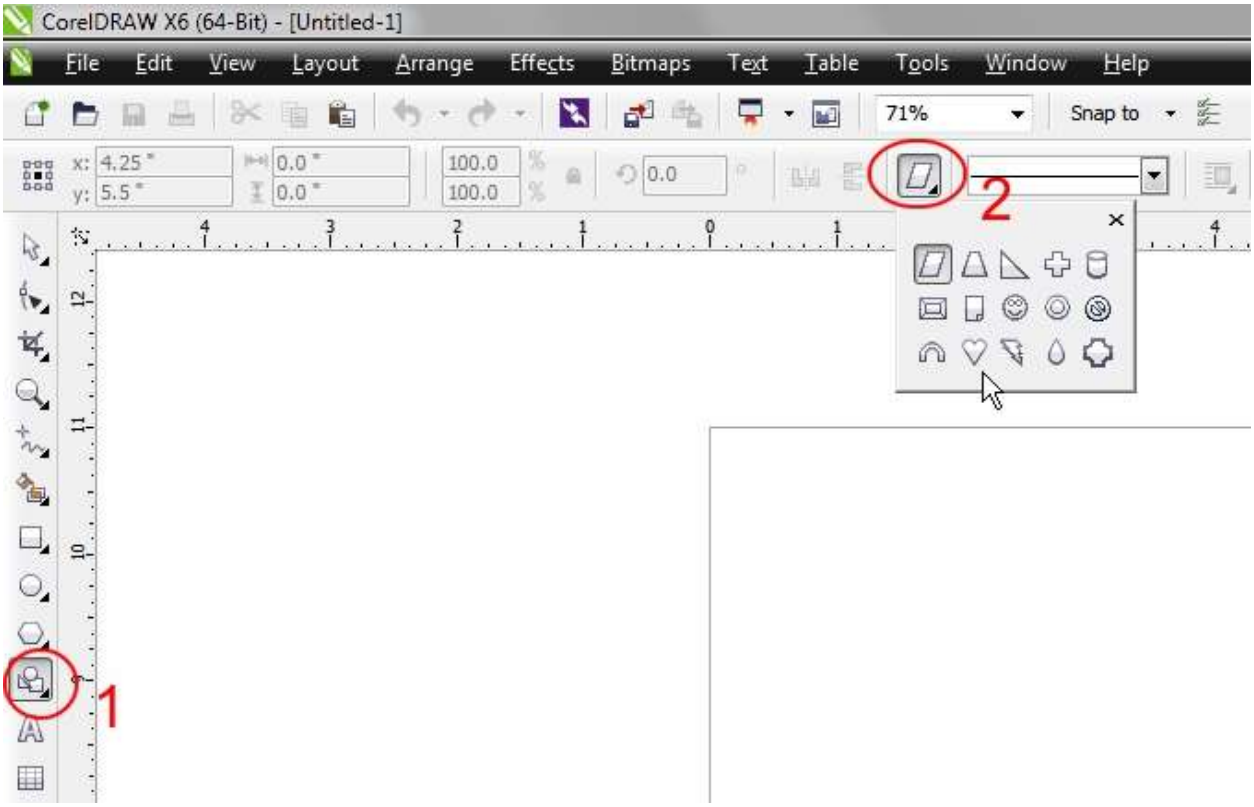
Creating a Valentine's Day Card with CorelDRAW

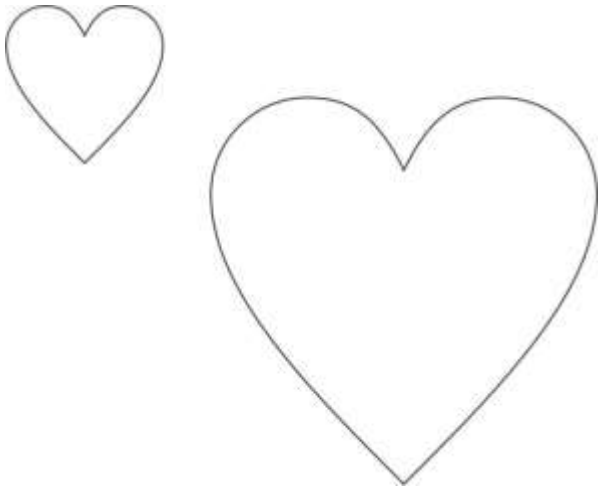
by Ariel Garaza Diaz

Let's create a Valentine's Day card. And, of course, in the spirit of the celebration, our design will have hearts — a lot of hearts.

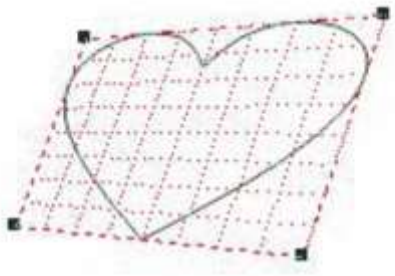
Drawing a heart with CorelDRAW® is very easy. Simply click the **Basic Shapes** tool, and on the property bar, choose the heart shape from the **Perfect Shapes** picker.



