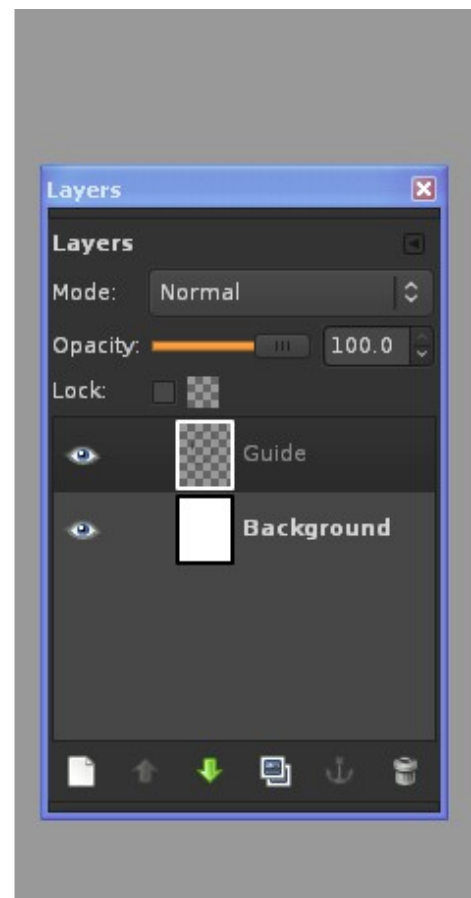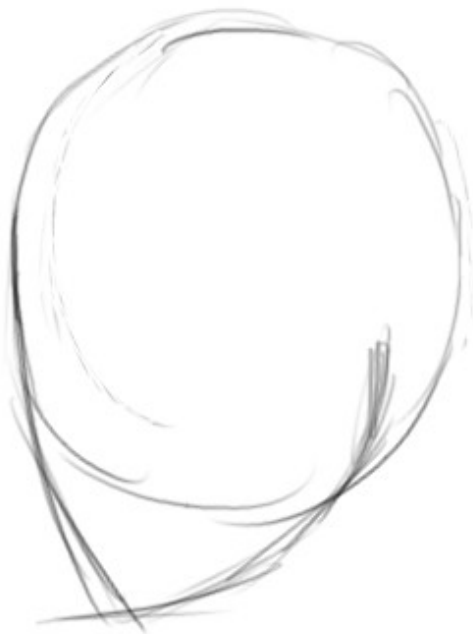# HOW I PAINT FACES

