

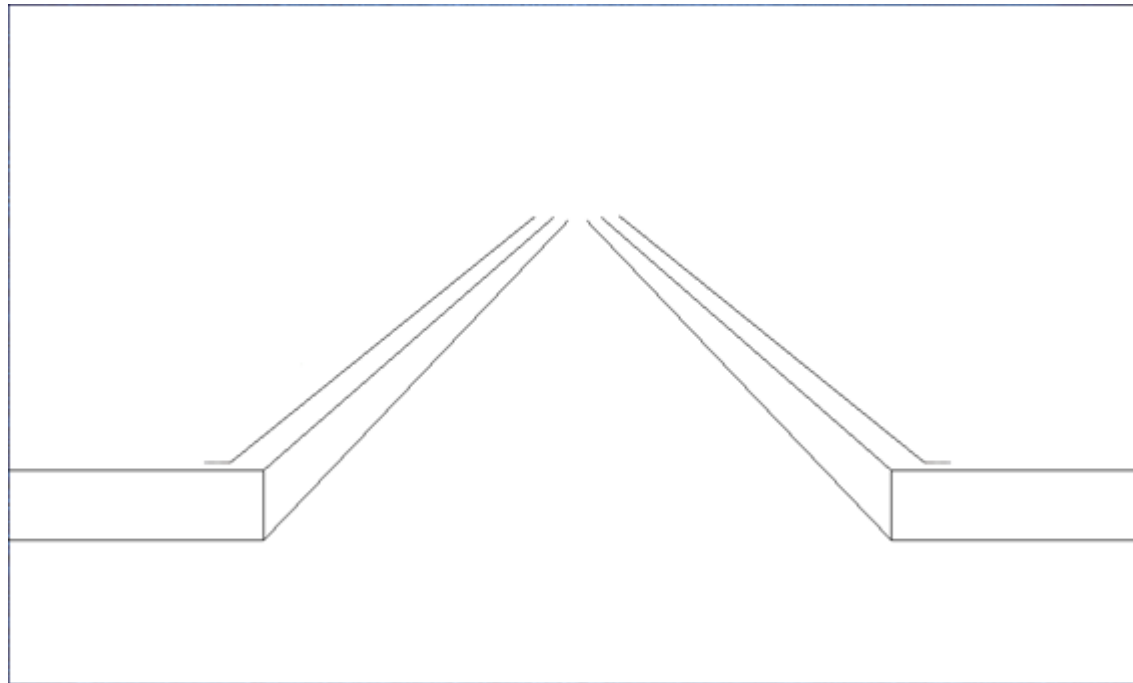
The Creation of the Surrealist Artwork “Modern Amsterdam”.

by Anthony van Bick

The aim of the artwork “Modern Amsterdam” was to create a representation, within the domain of the art genre “The Renaissance Moors”, which would depict the coexistence of East and West .

The initial idea was to adapt the artwork “Our Friends Connected” from the art sessions “Shoals”. This would involve intertwining canals in an adaptation of a Feynman diagram.

However, starting with a blank canvass, it transpired that the first act was to experiment by drawing the front view of a canal.



The brainwave came during this process: **East meets West at the vanishing point!**

[Aside: Parallel lines appear to meet at a point known as the vanishing point. So two separate areas depicting East and West will appear to join at this point leaving an ambiguous mixed area behind the vanishing point.