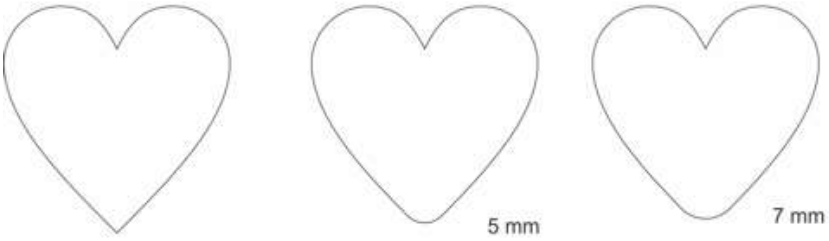
You can hold down **Ctrl** when you drag to create a proportional heart, or hold down **Shift** to create a centered heart. Naturally, you could create your own heart by using two circles and one triangle, and then welding the three shapes, but, why do all that work when using a perfect shape is so quick and easy?



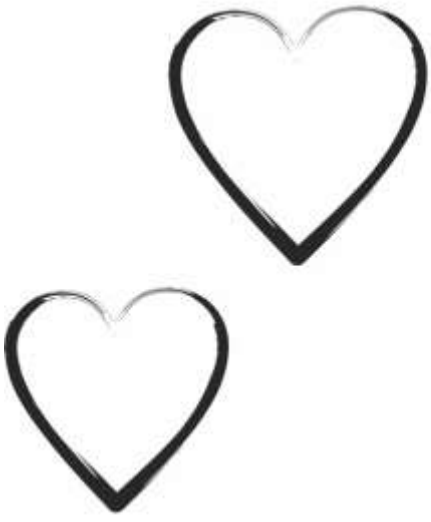
Now, we have our basic heart shape. There are many ways you can modify it; for example, you can add perspective by clicking **Effects > Add Perspective** and adjusting the perspective grid. You could also use the **Envelope** tool to create similar effects. Most importantly, use your imagination. There are infinite ways to create a unique and original design with CorelDRAW.

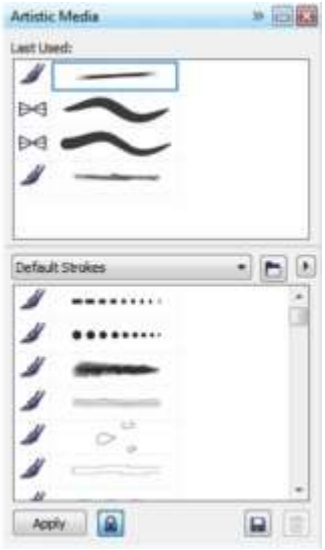


Want to add more diverse heart shapes? Select one of the perfect shape hearts and then press **Ctrl+Q** on your keyboard to convert it to curves. Then click **Window > Dockers > Fillet/Scallop/Chamfer**, and apply a fillet with an appropriate radius value. For this example, I've applied 5 mm and 7 mm fillets.

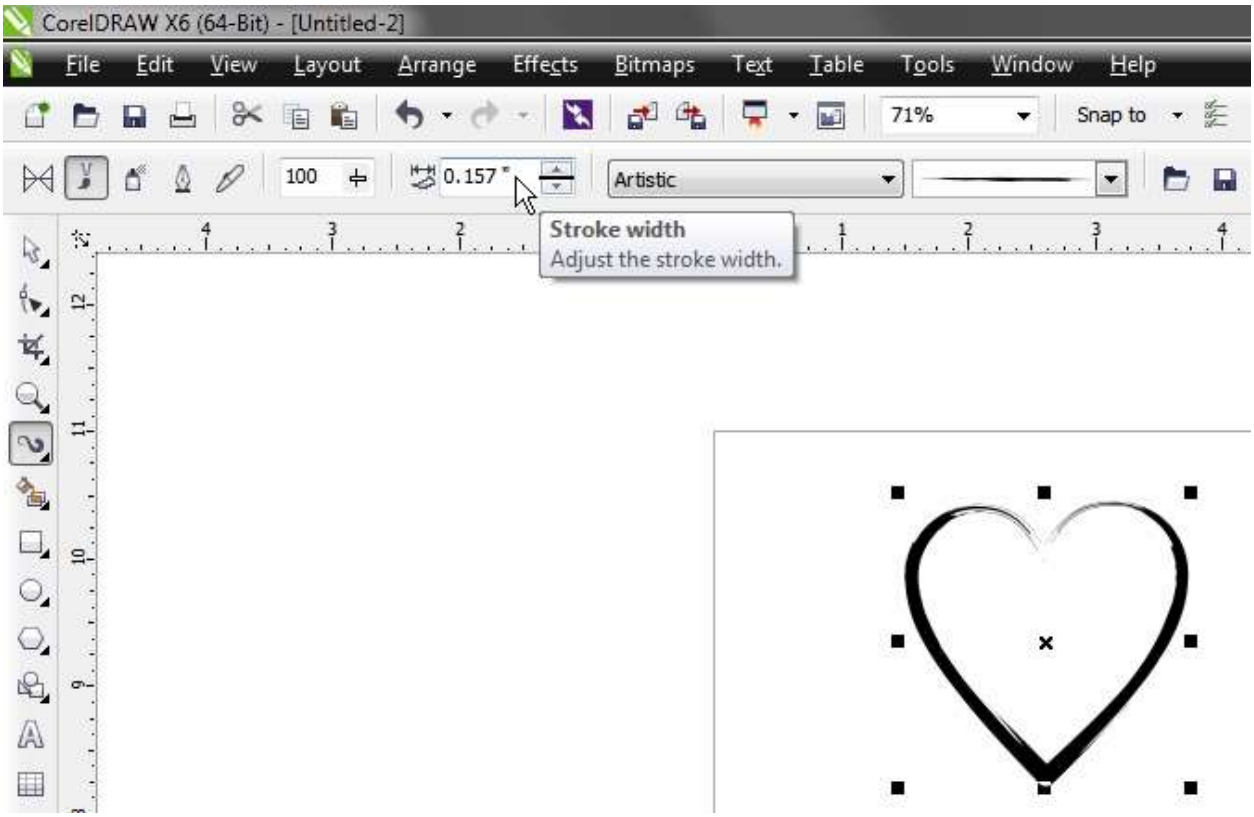


Now, let's use the **Artistic Media** brushes to add a custom outline. You can adjust brush settings from the property bar, but I like to use the **Artistic Media** docker (**Windows > Dockers > Artistic Media**) because I can drag a brush shape from the docker to the drawing window.