PART ONE
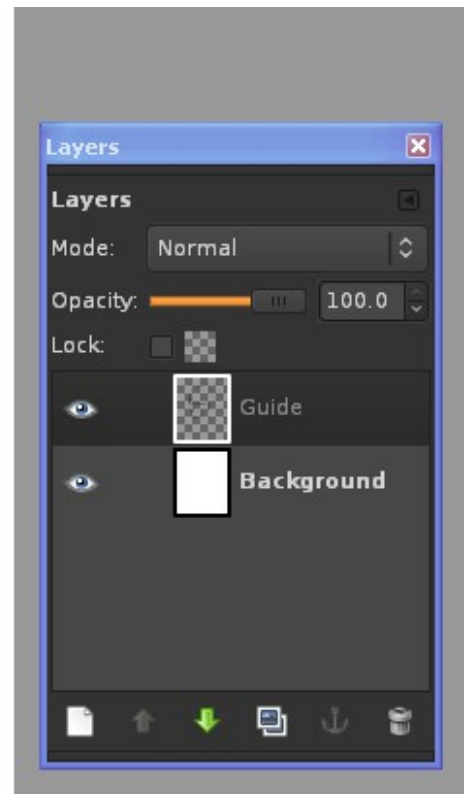### *SCULPTING THE FACE*

ERISIAN

There are many different techniques for painting faces and I thought I would share mine in case they are of any use to somebody. It's not an in depth tutorial but provides an introduction to my methods starting with the general and working towards the particular, keeping things as simple as possible all the way through. It assumes the reader has some knowledge of the shapes of faces and their features.
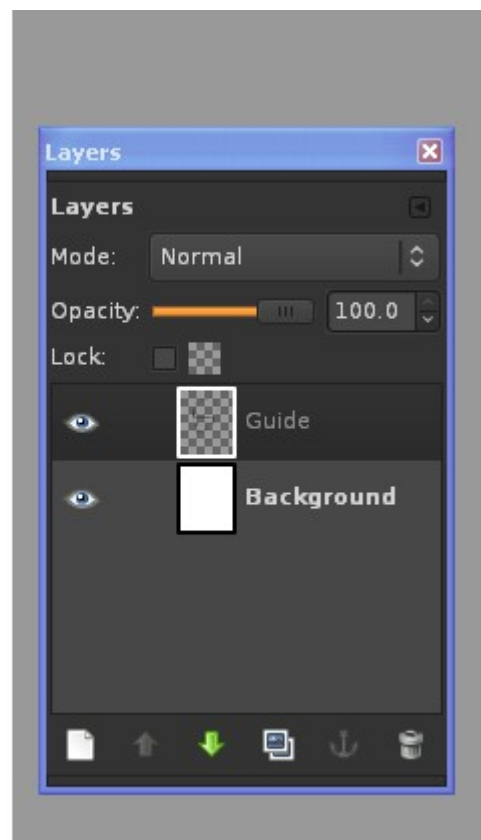
On a new transparent layer, draw a circle and add a "jaw" underneath.

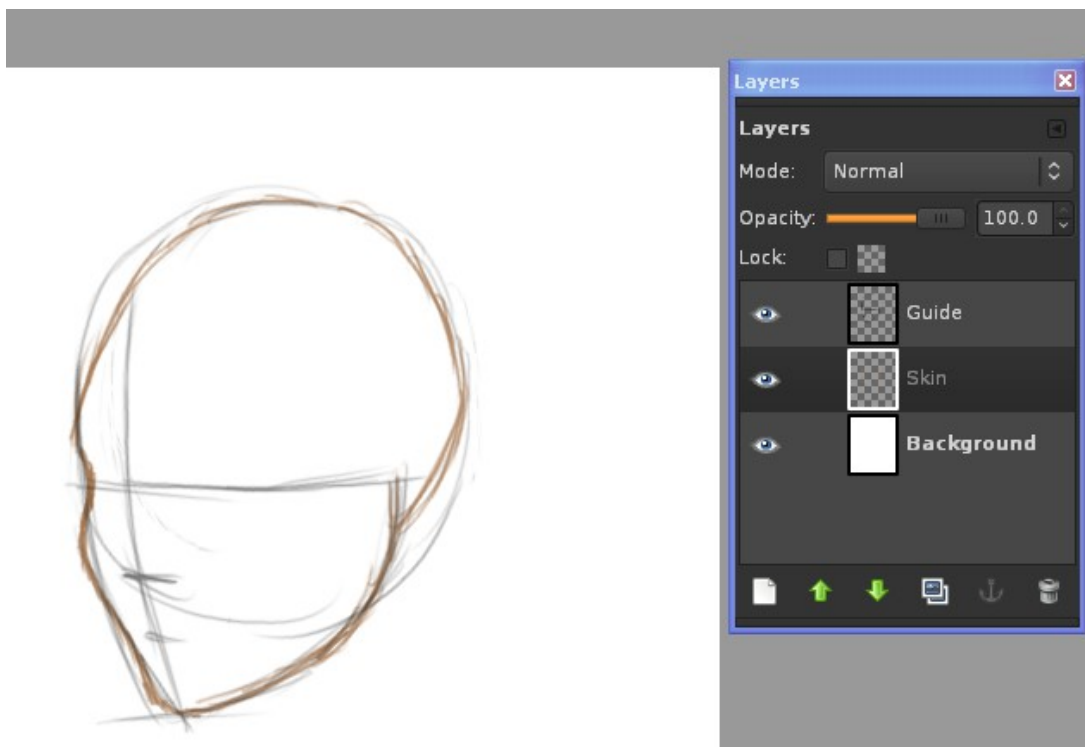Divide the face in half vertically and horizontally.

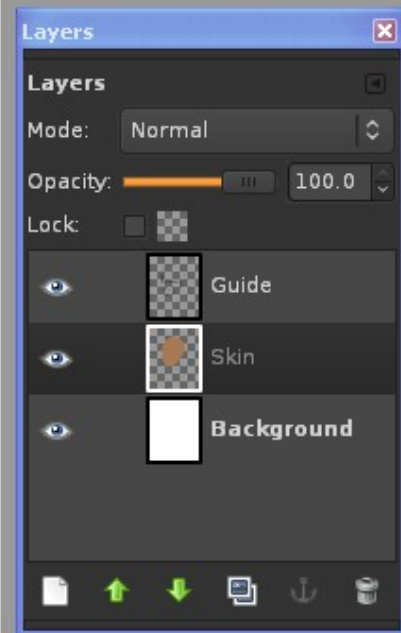Divide the bottom half roughly in half then in half again.