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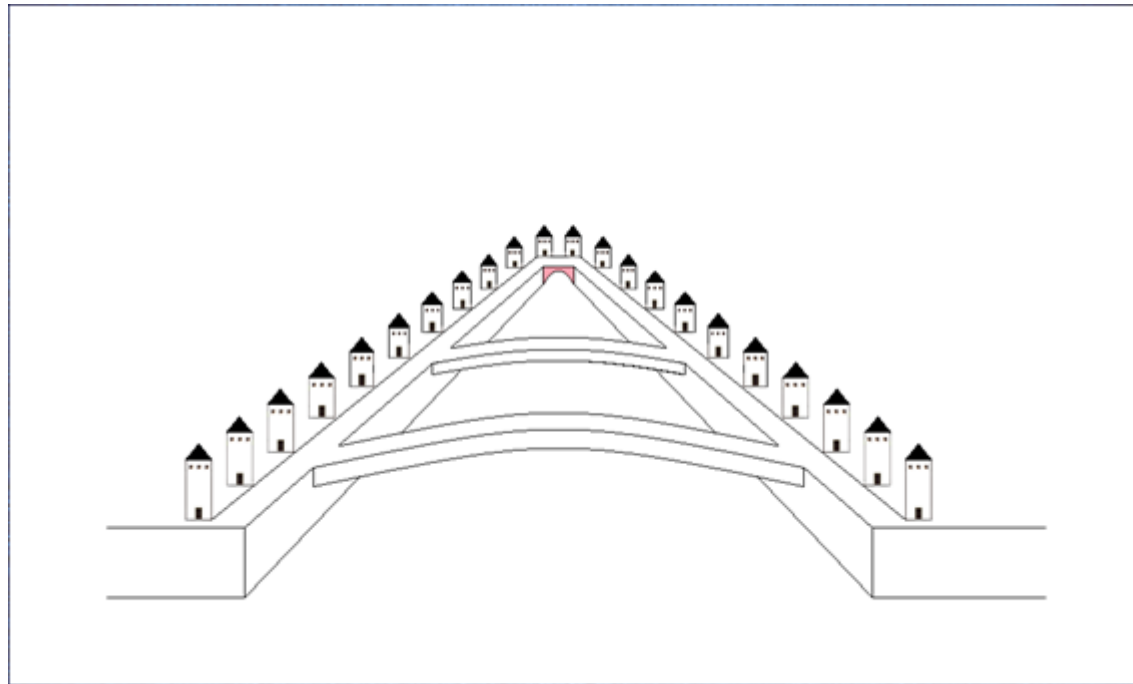
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[Running Commentary of the Creation](#)

With the conceptual foundation now in place, the next step is to obscure the vanishing point.

Add arched bridges over the canal.

Depict the Western district on the left-hand side and the Eastern district on the right-hand side using windmills!

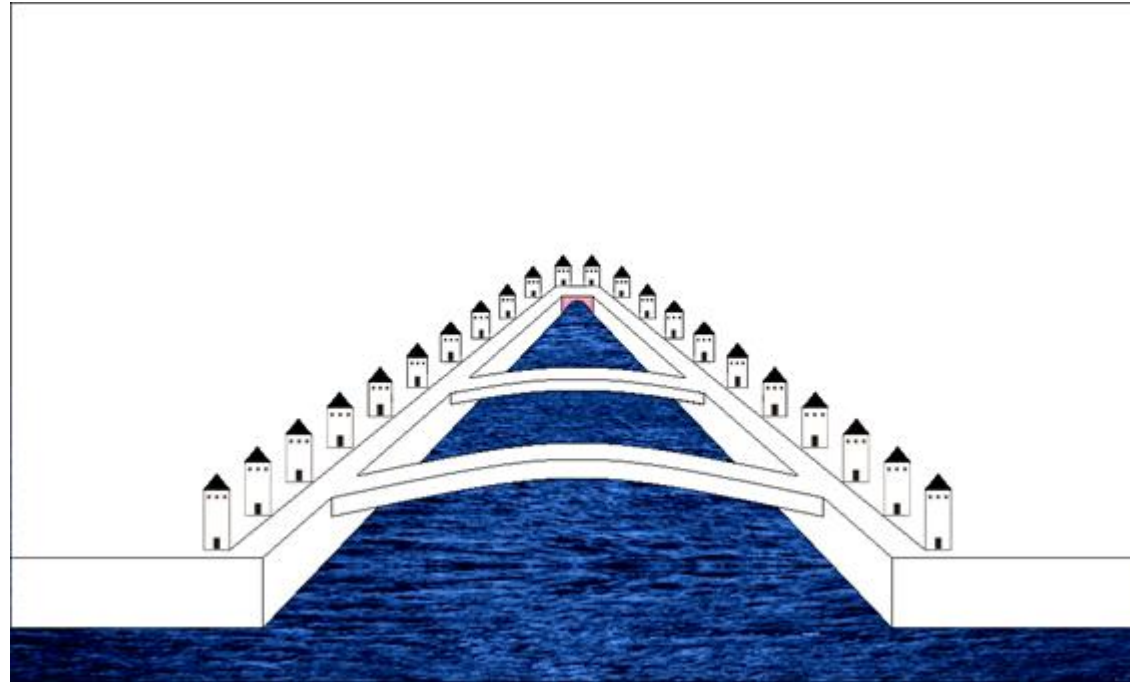


Reduce the size of the windmills beside the canal to give the appropriate perspective.

