Tip #126

Watercolor Crayon Play

We have indeed covered watercolor pencils and crayons before – but I just keep experimenting and testing the boundaries! It's fun...

If you find watercolor pencils too weak and wimpy or yourself becoming too tight, cut loose a little and give the crayons a try! See what they can do or how you might handle them. In most cases, watercolor crayons are going to be softer and easier to lift and move than pencils. (These are not the dryer woodless watercolor pencils, but true soft water-soluble *crayons*.) Lyra Aquacolors are the biggest, softest, juiciest ones I've tried, but Neocolor II works very well too.

126-1 Watercolor Crayons

I have a couple of funky little sets I've put together myself, so I have the colors I want – I mix and match brands. (This one stayed in the car over the summer...oops...)

126-2 Testing Tools

These are different from watercolor pencils, as noted. Softer, bigger, more blunt. More difficult to get fine details, but great for bold, broad effects. Try them out to see what they'll do!

125-3 Phthalo blue

Of course you can use these tools in a similar manner to WC pencils, or you can lift paint from the tip and paint with them as if they were big sticks of watercolor pigment – which they are. But why not really push it? Here, I've made a couple of rich scribbles of Phthalo blue with Lyra Aquacolors, then hit them with clear water from a small sprayer. On the left, I tilted the paper so the color would run, and on the right I drew through the amoebic blue blob with a sharpened sticks. It reminds me of fireworks!

126-4 Mug of Brushes

I did a rough sketch of the pottery mug of brushes in my studio, then tried out a variety of techniques ... applying crayons directly on the drawing, then spraying with water, drawing back into the damp areas with different colors, lifting color from the crayons with a damp brush and painting with them, and finally spattering by flicking a stiff brush across the tip of a crayon.

These ideas just scratch the surface ... why not try out your own experiments with a set of these handy tools?

If you want to explore further, you might check out my Watercolor Pencil Workshop CD at http://www.cathyjohnson.info/wcpencilclass.html or the new downloadable version, at http://www.cathyjohnson.info/ebooks/watercolorpencil.html.

You may also like my self-directed Watercolor Pencil Mini-class ... for more information, visit http://www.cathyjohnson.info/watercolorpencil.html.

Check out all my YouTube videos for lots more art tutorials, youtube.com/user/KateJosTube.

I'd love to have you visit my artist's blog at katequicksilvr.livejournal.com/, my brand new Etsy store where I'll be offering some of the demos from my classes at etsy.com/shop/CathyJohnsonArt, my catalog where you can find instructional CDs for artists, or drop by for a visit on Facebook, facebook.com/cathy.johnson1!

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