

## Art in the making 1. "Fire Burning the Whins"



### 1 Laying in the sky and fire

I create the sky using pale blue. After blending the blue, I put in the reds, yellows and oranges, remembering that the hottest part of the fire is the whitest. I then cover all of the fiery places by working from the lightest hot spots outward to the deep crimsons and reddish browns. Blending carefully, I keep a vertical pull or curve in line with the direction of the flame, but I don't mix the colours — they must be kept clean. If I get the sky right to start with, the atmosphere is fixed for the rest of the work.



### 2 Drawing the twigs and flames

I put in the skeleton of the little burning twigs and fiery spurts, but will leave the highlights until the end. The twigs vary — some are bright red and glowing, and some are still black on the inside. I bulk these out when I go over them again because a double line is often effective. I spray a fixative lightly over these marks to prevent dark dust settling.



### 3 Establishing smoke and trees

I sweep in the smoke with varying light shades and tones of umbers, browns and ochres because the whin plant burns with a definite yellow/brown smoke. Visualizing in my mind how it goes up in coils and circles, I blend in these directions.



### 4 Defining the smoke

Now I create more definitive smoke. I spray fixative on the individual areas that would be covered by the smoke. Putting in all the necessary smoke, I very gently and carefully blend in small areas at a time until I complete the whole surface.



### 5 Perfecting the smoke

I create small spurts of smoke that creep up in pale blues and pinks. These are the additional bits of information that make painting fires so exciting. I brush off dust as needed for a wispy look.



### 6 Finishing with detail

I add small refinements like a few branches and twigs in front of the flames to quiet them. I then create highlights from the sun that light up individual branches, and accentuate by changing some of the colours from yellow greens to blue greens.