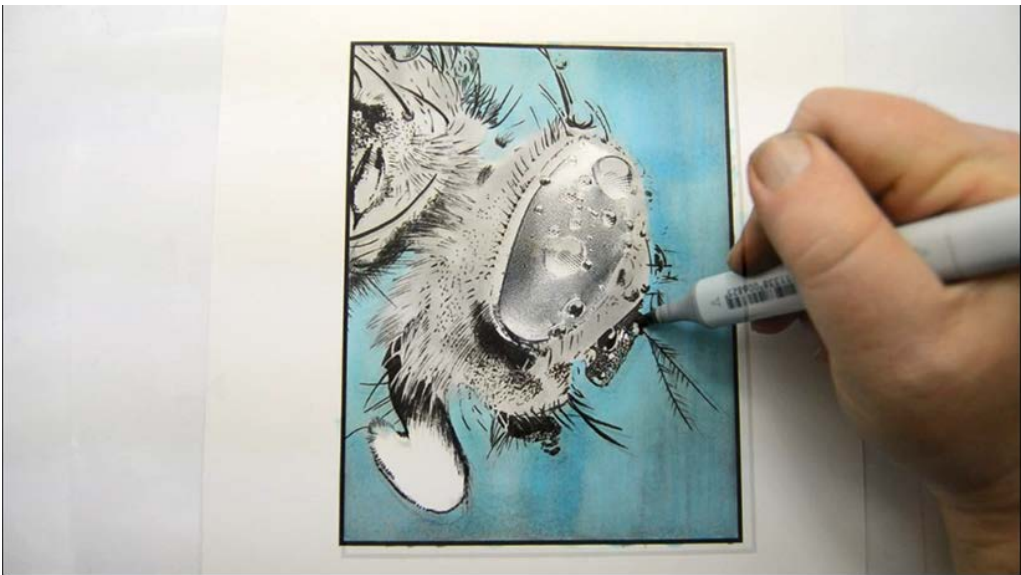...leaving the area in the middle uncolored. (T2)

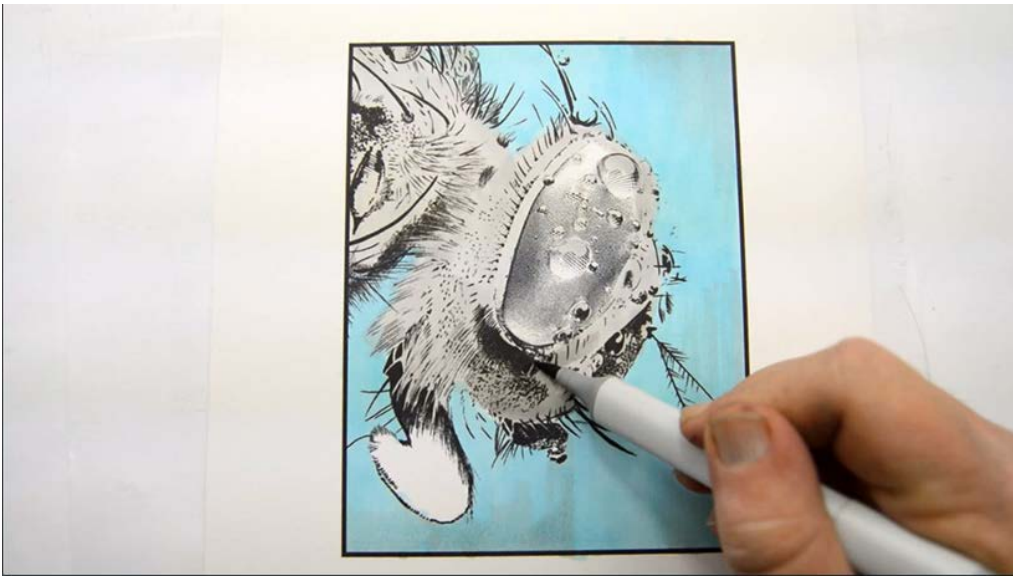I add T1 here...
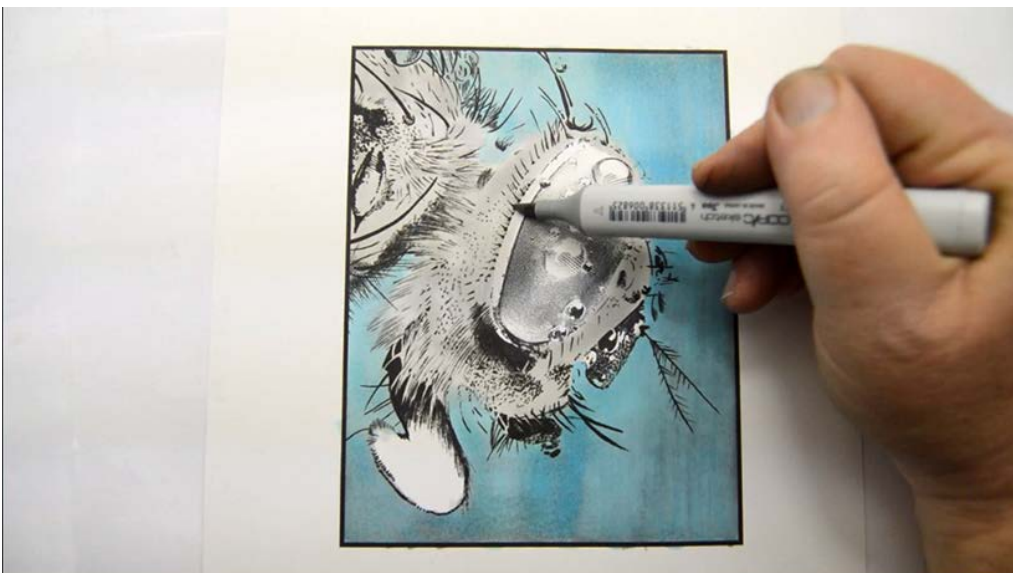
...to the rim of the eye... (T1)