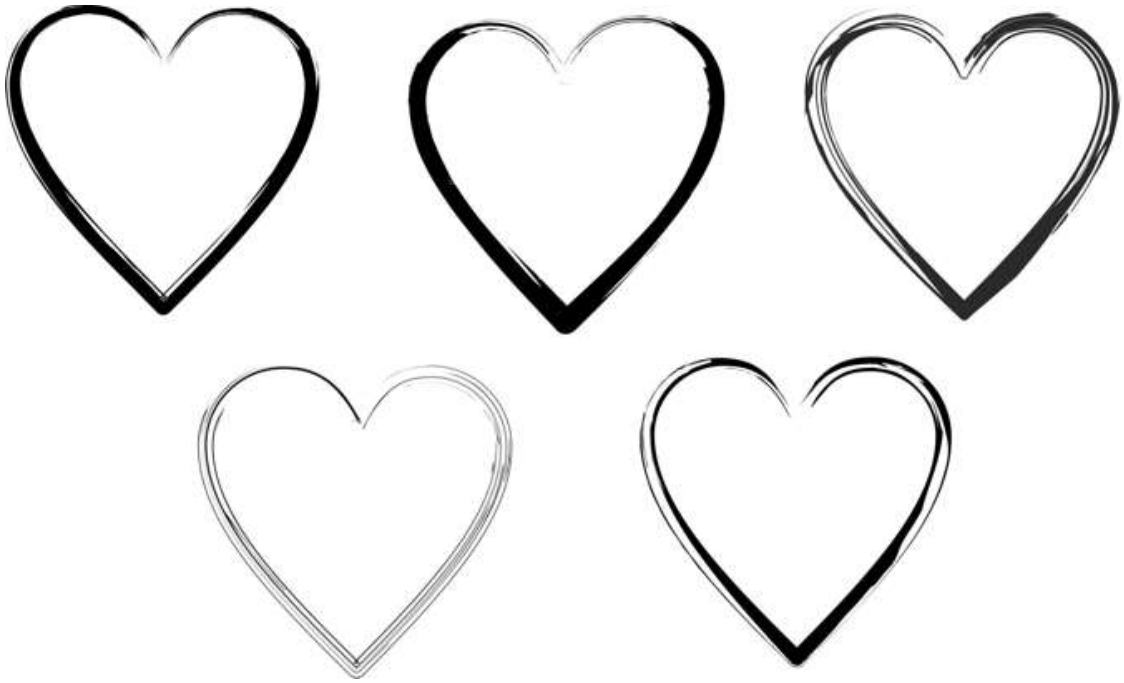




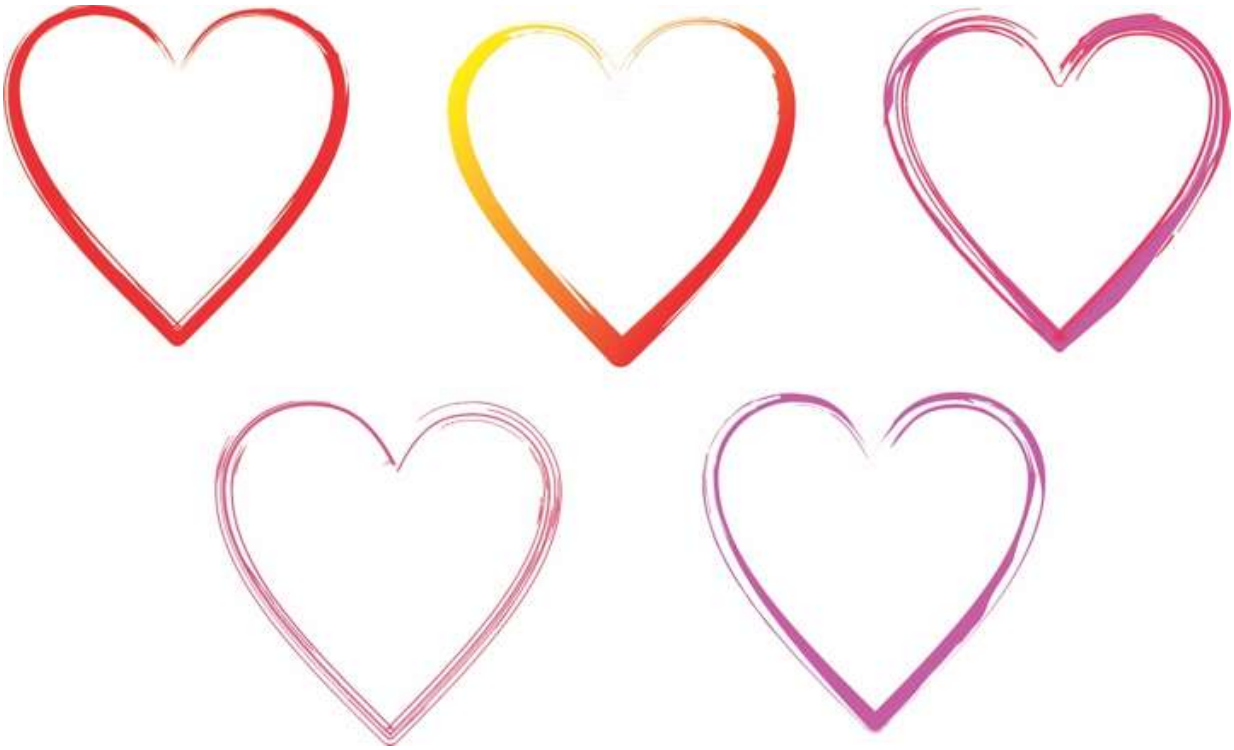
Remember to experiment with different brushes and settings. For example, you can change the width of the brush by specifying a value in the **Stroke Width** box on the property bar.



