PLEEEEEEASE...
by Leslie Smith
While most of the kids are out knocking on doors and yelling, “Trick or Treat,” our black kitten, Zemi, is saying, “please.” She knows that when her Mama is offering a treat—especially a candy corn Swedish fish—she’d best be polite.

PALETTE
DecoArt Americana Acrylics
Blue Harbor #13283
Burnt Orange #13016
Cadmium Yellow #13010
Grey Sky #13111
Lamp (Ebony) Black #13067
Navy Blue #13035
Orange Twist #13256
Primary Blue #13200
Sand #13004
Snow White (Titanium White) #13001

SURFACE
Tall Pumpkin Grooved Board #62997

MISC. SUPPLIES
DecoArt Americana Multi Purpose Sealer #87392
DecoArt Dura Clear Matte Varnish #87395
DecoArt American’s Dura Clear Soft Touch Varnish #72013
DecoArt’s Paint Adhesion Medium (depending upon scruffy brush handle material) #84185
Standard kitchen sponge
Fine grit sandpaper
Transfer paper, stylus, etc.
Standard painting supplies (palette, water container, etc.)
Shop towel

BRUSHES
1 inch flat
Liner
Size 4 round (Lowell Cornell)
Size 8 flat (Lowell Cornell)
Scruffy brush (I use an old chippy brush that I have cut at an angle. Think of it as a deerfoot gone crazy.)

TECHNIQUES AND THEORIES
The background painting is done with a loose, casual slip-slap. The sky, moon, and trees are painted loosely.
Most of the contrast and details will be on her hand, the kitten’s face, and that treat. If you look at the kitten’s lower paws, they really don’t get your attention. This careful contrast in the level of detail and value will draw the viewers’ eye to the “focal area.”

This project has a bit of color theory to it. And we will do a bit of color mixing. Have you ever made pink? You just add white to something reddish. And every child is taught that blue and yellow are green. We will make pink and we will make green.

There are many ways to use complimentary colors; each has a different outcome. We will mix complimentary colors together (orange and blue) to make a dull grey that doesn’t appear to be orange or blue. We will place the complimentary colors (orange and blue) next to one another to make each appear to be brighter. We will rouge one complimentary color over other another to make it misty and get a greyish atmosphere without losing either the orange or the blue.

PREPARATION
Seal both sides of pumpkin with DecoArt Americana All-purpose Sealer. Sand lightly in direction of grain.

Transfer the moon and horizon onto surface. We will paint over the lines, so you only need approximations, but, the outlines will help us know when to change paints.

PAINTING INSTRUCTIONS
Sky
Start at the top stem with you wide flat brush and Navy Blue. Use a “slip-slap” or large, loose “X” strokes. Work downward to the approximate top of the moon and pick up some Primary Blue and blend into the Navy so there is no sharp line or division. It may look like a line of night time clouds, which is good. Pick up more Primary Blue on your brush and continue down to about 2” above the horizon. Pick up Blue Harbor, blend into the Primary Blue and paint downward, to beneath the horizon line. Let dry.

Moon
Using your favorite method, transfer the moon’s outline and horizon. Use slight pressure so you don’t leave grooves in the soft wood surface. Paint the moon with Grey Sky in some areas and Sand in
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Use the scruffy brush and Blue Harbor to stipple in some highlights to the bushes and tree canopies on the side nearest the moon. The bushes extend about two inches beneath the horizon line.

Tree trunks are painted with a liner and either Navy Blue or Blue Harbor. Remember that it is dark. One can see only because of the moonlight—so you can paint a trunk even where you cannot see the leaves of that tree.

Transfer Zemi the cat, the witch’s hand, and treat, using your favorite method.

Zemi, our little black cat
Follow the photos carefully. There are several details that you need to notice. Her fur shines blue in the moonlight, but the objective is to end up with a black cat—not a blue or grey cat. There is a second light source from the left, so her raised paw prevents full light from falling onto the left side of her face; the right side is brighter. Also, her face is turned slightly, so it is not perfectly symmetric.

Paint Zemi’s fur one area at a time, first using a Low-ell Cornell flat size 8 and Lamp Black. While the black paint is still wet, pick up Harbor Blue. Using the knife edge of the brush and lay in highlights along the edges. Repeat if necessary to get a good blue shine of light through the fur. A very few final highlights are Grey Sky or Snow White. If she starts to look blue or grey, either remove the highlights by painting over them with Lamp Black or washing over them with dilute Lamp Black.