The picture is now taking shape. It is a matter of filling-in the districts with further windmills.

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Fill-in the canal using the water base from the art sessions “Shoals”.



A mosque is to be included to identify the Eastern district. This will shape the right-hand side but what about the top of the picture?

A simple blue-sky background could be used but that would squander an opportunity to apply artistic ingenuity.

So all the time that the main picture develops keep thinking about how to make the artwork stand out.

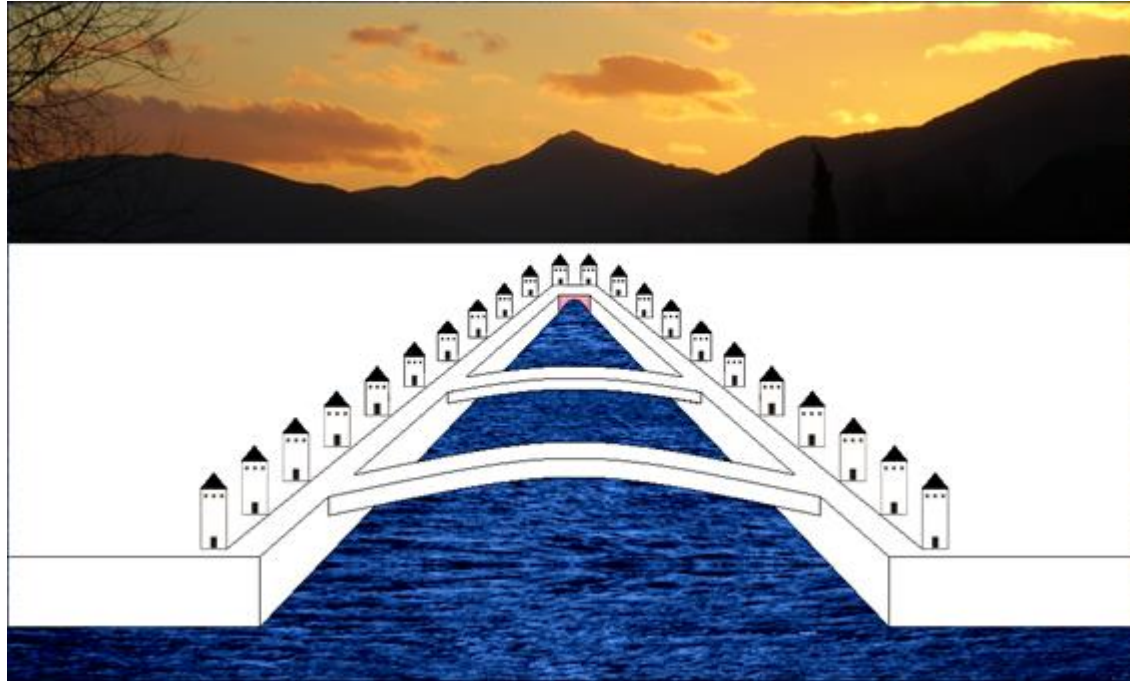
Time for some transposition. To make a link with the Renaissance Moors, pick up Amsterdam and plonk it down in the hillside of El Escorial in Spain.

This step adds a political dimension since it sets the dome of a mosque as the salient feature of the landscape rather than the 500-foot cross, further along the hillside at Valle de los Caídos, which effectively acts as a shrine to the military dictator General Francisco Franco.

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Superimpose a picture of the sunset over El Escorial into the artwork.