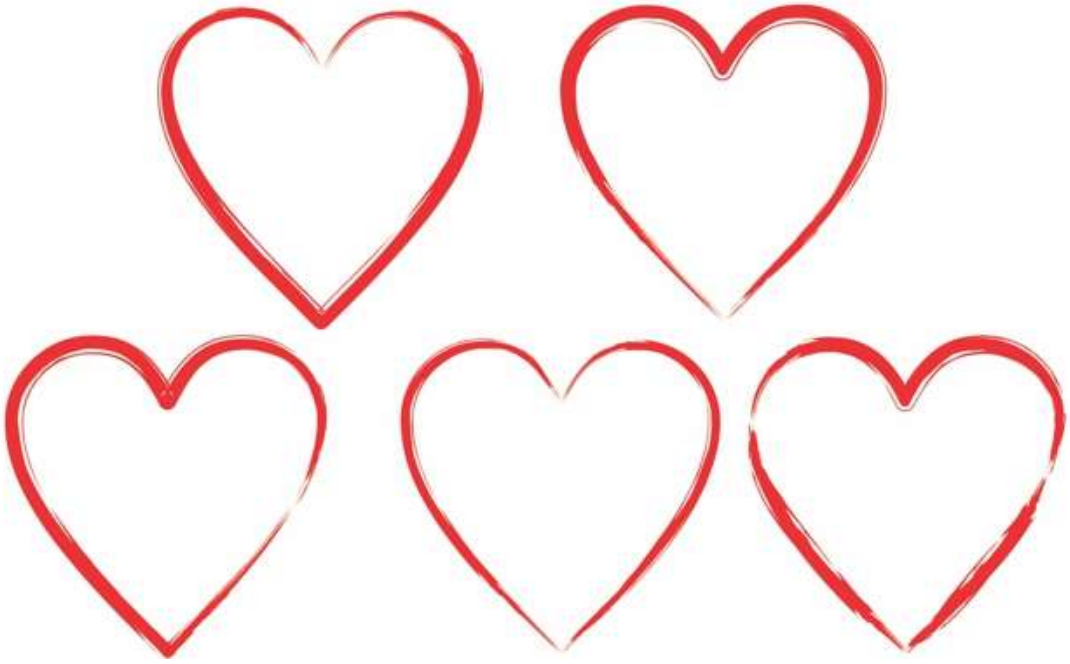
You can use the same shape and create different effects just by changing the brush.



Now, it's time to add some color to our hearts. You can add colors just as you would with any object; click any color swatch to fill an object, right-click any color swatch to apply an outline color. However, if you want to add a gradient, or other type of fill, you must first select the perfect shape and click **Arrange > Break Apart (Ctrl+K)**. You will now have two objects, the outline of the original shape and the group of Artistic Media objects. You can delete the outline and work with the Artistic Media objects.



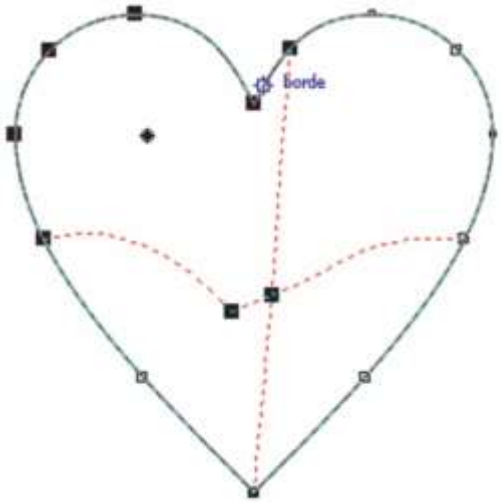
Let's say you want a different direction for the Artistic Media brush strokes. Here's a little trick you can use. First, select the perfect shape, convert to curves (**Ctrl+Q**), and then use the **Shape** tool (**F10**) to select a new point that you want to be the 'start' and 'end' of the brush. For example, try the bottom node of the heart. Then on the property bar, click **Break apart**. You can also add a node at any point on the object, then break nodes and apply an Artistic Media brush. By choosing different 'start' points, the Artistic Media brushes will produce different effects.

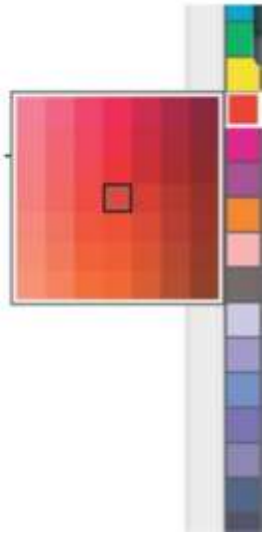


Now, spread your hearts out over the drawing page to look something like the image below.

