

DAVID RANKIN WATERCOLORS
Stages Brochure[©] ~ 62410

Snow Leopard Gray Study

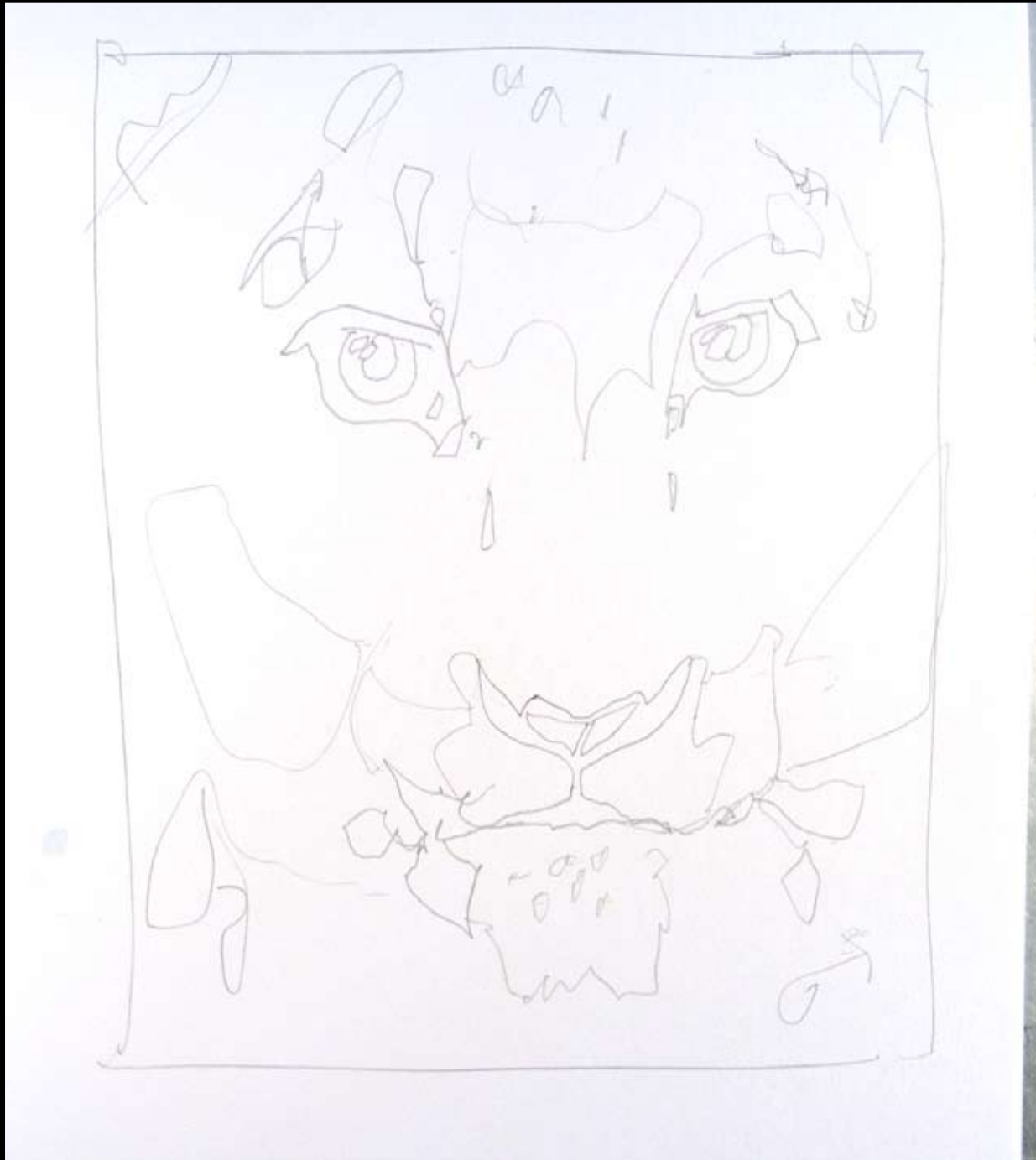


I use Gray Studies to quickly try out an idea that I have in mind for a larger more finished full color watercolor. And this procedure is one of the major skills I train artists in so that they can develop their own ability to see and paint colors in more correct values.

And here is a good example for you to review and possibly try. The procedure is easy to execute, once you understand the precise Recipe.

Gray Study Recipe© Stages

- 1) Do a light linear drawing of your subject.
- 2) Define all of the Whitest, Lightest, Brightest areas with a light mid-value gray.
- 3) Develop the darker areas using a "Near-Darkest Dark" gray.
- 4) Work back over the initial gray with a slightly darker gray to bring out the form.
- 5) Establish Darkest Darks to finish image.