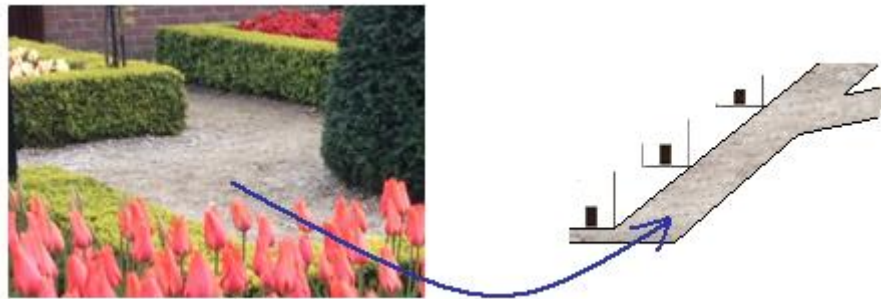
[Photo: Sunset over El Escorial (from Alpedrete) by Anthony van Bick.]



Now it is time to go off to Amsterdam to collect some genuine samples.

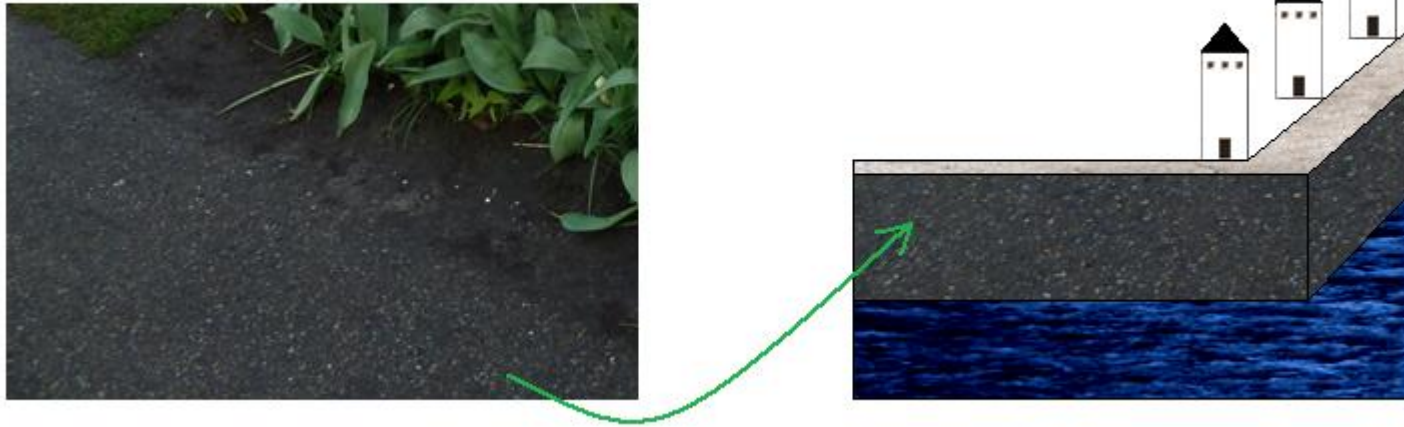
[Using samples produces artwork with more depth than that achieved by using computer generated colours.]

Start with the pavements.