At this point, we can start adding some brightness to the hearts. The **Mesh Fill** tool is a personal favorite and very useful for this purpose. When you start using the Mesh Fill tool, it can seem daunting, so it's best to start with simple objects (a rectangle, for example).

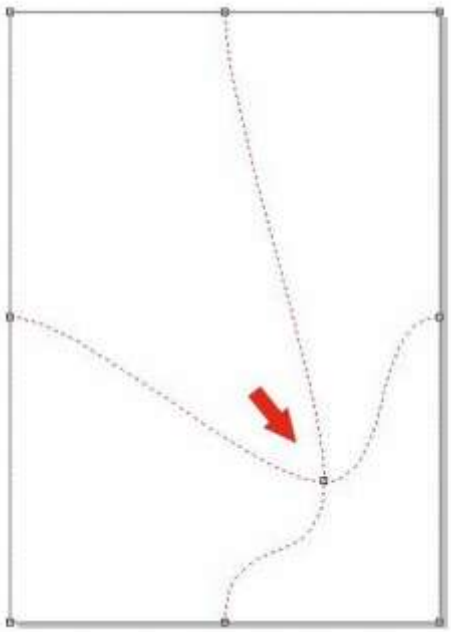
As for this heart, we really just need to add a node and then adjust colors. Remember, you can add color by selecting the nodes you want, and then choosing color swatches from the default Color palette. If you want the darkest shade of a particular color, click and hold on that swatch for several seconds, and then a new secondary palette will appear. You can choose a different shade from that secondary palette.



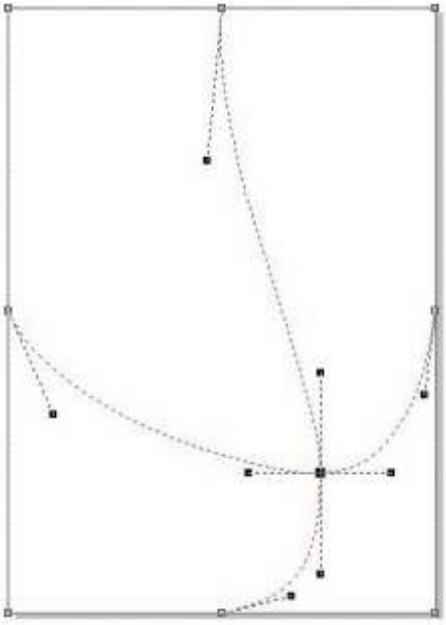


After you've added some brightness and color to a couple of hearts, add them to the Valentine's Day card drawing page.

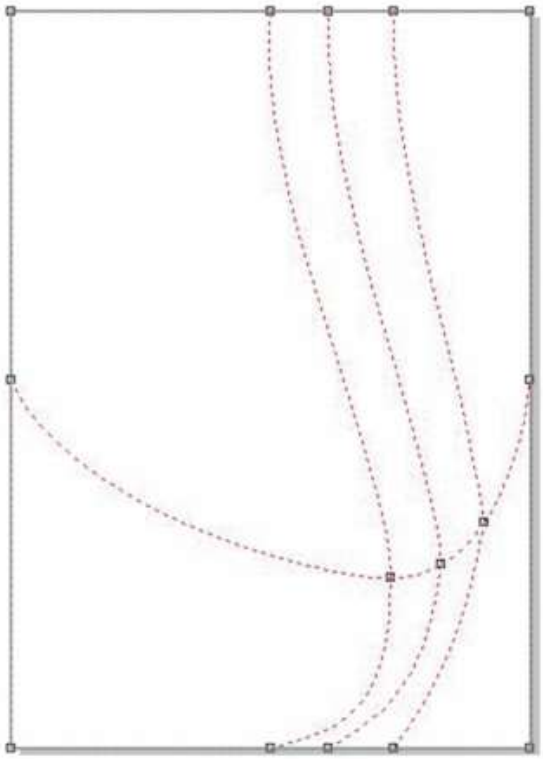
Now, let's use the Mesh Fill tool again to create a background for the card. We'll use similar shades of colors, but that's not a rule. You can use whichever colors you prefer, but keep in mind that you want colors that complement the main drawing. If the background is too dark or uses too many colors, then the text or imagery might be less visible. For this example, I've created a rectangle approximately 106 mm wide X 144 mm high, added a simple mesh fill by pressing the **M** key and then moving the center node.

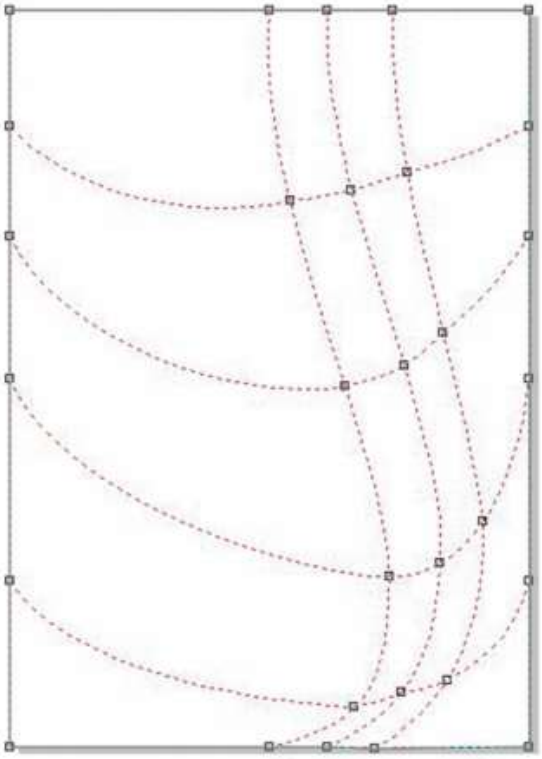


Next, I adjusted the handles of the nodes to create a smooth shade of colors.

