

AIRBRUSH

STEP BY STEP

74

SPECIAL **HARDER & STEENBECK**
Insights & Review of
INFINITY 2024

COMIC & FANTASY

Caricatures, vampires and computer game heroes

newart
medien & design



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by **ANEST IWATA**



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Comic & Fantasy: Popular and dangerous at the same time

Comic and fantasy artworks are particularly popular as airbrush designs, because they often depict our favourite childhood heroes or current favourite series, which we like to have around us on our motorbike, helmet, room wall or simply as a framed picture. Unfortunately, however, these designs are always subject to copyright, which customers often (un)knowingly ignore, causing headaches for artists. We always consider the artworks in this magazine, especially when they are painted on paper, canvas or smaller decorative objects, as practice pieces. What you paint for yourself and your own four walls is of no interest to copyright law. This only becomes relevant when it is painted as a paid commission and/or for a purpose that is visible to the outside world.*



In this issue, we have some good examples of how best to deal with these designs: **Franziska Czeicke's Super Mario** portrait is certainly a piece that could cause her problems as a commissioned work on a motorcycle or house wall. However, Franziska created it as a personal piece on airbrush paper and therefore simply uses the cute design as a successful mixed-media exercise. Spanish artist **Danny Ochoa** also uses many references as part of the airbrushing courses he attends – including a portrait of a vampire girl. Here, too, it is not

a problem if he finds references on the internet. It is even better if you are open about the origin of the image – as with **Iran Caro's 'Woman in blue latex'**. He uses it as an example in his own studio and states in his article that the template comes from the digital artist ThetaCursed. This credit and the associated honesty are particularly important in the context of work rights and are unfortunately often disregarded, especially on social media. In many cases, the 'original artists' have fewer problems with being 'copied' for private purposes (!) when they are referred to by name than when this is done secretly and tacitly.

Ideally, you create your own fantasy or comic design and then don't have to worry about any rights. Like **Neimar Duarte**: he first created the design of the magic macaw on the computer and then implemented it as an airbrush illustration with candy colours. **Cesar Deferrari's caricatures**, which he presents in the interview, also have a high artistic design value. Generally, caricatures are considered an art form that is protected by the freedom of art and as an expression of opinion. However, for Cesar, the entertainment value of his works, which he primarily airbrushes onto T-shirts, is what counts above all. With this in mind: always be aware of and honest with your artwork! Wishing you a wonderful holiday season,

The ASBS team

* This editorial is based on personal experiences/assessments and does not constitute legally reliable information or advice!

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The new Infinity CRplus 2024: Completely rethought

For decades, not much has changed in the Harder & Steenbeck Infinity. Yes, there were many different variants, the "build-an-airbrush" for customizing and modified ones like the Giraldez Infinity – but with the Infinity 2024, apart from the proven design, everything has now been turned upside down. That's why we were particularly keen to test the device. The test device arrived just before the editorial deadline, but was brought to the editorial office by General Manager Warrick Smith in person.

The new Infinity CRplus 2024 comes in the familiar black plastic box, which can be used to ship and store the device with no worries. In addition to the airbrush with a 0.25 mm nozzle set, it also includes a sketching cap (known from the Giraldez Infinity), an additional smaller cup, a tool for loosening the design ring and a spray sample card to match the device. Those who opt for the 2-in-1 version also get the 0.44 mm nozzle set and a 4 ml cup.

First things first: the new Infinity CRplus 2024 is the first device in the world with a titanium nozzle. According to the manufacturer, the use of this material makes it possible to produce thinner nozzle walls. It is flexible and significantly more

robust. This contributes to a finer spray pattern and longer durability, as well as preventing damage to the nozzle. The idea that nozzles with the smallest possible nozzle opening produce the finest spray pattern can now be finally abandoned. Because instead of the usual 0.15 mm nozzle, the smallest and finest nozzle in the Infinity now has a diameter of 0.25 mm! According to the manufacturer, the secret of the fine spray pattern lies in the optimisation of the air flow, which is due to the modified nozzle shape with 5 air channels, the thinner nozzle wall and the adapted suction cap. The same applies to the 0.44 mm titanium nozzle included in the 2-in-1 set, which has been individually optimised with 3 air channels and has a significantly finer spray pattern than the previous 0.4 mm Infinity nozzle.

The front part of the airbrush body has been shortened, so that you now work closer to the painting surface. The manufacturer is trying to optimise the ergonomics and feel compared to a brush or pencil. The handle is slightly longer so that the device fits comfortably in the hand of all sizes. This is familiar from normal paint brushes, where the handle is significantly longer. The handle is made of aluminium. In the future, however, there will be optional accessories with diffe-





rent weights. The cut-out in the handle is now larger and allows more convenient access to the needle clamping and locking nuts. The Infinity CRplus 2024 also has a built-in Quick-Fix with memory function – just like its predecessor. But this time, an unnecessary scale has been dispensed with. The built-in Quick-Fix not only helps beginners to create fine lines, but is also the tool of choice for high-end professionals when it comes to details!

The cups now have a filling capacity of 4 ml (for the 2-in-1 version) and 2 ml. The additional 1.2 ml mini cup included was requested by users, among others. This provides a better overview, makes the device lighter in the front area and is completely sufficient for most applications. Excellent polishing and optimisation of the inner shape of all cups enables super-fast cleaning from the very first days of testing, because the cup is now designed so that all areas can be easily reached with a 'finger swipe'. The Fineline protective needle cap, which is wider on the new model, also makes cleaning easier. It provides a clear view of the needle and helps to clean the needle tip quickly and easily with two fingers. However, due to its new stylish look, it is a little harder to pull off at the front than the more angular version of the previous model.

The most distinctive visual change to the new Infinity is the new massive lever. This has been made from a single piece and is significantly larger than any of the Harder & Steenbeck levers. The Infinity's central lever part is designed to significantly reduce reaction time. So even a light pull allows the release of small amounts of paint for spraying the finest details. With the new lever and the associated mechanism, the artist has an even more precise feeling of control and is thus supported when painting the picture. The finger rest, also affectionately known as the 'acupressure lever' in reference to Far Eastern health practices, is designed to create a comprehensive sensory awareness of the lever and needle movement. The finger rest has become very long so that figure painters in particular have the option of dispensing paint and spray strokes quickly and in a controlled manner to apply highlights to the model parts. To make this possible, the finger rest is pressed in the rear edge area. This 'lever experience' is really new and probably touches on the most sensitive and most discussed point when it comes to airbrush preferences. Too small, too large, too soft, too hard - everyone has a different feel for the lever. Therefore - just try it out!

The needle lock screw is the same as on the Evolution 2024. It is significantly more substantial than the previous version and the funnel for guiding the needle is also larger. The grooved needle guide is also brand new and designed so that the grooves can release lubricant over a longer period of time if needed. There is something similar on the lever – just a brief note on that. When disassembling the device, the return spring, which is now gold-coloured, is noticeable. The needle tension control is now easier to reach and quicker to adjust, allowing the lever to be set harder or softer according to your preference, especially when it comes to spraying extremely fine details. Despite the many solid-looking components, the new Infinity is still quite light at 82 grams and fits comfortably in the hand.

With the Infinity, the manufacturer concludes the product year and the relaunch of its three 'actuators'. The Infinity is once again the flagship of Harder & Steenbeck, which is reflected in the features, accessories and price. There is no doubt that the performance is superb. Those who spray fine details should get out their magnifying glass to see the sprayed lines. Above all, the 0.44 mm nozzle set also makes it possible to spray detailed, complex paints. But who is the device actually suitable for? The Ultra 2024 for beginners – of course! The Evolution 2024 – the Volkswagen among airbrushes as the all-rounder of the product range – logical... and the Infinity 2024... is also an all-rounder for most applications, whether you are a fine art professional, model maker or ambitious beginner, because fine spraying is no longer rocket science with the Infinity. So, for anyone who prefers extreme detail, has the highest standards of operation and performance and wants to call the latest state-of-the-art airbrush technology with the unique titanium nozzle their own – the Infinity is an absolute must.

www.harderairbrush.com



No-Name Simply Airbrush Paint Set: Much better than the name suggests

The US airbrush specialist Spraygunner deliberately plays with the cheap image associated with the brand name No-Name, and indeed the products – from airbrushes to compressors to paint – are characterized by an affordable entry price. But unlike other no-name products, the Spraygunner No-Name brand products are either made in the USA or at least personally tested and optimized by the supplier in the USA. The No-Name Simply Airbrush Paints are actually “Made in the USA” and offer airbrush beginners in particular a reliable, trustworthy paint of consistent quality. According to the manufacturer, they can be used on a variety of surfaces – plastic models, metal surfaces or paper – where they always provide good adhesion and coverage and are therefore suitable for art, model making, custom and vehicle painting.

The colors are available in sets of 5, 16 or 24 colors. We have subjected the 16-set in the editorial office to an initial test. The number of colors and variety leaves nothing to be desired in terms of classic fine art illustration with basic colors such as magenta, blue, red, yellow, white, black, sepia and Paynes Gray. The paint bottles are sealed against evaporation and can be opened and closed easily with one hand. This helps a lot when filling the paint. The bottle is soft, so the paint can be poured easily and drops can be counted. The colors are opaque and water-based and can be sprayed undiluted without any problems. The Spraygunner Reducer is available for

thinning, but we worked with water in our test, which also worked. Any classic airbrush cleaner can be used for cleaning.

The colors were used on two different colored surfaces with different techniques: For the first illustration, we worked with undiluted paint on black poster board to see how the opacity performed. The coverage is excellent, but you notice that you have to spray a few more layers of paint to achieve the desired effect. In any case, you need a first practice piece to be able to estimate the color tones well. It's practical that mixed tones such as opaque light blue and opaque pink as well as dark green and brown are also available in the set. This saves the beginner the hassle of mixing.

The second wildlife piece, also complex, with a toucan on an art board from Reflex, involved etching and scraping as well as working with masking film. The toucan was created with transparent layers and thinned paint to build up the structure of the plumage. An eraser pencil was used, for example. The reflection in the eye was created with an electric eraser and further details were scraped with a scalpel. The fine plumage structure on the neck was also scraped with the blade. The jungle background was worked with rather opaque colors throughout to achieve this milky and sun-drenched background. In addition to scraping highlights, several brushes were also used here to quickly build up natural structures. By diluting it with a little water, the paint also performed excellently with the acrylic paintbrush and bristle brush for special effects and drybrush techniques.

The No-Name Simply Airbrush Paint 5-pack, priced at \$12, includes the primary colors and a suitable cleaner in 6 x 30 ml bottles. The 16-pack for \$26 contains additional colors, and the 24-pack for \$38 is supplemented with additional metallic and neon colors. Due to the low prices of the sets, individual colors are not available for purchase at this time.

www.spraygunner.com



Deltec Masking Tape Sensitive: Gentle masking with rice paper



From the Netherlands comes an adhesive tape that has even found its way into the studios of international airbrush professionals: the purple-colored Sensitive Masking Tape from Deltec is particularly popular with fine art professionals such as Dru Blair and Nathan Makris. The tape consists of thin, transparent rice paper (Washi) and has a low adhesive strength.

This makes it particularly easy to remove without leaving any residue, even from sensitive surfaces. According to the manufacturer, it can remain on a surface for up to 4 months without leaving any adhesive residue. It effectively prevents paint from bleeding under the tape and leaves extremely sharp edges. The purple color of the tape also makes masked areas more visible than conventional white tape.

Deltec Masking Tape Sensitive is available in different widths. A roll contains 50 meters of tape and costs about €5.50.

➔ www.deltectape.com
➔ Seen at: www.lion-art.nl

SATAjet X5500: Spray gun in street art design



SATA's new limited edition Street Art spray gun is both a tool and a collector's item. Behind the cool Street Art print is a SATAjet X 5500, which is available with I- or O-nozzles in sizes 1.2 to 1.4, as a fast RP or economical HVLP system, in a classic or modern digital version. The X-nozzle system is suitable for use with all paint systems and processing recommendations and is characterized by a soft, pleasant painting

feel and reduced noise. The device works particularly efficiently and saves material, and has optimized material distribution for more even and finer atomization.

The SATAjet X5500 is a professional product that is only available from specialist paint retailers and is aimed at experienced paint users with the appropriate equipment. The Limited Edition costs between €700 and €1,000, depending on the version.

➔ www.sata.com



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SCAN ME

The game changer: Createx Reducer 40216

Acrylic paint is designed to dry quickly on the substrate without clogging the nozzle. At the very least, you want to prevent drying at the needle tip as much as possible. Diluting the paint correctly for perfect spraying is always a challenge. The US airbrush paint expert Createx has now developed

a reducer that has professionals singing its praises. The new Createx Reducer 4021 is set to take the spraying experience to a new level, no matter what airbrush area and on what surface you are working.



4021 Reducer is a thinner used to dilute water-based paints. 4021 Reducer appears clear in the bottle and does not affect the colour when mixed with paints. It is compatible with all Createx paints and clear coats.

4021 Reducer is generally added to Createx paints at 10% to 30% by volume. For optimal performance, it is recommended that you wait 10 or more minutes for the 4021 Reducer to acclimate with the paint before spraying. The 4021 Reducer reduces the surface tension of the water, which promotes flow and levelling. According to the manufacturer, it is very important to stir the 4021 Reducer into the paint – do not shake!

4021 Reducer can be added to all Createx paints in advance and stored indefinitely. This means that the reduced mixture can remain in a good, sprayable condition for several weeks, if not months, if the paint mixture is stored in an airtight container and in a cool, dry environment protected from direct light.

The 4021 Reducer should be used in a well-ventilated area. A properly fitting, approved respirator is recommended. For more information, see the 4021 Reducer data sheet, available at www.creatextech.com.

The Reducer 4021 from Createx is now available from specialist retailers. The following package sizes are available: 60ml (approx. €7.90), 120ml (approx. €11.90), 240ml (approx. €24.90), 480ml (€29.90) and 960ml (approx. €59).

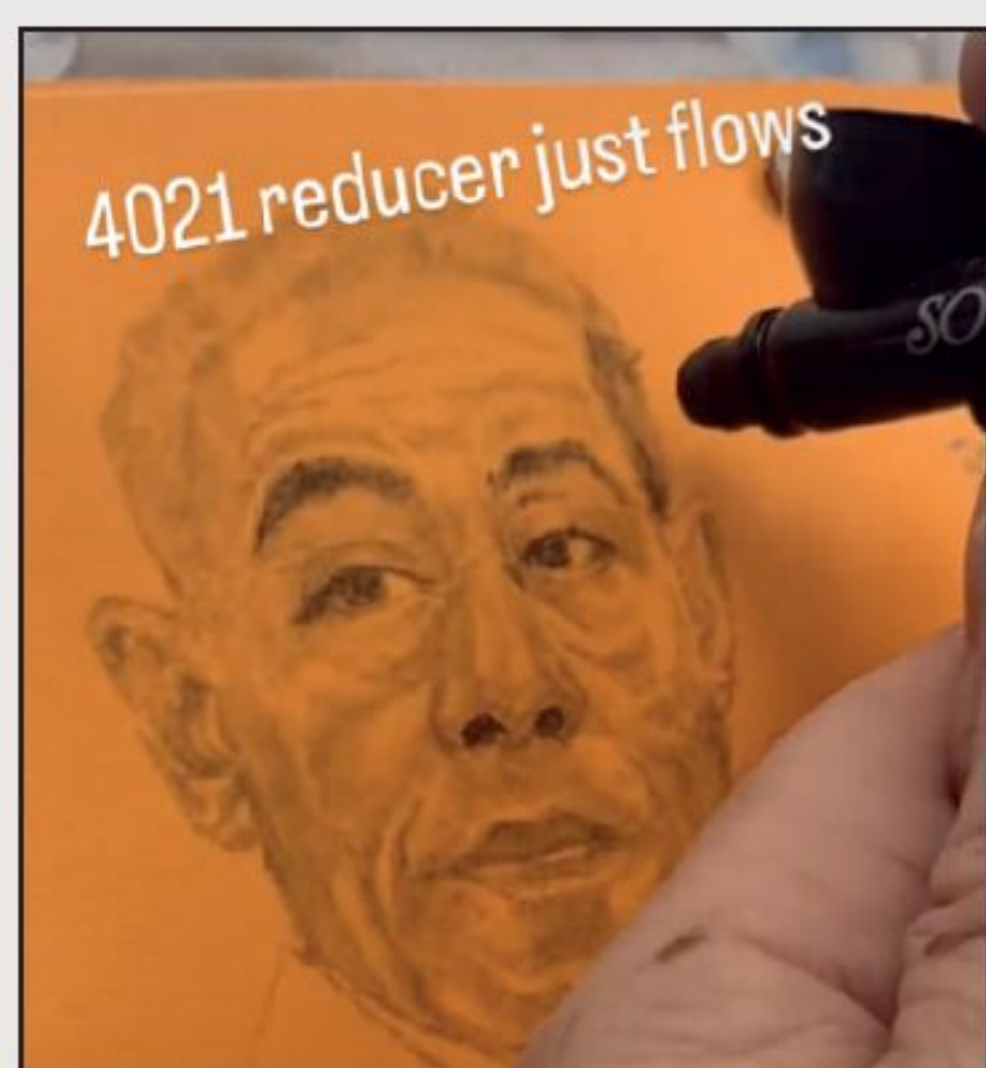
Further information is also available at:

www.createxcolors.com



First Facebook comments after the release of the new 4021 Reducer:

Dru Blair: Createx's new 4021 Reducer is probably the **best new product to hit the airbrush industry in decades**, greatly reducing needle tip dry-up. It was developed for Createx paint, but is reported to work with a number of other brands as well.



David Naylor: I tested the 4021 Reducer and all I can say is: **it flows and flows!**

Scott MacKay: I love the Createx Colors 4021 Reducer. The paint sprays smoothly, allows for soft color transitions and is robust when dry.

Marcus Eisenhuth:

The reducer has almost no smell at all! **In my opinion, it's going to be a real game-changer!**

The reducer really does make the paint flow incredibly well. Especially with the opaque paints (Createx Wicked but also Create Illustration Colors), you can dilute them very highly so that the paints become really watery without losing their opacity. **The reducer is really fun to work with!**



Gerald Mendez:

I have used it in two workshops and on a personal project already. With great results: 'no tip-dry!'. **It's amazing! It's so cool that I named it the Magic Reducer.**

Editor's tip:

The Createx Reducer 4021 also works unofficially to thin and optimise other paint manufacturers. Artists from different countries have already tried out a wide range of manufacturers.

For example:

Dr. Ph. Martins India Ink, Schmincke AeroColor, Vallejo Model Air, AK 3 Gen, Citadel, Golden High Flow, Tri-Art, Holbein Acrylic Ink, Paasche Airbrush Colors

American artist Dave Goldfarb explains his test method for checking whether the 4021 Reducer also achieves better results with other paints:

First, I check the SDS sheets to see what, if any, substances are compatible. Most of them contained propylene glycol. Once I am fairly certain about compatibility, I use a small palette of colours to see how the 4021 interacts with the colour sample. I usually add a drop (or several drops) of colour to one of the cups and then add reducer on one side. I watch the sample for a few seconds to see what happens. ... if everything remains fine, I mix the sample together with a brush and leave it to stand. If it still looks good after 10 minutes, I mix another sample and apply it with a brush to test it. I let the sample dry out in the palette – this way I can check the drying time and the hardness and adhesion to the surface. I spray a sample of the colour undiluted or diluted only with water. I test how long I can spray without losing the ability to draw a fine line. Then I switch to a 4021 mixed sample of the same colour and do the same spray test again, also measuring the time I can spray before I have to clean the tip of the needle. I also check other things – such as adhesion to different surfaces, tack after drying, and more.

More about Dave Goldfarb's research can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/dave.goldfarb.96>





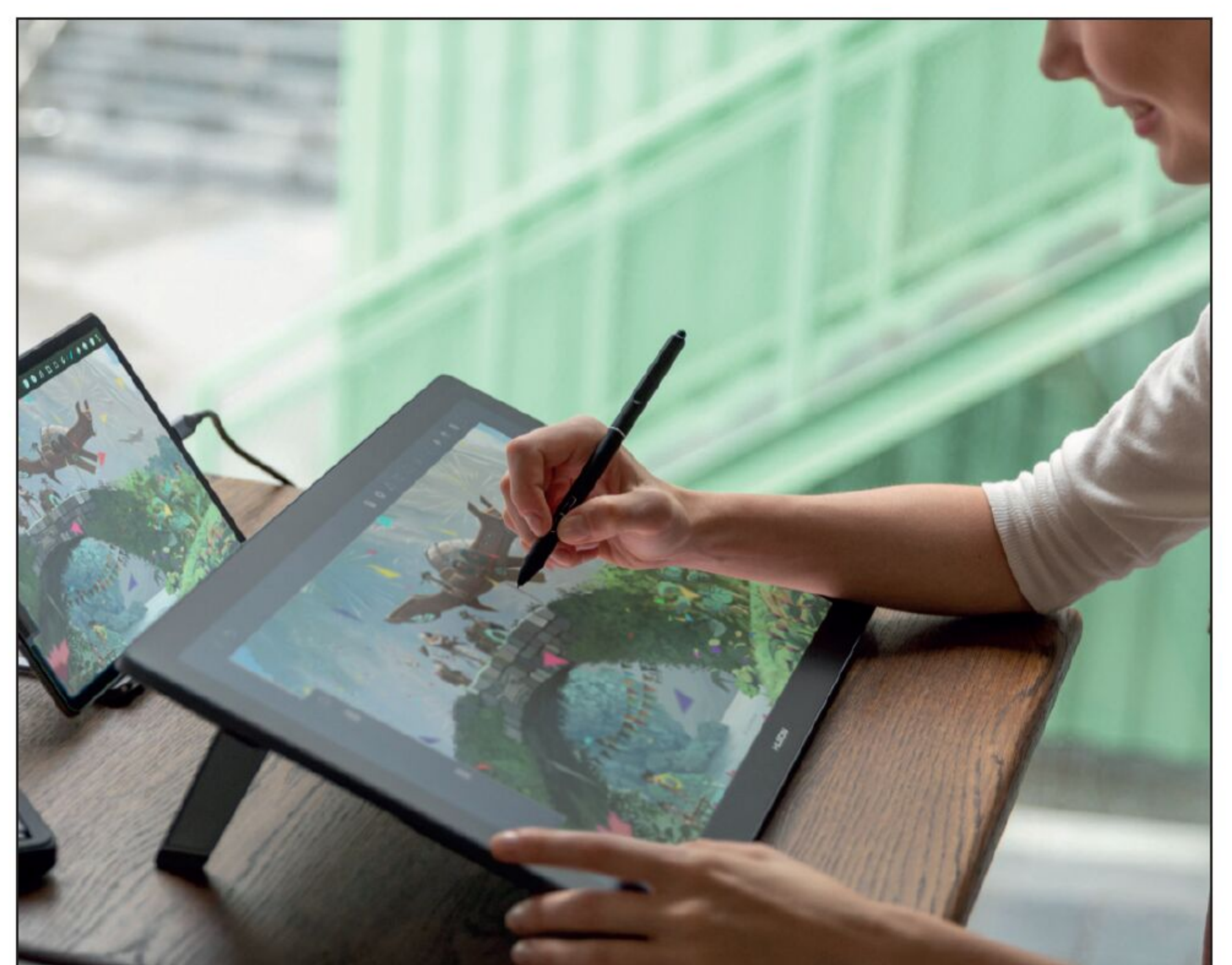
The Huion Kamvas Pro 19 (4K) Pen Display: Top quality and convenience for on the go

Not a week goes by without another AIRBRUSH STEP BY STEP reader asking about devices for image editing and previzualization of his airbrush projects or for making stencils. There is a wide selection, and the differences are now quite small and confusing. That's why we always try to shed a little light on the subject with our test.

With the Huion Kamvas Pro 19 (4K), the prominent graphics tablet and pen display manufacturer Huion is entering a portable, but almost 19" large professional device with a light 2 kilograms into the race. Whether on the road or at your home studio desk - the Huion Kamvas Pro 19 (4K) looks good. The two integrated feet tilt the display to the optimal working position. Alternatively, you can place it flat on a surface or mount it on a VESA mount, which is available as an accessory.

We are often asked whether software is already installed in the Pen Display and how to get pictures into it. This device is a mixture of a graphics tablet and a monitor with pen input. In this category of devices, it is necessary to connect a desktop or laptop computer. This also gives you complete freedom in your choice of graphics software. Another alternative is to connect it to an Android smartphone/tablet with USB 3.1/DP 1.2 or newer. We tested the device with a PC, but also a bit more intensively with a current Mac Book Air with M2 processor. Here we used Photoshop and Krita. Basically, however, all standard painting and graphics programs can be used.

What makes the device a pro model? On the one hand, this is due to the built-in high-quality UHD (3840 x 2160 px) IPS panel with 150% sRGB color gamut, 220 nits, and 1000:1 contrast ratio. Color calibration was not necessary in our test be-





cause everything looked great visually. In addition, the two included pens have over 16,000 pressure levels that react from a pressure of 2 grams. This means that the pen is very sensitive. The slim pen that is included has two assignable buttons. The regular pen even has three buttons that can be individually controlled. Both pens have an integrated eraser and come in a transport box with a replacement pen tip and an integrated holder. The display surface is fully laminated. Thanks to a nano-etching technology, there are no reflections and the surface has a paper-like structure when touched with the pen.

For even more convenience when working, the Huion K20 Keydial mini keyboard is also included. This is connected to the system via Bluetooth and the 18 keys can be individually customized via the driver to implement shortcuts in the individual programs. The built-in scroll wheel can be used for zooming, scrolling or changing the brush size, for example. This ensures convenient and fast control of the device. With so many options, it takes some getting used to. However, the pre-assigned shortcuts make sense and allow you to get started right away. Many users also want touch input on the Pen Display, as they are used to on their smartphones. The Kamvas Pro 19 (4K) is one of the first devices to support this function. In MacOS, this function is still in the beta phase and can be enabled by a firmware upgrade. In Windows, this is already possible by default. This means that you can also use gestures on the screen to zoom in on the image, rotate it or move it.



For example, the connection can be made using the 3-in-2 cable, for which an HDMI and USB connection should then be available on the PC. The third cable harness supplies the pen display with power. A slightly more elegant solution is to connect the device directly to a laptop using a USB-C to USB-C cable. The power connection for the Kamvas Pro 19 (4K) can even charge the laptop. To install, you should download the latest driver for your system from the manufacturer's website and then follow the instructions. On a Mac, it is necessary to enable the Huion tablet under "Privacy & Security" in the operating aids. Here it is advisable to look at the manufacturer's instructions if you have never done this before. In the test, we selected Kamvas Pro 19 (4k) as the "extended display" in the operating system, so that it acts as a second monitor and you can move any painting program onto the screen and use it. Alternatively, the content of the main screen and the pen display would be identical.

With the Huion Kamvas Pro 19 (4k), you get the latest in pen input technology for monitors. From the high pressure sensitivity, the wide range of pens and keydial pad to the touch input. The whole thing is built into a still portable device with high 4K resolution. With an MSRP of 1399 euros / 1099 USD, the device is in the upper price range and is clearly aimed at users who want to design professionally while on the go or need a compact size with all the features on their desk.

www.huion.com

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Kustom Kulture Blast Off 2024: A fresh start for the British custom show

On 6 September 2024, the Kustom Kulture Blast Off Event, also known as KKBO, took place in Lincolnshire, UK. AIRBRUSH STEP BY STEP reader and

This has always been a unique custom art and lifestyle event in the UK. It grew from a small beginnings over 15 years through great organizers to become one of the UK's only Custom events with a gathering of pinstripers, airbrush artists, painters and other arty customizers. As the show grew, it gained popularity with other sub-cultures – leading to a great mixture of Rockabilly, Steampunk and alternative art and styles filling the event.

I have attended KKBO for many years. Originally KKBO was mainly linked to custom art and the 50's Rockabilly scene fil-

ling the show with its amazing classic American cars and 50's style music. But this year was different, it was an extra special year. It was both a shout out to the old KKBO and a start of a new one, with a new location – Slates Farm, Lincolnshire –and with an enthusiastic new organizer, Jake, who wanted to do homage to the show's original roots bringing the custom art and alternative lifestyle feel back into the limelight of the show, whilst adding in new elements to help the show grow into a new direction. And it worked!

The minute we arrived to set up in our marquee, the atmos-





phere amongst the artists and traders was so positive with expectations of how good this event was going to be. Jake and his team of organizers had everything under control which made for setting up a breeze. The event's new location, direction and organization even got approval from the original organizer Linda, who attended the show as a guest of honour. It was great to catch up and chat to her. The event was dreamed up by herself and late husband and it was an important moment to see her approval for how the event would be run going forward.

I attended KKBO'24 as part of the 'UK airbrush forum'. Our marquee hosted a collective of airbrush artists at the event and each had a small area to display our work, set up an easel to paint throughout the event. I had a seascape airbrush painting I was working on, where I was during the days of the event working out how to create a perfect wave. I was demonstrating techniques like fine line work with an airbrush, the basis dots and daggers strokes and how I use those to create art as well as different blend to create colourful effects. Next to me was artist Simon Carter. He was demonstrating how to create artwork with an eraser and layers of transparent paints whilst painting a airbrushed scene from „Alien“. At the other side of the marquee Sammy Cave was painting in monotone a large scale airbrush design of a rose, and next to her was Mickey Austin who was demonstrating how to cut and use stencils to put a guide onto a surface to show how to begin an artwork.



One of my favourite things to do as an airbrush artist is to encourage other people to try out this style of painting and explore a creative side. The airbrush makes for an interesting art tool. It's one not many people have had chance to use. So it's always fun to let people have a go and see what they can create. All the artists that day had visitors wanting to try out airbrushing and it has been inspiring letting them try out this art tool and hopefully encourage many new airbrush artists in the making.

There was a great amount of things to see and activities to try out for all the visitors to the event, even as a trader myself I especially enjoyed meeting all the pinstriping artists in the panel jam marquee where with some expert guidance I managed to create some somewhat wobbly lines – pinstriping is fun, but harder than it looks. It's a skill I plan to improve on though, so I can add fun pinstripe details to my airbrush artworks.

It was great to see the „tattoo barn“ back, and all wander around seeing pictures of all the body art they create. And for anyone brave enough they could sit and have a tattoo created on the day! For those not into permanent body art, the Midlands Body Paint Project were painting designs using brushes and airbrushes to full body paint models with cool apocalyptic and themes inspired by films like Madmax and Alien.

The main show and shine field was filled with a variety of car





clubs. Along with the KKBO regular American classics, there were some extremely customized Rat Rods, a selection of bikes and oversized trucks, and even the British classics including the original Minis. It was great to see graffiti artist Adam Dust O'Connor back painting a plain white van with a fully custom neon bright rat think mural using just paint rattle cans.

KKBO has always supported charities and this year's KKBO was no different with a few charity auctions, competitions and raffles taking place at the event. These all had a custom art twist to them. Supershoes is KKBO's featured charity. It was great to see some of the artists from Supershoes there, painting shoes and promoting what good they do. They also ran a silent auction - with a wall of unique fridge magnets all hand painted by artists from around the UK. From the Airbrush forum marquee, we also ran a charity raffle with a collection of artworks created by the artists at the show, ready to be won.

Walking around the trade stalls, there was something for everyone to browse or buy. Every stall I walked around seem fitting for the custom and alternative art theme – hand made items, pictures, stickers, badges, bags and jewellery. One of my favourite artists to visit at KKBO is Ian Guy with his ama-

zing hand painted automotive art. He creates art in a traditional way using brushes and oil paints. A lot of his artworks have extra details hidden in the pictures. The more you look his artworks, the more you find hidden skulls, people, cars, reflections, ghostly images and objects. His work also draws a crowd as people study the pictures he has on display.

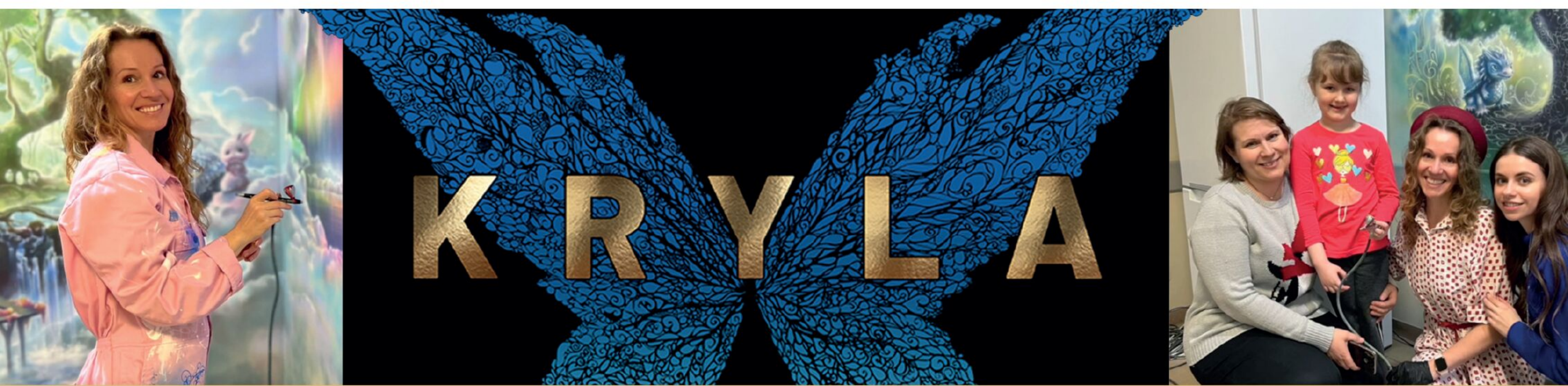
A small collection of art and paint suppliers attended too: The Brushman had his stall and selection of hand made artist and pinstriping brushes, Walcom with their spray equipment, F.A.B with there unique shapes and selection of fiberglass blanks ideal for creating 3d custom paintings or practicing painting onto shapes such as bike tanks and helmets.

This years KKBO has been an amazing mixture of both old and new, lots of different custom paint styles coming together, and I look forward to attending KKBO 2025 next September at Slates farm, Lincolnshire, and seeing how much more this event can grow and evolve.

www.kustomkultureblastoff.co.uk



KRYLA: Harder & Steenbeck launches artistic aid project for children worldwide



It all began two years ago with the start of the war in Ukraine: the German airbrush manufacturer Harder & Steenbeck immediately contacted artists and business partners they knew in Ukraine and immediately brought the family of an airbrush dealer and an artist outside of Ukraine to safety. However, the artist Anzhela Dmytrenko did not want to leave her country for personal reasons, so Harder & Steenbeck began supporting her work at the Okhmatdyt Children's Hospital in Kyiv: there, Anzhela painted the walls of the corridors and various departments, bringing smiles to the faces of many children, parents and even staff, and giving them new hope. Harder & Steenbeck created the Kyiv Infinity together with Anzhela, and the proceeds from the sale enabled Anzhela to continue working on this project. The hospital management wanted this more than direct financial support. The result was more than 700 square metres of artwork.

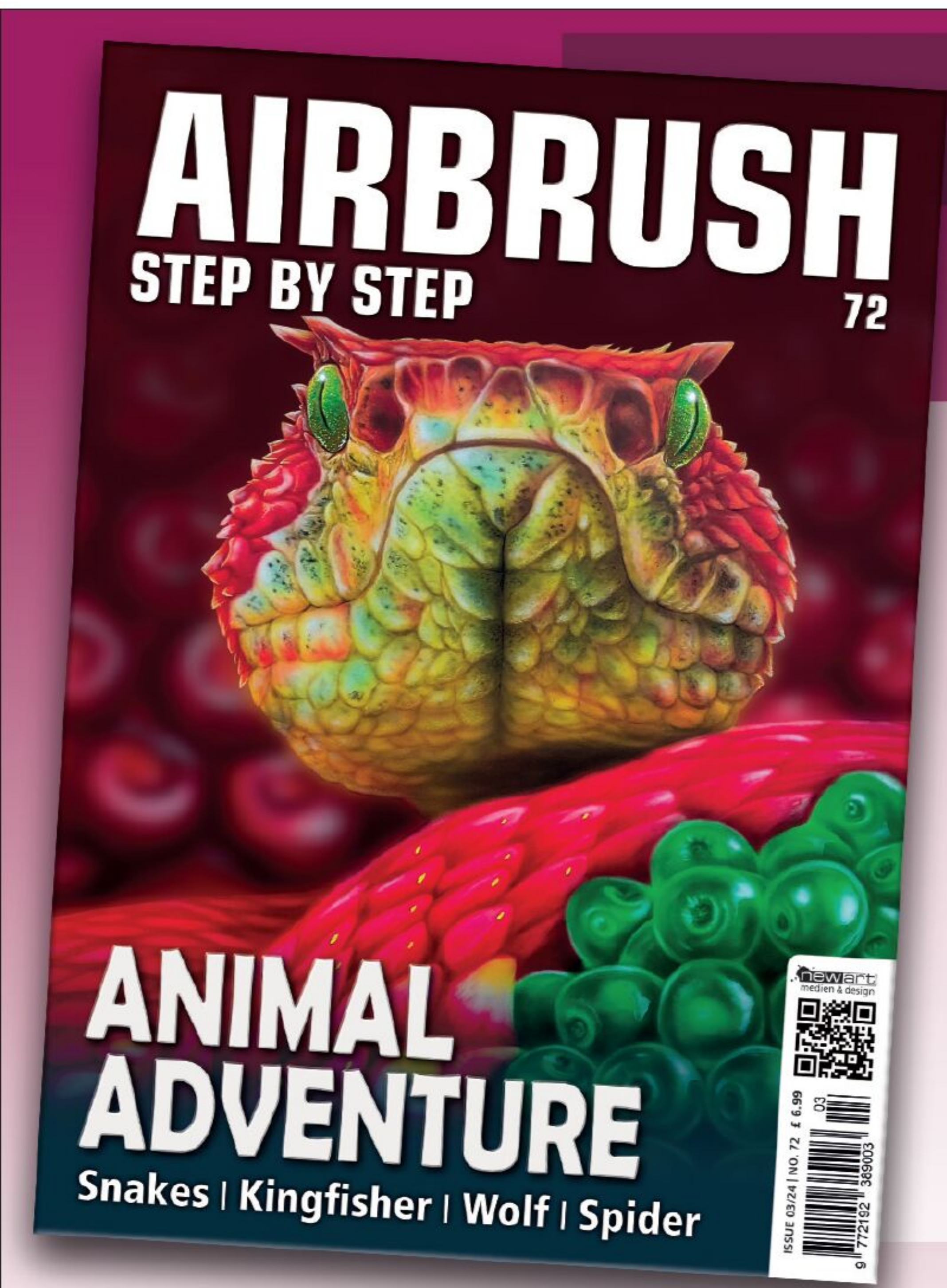
In July 2024, a rocket hit the children's hospital in Kyiv directly, killing several people. Anzhela Dmytrenko and Anastasiia Maherramova, the children's hospital's press officer, who always accompanied Anzhela's work for the media with her camera, were fortunately unharmed, but it became increasingly clear to them that what had been created there in the

hospital through Anzhela's art should also benefit other children and adults in the world. And so the idea for KRYLA, the Ukrainian word for wing, was born: KRYLA is to be a charity based in Germany that, under the leadership of Anzhela Dmytrenko and Anastasiia Maherramova, will collect donations to enable artists worldwide to use their art to bring joy, comfort and hope to hospitals and social institutions. The aim is for not only the people in the institutions, but also airbrush artists to benefit from the jobs created. To set up the project, Warrick Smith, General Manager of Harder & Steenbeck, has launched an online fundraising campaign.

On the website gofundme.org, Warrick describes the details of the project and tells the whole story of the Okhmatdyt Children's Hospital in Kyiv, Anzhela and her art, as well as the fates of the children and parents and how the painted rooms could help them. The target donation of €50,000 needs to be reached in order to get the organisation's work off the ground.

Please support the campaign!

<https://gofundme.org/5bf9f608>

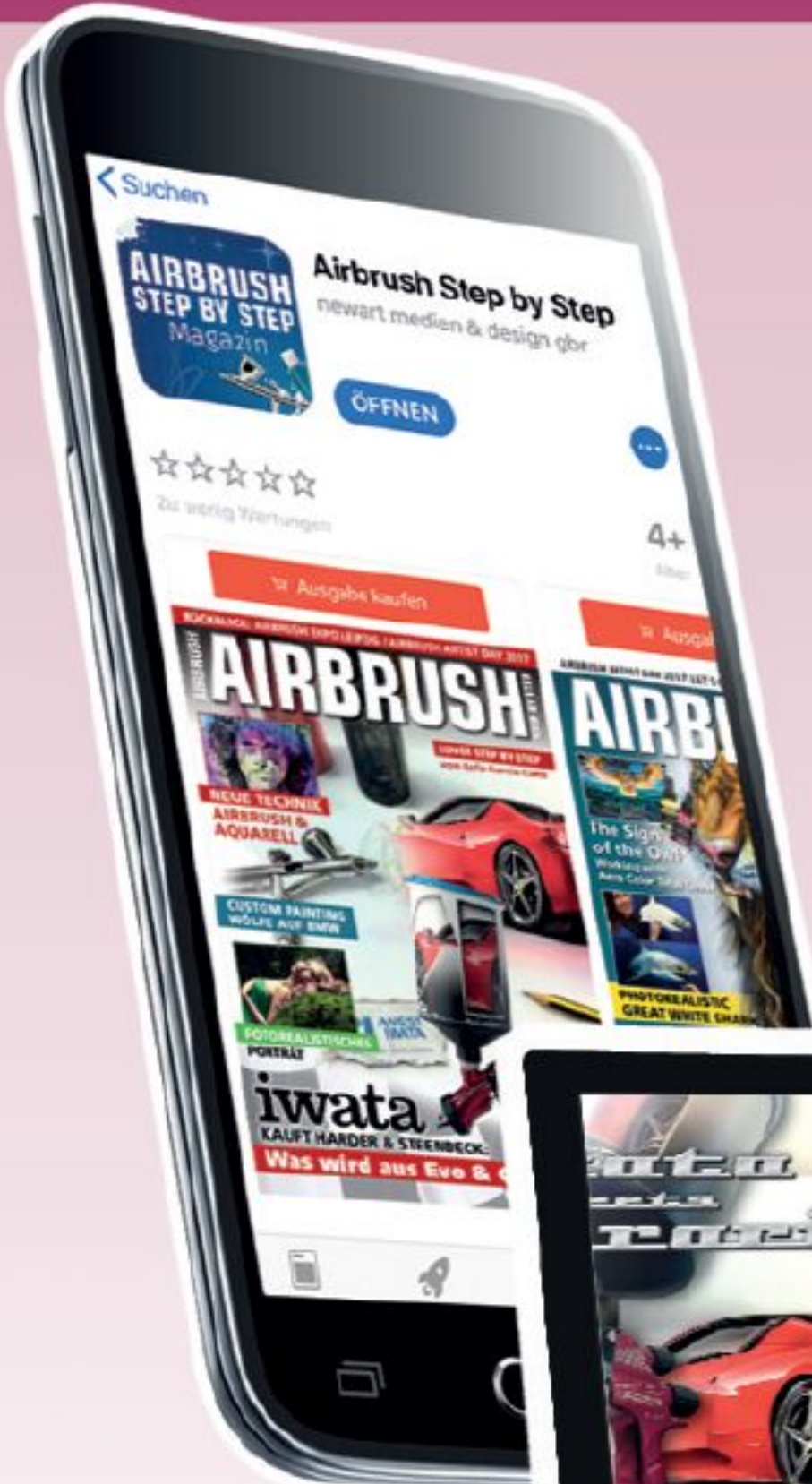


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SUPER MARIO

Since the early 1980s, the little plumber Mario, with Italian roots, has been jumping and running through dozens of computer games. He successfully fights against small and large creatures and always remains charming and funny. Franziska Czeicke painted the little hero in airbrush mixed media on airbrush paper.



EQUIPMENT – SUPER MARIO**Airbrush:** Harder & Steenbeck Infinity**Paints:** Schmincke Aero Color; Hansa Pro Color**Background:** Airbrush paper from Harder & Steenbeck**Other materials:** Markers (Copic, Stylefile, ProMarker), colored pencils (Caran Dâche, Holbein), scalpel, masking film from Harder & Steenbeck, masking liquid from Schmincke**01 Transferring the reference**

I am using an image that I found online as a reference. I transfer this using a projector. I paint the preliminary drawing with a colored pencil, which is less noticeable than a pencil later on. At a later stage, I will decide against the background and remove it again.

**02 Masking and first color**

I mask the entire image with my masking film. At this point, I already have a plan of which areas I want to airbrush together and carefully go over them along the lines with a scalpel. Otherwise, the drawing may no longer be visible later due to overspray, making it difficult to cut out. I start with Mario's face. First, I use the finished skin color and mix in a little yellow to match Mario's skin color as closely as possible. I apply the first coat of paint, taking care to leave the light areas on the nose, cheek and ear free. The face is almost completely in the shade. So I then mix one drop each of neutral gray and purple into my base skin color. I use this to create the shadows.