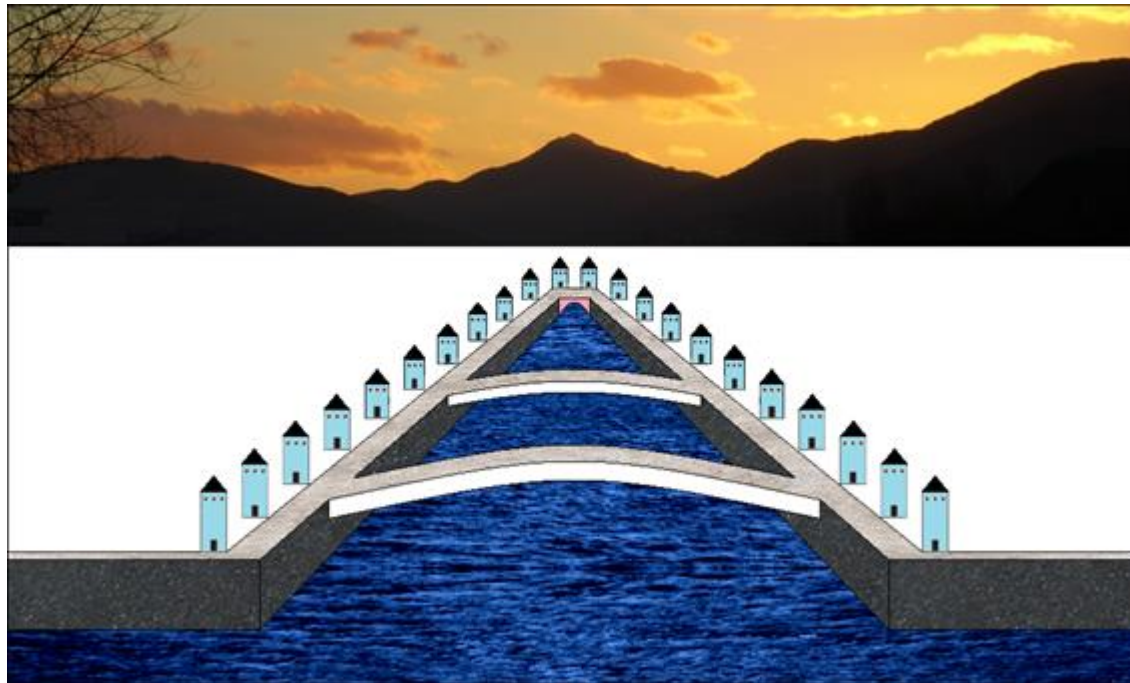


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Next fill-in the canal banks.



This sample choice is more to do with colour-coordination than worrying about foundations built on soil!



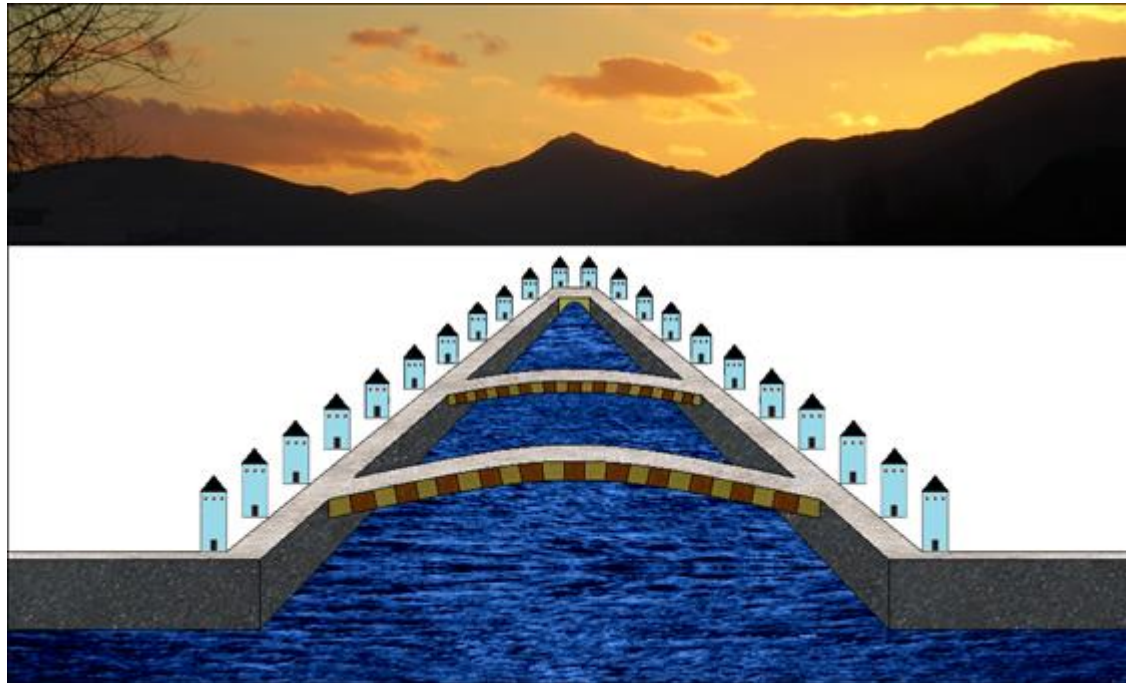
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Next, fill-in the arched-bridge designs.

