

Brushes From Your Own Marks

ART 220 · Digital Illustration · Session 11

V1
09.29.26

Workhorse Collective

ART 220 · Fall 2026

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Today 09.29.2026
Topic Turning the marks on your mark sheet into brushes in Photoshop and Illustrator, then using them on your poster.

Today your mark sheet turns into brushes.

01 · Why

Thursday we did shadows, and a box from your mark sheet clipped into a shape. Today that mark becomes a brush you can paint with. A brush from your own marks matches the line you inked, and the ones that come with Photoshop never will.

03 · How

A brush in Photoshop, then Art and Scatter brushes in Illustrator. Demo first, then you do it.

02 · Three illustrators

Pictures only. Look at the texture and where it sits.

04 · Exercise 4

Three brushes from your mark sheet, a test sheet, and one brush used on your poster. Then drawing time. The drawing is due finished Thursday.

Three illustrators

Each one's texture comes from their own hand.

02 · Jon Klassen

Jon Klassen.



THE ROCK FROM THE SKY
CANDLEWICK, 2021



THE ROCK FROM THE SKY
CANDLEWICK, 2021



THE ROCK FROM THE SKY
CANDLEWICK, 2021

Owen Davey.



MAD ABOUT MONKEYS
FLYING EYE BOOKS, 2015



MAD ABOUT MONKEYS
FLYING EYE BOOKS, 2015



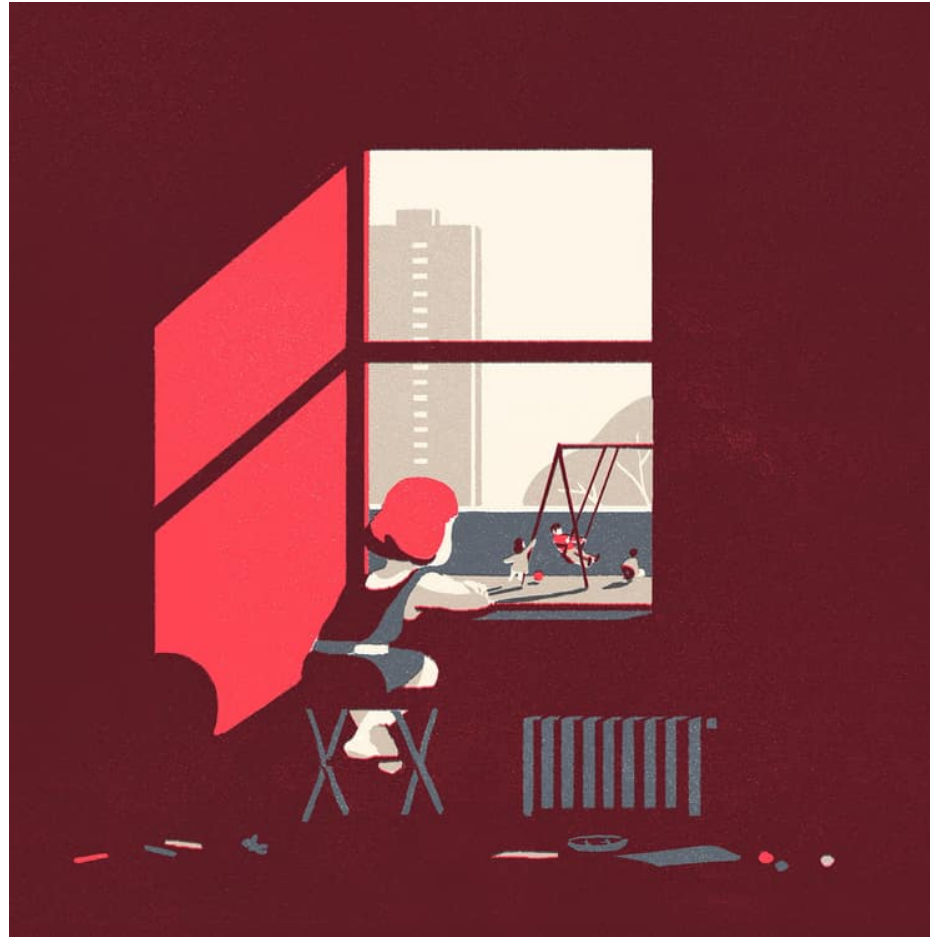
MAD ABOUT MONKEYS
FLYING EYE BOOKS, 2015

02 · Tom Haugomat

Tom Haugomat.



