



## Watercolor Pencil Workshop with Cathy Johnson

### Suggested Supply List

For this class, you will need either my North Light book, *Watercolor Pencil Magic* (now out of print, sorry!) or my new CD, *Watercolor Pencil Techniques* which is based on the book. Find the CD on my website catalog, here <http://www.cathyjohnson.info/wcpencilclass.html>, on the signup for the class itself, or on my CafePress store: [http://www.cafepress.com/cathy\\_johnson](http://www.cafepress.com/cathy_johnson)

The CD reinstates much of the art that had to be cut from the book for space reasons, including an entire chapter on mixed media. Two new articles have been added, as well. (For those who use the book, we'll supply lesson 6 so you'll have everything the other students do.)

This is a data CD, with downloadable PDF files; you will need Adobe Reader to access them, a free program available here: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html> (This is not a DVD or video.)

**Watercolor pencils** –a starter set of 12 or so can get you going, or order open stock in your favorite colors.

My favorite brand is Faber-Castell's Albrecht Durer, for their intensity, rapid mixing and buttery application, but I also like Derwent and have used Prismacolor, Cretacolor, and Caran d'Ache, among others. Those pencils with harder leads than Faber-Castell are more difficult to lift and blend with water, but sometimes we WANT the residual linear effect, so I certainly wouldn't pass them up if you have them already or find a good deal.

Newer types include Derwent's Graphitints—they're pigment mixed with graphite, and yield interesting effects—and Derwent's Inktense, which are, as the name implies, intense. They are not supposed to lift once dry—like ink. I enjoy both of these for casual sketching, but do be aware they've got some serious lightfastness issues. If you want

your work to last, do pay attention to lightfast ratings.

Many artists like Cretacolor's woodless watercolor pencils—they're all pigment, just covered with a matching enamel. They're a bit hard and dry for the way I work, but they're very popular and you may love them.

**Watercolor crayons**—you can use them easily as large “pans” of watercolor, touching the tip with a wet brush. The larger size allows you to cover more area quickly. Like watercolor pencils, you can use these wet or dry.

Caran d'Ache Neocolor II Aquarelle Artist Crayons (also called water-soluble wax pastels) are the familiar Crayola-sized crayons but made with water-soluble pigment. Light colors will cover dark, and vice versa. The set of ten is too limited by unfortunate colors, but the set of 15 is more promising. (I bought a single open stock white one to use as gouache on a recent trip...)

Lyra Aquacolors are large crayons that feel almost like oil pastels...the small set of 12 comes with a few unfortunate color choices, though, so you may want to get a larger set. Other brands are fine, too, I'm just not as familiar with them.

There are also large bricks of watercolor that you can draw with dry, wet them to make washes, or use them as pan colors—I've not used them and would be interested to hear what you think. I've heard mixed reviews from fellow artists.

**Water-soluble Graphite Pencils**—these are fun to use for value studies. Derwent, Prismacolor

and General all make good entries in this field. Try one or two of these if you like—not required but good experience.

**Brushes** –I’d suggest at least a #8 round brush and a ½" and 1" flat. (A smaller and larger round would be fine, too!) These can be manmade brushes—these works fine with WC pencils as the pencils can be a bit hard on sable brushes. Also a smallish flat bristle brush for lifting...look in the oil painting section of the brush display.

**Paper** –this is a very important aspect of using watercolor pencils—if the paper is too soft or delicate, you will *not* enjoy the medium. Look for a watercolor paper with a good, hard finish and plenty of sizing, otherwise you will not be able to lay down sufficient pigment. You can even damage the paper surface with some of the harder, dryer pencils.

Look at Fabriano, Arches, or Strathmore 400 series, cold press or hot press surface.

I often use hot press, which is smooth, if I’m using Fabriano or Arches, but usually go for the Strathmore 400 cold press. It’s very tough and allows for the kind of lifting and blending you can do with watercolor pencils.

**\*Note:** The new Fabriano Artistico cold press surface may not be satisfactory—it’s been changed and is now rather pebbly and rough.

**Water Container** –a jar, glass, folding water bucket, margarine tub, etc.

\*You can combine these two and get **Niji or Aquash Waterbrushes** for sketching, of course—the water is contained in the brush handle! I have all sizes of rounds and the flat brush, but they are all rather small compared to “real” brushes—they really are best for small sketches. (I haven’t had as good luck with other brands of water brushes, which tend to leak.)

**Pencil**— a #2 or HB is fine. Mechanical or wood.

**Eraser**—I use soft white vinyl ones

**Mr. Clean Magic Eraser** —find this in the household cleaning aisle of your grocery store, and buy the original one, not the one with detergent

**Paper Towels** or tissues

**If you like mixed media effects**, consider getting a Micron Pigma, Nexus, or Zig Millennium pen, a dip pen and a bottle of waterproof ink (like India ink), a set if watercolors, a few wax-based colored pencils.