The mere mention of arches regarding Islamic art turns attention towards the design of the arches in the Mosque of Córdoba (La Mesquita).

[Aside: In the context of coexistence it is significant to note that it is actually the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba.]

Use samples from the arch design to fill-in the bridges.



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Next, produce terraced windmills for the back edge of the city and also include a mosque template.



The tall windmills on the left-hand side represent the high-rise buildings of the financial district; illustrating the West's worshipping of capitalism.

It is worth noting at this point that since the Sun sets in the west then the Islamic district should be on the left-hand side!

However, the marvellous thing about art is that it is never wrong; it merely conjures up the issue of perception.

In this instance what is being demonstrated is that the partitioning of humans is detached from the reality of nature.

An alternative viewpoint would be that the artwork shows an Islamic enclave in the West.

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Now produce the layout of the windmills for the (political) West.



Next, contemplate how to fill-in the base.

A chance to display further artistic craftiness!

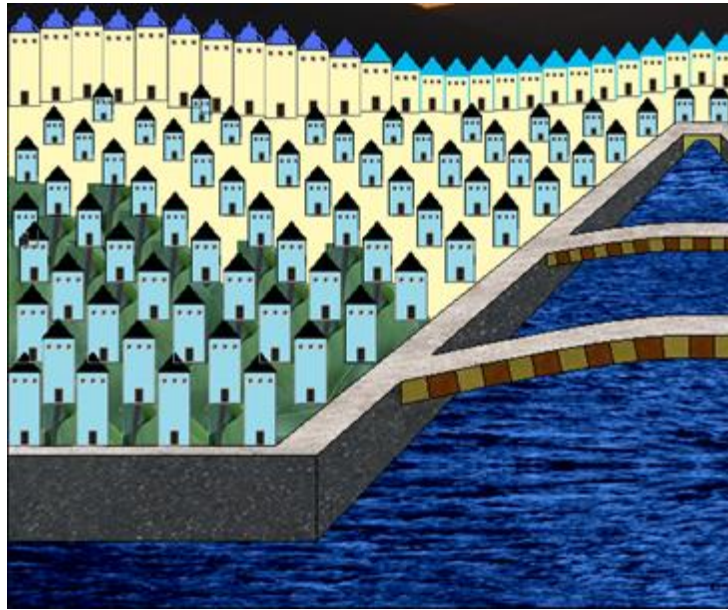
Regard the windmills as tulip flowers so that the base can be made to represent leaves of the tulip plants.

Align the windmills with the stems.

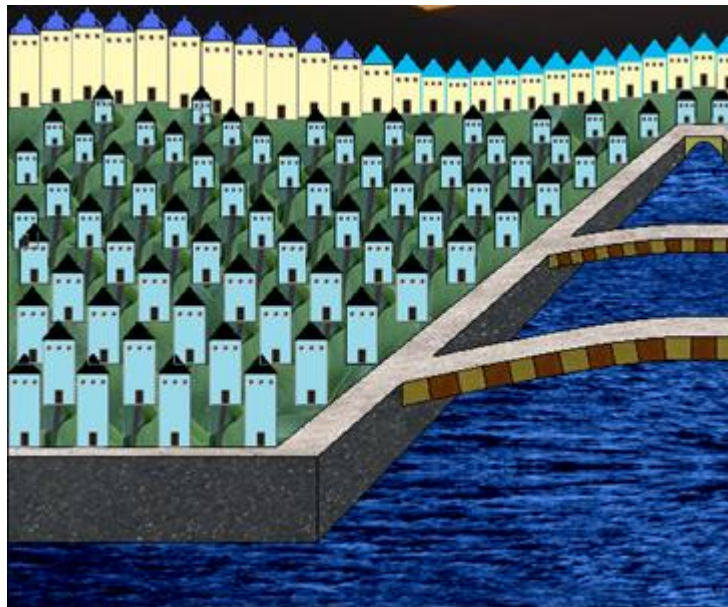


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Start to fill-in the base.