UNTITLED
FIGURE ON A PIER



UNTITLED
RED ROOM, 2018



UNTITLED
WILDFIRE

Making the brushes

Scan one or two boxes from your mark sheet at 600 ppi, grayscale. That is all the scanning today.

Make the brush tip.

1 · Open the scan FILE › OPEN	If it opened in color: Image › Mode › Grayscale . A brush tip is gray values only, so color does nothing.
2 · Clean it IMAGE › ADJUSTMENTS › LEVELS · CMD L	Drag the black input slider right until the ink is solid. Drag the white input slider left until the paper is pure white. White becomes empty in the brush, black becomes full paint, and any gray left in the paper becomes a box around every stamp.
3 · Check the size IMAGE › IMAGE SIZE	If the scan is 600 ppi, set Resolution to 300 with Resample on. A mark over about 1000 pixels across makes the brush lag.
4 · Select one mark RECTANGULAR MARQUEE · M	Drag a box around one mark with a little white around it. Only one mark per brush.
5 · Define it EDIT › DEFINE BRUSH PRESET	Name it after the box it came from, like 04 hatch . Click OK. It appears at the bottom of Window › Brushes and is already selected.
6 · Repeat CMD D TO DESELECT	Deselect, marquee the next mark, Define Brush Preset again. Three marks: one for a line, one for tone, one for texture.

Set it up for the job.

SETTING	LINE BRUSH	TONE BRUSH	TEXTURE BRUSH
Brush Tip Shape SPACING SLIDER	Spacing 5 to 10% , so the stamps run together into one stroke	Spacing 40 to 70%	Spacing 100% or more, so each mark stands alone
Shape Dynamics TICK THE BOX, THEN CLICK ITS NAME	Angle Jitter 0 , Angle Control Direction , so the mark turns with the stroke. Size Jitter Control Pen Pressure with a tablet	Angle Jitter 10 to 20% , Size Jitter 10%	Angle Jitter 100% , Size Jitter 30 to 50%
Scattering	Off	Off, or Scatter 30%	Scatter 150 to 300% , Both Axes on, Count 2
Transfer	Opacity Jitter Control Pen Pressure with a tablet	Opacity Jitter 20%	Opacity Jitter 30 to 50%
Keep it EASY TO MISS	These settings are lost when you pick another brush. Click the Create new brush icon at the bottom right of the Brush Settings panel (the square with a plus), name it, OK. That saves the brush with its settings.		

Use it on your poster, then save it.

1 · New layer CMD SHIFT N	Every brush goes on its own layer, never on the scan. Name it, like shadow tone .
2 · Keep it inside ALT-CLICK BETWEEN THE TWO LAYERS	Put the new layer right above the shape it shades and Alt-click the line between them. It is now clipped: you can paint over the edge and nothing spills out.
3 · Paint BRUSH · B	Paint in black or your darkest color. [and] change the size. Shift-click draws a straight stroke between two clicks. Set the layer to Multiply so the paper and color show through.
4 · Export the brushes WINDOW › BRUSHES › PANEL MENU ≡	Cmd-click your three brushes to select them, then Export Selected Brushes . Save as lastname-brushes.abr . Brushes live in the app, not in your file, so this is the only way they reach another computer.
5 · Bring them back BRUSHES PANEL MENU › IMPORT BRUSHES	On any other computer, Import Brushes and pick your .abr. Or double-click the .abr file.