**03 Orange light effect**

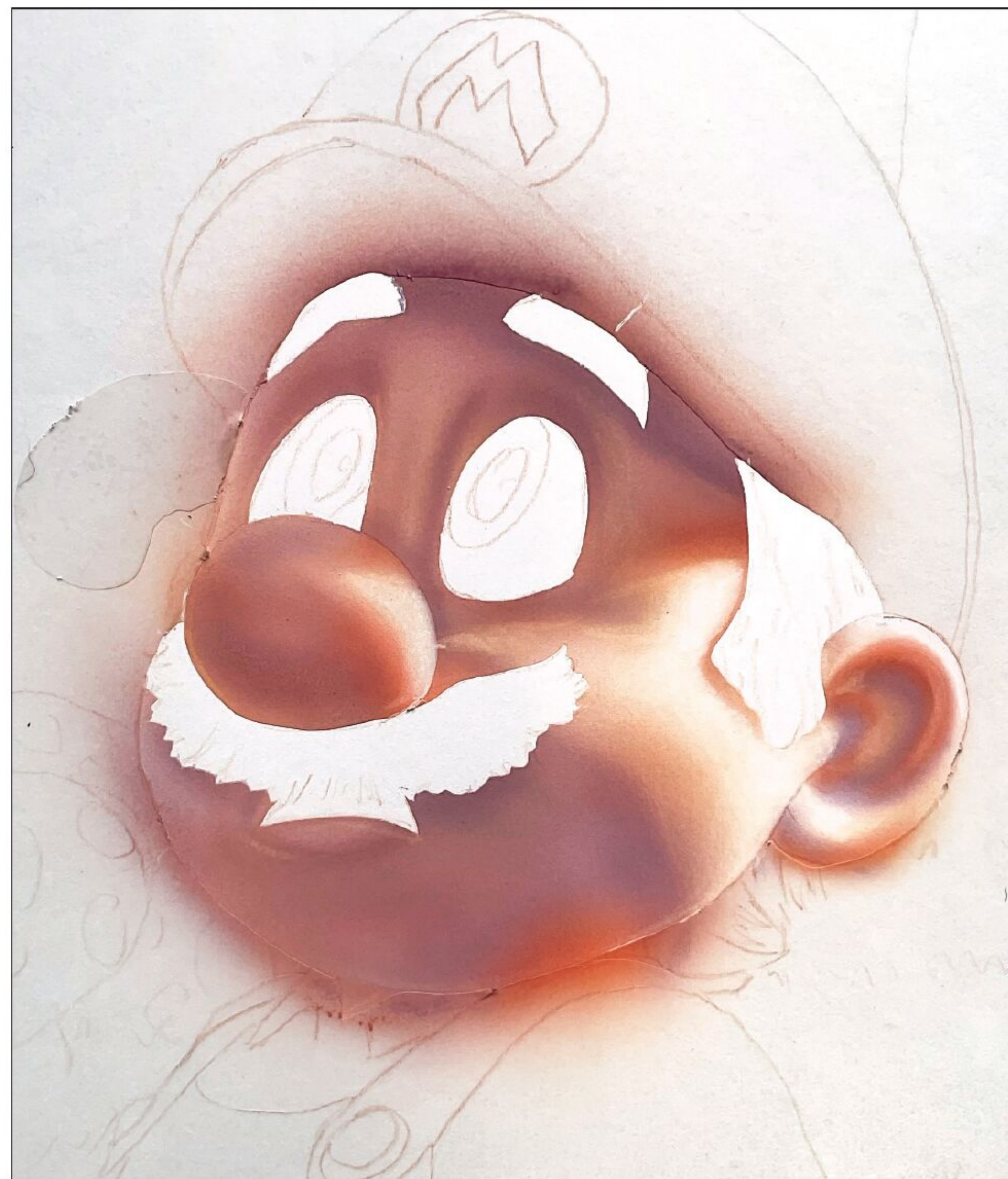
The transition from shadow to light has a slight orange glow, as do the areas on the ear that appear translucent due to the light behind them. For this, I use fire orange and mix it 1:1 with bright yellow. With little pressure and medium distance, I carefully mist this mixture onto the surfaces, trying to create a transition that is as smooth as possible.



04 Darken the shades

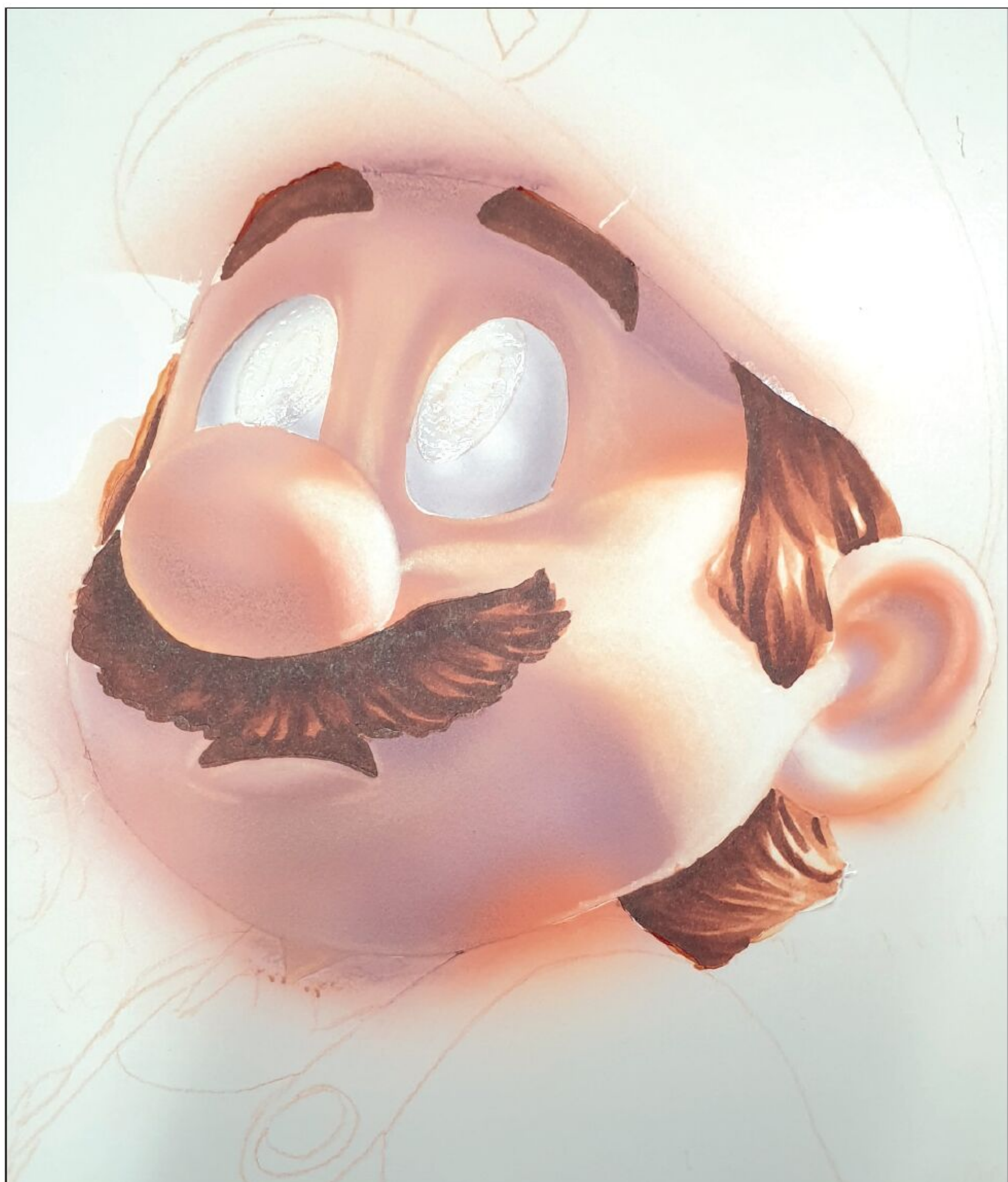
I add more brown to my mixture and deepen the

shades further. Then I remove the masking tape from the eyes, eyebrows, mouth and hair.



05 Hair and moustache

I paint the hair with markers. First I paint the shadows with a dark brown and then go over them with a medium brown. This way the colors flow easily into each other and a transition is created.



06 Masking Iris

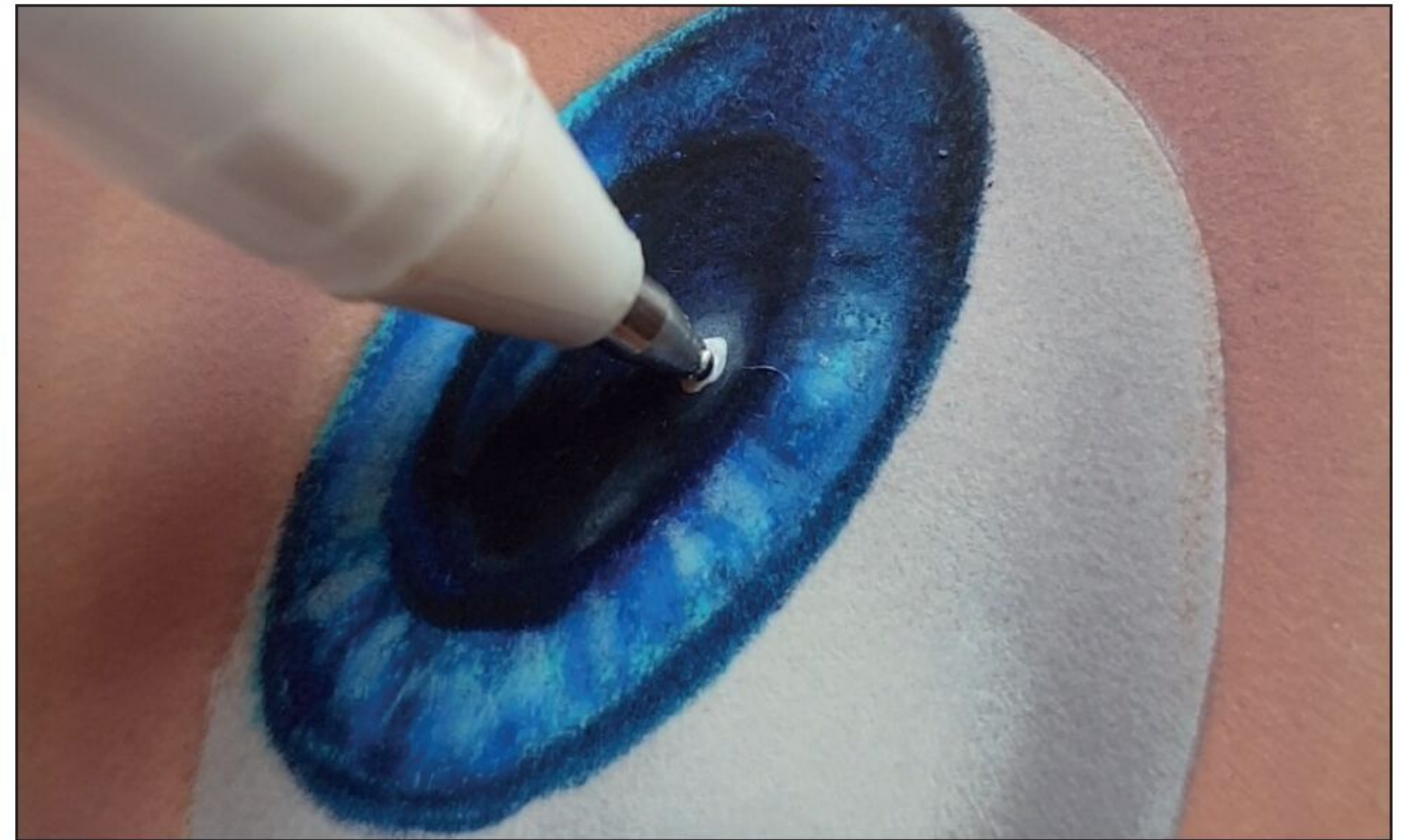
I cover the pupils and irises of the eyes with masking fluid. I do not cover the rest of the face at this stage. I apply diluted neutral gray (2:1 ratio) to the eyes. I mix in more gray for the darker shadows. I carefully rub off the masking fluid – be careful! The color on the mask dries slowly and must be completely dry so as not to accidentally get color on the surrounding areas.



07 Eye color

I draw Mario's iris with a bright blue of my markers and the pupils with black. Then I go over the outer edge of the pupil with a dark blue of my colored pencils, so that there

is a slight transition between the two areas. I do the same with the transition between the iris and the white of the eye. With a white gel pen, I set the highlights.

**08** Animation style

Since Mario is an animated character, I like it when the drawing does not look too realistic. Therefore, I roughly

trace some outlines and shadows on the face with a brown crayon. This creates hard edges that do not occur in a realistic portrait.

**09** Hat

Now I turn to Mario's cap. This is an intense red. I divide the cap into three areas: the cap, the visor and the emblem. To clearly distinguish them from each other, I will paint them one after the other, leaving the remaining areas masked. I remove the mask from the cap. I mix the red with scarlet red and fire red. For the upper and lower areas of the cap,

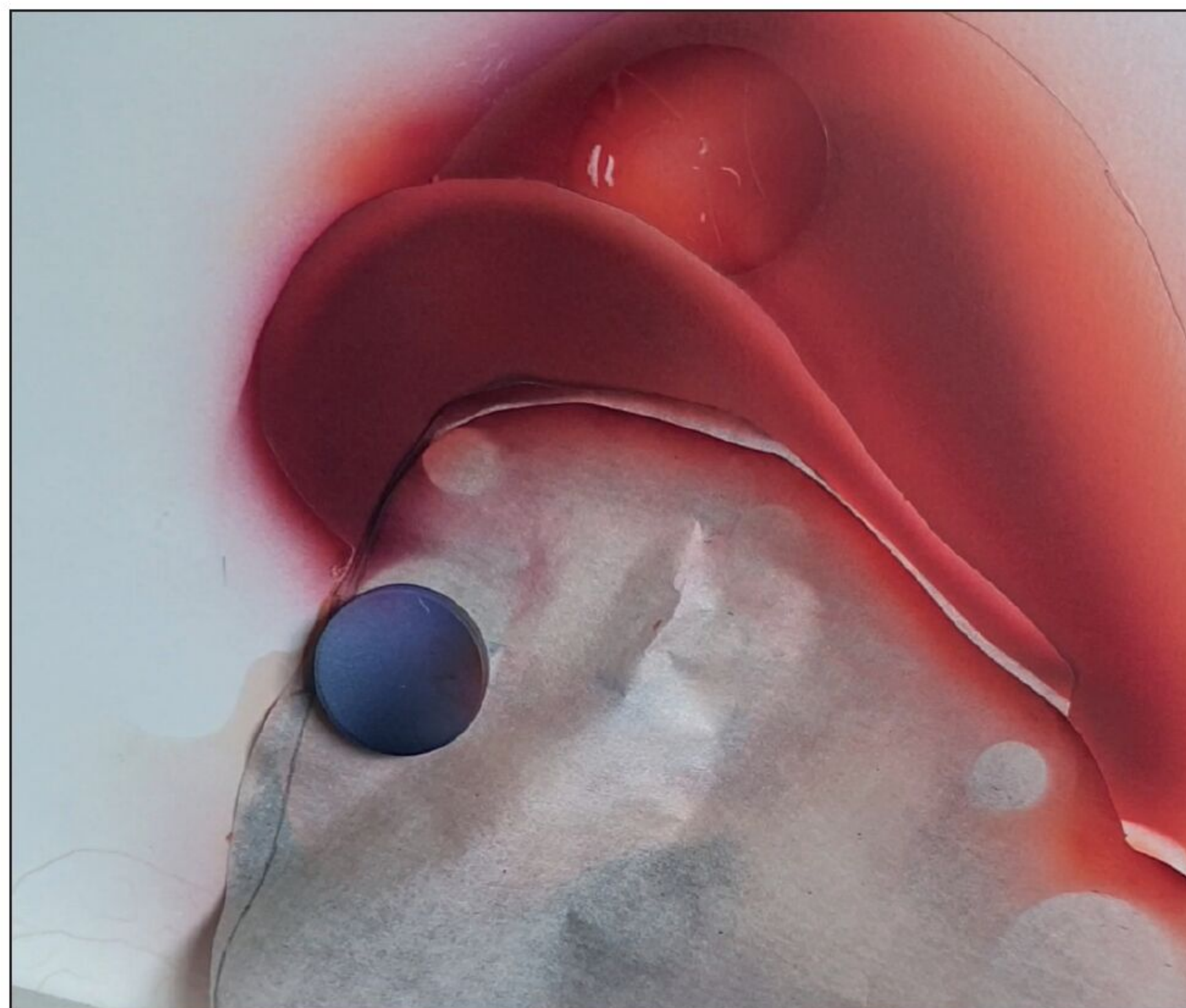
I add a little orange. These areas are hit by light or reflect it from the shield. I keep a large distance from the paper and use more pressure to get a spray pattern that is as even as possible. For the darkest areas, I mix 2 drops of purple into the color.



10 Shield

Now I remove the film from the sign and apply it in the same way. I also cover the face now to avoid overspray.

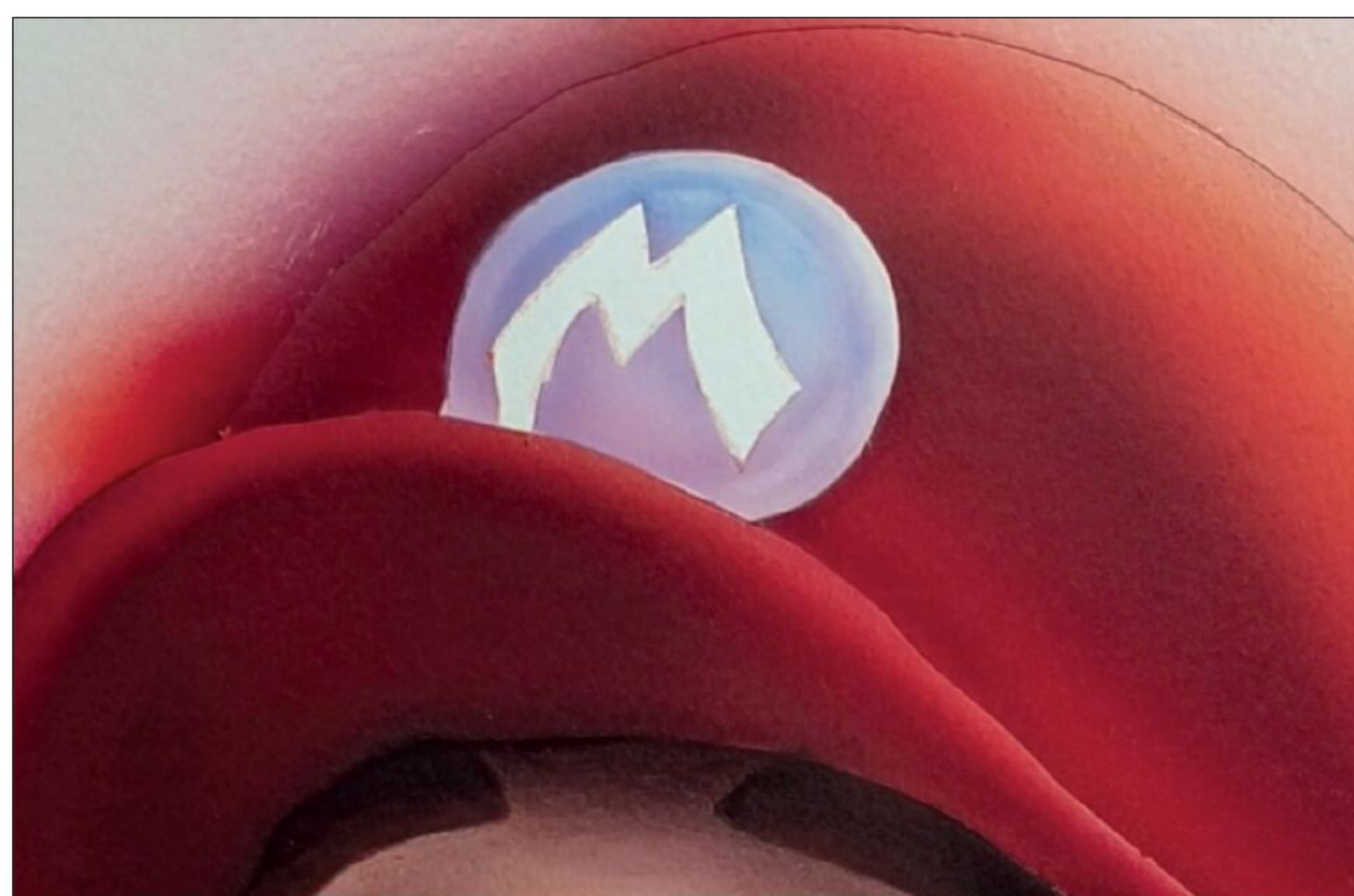
When designing and shading the cap, I always refer to my reference picture.



11 Color the emblem

Mario's emblem consists of a white circle with a red "M". I carefully cut out the M so that I can remove the mask around it. Although the circle appears white, on closer inspection it reflects red and blue. Probably the sky and Mario's

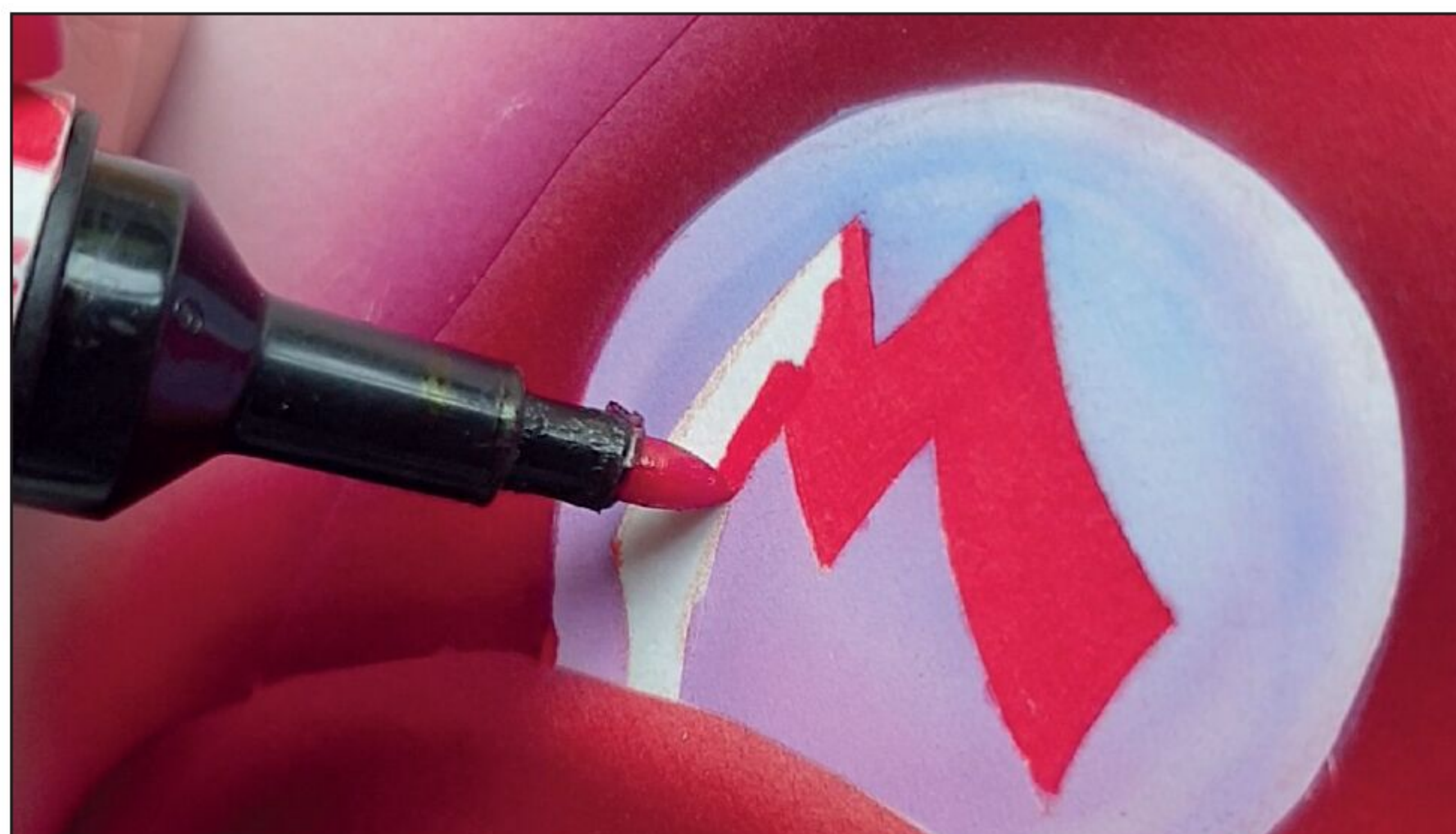
cap. I mix two colors: one with neutral gray and blue, and the other with red. Both are heavily diluted with water (3:1) to achieve a very delicate application of color. After that, the mask is also removed from the "M".



12 M for Mario and details on the emblem

I add the M in a similar way to the hair, using two different red highlighters, and add details with a dark red

crayon. The outline of the emblem is lightened with an electric eraser to further enhance the contrast.





13 Finish the cap

The cap is almost finished. Some details are still missing to make the picture look even more alive. The edge of the visor is first lightened with an eraser pencil and then with a white marker. To achieve a soft color application, I apply the

color of the marker to a fine paintbrush and paint with it. On the underside of the visor, I add the stitching with a pink crayon.



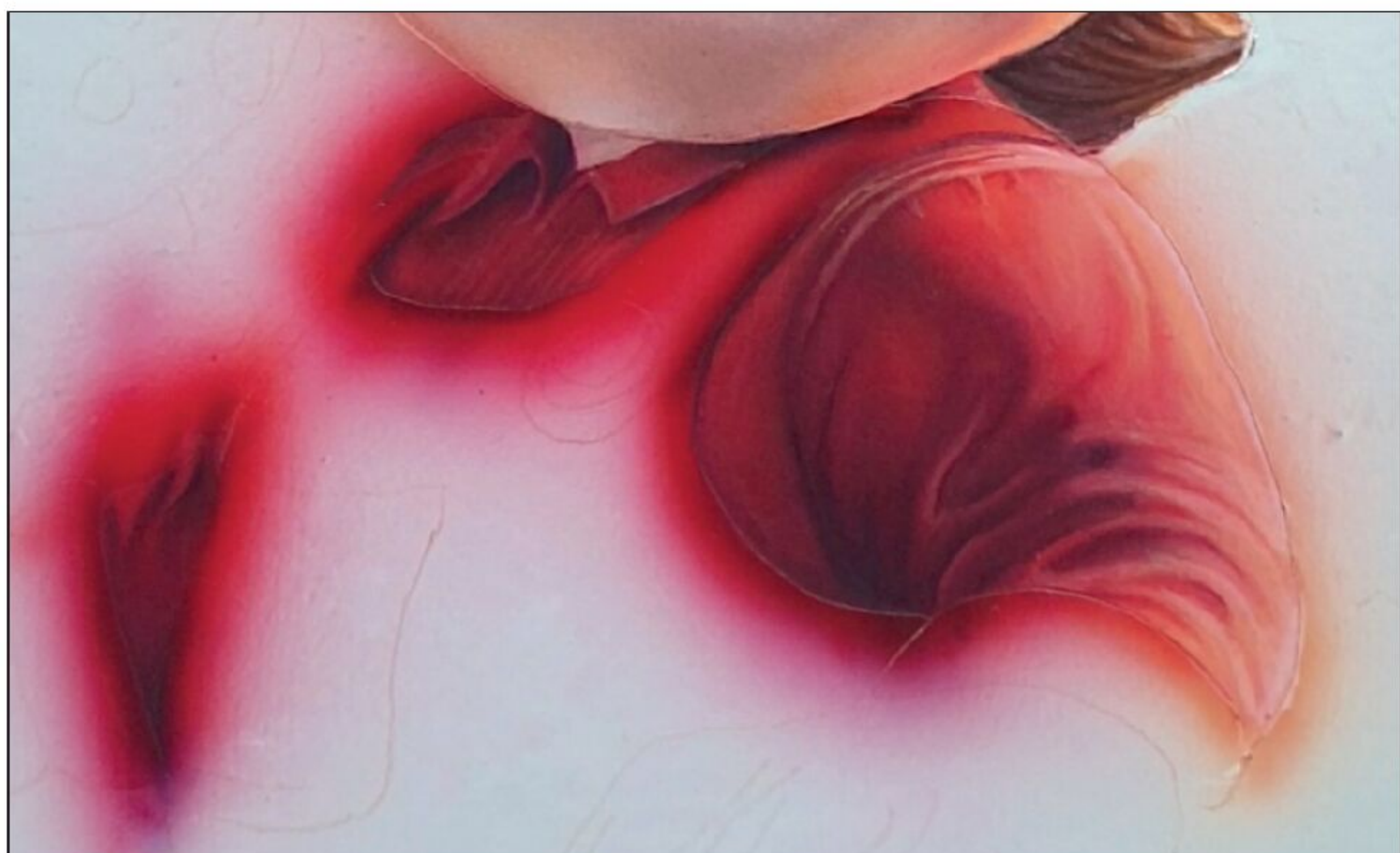
14 Red Sweater

Next, I will continue with Mario's sweater. I remove the mask from the sleeves and collar. I use bright Flame Red for the highlights. After each color layer, I erase the lit wrinkles with a hard eraser to increase the contrast and make the edges more visible.

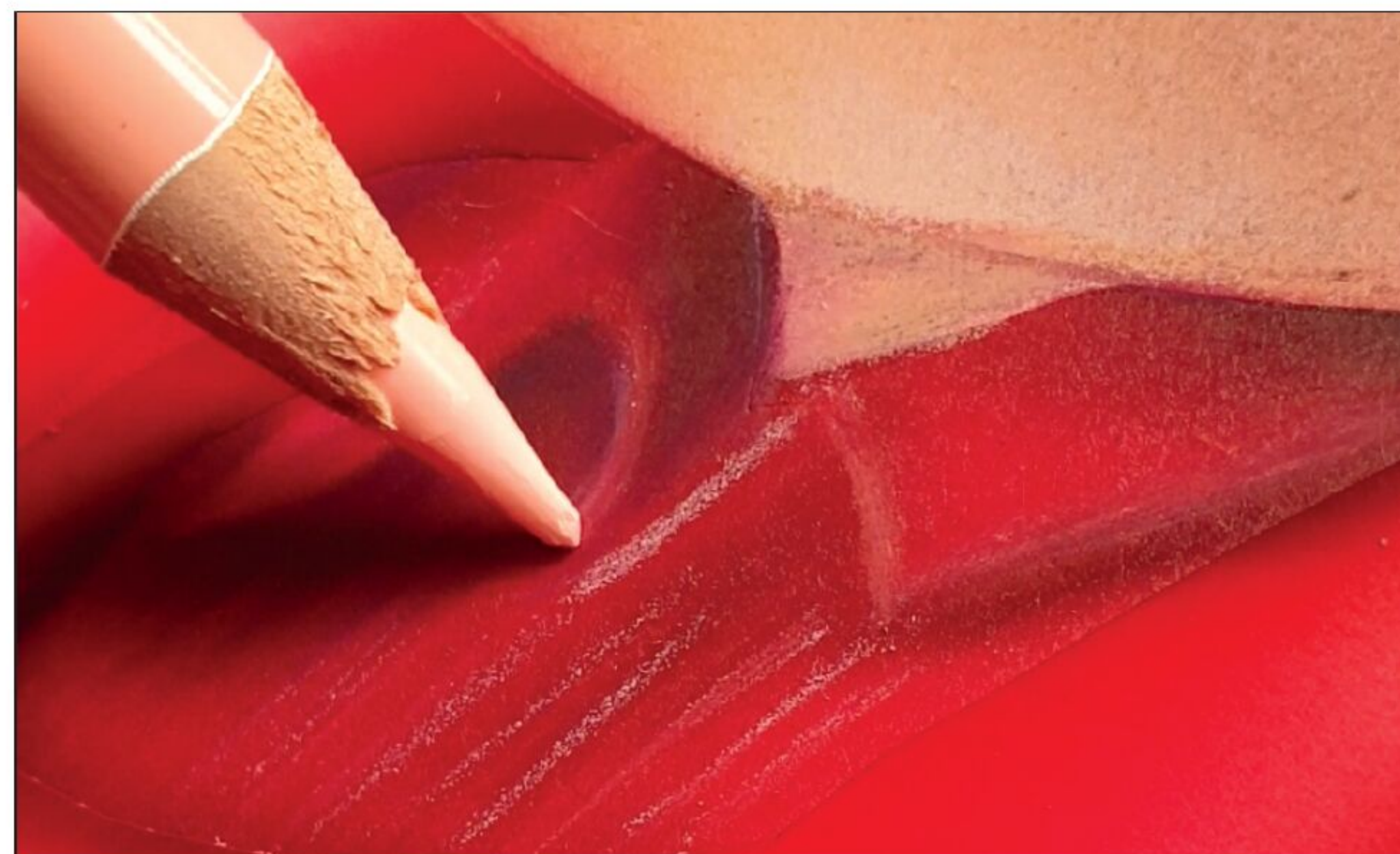


15 Shadows and Details

Subsequently, I apply Scarlet Red to the rest of the sweater and create the shadows using a mixture of Scarlet

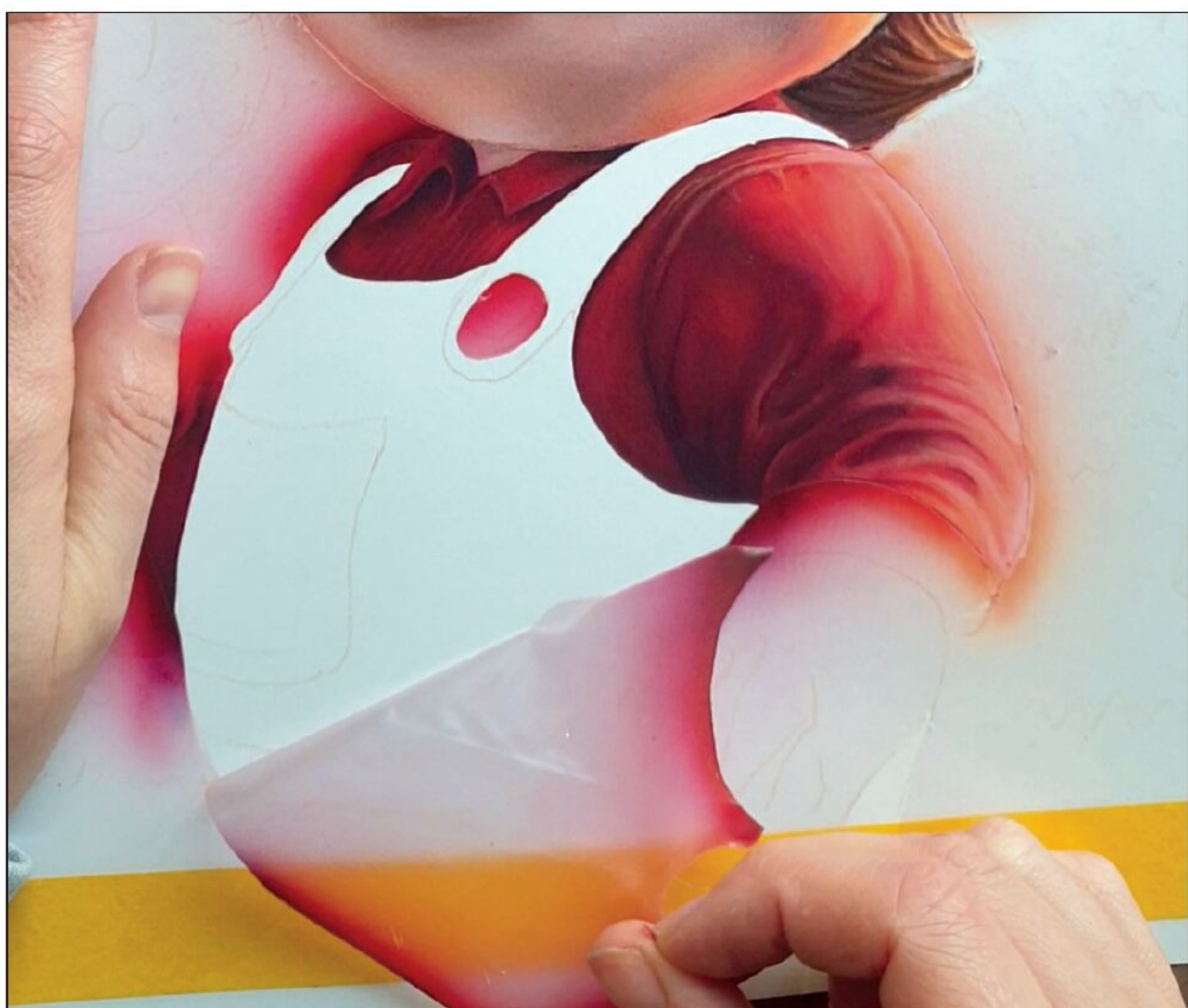


Red and Purple. At the collar and on the shoulder, I draw some details of the seams as well as fine highlights with a white crayon.



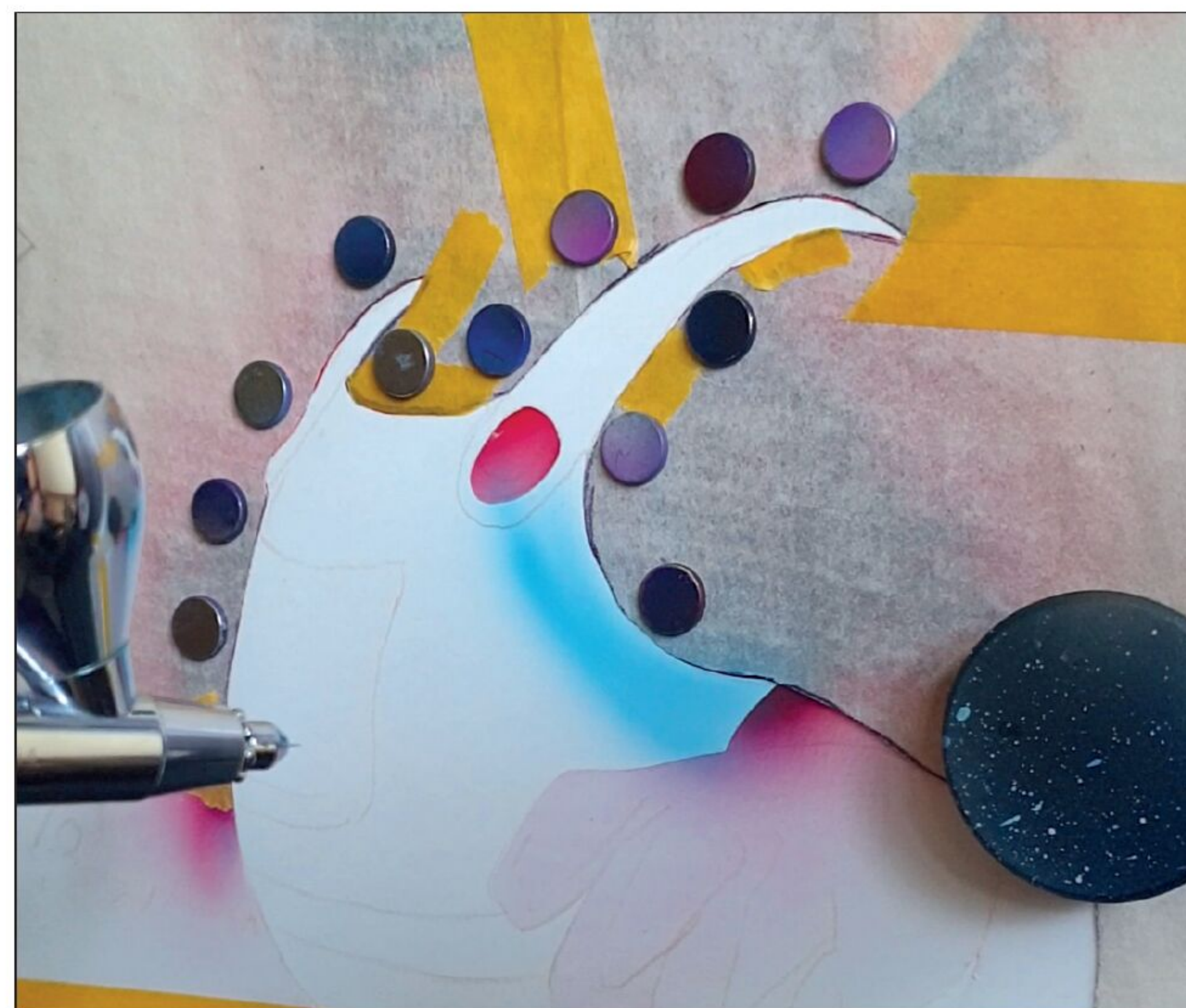
16 Light Coloring

For the outer arm that will be lit, I use a mixture of skin colors and yellow. Then I remove the dungaree masking to properly evaluate the sweater and prepare for the next step.



17 The dungarees

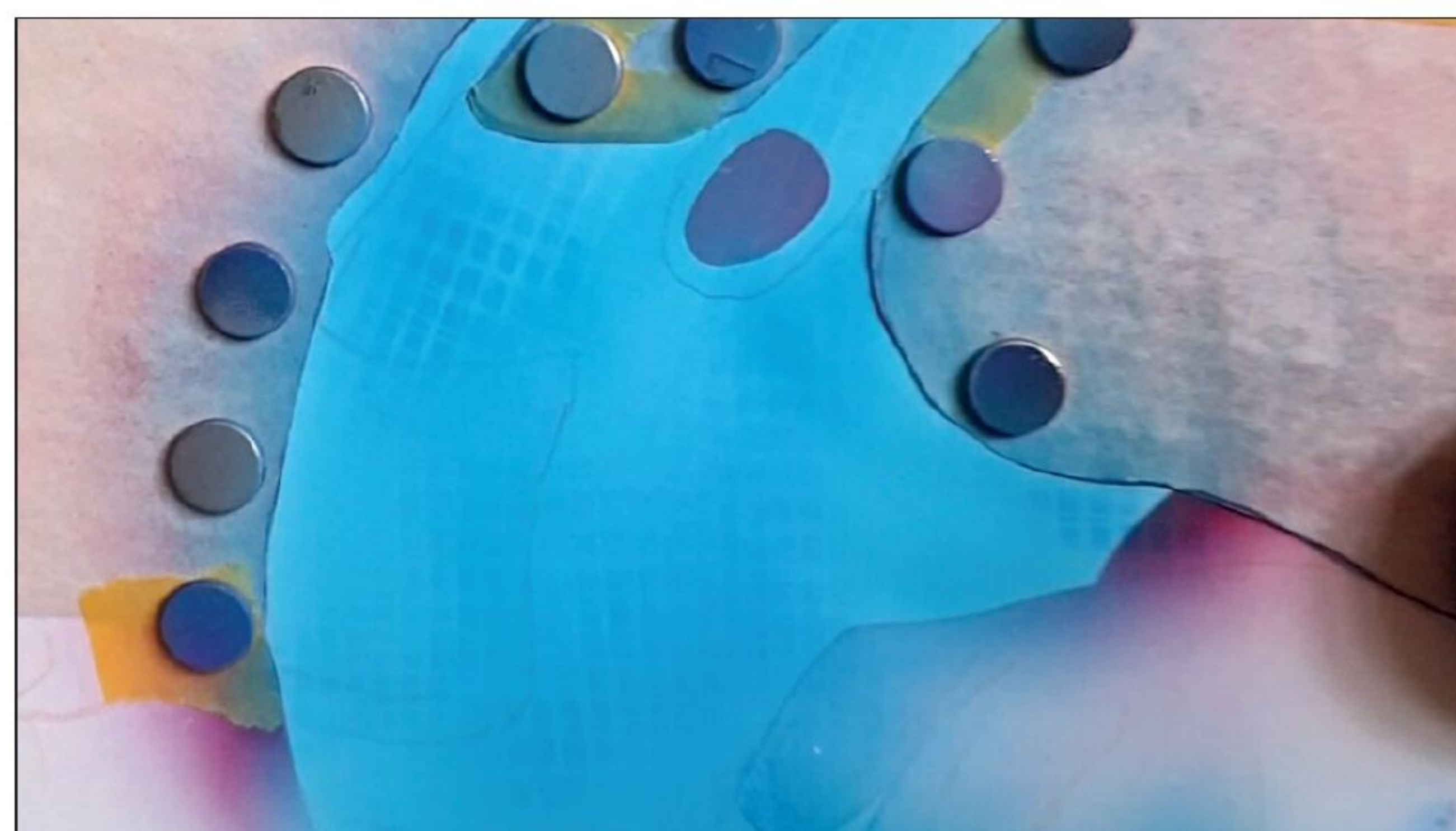
Next, I start with Mario's dungarees. To avoid damaging the finished areas, I cut out masks from butter paper and attach them with magnets around the trousers. I apply diluted light blue to a large area of the trousers.



