



TUTORIAL  
HOW I USE  
ARTRAGE



# ArtRage

Canvas Settings

Canvas Presets... >

Canvas Lighting

Canvas Color

Opacity

Metallic

Grain

Pattern

Layer 17

Layer 16

Layer 15

Layer 14

Layer 13

Layer 12

Layer 11

Layer 10

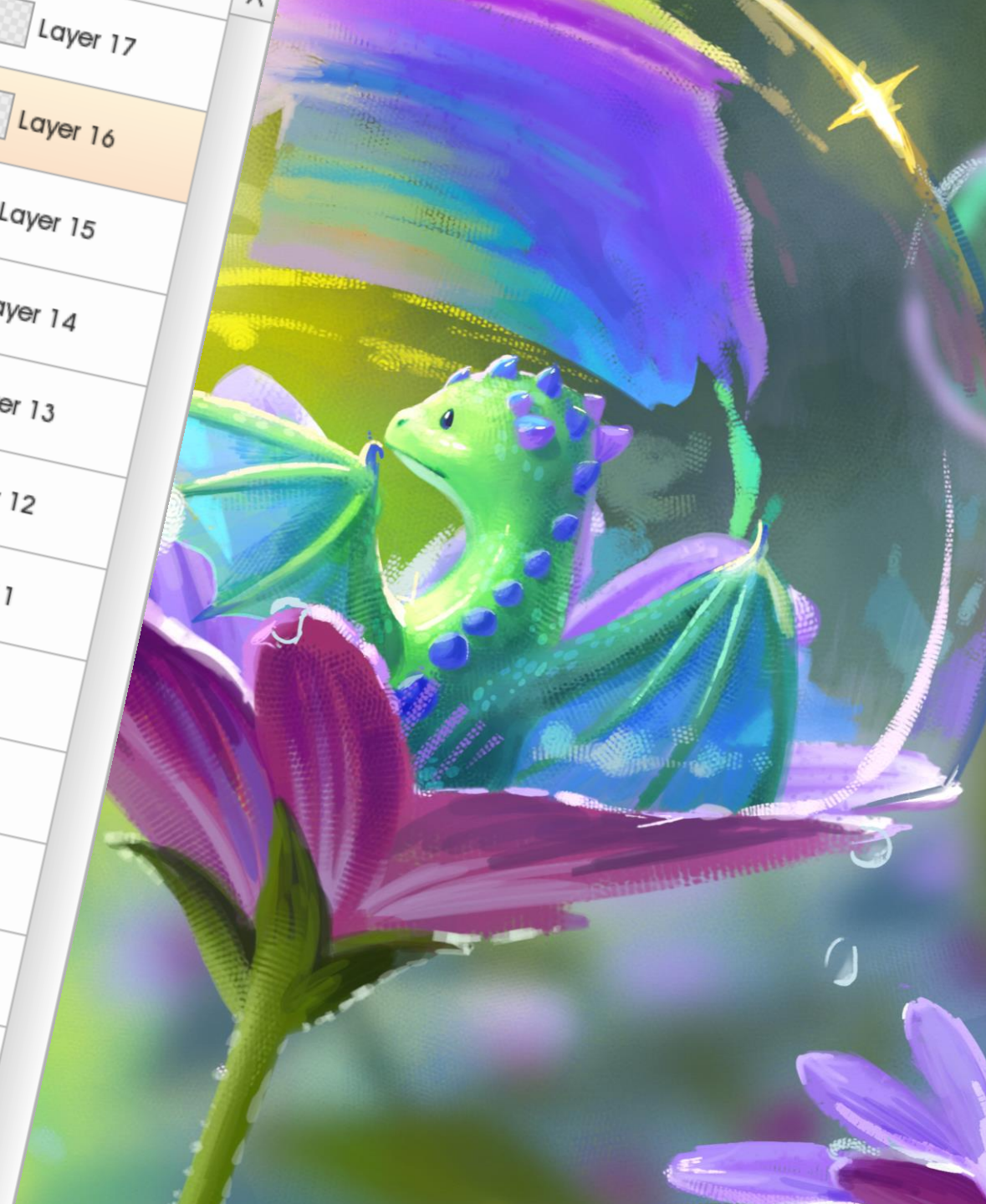
Layer 9

Layer 8

Layer 7

Layer 6

Layer 5





### GUIDES

Drag and drop guidelines into your canvas. If you no longer wish to have them, you can drag them off the canvas with the transform tool

### TRANSFORM TOOL

Once you have this tool selected, you can click on your canvas and alter elements any way you like

### CANVAS POSITIONER

Click and drag elements to move around your canvas or zoom in and out

# THE INTERFACE

You can adapt the interface to your needs by toggling and hiding the following features:

### STICKERS & STENCILS

Have fun with some pre-made assets

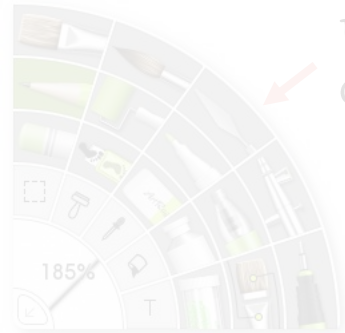


### SETTINGS

Adjust your brush

### TOOLS

Custom Brushes are on the bottom



### PRESETS

Gives you the option to try out brushes with pre-made settings



### LAYERS

### TRACING & REFS

Import references

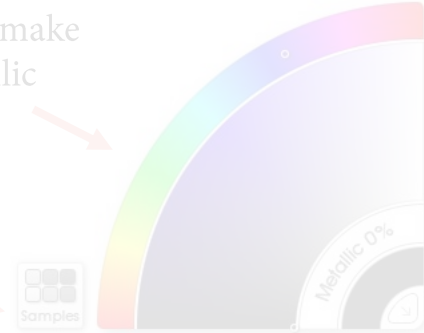


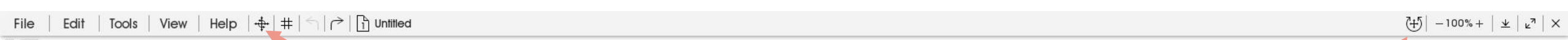
### COLOR-WHEEL

You can chose to make your colors metallic

### SAMPLES

Save palettes for all your files





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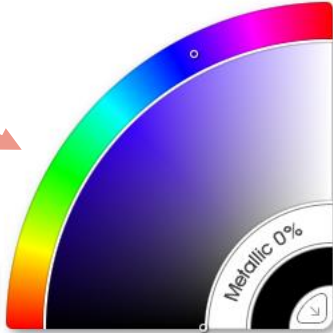
### TRACING & REFS