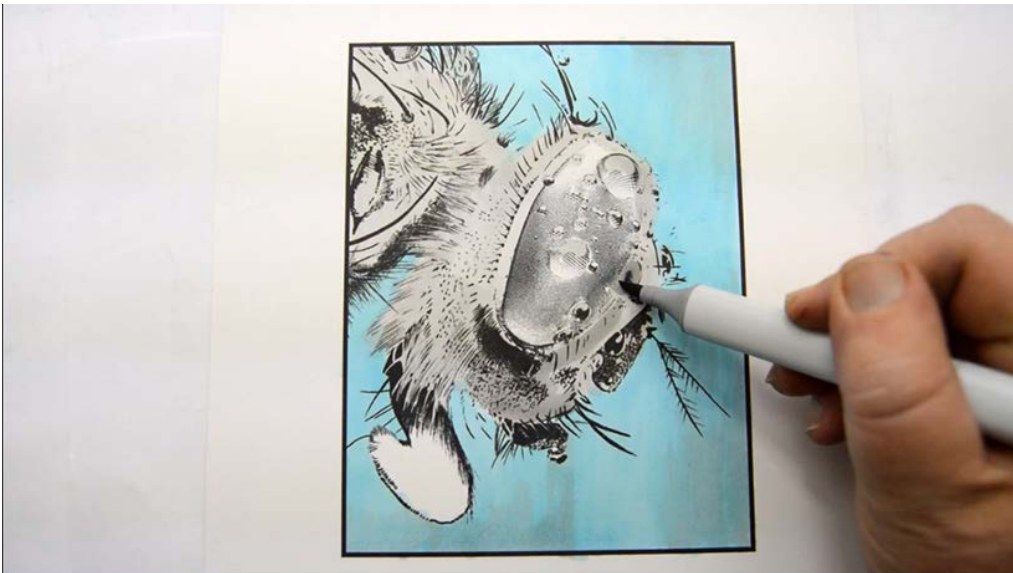...and reflected light areas of the water droplets. (T1)
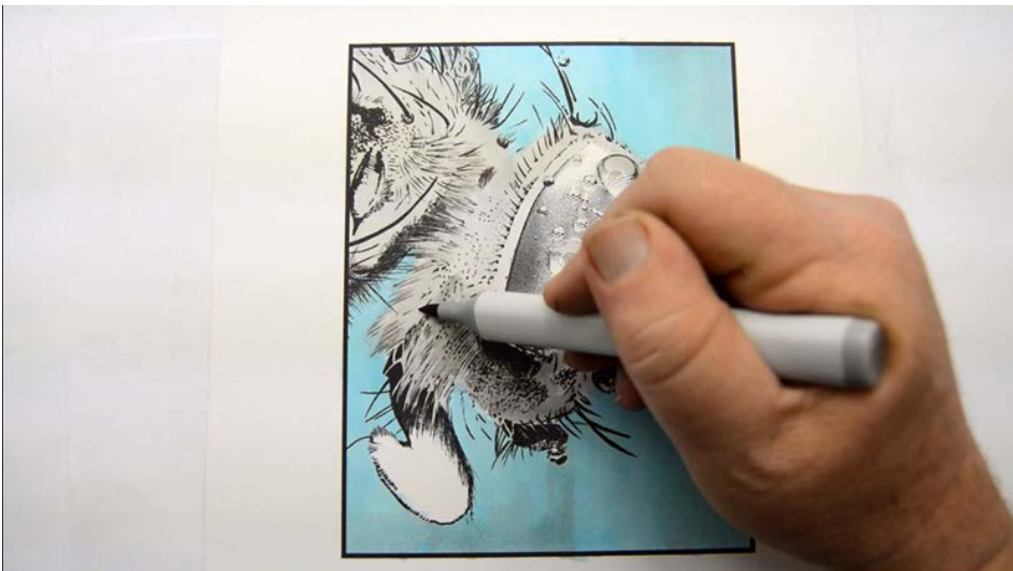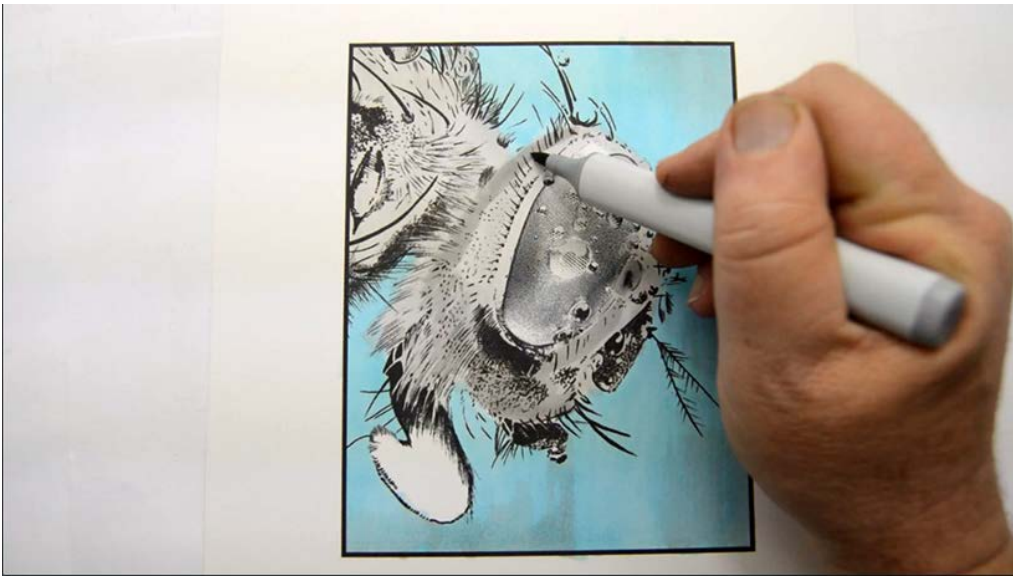

T1

T1

I add T3 on the face under the eye...

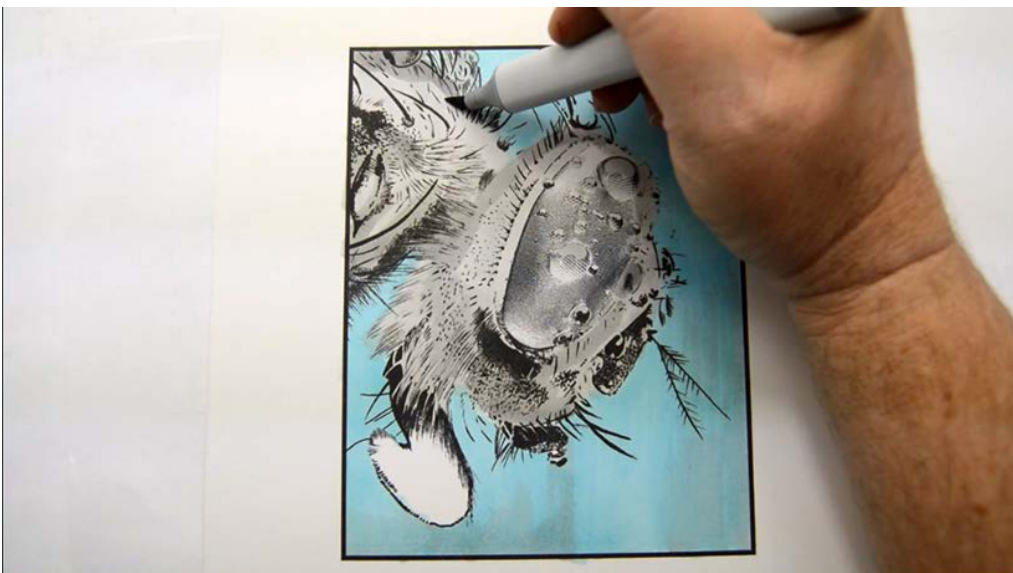...and the water drop in front of the eye. (T3)
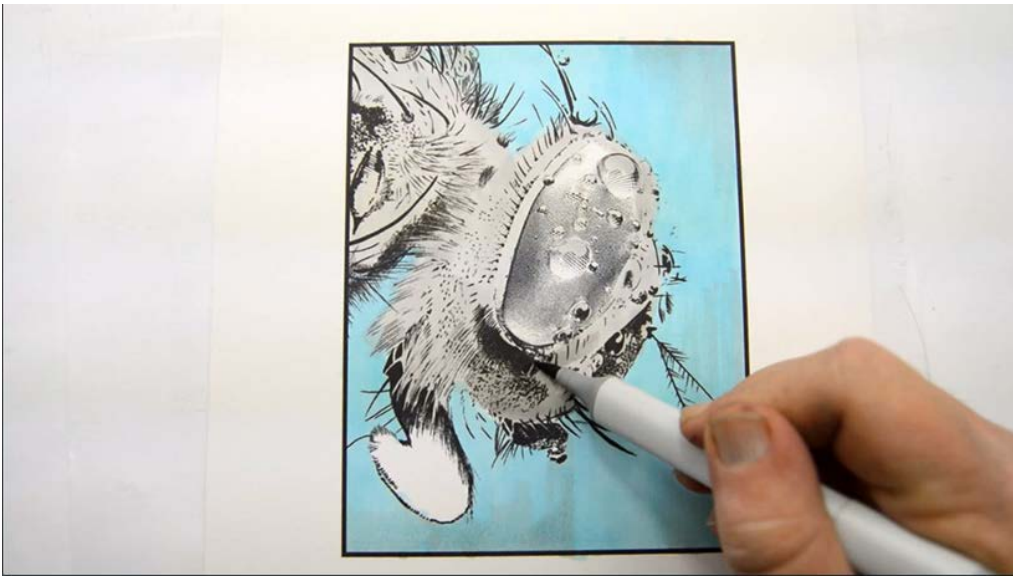