18 Fabric texture

The dungarees have a fine weave. After thinking about what to use for them, I cut a potato net to the appropriate size. I hold this on the paper without spacing and spray

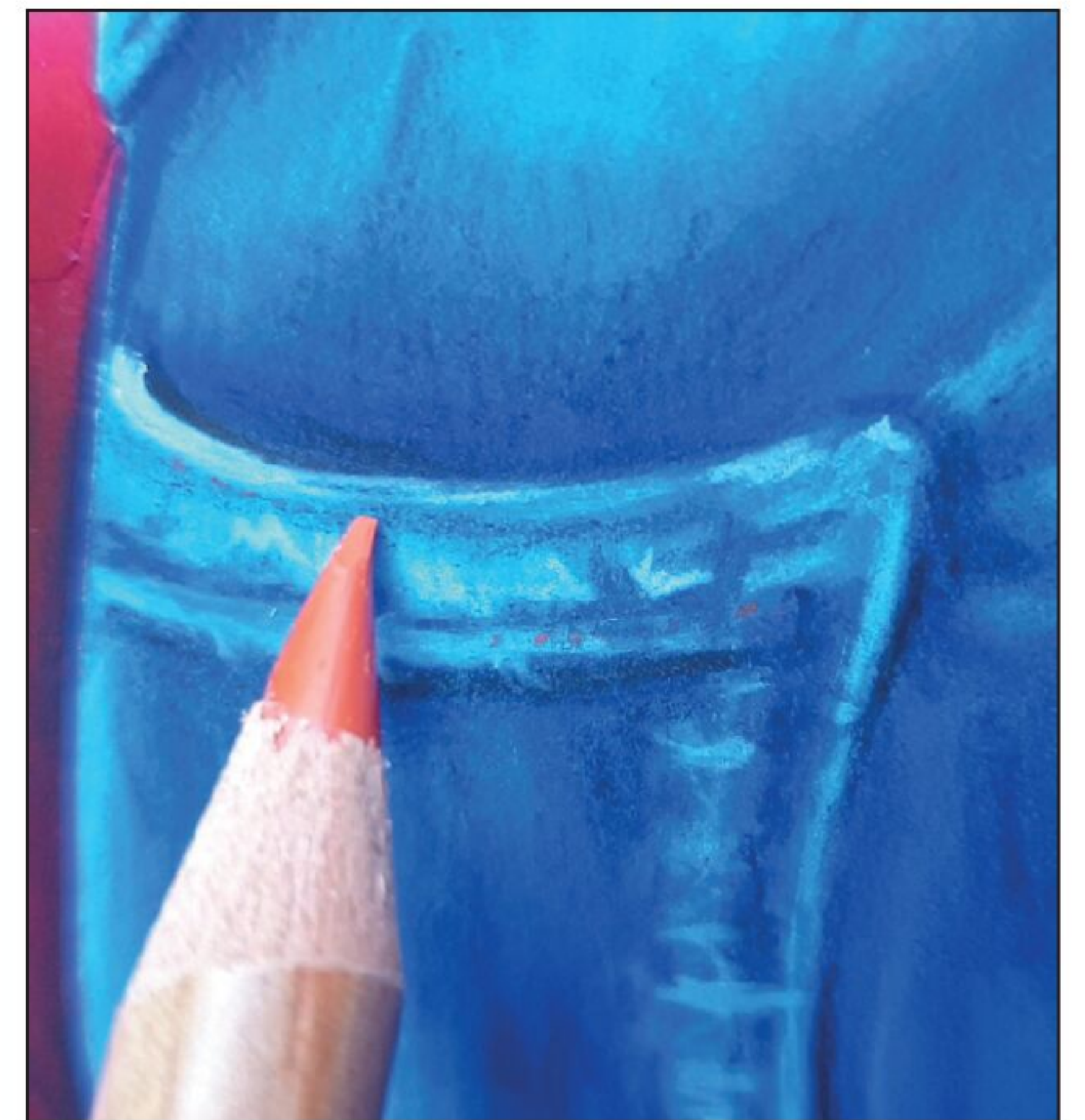
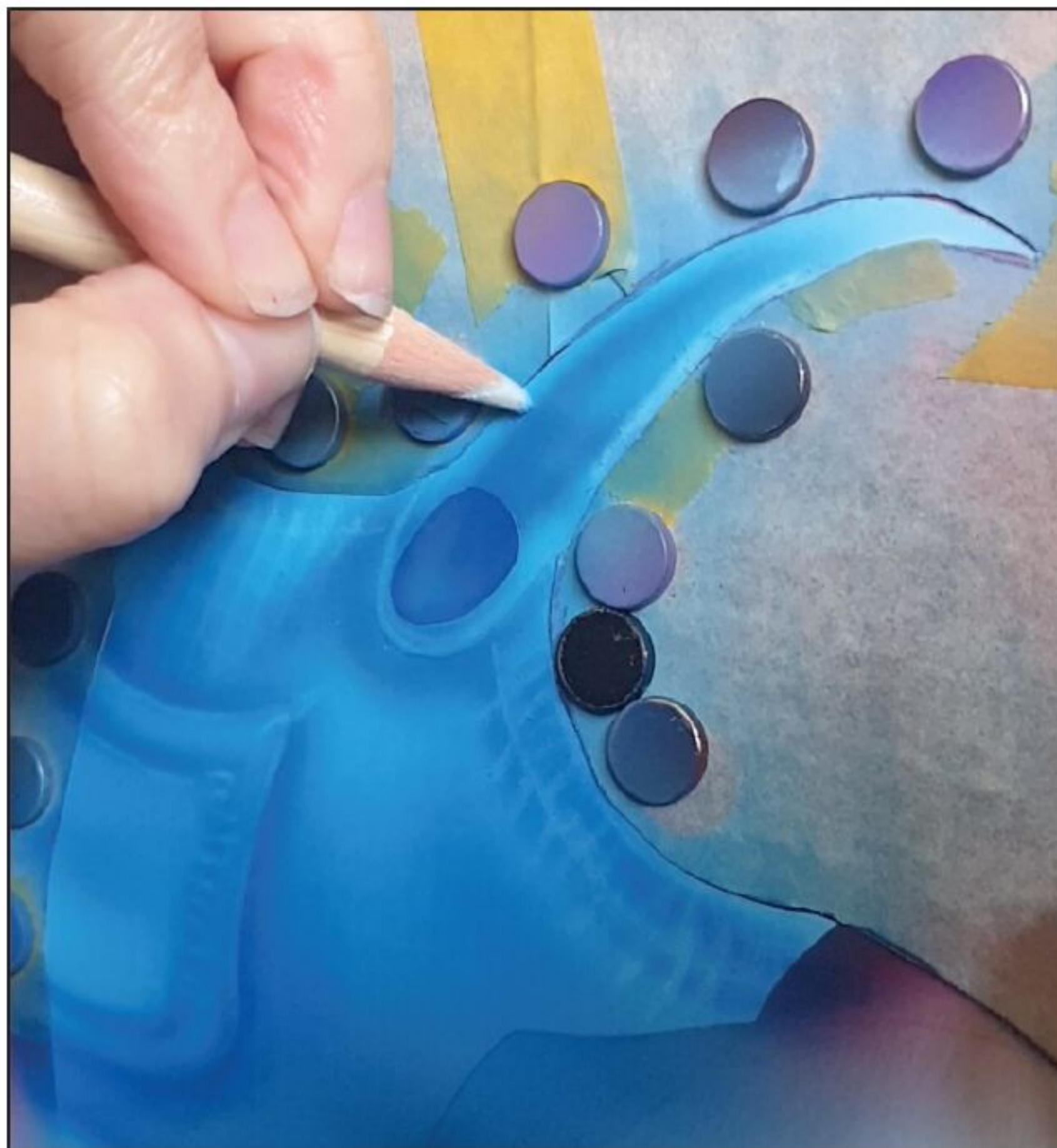
over it with a darker blue. I change the direction of the fabric to adapt it to Mario's body shape.



19 Shading and Contours

With the same color, I also create the dark shades and contours along the straps, the bag, around the button, etc. The color shade is gradually darkened. I then add further

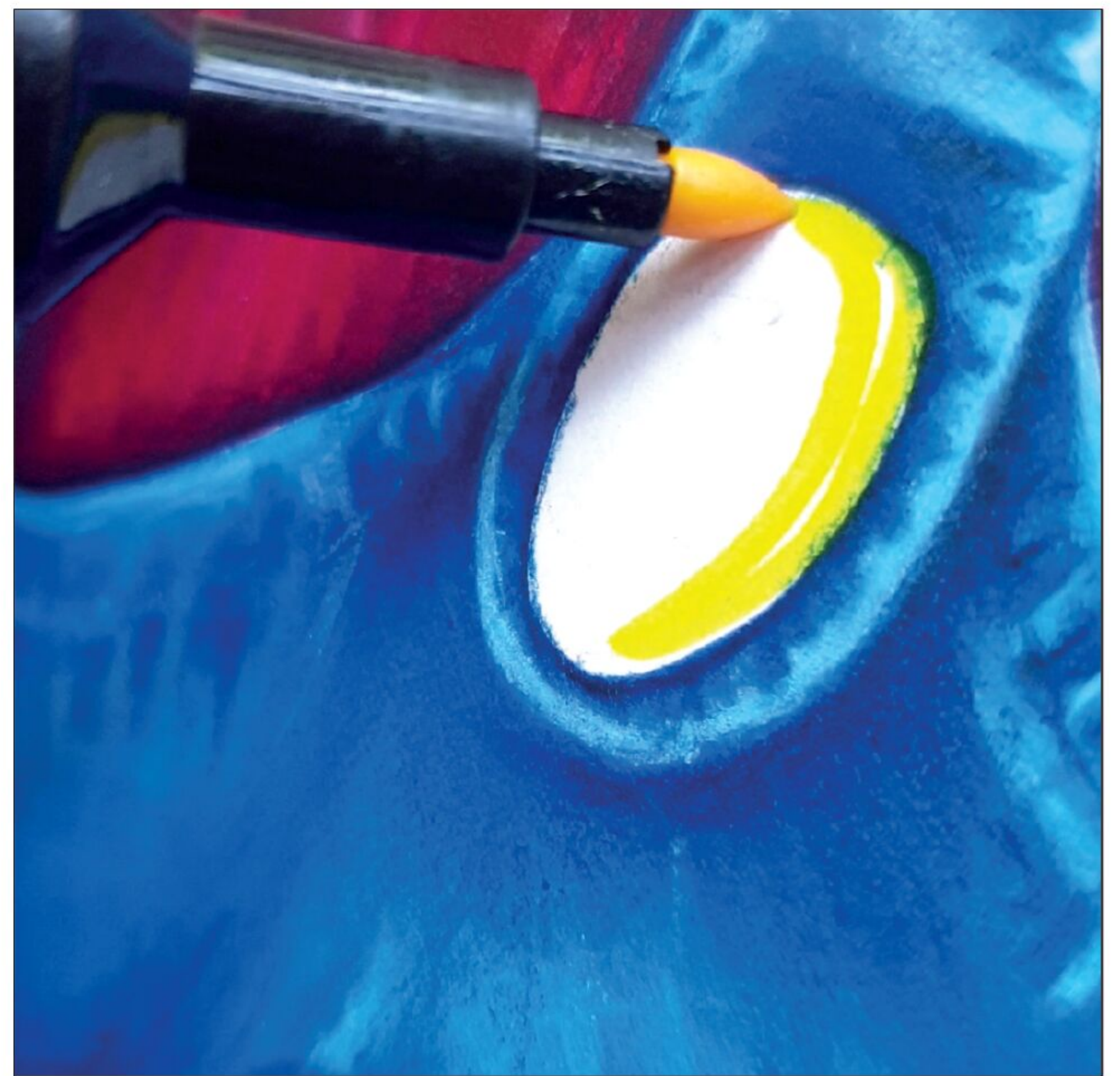
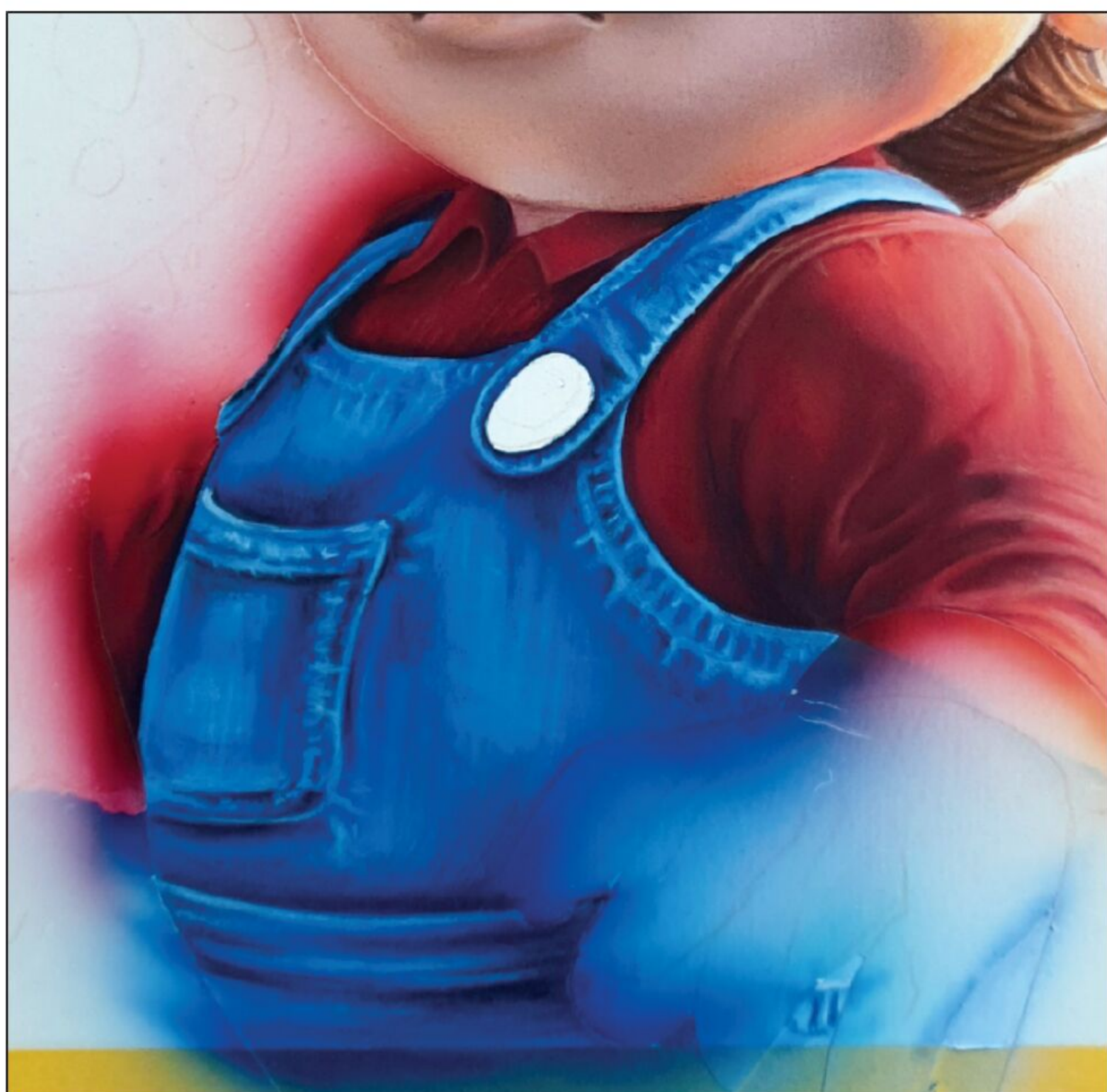
details with my eraser. I draw the trouser seam with an orange crayon.



20 Finished trousers

After that, I remove the masks around the trousers

and the button. I draw the button with markers and colored pencils.



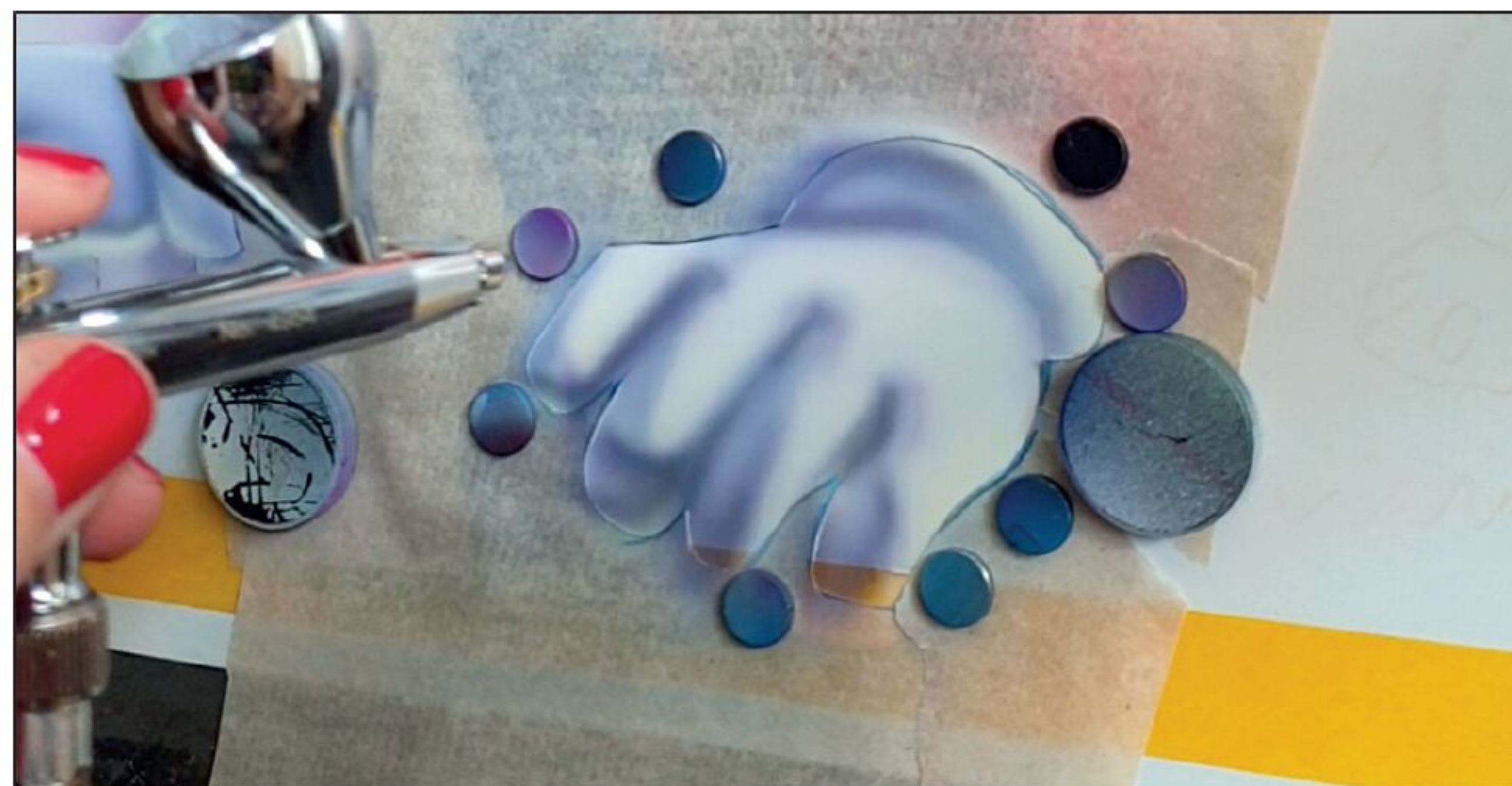
21 Gloves

Finally, I paint Mario's gloves. I remove their masking and cut out more matching butter paper to protect the surrounding areas. This is attached to the picture with magnets. First, I use diluted neutral gray (2:1) and apply the midtones. I try to leave the exposed areas of the glove white. Therefore, I work closer to the paper.



22 Shadows and colored reflections

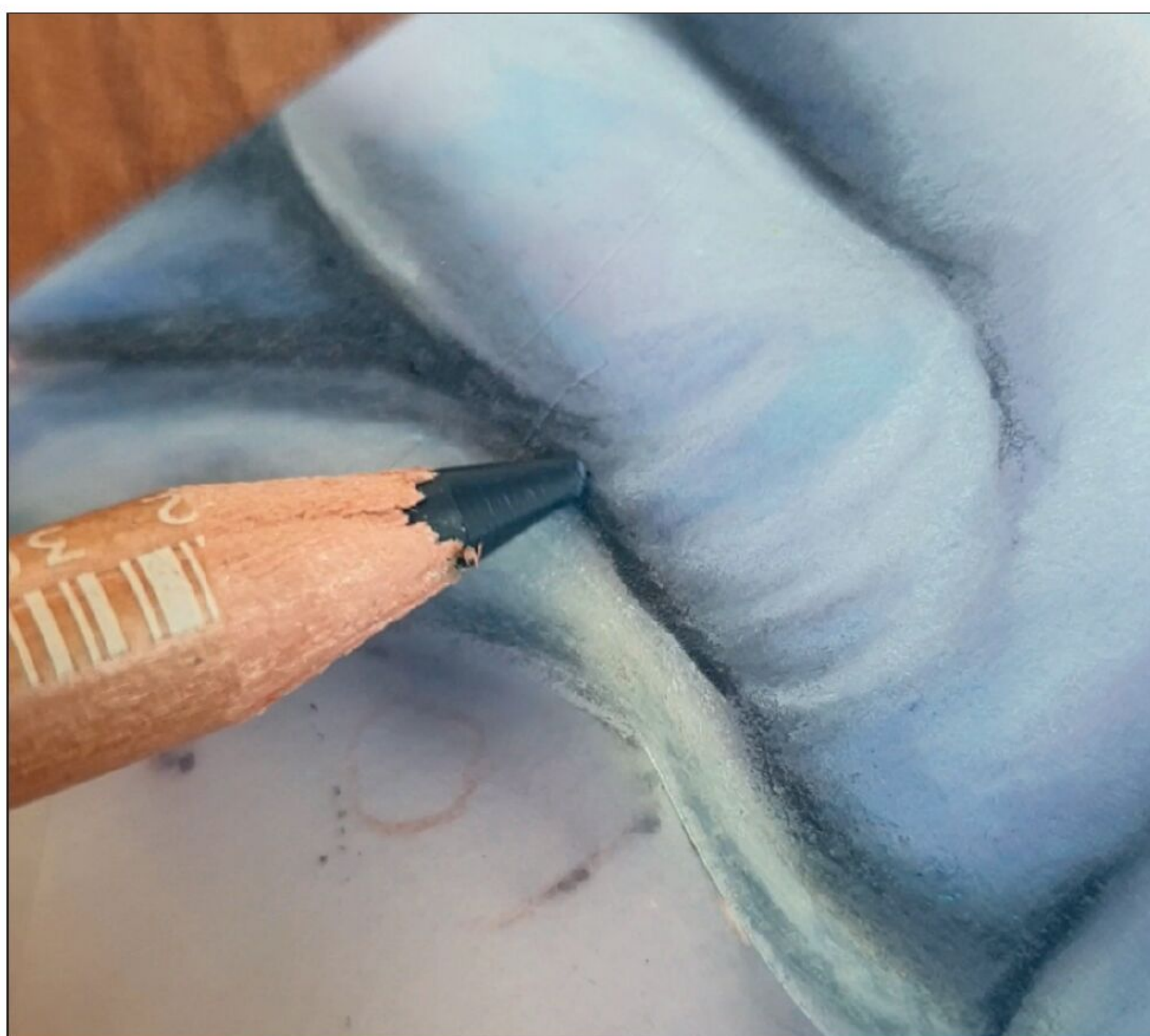
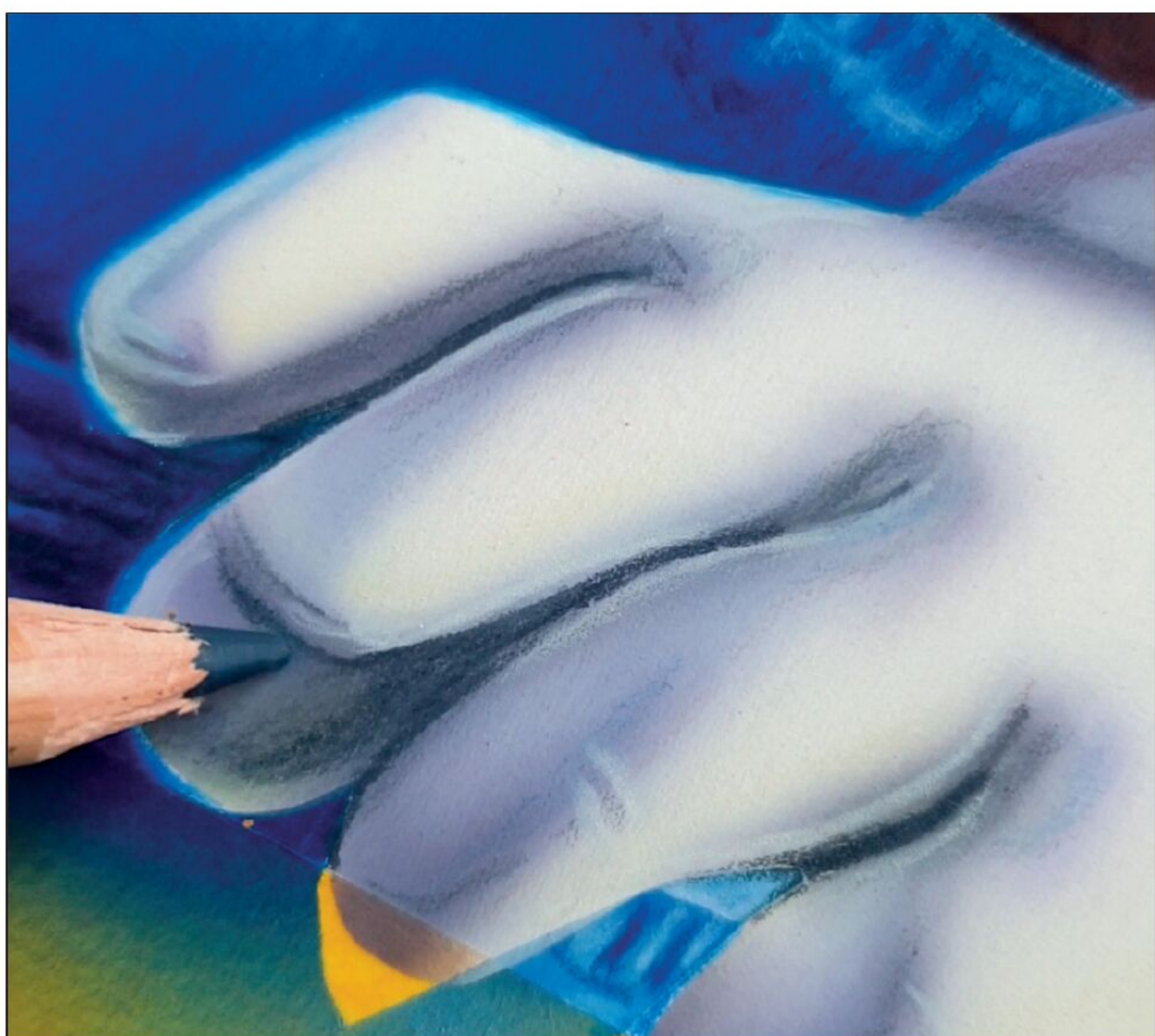
After that, I gradually work my way towards the shadows, adding more and more gray to my color mixture. In some areas, I add a very diluted red or blue (4:1) to the areas directly next to the trousers or sweater to represent color reflections.



23 Sharp lines and soft light

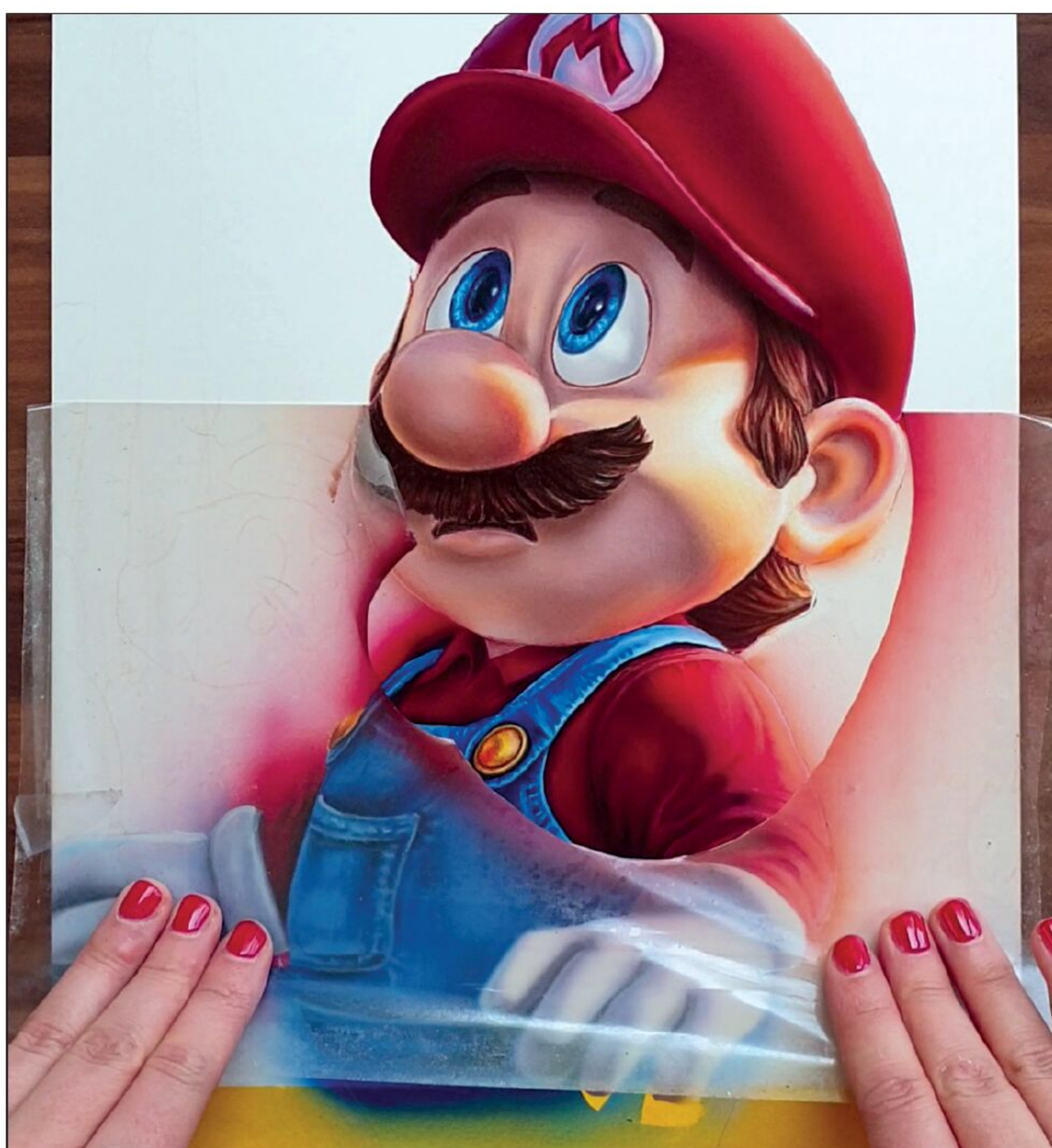
I add details and sharp lines with a dark gray colored pencil. As a last step, I carefully rub out the white areas on the

gloves to remove any overspray and make the gloves glow.



24 Great, Mario!

Mario is finished! Now I remove the large mask around the character and the masking tape.



**FRANZISKA CZEICKE**

Franziska Czeicke has loved drawing since she was a child. After trying out a variety of techniques, she came to airbrushing 10 years ago. After a weekend course, she continued to develop her skills over the following years. Initially, she only ventured into black and white works, but eventually moved on to colored works in mixed media. She uses an airbrush, markers and colored pencils. She draws mostly portraits and creatures, and she draws mostly from film and television.

Instagram / Facebook / Tiktok: [@franziska_maria_art](#)



MAGIC MACAW

The colourful macaws are also at home in the homeland of Brazilian artist Neimar L. Duarte. In his work, Neimar has created a particularly magi-

cal and bright specimen using candy colours on a grey background.

Neimar 2024

EQUIPMENT – MAGIC MACAW

Airbrushes: Iwata Takumi Micron, Iwata HP-CH, Creos PS-290. Sparmax Silver Bullet with Mac valve, Harder & Steenbeck quick couple with Mac valve

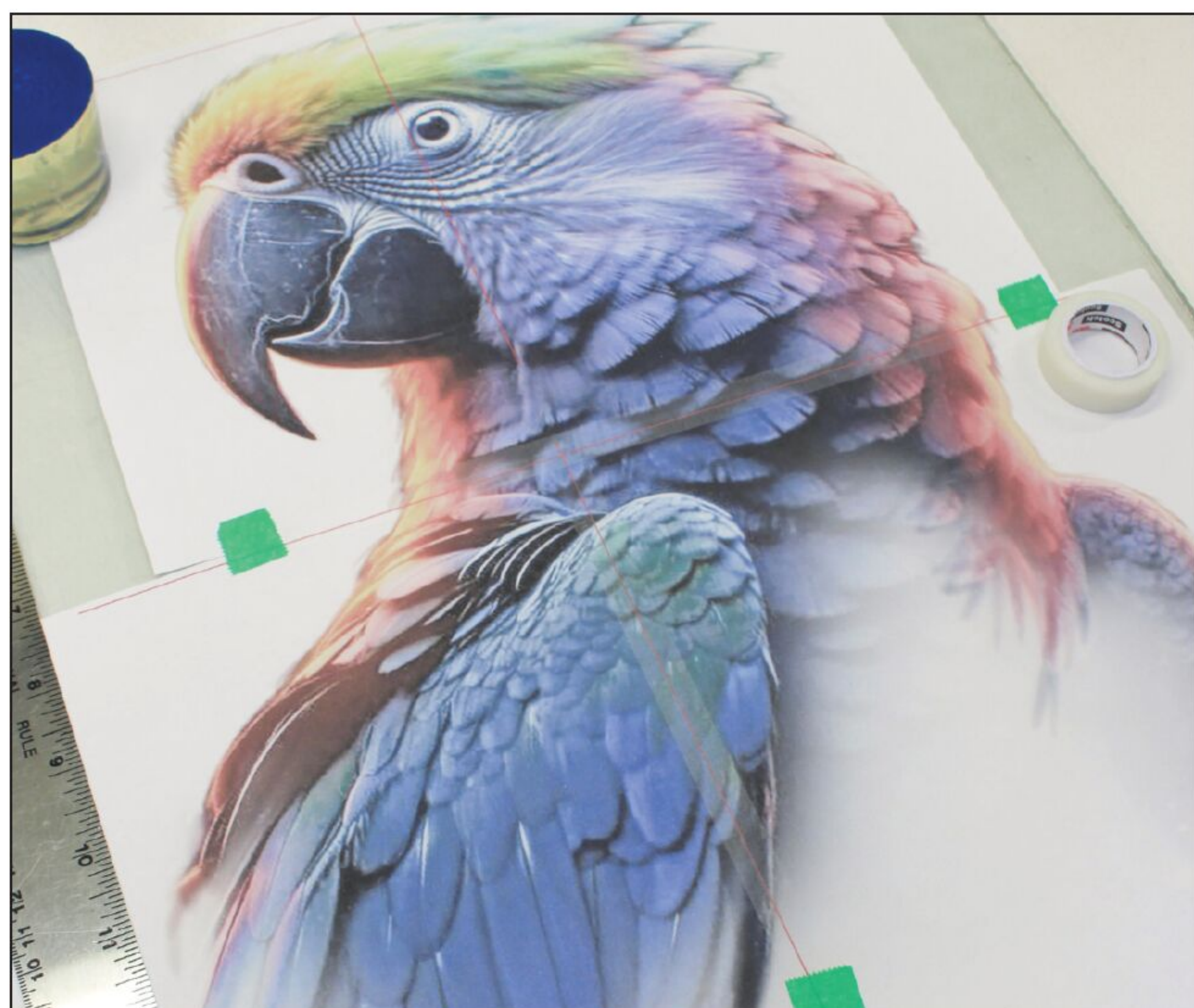
Paints: Lacquer Nitrocellulose, low speed reducer, matte 2K clear-coat

Surface: Aluminum panel (ACM), 60 x 40 cm (23,6 x 15,8 inches)

Further materials: Printer paper, Exacto knife, mechanical pencil with a 5.6 mm 2B graphite lead, 0.5 mechanical pencil, paper puncher, 3M Magic Tape, masking tape, 800 grit sandpaper, wax and grease remover

01 Preparing the reference

Once I've done some digital composition studies and defined the size of the panel I was going to paint on, I printed the reference image in the actual size of the painting. It took 3 sheets of regular A4 paper that I cut and taped together with 3M Magic Tape.



02 Transfer technique

I scribbled the back of the printed image with graphite, using a mechanical pencil with a 5.6 mm 2B graphite lead. The base color of the panel will be black; but as the graphite is actually gray, it's going to show on the black background.



03 Creating a template

The first thing I used the printed image for, was to create a template of the overall shape of the bird, to use while I paint the background. For that, I taped together 3 A4 sheets of a ticker paper, the same way I did with the printed image. I placed the printed image on top of the paper that will be the template, and using a 0.5 mechanical pencil I traced just over the outline of the bird on the printed image, so the graphite transferred the line to the paper underneath.



04 Attaching technique

Then I cut the paper template using an exacto knife and cut some holes around the edge using a paper puncher. I use those holes to attach the template to the panel in the following steps.



05 The surface

The panel I used is an ACM (Composite aluminum panel) that was originally matte white. I scuffed, degreased and painted it black using lacquer nitrocellulose paint. Then I sand the surface with 800 grit sandpaper, degrease it and it's ready to go.



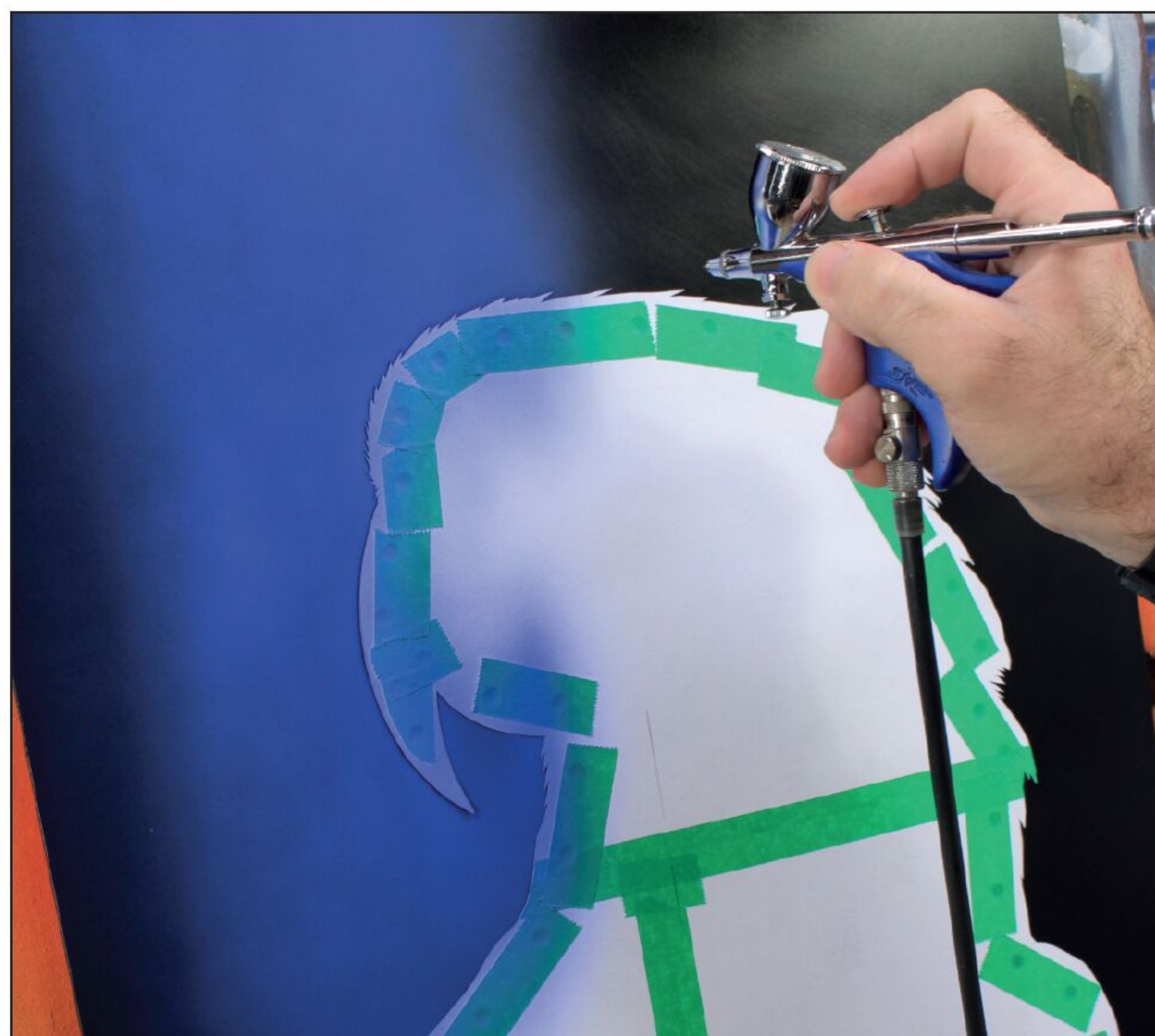
06 Placing the template

I placed the template on the panel and attached it by putting pieces of tape over those holes I did around the edges. The tape touches the panel through the holes attaching the template to the panel.



07 Creating foundation

I made a mixture of blue, violet, white and a little bit of black to use as a foundation to the background, and I sprayed it using the Iwata HP-CH. I wanted to be free to have fun with this painting, so I was not attached to the exact color tones I had in the reference image. I was mixing until I found a tone that I liked better.





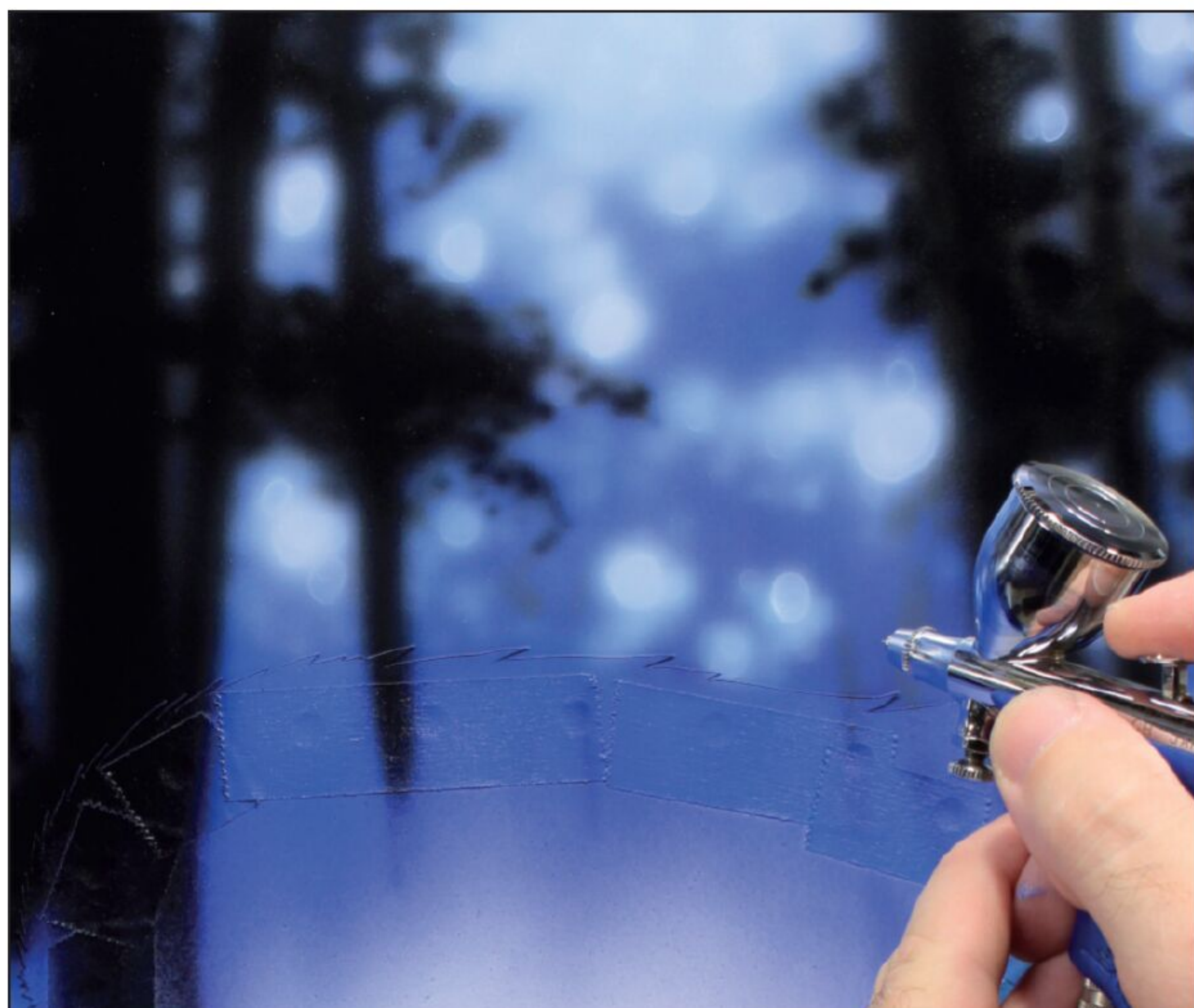
08 Painting trees

My intention was to bring the focal point to the bird, so I decided to make an out of focus forest as a background. With that in mind I painted some trees using black, taking care to paint all the edges softly by spraying from far from the surface. You will see in the next step that I also mixed the background color with a little bit of black to make some trees far away to create more depth.