Import references



### COLOR-WHEEL

You can chose to make your colors metallic



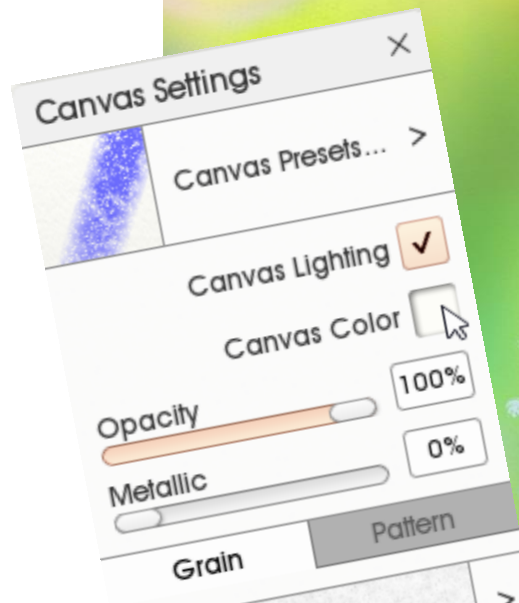
### SAMPLES

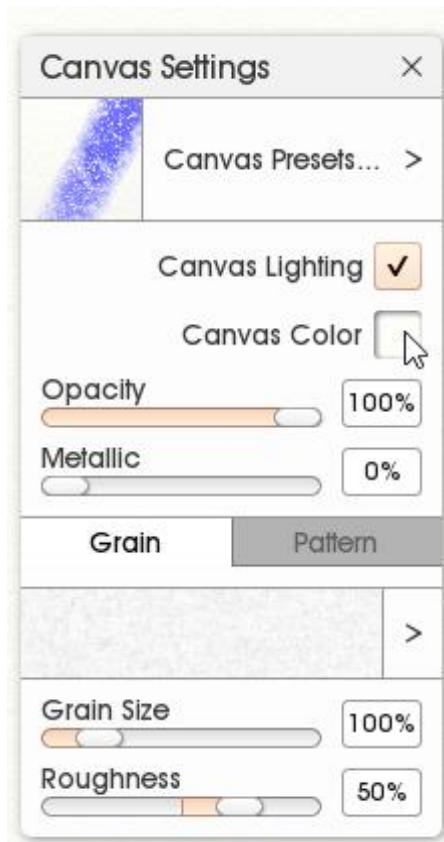
Save palettes for all your files



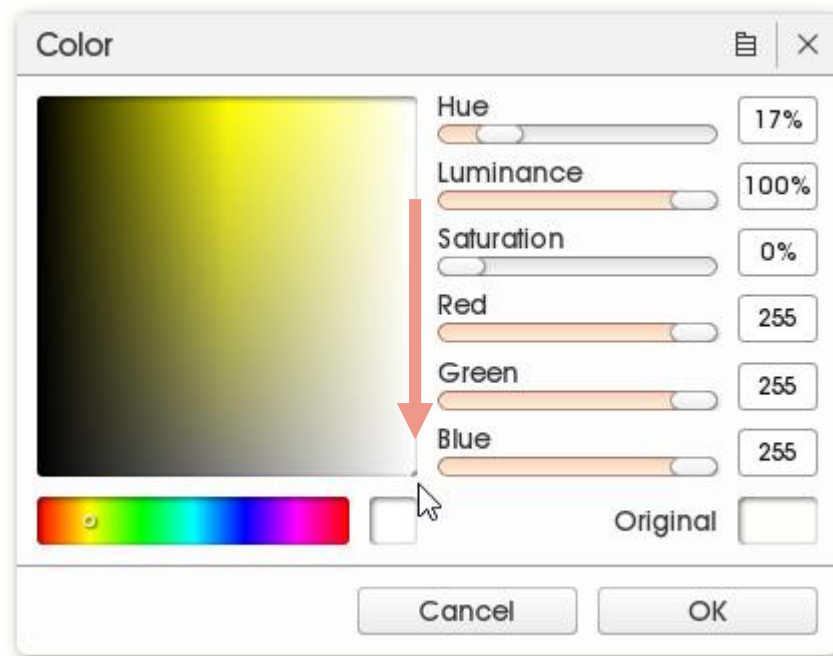


# CANVAS SETTINGS





1. Click on square next to “Canvas Color”



2. Drag the little dot down from the top to the bottom

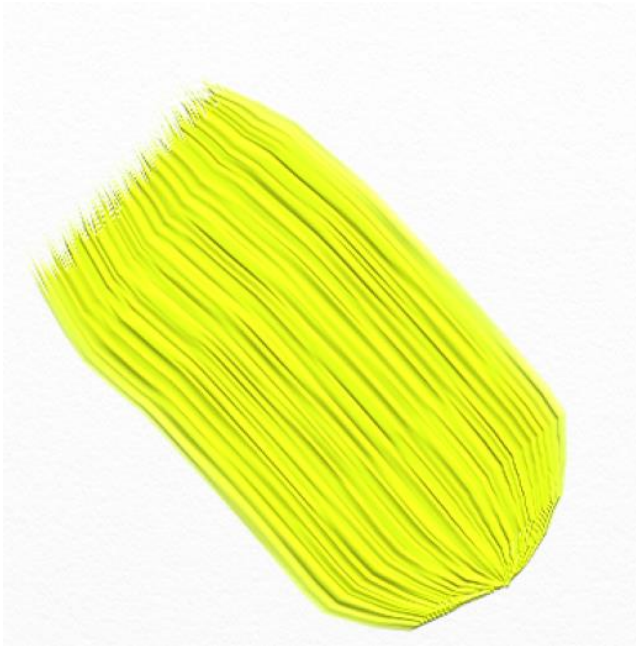
## CANVAS SETTINGS - COLOR

The default canvas color is slightly yellowish instead of white to mimic the color of paper. I personally like to have a completely neutral background. In order to change the default color, go to “View > Canvas Settings” and click on the square next to “Canvas Color”. A color wheel should appear. Here, drag the light yellow down to a neutral white.

Also: you can have a transparent background if you set the opacity to “0%”.

## CANVAS SETTINGS - LIGHTING (1)

A setting I also change is “Canvas Lighting”. This will be on by default and I recommend to leave it on if you like to work with e.g.: the Oil Paint Brush. This setting will cast a shadow and make the texture of the Oil Paint Brush visible.

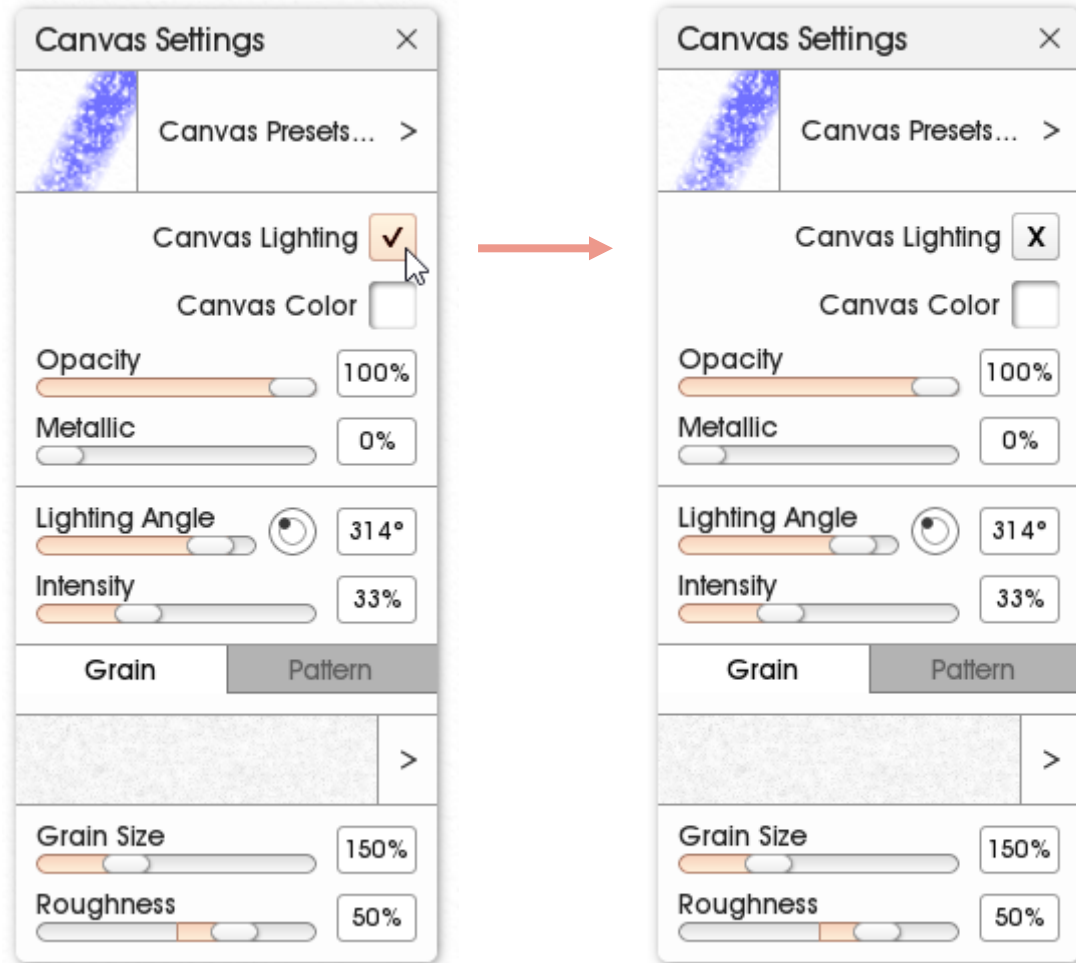


Oil Paint Brush with lighting



Oil Paint Brush without lighting



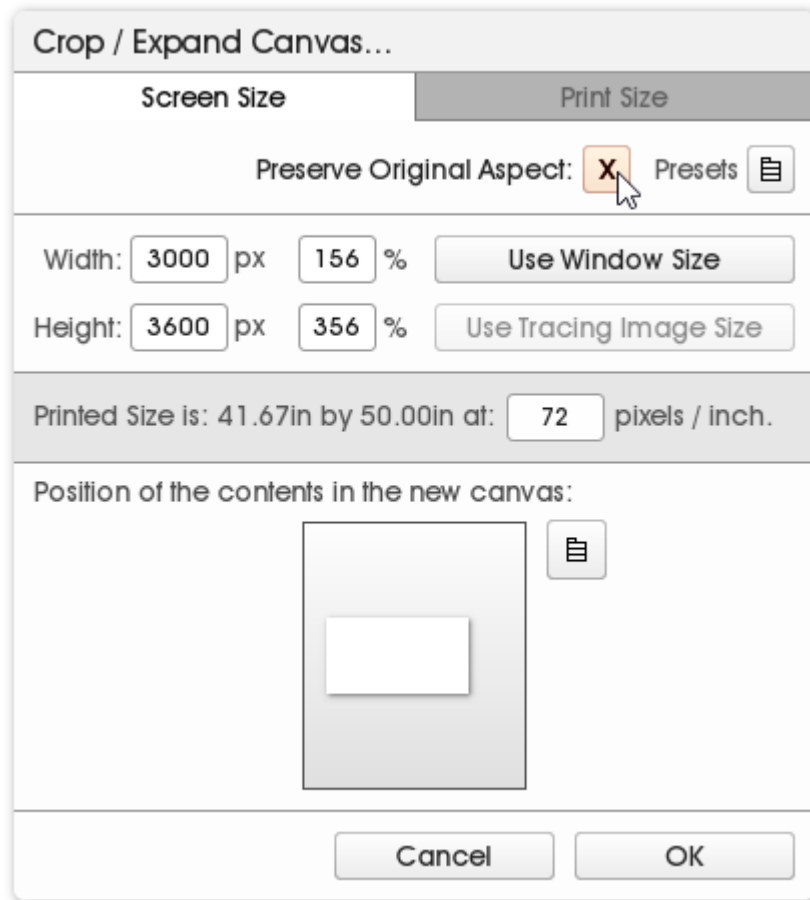


## CANVAS SETTINGS - LIGHTING (2)

Since I don't need the texture of the Oil Paint Brush, I turn the lighting off. Doing so is the only way to keep your background a pure white color without a shadow casting over it.

In order to do this, simply click on the checkmark next to "Canvas Lighting".





## CANVAS SETTINGS - SIZE (1)

I use two different tools to adjust my canvas size. One is found under “Edit > Crop / Expand Canvas” and the other under “Edit > Resize Painting”. For now we’ll look at “Crop / Expand Canvas”.

