



Hillside Blues by Cliff Cavin

MAKE-AT-HOME BLUEBONNET PAINTING

When you close your eyes and think of Texas, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Is it the image of the rugged cowboy riding his horse out on the open range? Maybe you see a tumbleweed rolling in the wind or a field of bluebonnets. Texas is a pretty special place, not to mention it can be picture-perfect in the spring. Many Texas artists, such as those featured in the Janey Briscoe Marmion Collection at the Briscoe, draw inspiration from their surroundings for that very reason.

In this exercise, you can use your surroundings or think about a place you have visited. The most important part of the process is the feeling of being connected to nature. Use these steps to create a Texas bluebonnet landscape painting.

STEP 1: GATHER YOUR MATERIALS

- Watercolor paper
- Flat brushes
- Filbert brushes
- White acrylic paint or watercolor
- Blue acrylic paint or watercolor
- Green acrylic paint or watercolor
- Paper plate to use as your palette

STEP 2: STEMS AND LEAVES

- Start with a flat brush double-loaded with your green colors on the chisel edge.



- With the chisel edge of the brush, pull up a line to create the main stem.
- Make smaller chisel edge strokes for the side shoots. There's no need to be perfect—you will cover much of these with the bluebonnets.



STEP 3: PAINT TEXAS BLUEBONNET BLOSSOMS

- Load a filbert brush with dark blue paint. Using a reference photo or drawing, start adding your buds to the stems. To create the bud shape, press, twist, and drag your bristles to a point toward the stem.
- Fill in more buds as needed. Remember, less is more, so start with a few, step back and look at your flower, and add buds where they are needed. Adding is easy, but subtracting is more difficult.



- Remember, no two flowers look the same, so embrace diversity in your flower painting.



- Keeping adding petals until you like it, but don't add too many.

STEP 4: ADDING MORE DETAIL

- Clean your filbert brush. Load it with white paint.
- With the side of the brush, add white strokes to your blue buds and at the top. On the example image, the background is green so the white tip will show up. Make the white tip a bit more conical than shown on the image to make it truer to a bluebonnet.



- You can thicken the strokes as you see fit once you've completed the basic chisel strokes. Also, you can add more leaves to the other side if you wish.

STEP 5: SHARE!

Take a photo of your new masterpiece and share it with us online. Be sure to tag **@BriscoeMuseum** and use the hashtags **#BeyondTheBriscoe** and **#TheWestStartsHere** so we can find your awesome work of art.