Don’t forget to faintly highlight her toes, cheeks, forehead, ears and chin with the Harbor Blue.

Base in Zemi’s nose, mouth, eyes, inner ears, and paw pads on her extended foot with Sand. Sand is opaque and will cover any underlying blue or black to prepare for the future steps.

Mix Blue Harbor and Cadmium Yellow in equal amounts. Use this green to paint Zemi’s eyes. Shade along the top and bottom with a wash of dilute Lamp Black. Add pupils in Lamp Black and a tiny sparkle of Snow White; the sparkle on the right eye is brighter. Add a second sparkle beneath the first with straight Cadmium Yellow.

Mix Burnt Orange and Snow White to make any pink that you like. 50:50 yields a lovely shell pink. Using a small enough brush, cover her nose, inner ears, and paw pads.

Tuck a tiny triangle of Burnt Orange at the bottom “v” of her nose. Add Lamp Black nostrils and a highlight of Snow White along the top edge.

Paint her mouth with your pink, adding a little more others. Use a size 8 flat brush and keep your strokes arched so they form circles; the moon’s craters will form as if by magic. Don’t try to achieve complete coverage. Let the blues of the background show, adding depth. Wash the moon in random areas with a thin coat of Orange Twist.

Add a few faint clouds with Grey Sky; wash the bottoms of the clouds—with Orange Twist. You can use the clouds to cover any poorly blended areas of sky but keep the clouds sparse. This is still the background and it should not take over the painting.

Horizon
Add 2 drops of Lamp Black to a good sized pile of Navy Blue and paint below horizon. This is just to dull the Navy Blue a bit. Use a scruffy brush to pounce in bushes, breaking up the horizon. Paint the canopy for one or two trees on either side of the moon. Have these extend both in front of and beyond the moon.
white at the upper portion where her mouth is open. Use Burnt Orange to paint in the two fine lines where her moth is closed. Wash or float some of the pale pink along the top of her chin to finish her mouth (are those her lips?). Paint a fine white line to define the very top of her chin.

Use a liner to paint her inner ears are painted with your mixed pink starting at the tip. Tuck some lines of straight Burnt Orange at the base of her ears. If you use a variety of pinks—some with more or less Snow White, it will add interest.

There are several layers of hairs that cover her inner ears; they are Lamp Black and/or Harbor Blue. Paint these with a long liner and a light touch.

Paint the pads on the uplifted paw with your mixture. Add a soft highlight of Snow White slightly left of the middle. Shade on the right side with Burnt Orange. Paint in one tiny raised claw with Lamp Black and a liner.

Why didn’t I just grab a pink off my shelf or go buy a pink? I only need a few drops—and, trust me—it would be really hard to find any pink this perfect. Because it is made from Burnt Orange, it blends into Burnt Orange perfectly. It is a blend of two paints already on my palette and planned for the fish. As for the green—again—I only need a drop.

Highlight her claw and add a few whiskers with a liner brush and Snow White.
The Witch’s Hand

I know some of you do not like to mix paint. But, we’re only going to do two more mixes and they are easy. The results are a pair of yucky grey “kinda” colors. And, that is what we want for the witch’s skin… something yucky.

Even better, it will fit into the painting—guaranteed—because the two colors used to make each grey are already on the palette and in use. Complimentary colors make a grey. This was planned. It is impossible to mess these mixtures up—because it is a witch’s hand. That means that too blue or too orange is fine.

Mix two greys (each 50:50): (mix 1—dark) Navy Blue and Burnt Orange and (mix 2—medium)Blue Harbor and Orange Twist.

Base in her hand and nails with the medium grey. Paint the creases and her cuticle with the darker grey and a liner. Blend slightly to keep from having sharp lines. Highlight the ridges of her knuckle with Sand. Blend some of the darker grey between her thumb and forefinger and the small part of her palm that is showing.

Highlight her nail with Sand and then a final highlight with Snow White. Note that this highlight is further down on her nail. Her thumbnail is cracked and chipped. The cracks are painted with a liner brush and Lamp Black.

Sideload Orange Twist along the left side of her thumb, finger, and thumbnail; use Harbor Blue along the right. Don’t miss the tiny tip of her back finger, showing from behind her cracked thumb nail.

Use a flat brush to wash Lamp Black on her back nail; it is darkest near and behind her thumbnail. Use a liner to paint the edge and tip of her back nail with Snow White. This brighter white edge fades out before it gets to the shaded portion of her nail.

