Mixtape: 5 Ways to Paint a Houseplant with CBTV

Chapter 1 - Mixtape: 5 Ways to Paint a Houseplant

Draw a Potted Plant with Lisa

- Another way to approach drawing botanicals is to play around with drawing houseplants that are in pots and jars and planters. I'm going to draw four from my imagination, but you could always pull in a houseplant that you have in your own collection. Succulents are really fun houseplants to draw. They've got very clean lines. So this is the first one we're gonna draw. And you can see I'm just making, I literally am not even lifting my pen, just making a sort of zigzag shape, curved zigzag shape on top of the pot. To add a little dimension, I'm going to add some veins. (pen scratching) And maybe a little bit of dimension or shadow underneath. There's our first. This next one looks more like a traditional houseplant you might have seen. I like to draw the backs of pots, just even if it's a really shallow indication of some depth. (pen scratching) And this one is just going to have about five big leaves sticking out. And that is it, and you'll just see how simple it is to make these houseplant drawings. (pen scratching) And I am also gonna add the veins here to this one. (pen scratching) Let's add a little bottom to this pot. Okay, next one, super simple. Kind of a different approach. Gonna draw a pot again. I'm not even going to connect the leaves to the pot. Just going to draw at different heights, five tall leaves sticking out like this. And I'll draw dotted lines, the middle of each of them. And let's do one more here. This'll be our tallest, big, maybe terracotta pot with a rim. (pen scratching) This one also has big leaves and a little bit wider stems. (pen scratching) And notice how I'm hiding some of the leaves behind others that I've already drawn. And this is a way to create a sense of depth in your drawing. (pen scratching) And I'll also add veins all the way up. And I'm going to add some veins going the other direction in each or alternating directions in each of the leaves as well to just give it a little bit more detail. But you could keep it very minimal and simple, if you wanted. You could add dots to your leaves for dimension, little dash marks, line work. (pen scratching) And there we have four houseplants.

Painted Plant Study with Joy

- Plants are a fun subject to paint, especially since they're all around us. I'll start off with a sketch to give myself a little map of where to paint. Just kind of flying around this plant and mapping things down as I go along. There's some leaves in the back that are really dark, so I'm just going to put an impression of leaves back there. I'm not gonna necessarily draw every leaf. When I'm laying these paints down, I typically just don't mind if the whole sketch looks messy, because I can always add details to kind of bring everything together. The flowers have a type of roughly petal, and some of them are super bright pink and some are pale, so I'm just gonna make sure to add that. The inside is yellow, so I'll put a hint of that in there in the middle. Just trying to mimic the ruffles of the petals. Switching to marker. Just being super loose and I don't mind that it's messy. I love adding the energy to the painting. Using some watercolor markers here. These are great because you can press them down and they do a different look. So sometimes I like to add these as kind of a change in what I'm doing. And if it gets too dark, I can just water it down. And the water color marker just acts like a regular watercolor, which is great. This is just a hint of the pot that the plants are in. You can even add some colored pencil marks that are leaves, so you don't have to necessarily paint, for example. You could just leave it unpainted. These leaves remind me of my favorite plant, which is arugula. I love to eat arugula.