Click on your foreground colour then select a fleshy colour. This will be a partially desaturated orange.
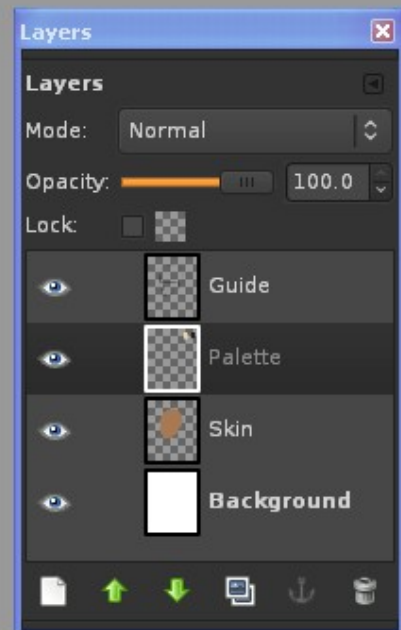

Reduce the opacity on your guide layer then add a new layer underneath it and draw the face outline. I usually use a fuzzy brush but forgot when I wrote this tutorial. (Oops!)
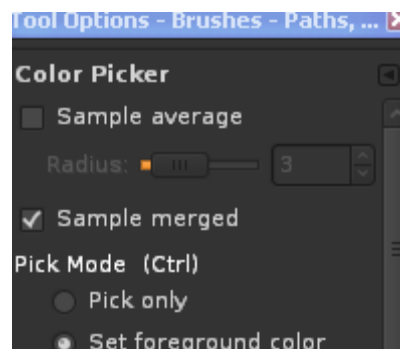
Fill the shape in.