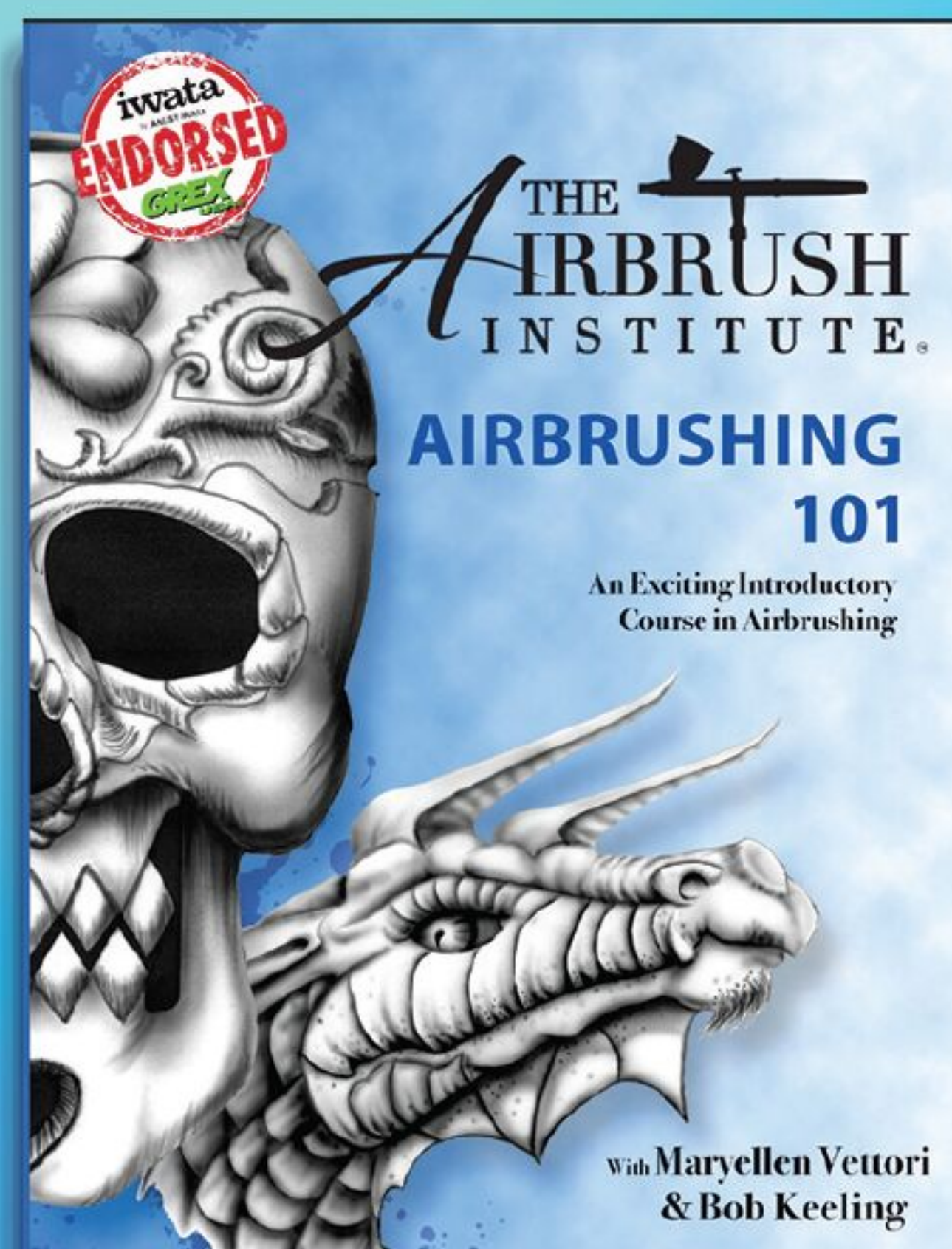


09 Bokeh effect

I wanted lights shining through the trees. As it's out of focus I did it as a bokeh effect. My goal with this painting was to make a fantasy painting that has a little bit of realism with free artistic elements. So to make the bokeh effect I experimented with what's usually a mistake on airbrushing. Doing circular movement while spraying the paint very wet, at the same time using the air pressure to blow the paint to the edges of the circle and making the center more transparent.

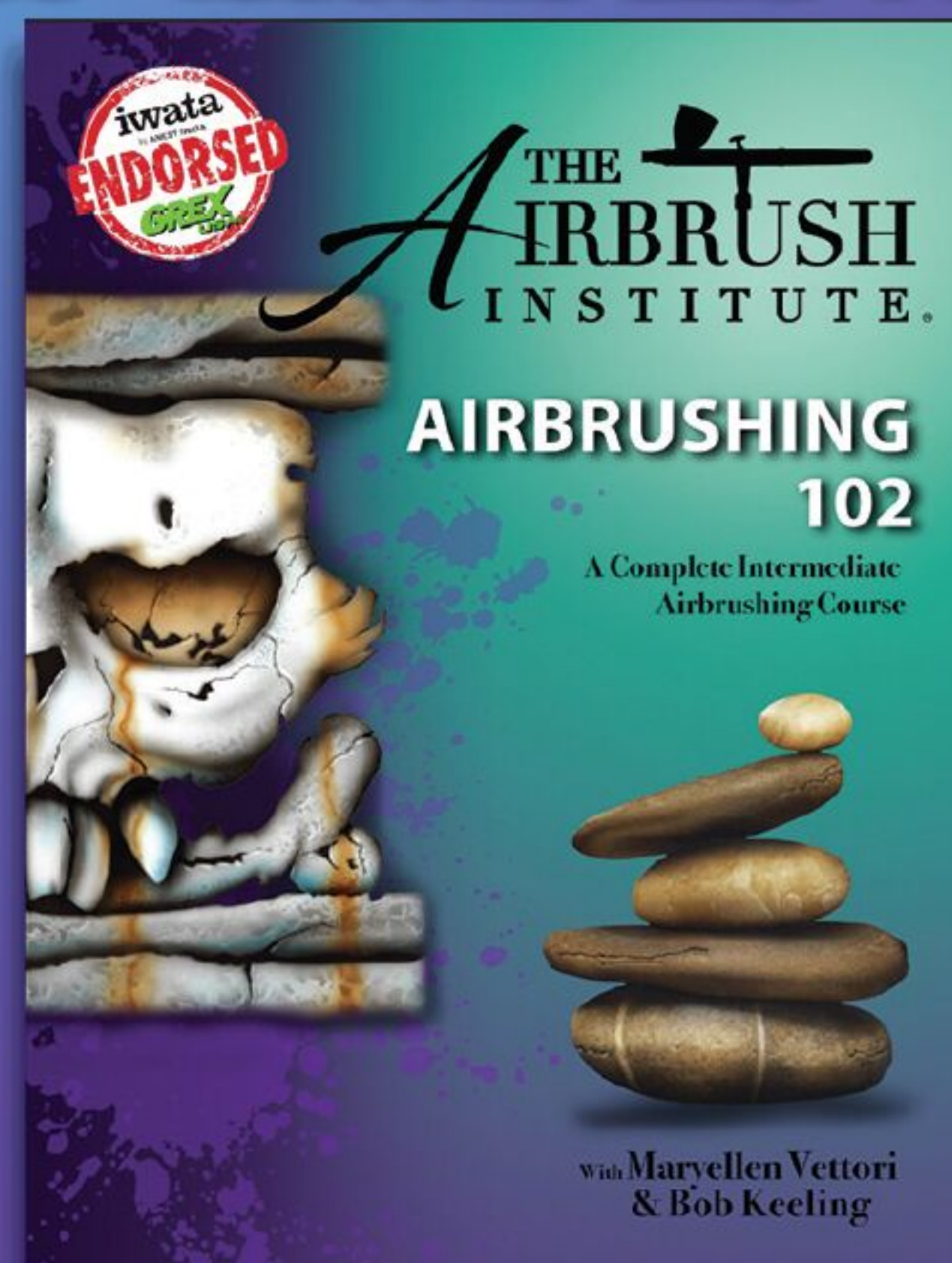


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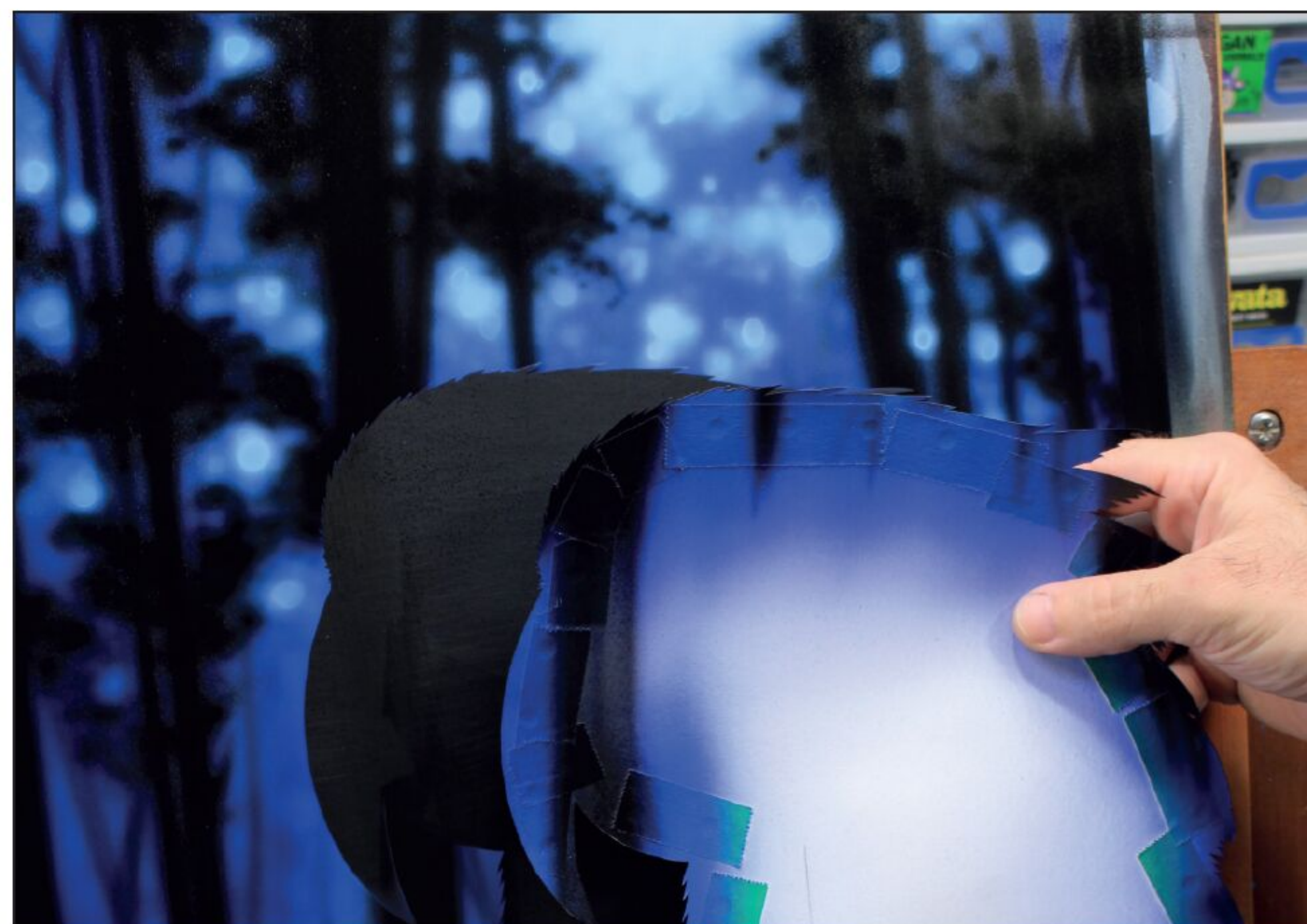
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10 Removing the stencil

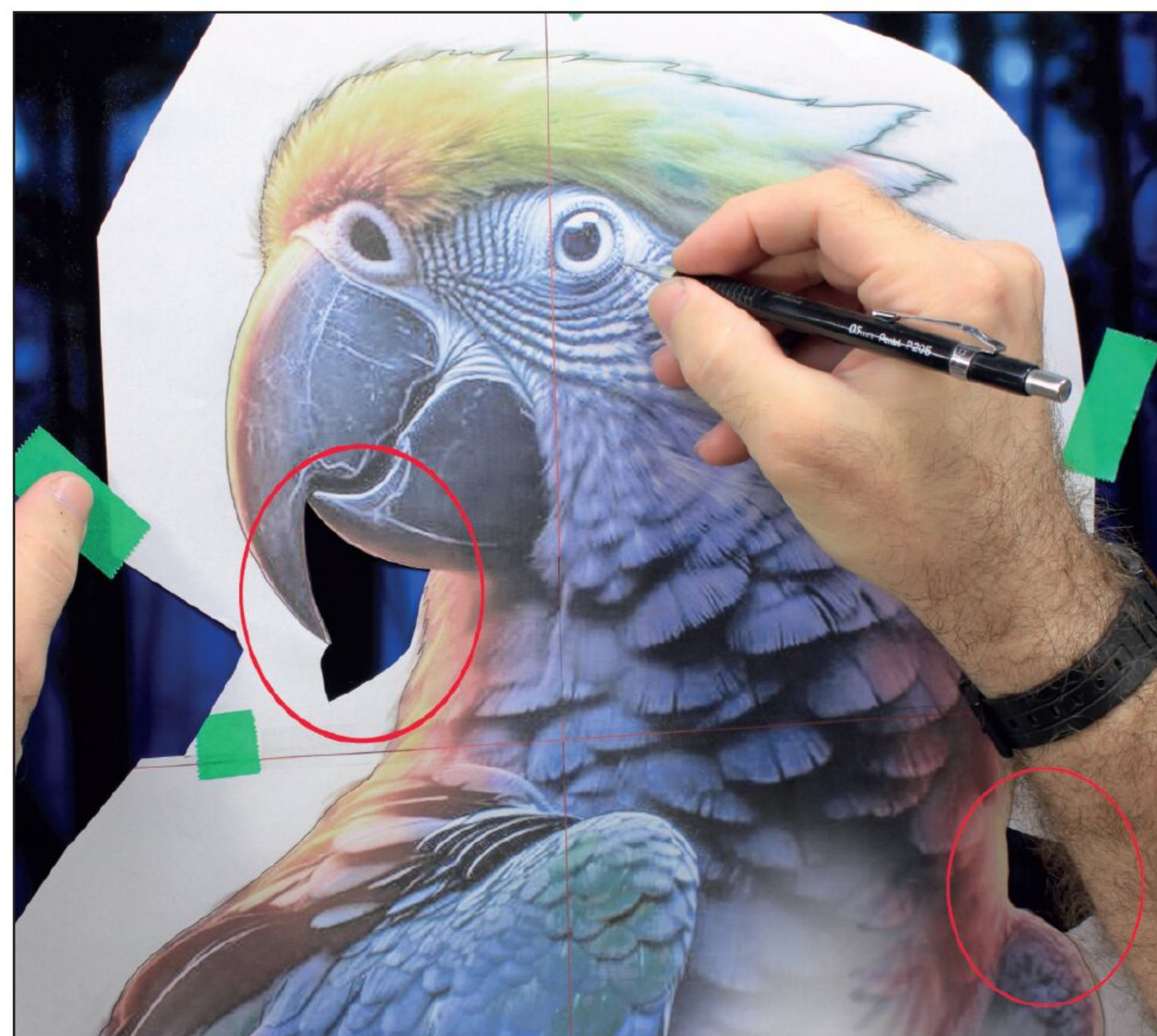
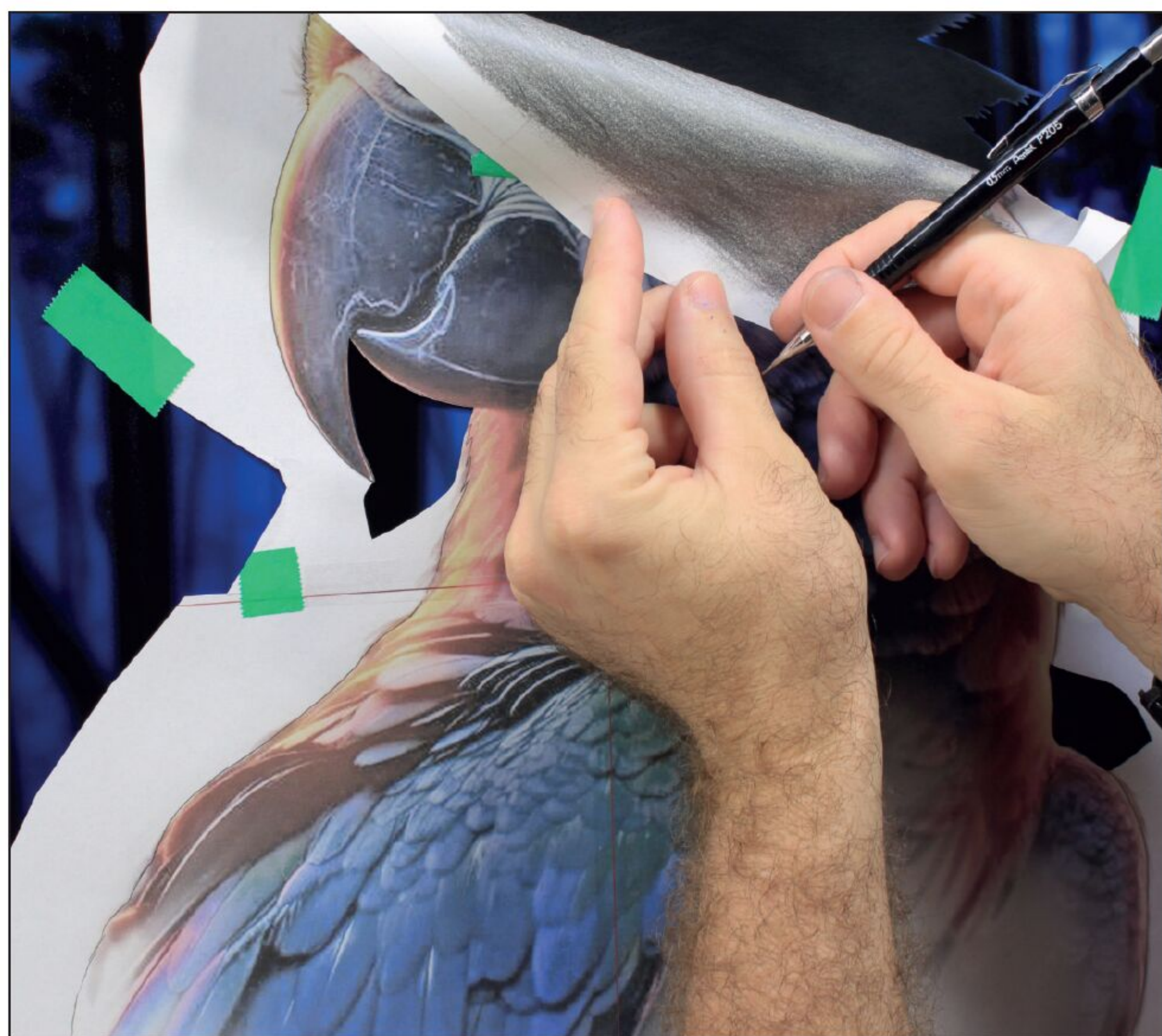
I played around with a series of light blue tones to make those lights in the background. I didn't go all the way to white, because I want the lights that I will later create in the foreground to pop more than everything. Once I finished working on the background, I removed the template.



11 Transferring the image

I reached back to the printed image with the graphite in the back. To make it easy to place it in the correct position, I cut some windows in the paper as you see marked by the red circles. The best places to cut those windows are in cor-

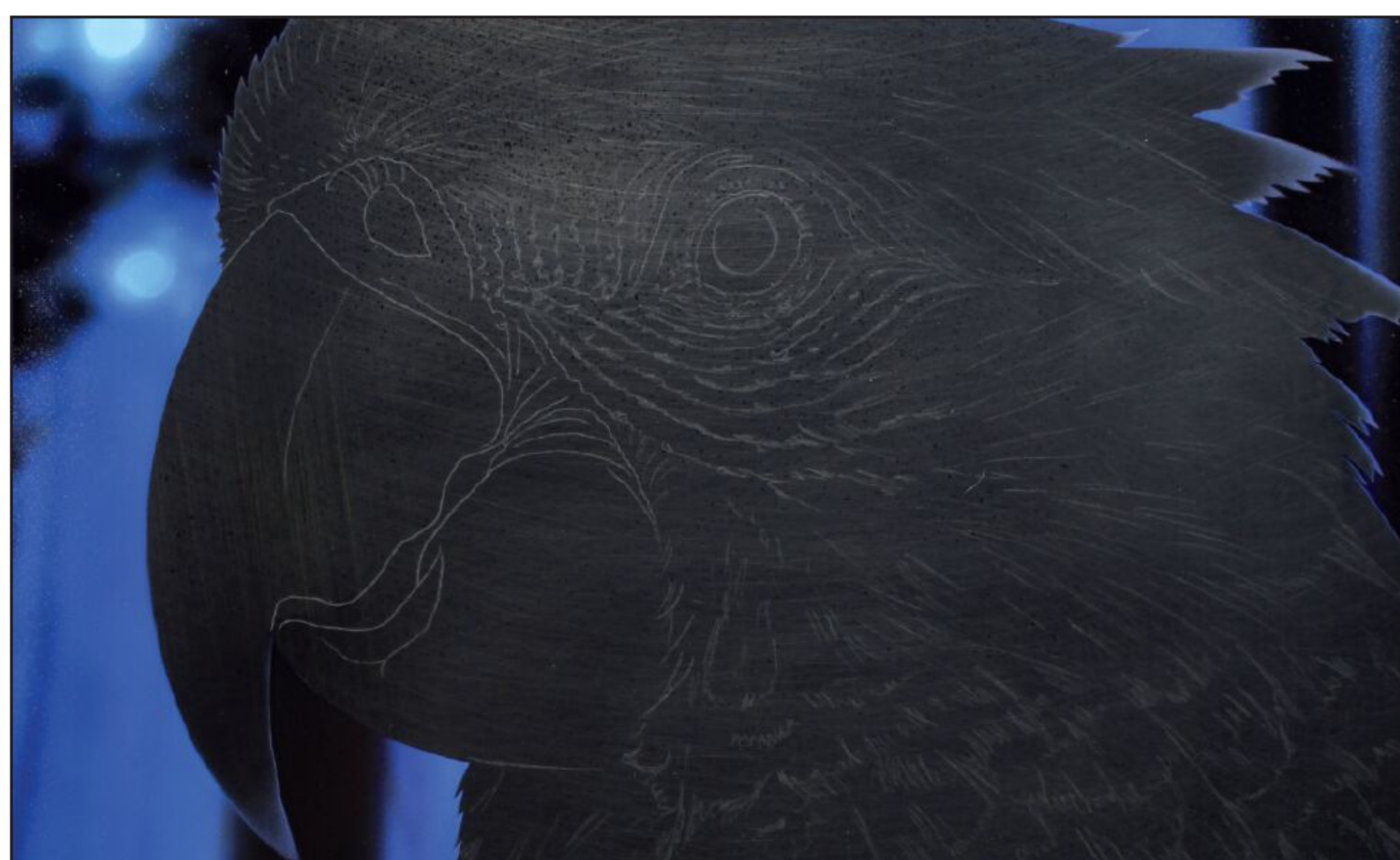
ners, it gives you more precision to find the right spot. Once I did that, I taped the paper to the panel and traced over the main lines of the image using a 0.5 mechanical pencil.



12 Sealing the lines

As we can see the graphite shows on the black surface. To seal that graphite in the panel and avoid smudging and losing the lines, I sprayed a coat of transparent base

that in my case is the clear lacquer resin that I use to prepare the paints. Check what's the product recommended for this purpose in the kind of paint you use.



13 The eye

Using a light shade of grey I carefully started painting around the eye, now using the Iwata Takumi Micron. I add a little bit of transparent base to the paint to reduce its opacity, so while I'm building the image I have more control over the different shades of grey around the image. While creating textures like this, I keep the airflow continuous and vary only the paint flow by moving the trigger back and forward while I keep moving the airbrush around creating dots and shapes that form the texture.



14 Textures and values

I kept doing the same process throughout the image, just paying attention to the different textures and values. So far, we have many kinds of strokes in this image. Near the eye it's mostly texture made by dots, and the feathers I make by using the dagger stroke. The dagger stroke consists of creating a line that starts narrow, gets wide and then narrow again. In order to make lines like that, you need to keep the airflow continuous and while moving the airbrush, you gradually pull the trigger back and then to finish the line you gradually move the trigger forward while still moving the airbrush until it closes the paint flow. By doing that you will create a taper on both ends of the line. Of course, you have to take into account the direction of growth for all feathers and textures, which is indicated by the photo template.



15 Adding highlights

After I've done the previous step process in the entire image, I came back now using white and selectively highlighted some areas. This way I have a bigger range of values from white to black, which gives more volume to the image.



16 Adding shadows

Now I'm using black to create shadows under the feathers and also to increase the sharpness all around the image. I'm also painting over any graphite lines that were left. At the end of this process the image has an even bigger range of values between white and black, as well as a good contrast.



17 Concluding the foundation

I kept pushing and pulling between dark and light until I got to a satisfied foundation to start applying colors over it. As it's not meant to be a grayscale image at the end, I didn't worry about different color temperatures, such as bluish grey or brownish grey – things that we need to pay attention if we are making a grayscale painting. And that's why I only used one shade of gray, white and black.

My intention is to make the head sharp and detailed, and gradually looser towards the bottom of the bird. Almost like a transition to a sketch.



18 Candy basis

One important thing to keep in mind when you're creating a grayscale foundation to add color with candies is: You should not do it as a grayscale version of the colored image. If you do that, you'll not have space for colors and your painting will end up looking too dark. I'm using the final result of the painting (image A) to make this demonstration.

In image B you can see the perfect grayscale version of the colored image A, but a big portion of those grays are actually in the space that the colors need to be. Because candy colors are highly transparent, they add to everything that is under it. If you spray it over a grey base, it's equivalent to a color with some portion of black added to it, if you spray it over a

black base, it will remain black.

Candy colors will only show the pure color when applied on a white base. That's why every area you want to have a pure and vibrant color should be white. In conclusion, in this case the ideal foundation would look like the image C. There we have space for clean colors and highlights, and we also have grey values that will become shades of colors.



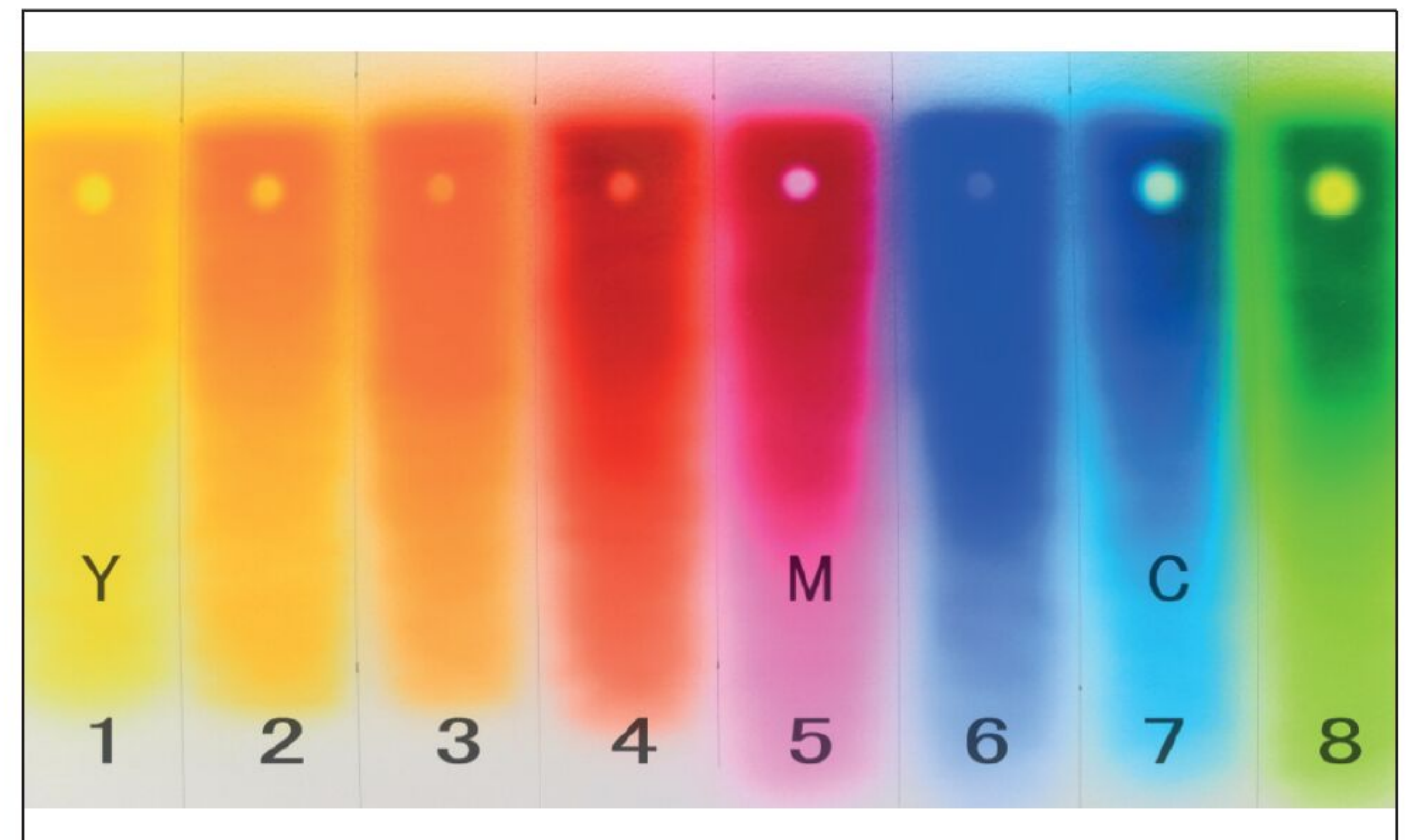
19 Candy colors

Before starting to spray colors on top of that foundation I did, let's take a look at all the candy colors I have in hand to use in this project. As candies look almost black in the bottle, I made this test sheet to use as a reference of how the colors look like on a white base, to help me choose during the painting.

As you probably know, following the CMYK system we can make any color with cyan, magenta, yellow and black. But as candies can behave differently in some situations it's good to have some secondary colors too. The primary colors in my chart are numbers 1, 5 and 7, the other ones are secondary colors that could be made by mixing the primaries, but in this case those came that way from the factory.

Another particular behavior that candies usually have is a thing we call "bleeding", which is the tendency to dye anything you spray on top of it. It migrates and mixes with the color on top. To test this effect, I sprayed a white circle on top of each color as you can see in the test sheet. Then to induce the bleeding, I sprayed a coat of transparent base over it. No-

tice that the white circles were dyed by the color under it. Notice also that each color behaves differently, some bleeds more than others. At first we see this as a problem, but with practice we learn to use it as an advantage, as you will see later in the process. Some brands have a specific product to stop this bleeding when you don't want it to happen. If you are using solvent based paints I recommend a coat of 2K clear coat.



20 Adding color

I started adding color using the yellow. I'm painting all the areas I want to be yellow and also areas that will become hues of orange and red. Having this yellow foundation will make those secondary colors more vibrant. Notice that there's a glow in some areas, like in front and under the beak, as well as in front of the chest. I previously sprayed a very light coat of white in those areas, to create foundation to this glow. And now I sprayed a little bit of yellow over it, also to be a base for the next color.



21 Thinking ahead

I've painted the entire iris of his eye yellow, already knowing that later I would create texture with orange on top of this base. I'm trying to avoid painting on some areas like in that bright spot in the eye to avoid that bleeding effect in this area.



22 Blending colors

Now I switched to the orange number 3 and I'm spraying it more concentrated in between the feathers, leaving the protuberant areas yellow, making the shadows darker and by consequence adding volume.



23 Adding texture with color

Using the same orange, now I'm adding texture to the iris and surroundings of the eye. I'm being careful to keep the highlight spots yellow, even though I'll recover some of them later. To get the most vibrant result it's better to avoid it.



24 Making it deeper

Now I've switched to magenta to create a second hue of orange. I'm not spraying on top of all the areas that I previously sprayed orange. I'm spraying magenta just at the very edge, so I have a good range of colors from yellow to almost red.



25 Overlapping colors

Still using magenta I sprayed it in the beak, half way on top of the yellow, creating nice hues of oranges where the two colors overlap each other. And I went further towards the middle of the beak creating a base that later I'll use to transform in purple.



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26 Planning ahead

I went ahead and sprayed magenta in all the areas I intend to have the magenta itself and also extended it in the areas I want to make hues of purple later. At this point I also sprayed magenta on those glows around the beak and chest.



27 Switching to cold colors

Now I switched to the green number 8 in my test sheet. I'm spraying more coats of it in between the feathers to create dark areas leaving the highlights lighter. I overlapped a little bit of green on top of the yellow, carefully not getting to the orange.



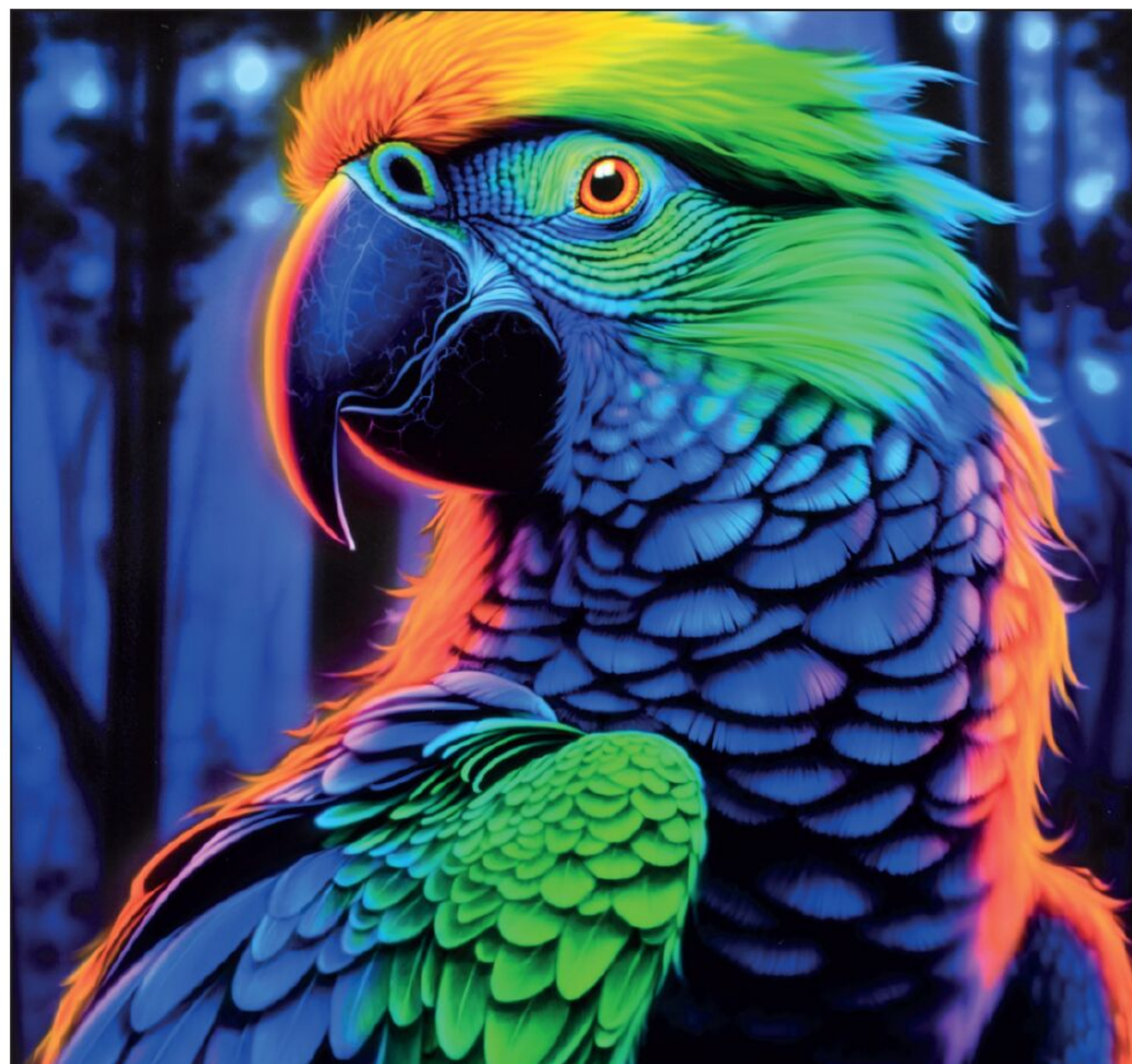
28 Finishing filling with colors

To finish filling all the areas with colors I used the blues. First I sprayed cyan (7) then I did the darker areas with the blue (6). By overlapping blue with magenta I got my purples, and overlapping blue with green I got my aqua hues. I also used the cyan (7) to spray the dark shades on the green areas, right between the feathers, to create a transition to dark green.



29 Avoiding creating brown hues

And I sprayed magenta (5) in between the blue feathers, creating a darker blue transitioning to purple. Now I have the entire image filled with color, ready to start the next of the process. My intention in this painting was to have only vibrant colors, so I was avoiding creating any kind of browns. In order to do that I was careful to never mix the 3 primary colors together in the same area. For example, green has yellow and cyan in its composition, so I would not spray magenta on top of the green.



30 Adding highlights

Now it's time to start adding highlights, I'm using pure white to do that, already expecting that bleeding effect that I'll induce later to transform the white into a light version of the color under it. Notice that now I'm applying white in smaller areas than I did before, leaving color around it. That's what's going to create volume in the textures.



31 Creating volume

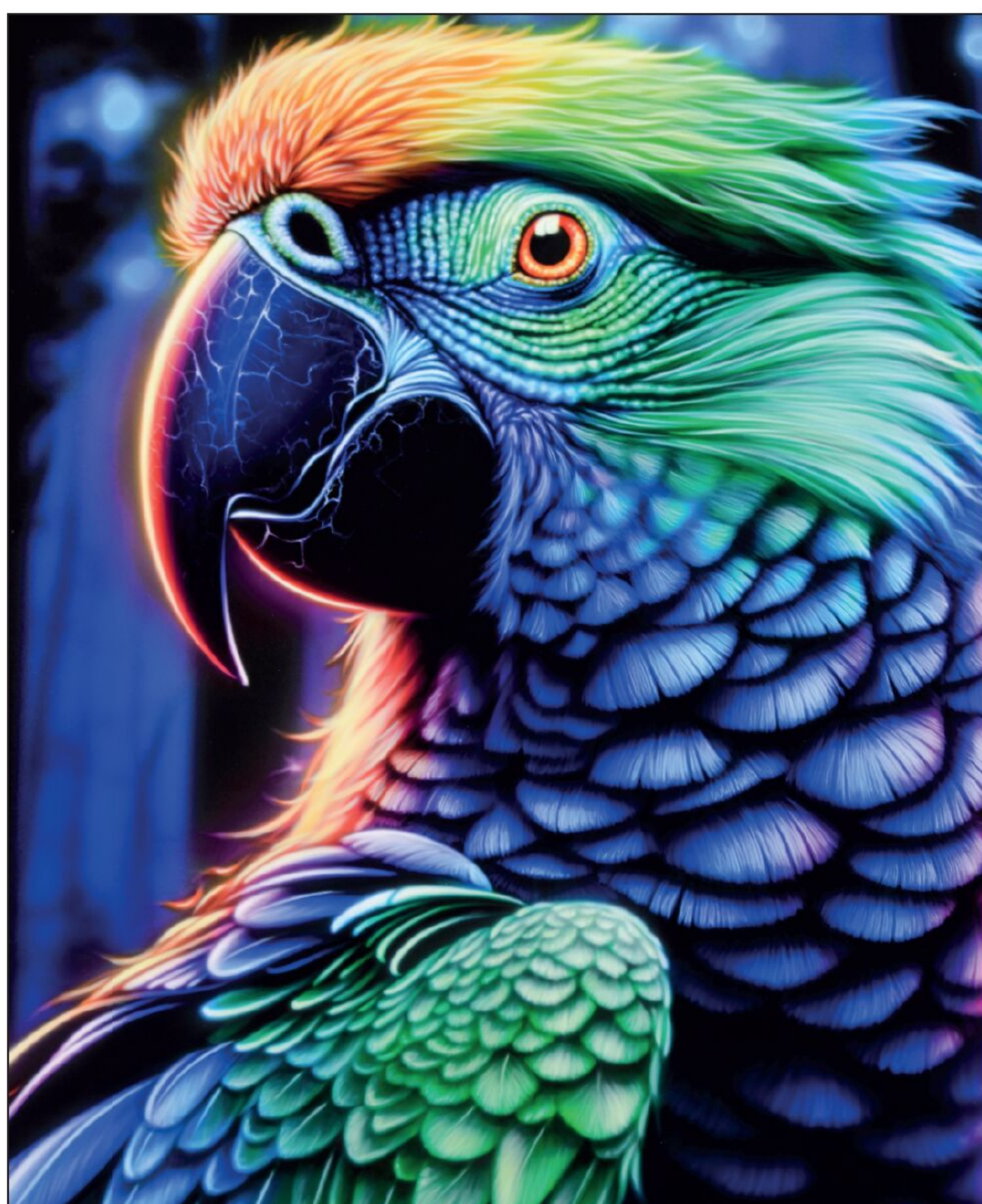
To create volume to the feathers I imagine they are shaped like an arch, so the light hits the top of the arch with more intensity. Those are the spots I apply white with more intensity.



32 Inducing the bleeding

After I did all the process with white, now is the time we are going to see that magic bleeding effect happening. The image on the left is before inducing the bleeding; obser-

ve what happens when I spray a heavy coat of transparent base over everything. In the image on the right we can notice that the colors tinted the white, transforming it into a light version of each color.



33 Second level of highlights

After that I'm using white again to create a second level of highlights. I'm not doing everything again, now I'm applying white in even smaller areas, just in the very bright spots, each time increasing the volume on everything. After doing that in the entire image, I spray another coat of transparent base to induce more bleeding, and come back with white where it's necessary. Each time you do this process, the bleeding effect gets weaker until it stops happening.