I add hair strokes... (T3)

...then round the back of the head. (T3)

I add T3 to the lower portion of the body...

...then to the upper, again leaving the middle untouched. (T3)

For the next few colors I'll be following the same patterns, getting successively darker with each pass. I always let a bit of the previous color show under and around the new color.
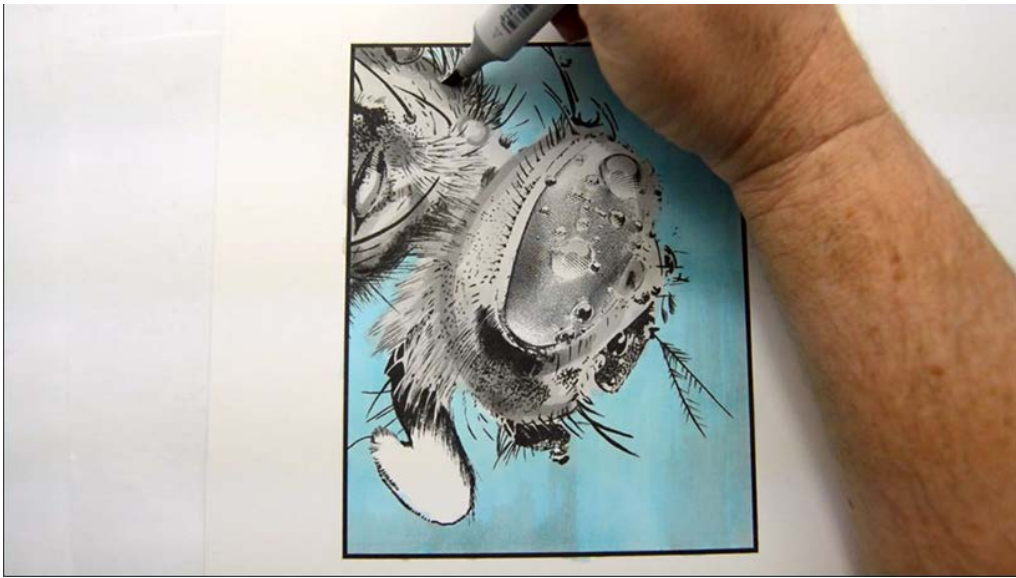

T4

T4

T4

T4

I define the large water drop on the back. (T4)

T4

I add areas of texture. (T4)

After the T4.

Again I'll be following
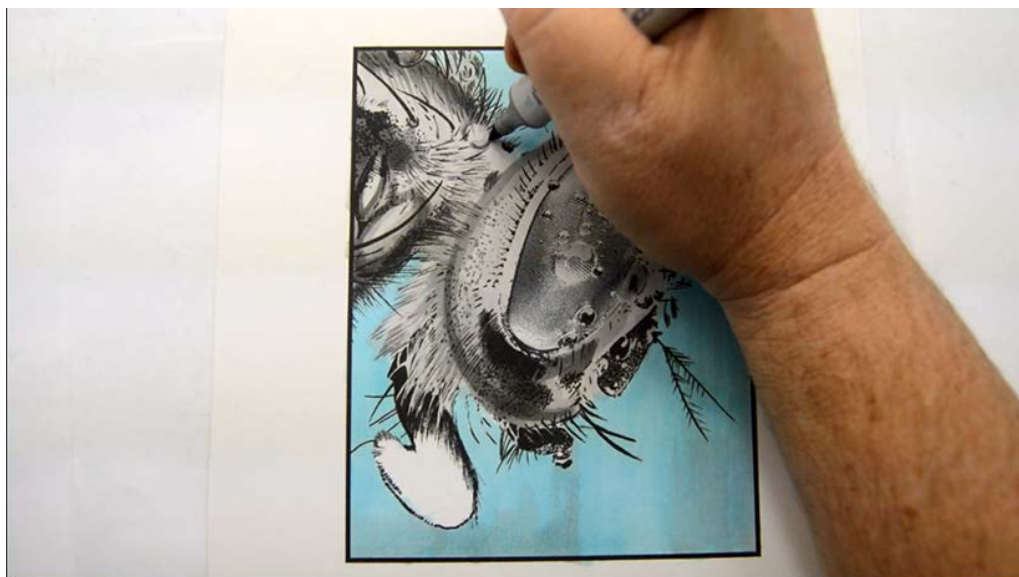essentially the same
pattern with T5.

T5

T5

T5

For the top of the body I add hairlike strokes. (T5)

I redefine the droplet. (T5)

I add a broken accent line to define the back of the head... (T5)

...and the front of the face. (T5)

I darken the lower portion of the neck. (T5)
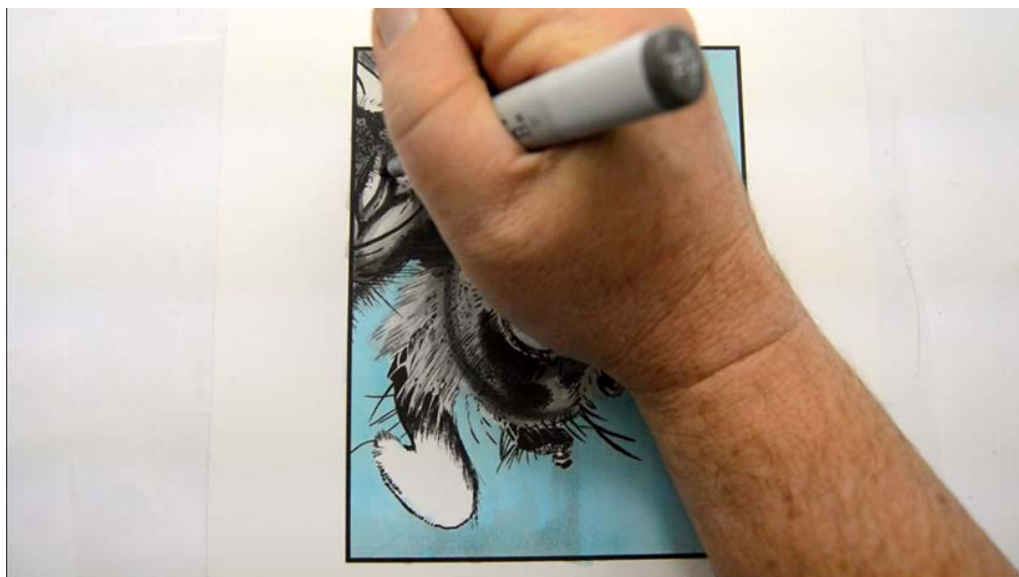
After the T5.