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Paint a Plant from Imagination with Sharon
- For the last couple of days, we've been looking at plant forms, and since the beginning of this course, we've been talking about keeping track of plant forms and shapes that we really like in our sketchbooks. So today I'm referencing my sketchbook, some house plants that I'm going to put into an imaginary composition using acrylic paints. I'm pulling plants out of my sketchbook, looking at the shapes that I really like, shapes of the pot, shapes of the leaves. So I have a couple of different plants here that I'm going to put together in an imaginary composition. I'm gonna start with this plant right here, and put this right in the beginning of my composition. I've already laid down a ground of lavender with the acrylic paint. And I think what I want to do is also create that semi-abstract, cubist perspective, where I turn everything kind of up on its end. Change the perspective of the square, so that we can see more of it. (pen softly scratching) I am thinking about the directions of the leaves. I'll put this one a little smaller in the background. (pen softly scratching) And one more right here in the foreground. (pen softly scratching) Okay. Let's put down those mid-tone values to start with. Because we're working with acrylic paint, we can paint right over the color in the background. I'm choosing greens that are different shades, different tones. I'm going to use contrasting colors for my plant pots. I'm not following my sketch exactly, because it's not working in the composition right now, I'm balancing it out a little bit by moving this one plant pot slightly to the right. I'm mixing up a complimentary color here, staying with those warm, orange tones. And I've moved it over slightly from my original drawing. Some contrasting colors right here in my plant pots. I'm going to switch to my rigger brush to create some outlines. Now, I'm going to correct some of my initial sketch. I'm going to turn this into a Persian rug, and then a little fringe on the base. There's something about that dark outline for me, that really brings the whole composition together, (paint brush swishing) after laying down those initial planes of color. I think I want to bring up the contrast in the background here. Probably use a lighter tone, but maybe a more neutral color, almost a gray perhaps. That will contrast these bright colors, more saturated colors of the plant pots. (paint brush softly painting) Again, I'm working pretty loose here. I might take a little bit more time to work on details. And then there are also moments where I, I appreciate the loose, brisk quality, and things happen. For instance, in here, there's the purple of the background that I actually might leave as the color of the stem, for this Ficus-looking plant. Gives the painting a quirky quality, which is in line with the quality of the brush strokes and the composition, because it's imaginary. I'm going to come in with some of those details that reflect the characteristics of certain plants. So this plant, the common name is Mother-in-Law's Tongue, and it has a beautiful, yellow outline, and a very distinctive striation on the leaf. I'm just gonna give the impression of that. I'm going to make my Ficus a little brighter green. It's kind of Rubber Plant-esque. Resisting the temptation to do every single leaf exactly the same. And this Monstera Plant in the back, I'm gonna even up some of these greens. Just to finish up, I'll try and clean up some edges. And the last thing I'm gonna do is add a little shadow (paint brush clicks) to emphasize the form. So I'm watering down my acrylic paint, create a wash, and then I have to decide which way I want the light to come, and my shadow will fall on the other side of that. (paint brush swishes) There we have a quick sketch of an imaginary group of houseplants.

Succulents in Acrylic with Courtney
- We're gonna paint this little collection of succulents. Succulents can be a fun thing to paint, because there are kind of different textures and shapes, depending on how they're potted. This one actually is not real. Don't tell anyone. We'll start with that sort of back part of the succulent. I'm

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using some of the berry wine, which is a complimentary tone 'cause it's on the red scale, but it's also kind of muted. So, this will make this a little more olivey in color. And then, I also want a little part of this that's much darker. So, add a little navy and a little bit of umber, and a little berry wine. Warm it up a bit. (brush scraping) All right. Let's block in my succulent leaves using my Filbert. It's my favorite. Maybe you guys will have a different favorite to work with, but really is my favorite. Because we're working in acrylic, this pink succulent, which may not be that realistic in tone, but I like it, we can kind of ignore that and paint all the green in the back first, and then paint that on top. If we're using watercolor, we wouldn't be able to do that. We'd have to mask that area out and come back to it later. (brush scraping) I'm using this vertically, because this composition's actually kind of tall when you include the pot and everything. And I feel like I am notoriously running outta room for things, so, okay, I feel like that's generally. The back area. Move on to the succulent here. (brush scraping) Just looking back at my subject often. And these front leaves are more purple. I could mix a color like berry wine, but I just really like it. It works really well for so many things, skin tones and warming up kind of cooler tones. (brush scraping) Let's get these pinky translucent guys in here. We're gonna be mixing with white to achieve that tone. (brush scraping) A little yellow. This little guy is, this stem, it goes up and then to the right, so let's kind of lay it in there. And depending on my angle, this top bloom kind of just crests where these come together. So, it might actually live kind of right there. Oh, paint might still be a little wet, so we can come back to that too. It's a bigger kind of blossom here. I need to mix some more of this color. So, a little bit of my berry wine and like a little bit of yellow into the white. (brush scraping) I wanna get all of this dark color, and then block in little cement pots. My darkest color, remember, we're not using any black, so umber, a little bit of Navy, and I might throw in some of the berry wine to warm that up a little. (brush scraping) I can refine everything. Okay, and this is really dark in here too, so maybe I'll just put in a few little snippets of that. This color palette is actually so pretty. (water gurgling) I love all these tones together. (pot clanking) Let's mix the color for the pot using white, of course. A little bit of my umber. The pot's kind of like our shadow color we've been mixing all month. Some kind of variation on that. This looks a little cool, but let's test it. So, that looks too blue. We can add a little bit of berry wine, or red, or pink or what have you to warm it up. Maybe a little yellow also. (brush scraping) It's closer. It's not bad. It's gonna dry a little darker so I think that's good, at least to start. (brush scraping) This little pot really like bows out on the sides, but I'm seeing more of it on the left from my angle than I am on the right. (brush scraping) And I haven't said this recently, but I think I've said it earlier in the month. Of course, you're not gonna have exactly this thing in front of you, so just observe what you are painting from. And constantly looking at your reference and remember, we're just doing studies. And once we put a shadow on that too I think that'll help ground it. I actually might just do that now since we're kind of over here. (brush scraping) It's by mixing slightly darker color. I think that's a little cool. (brush scraping) (water gurgling) Paint some white. (brush scraping) It's like having something to paint into for these edges and so forth. (water gurgling) For me, I really have to squint my eyes because we don't have a lot of dramatic lighting on this, and it all kind of looks the same color. I think in general, this left side's a little bit darker so. That's too dark. That's too much like our shadow color. So let me, I want a little bit warmer, a little bit more white. Not that warm. (brush scraping) That's not darker. Make it darker. There we go. It's pretty subtle, but it's a little darker. It's gonna help me define that edge. (brush scraping) (water gurgling) It's definitely dark up here on the left, where the little succulent is casting a shadow. (brush scraping) (water gurgling) And maybe we will lighten this side just a little. (brush scraping) (water gurgling) Okay, let's work on the succulents themselves. (brush scraping) So, come in here