I advise you to work with a high resolution if your computer can handle it. You never know if you’ll end up printing a drawing, that’s why it’s always best to work with high resolutions: The shortest side of my drawings is at least 3000 pixels long. Hit the checkmark next to “Preserve Original Aspect” if you want to make a custom resolution.

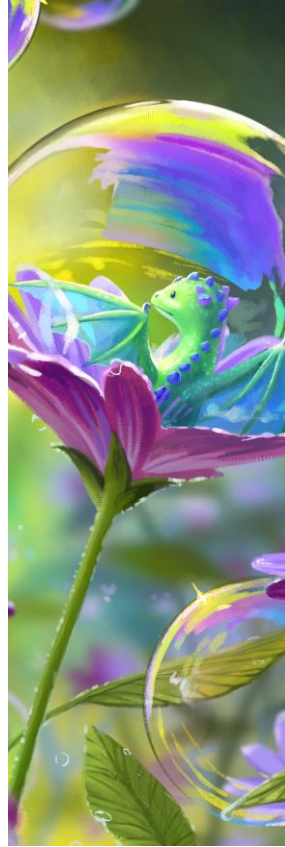
You can also set your canvas to automatic DIN sizes by clicking on the icon next to “Presets”.



Original Canvas



Resized with  
50% width  
100% height



Cropped with  
50% width  
100% height

## CANVAS SETTINGS - SIZE (2)

The difference between “Crop / Expand Canvas” and “Resize Painting” is that “Crop / Expand” will add or subtract elements from your canvas while “Resize” will stretch it to a certain size.

I like to resize drawings I upload so no high-resolution pieces of mine can be found online. This protects my artwork a little more from being stolen since it is only available in a lower resolution.

The drawings I upload are JPGs and between 40% and 50% of their original size.

# LAYERS



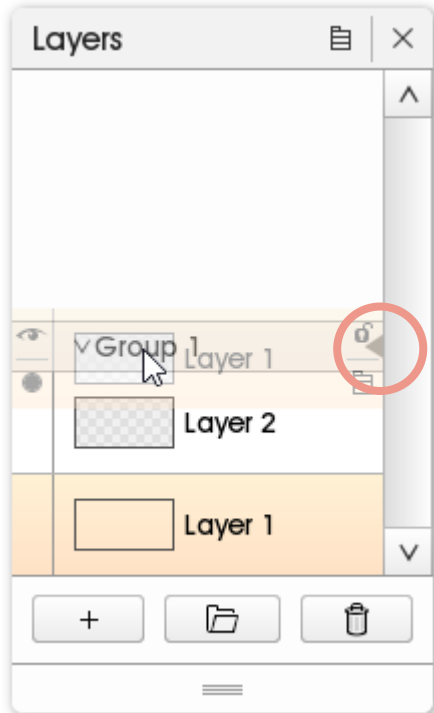


## LAYERS - CREATING A GROUP

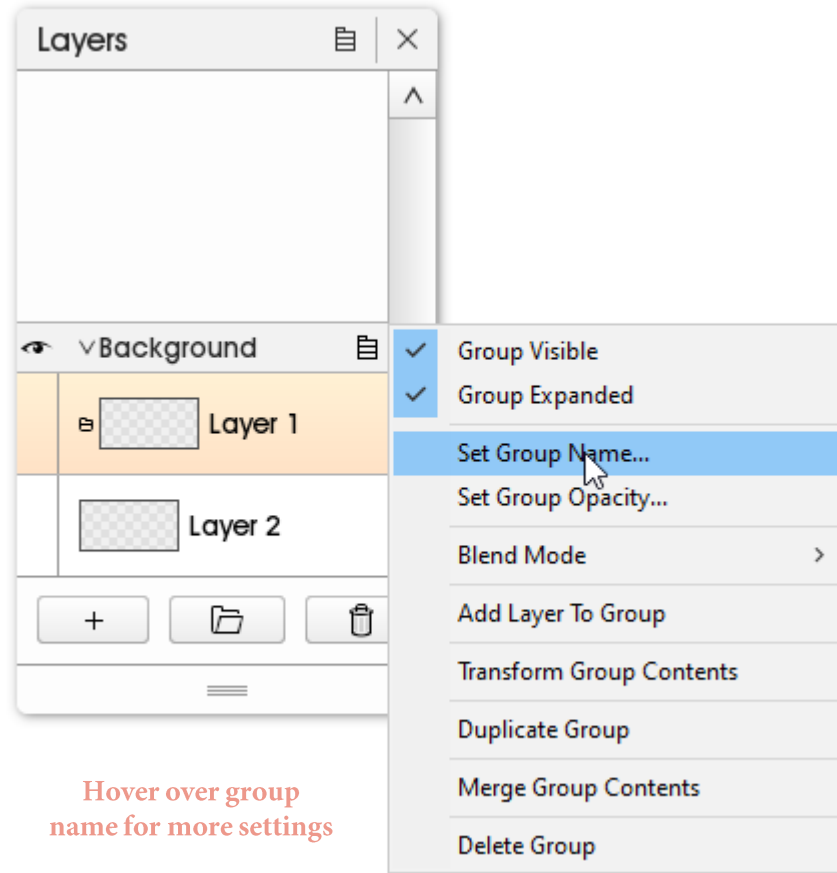
To add a layer, simply click on the + symbol in your layers window. Next to this symbol is a folder icon. Click on that to add a layer group.

You'll need to drag and drop your layer into the layer group. When you do this, pay close attention to the arrow that spawns: You'll need to make sure that the arrow is directly in the middle of your group name.

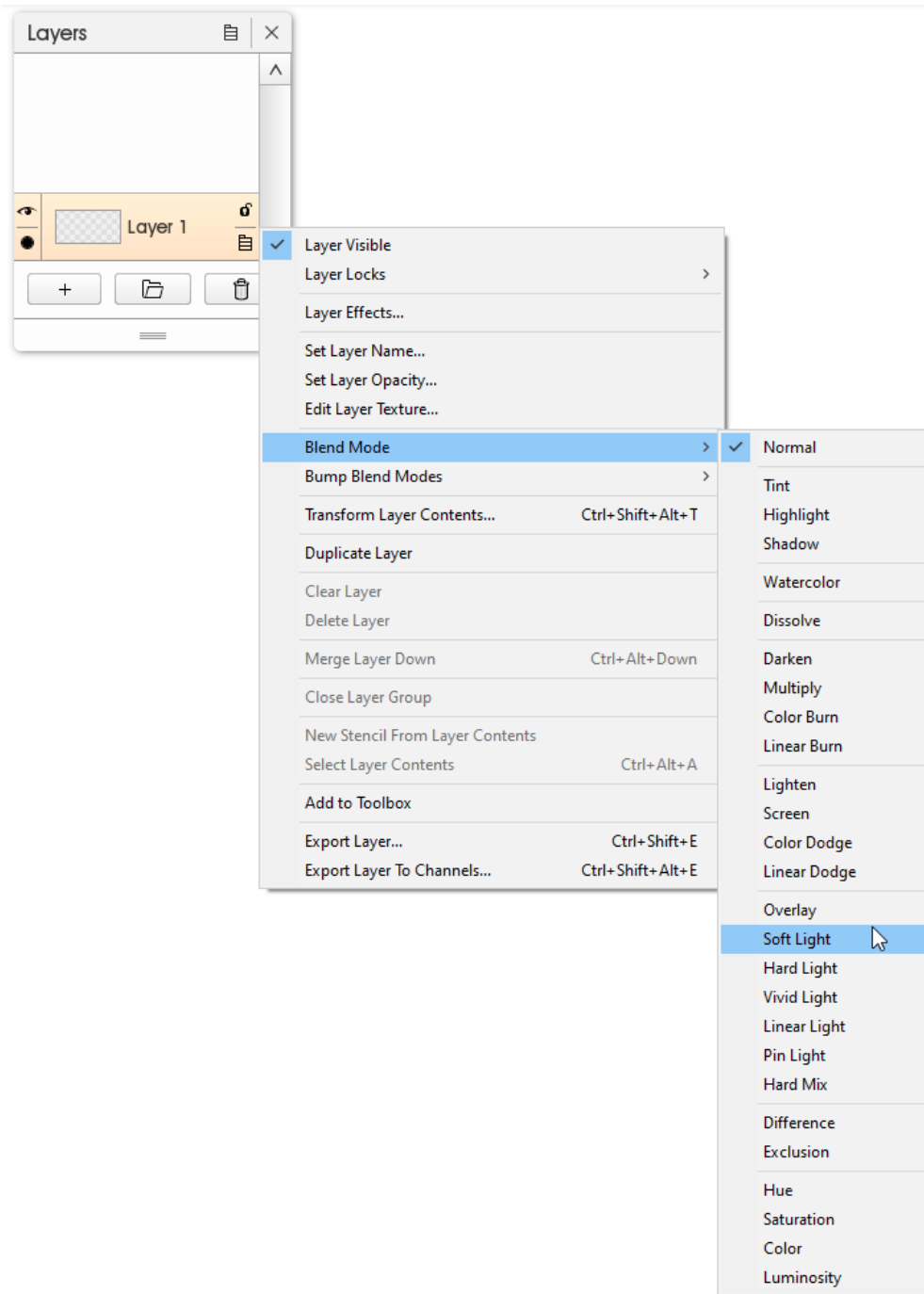
I recommend to name your groups if you work with a lot of layers. In order to do this, hover over the group name and click on the icon on the right: A list of settings should appear. Here, you can set the group's opacity. You can also click on the eye icon if you want to hide the entire group.