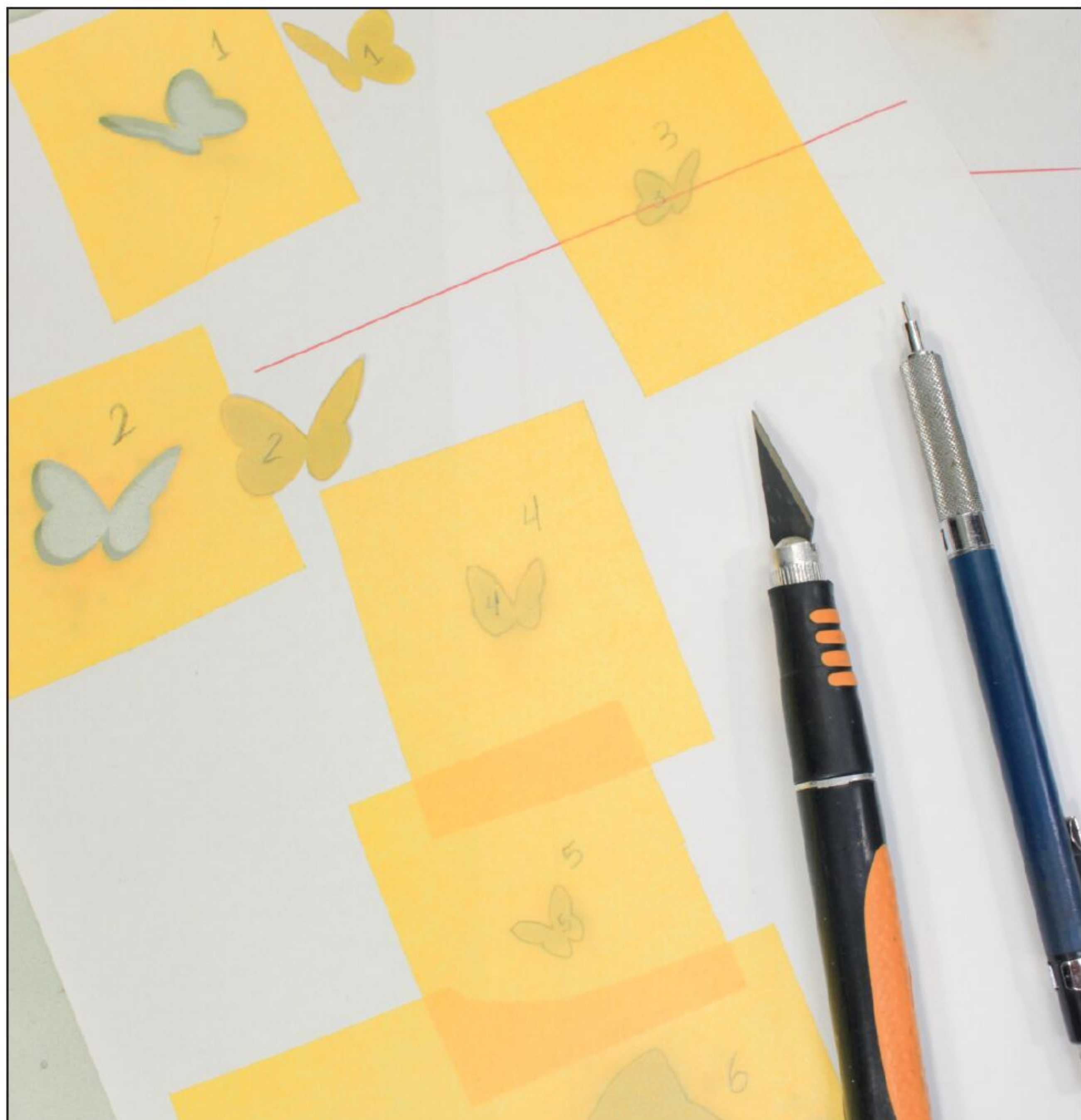
34 Touch ups

I kept pushing and pulling with this process until getting to the point I wanted. As some colors bleed less or almost nothing, I came back and sprayed candy in those areas that I noticed needed more color.



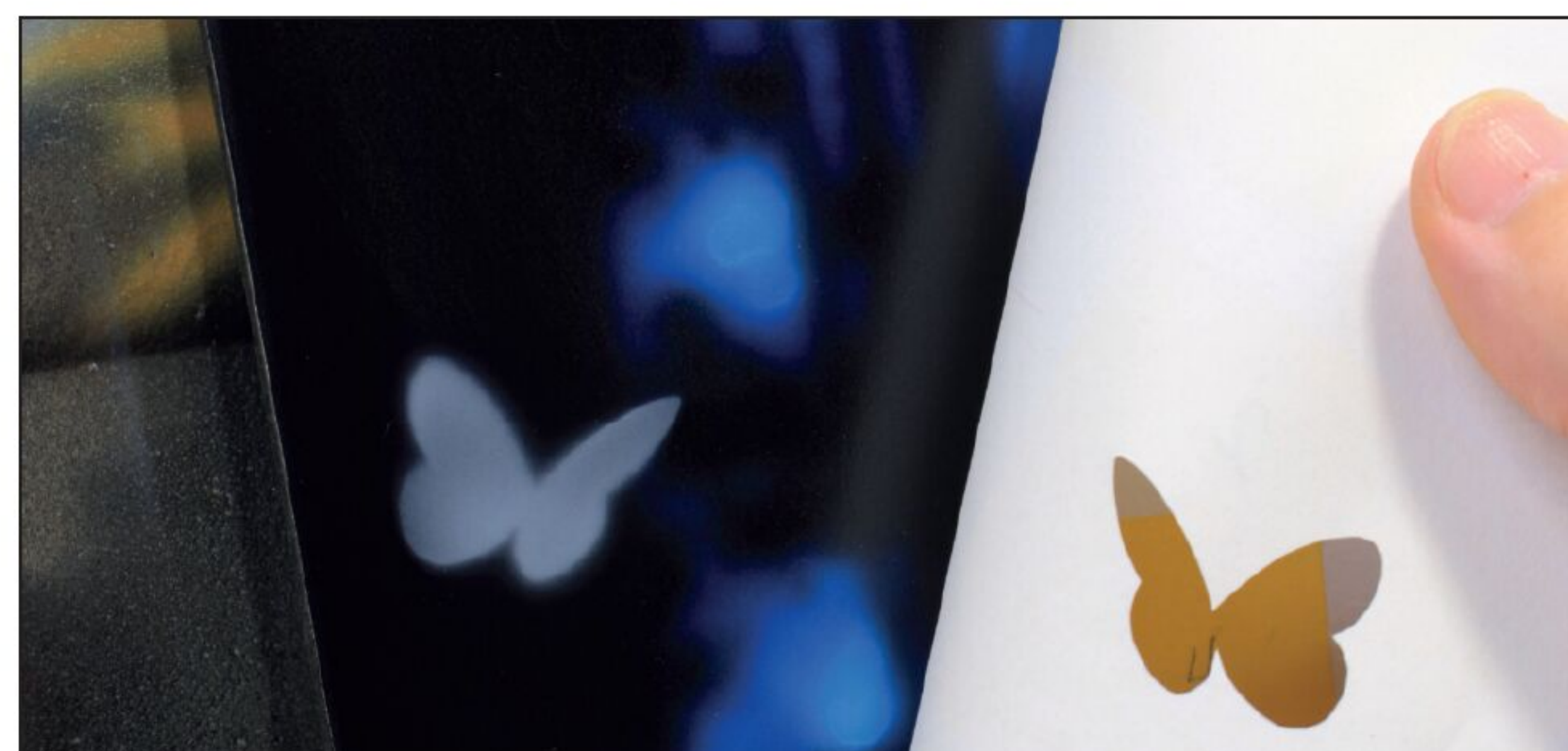
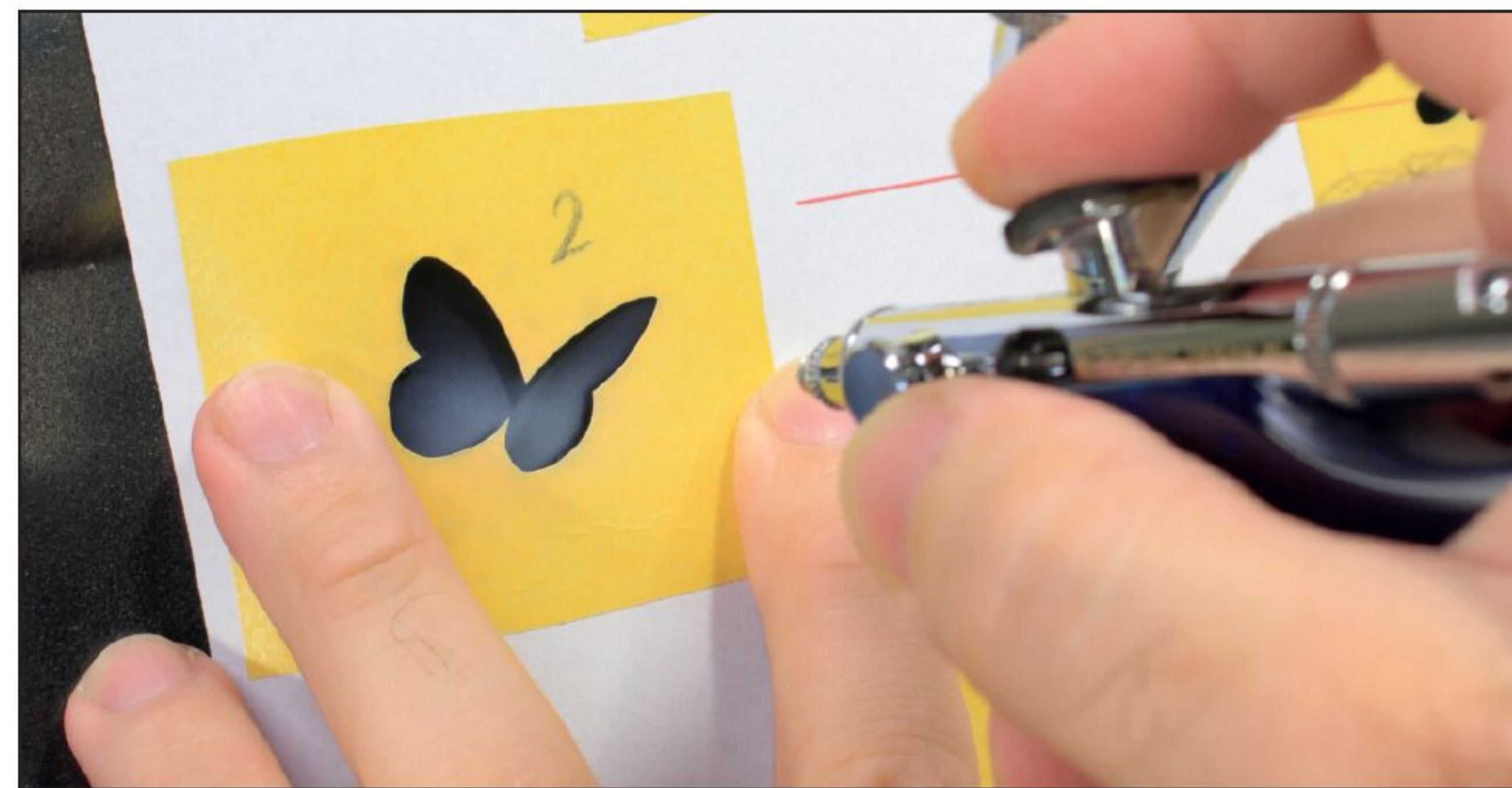
35 Adding more fantasy

I wanted to add more magical elements to complement this painting, so I decided to add some butterflies made out of light, flying around and leaving magic dust behind. I've decided to create templates to start painting them, so I used common printer paper, but I added a piece of masking tape to it just to make it more rigid.



36 Soft edges using templates

I chose the spots and taped the template to the surface. In order to get soft edges I used two fingers to bend the paper, by doing that pushing the paper away from the surface while I sprayed a light coat of white. The result already looks good but my intention is to make it bright so I will work freehand on top of it later.



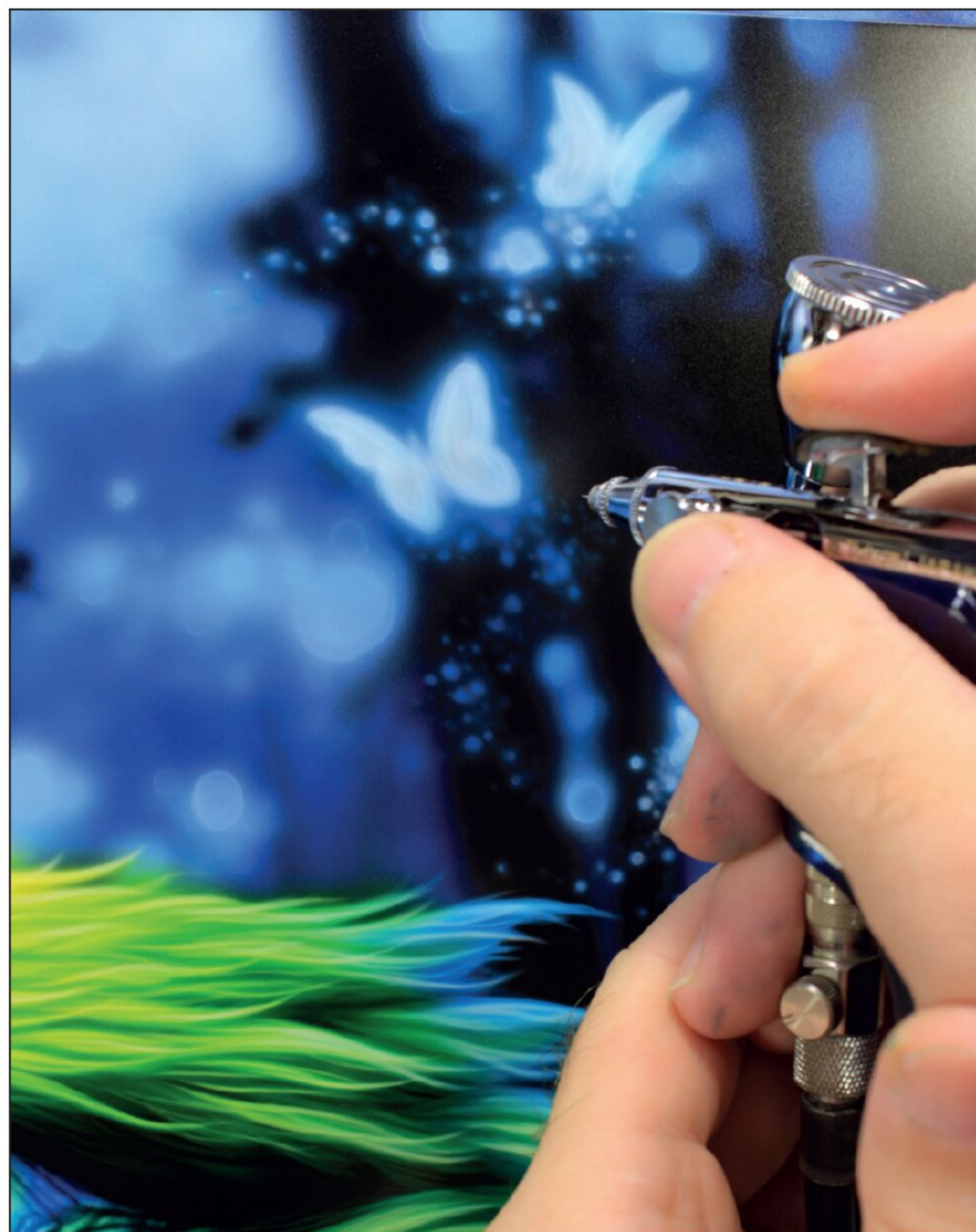
37 Magic dust

I went ahead and created a first layer of magic dust using opaque blue. And also as I want to have a blue glow around the butterflies, I added transparent base to the blue to reduce its opacity, and sprayed it around the butterflies.



38 Lighting up the butterflies

Now I'm back to using white. I added transparent base to it and it's also a little over reduced, as I want to make that out of focus bokeh effect. Also in order to create that effect I set the air pressure higher than usual and while spraying a wet coat of paint around the butterfly, I blow it around with air until it gets to the point I want.



39 Using a defect as an effect

And at the end I used the same technique to create the magic dust. I wanted to experiment with that bokeh effect and also add some abstraction and fantasy to the painting. I took care of leaving particles with different levels of brightness to create depth. I did the same thing with the butterflies; some are brighter than others because they are not all on the same level.



40 Conclusion

I think it turned out looking good, I'm happy with the composition and balance of colors. The only thing I would change would be to make that lower part of the front wing looser. Overall I'm happy with the result, and I hope you enjoyed this tutorial as much as I enjoyed creating this painting. I hope it was helpful in adding more techniques to your package.



NEIMAR L. DUARTE



Neimar Duarte was born in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, in 1985. He taught himself how to draw with the help of magazines, books and the internet. His passion for classic cars, hot rods and choppers led him to discover airbrushing, and in 2005, with no prior knowledge, he bought his first airbrush. He built his first compressor out of a refrigerator motor. Since then, he has continued to learn more and more. He does all kinds of airbrushing and pinstriping work, portraits, photorealism, fantasy art, motorcycles, instruments, helmets, etc. He also works with Harley-Davidson dealers and music bands. He likes to mix photorealism with fantasy elements in his portraits to inspire the viewer's imagination. He has been a regular visitor to the SEMA show in Las Vegas since 2015, and it is a great source of inspiration for him.

www.facebook.com/neimarfa

VAMPIRE GIRL

Spanish artist Danny Ochoa likes things bloodthirsty. His dark vampire girl offers many exciting challenges of a portrait on illustration board, combined with a certain creepy factor.

EQUIPMENT – VAMPIRE GIRL

Airbrushes: Iwata Eclipse Kustom 0.5, Iwata Custom Micron 0.18

Paints: H2O and Golden

Surface: illustration board, 30 x 50 cm

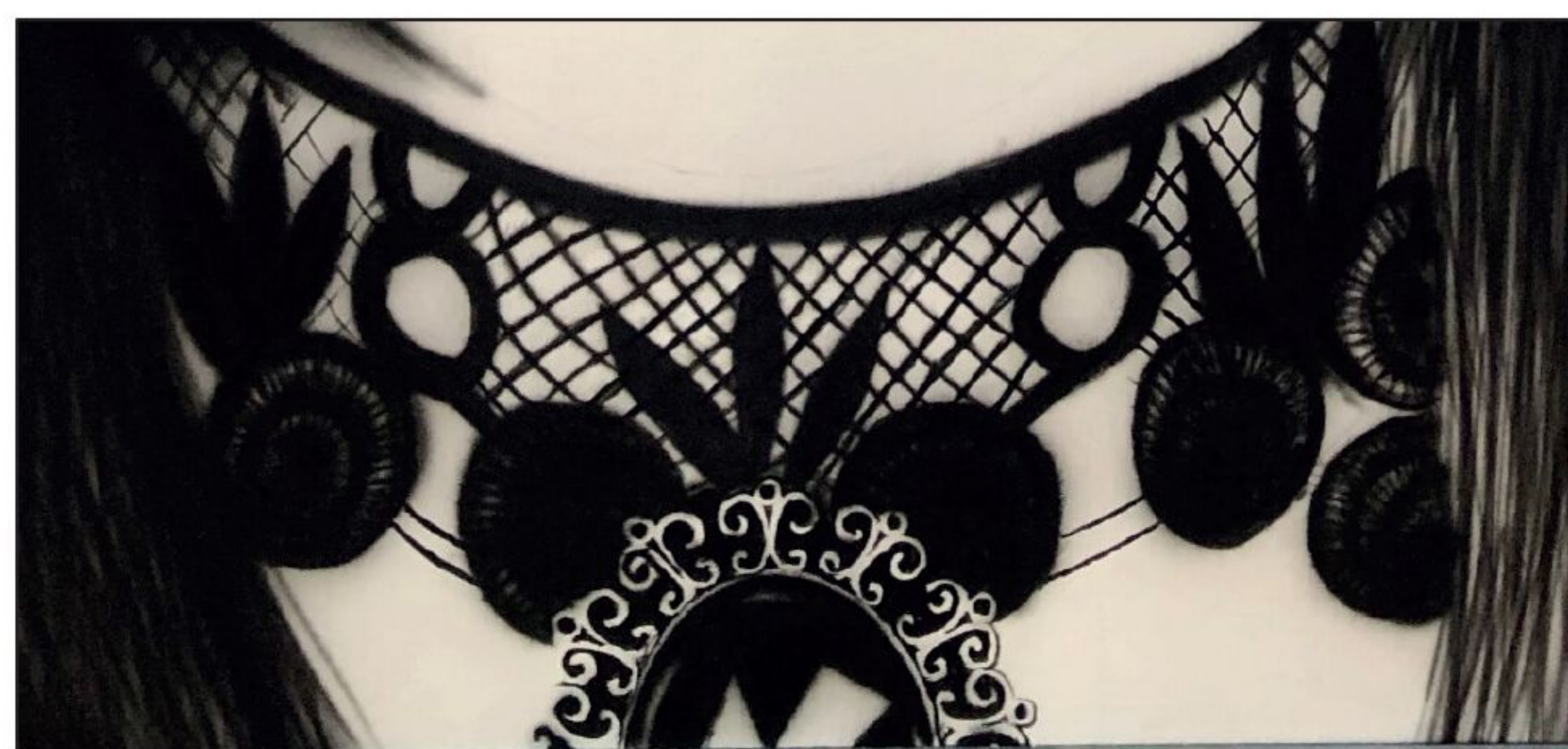
01 Preparing the image

I transfer the preliminary drawing from the template directly onto the cardboard and start with the darkest parts. This is the background, the hair and the necklace, which I paint in pure black: the hair merges almost seamlessly into the background, which I spray more flatly at the edge. I draw the hair in thin lines from the parting in the direction of growth. I take details from my template.



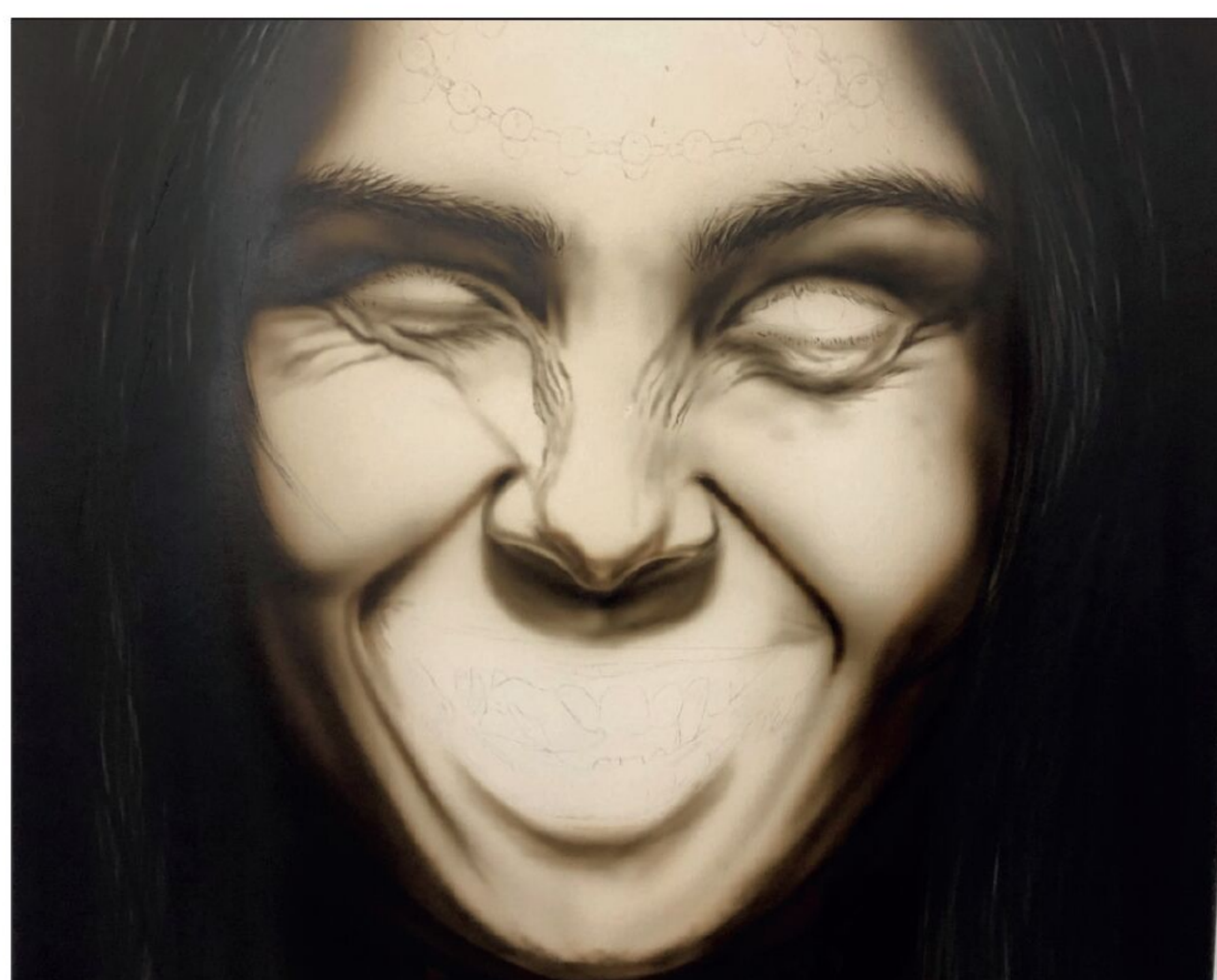
02 The necklace

I draw the necklace from my template, using the airbrush and the fineliner to create the thin lines and fine details. I will add more details later.



03 Facial features

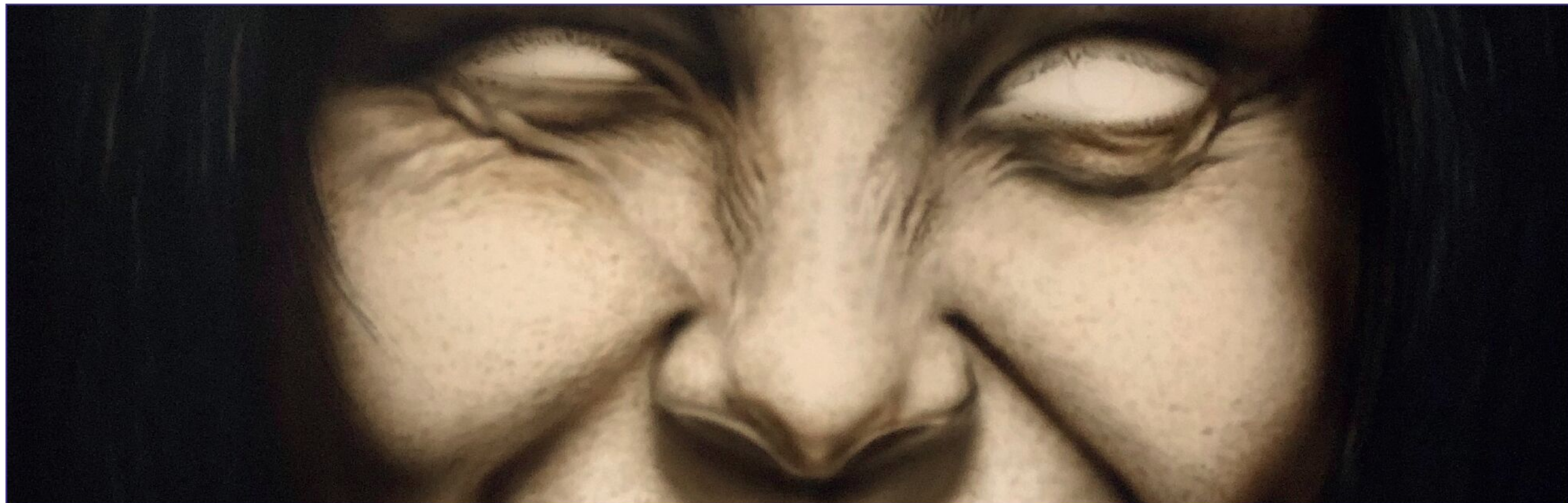
I continue with the face. I paint the darkest part, the main reference lines, so that they are not lost. At the same time, they also provide the first volume. The direction of growth should be noted again for the eyebrows and eyelashes, which I only hint at here. The wrinkles around the eyes are particularly pronounced, as are the wrinkles between the nose and lips, which form the broad grin. Along with the harder, darker facial features, I also create the first soft areas, which are important in the next step to create texture. I use 50% red oxide and 50% violet to get a dark brown. The colors are Candys. This allows me to work in layers and add color at any time.



04 Skin texture

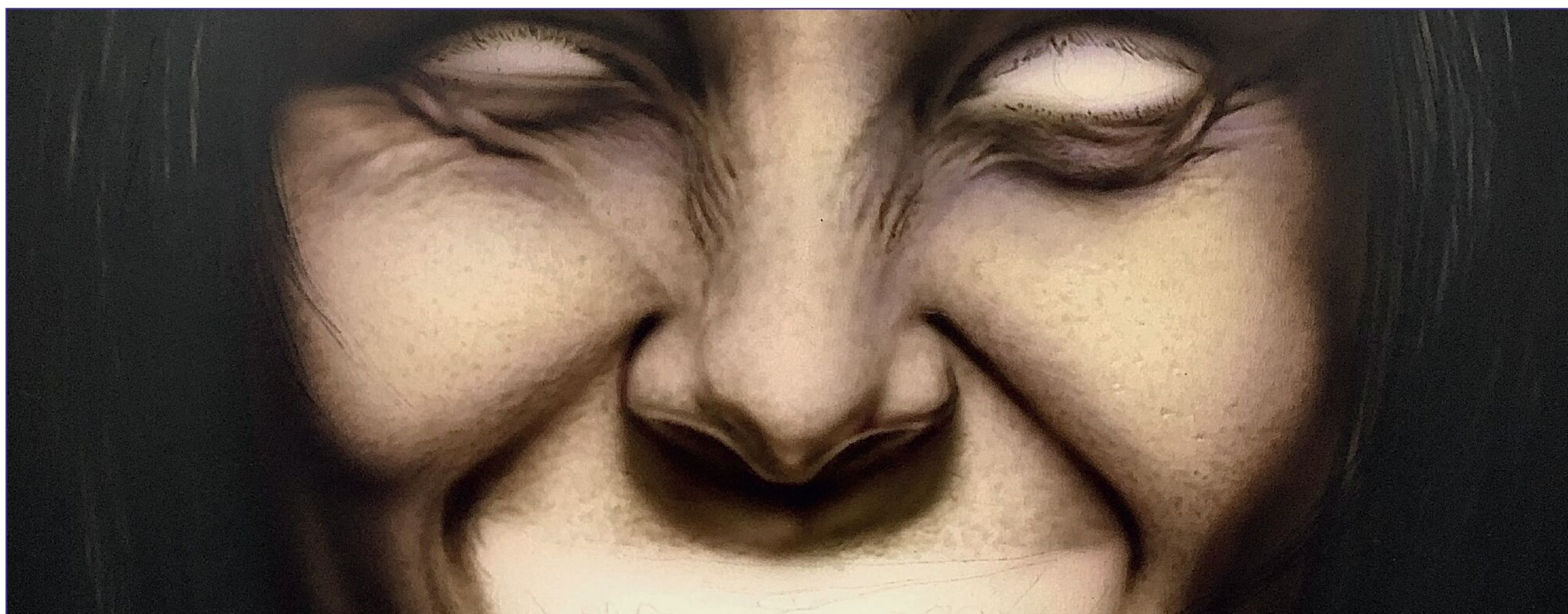
I now use a soft color for the skin, mixed from 40% red oxide plus 10% violet and 60% white. At the same time,

I have erased the pores of the skin with an eraser and an electric eraser.

**05** Intensify skin tone

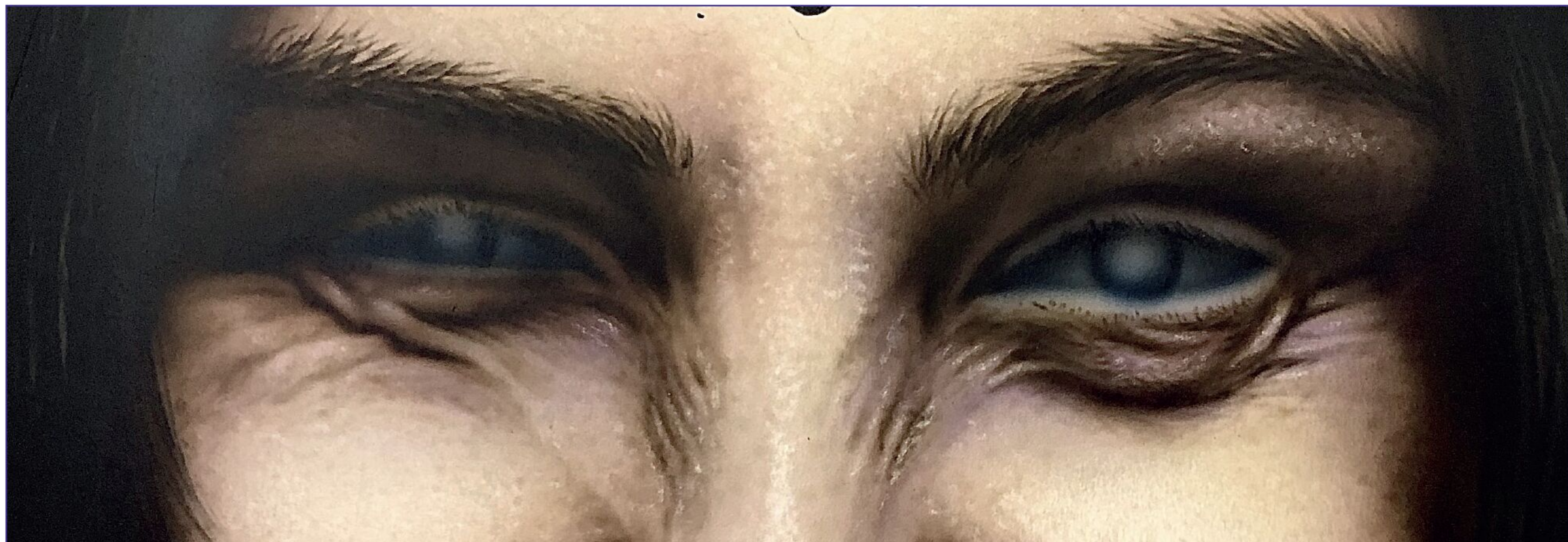
I continue to intensify the skin tone, alternating with erasing the skin texture. I also work out the texture around

the eyes and add a little violet here to slowly darken this area.

**06** Eyes

Now I move on to the eyes. I give them a bluish look by darkening them with shades of grey and blue shadow

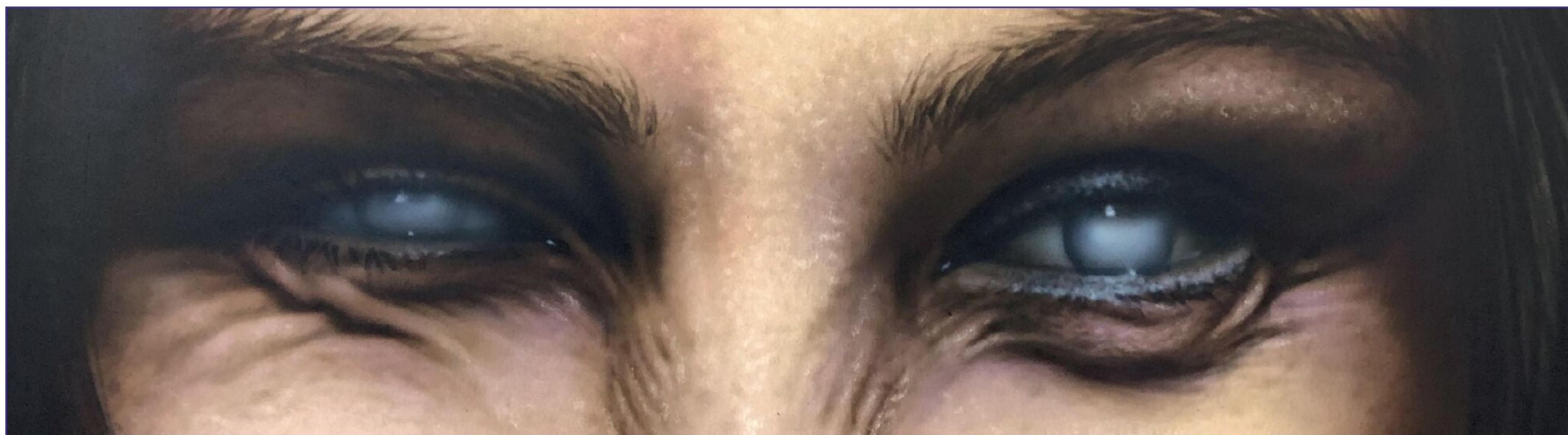
grey. Then I use white and let some of the grey I used to darken the eyes show through.



07 Clouded Vision

I darkened the eye colors with dark brown tones and then reworked them with white to give them light and realism, playing with the transparency. Now it seems as if the

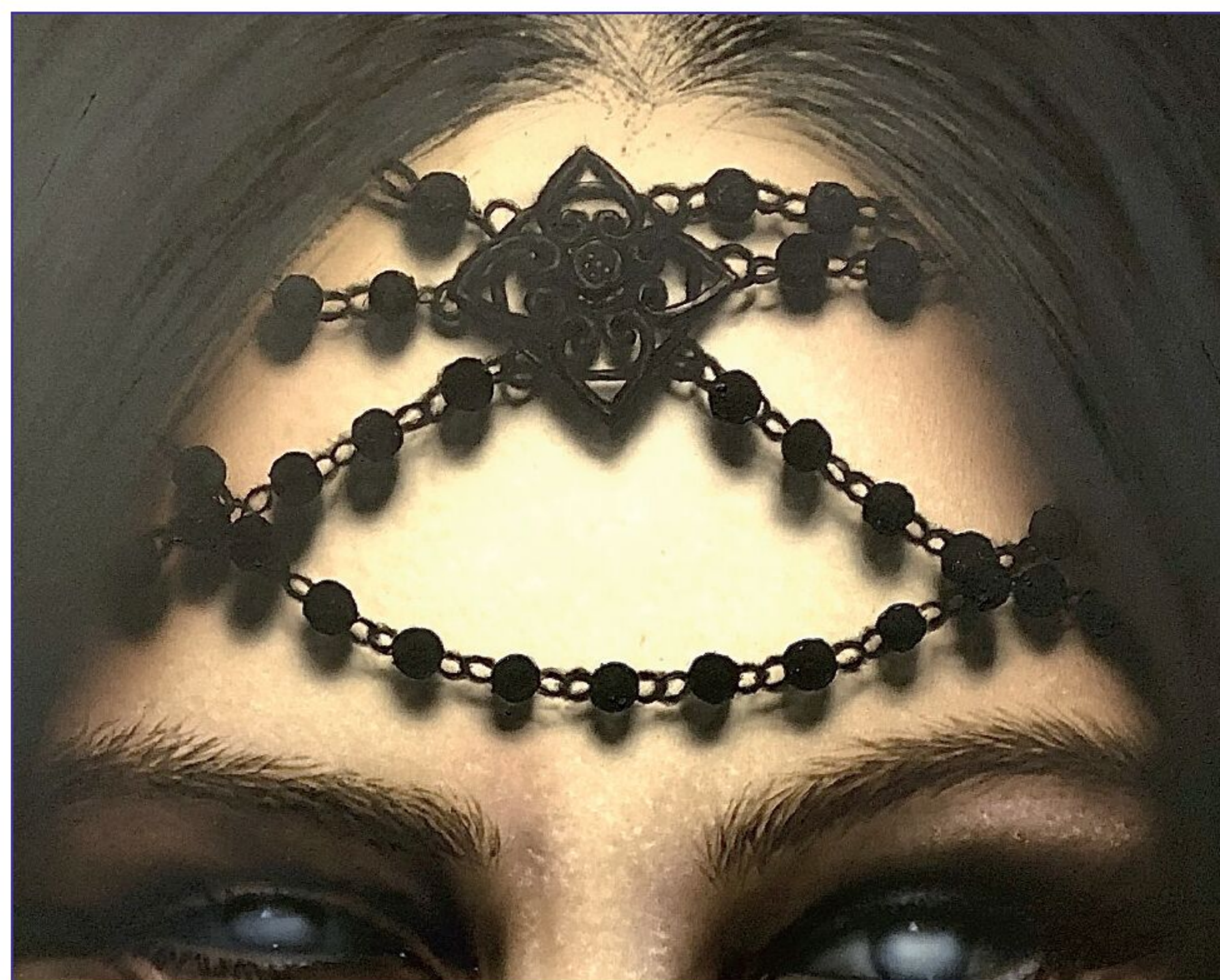
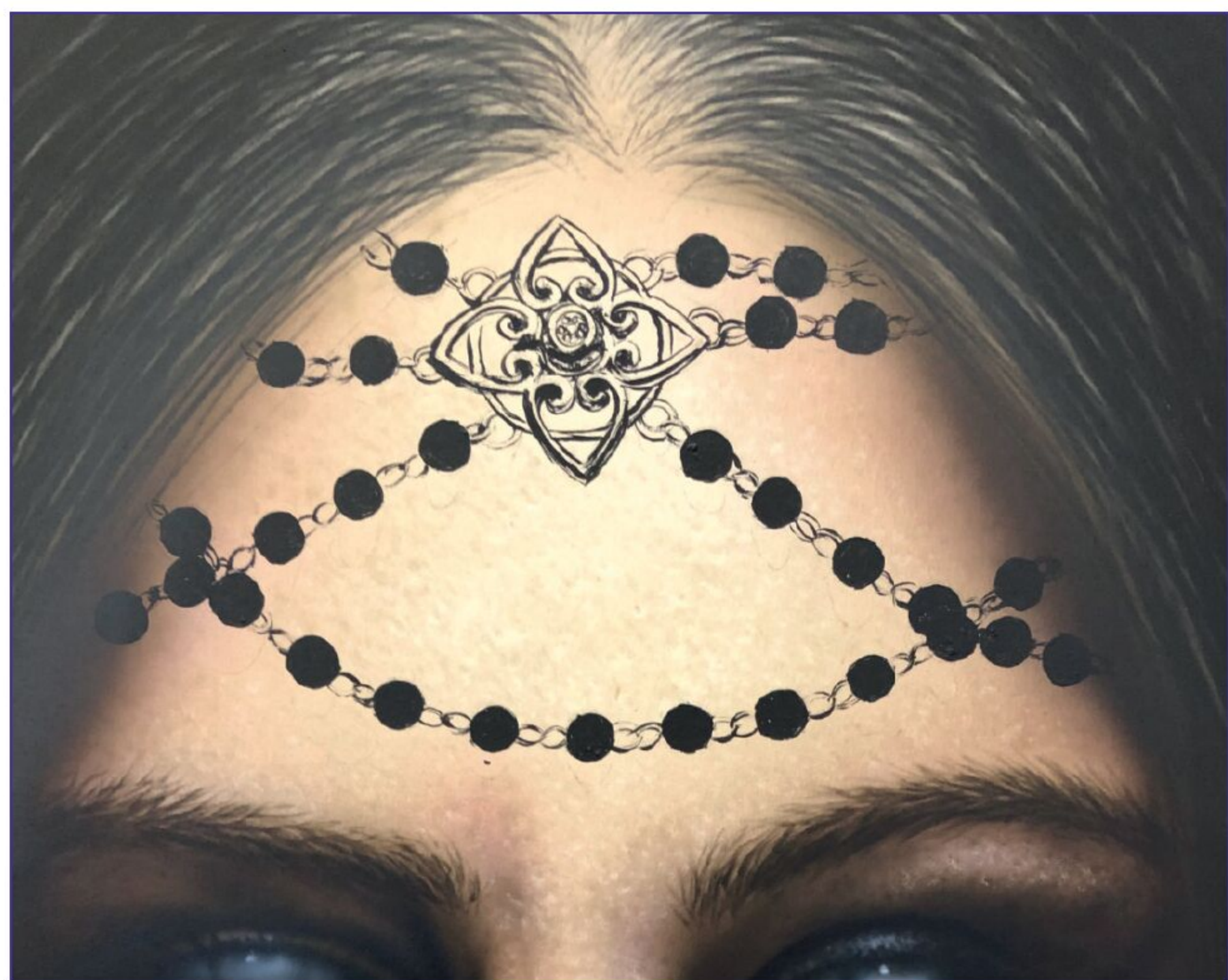
vampire lady has lost her sight. With white, I set the last points for the final shine of the pupil and eyelashes.



08 Brow chain

Now is the moment to add the brow chain. Similar to the necklace, I first draw it in black only. With the airbrush, I

create the shadow and work out the details further. With the eraser, I emphasize highlights and contours.



09 Lips

I start with the lips with a dark red Apple Red by H2O. I give the lips shape and add a little dark grey to give volume. For the tongue, I dilute the apple red with reducer in a 30:70 ratio to get the light pink base color. However, I will darken it with several layers by gradually adding more apple red and grey. I do all this with the Custom Micron 0.18 mm airbrush.



10 Teeth

I spray the teeth with the same blue shadow gray from H2O that was used for the eyes. You can also mix gray with blue and reducer to achieve this effect in equal parts.

Now that the teeth already have a layer of blue, I can apply a little white, then let the blue become transparent and continue with the following layers.