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and articulate some of these petals a little bit more. (brush scraping) (water gurgling) Some brighter greens in here too. (brush scraping) (water gurgling) I might have switched my position a little bit. Things are looking a bit different there. (water gurgling) (brush scraping) Just getting some of those darker tips. (water gurgling) A lot darker. (water gurgling) And then, let's focus on the little pinky bits. (brush scraping) Warming those up a little. (water gurgling) I'm gonna bring darker in to get this little space as opposed to trying to paint the light color into the dark. (brush scraping) Some darker little bits in here. (water gurgling) (brush scraping) Just do some little brush strokes too create these petals. (brush scraping) This is more like that. Yeah, I think the soil color is a little bit blue, so I'm just gonna add a little bit of my umber on top of there In some places. And really maybe just get a hint of this darker kind of grounding shadow. (water gurgling) And last, let's add a few little highlights into those pink ones. (brush scraping) This mix a slightly lighter color. And I might switch actually to my round, which fives me more of a point. Just light here. Right there. When you're sitting down to do any of your daily studies, think about what it is that you want to capture. Are you really focused on color, on the energy, on the light? Are you trying to work on your brush strokes? I really like the luminosity of the inside of the succulent. It could be because it's made out of plastic, I have no idea, but I feel like I captured that. I didn't paint every single little petal, but there's something about the contrast and the push and pull of those darks and lights that feels like really glowy and vibrant to me, which makes me really happy. I love that. So, these are the things that you'll discover as your painting. And try to keep an intention in mind too, because as we move out of this month and you go to work on your own painting practice, you wanna give yourself kind of maybe a little bit of an assignment or intention when you sit down. These are studies, so be as loose as you can, but think about what it is that you are kind of looking at and what you wanna kind of capture on your paper as you go.

Plants in Ink with Pam
- Something fun to draw is houseplants. I'm gonna actually use this one that isn't even real here. I think an important trick with houseplants is to simplify. Just going to start with that in mind and just begin the pot. And I'm gonna leave room. I'm gonna stop so that I can put leaves here and I can fill the pot in afterwards, like where the pot would be. And I'm gonna do what I see. Quickly though. More of a rough outline. I think of these drawing exercises as really exercises. You just want to be enjoying the practice of it and allowing yourself the freedom to participate in it without worrying about getting it exactly right. So now I'll do the other type leaves. Let's see, they're more of a spade shape and they've got some veins, but I'm not gonna put veins in every single one of them. It's more the concept. And I'm even gonna vary up some of the sizes from what I'm using as inspiration here. Now I'm really just filling in with that same shape, not even looking at it right now. 'Cause this isn't exact sketching. This is just a drawing. I'm using this as my reference. This is more of a vine here. So I wanna get some of this in here so that I can finish my pot off. So we'll do a little bit more of this vine. Have one lay on the table, imaginary table. And so now I'll finish it by just completing the pot and imagining if this circle were to continue, it'd stop about there. So I'll just bring the pot down here and have it meet. And then this plant, I could keep filling in here. And that way just take this circle of the pot and kind of complete it all the way around. And if you want to, you could fill in these leaves or you could do some sort of hatch marking to indicate the interior of the pot, which is darker and has a shadow. And so now I'll just finish it off and make sure that all the leaves connect to their stems. You could add some detail, just lines. Do one more right here and just kind of step back and look at it and see if it looks good. And maybe just because the pot is getting lost here, I'm