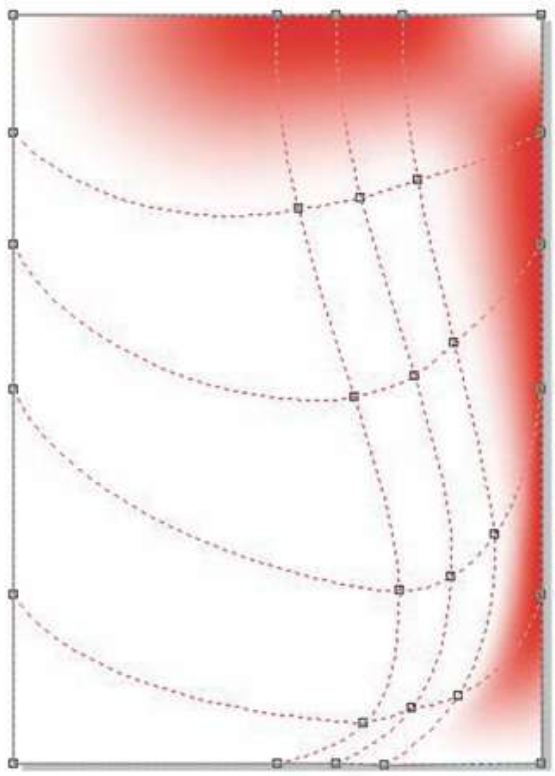


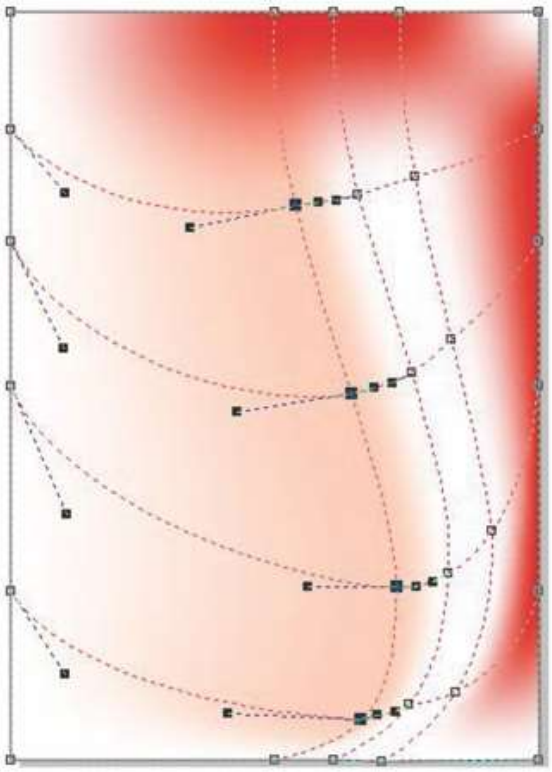
Then I added more nodes by double-clicking with the **Mesh Fill** tool at any point to create additional custom columns and rows for the mesh fill.