Gray Study Recipe©

Stage 2: Define the Whitest, Lightest, Brightest

This is a confusing procedure at first because you are going to look for... and paint around... all of those areas that you see that will be the lighter areas of the final image. And in painting this initial wash of light gray... you must paint over and around... everything other than these lighter areas.

This can be confusing because you'll paint right over

the areas that will be darker as well as all areas... other than these lighter brighter areas.

The image below shows this stage completed. Notice how I've left very distinct areas of white paper.

This is a major skill in transparent watercolor. Many beginners tend to resort to the use of Frisket to reserve these white areas. But that will actually weaken your skill-set rather than develop it. Use Frisket... Only... when you can't achieve an effect with brushwork.

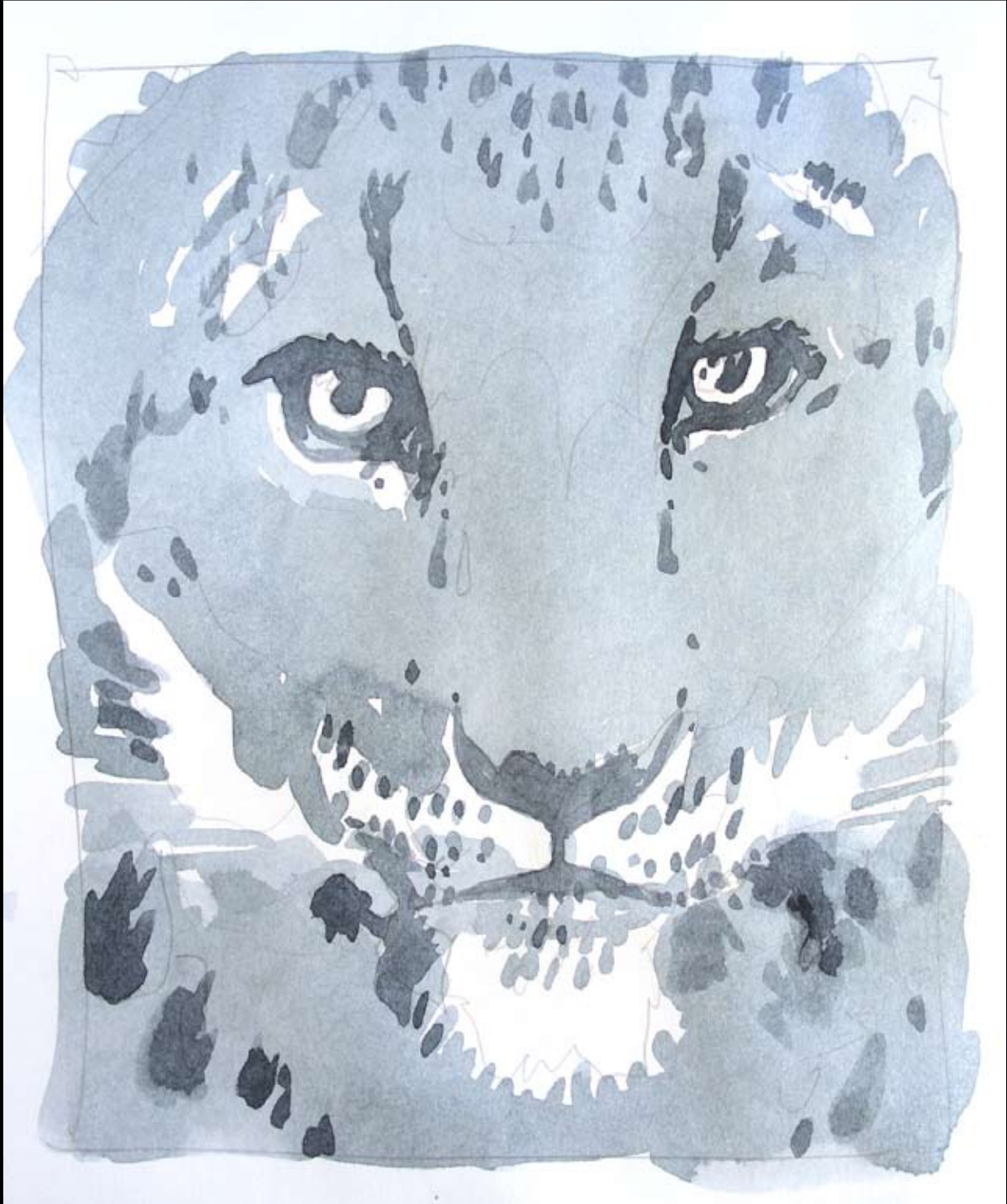


Gray Study Recipe©

Stage 3: Near-Darkest Darks

Mix up a darker mixture of Paynes Gray and use it to paint into the darker features of this Snow Leopard. Don't keep darkening these areas. Instead work all over the subject developing these dark areas with good brushwork and a mixture of gray that is not too

dark nor too light. It needs to be a couple shades darker than whatever gray you used in the initial painting stage... when you first defined the whites.