I add T6

T6

T6

After the T6.

I add an overall blend layer of T1.

T1

After the T1

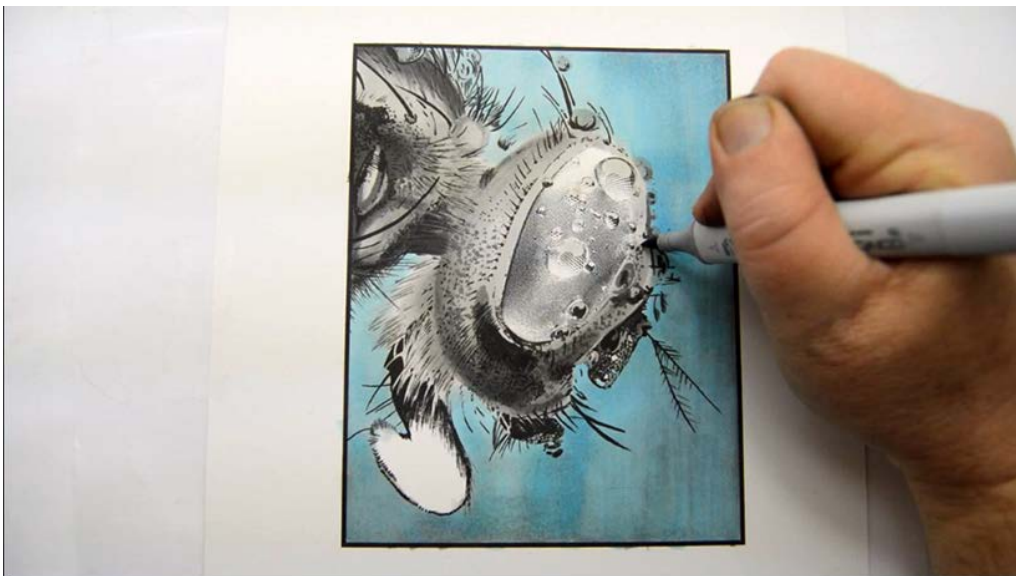Then do another overall blend with T2.

T2

I color the water droplets on the large hairs... (T2)

..then add texture using T5.

T5

T5

T5

T5

..and then my marker blobs ink!
(I refilled all my grays right
before shooting this video.)

The dried blobs.

I remove the cap from the back of the marker to equalize the pressure inside the marker body. This keeps the marker from blobbing! I then continue on as though nothing happened!
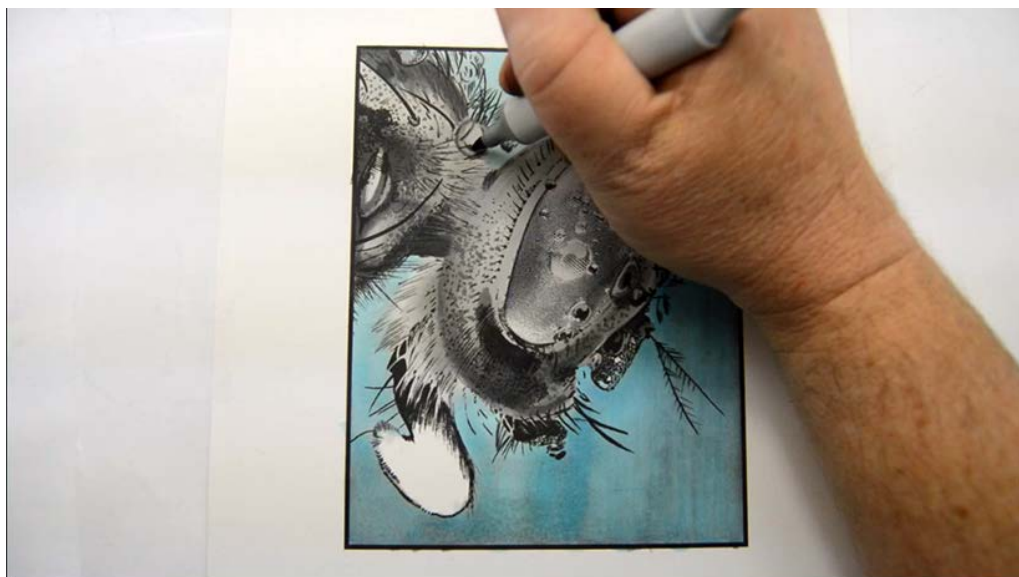

I define the water droplets here... (T6)

...here... (T6)

...here... (T6)

...and here. (T6)

T6

I add hair strokes here… (T6)

…more individual hairs on the top of the head… (T6)

…and more larger hairs to the back. (T6)

After the T6.

I do an overall blend with T2...

...to finish off the basic forms of the fly.

Chapter Three:
Finishing The Image

With the base colors complete we now have essentially a grayscale version of the fly. So now it's time to add some color!

I color the bottoms of the largest water droplet with Y38...

...then fill in the rest of the eye. (Y38)

I add a layer of YR68, leaving touches of the Y38 exposed in the large water drops.
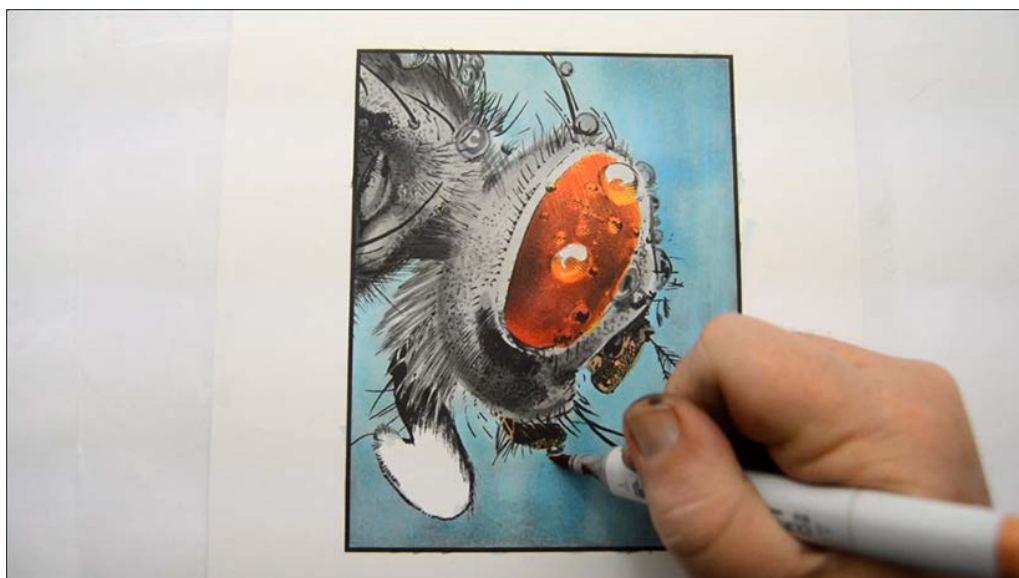

I color the entire eye area excluding the large drops with R27. At the top of the eye I "hatch", first one direction...