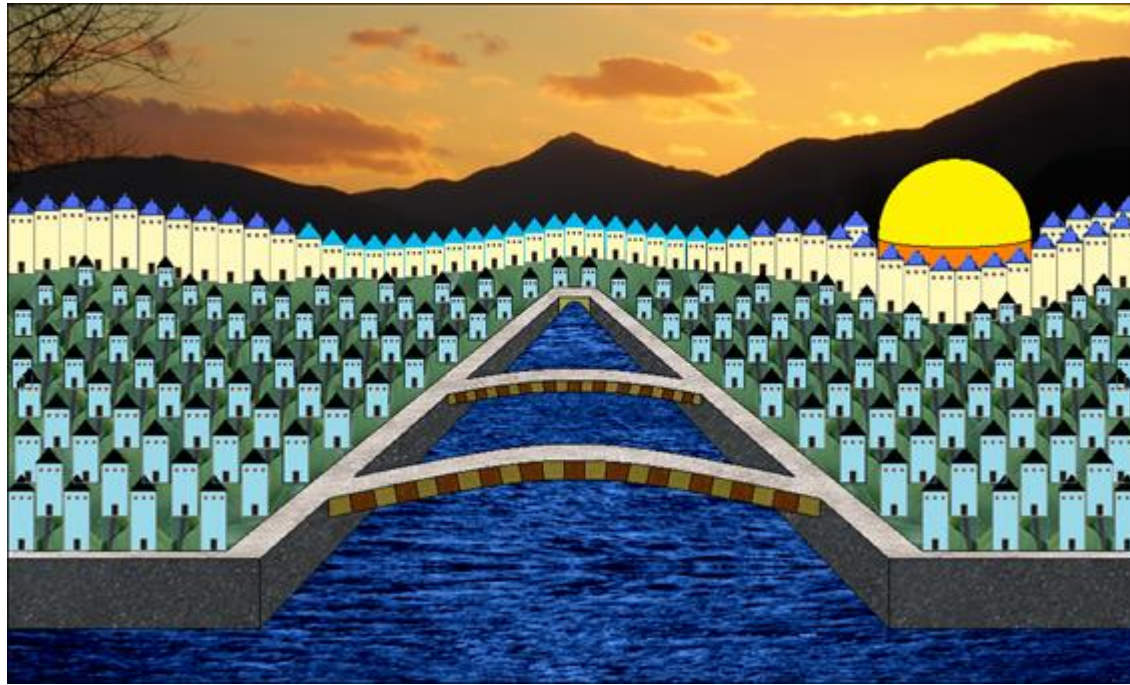


Complete the base on the left-hand side.



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It was a laborious task to complete the base but fortunately COPY and PASTE can be used to produce the base for the right-hand side. Use the free-selection tool then apply the image tool “Flip Horizontal”.



Produce a golden dome.

El Dorado dome version.



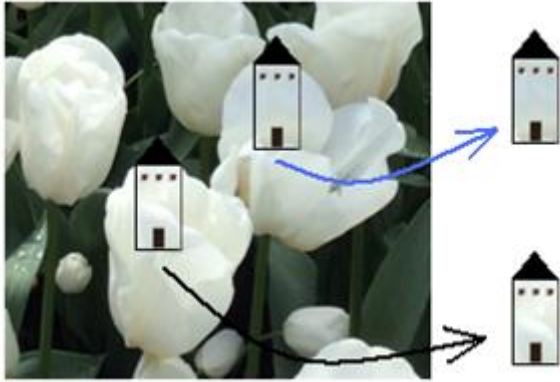
Plum gold version. [This version is used in a reflected tile to produce a panoramic view.]



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Back to Amsterdam now to obtain authentic samples of tulips.

Set the colours of the windmills of the Christian West as predominantly blue and white.



Note that significant colour variations may arise from the same batch of tulips so for consistency it is best to use the same region for different-sized windmills.



Tulipa “Cottage Maid” 1857



Tulipa “Van der Neer” 1860

The roof colour may be changed to add variety.