Candy Corn Swedish Fish

Paint the white stripe with Sand. Shade the right side with the darker grey mixture from the witch’s hand. Highlight this stripe with a flipped sideload of Snow White. The highlight is slightly left of center.

Paint the yellow stripe with Cadmium Yellow. Shade the right side with Orange Twist.
Sideload a narrower shaded area on the right. Highlight the yellow with Sand.

Paint the Orange Stripe with Burnt Orange. Use the—darker mix from the witch’s hand to sideload shading along the curved bottom edge of the fish’s tail and the small triangle formed where her tail flips up against the fish’s body. Highlight with the pink mixture. If you don’t get the exact same mixture as before, it doesn’t matter.

Edge along the right side of the fish with the green mix and continue this thin line along the curve of the tail. Paint a thin line of Blue Harbor along the top of the tail where it flipped. Outline the lower portion of the tail with the pink mix.

Paint the string with a liner and Lamp Black. Use the same liner and add some random sparkling highlights of Orange Twist in some areas and Harbor Blue in others.

Marrying Colors
First, we are going to “marry colors.” This term is used for a process during which the colors of each object are used, very stingily, to add color to all the other objects in the painting. They share. They marry. It is used to prevent isolated areas of color that don’t seem to fit in with the others.

At this point, we have a pale yellow moon, a dark forest, a bright blue sky, grey hand, a bright orange and yellow fish, and a black cat with some pink areas. It is time to marry these areas so they all sit comfortably in the same painting.

In general, the warmer colors will go on the left—the cooler colors will mostly go on the right. The strokes are few, and most are kept within the focal area. Compare the finished photo to Figures 2, 3, and 4. The changes are very subtle but very necessary to bring the finished project together.

Sideload pink along the left side of the witch’s knuckle. This may cover some of the Orange Twist already there. Sideload green along the right side of the witch’s knuckle. This may cover some of the Blue Harbor.

Wash some pink at the base of her nail. Wash a smaller area with Burnt Orange.

Using a liner, add some fur using the green and Burnt Orange (our cat already has the blues and pinks). Don’t get carried away. I added maybe four or five strokes—on the right side—and mostly on her up stretched arm and chest.

Wash areas the moon with the pink or green or Burnt Orange. You can also use Sand or Grey Sky, both of which are opaque, to clean up the edges of Zemi’s fur if it is too ragged.

Stipple some leaves or grasses with Burnt Orange, Orange Twist, Cadmium Yellow, green or even pink. It’s autumn and the leaves are colorful.

Let it dry, cover with a single coat of matte varnish, and let it dry again.

Final Step
To refresh your memory, Orange and Blue are complimentary colors. Mix them together, as we did for the witch’s hand, and they dull one another and create any variety of greys. Place them side by side and they make one another appear to be brighter. That is why the blue sky is currently “honking.” The brightness was deliberate, so it would support the next step. We are going to create some atmosphere by rouging orange on top of the blue sky, which will dull both the orange and the blue. But unlike when we mixed the orange and blue, we will not lose either. Both the orange and blue will still be visible.

Pour out a little Orange Twist and a little Burnt Orange. Wrap your forefinger with a shop towel, pick up a tiny bit of either orange and, with a circular motion, rub the paint into the blue sky near the moon. It doesn’t matter if you go onto the edge of the moon. Work outward. You can even go over the trees and into the grass. Play with it. It should be so sheer that it creates a mist, but doesn’t cover. Try the other orange. Repeat until the bright blue is misty; on the sample, the mist went up to about the orange stripe of the fish. Do not rouge Zemi, the Candy Corn Swedish fish, or the witch’s hand. Remember to rouge the blue edges of the pumpkin.

If the orange gets too heavy or unpleasantly streaky, take a moist cloth, wipe the orange mist off, let the surface dry, and try again. Don’t wait too long, or it will be harder to remove. If the forest is lost in the orange, remove enough to let the trees show with a damp cloth and/or stipple back some of the Navy Blue or Lamp Black tree canopies.

When you are happy, sign your name.

FINISHING
Apply two coats of DecoArt American’s Soft Touch.
Note: Dotted lines indicate that this should not be a harsh line.

Arrows indicate the direction of fur/strokes.

Line up the two “X”s in the moon to connect the top and bottom of the line drawing.
To ensure your pattern is at 100%, this box should measure 1" x 1" when printed.
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