...and then the opposite direction to help maintain the texture of the eye in this lighter area.
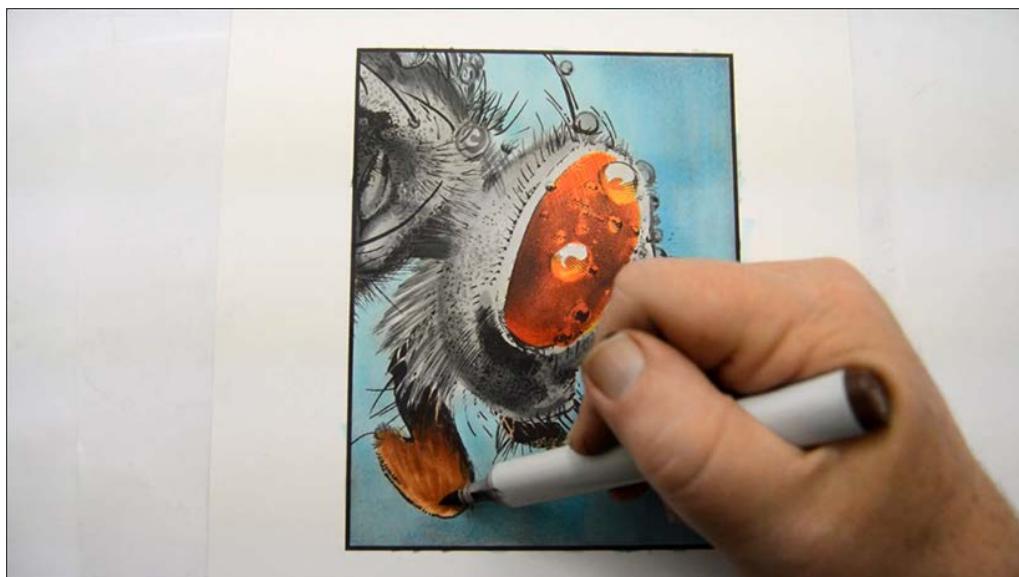
Believe it or not, that bulbous thing at the front of the fly's face is its antenna. I color it in with E13.

This area is called the maxillary palps. I use E13 here as well.

Finally I lay in a base of E13 on the proboscis.

I darken the proboscis with E27 with quick, light pressure strokes to keep the color transparent.
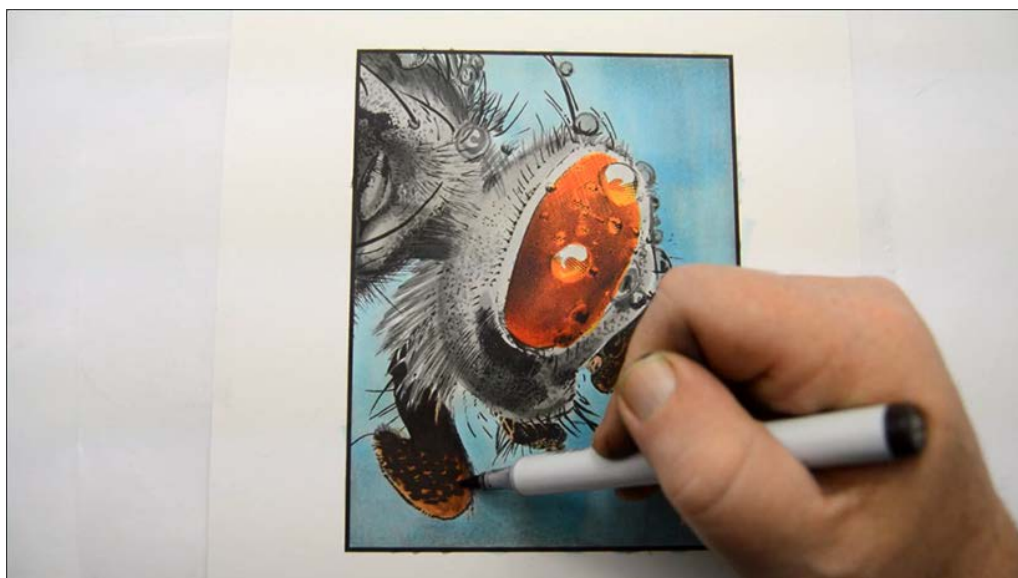

E27

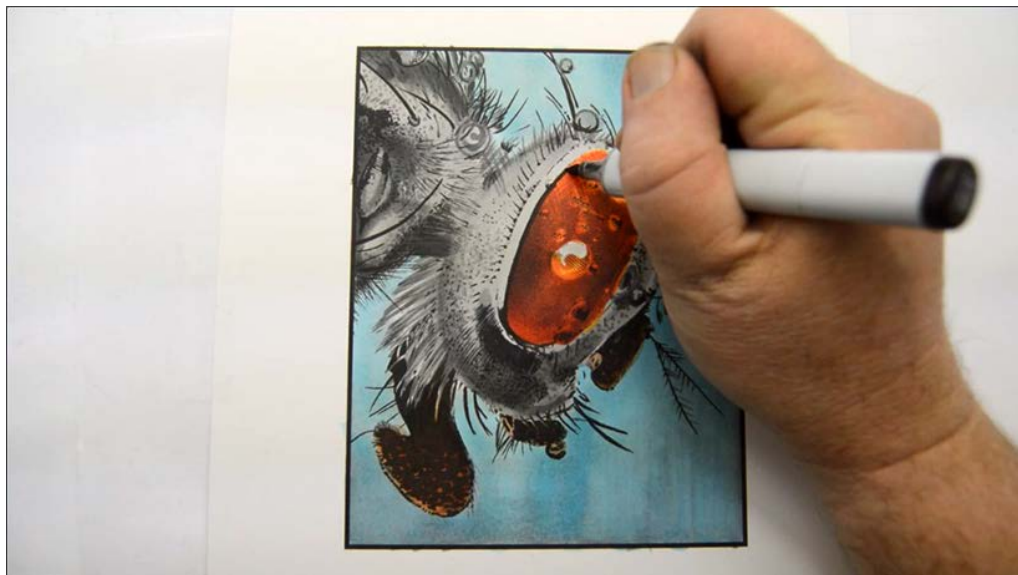I darken these water drops. (E27)

After the E27.

