

Painting a Cityscape at Night

by

Roberta Barbarić

Artist, Professor, Graphic Designer

Mostar, Herzegovina

Using the app “Brushes”, Roberta Barbarić starts with a dark summer sky, and teaches us to fill the frame with beauty, depth, color, faith and hope.



Since we're painting at night, we start with large, opaque strokes to create the dark blue background, and then a tan brush to rough in the composition.



The Old bridge of Mostar is made of stone, so during the day it's all grey. At night, there are large yellow lights surrounding it, so it turns many of the stones to a golden hue, yet leaves some stones grey in a beautiful patchwork.

iPhone painting is great because you can redo parts of the image over and over again until you are satisfied with the result. While painting the old bridge, the ambience of the sky and the light changed several times before the piece was finished, and these changes are expressed as very light washes of color, blended together to create atmosphere.



Next we define the horizon with details we see through the bridge, some foreground building details, the water below and it's reflection.



To paint a proper starry night, we have to zoom in quite a bit. That way, using a very tiny brush, we can draw dots that will be softened later, to give the impression of distant stars. The addition of green foliage helps establish a vivid foreground and a link to the background.





Finishing touches include adding some deep reds, to make the distant hills more vibrant, warming up some of the window light and then, using very small opaque brushes, to paint in all fine details on the rooftops and the bridge.

This is the town of Mostar. This famous, 600 year old bridge stands in the middle of the city and it connects the two sides of the city. Christian and Muslim. During the War this bridge was destroyed, and it has since been rebuilt. I like to create beauty here, in the hopes that my art can shine a different light on this place called Mostar, and help heal the wounds of the past.



The Old bridge of Mostar

Roberta Barbarić fills the frame slowly but surely, showing the steps to adding light, color, reflection, and the soft sparkle of faraway stars through the evolving nighttime haze.