Drag and drop layers into the group (look at circled arrow)




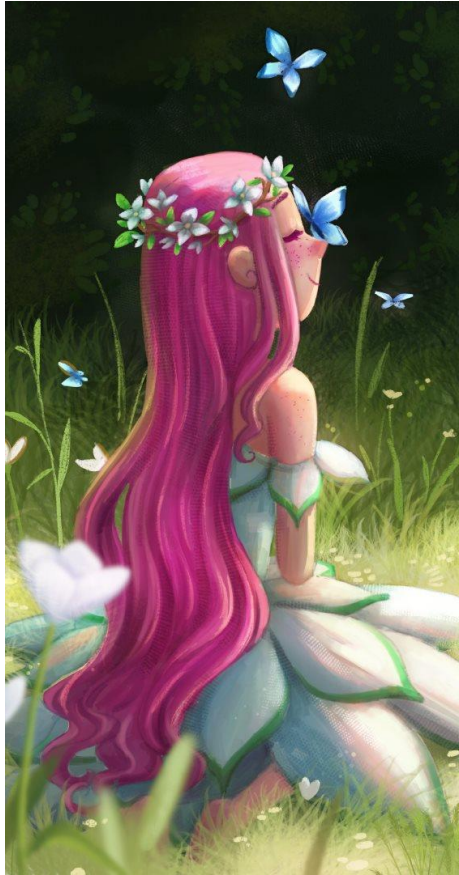
Hover over group name for more settings



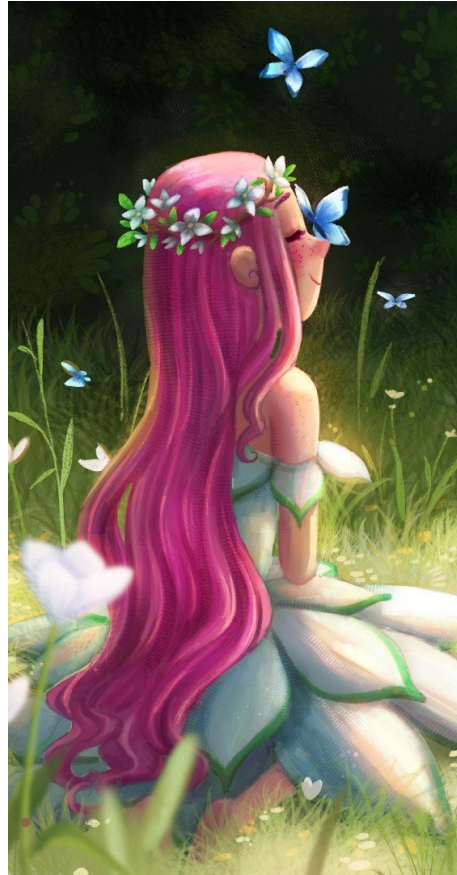
## LAYERS - BLEND MODES

I advise experimenting with layer Blend Modes. They will determine how layers blend into each other, in other words, they will create an effect. The mode I use the most is “Soft Light”. You find it after hovering over your layer and clicking on the icon on the bottom right. From there you go to “Blend Mode > Soft Light”.

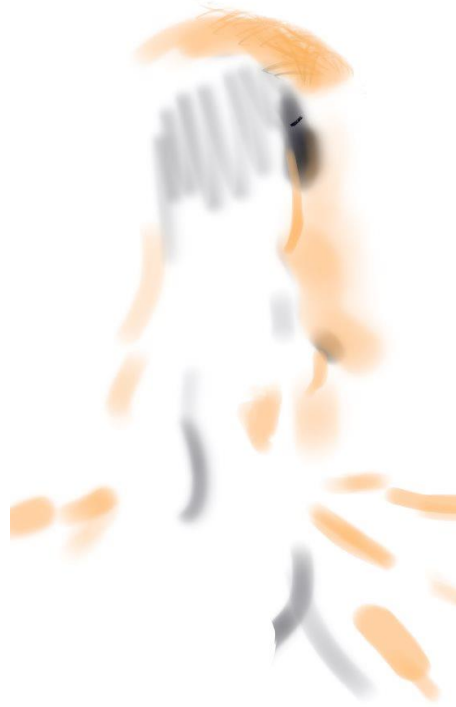
Layers will be marked with this symbol if they are Blend Mode layers: 



Drawing without  
Soft Light



Drawing with  
Soft Light



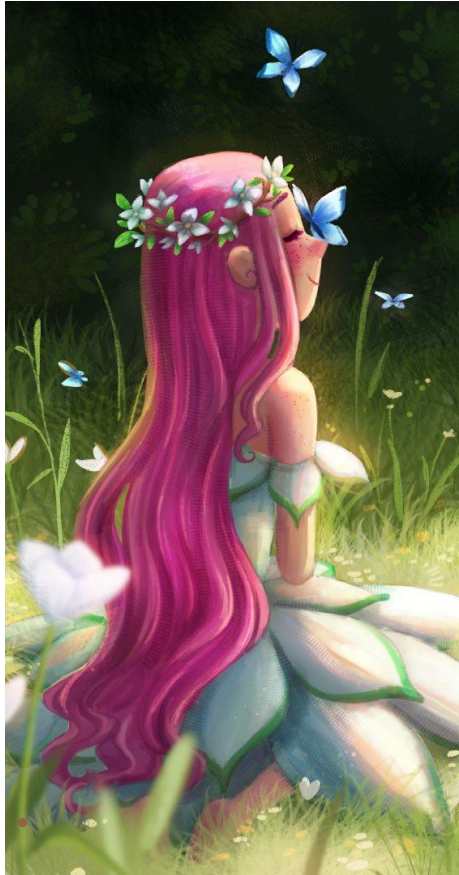
Soft Light layer  
by itself

## LAYERS - SOFT LIGHT BLEND MODE

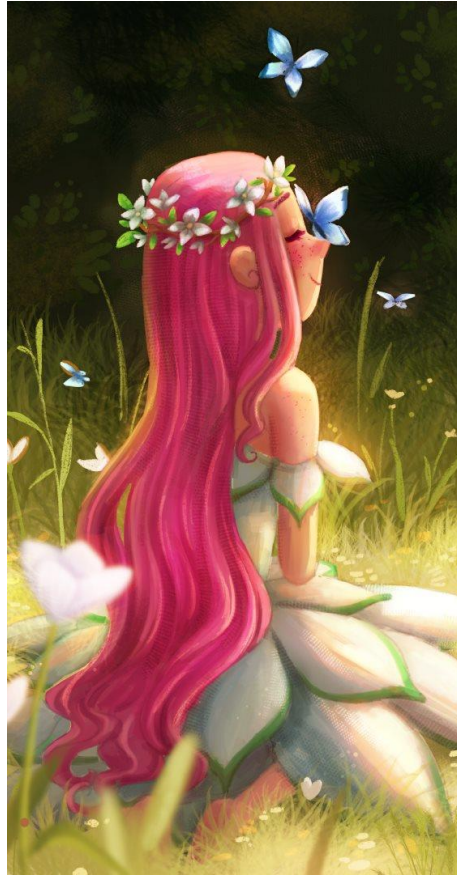
This is how I achieve glowy effects for colors. I like to use a warm, light color for bright areas and a darker cold color for shadows.

In order to do this you'll need to make sure that your Soft Light layer is on top of the other layers.

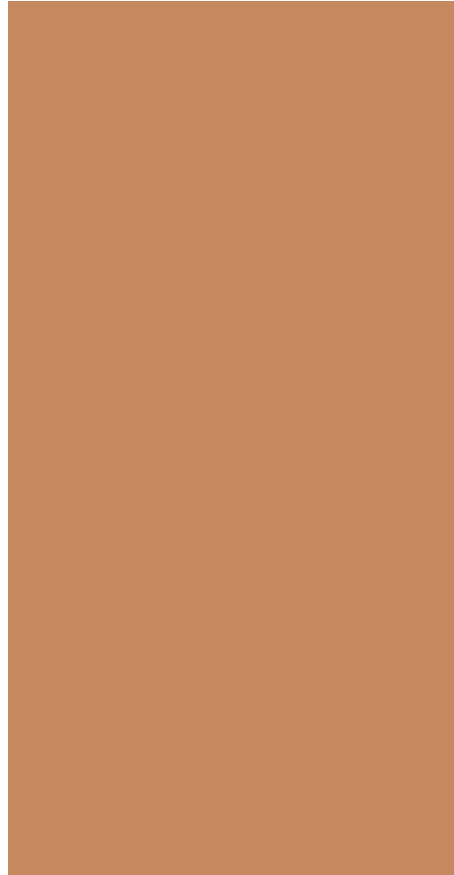




Drawing without  
Soft Light



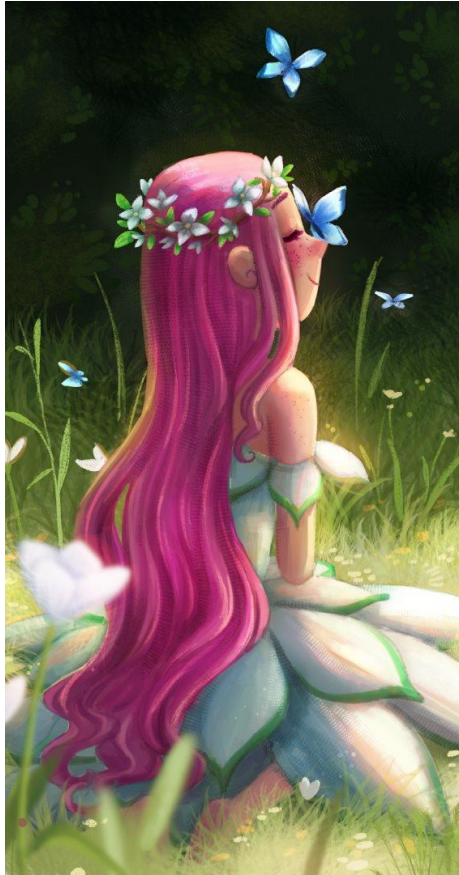
Drawing with  
Soft Light



Soft Light layer  
by itself

## LAYERS - SOFT LIGHT BLEND MODE (2)

Another way I use the Soft Light blend mode is by covering the entire layer with a certain color. In this example, the orange / brown color gives the piece a more autumn-like look.