11 Blood

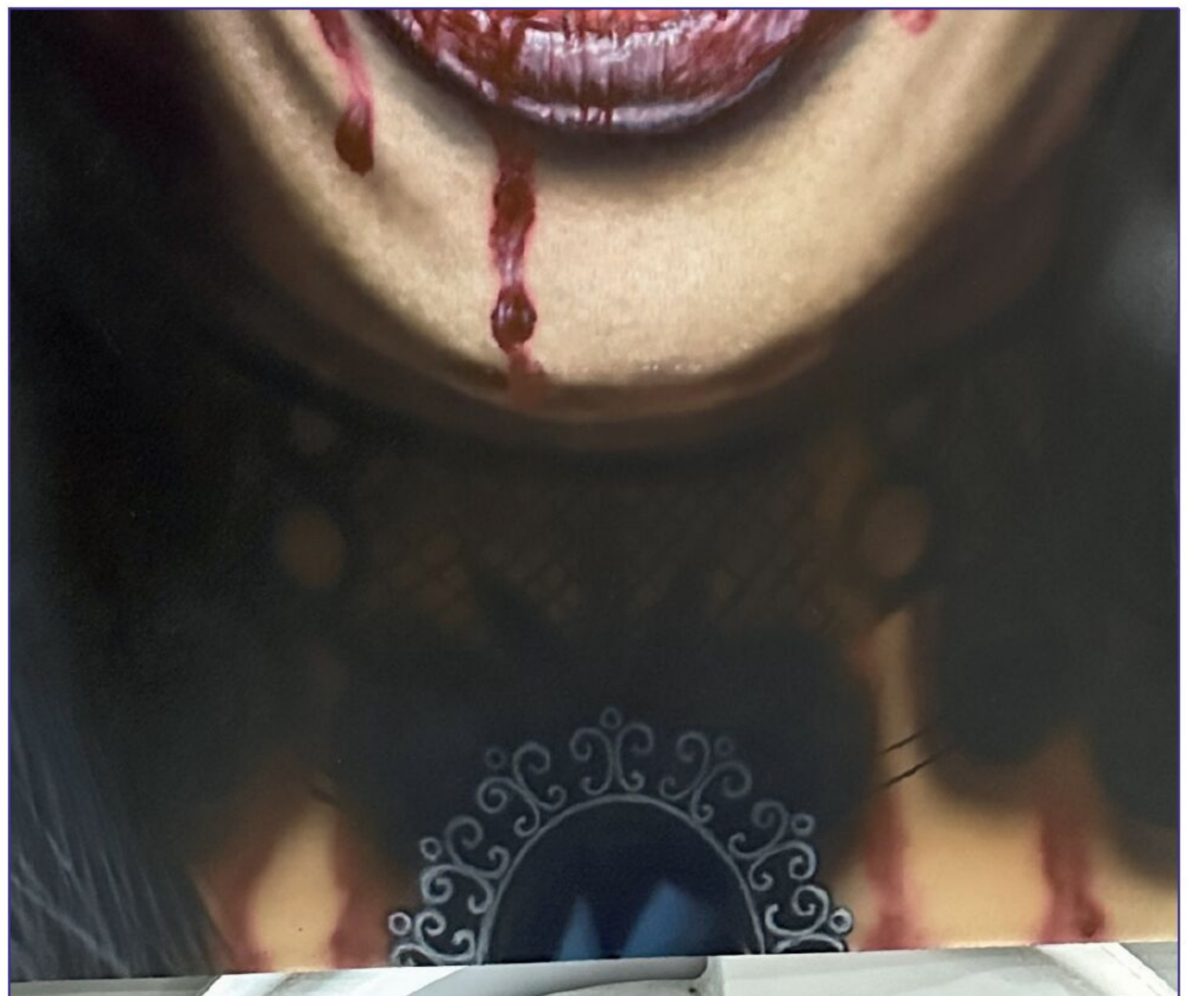
To achieve the blood effect, I add 20% red oxide plus 40% red and 40% gray for darkening in my clean airbrush. For the lightest blood, which is on the inside of the lip, I use pure red.

I create the shine of the lips with layers of white, which I dilute with reducer. For the teeth, I added a drop of red oxide to the white in the upper area of the teeth.



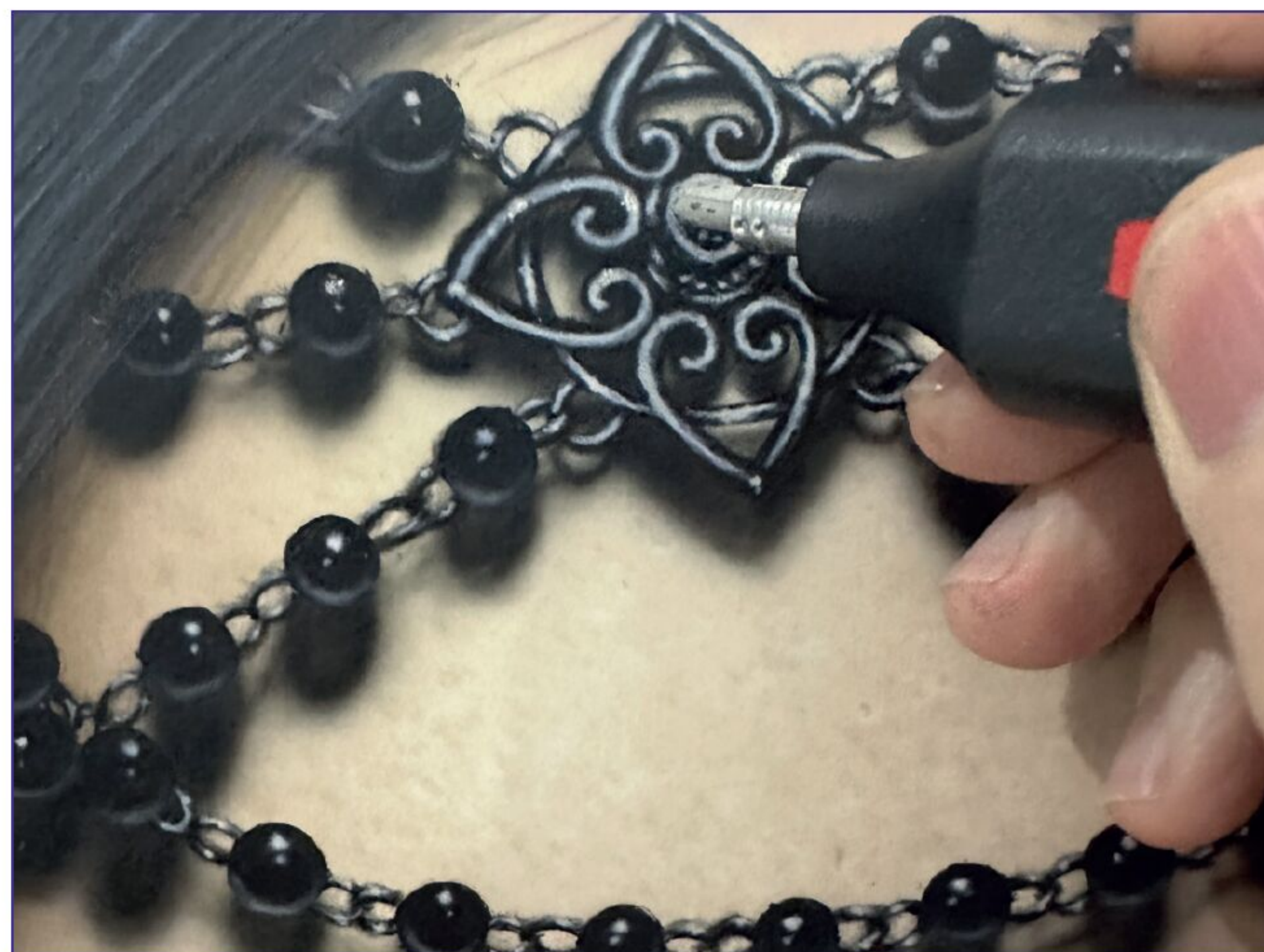
12 Finishing the necklace

In this case, the necklace consists of dark blue mixed with black and pure blue, then some glitter around the stone, which consists of 30% white plus 20% blue, 10% grey and 40% reducer. Finally, I sprayed dark brown over it to create the shadow on the collar.



13 Finishing the necklace on the forehead

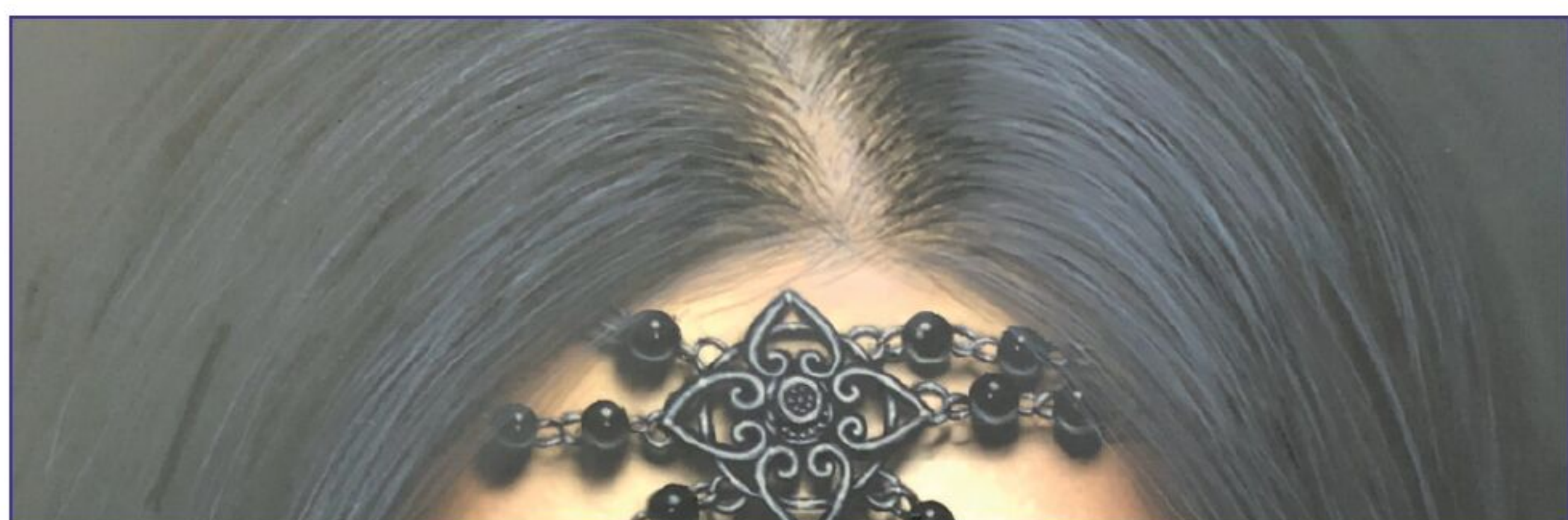
Now I continue with the forehead. With the electric eraser, I carefully set highlights so as not to damage the background. I do the strongest highlights with the electric eraser – the ones that are less visible, I create with 50% diluted white. I paint the shadows on the forehead with gray.



14 Hair

Now for the hair, to which I add a few light strands. I don't do this with pure white, but mix 50% white plus 10% blue and 40% thinner, which is why we get this dark, bright

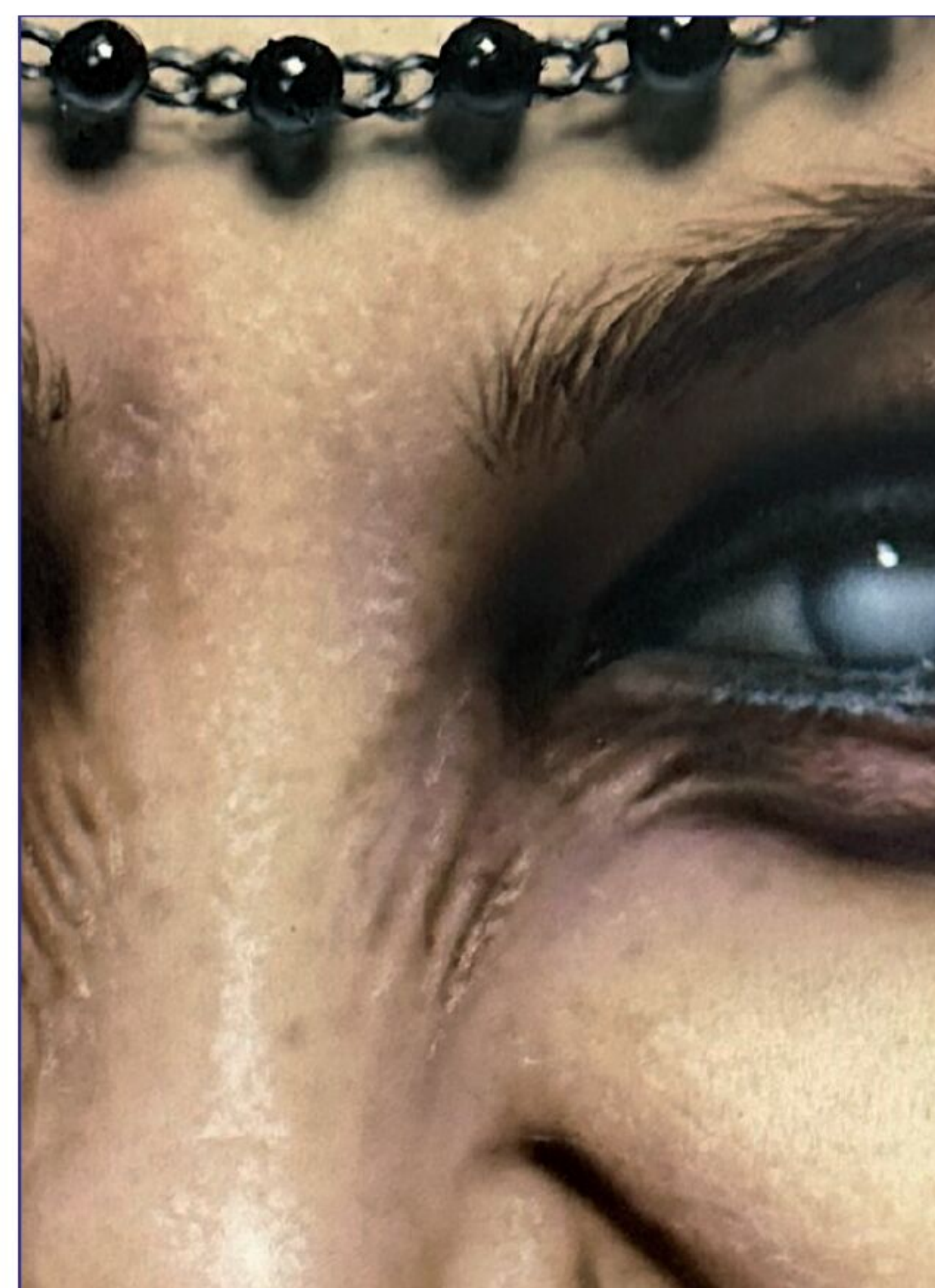
blue color. Then I darken with brown tones. I need this before I finish with red oxide 30%, 30% violet and 40% gray.



15 Final Textures

Now is the time to finish the textures, as all the steps have been completed. The shine of the skin is very important,

so I finish removing the textures with a hard eraser.



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16 Finished Vampire Portrait

Done! The next step is to sign it and protect it with varnish. Now I can hand it over to its new owner.



DANNY RICARDO OCHOA



Danny was born in Ecuador 23 years ago and now lives in Bilbao, Spain. He is a tattoo artist and the singer of several heavy metal bands in Bilbao. He likes to paint realism and also to tattoo this style. He runs a tattoo studio in Bilbao, but also likes plastic and manual art, which he believes complement each other well. He has been working with airbrushing for 8 years and studied at the airbrushing school of Juanjo Baron. He won the first national airbrushing award in Spain in 2021 and loves to paint with bright colors, contrasts and exaggerated brightness.



WOMAN IN BLUE LATEX

Iran Caro from Venezuela loves fantasy and beautiful women. In his art, he likes to combine both motifs and has developed his very own style. The woman in blue latex is based on an AI image by digital artist and photographer ThetaCursed. He

studied it for over a week to be able to paint the multi-layered reflections using airbrush technique. With soft gradients and hard boundaries, he has created a surrealistic portrait.

EQUIPMENT – WOMAN IN BLUE LATEX

Airbrush: Paasche H-3, Single Action, Airbrush Iwata Eclipse

Colors: Iran Atelier Color airbrush colors: Basic Blue, Turquoise Blue, Ultramarine Blue, Black, Caramel, Yellow, White, Magenta Red, Varnish.

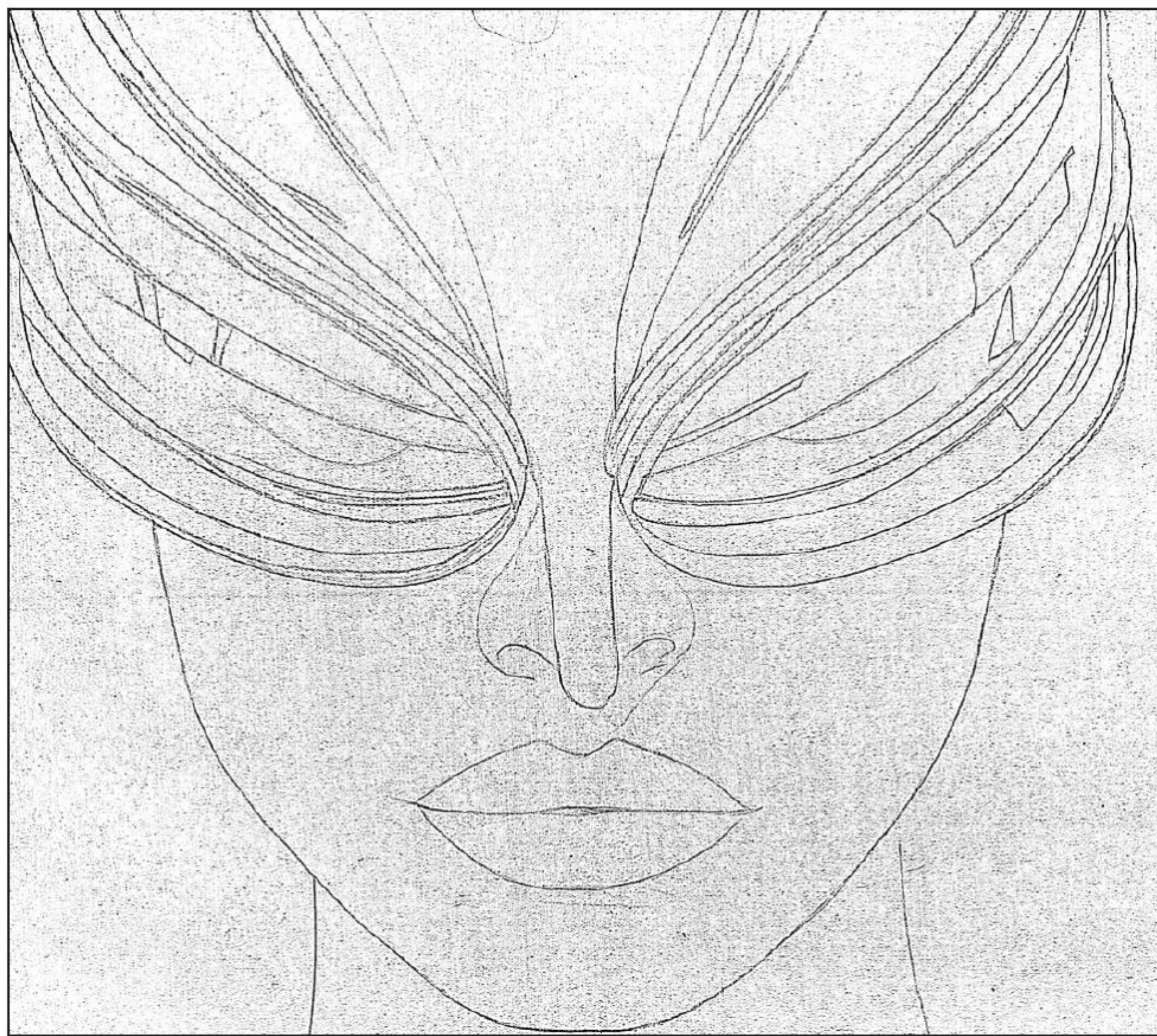
Surface: Canvas, 60 x 90 cm

Other materials: 3M green masking tape, transparent vinyl

01 Drawing

First, make a drawing of the work. Then transfer it to the canvas, which you have previously primed. To do this, use

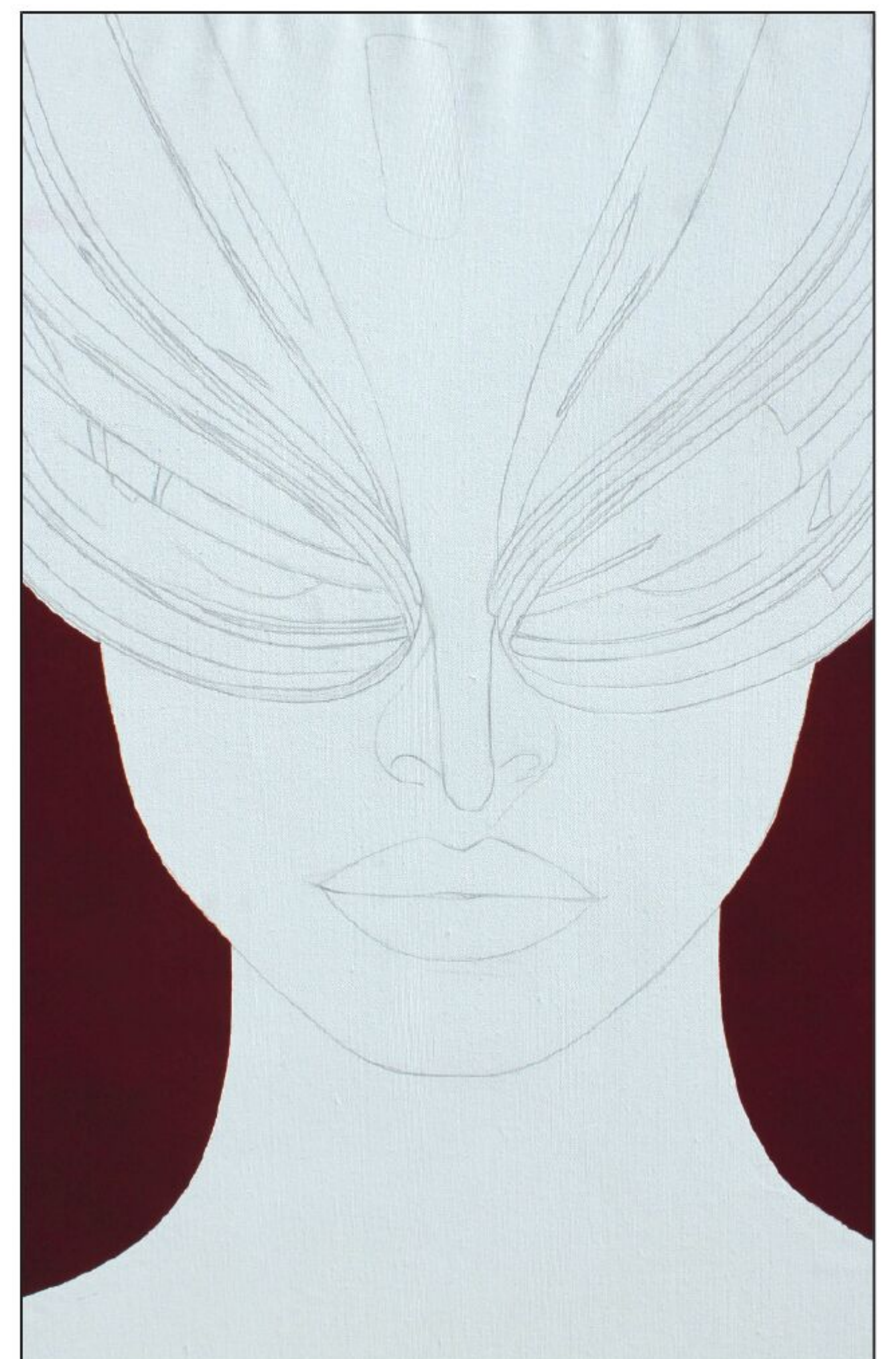
sandpaper with a grain of 800 or 1000 very gently, then clean the surface completely with a damp cloth.



02 Background

Now mask the figure completely, first with 3M tape and then with paper. Mix magenta paint with a touch of ca-

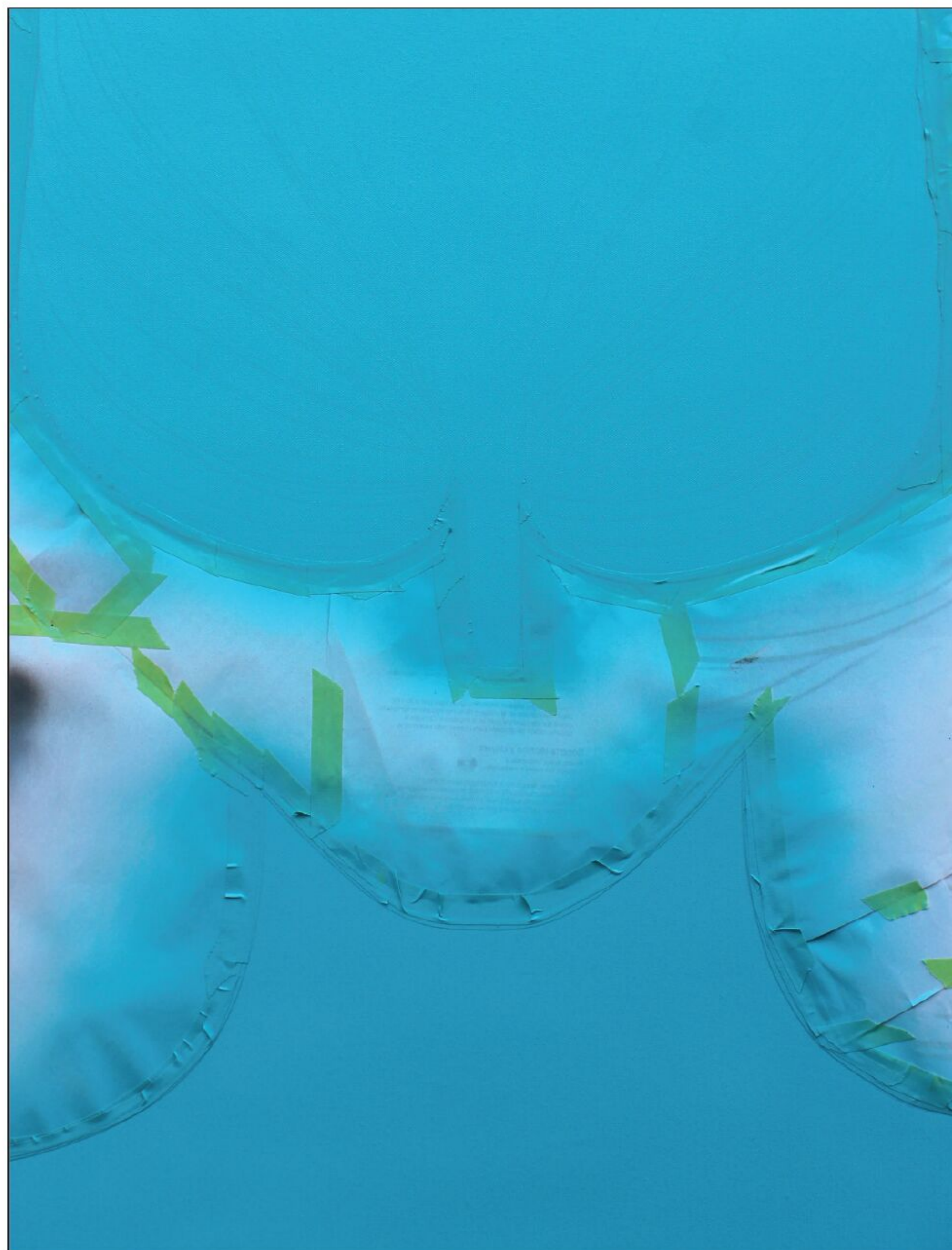
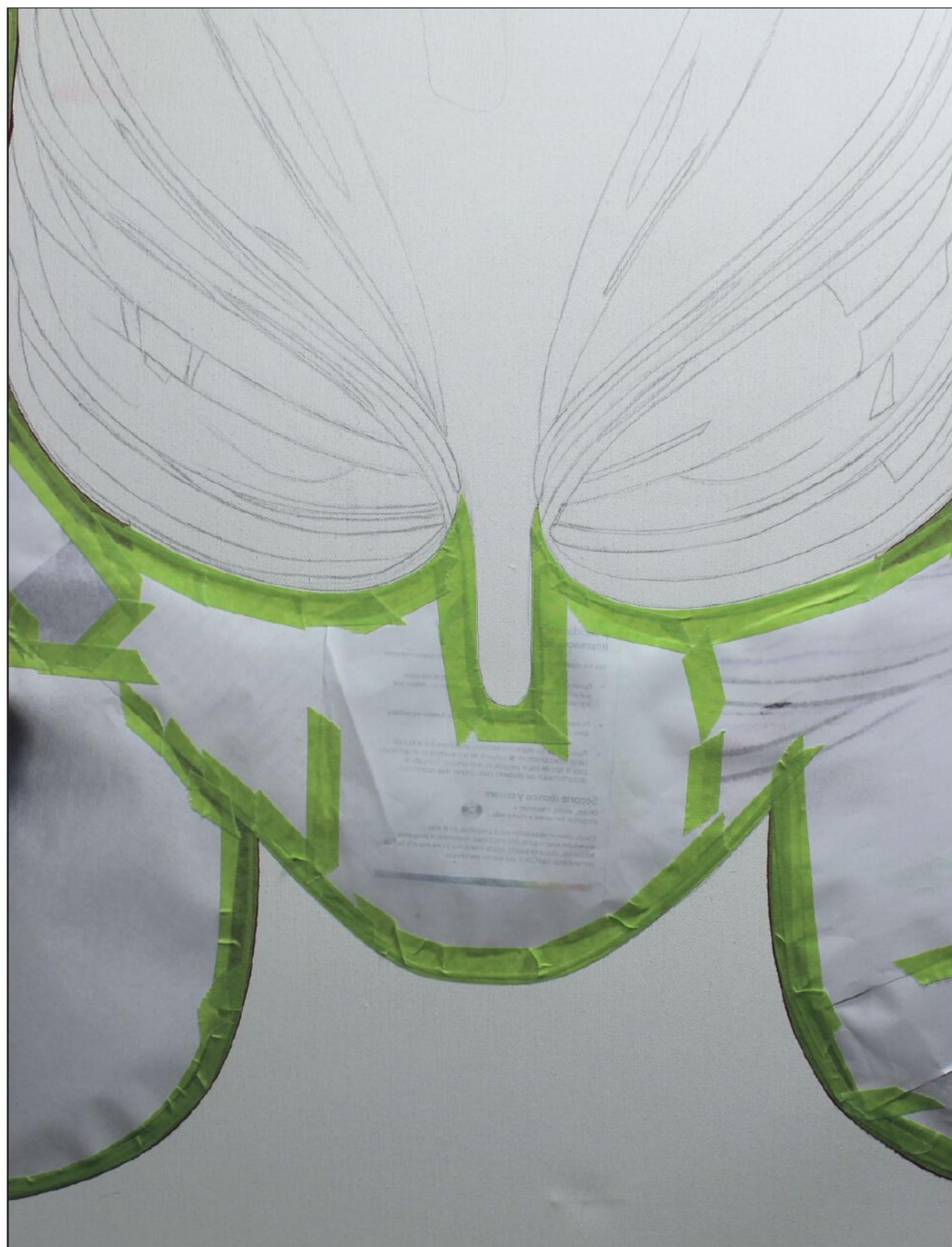
ramel and a few drops of black. Then apply this color to the entire background and remove the masking.



03 Base color turquoise

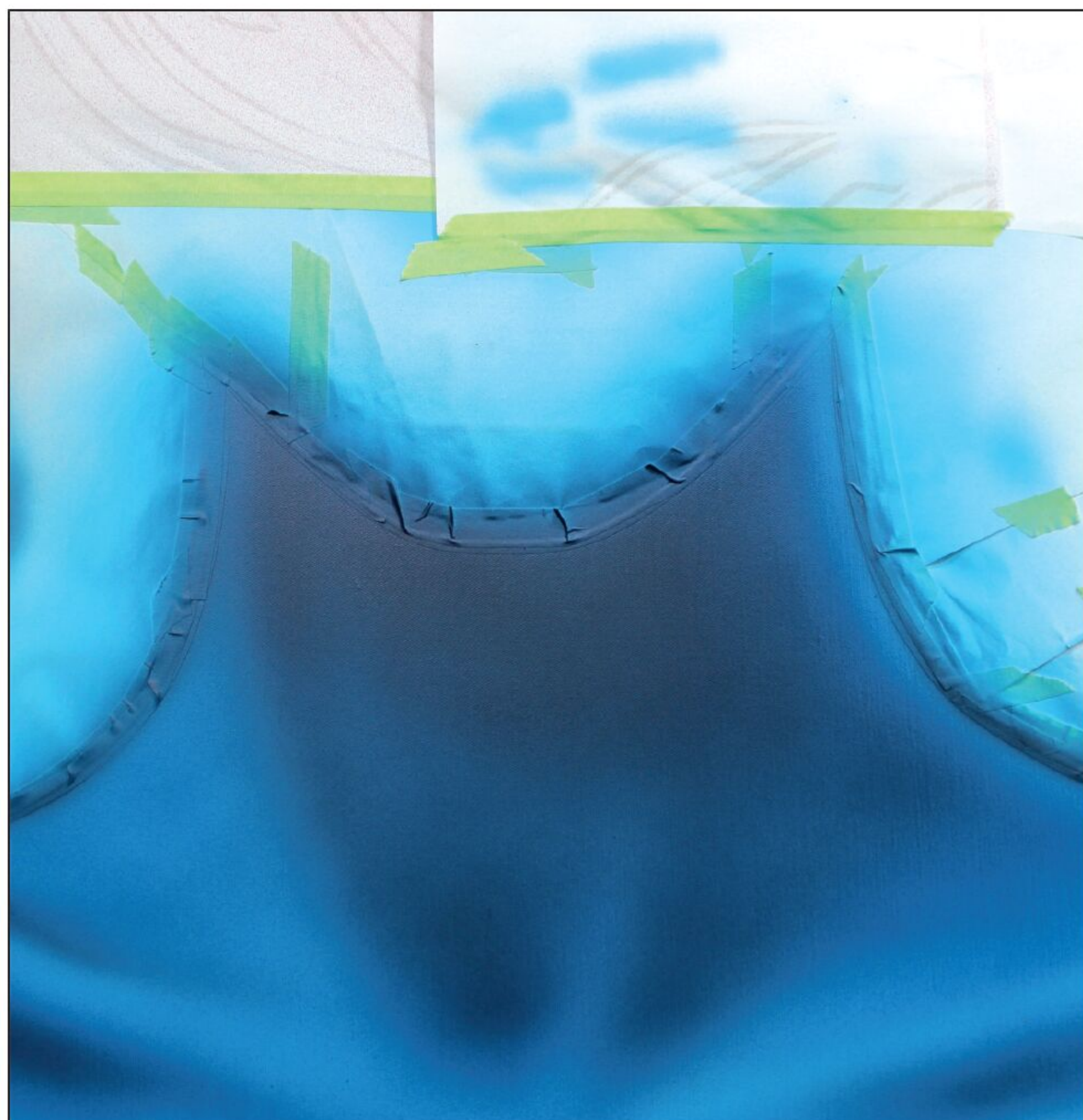
Now I mask only the face, leaving the visor with the helmet, which is made in one piece, and the latex suit at the

neck uncovered. Make a mix with white and turquoise and apply it to the entire background.



04 Dark shades

I use the ultramarine blue paint to create the anatomical shape of the neck, then mix in a few drops of black to darken it.



05 Helmet

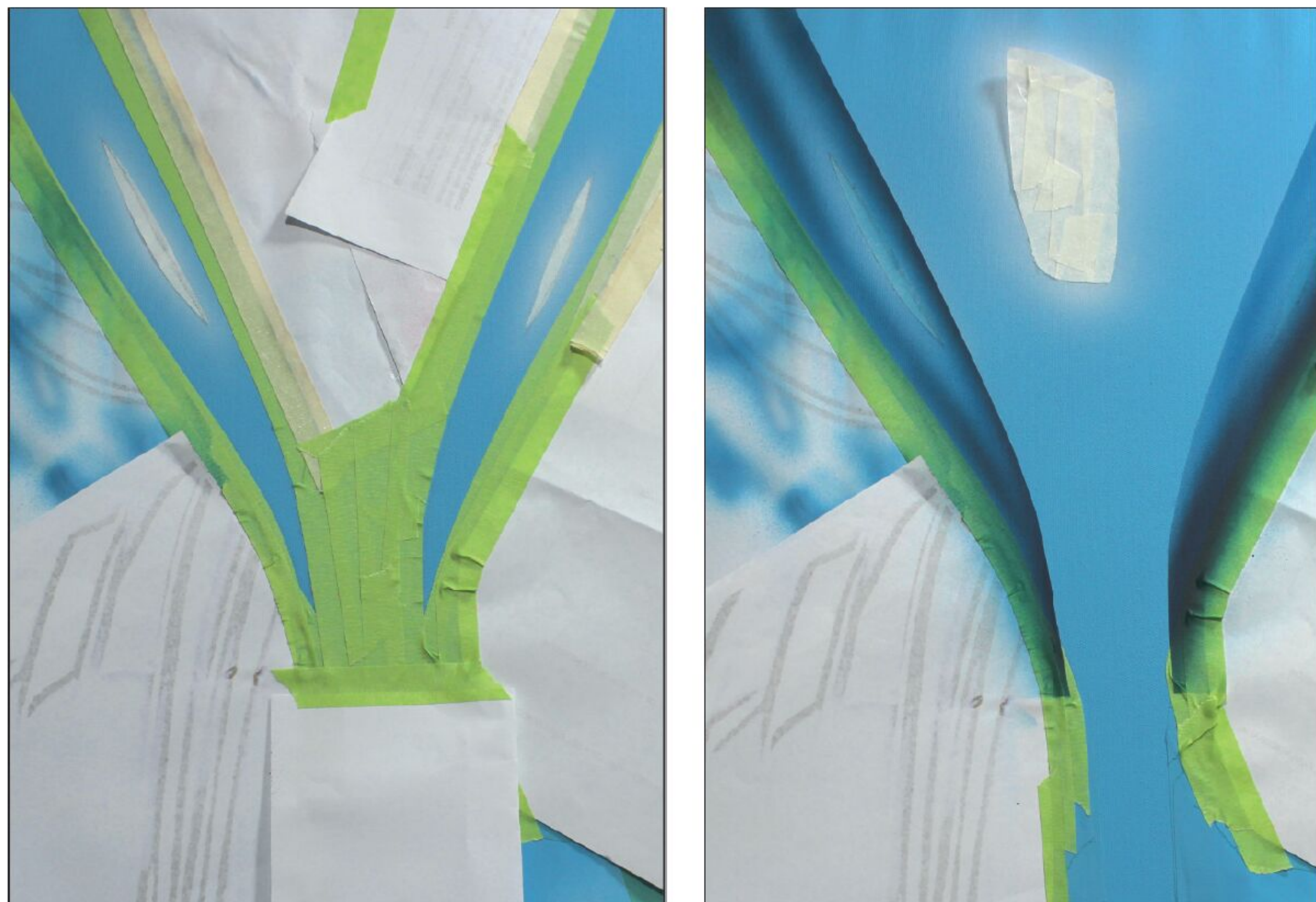
Now start with the helmet. Mask the areas of the visor on the left and right and leave the forehead and nose element free. First, add the shine with white paint.



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06 Dark shading

Now mask the middle triangular area and the two glossy areas, leaving only the two "stripes" on the left and right open. Use the ultramarine-black mixture to shade the area, creating a gradient from the center (light) to both sides (dark). Use the same technique to shade the triangular area in the middle.



07 Working with adhesive tape

Work in sections in the same way: Now re-tape the part you have already drawn and open up further sections towards the outside until the middle part of the helmet is finished. I use green 3M adhesive tape for masking throughout the helmet and visor. At the edges with very pronounced curves, I cut the tape to a width of no more than 2 to 3 millimeters and then protect the rest with paper and simple tape. This way the paint does not seep through. I could also use masking film, but then I would have to cut the canvas, which is very delicate. So I prefer to use the tape. Masking tapes come in different sizes and are a wonderful tool.