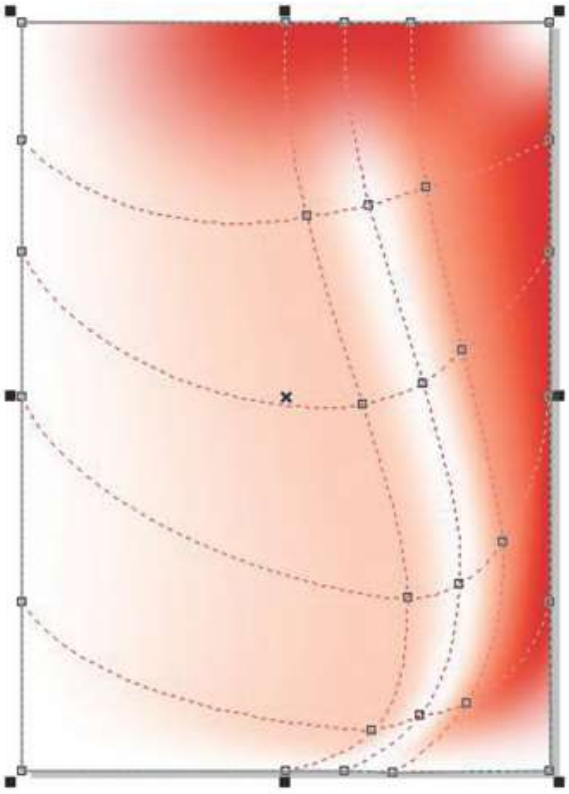


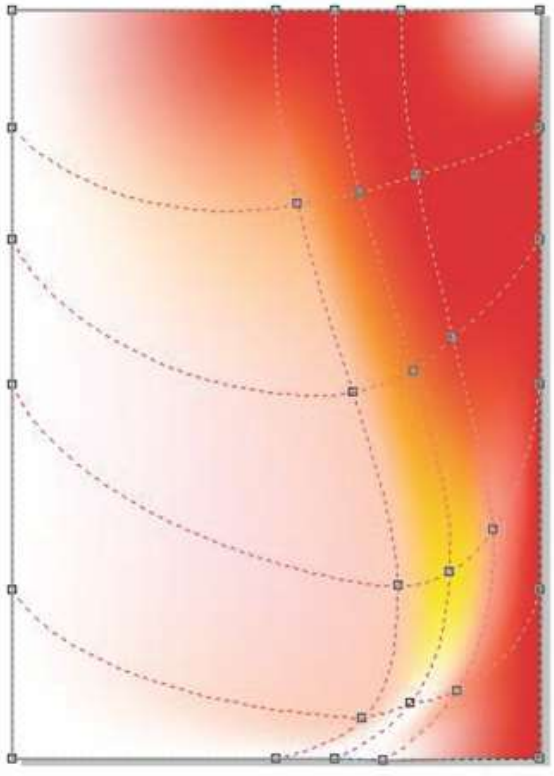


With all those adjustments made to the mesh fill grid, it's now ready for some color. To add color, use the **Shape** tool (**F10**) to select some nodes. I concentrated first on the perimeter of the mesh fill grid, and worked inward. To produce a smooth color shade, **Ctrl+click** on the red swatch in the default Color palette (or whichever color you've chosen). This method will add 10% of the selected color tone each time you Ctrl+click. Eventually, I added a touch of yellow to the center-most column.



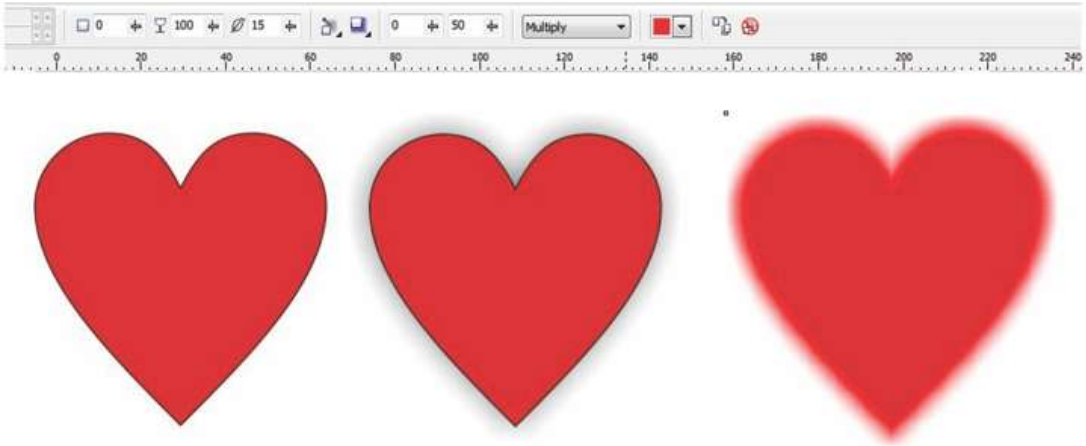






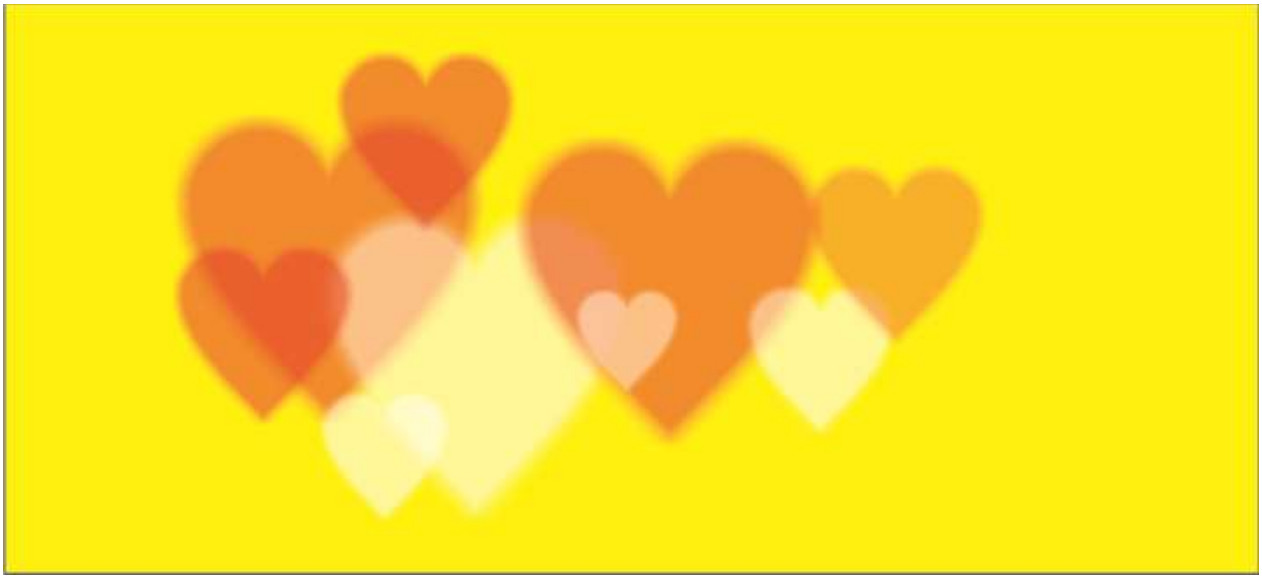
At this point, let's add the previously created hearts to the background. It's a good idea to use layers here, which will make it easier to go back and modify the background if necessary. I've put the mesh-filled hearts on one layer, the Artistic Media hearts on another layer, and the background on a third layer. Of course, you may choose to organize your job however you prefer.