Drawing without  
Soft Light



Drawing with  
Soft Light



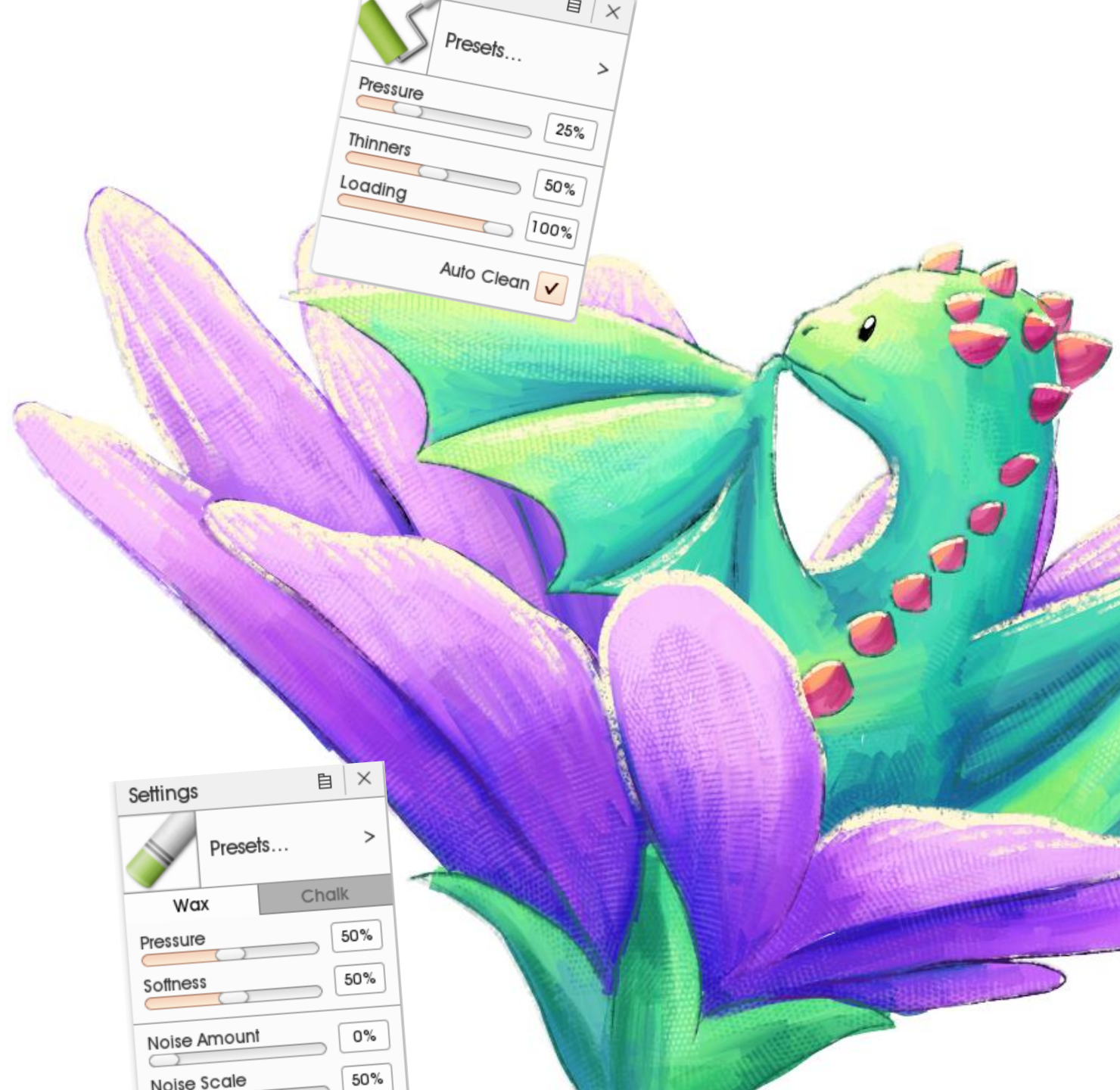
Soft Light layer  
by itself

## LAYERS - COLOR BLEND MODE

Feel free to experiment with other Blend Modes! All of them will give you different outcomes depending on the hue, saturation and brightness of the colors you use in your Blend Mode layer.

Something I like to use is the “Color” mode. This mode will tint your drawing to a specific hue. I like to use this to check how my drawings look in grayscale. Make sure that there is visible contrast in the most important parts of your composition.

# TOOLS

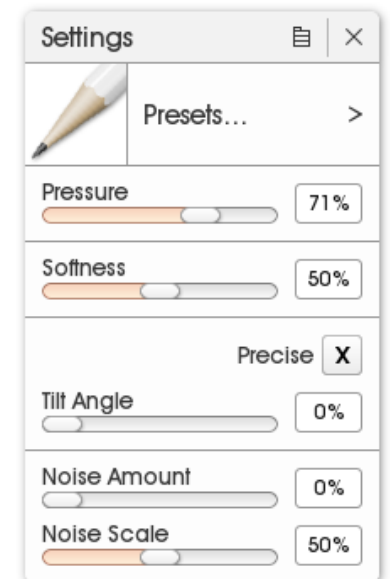


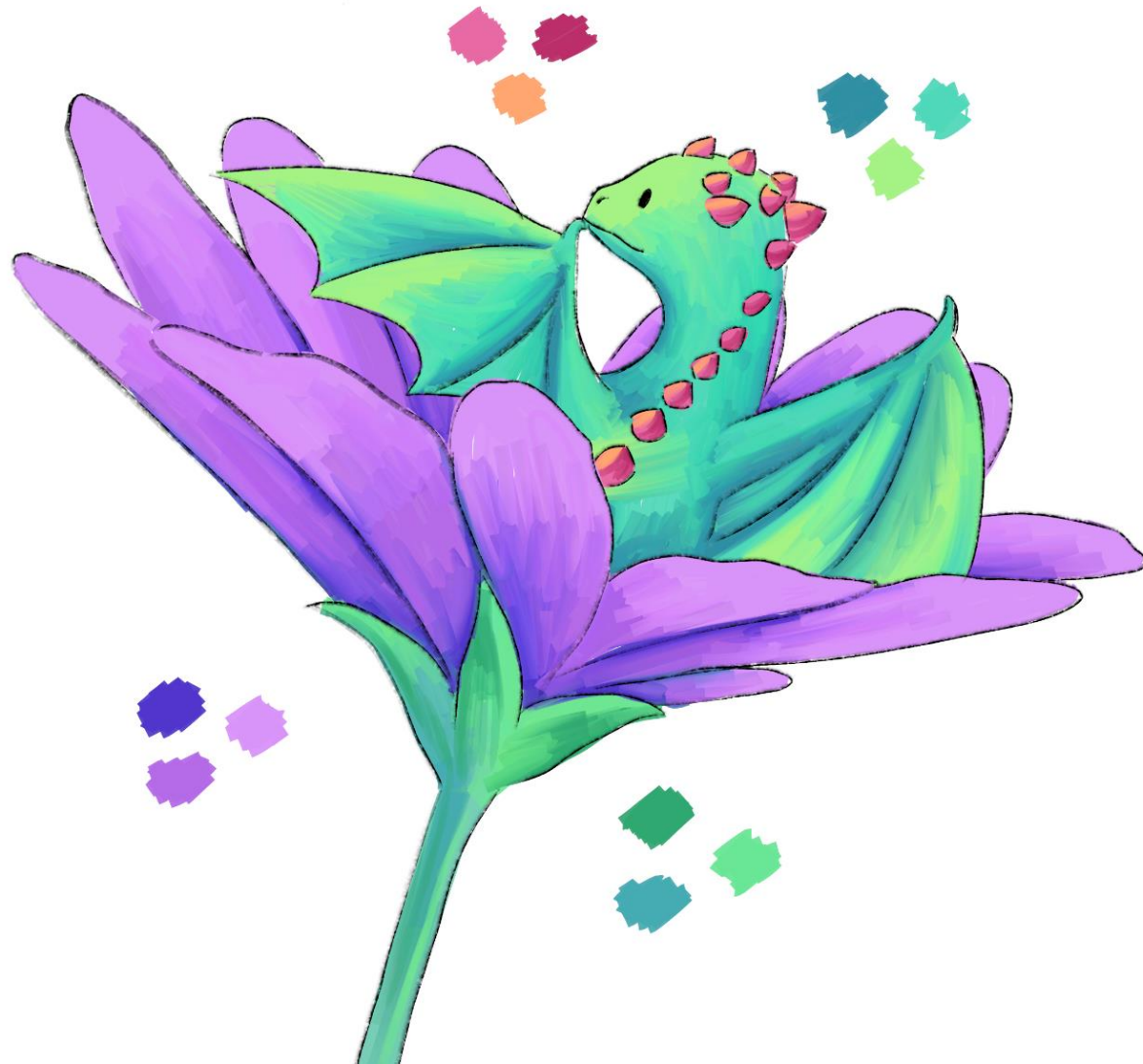




## TOOLS - PENCIL

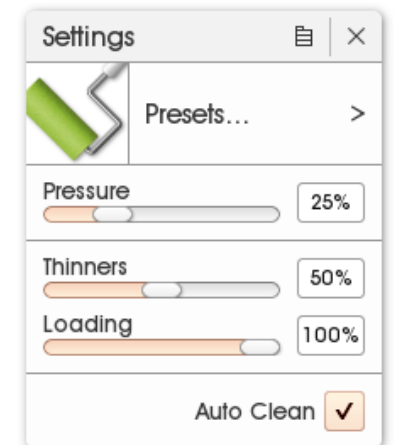
I use the pencil for lineart and sketches. If you want your lineart to look clean and smooth, I recommend using the Ink Pen instead.