Turn the mark into a shape.

1 · Place the clean scan FILE › PLACE · CMD SHIFT P	Use the scan you already cleaned with Levels in Photoshop. Click once to drop it in.
2 · Crop to one mark PROPERTIES PANEL › CROP IMAGE	With the image selected, click Crop Image , drag the handles in to one mark, and press Enter.
3 · Trace it WINDOW › IMAGE TRACE	Preset Black and White Logo . Open Advanced and tick Ignore White . Move Threshold up if thin strokes break, down if the marks fill in. Click Trace .
4 · Expand OBJECT › EXPAND	The trace becomes plain vector shapes. Zoom in: if the edge has lost its roughness, undo, raise Paths toward 100% and lower Noise , and trace again.
5 · Check it VIEW › OUTLINE · CMD Y	One mark, no white box behind it. If there is a white shape, select it with the Direct Selection tool (A) and delete it.

Make the brush.

	ART BRUSH · FOR A LINE	SCATTER BRUSH · FOR TONE AND TEXTURE
What it does	Stretches one mark along the whole path, start to end. Use a long mark: a dry stroke, a wobbly line.	Stamps copies of the mark along the path. Use a small mark: a speck, a dot, a short hatch.
Size	Width Fixed 100%, or Pressure with a tablet	Size Random , 50% to 120%
Length and spacing	Stretch to Fit Stroke Length . Set the Direction arrow to point the way you draw	Spacing Random , 60% to 150%. Scatter Random , -40% to 40%
Rotation	Follows the path on its own	Rotation Random , -180° to 180°, Rotation relative to Path
Colorization	Tints . The brush then takes the stroke color, so one black brush works in all three of your colors. Left on None, it stays black forever.	
METHOD MENU, BOTH KINDS		

Use it on your poster, then save it.

1 · Draw with it

PAINTBRUSH · B

Pick your brush in the Brushes panel and draw. Or select any path you already have and click the brush to apply it.

2 · Size and color

STROKE PANEL · STROKE COLOR

Stroke weight scales the brush: 1 pt is the mark at its own size, 0.5 pt is half. The stroke color is the brush color, if you set Tints.

3 · Keep it inside

DRAW INSIDE · SHIFT D

Select the shape it shades, press Shift D, and draw. The strokes stay inside the shape. Shift D again to go back to Draw Normal.

4 · Save the brushes

BRUSHES PANEL MENU ≡ › SAVE BRUSH LIBRARY

First **Select All Unused** from the same menu and delete, so only yours are left. Then Save Brush Library as **lastname-brushes.ai**.

5 · Before print

OBJECT › EXPAND APPEARANCE

Not today. For the separations later, brush strokes become plain shapes so every screen gets exactly what you see.

Three brushes, one test sheet, one use on your poster.

01 · Three brushes

From your own mark sheet: one that draws a **line**, one that lays down **tone** (a hatch, a scrub, a stipple), and one **texture** (a speck, a spray, a grain). Photoshop, Illustrator, or both.

03 · On your poster

Photograph or scan your drawing as it stands, and use one brush on one shadow or one background area. It does not have to be final.

02 · A test sheet

A letter-size file with each brush drawn three ways: a straight stroke, a curve, and a patch filled in. Label each with its name and the box it came from.

04 · Hand in

The brush file (.abr or .ai) and the test sheet as a PDF, plus the poster try as a JPEG. Before the break.

After the break

Then back to the drawing.

Today

AFTER THE BREAK

Drawing time on your poster, with desk visits.

Thursday Oct 1

CHECK-IN 2

The drawing is due finished at the start. We scan it in class, clean it, and separate the line, then color goes under it. Your brushes come back for shading and texture.

Tuesday Oct 6

COLOR AND WORDS

Three color plans, the words, and texture on your own poster. Bring the brushes.