Returning to the proboscis I add an E49 texture.
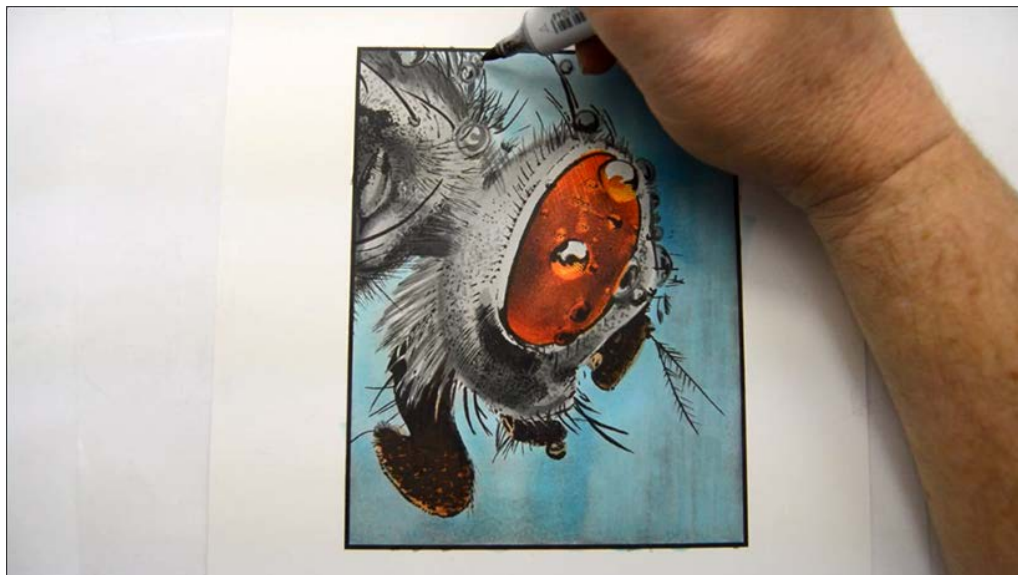

E49 texture

E49 texture

Continuing with the E49 I define the contour of the eye.

E49

I add dark accents to the largest water droplets on the eye and to various other droplets throughout the image. (E49)
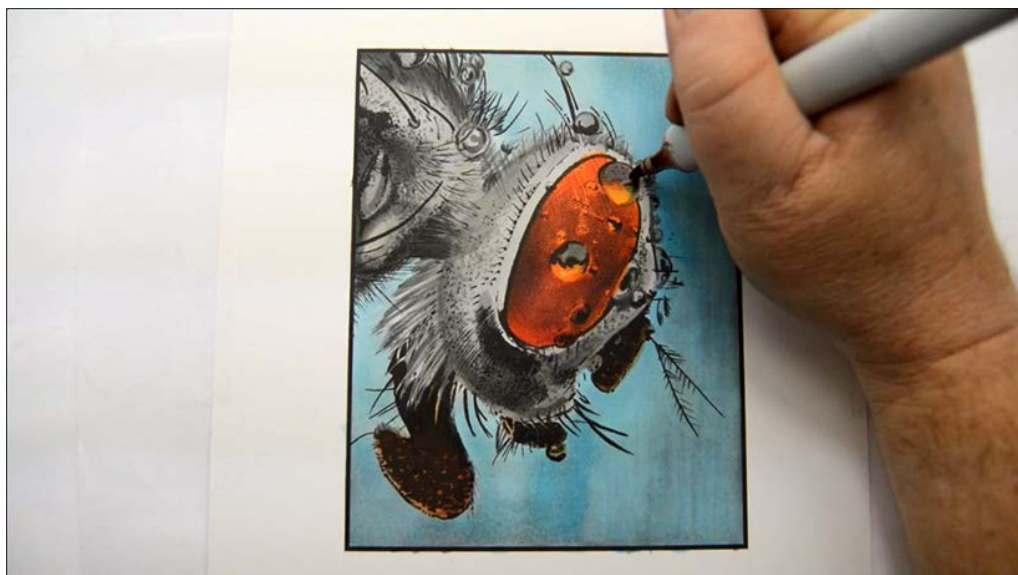
E49

I darken the back of the head with T4...

...then darken the highlight areas of the large water droplets. (T4)
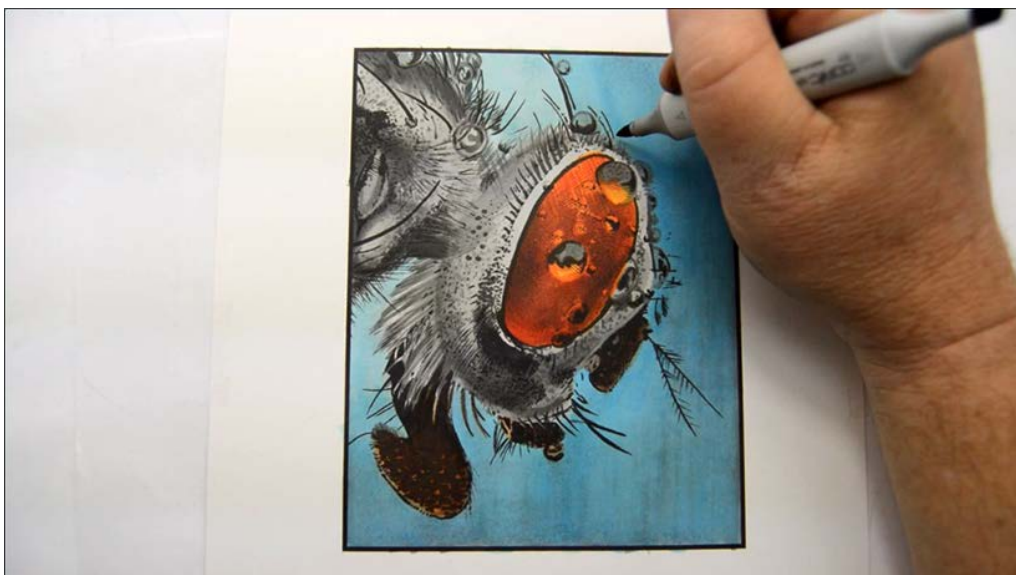

After the T4.

I add dots of E27 inside the highlight areas of the largest water droplets to indicate the texture of the inside of the drops.

I "draw in" eyelashes with T7.