## TOOLS - PAINT ROLLER

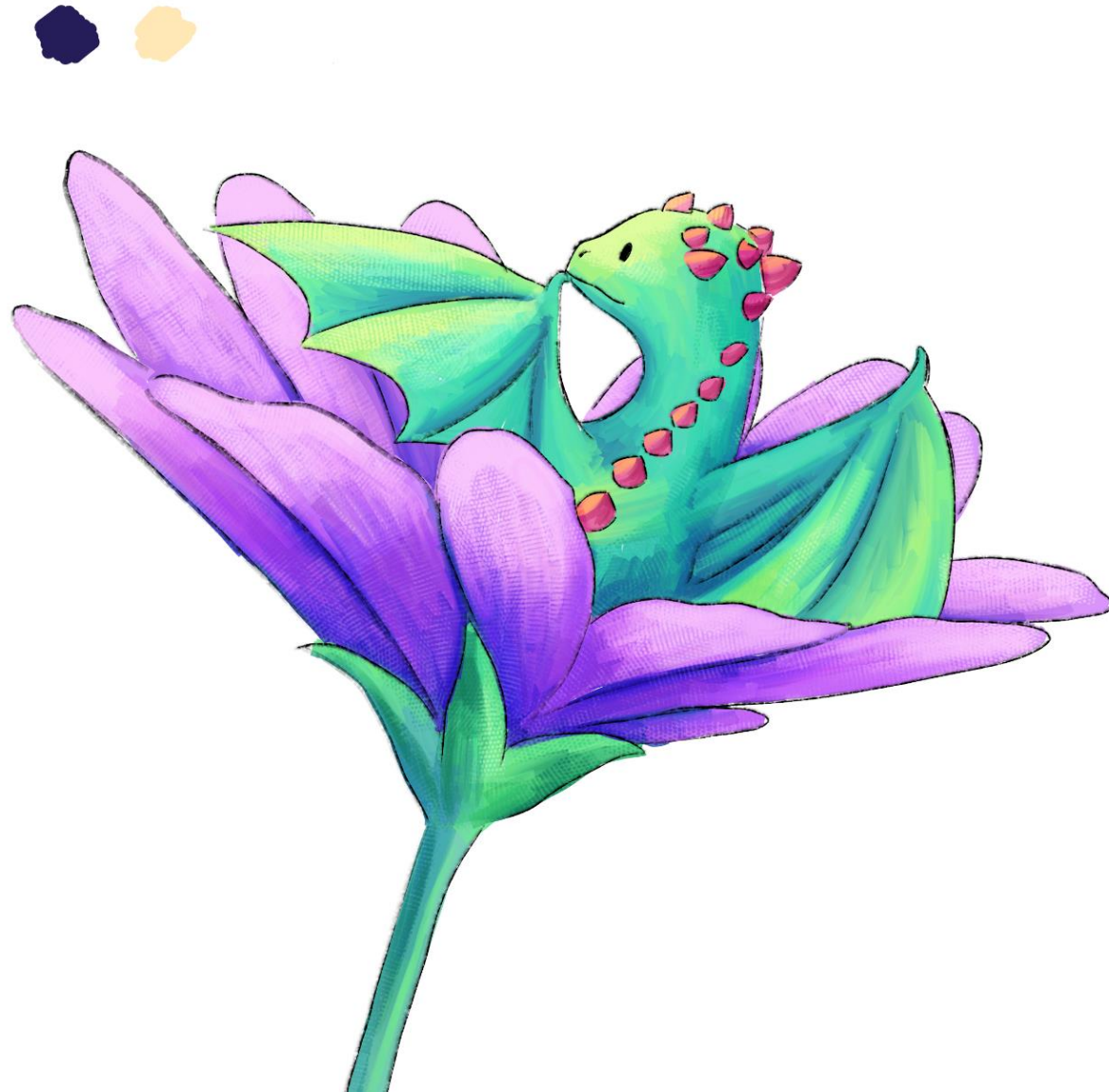
With this tool I work on base colors and rendering at the same time. I paint the darker areas first, then pick a lighter color and draw with it on top. This automatically blends the two colors together and creates a nice painted texture.





This is what my piece looked like at an early stage:  
Again, no base colors, instead I paint shaded areas  
first and then add lighter colors on top.

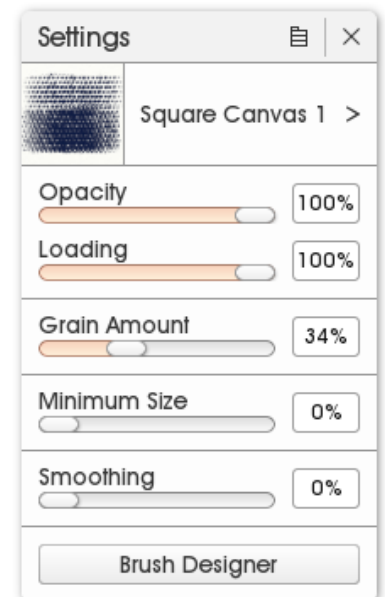




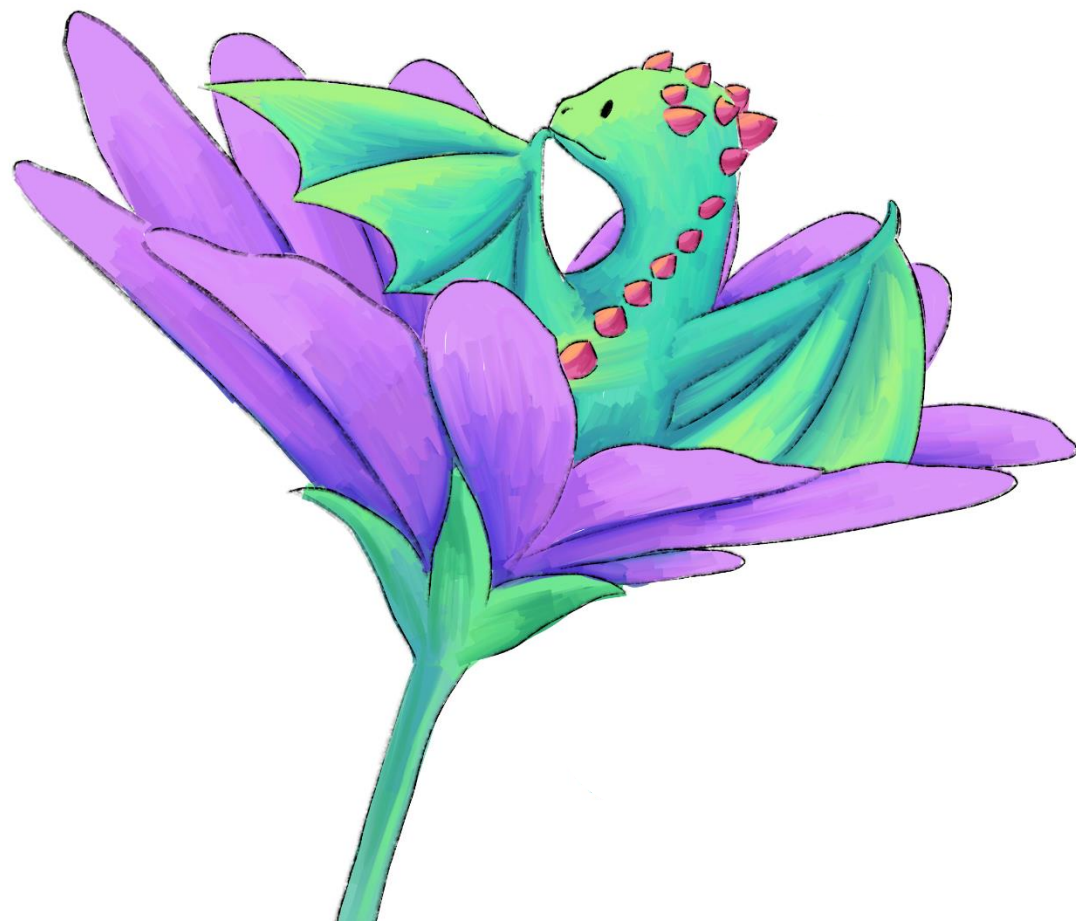
## TOOLS - CUSTOM BRUSH

I use a variety of premade custom brushes, especially „Square Canvas 1“. You can find it by clicking on the „Presets“ square next to the tools. Click on the „Artistic“ category and scroll down until you find it.