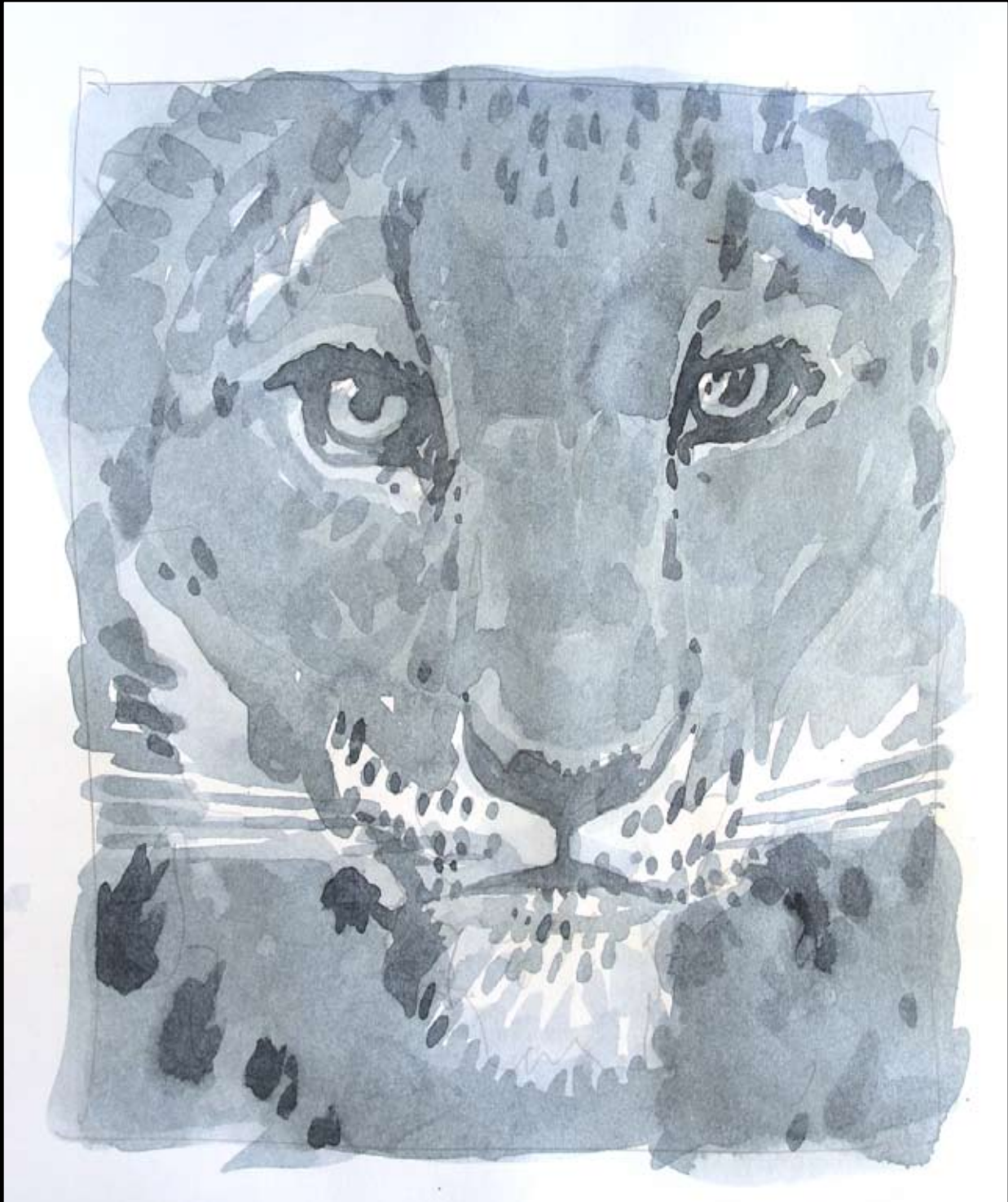


Gray Study Recipe©

Stage 4: Develop the form

Once you've worked your Near-Darkest Darks into the dark areas... mix up a lighter value gray to develop the form. This value must be lighter than the Near-Darkest Darks... but darker than the initial value you used to define the whites.

I use this PDF file because it helps me to demonstrate the visual effect of certain stages in a dramatic way. Go back & forth between the previous stage and this one so that you can clearly see the visual effect I am trying to get you to see and understand. Remember... this is all done merely by learning how to make better use of color values.