Create a new layer below the guide layer and call it "palette." Paint your light and shadow colours onto this. They will usually be complimentary colours and will have little saturation.
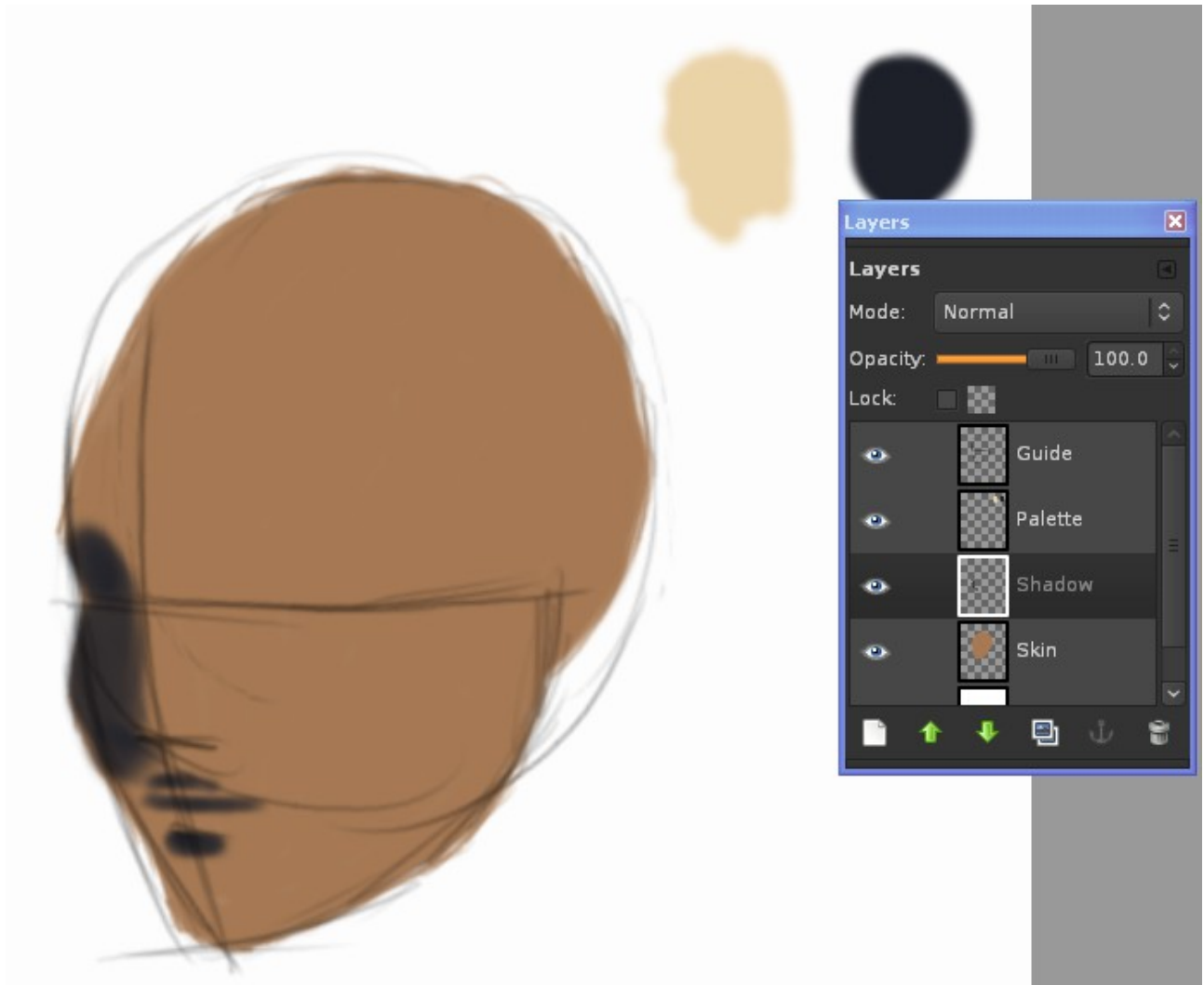
To find the complimentary colour of your light colour, open your foreground colour dialogue and select the fourth tab. The complimentary is directly opposite on the colour circle. You can then slide the value (V) slider until it is between 15 and 20 to get your shadow colour.
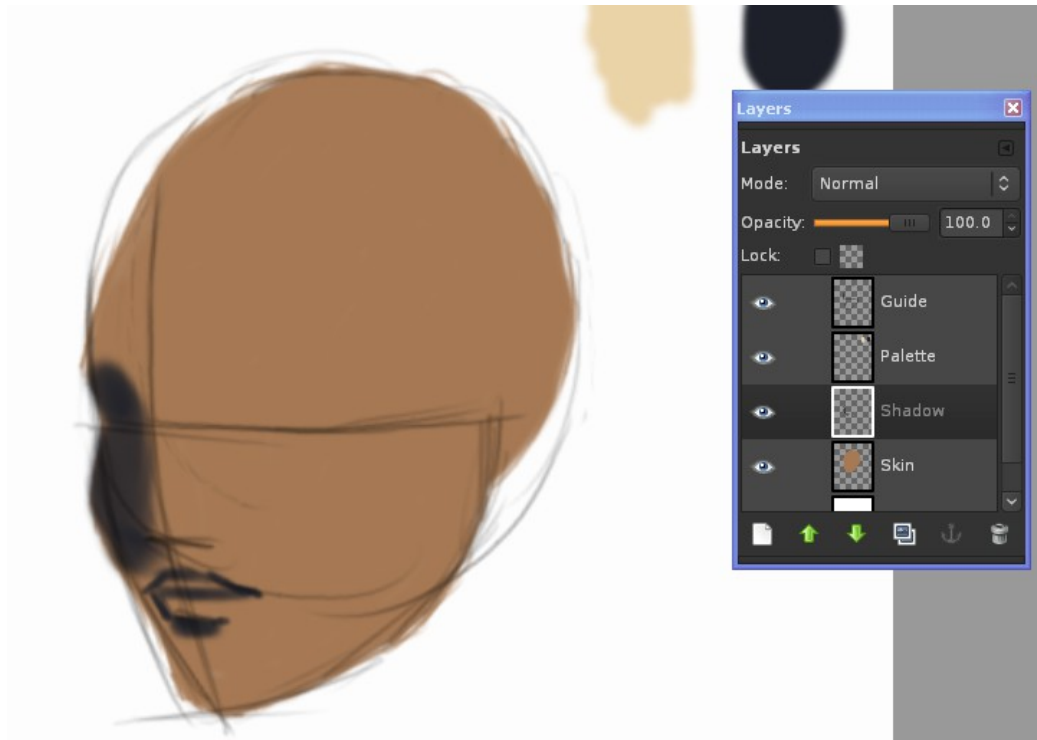