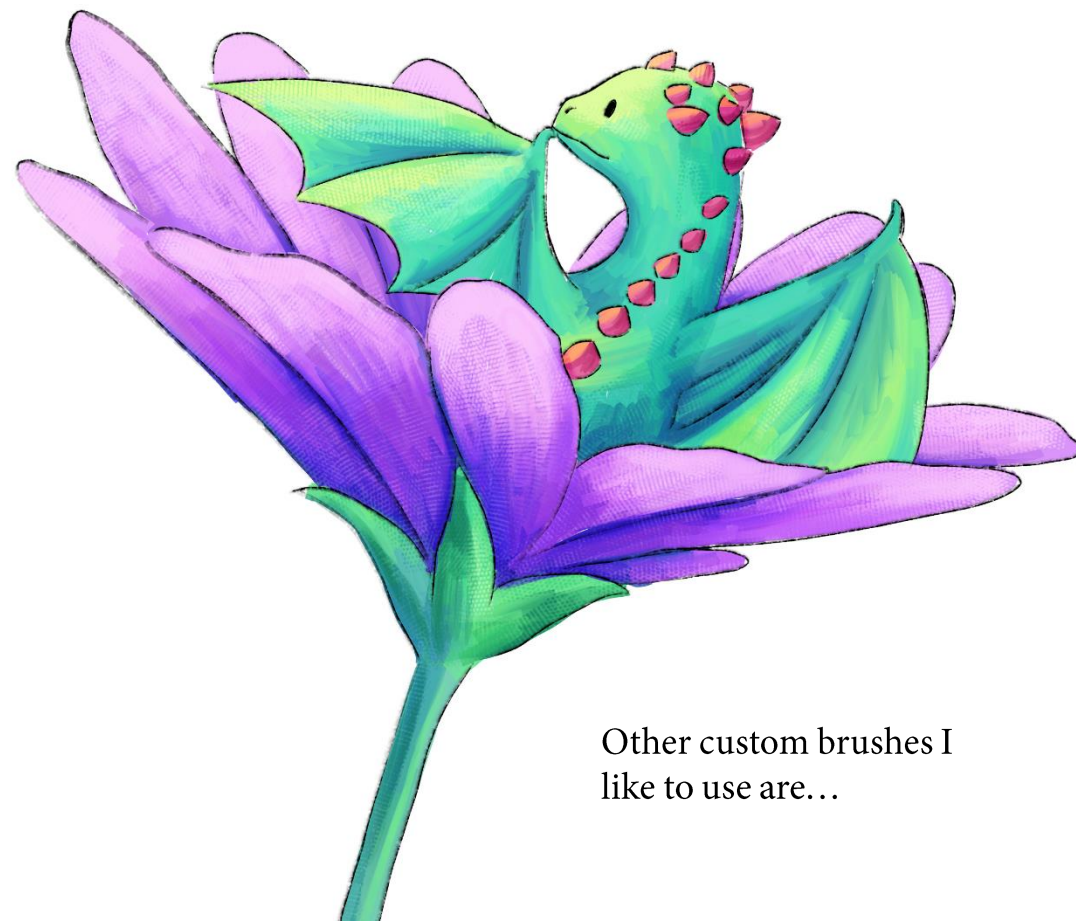
When adding Soft Light to my drawings, I like to use this custom brush as it creates a canvas-like texture.



Before Soft Light

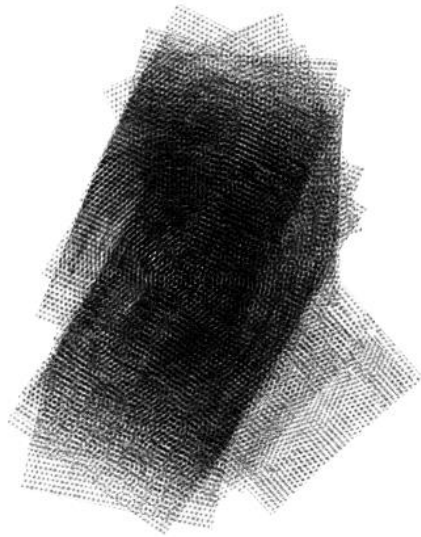
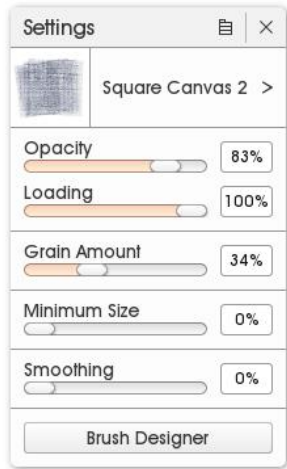


After Soft Light

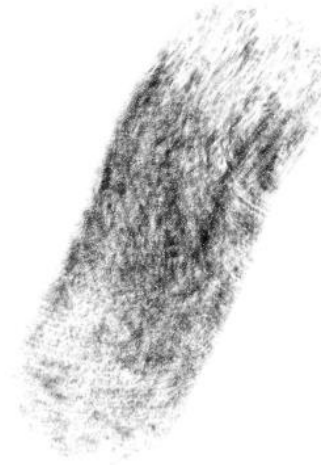
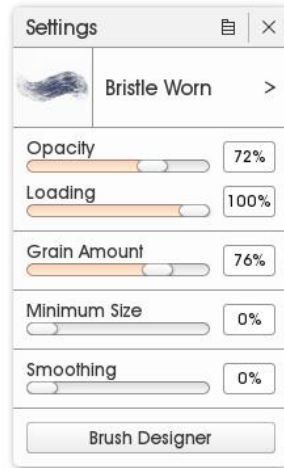


Other custom brushes I  
like to use are...

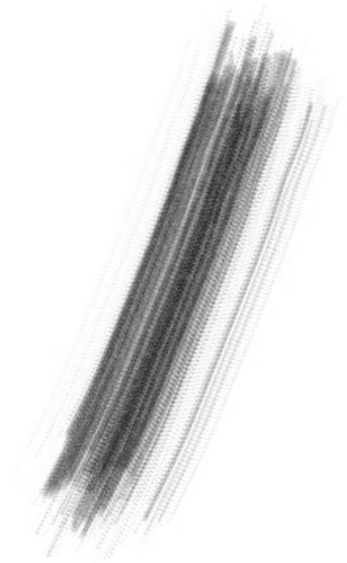
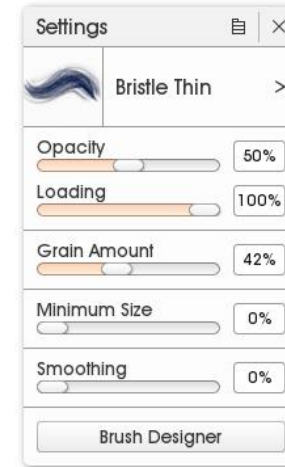
Softer version of „Square Canvas 1“



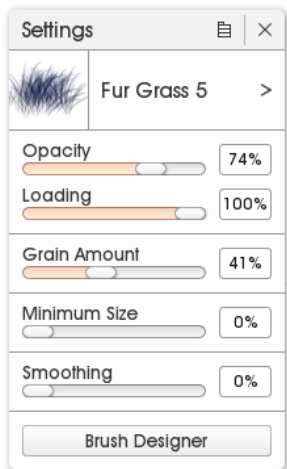
For a muddy look (ideal for grounds)



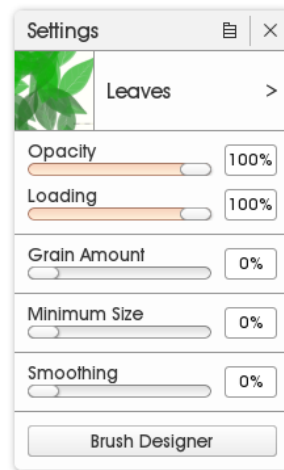
For tree textures



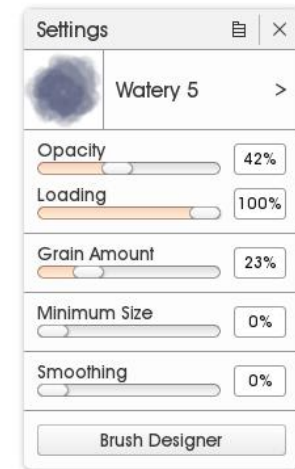
For grass



For leaves in trees



For clouds



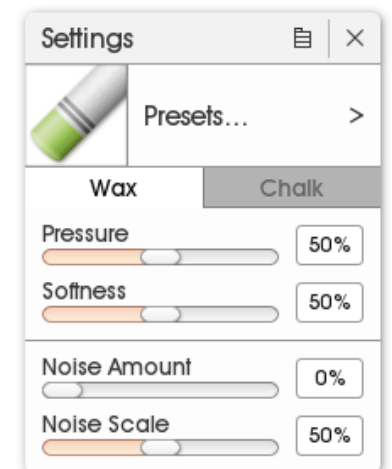
The three top brushes are found under „Artistic“, the bottom ones under „Nature“