Produce a surround



Make the roof transparent



Place the design on a tulip picture



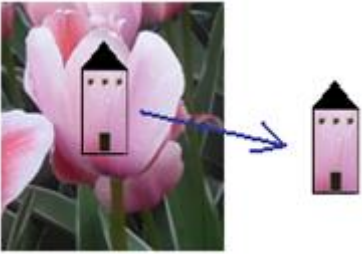
Use the paint tool to make the surround white.



Extract the windmill.

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The following design is used for the terraced windmills.



Again, the roof colour is changed to add variety.



Produce a surround



Make the roof transparent



Place the design on a tulip picture



Use the paint tool to make the surround white.



Extract the windmill.

Set the colours of the windmills of the Islamic district as predominantly red and yellow.



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The star “Al Maisan” (“The Shining One”)

Following on from the theme of “Los Padres en el Cielo”, the star “Al Maisan” is included to represent the encapsulation of the spirit of a lost loved one.



“Al Maisan”

Windmill designs from the art session “Al Maisan” are included on the right-hand side.



The Moors’ windmill template is included in the Eastern district.

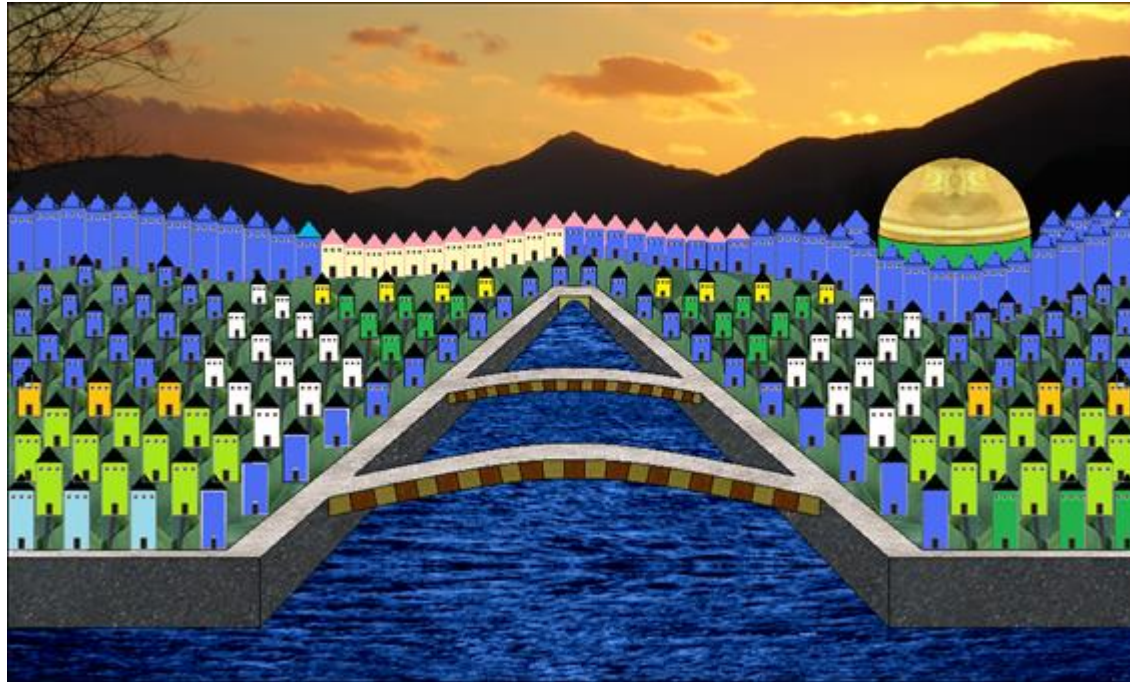


The brickwork on the Moors’ windmill template is sampled from La Alhambra in Granada.
This brickwork sample is also used for the mosque.



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A colour plan was used to assist the arrangement of the “tulip” designs.



Having completed the windmills it is now a matter of adding the trimmings.

Add a design to the top of the dome of the mosque.



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There is still time for more surrealism!

Add blossom baubles to the tree branches. Use tulip flowers!



Loose petals are added for a windswept effect.



Ethereal Gold

Include gold blossom baubles and loose gold leaves.



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Variations of the completed artwork may be placed together to produce a panoramic view.