Select the colour picker tool and check the "sample merged" box in tool options. This will enable you to pick colour from the palette layer using ctrl-click without leaving the layer you are working on.
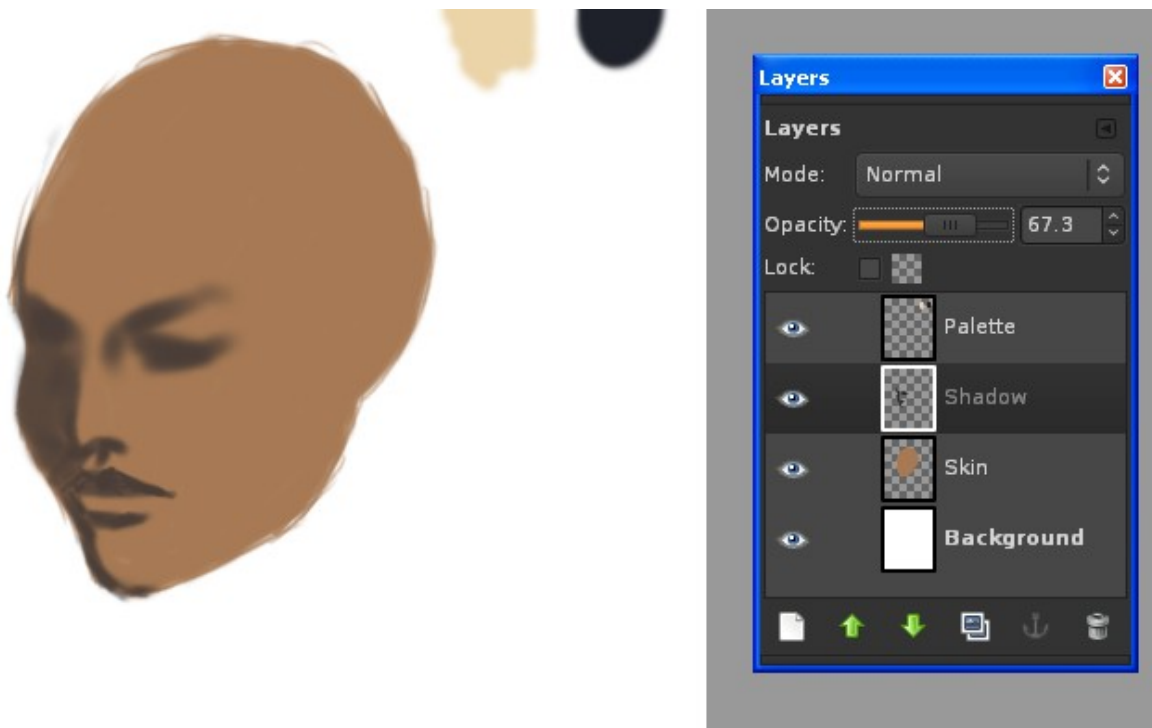
On a new layer above your skin layer, in your shadow colour draw three horizontal lines where the top, middle and bottom of your mouth will be. The bottom line should be on the bottom line of your guide. (ignore the other shading in the example – I confused myself.)
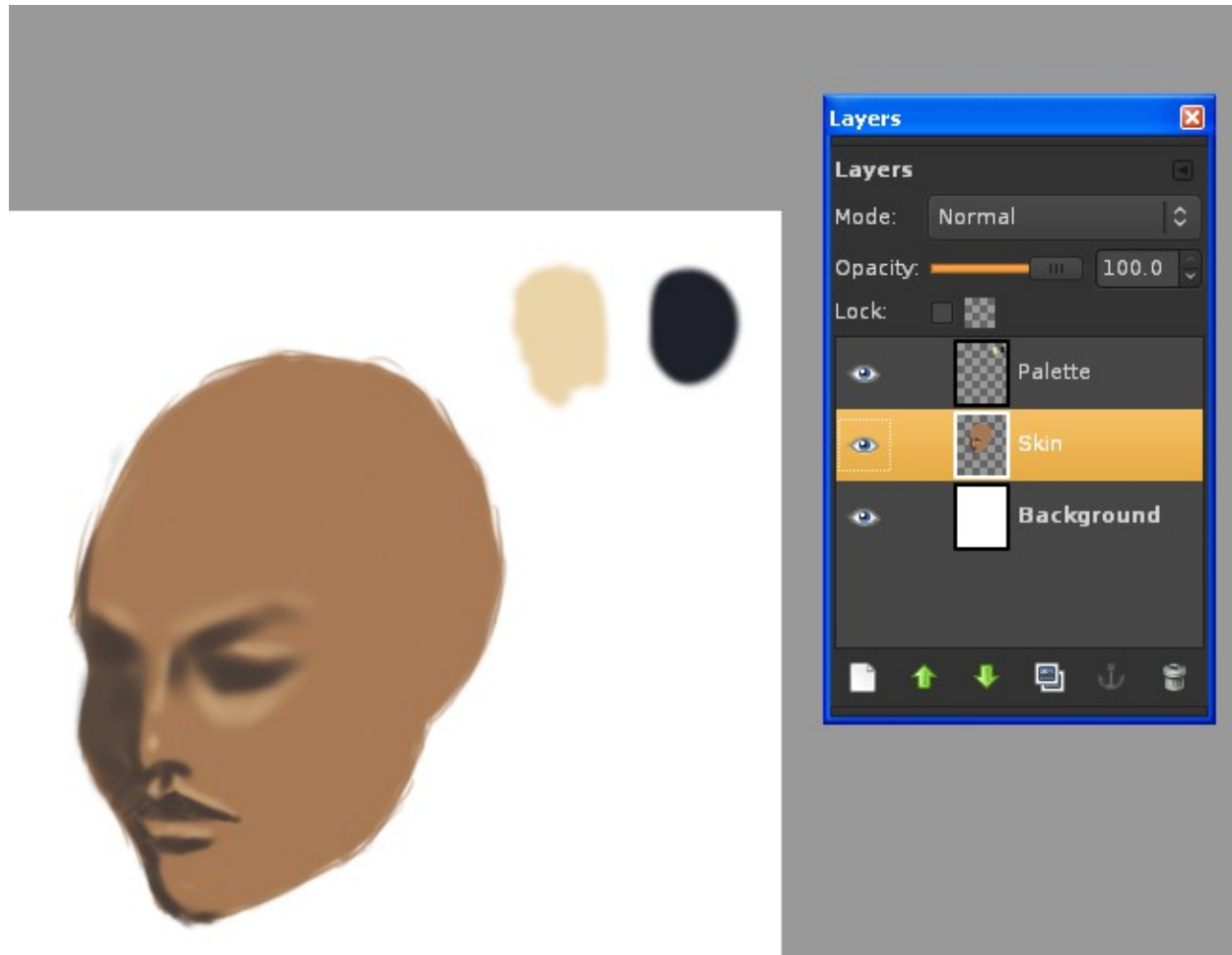
Join these up to make a mouth shape.