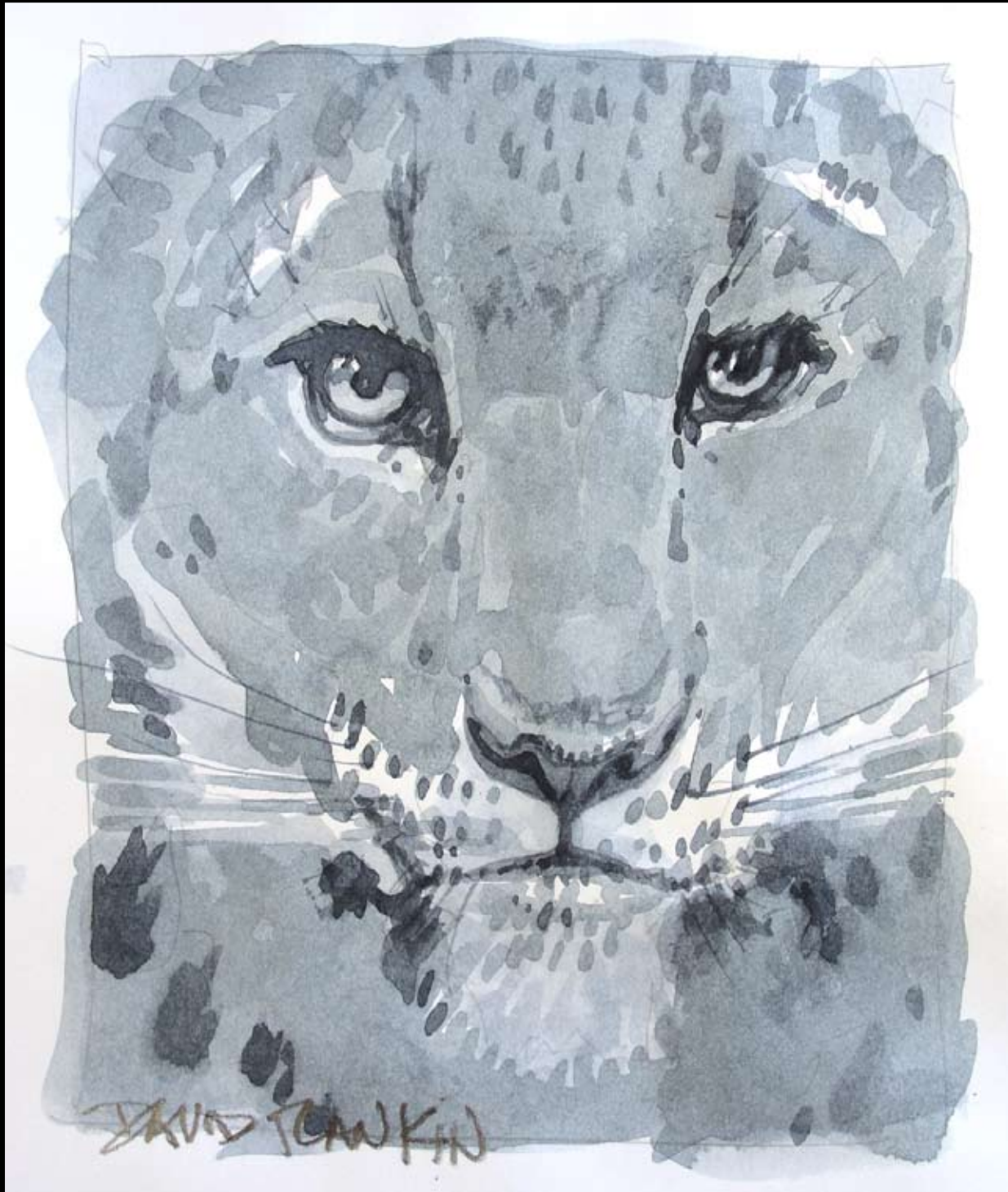


Gray Study Recipe©

Stage 5: Develop Darkest Darks

This last stage is where you'll work into your dark areas with a Darkest Dark. You can see this distinctly darker value brushwork clearly in the leopard's nose. And if you page back & forth in this PDF file you'll see it happen right before your eyes.

Remember that this is one of my actual Watercolor Training Recipes©. A Recipe is different from just step by step photos of an artist creating a painting. This is a Recipe that can be followed for virtually any subject. If you practice it in these stages you'll develop the skill so that you can then apply this same recipe to anything with much better results.



Gray Study Recipe© Final Notes:

Many artists have difficulty with watercolor because they have not developed their ability to evalu-

ate & paint color values correctly. This Recipe procedure however will rapidly upgrade your skills. Stay in touch... David Rankin / ddrankin@sbcglobal.net