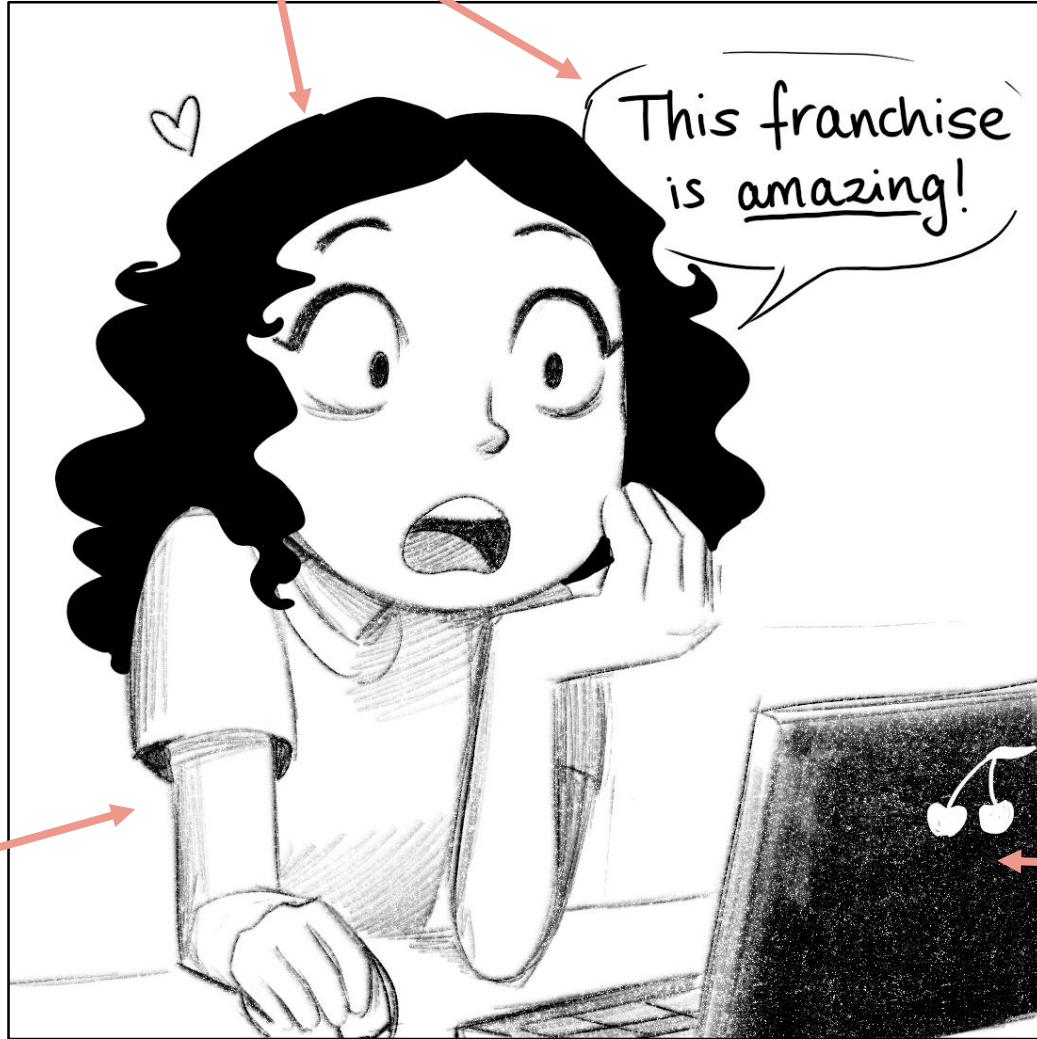


## TOOLS – PASTEL

I like to add some strong highlights with the Pastel brush on a layer above the lineart. Sometimes I use this tool for rendering as well.



Ink pen  
Hair and text



Pencil  
Lineart

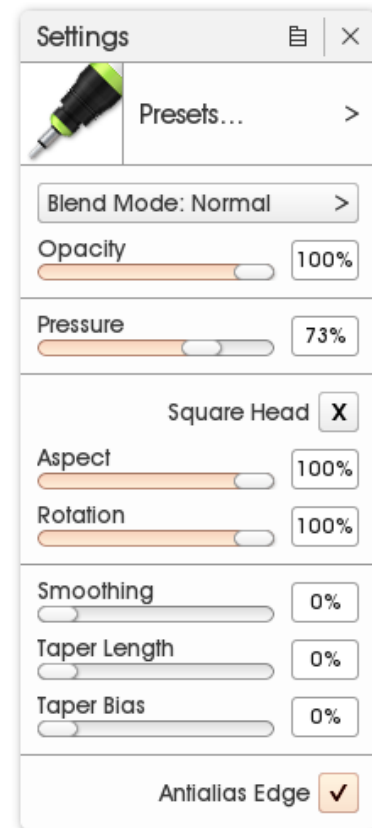
Pastel  
Laptop

## TOOLS – INK PEN

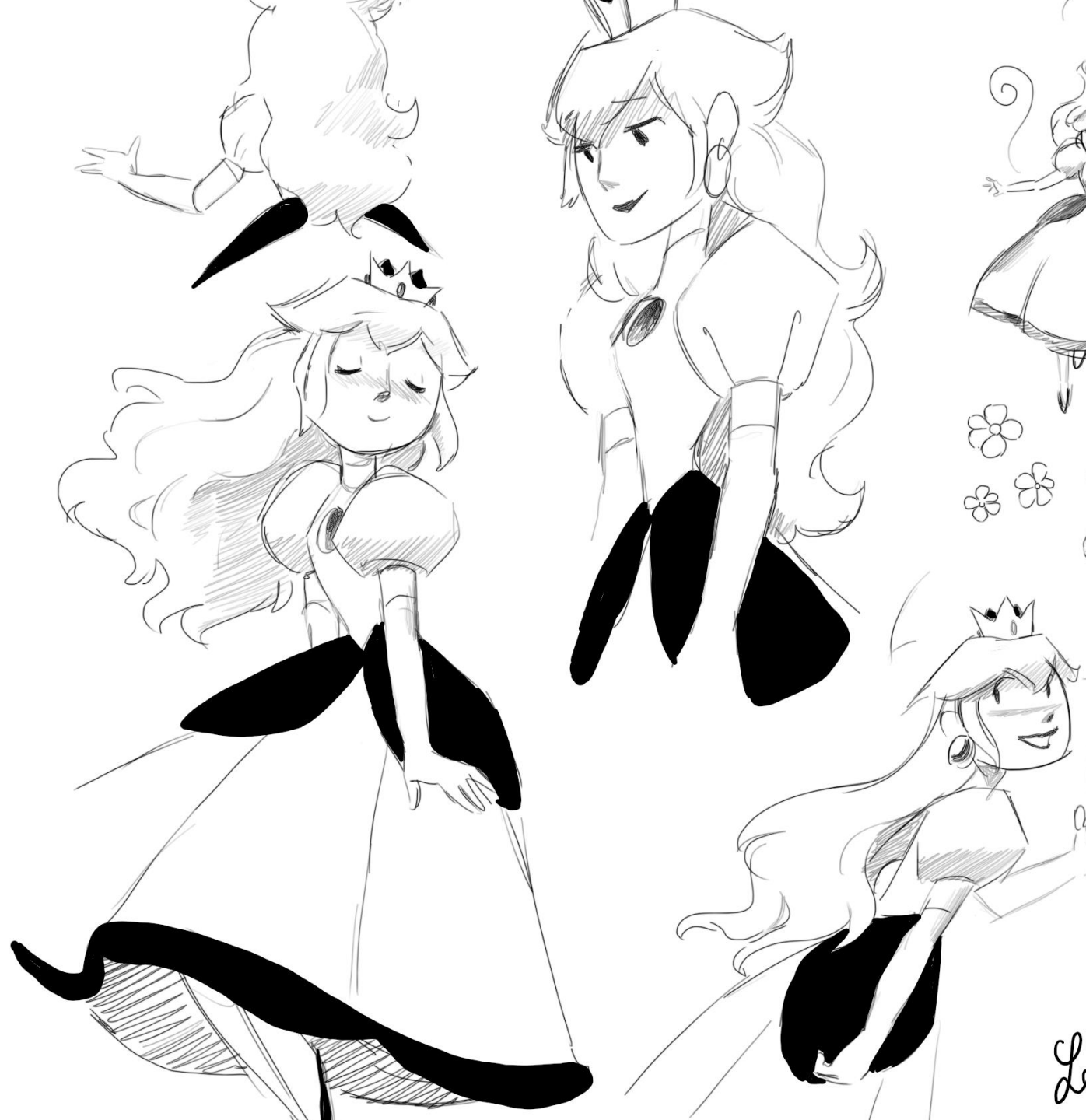
The Ink Pen is a very clean brush. I like to use it when adding base colors.

In my Leffie Life comics, I use the Ink Pen for bold black areas. If you're a cell-shader, this brush is for you!

Hint: when using the Ink Pen, you can increase your lines' smoothness for that perfect look.



# SUMMARY & TIPS





## SUMMARY

For a clean white canvas, turn off the lighting and make sure the canvas color is pure white.

I make my canvas size no smaller than 3000 pixels on the shortest side.

I work a lot with the „Soft Light“ Blend Mode to create glowy effects.

You can achieve many looks in ArtRage – including oil-paint-like styles. For those, I can recommend checking out the YouTube channel of Alai Ganuza, who makes nice ArtRage tutorials.

The main brushes I use are:

- Pencil (lineart and sketching)
- Paint Roller (rendering)
- Custom Brushes (rendering and lighting)
- Pastel (rendering and adding highlights)
- Ink Pen (base colors and clean lineart)



## TIPS AND HINTS

- You can size your **brushes up to 500%** by clicking on the percentage number on the bottom left. Alternatively: press shift and move your cursor to the right or left. **In ArtRage Vitae, you can size them up to 800%.**

- When you **press „h“** you can **flip your canvas horizontally**. If your drawing looks wonky when flipped you'll know that there are bits to redraw. (Press “v” for a vertical flip).

- **Feel free to add a date** to your drawings! Or at the very least keep some structure for your file names. I use this template to name my files „YYYY-MM-DD – Title of drawing“. This will sort your drawings chronologically in folders, and is especially useful if you want to browse through your old work to see how much you've improved! :)

- Look at your drawings in **grayscale to check your values** (Page 14).

- You can **use any tool for blending** by lowering its opacity or pressure.

- I would advise to **upload your work online with a watermark**. When you go to „File > Import Image File“ you can import other images including transparent PNGs.

- When you click **command (strg)** on your keyboard, the line you create **will be a straight line**. When you hit shift as well, your line will follow certain angles.

- **Photoshop brushes are compatible** with ArtRage, so you can import them into the program (you can also export .psd files)