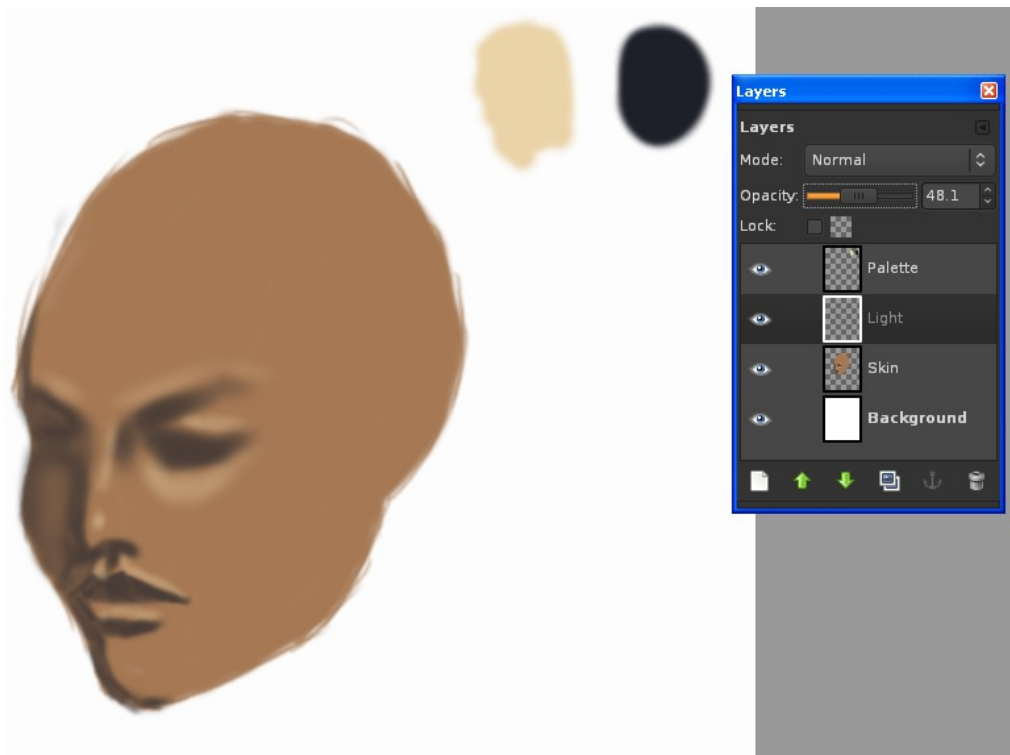Paint in your main shadows then delete the guide layer.

