

Tip #52

Sketching with Colored Pencil

Colored pencils are handy, portable, clean, and-well, colorful! They can be subtle or bold, almost photorealistic or extremely sketchy, depending on how you use them.

You can buy open stock pencils, one at a time, or buy sets of 12 to gorgeous gift sets of 120, some even in a wooden box! Use them alone or in conjunction with other mediums, like ink or watercolor-they're FUN...

My most frequently used brand is Prismacolor, but I will admit that's what I'm used to, and I love them. I haven't experimented with all the newer brands, so there may be something you like better.

I carry a small metal pencil sharpener with me to the field, as these soft, creamy, pigment-dense pencils lose their point rapidly. (Use the side of the lead to shade in broad areas, if you wish!)

Usually, for sketching purposes, I stick to 2-3 pencils in my field kit-a warm dark gray, an indigo, and sometimes a black. But other times I take a plastic pencil box with enough room for 15-20 pencils-I swap them out as the season changes, so I don't find myself ready to sketch in the winter with only spring colors in my kit!

Art 52-1, Harris and Silk, sepia

Color provides the values in this watercolor Colored pencils in the darker shades give you a wide range of values, and they're less likely to smear than graphite. They may transfer a bit of tone to the opposite page in your sketchbook, but not nearly so much so as pencil.



Art 52-1



Art 52-2

Art 52-2, Monarch butterfly

Watercolor goes on well over colored pencil, either a fairly detailed drawing, as in the monarch above, or to give life to a quick sketch, like the deer in the winter landscape, 53-2.



Art 52-3, Deer sketch, warm dark gray colored pencil with watercolor wash



Art 52-3

And of course you can do a complete drawing in colored pencils that is as finished as a painting, but that's a subject for another time!

Be sure to look for my NEW CDs for artists in my Cafepress store, http://www.cafepress.com/cathy_johnson.

© Copyright Cathy Johnson Graphics/Fine Arts, All Rights Reserved
Website: <http://www.cathyjohnson.info>
Email: graphicart@epsi.net