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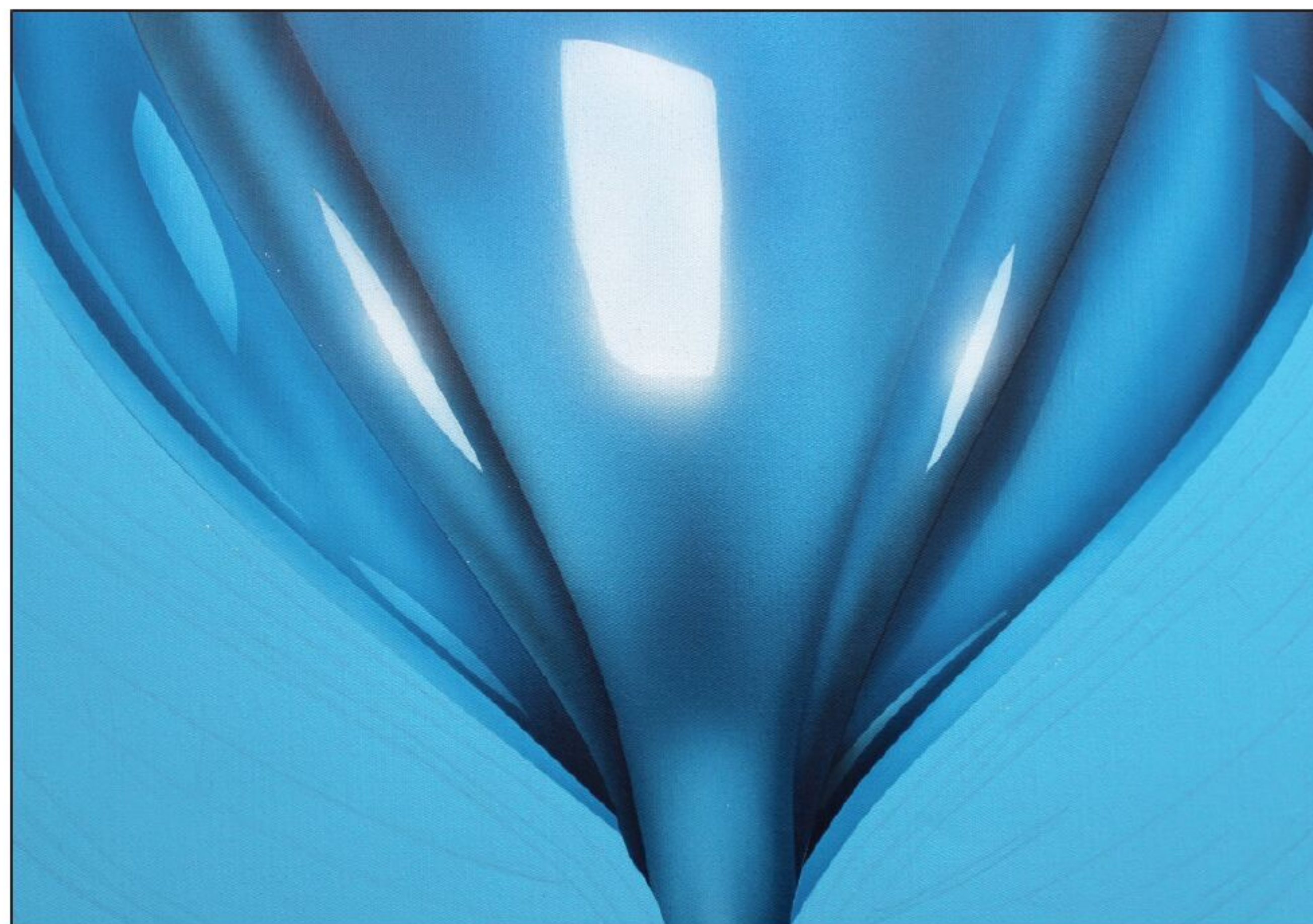
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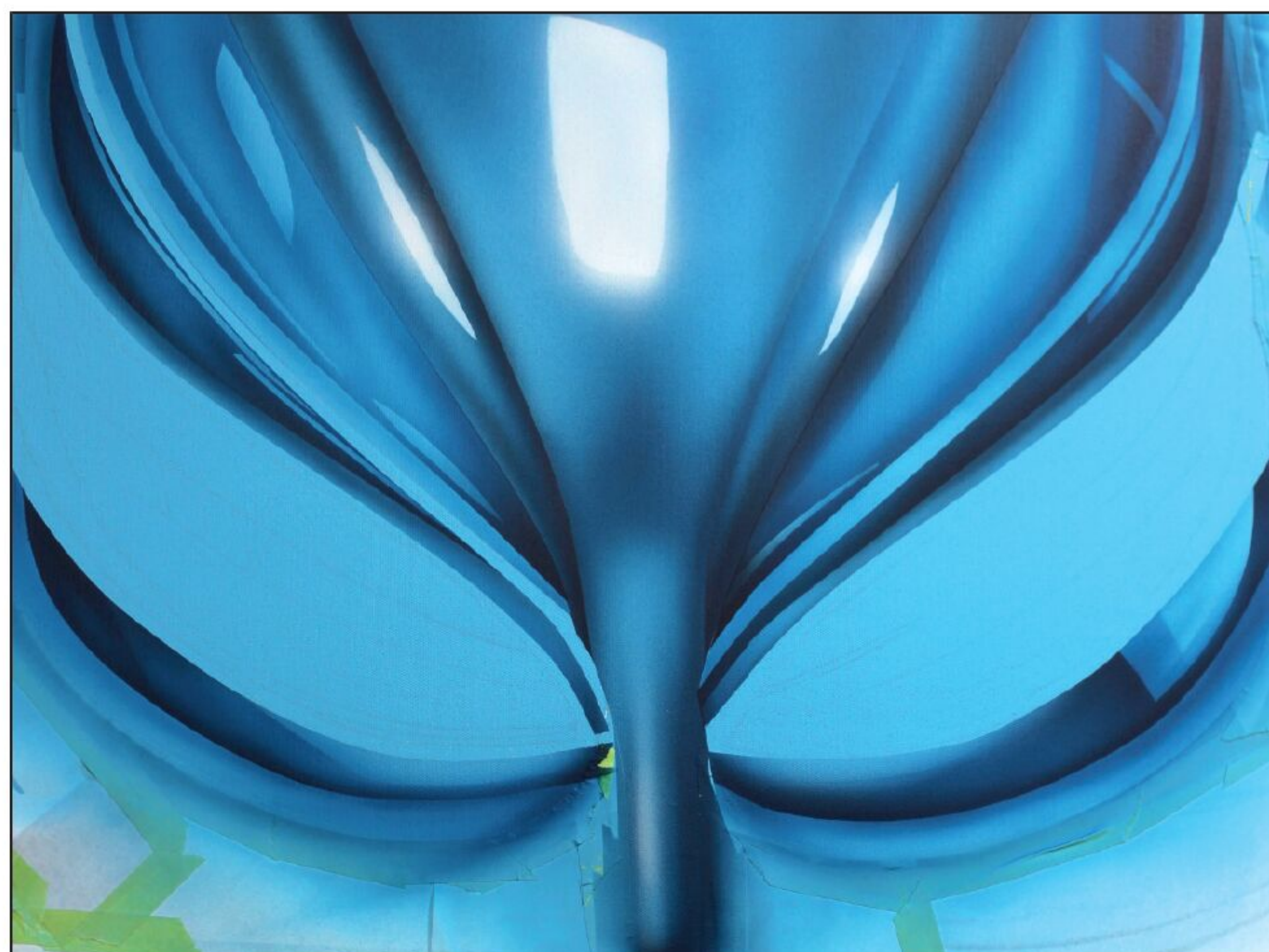
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08 Narrowing down the visor area

Now it's getting quite detailed. To further narrow down the visor area and define its shape, I first devote my attention to the curved lines of the eye area. Some of these

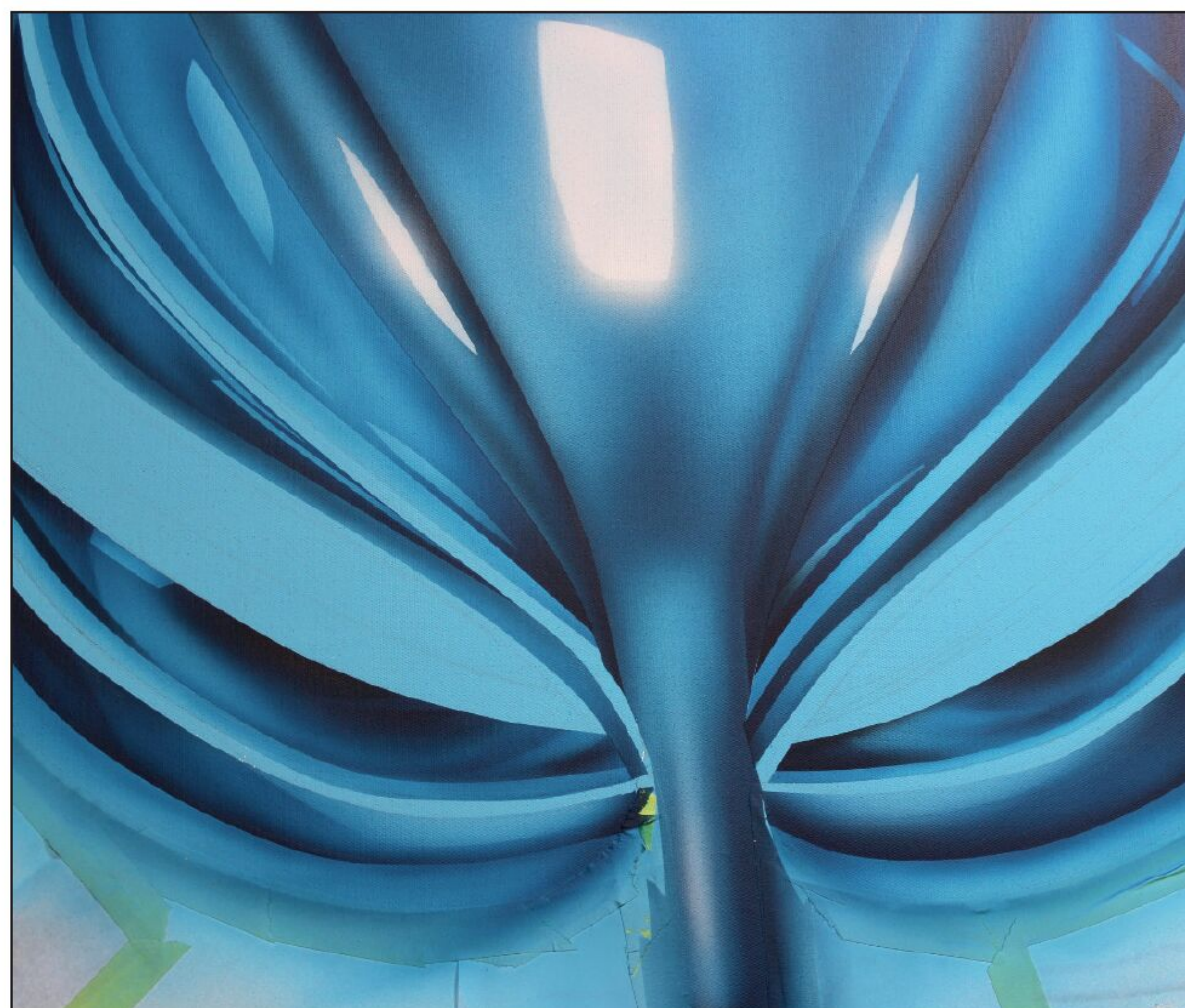
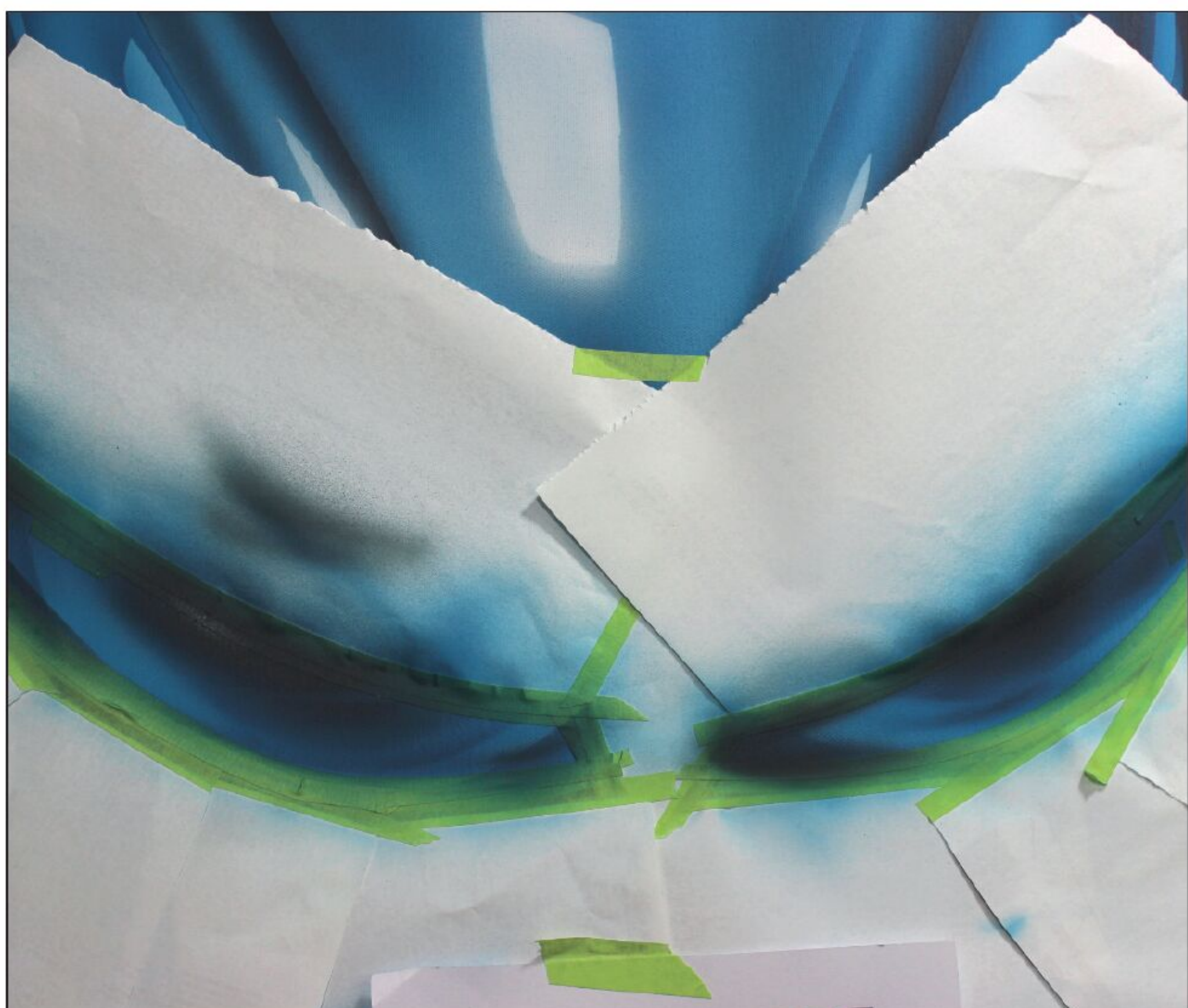
lines have to be sprayed quite flatly, while others have more pronounced gradients or even small reflections that have to be masked separately.



09 "Lower eyelid"

Here we are in the area that looks a bit like a lower eyelid. The semicircular color gradient is characteristic here.

Outwards, there are small box-shaped reflections on both sides, which you have to mask during work.



10 Visor

The "upper eyelid" and the "vision area" in the middle have a striking, counter-rotating structure: While all the other shades so far have been rather horizontal, here you will find a vertical structure. In the "visible area", spray the

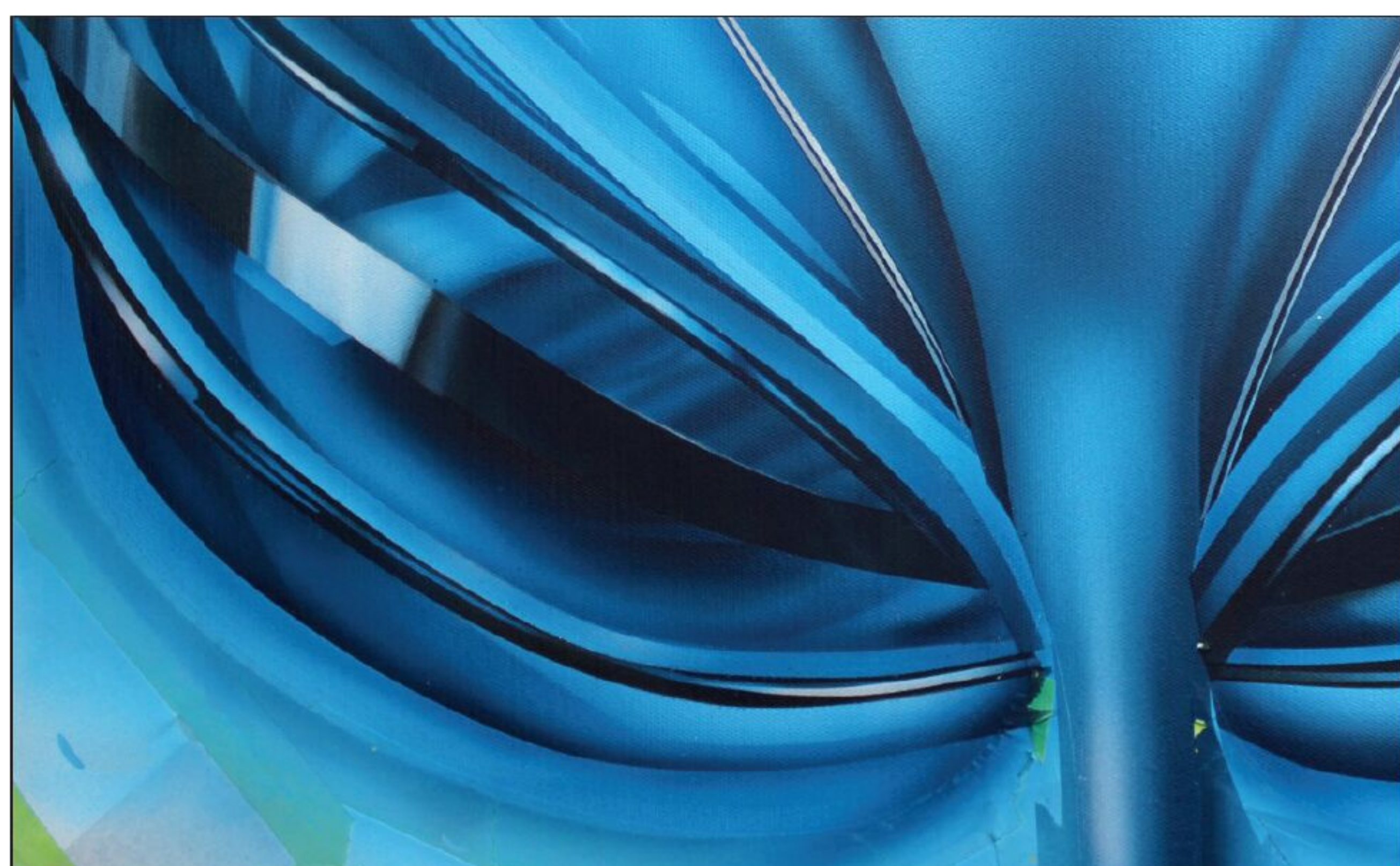
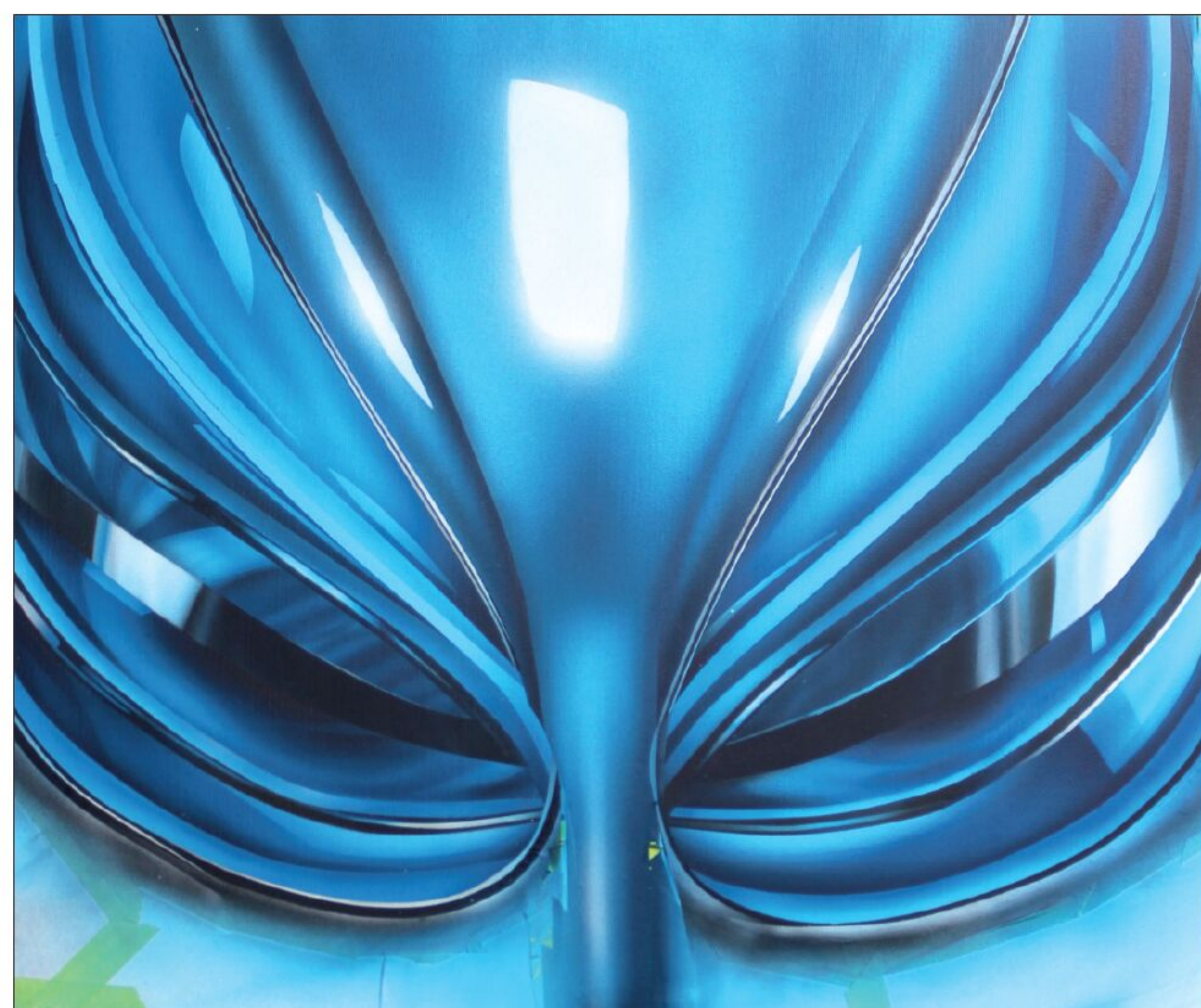
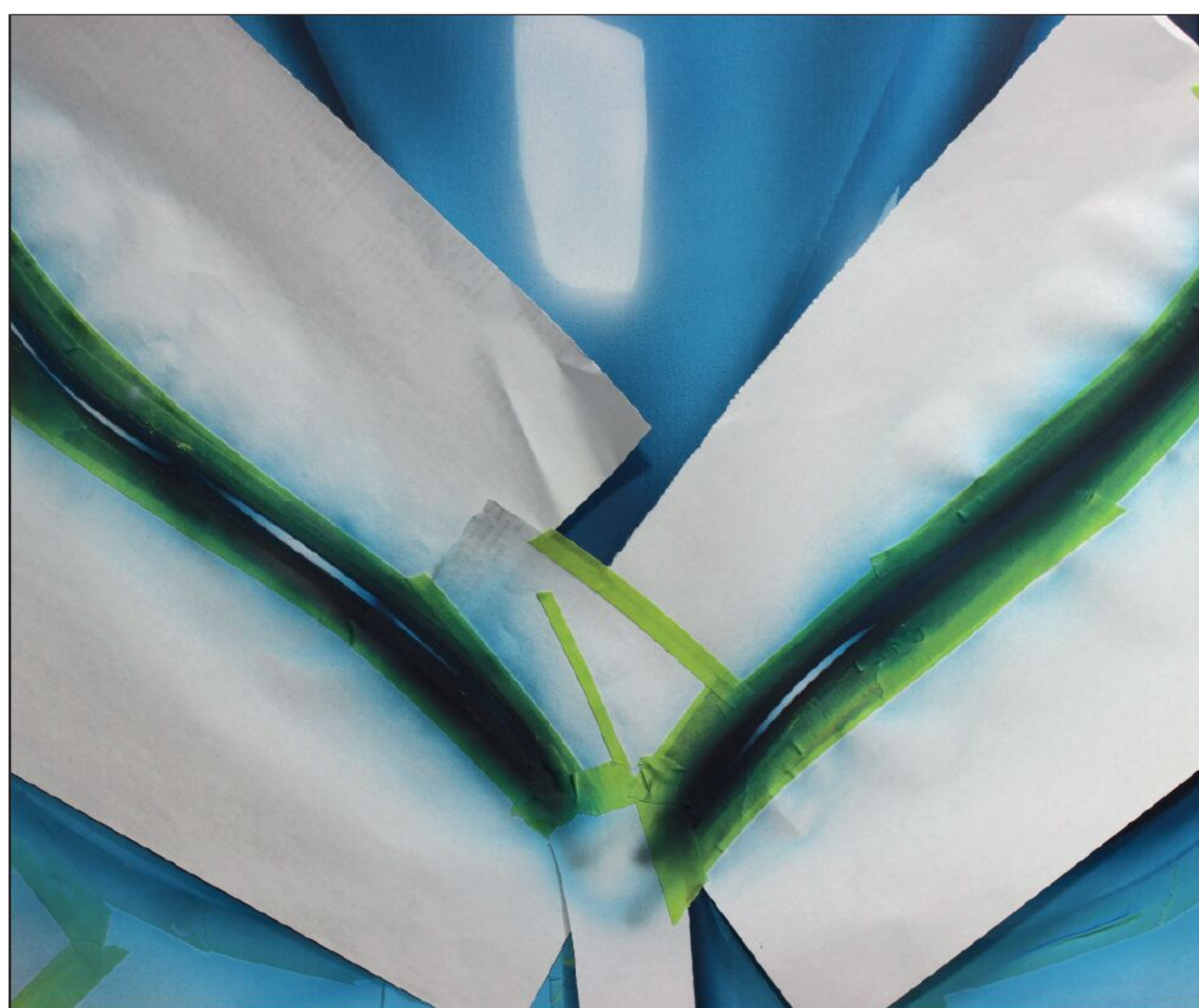
blue-black mixture in several dark layers towards the center. After a hard demarcation, continue outwards with a striped white gradient. These are rough reflections of the surroundings with their light and dark light sources.



11 Fine Reflection Lines

Finally, add the fine reflection lines, which give the helmet additional shape and effect. Study your photo template in detail to reproduce the shape of the reflections correctly.

plate in detail to reproduce the shape of the reflections correctly.



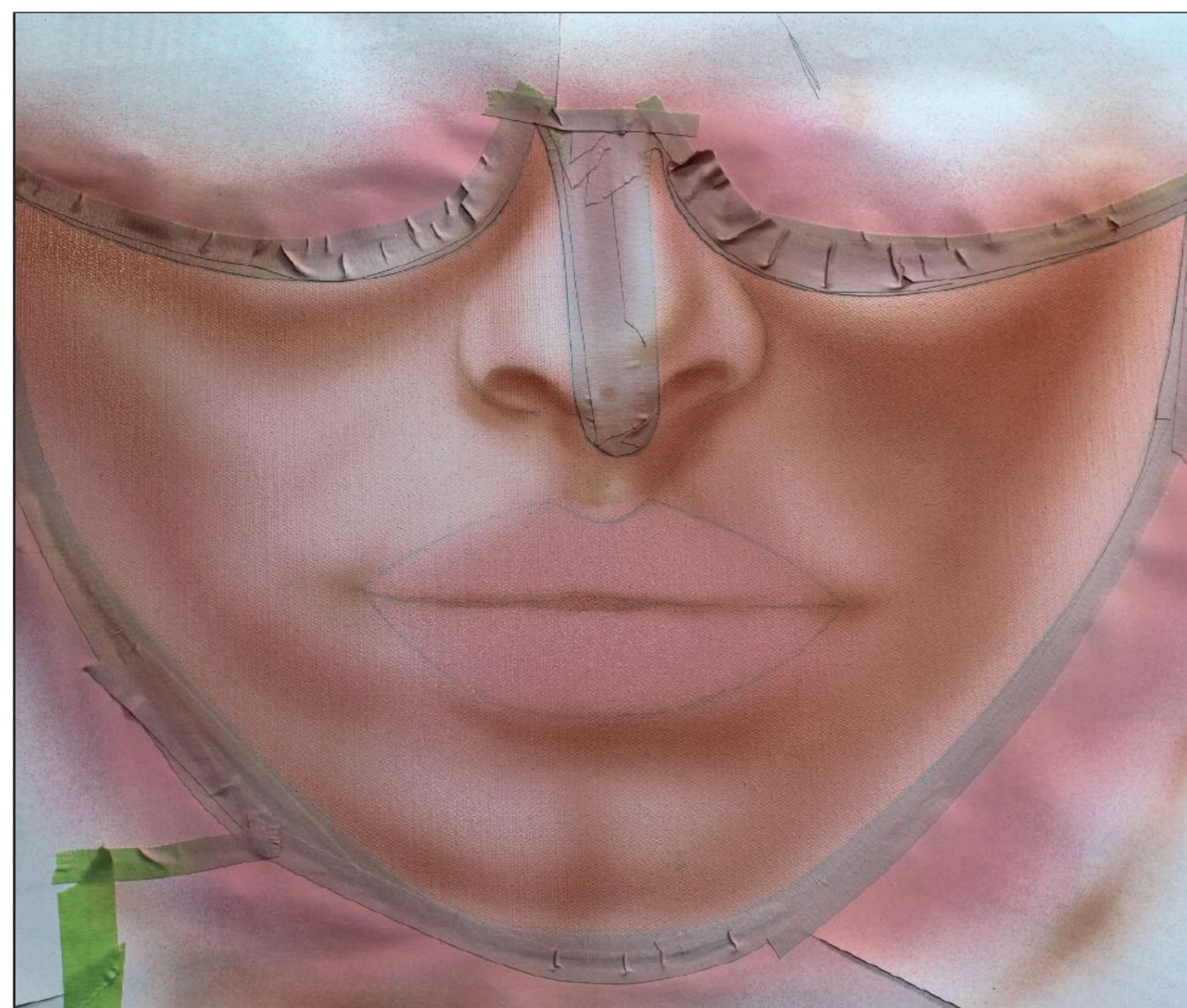
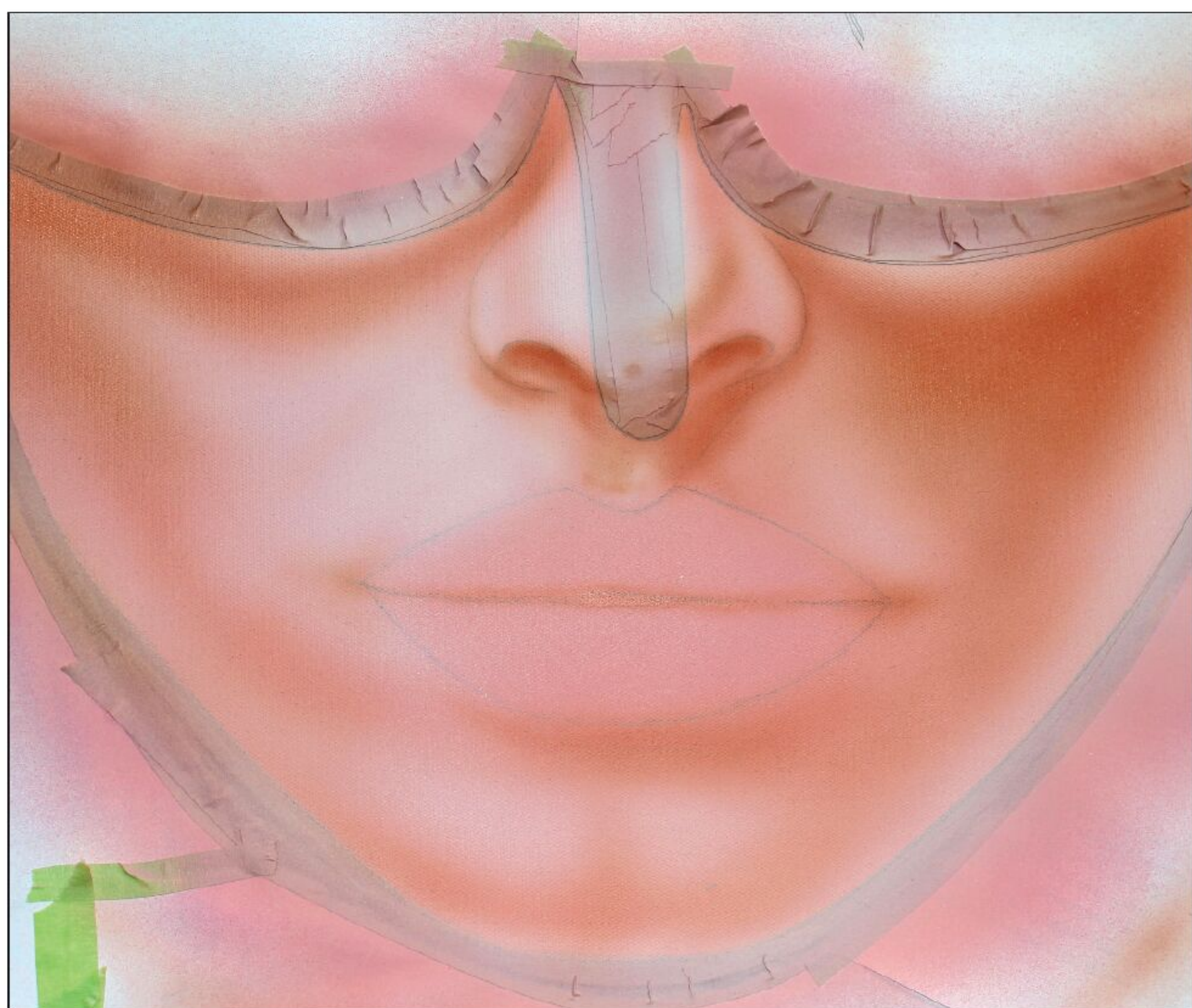
12 Intermediate Result

This is an important intermediate result, because the blue parts of the body and the helmet are now complete.



13 Face

Now mask the entire outline with tape, leaving only the face uncovered. I shade the entire face, including the mouth, with the base skin color, which I created by mixing white, caramel, and yellow. In the second step, I darken the shadow areas further and use the caramel color to shape the facial features and the shape of the face freehand. You can use a curved ruler to help you outline the details of the nose. Then add a few drops of black to the caramel color to emphasize the overhangs and the volume of the face. Be careful not to get the lighter parts of the face dirty in the process.

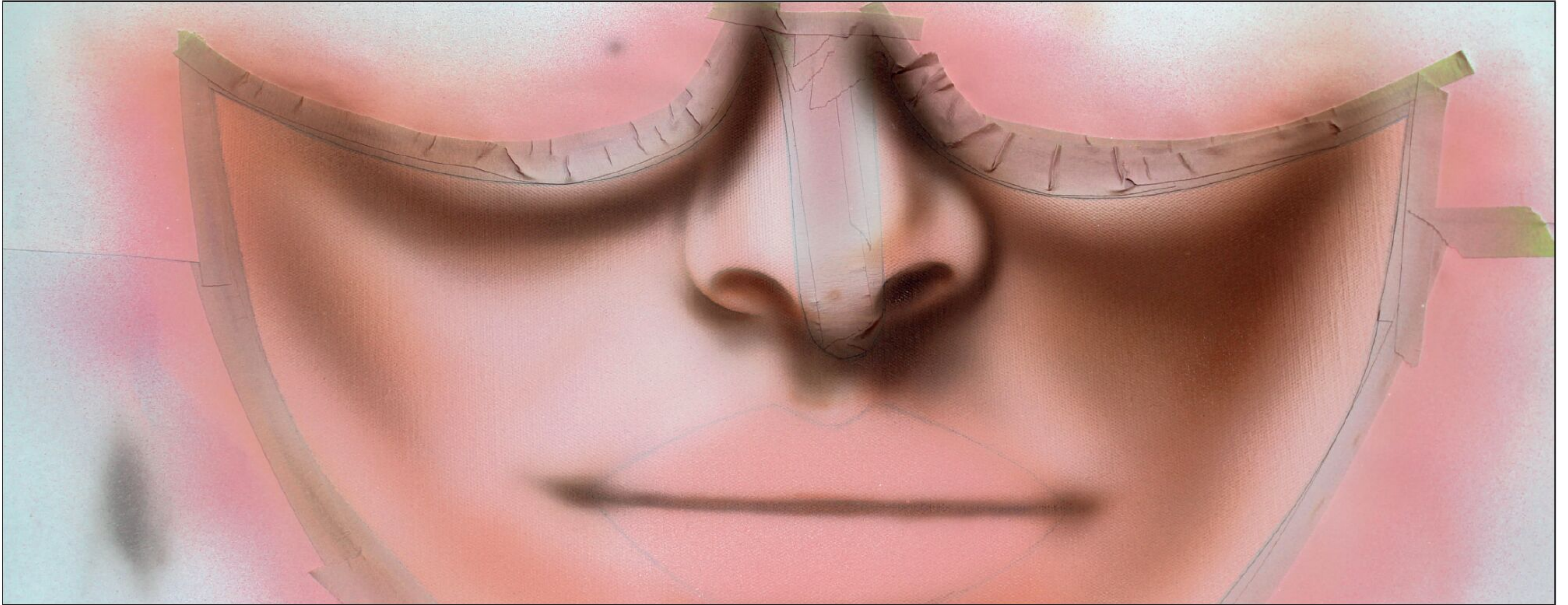


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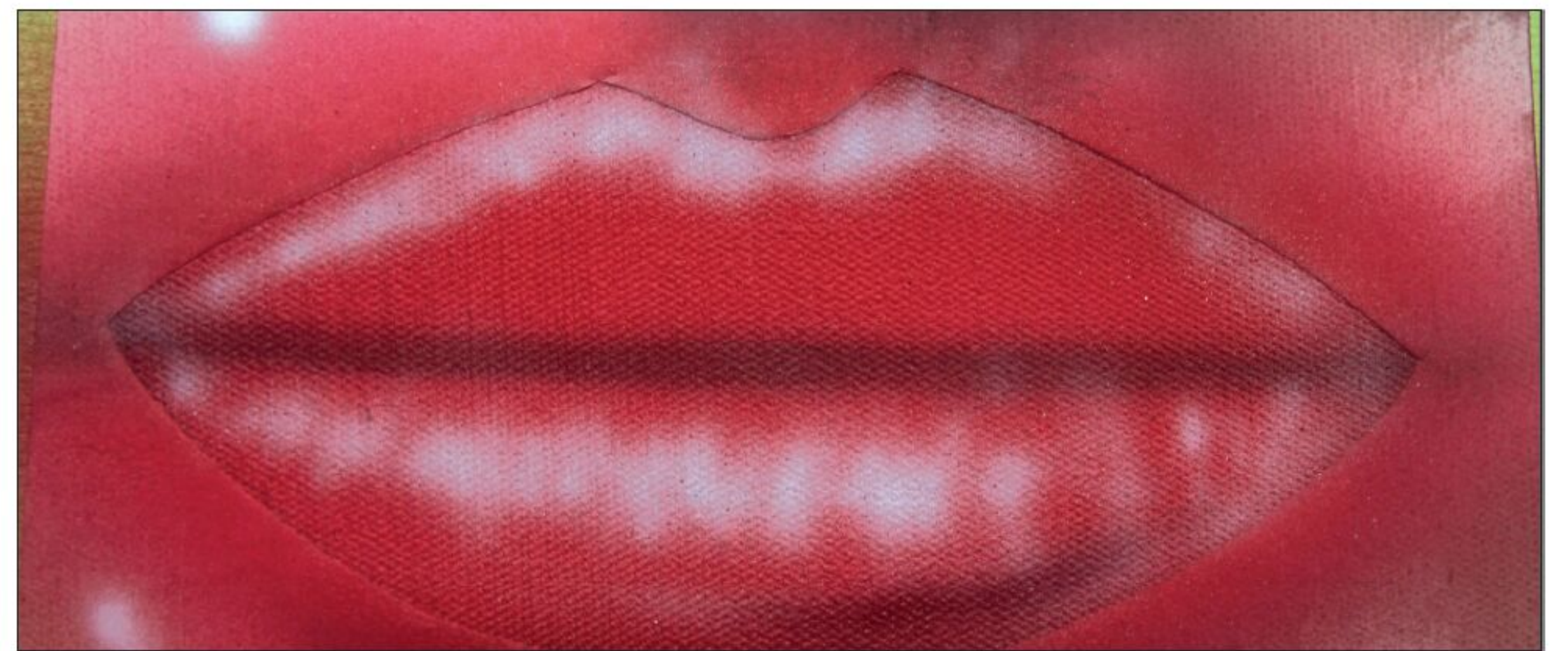
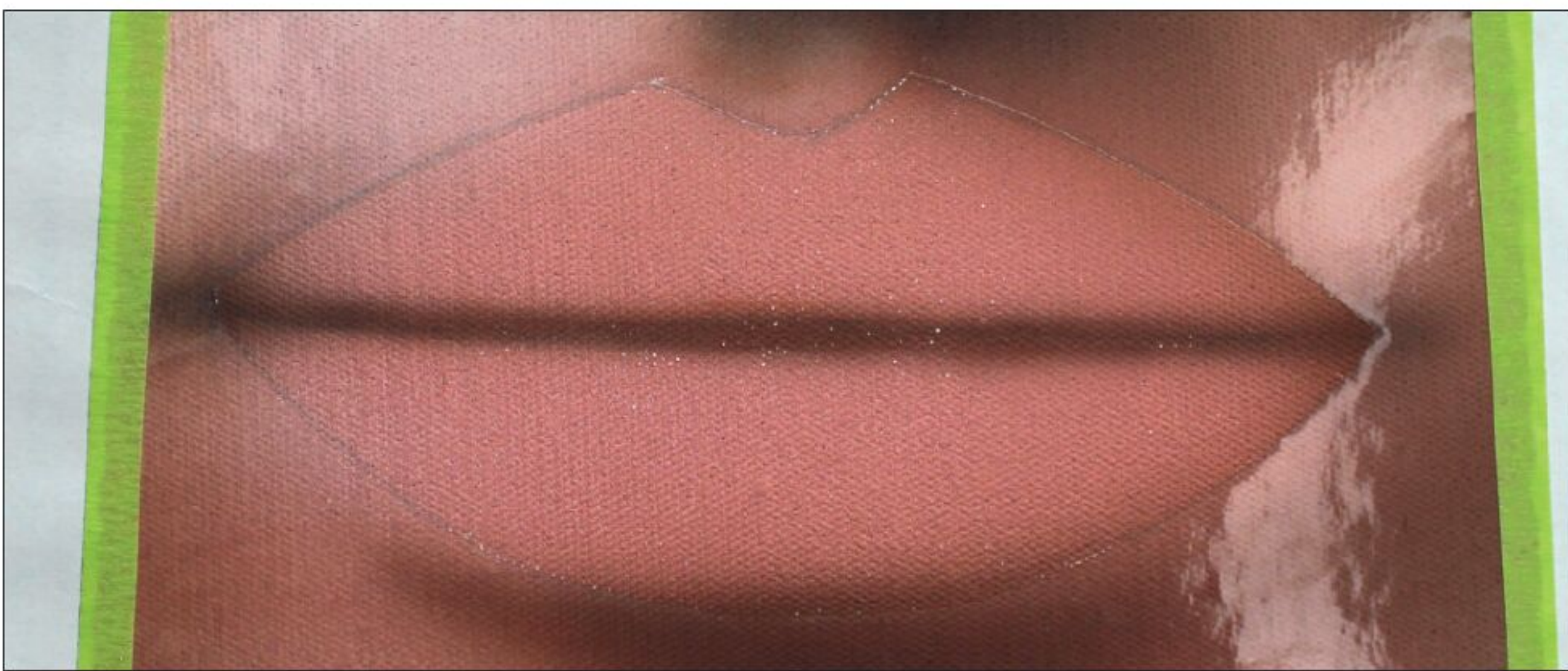




14 Mouth

Now I use a piece of thin transparent vinyl to mask the mouth. I stick it on the canvas and trace the lip contour.

Be careful not to cut the canvas. This leaves the lips free and I can use magenta to shape the mouth.



15 Shadows and highlights

I add highlights with white paint. Then, using red and a few drops of black, I subtly create the shadows. I also used a very fine brush and a stencil to refine the mouth and give it texture.

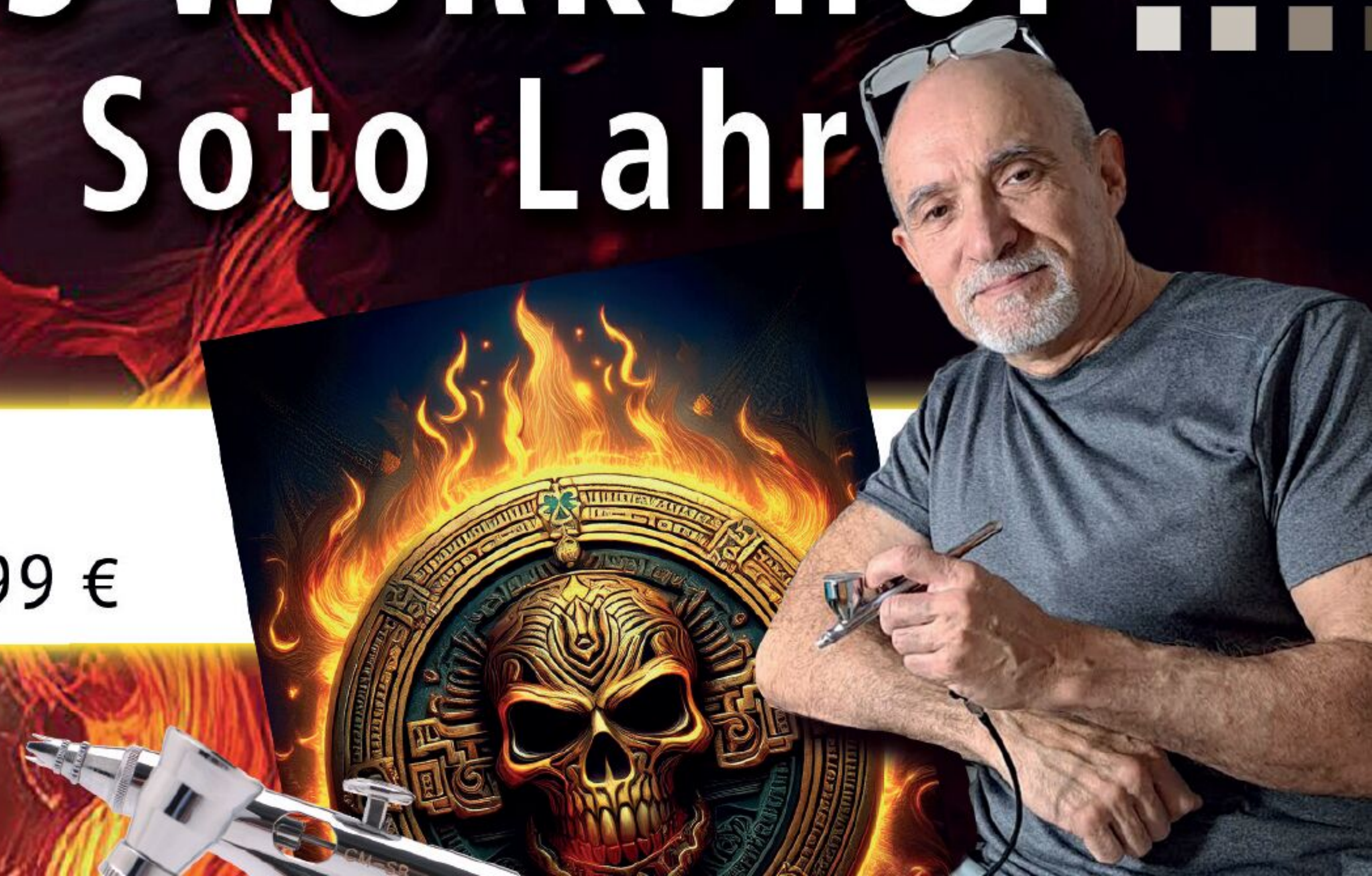


SKULL & FLAMES WORKSHOP ... with Mariano Soto Lahr

Date: **April 26-27, 2025**

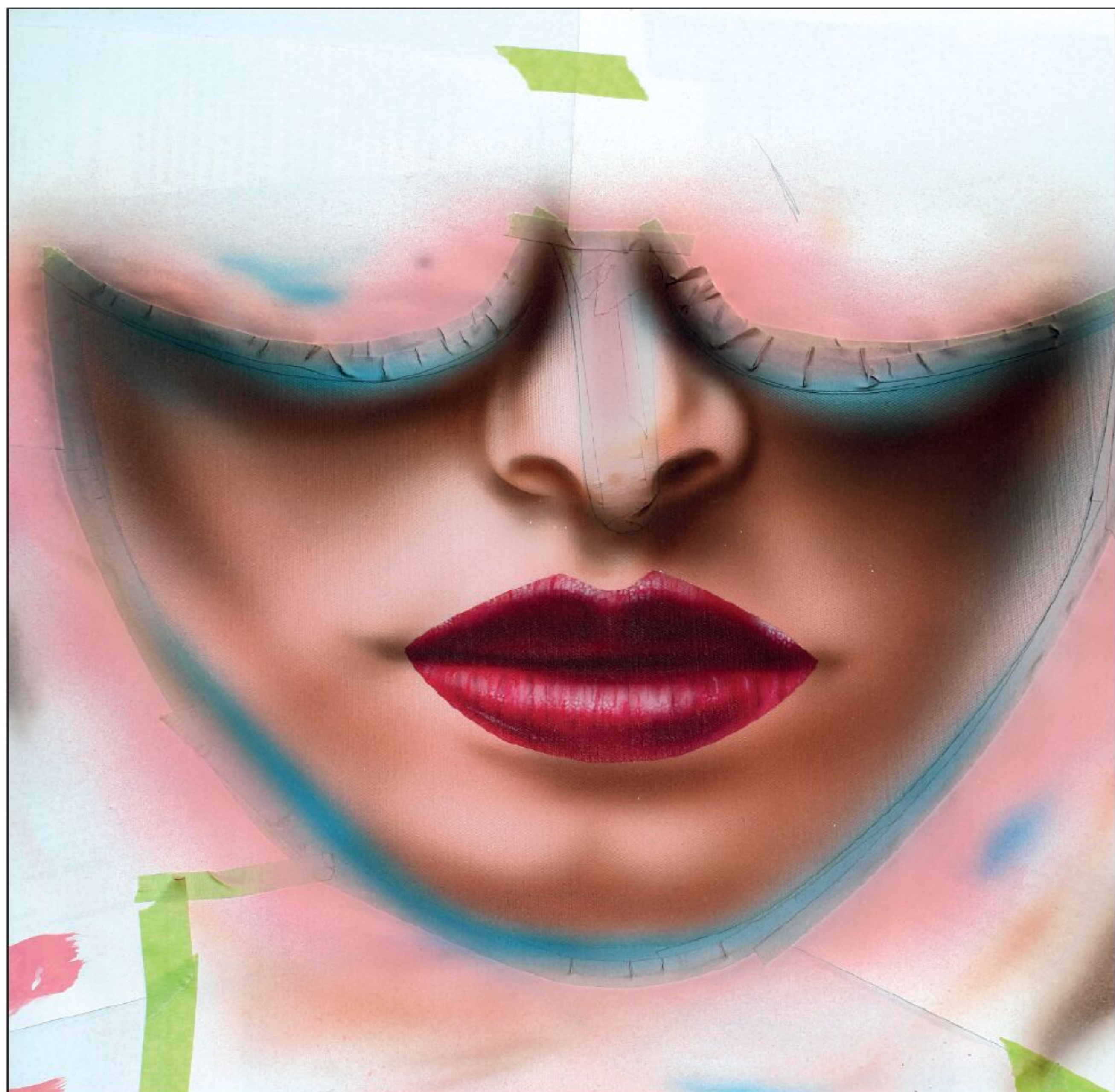
Location: Büchen, Germany - Preis: 299 €

Info and booking at: www.newart-shop.de



16 Blue Glow

I remove the masking of the mouth and retouch the contours of the mouth freehand so that the contours are not too harsh. I also carefully spray a blue shading on the upper, right and lower edge of the masking to represent a blue glow that results from the reflection of the blue suit and helmet.