Use large fuzzy brushes for this to get a soft edge. You can refine the shapes with the eraser and smudge tools. Go carefully with the smudge tool or you could make a mess. Reduce the opacity and merge down.
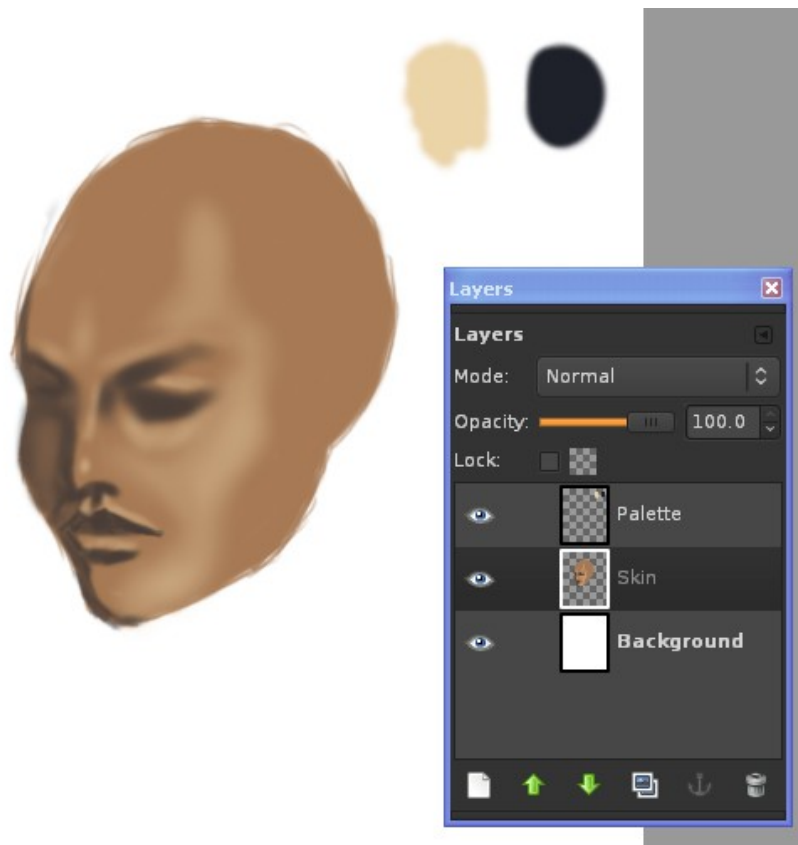
Add a new layer, paint the main light areas, adjust the opacity then merge down.
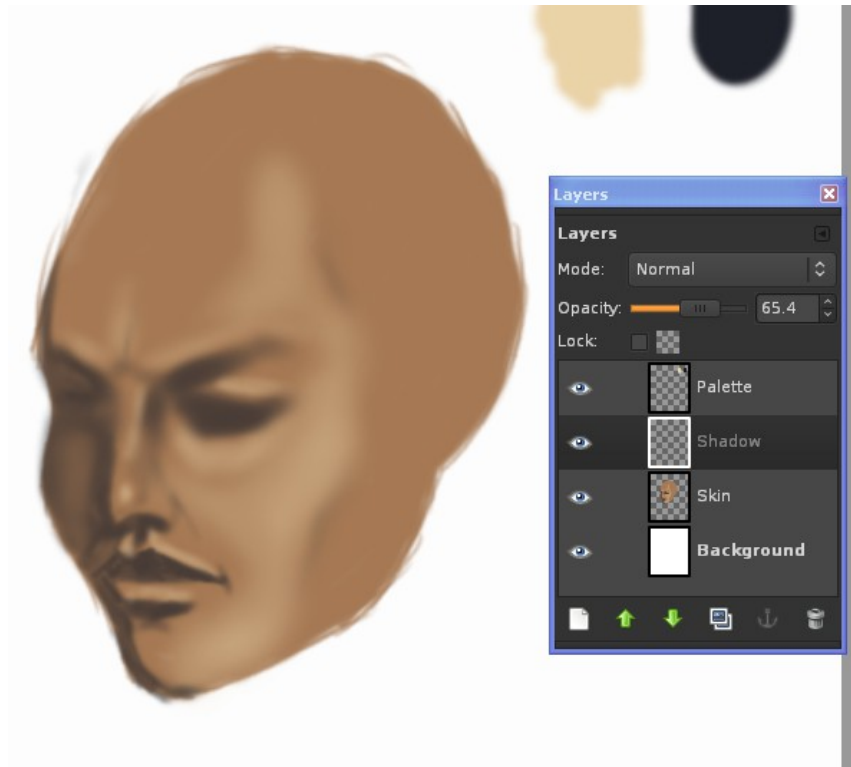
Pick your original skin colour and on a new layer add some light in the shadow areas then merge down.