I then add texture. (T7)
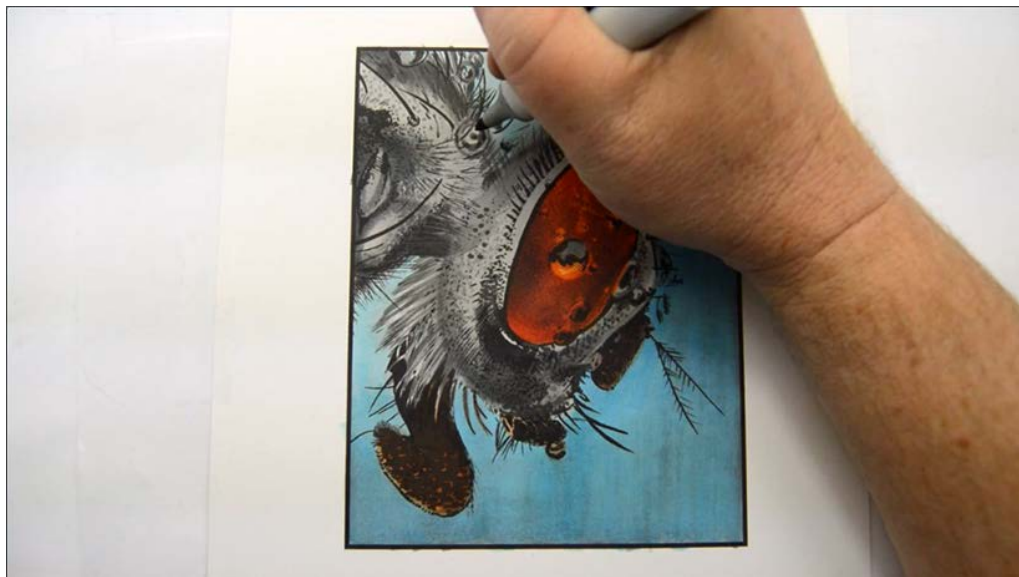

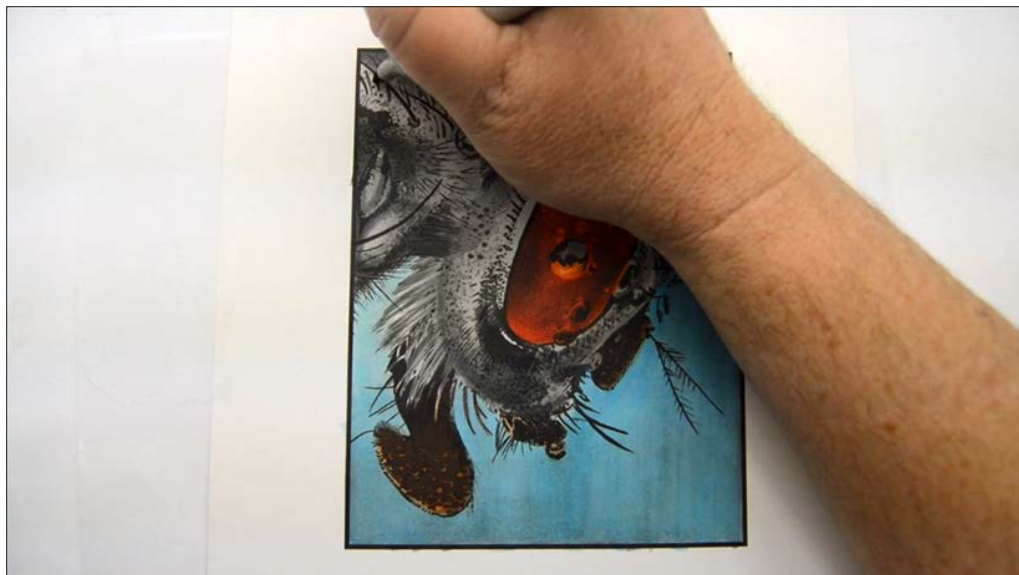T7 texture

T7 texture

T7 texture

T7 texture

I add accents to various water drops throughout the image. (T7)

T7

I then add T7 texture to the body.

T7

That looks nice :)
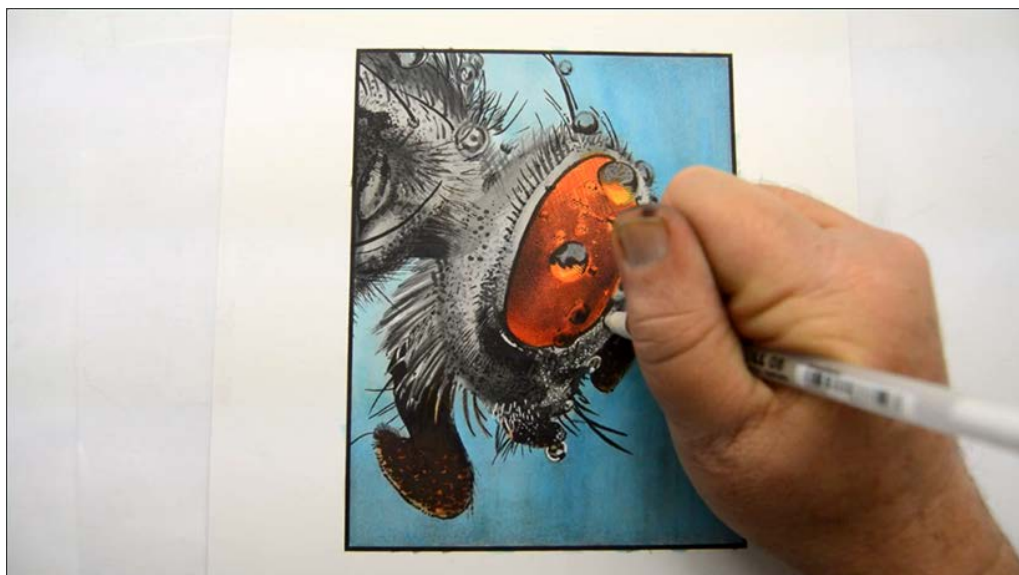
So let's add some white!

08 White Gelly Roll Pen

For this image I'll be using a white Gelly Roll 08 pen (WGRP) to create a variety of effects including pores, texture, hair, and reflections in the water drops. You may use as many or as few of these techniques as you like to bring your image to its final stages.
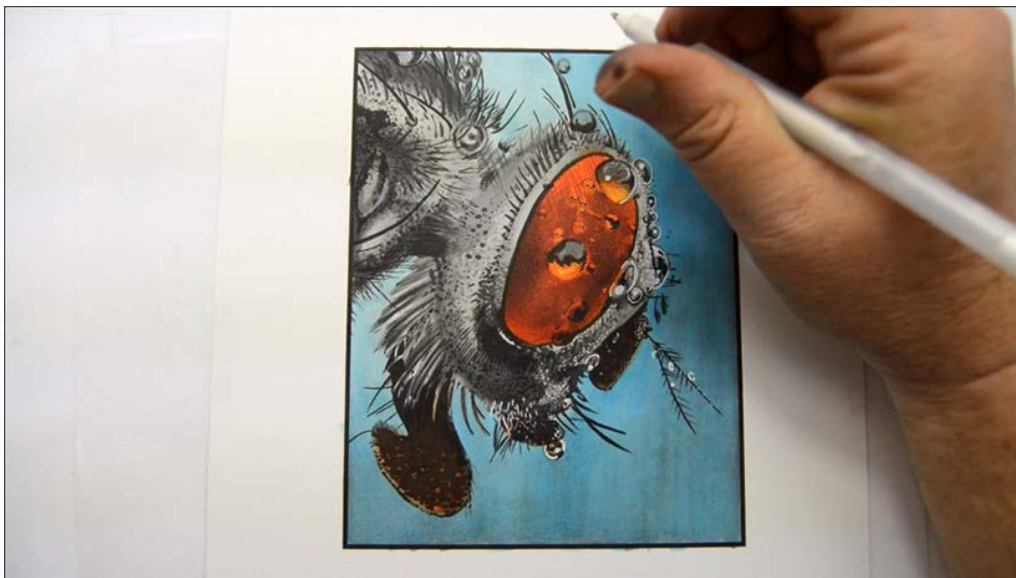
WGRP

WGRP

WGRP

WGRP

WGRP

WGRP

Let's look at how to create the water drops in more detail. We have done most of the work already, now we just need to define the tops of the bubble. (WGRP)

Then add a dot for a highlight.