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going to go ahead, I'm gonna emphasize it by doing the line again. And then I'll even do a little bit of shading right here. So it'll draw your eye to that as well. And it won't just make your eye just focus straight on this side. You could add another leaf or two or details. So there's one house plant drawn from this live inspiration. Now I'm gonna do one from memory that's in my house. I have a bearded mother-in-law's tongue that's in a like pottery, just, I wanna say vase, but it's more like a urn thing. And so I know that that plant doesn't hang over the edge. So I'm doing the edge completely at first. And I will do the whole thing. The bottom two. And its handles. It has these fun thick handles that actually have little ridges in them and connect to the pot. I'm gonna line up this top line which ends up connecting to the pot down here. So I'm gonna start at the same place and go out and come in and try to line up at a similar spot. Looks like an ear. And then I'm just gonna go inside from that as I've done on the other. And I'll do one more and have him connect to the pot. So it's a nice big flat area against the pot. And now I'll start doing the plant. You wanna draw the line closest to you so that you don't break through that line when you draw the back of it or the item farthest from you. So I'm gonna start with the leaves. And as I recall, they're just kind of pointy and they do have a strong stem in them. And mine kind of is growing towards the sun. So they're tilting a little bit, which probably means I need to move it, but they overlap too. So this one I'll have sort of disappear and come out up here and that belongs to this guy here. And maybe I'll do the same with it back here. And although as I recall it, mine is more tilted, I'm going to cheat on my drawing and have it be more balanced up and down 'cause I think that's how they really grow. And I'm not even gonna start at the bottom with this one. I'm gonna start up here and just fill in that space just so it looks nice. And you can do one line at the bottom and it'll all sort of like blur together and make sense. And now I'm gonna draw the back of the pot, which is just a thin oval or ellipse like that. And sometimes you do see inside a pot, so you don't want it to go all the way down to the front, but I'm gonna imagine that I'm not seeing the dirt or anything. And I'm gonna go all the way down with these little leaf shapes. So there's another one, one more houseplant from my house and memory that I'm gonna draw is, I think it's a rubber tree plant. Not sure, but it's in a basket. And so I'm gonna start with the basket and I'm gonna start with the base of the basket instead of the lip, which I'm just gonna kind of do a loose line here and make it round. And then I'm gonna do another loose line here. Mine has a painted stripe here, so there will be more basket right here. I like to sometimes, I think I mentioned before on one of the other days, maybe the sailboat, just doing little bits of the element. Kind of get your mind reading the whole thing as that. So you could do just this with the basket or you could complete the whole thing, or you could even make it more connected and spend a lot of time like making it like a woven basket. But I think this is really good. It gives a suggestion and your mind just fills it in the rest of it. So now I'm gonna start with a plant and I'll give it a leaf pretty quickly. Oh, and I already blew it because that is where the top of my basket is. So I'm gonna instead turn this into a leaf that's hanging by going like this. And that's how you fix a mistake because we all are gonna make them over and over. And that's just fine. So now I'm gonna have this attach to my stick. So the top of the basket will be here, and that's now overlapping it. So my stick for my plant or stem or whatever the proper term. And then I'm gonna do some more leaves. And I just kind of remember 'em like this. And they get smaller as they go up. And some of 'em actually almost look like cupped because they're curving. So I'll make this part thinner. And this is like you're seeing the back and this is the front here. Same with this. This would be the front of the leaf. You don't have to do that with all of them, but you could with some, I think it just has these leaves that come off of it. And I do a big one. They kind of overlap. I'm gonna do another stem in a minute, so I'm going to give this another leaf hanging down. While I'm here and I've done all this, I'll

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go ahead and make that like it's the other side. I'm gonna start to add this basket just so I can visually see it over here. So now I've got this top area that's gonna be the basket. And I'll stop right here and do another stem in case I wanna have a leaf hangover. So we'll do that harder stem and I'll have a leaf coming off of it. And then I'll have it up and I'll do a bigger one and another and another. And since this is a different color on my basket, we could change up the way it is and actually make it more like striped or something. Need to make that line a little bit less perfect just to differentiate it. Especially if you go in and color it later. And you could keep going, make sure some are under others so that you're not completing it. Some will come out. They're just hidden. Maybe just the tip of that one's showing. And there you go. And so this is the front, and I'll just finish it by doing the back that comes around just a little. And since we've done our stem in front of it, it won't be broken up by the back of the basket. And then again, you could do this just slightly shaded so that it differentiates the inside from the outside of the basket. Because I did some hash marks here I'm gonna do some over here as if the plant we're getting the backside of some of these leaves as well just for balance and looking like it belongs together. And there's your third houseplant.

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