Add a new layer and paint secondary light. This will usually be on the ridges directly facing you and will "bleed" into the other ridges. Adjust the opacity and merge down.

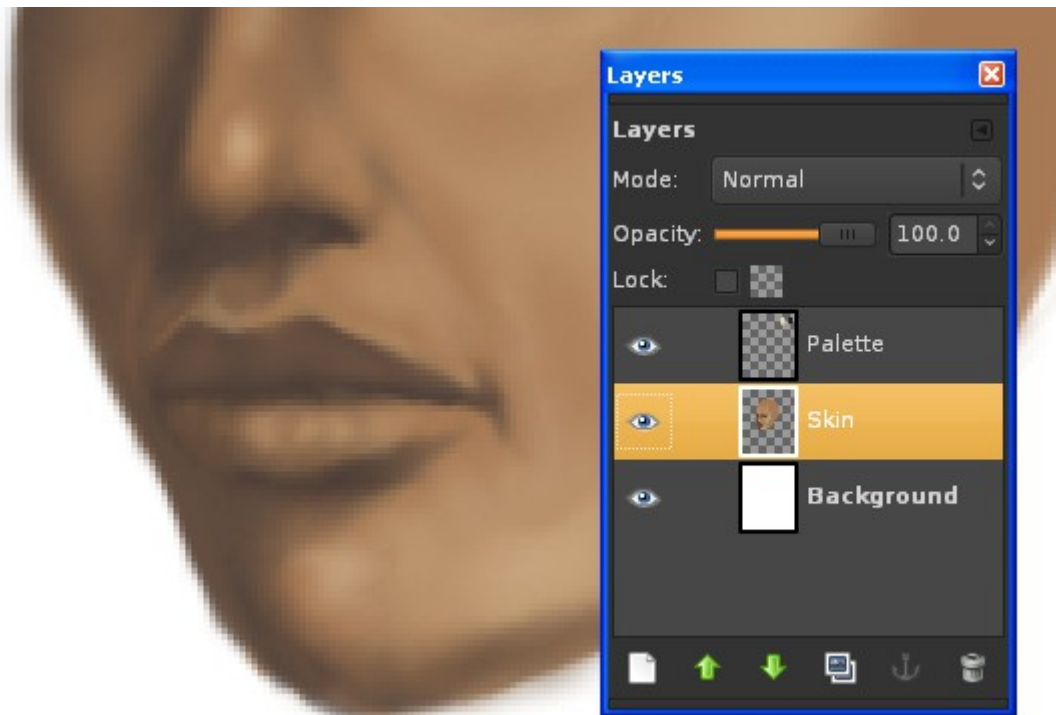New layer, secondary shadow, merge down.

Using your painting as a palette, refine the shapes and values until you are happy. Use new layers wherever you don't feel confident and use the smudge brush carefully and selectively.

On a new layer add the eye whites in your light colour. Zoom out a bit before adjusting the opacity and merging down.

Using shadow from around the light area of the bottom lip, break the light area up then select a lighter colour and add a couple of dashes to the shadow area.

Now add some lighter values and highlights on a new layer, adjust the opacity and merge down.

Now you can add your darkest shadows.

And finally a levels adjustment.

I'll be taking this face further in part two; "Adding more colour." I hope this has been of some use to you.

-ERISIAN