Simple, huh? :)

More water drops. (WGRP)

WGRP

WGRP

WGRP

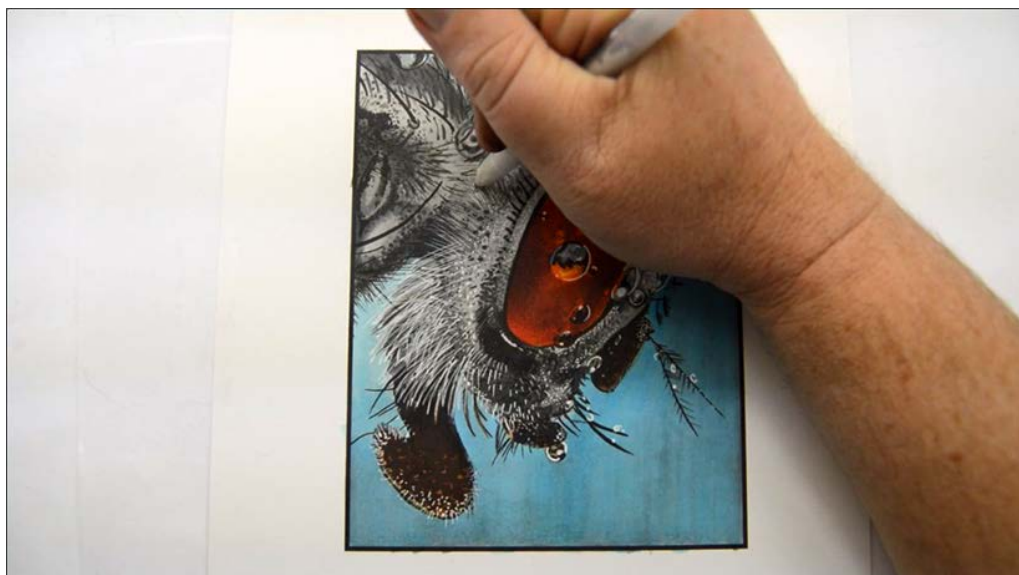Small hair strokes. (WGRP)

Small water drops. (WGRP)

WGRP
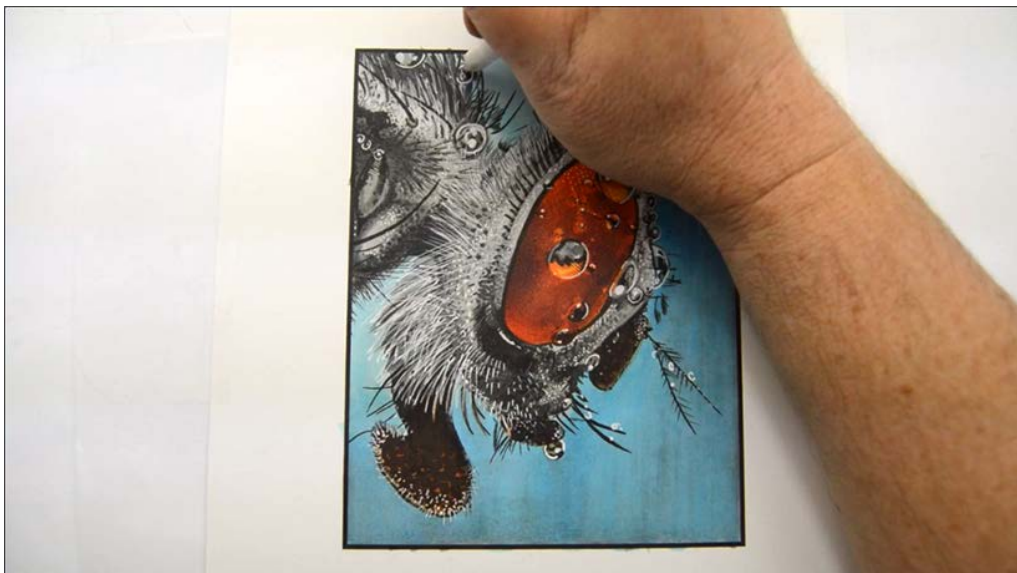

Large hair strokes. (WGRP)

WGRP

The head is complete.

WGRP

WGRP

At this point the image is more or less complete, but I'm not happy with the amount of contrast between the fly and the background, so I decide to darken the background a bit with more saturated blues.
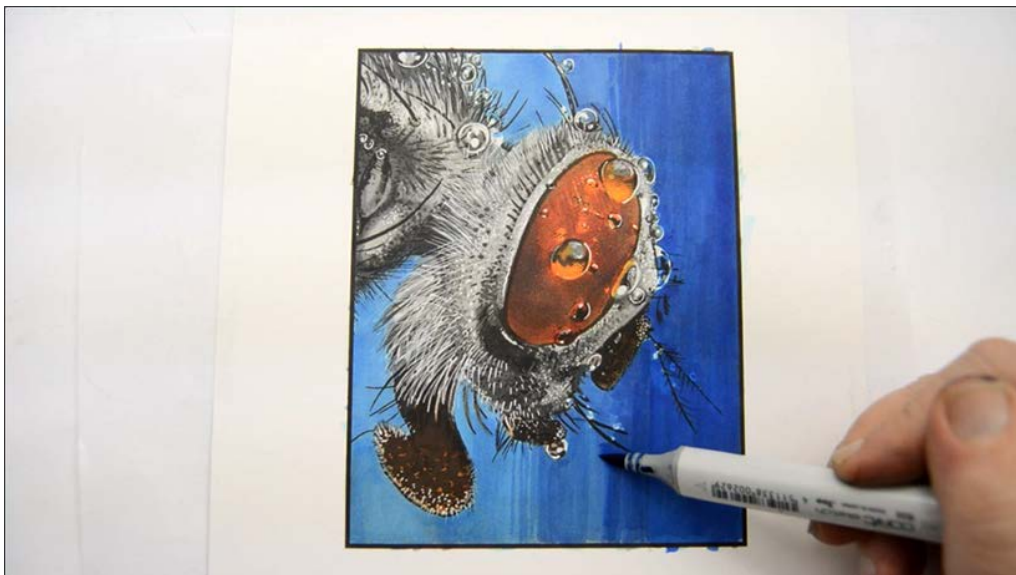

B24

B26

B28

That's better! It just needs a little blending, so I blend the edges between the B28 and B26 with B26.

An overall blend with B24 finishes off the image. I really like the contrast better now!

Happy coloring!

Christopher Kerry