17 Finished image

Finally, retouch any small imperfection or detail left, then color the image. Done!



IRÁN CARO



Irán Caro was born in Santiago de Chile in 1962. At the age of thirteen, he completed his first drawing courses at the School of Architecture in Santiago de Chile, then he took comic drawing courses with the well-known magazine and Walt Disney artist Pepo. In 1979 he came to Caracas, Venezuela, and in the early years he illustrated comics for newspapers, magazines and children's books. In 1982, he studied fine arts at the School of Fine Arts "Cristobal Rojas". There, he became interested in and began studying the airbrush technique. He consolidated his knowledge and experience as an artist and became a pioneer of airbrush art in Venezuela. Since 1987, he has organized and directed the Airbrush Biennials. He works as an artist, teacher, designer and illustrator for numerous well-known institutions worldwide.

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HARDER & STEENBECK

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Harder & Steenbeck 2.0: technology, family spirit and social networks

A surprising tour at the 101-year-old airbrush manufacturer

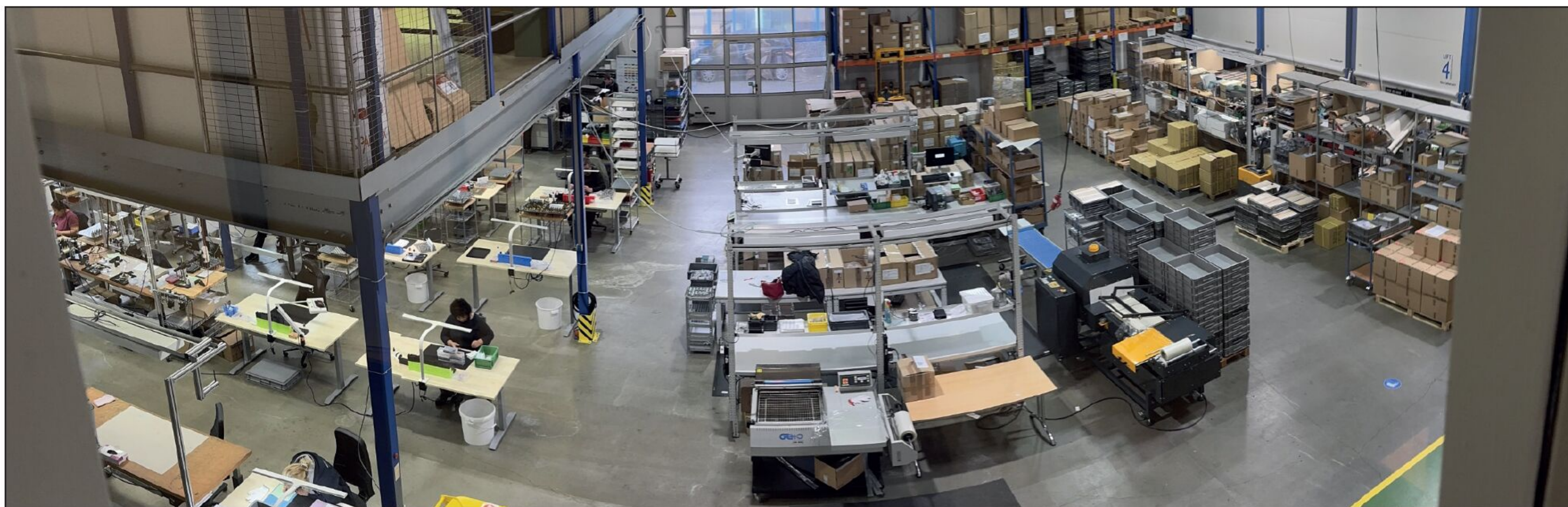
It has been seven years since the German airbrush manufacturer Harder & Steenbeck was taken over by the Anest Iwata Group. Since then, the company has been managed by American CEO Will Nae-mura and Zimbabwe-born General Manager Warrick Smith. For a long time, the once so communicative and user-oriented company was silent, which caused some resentment and rumors, especially in Germany. Then, two years ago, the return: the company was suddenly back, especially

on YouTube and social networks. This was followed by model variations such as the Kyiv and the Giraldez Infinity, the Squidmar Evolution – and finally, within just 12 months, the technical relaunch of the three “figureheads” of the company, Ultra, Evolution and Infinity. What really happened behind the scenes – and what comes after the three big releases? We wanted to find out during our visit to the Norderstedt production facility...

A fresh start with obstacles

As soon as we enter the workshop, we notice that it is more crowded than on our last visit. The hall is full of assembly and test stations, and the number of storage lifts has more than doubled. No wonder, since the number of employees here has now more than doubled. There are around 40 of them, and around 10 of them already worked or trained here before the company takeover. For our tour, Warrick Smith takes us to a part of the building that we haven't seen yet. While Harder & Steenbeck used to only use part of the building complex, two

more have since been added. During the pandemic, which began shortly after the company space was expanded, this was a great stroke of luck, as it made it possible to separate employees spatially and to maintain operations in two shifts to a large extent. Nevertheless, Warrick tells us, the pandemic was largely responsible for the fact that the new devices were only launched on the market now, as it would have slowed down the entire process.



The latest technology for the smallest parts

The raw materials, including copper, nickel silver, aluminum and, thanks to the new Infinity nozzle, now titanium as well, are stored in this new part of the building. Next to it is the heart of the company: state-of-the-art CNC machines that can produce 11 different airbrush components simultaneously. Previously, this was only possible one after the other, which resulted in long changeover times. "Just a few years ago, manufacturing the titanium nozzle would not have been technically possible with the old machines," explains Warrick. Another technical marvel is the new Infinity lever, which is made from a single piece. This makes it even more resilient and stable than before, when it was made from two parts. The machine needs just 6.5 minutes for this, and as little as 8 minutes for the new titanium nozzle – a conventional nozzle takes less than three minutes by comparison.

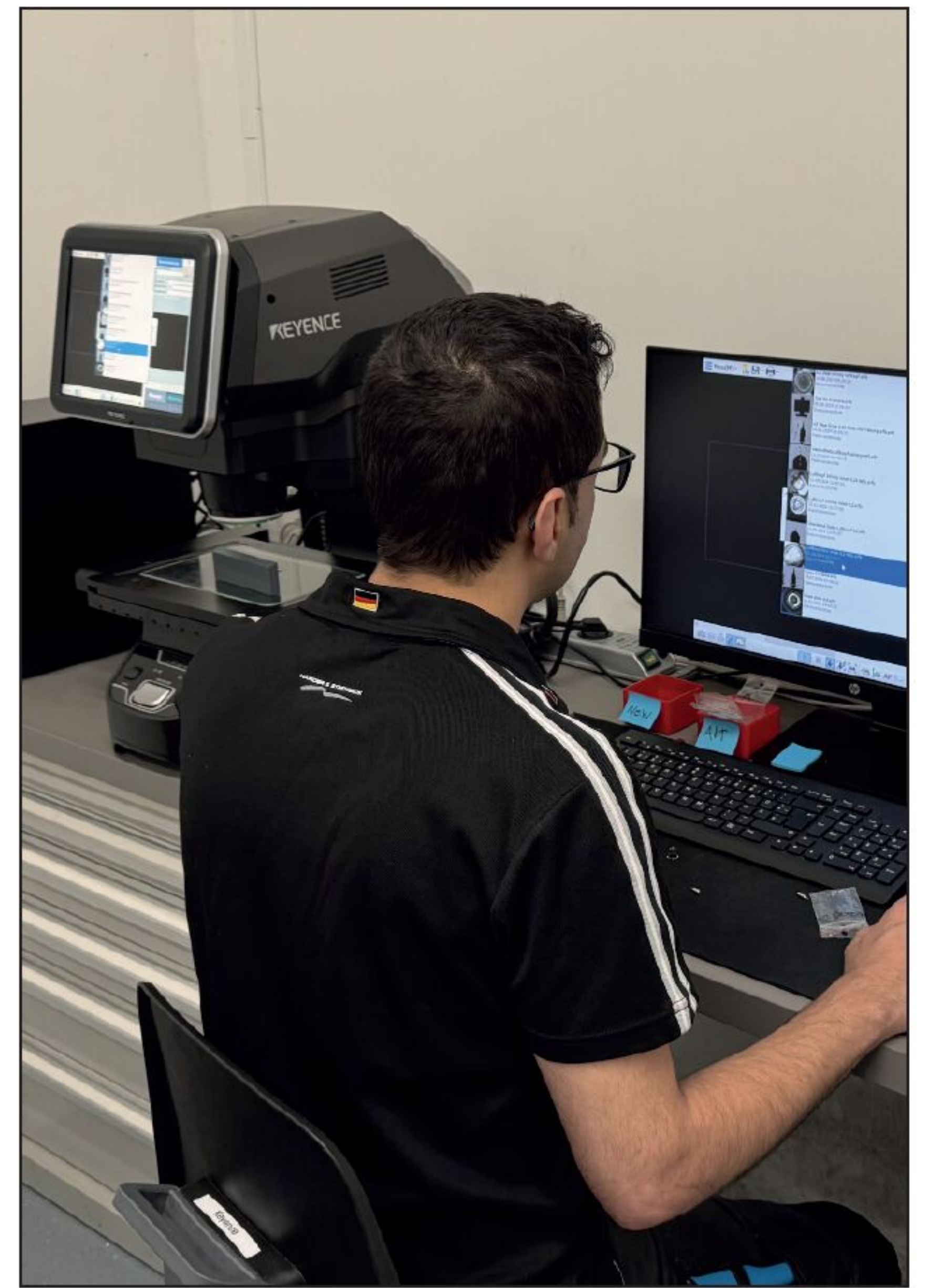
The polishing machines also catch our eye: there are many more of them, larger ones with a capacity of up to 400 liters for large parts such as the airbrush body, small ones for the smallest parts such as nozzles and lever parts. We also encounter new machines in quality control, where the production accuracy of the parts is checked. Deviations and tolerances

can be measured here with an accuracy of 0.001 mm. This plays a particularly important role in the new titanium nozzle, which owes its special performance mainly to its extremely thin wall of only 0.04 mm. The machine for needle production is hidden in a separate room – a proprietary construction of the company. Here we were already able to see a unique innovation... but unfortunately we are not yet allowed to tell you about it....

Modern customer service on YouTube

We had already seen some parts of the company on YouTube a few days earlier, because Warrick in particular has been constantly on air for Harder & Steenbeck for the past two years: "Social media allows us to communicate with our customers directly from the workshop and get their feedback," Warrick tells us. This feedback is then incorporated into the development and optimization of the products – marketing and market research in the same breath, so to speak. This strategy, modern technology and the extensive know-how of the employees, which is due to the excellent German training system, give Harder & Steenbeck a decisive advantage in the airbrush industry – especially over cheap goods from China. But who is this Warrick Smith, who explains the details of the new





airbrush devices and techniques in his videos in English for up to half an hour, and who seems to be just as familiar with airbrushing as he is with social media and CNC technology? We know from his fellow managing director Will Naemura that he was head of Anest Iwata Medea in the USA for decades and was involved in many airbrush developments at Iwata. Warrick is an unknown quantity, at least in this country, but his background is surprising: Warrick completed a music education at the Royal College in London at a young age and was a professional trumpeter. He came into contact with airbrushing through his love of motorcycles and his then father-in-law: Ken Medwell, head of the British company The Airbrush Company, now known for the webshop airbrushes.com and once emerged from the production company of the Conopois Airbrush. Warrick worked in the repair shop here for many years. Airbrushes and compressors of all brands passed through his hands to be repaired. Later, he worked more on the user side, setting up professional airbrush painting departments for companies, looking after customers in the tanning and make-up business and also working as an airbrush artist himself. He also founded various companies and was involved in the production of special model aircraft parts, among other things. Will Naemura, who he had known since his time at the Airbrush Company, finally brought him on

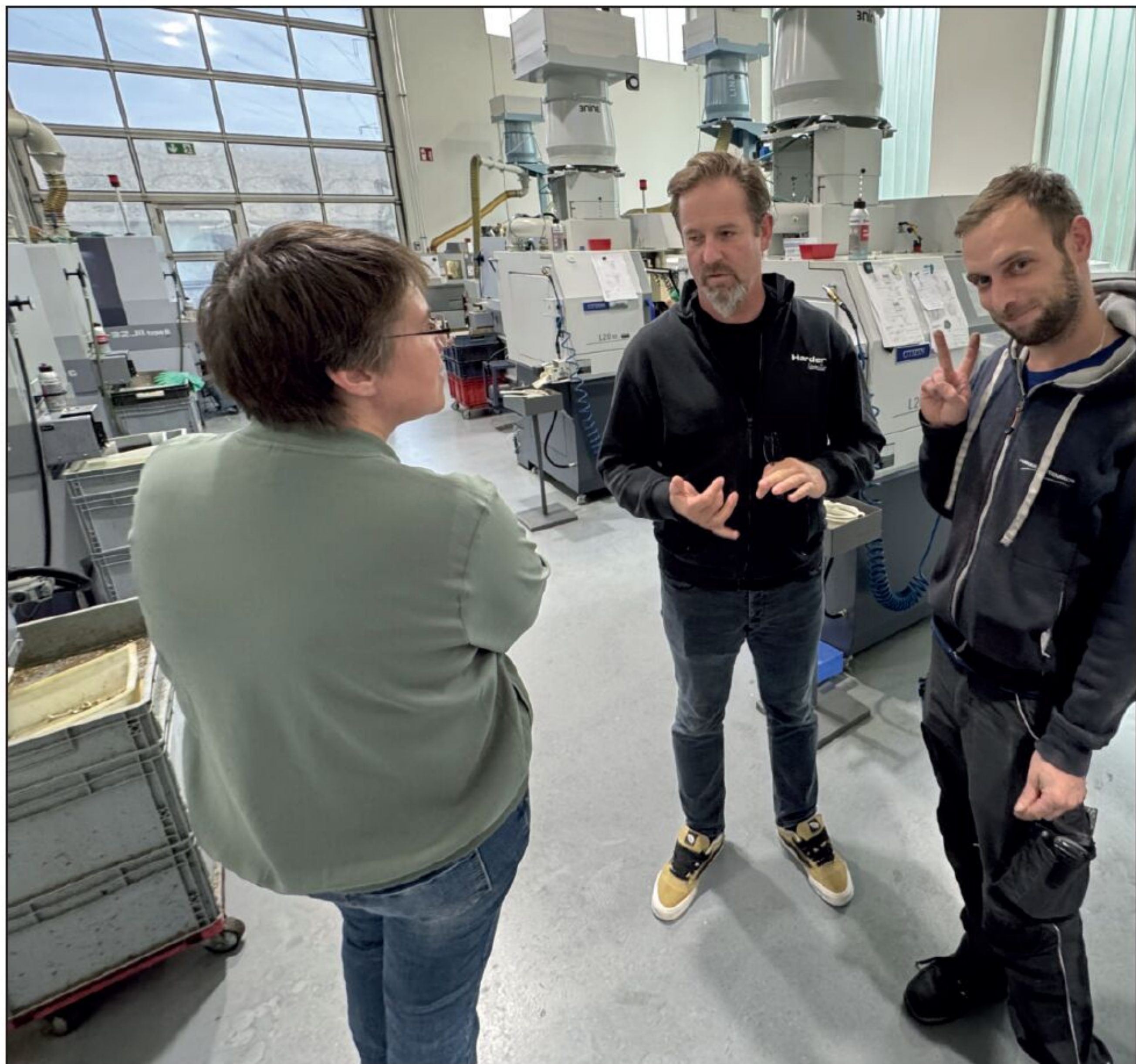
board at Harder & Steenbeck in 2016.

Employees: airbrush experts from A to Z

Back in the assembly hall, Warrick tells us about another new development in the airbrush production process: each employee here builds an airbrush from start to finish, no longer in subassemblies, as was previously the case. This means that every employee is familiar with every part of the airbrush and has full control over the manufacturing process and the quality of the device. The quality is then put to the test again by experienced testers who check the spray behavior of the device. There is an absolute "tuning" ban here: if a part of the airbrush causes problems, it must not be replaced, but the entire production batch must be checked. This is how Harder & Steenbeck ensures that all parts work equally well and that the device offers the same performance with a later replacement part as with the "original equipment".

Among the testers, we also meet a Polish artist who has been working at Harder & Steenbeck for a few months. He had responded to a job ad on social media. Convinced by his expertise and airbrushing experience, Harder & Steenbeck not only offered him an employment contract, but also helped him with his move to Hamburg, where the housing market is no-





toriously difficult. And he was not the only one: thanks to Harder & Steenbeck's commitment, the family of an airbrush dealer from Kharkiv in Ukraine, a long-standing business partner of the company, also found a new and secure home in Hamburg and a job in the company. The Ukrainian artist Angela Dmitrenko, who has already worked with Harder & Steenbeck on the Kyiv Infinity charity project, will soon be moving to Hamburg with the help of the company to further develop a joint aid project.

2023/24: New devices and concepts in the anniversary year

In 2023, Harder & Steenbeck celebrated its 100th anniversary – a welcome occasion to present the three new flagship models Ultra, Evolution and Infinity 2024. Unfortunately, it didn't quite work out, because it took longer than planned, especially in the area of production and process development. "We worked on the new Infinity for over two years. For the new nozzle, we sometimes had a CNC machine occupied for three months just for testing, developing and researching, without producing a single saleable product. Due to the new, hard material, tools were constantly breaking and we had to replace them again and again," reports Warrick. Even the

company's anniversary celebration had to be put on hold and took place a year later, in September 2024, during an evening boat trip in the port of Hamburg.

With the three new airbrushes, Harder & Steenbeck has not only presented modernized models in the last 12 months, but also a completely new understanding of its products and company: When classifying airbrush devices, it is no longer about the type of application, nor about even smaller nozzle sizes – it is about the user's level of knowledge and ability. And in airbrushing, this is largely dependent on the operation of the lever, which is why optimizing the lever and the lever travel and adapting it to the user's ability played a central role in all three models. It was with this in mind that the decision was made to launch the Ultra as the first of the three new developments and to emphasize its importance: In the future, the "beginner's device" should no longer only qualify as an entry-level airbrush by being priced lower than other airbrushes on the market, but should also take the user by the hand and literally provide an "airbrush workshop on the device", including clear lever feedback, clear setting options and a secure needle guard with improved access and visibility of the needle tip.



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From caricature to airbrushing

Cesar Deferrari and his love of freehand technique

For the Argentinean artist Cesar Deferrari, the airbrush is like a pencil: he loves working freehand and particularly enjoys caricaturing people, animals and objects of all kinds – preferably on T-

shirts. Cesar has been teaching all over South America for 20 years and recently also in Italy, Spain and Germany.

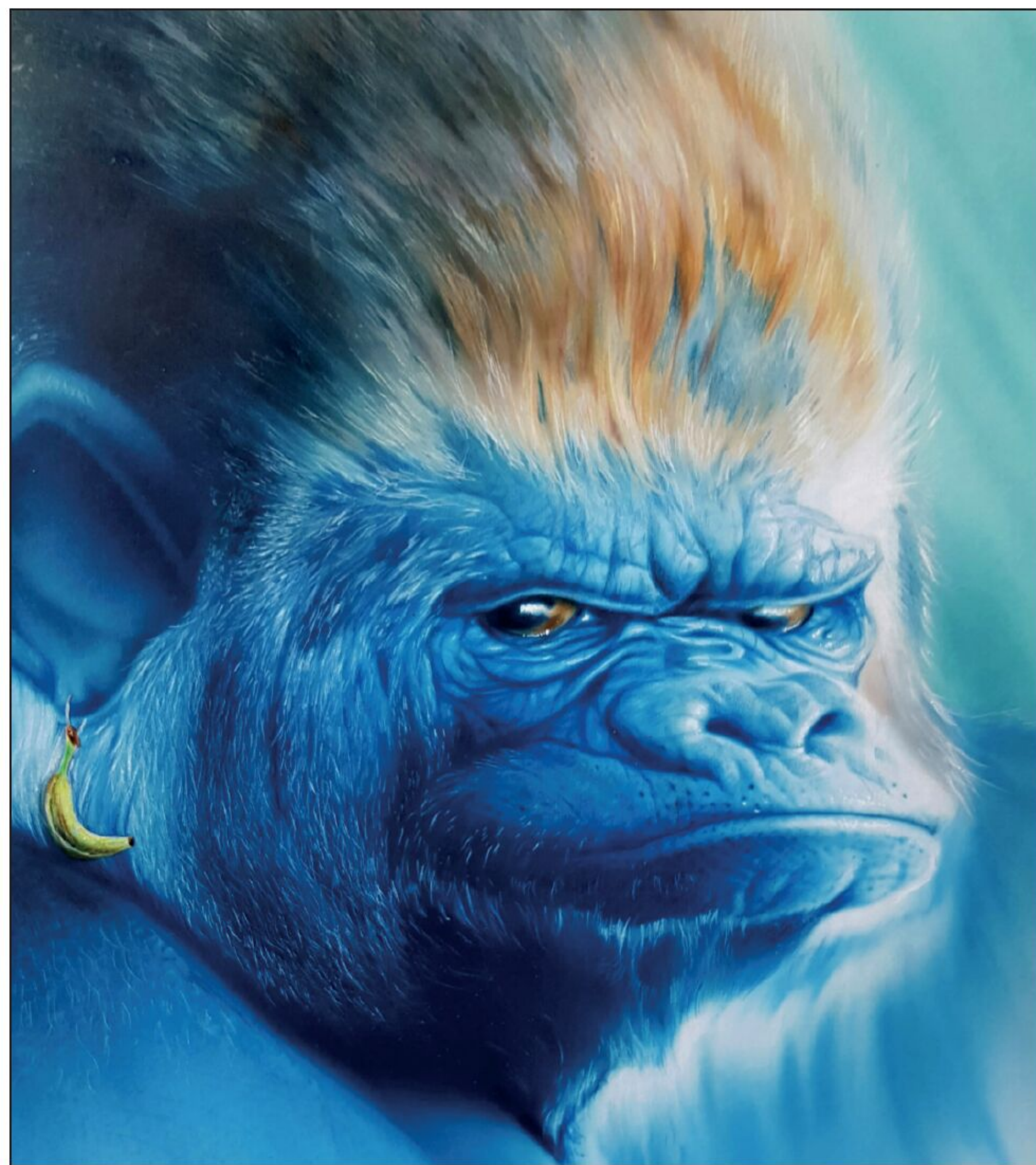


Hello Cesar, tell us something about your artistic background.

Cesar Deferrari: I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1970. I had my first experiences with caricature. I remember that in my childhood there were little figures of football players who were incredible, and I tried to copy them – that's how my passion for caricature began. Then I didn't do any drawing or painting for a long time until I started teaching myself to draw again at the age of 20 and decided to study at the Mitre Institute of Drawing and Painting. There I spent two and a half years (without being able to complete it) learning traditional techniques with pencil, oil, tempera, ink, acrylic, etc., with a lot of emphasis being placed on color theory.

How did you get into airbrushing? Was airbrushing very common in Argentina at the time?

Cesar Deferrari: After studying traditional techniques, I discovered airbrushing. I took a six-month course in the masking

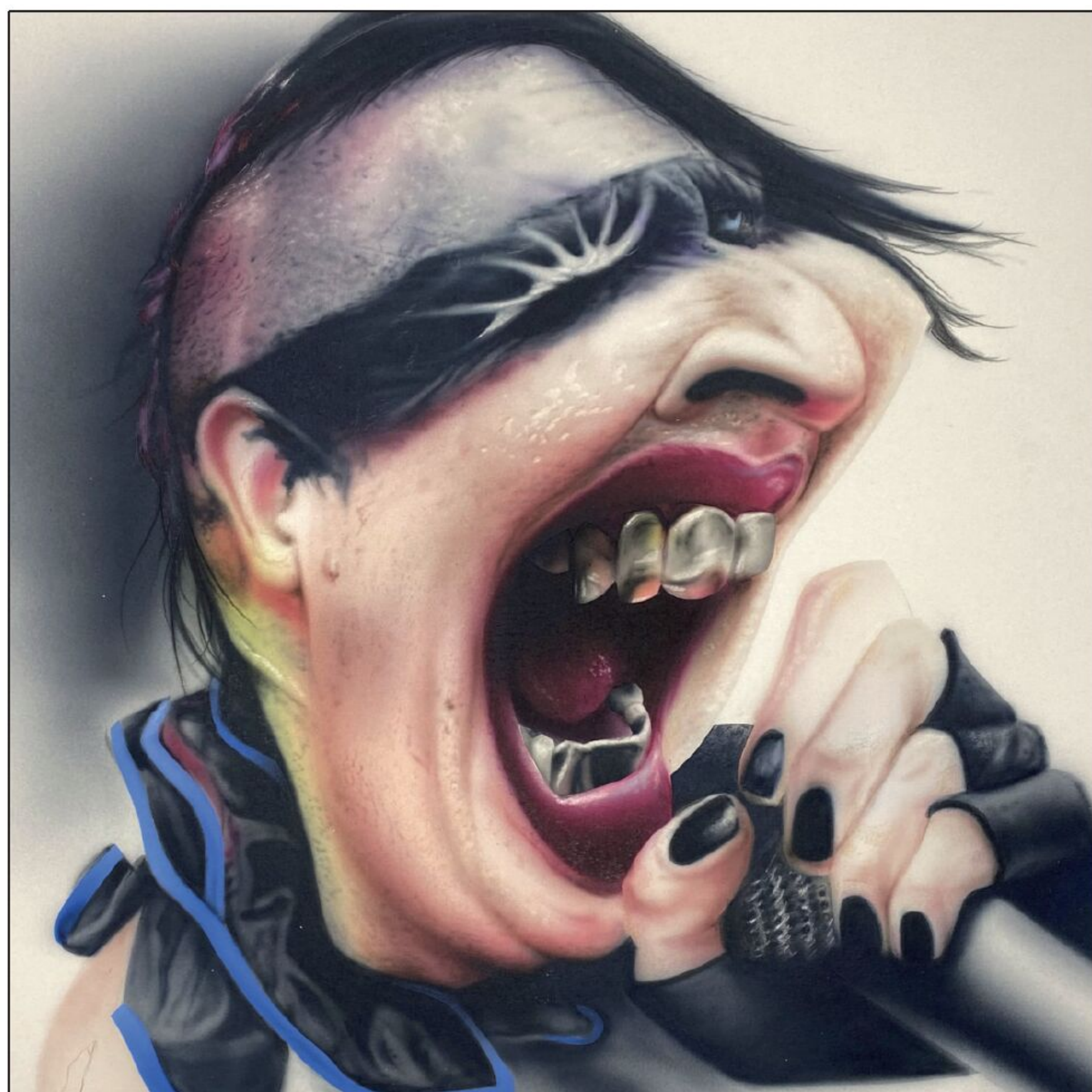


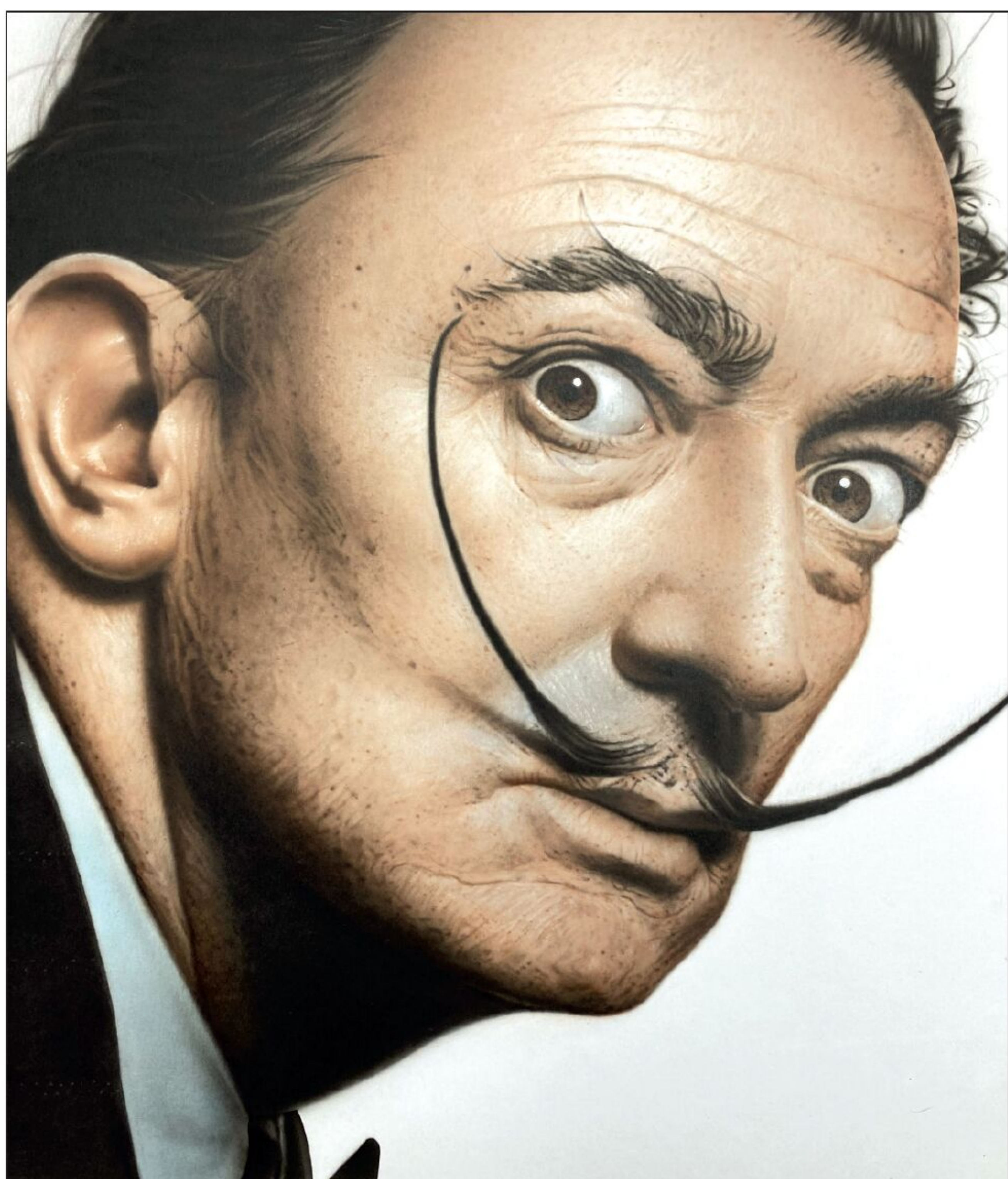
film technique on illustration board. It wasn't a technique that particularly appealed to me because I wasted more time cutting and making stencils than I did painting. It was a technique that was more oriented towards illustration – very typical of the 90s. Until I managed to find masters of the free-hand technique. Then I took a course that lasted about a year, and from then on I saw it as a way of life, being able to make a living from airbrushing. At the same time, I had learned tattooing, so I pursued both activities as my main occupation. Then came the moment when I had to choose one of the two activities, and I chose airbrushing, which was less lucrative but the one I enjoyed the most. At the time I started airbrushing, freehand technique was flourishing in America, and it is still

very successful today. Here, 90% of airbrush artists use this technique.

Is airbrushing used more professionally in Argentina or also by amateurs?

Cesar Deferrari: Yes, it is used both ways, airbrushing is a good professional option. Most start as a hobby, but soon the opportunity to work independently opens up for them. Then it becomes an alternative. If they lose their job, they continue with airbrushing. Fortunately, there are many airbrush artists in Argentina who paint. And nowadays there is a strong culture of advertising banners and large-format posters, in soc-





cer, in politics, among students, trade unions, etc.

What equipment do you prefer to work with now?

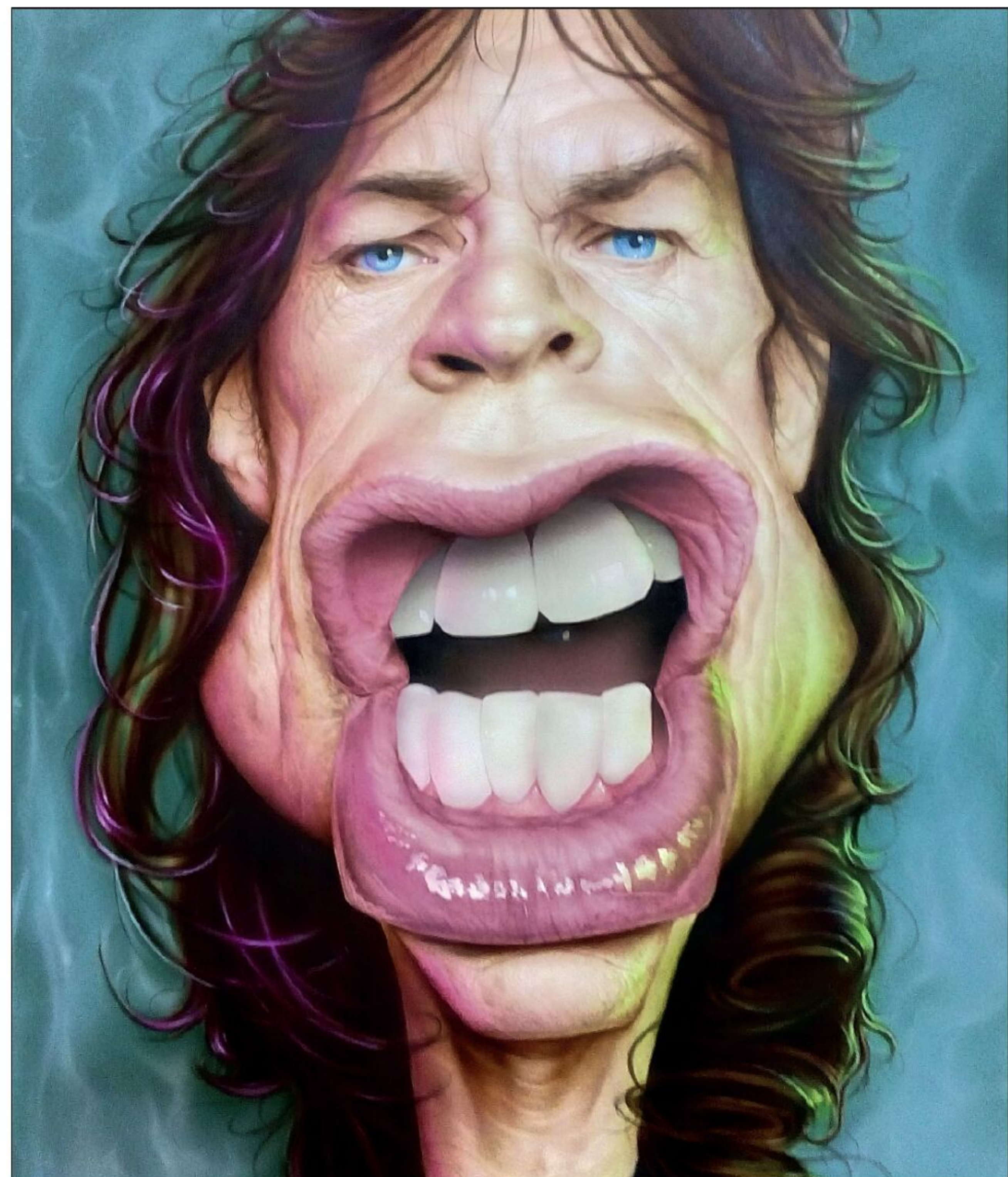
Cesar Deferrari: In terms of compressors, I use dental compressors, dry piston compressors that allow me to use several airbrushes at the same time, and even a small spray gun. The airbrushes I use are from Badger and Iwata. I use several models from Iwata, including the Eclipses and the Custom Micron. Of the Badger line, I use only the Sotar 2020, although I have also used the Patriot and the Renegade Krome. And lately, I've started looking into the Creos, which are Japanese and I'm just getting used to them.

What fascinates you about cartoons and caricatures in terms of airbrushing?

Cesar Deferrari: I liked caricatures since I was very young, even before I knew about airbrushing. So the subject of drawing is very relevant because it is my way of creating more original airbrushing work. When we talk about caricatures, we are not only talking about people, but also about pets, animals, cars, objects, etc. Anything can be caricatured, even airbrushing! Hahaha!

What are your preferred painting surfaces and do you also do commissioned work on other surfaces?





Cesar Deferrari: I do a lot of painting on t-shirts. That's something I still enjoy doing today. But I also like painting on paper and on hard surfaces like motorcycle tanks or helmets, although I'm not that specialized. Since I'm lucky enough to make a living airbrushing, I do all kinds of jobs. So I can paint sneakers, a 3D print, a canvas, clothing such as jackets, pants, advertising banners, murals, and even some weird things like a wedding dress, a billiard cue, cell phone cases, and more.

Are the designs on the t-shirts always created individually for the customers or are there also free designs?

Cesar Deferrari: In general, they are designed for the customers, but sometimes we also have the freedom to design. If the customer comes up with a design, I try to personalize it, to vary it, to create a new, more personal version and not to make a copy. Sometimes I do the whole drawing from scratch, sometimes I just change a few things.

I have already had the opportunity to watch you teaching in Spain and Mexico. How long have you been teaching and what do you specialize in?

Cesar Deferrari: I've been teaching for more than 20 years. My technique is the American technique, which is the free-hand technique that I've been teaching since the beginning and it's very focused on textiles. But over the years I've expanded the course to include how to paint on different surfaces.

You also do online seminars, right? Does that work well and how did it come about?

Cesar Deferrari: Yes, that came about with the pandemic. I

didn't do any online classes before until I was forced to teach in that format. Although it was difficult at the beginning because I didn't have the right technology, I now feel very comfortable teaching that way. I feel that several of my colleagues have started offering these courses during the pandemic, but they have already returned to normal. There are many advantages that in-person teaching does not have, for example, the courses are recorded and students can see the teacher from "beginning to end" as often as they want. Another important factor is that I can reach many more people who cannot attend in-person classes due to distance. Today, I am not only able to teach people from Argentina, but also from other countries such as Chile, Uruguay, Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico, Costa Rica, the United States, Spain and Italy, who are taking my virtual classes. That's why I believe there is great potential in this.

Thank you for this interview, Cesar.

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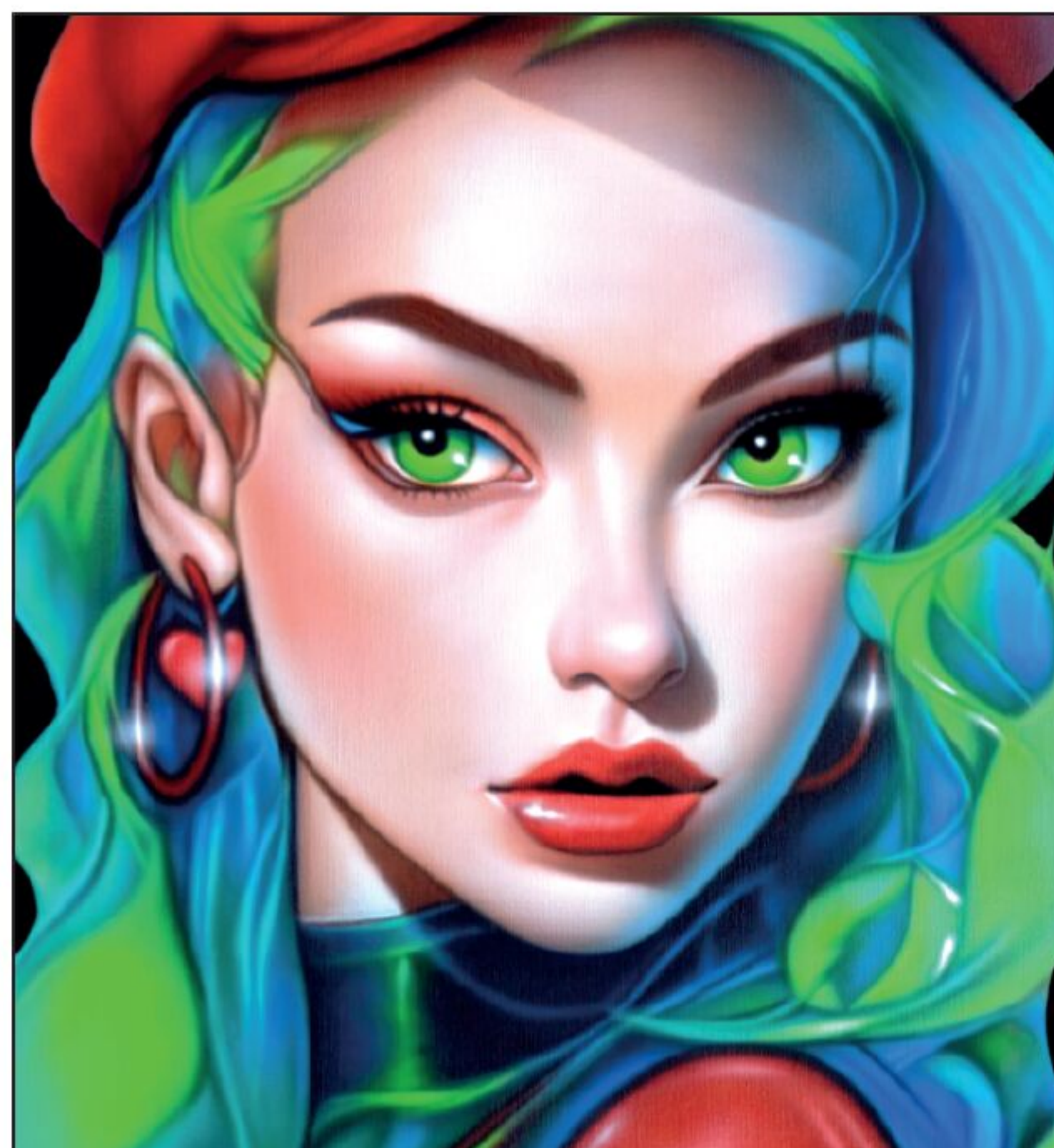
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Preview

Airbrush Step by Step 75 will be available from March 28, 2025.



AI Girl

Artificial intelligence often produces images that are more than perfect – or over- or unnatural, depending on your point of view. Carlos Cartagena has painted a high-gloss portrait like this.



Kiyomi Racer

The Asian racing driver looks determined to win as she peers out from under her helmet. Canadian illustrator Dennis Mott's detailed portrait uses only a few colours to great effect.



More than a nude

The Ukrainian-born artist Mitya Ka combines a realistic depiction of a woman with an abstract, almost geometric background.



Fire Girl

The girl's red hair glows even more brightly in the light of the candle and her skin tone is illuminated in yellow. The Hungarian artist Geza Nagy conjures up a magical portrait with warm light.



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