We still need a few more hearts for the background. Instead of simply duplicating several hearts, we can use a little trick to copy only the shadows of some hearts. How? It's easy. First, add a **Drop Shadow** to the initial perfect shape heart and change its color to red. Then, on the property bar, move the **Drop shadow opacity** slider to 100, and choose **Outside** from the **Feathering direction** picker.

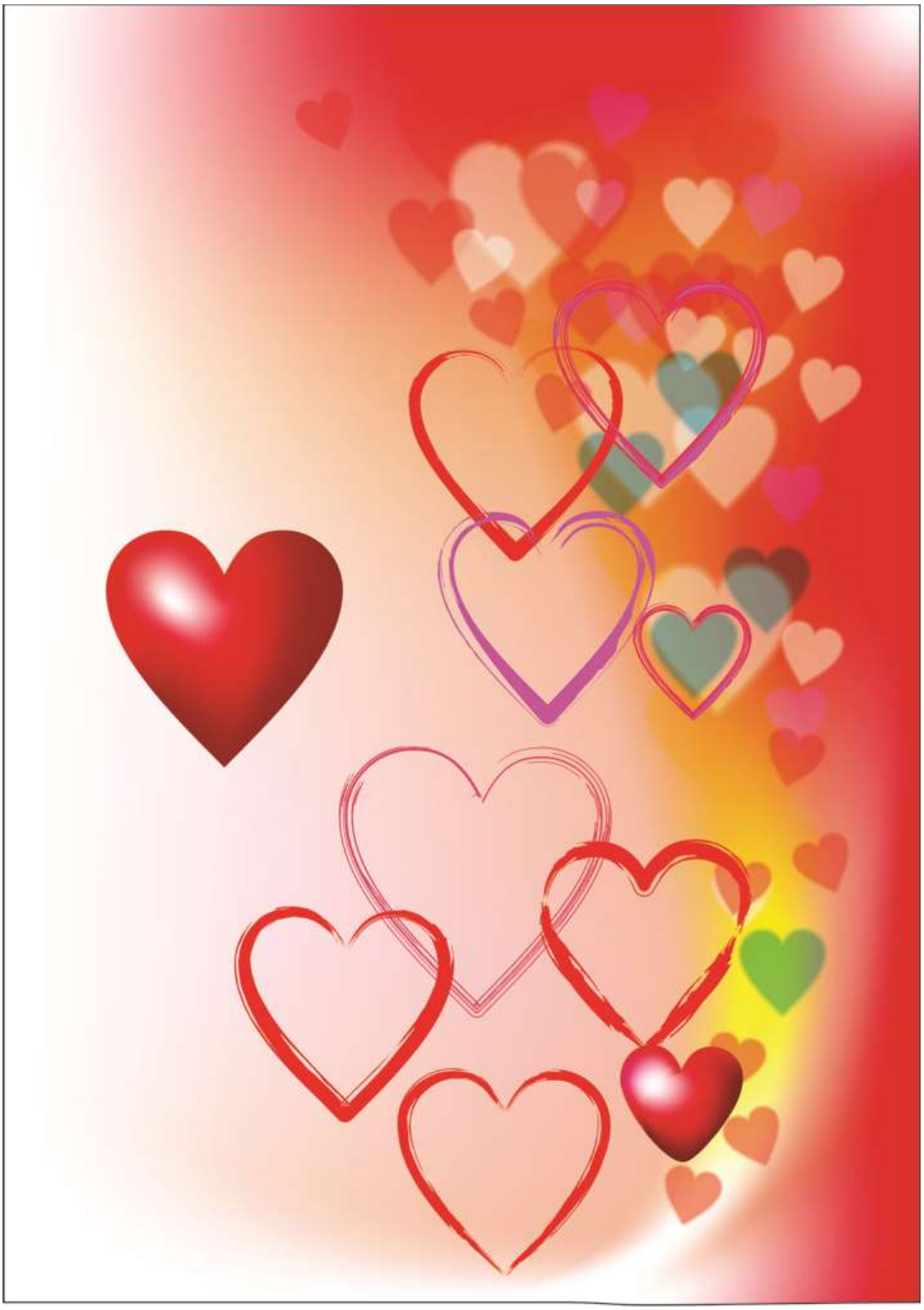


Now, let's break apart the drop shadow (**Ctrl+K**), so you can delete the original shape. We will use only the drop shadow, now it's a new shape with **Transparency** in mode **Multiply**. You can choose a mode from the **Transparency operation** list box on the property bar.

The next step is to use the **Transparency** tool to make a translucent heart within a yellow rectangle. On the property bar, adjust the **Transparency midpoint** slider to approximately 50%. Duplicate the heart several times, changing object order and rotation. You can use your creativity here to produce new options and effects. Try selecting one of the translucent hearts with the **Transparency** tool, and then on the property bar, choose **Divide** from the **Transparency operation** list box.



I've added some of the new, translucent hearts to the main drawing.



Before finalizing the card, let's add some text and make some more modifications of the shapes and color. Your options are virtually limitless, so you can easily create unique effects. This tutorial is not meant to be repeated step-by-step, but to serve as a starting point and guide. Use your imagination to give the card your own personal style.