

Tip #120

Working on Toned Paper

This is a very old technique employed by the Old Masters right down to the present day. It can be as detailed as you like, and rival a photograph for realism, or loose and sketchy. "Pushing and pulling" with light and dark on a mid-toned paper creates an effect that's almost three-dimensional ... it's like sculpting on the flat plane of your paper.

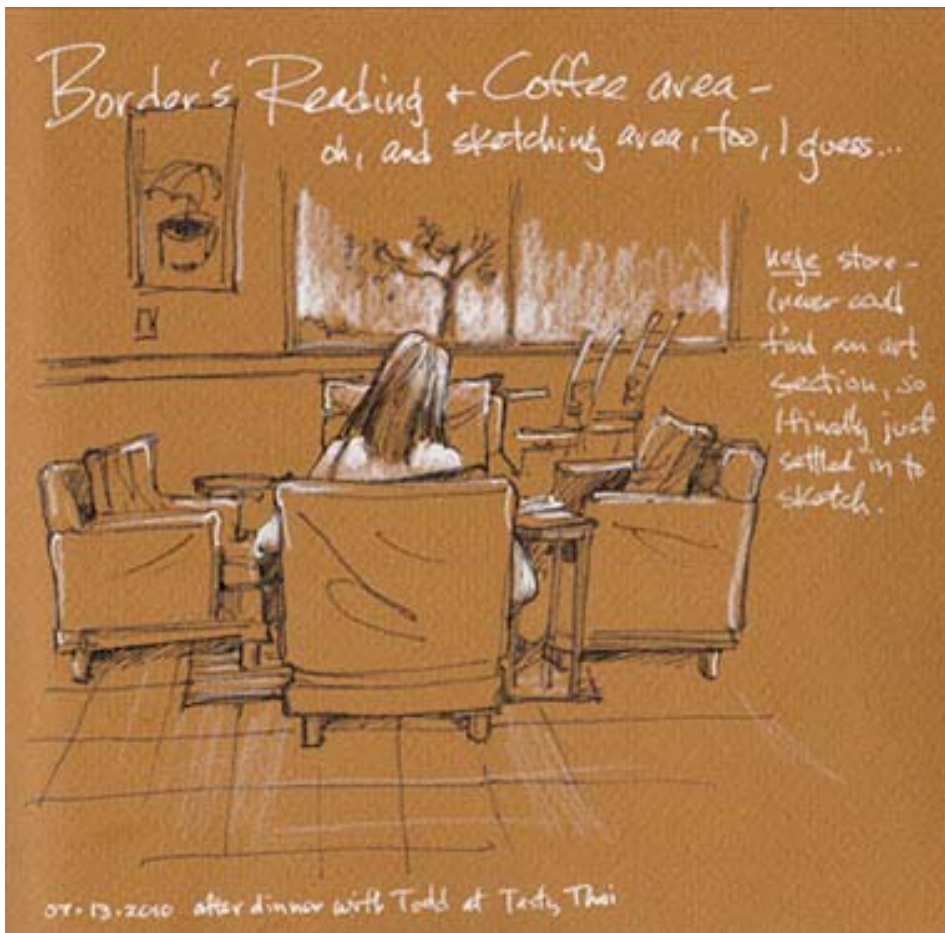
You can work on tan, gray, blue-gray or even black paper for some amazing results. Use a black and a white pen or colored pencil, or go all-out with full color. Use gouache, if you like!

But DO take advantage of that paper to make your drawings and sketches pop.

120-1

I often start out with an ink or pencil sketch, then give it a punch with a bit of white, as you see on the right side, here. Prismacolor white colored pencil did the trick, here. Try it ... use dark on a midtone background – ink pen, brush and ink, dark colored pencil ... and then add a bit of white to suggest form or dimension.





120-2

Just two values,
black and white,
make this
sketch pop
on brown
paper!

120-3

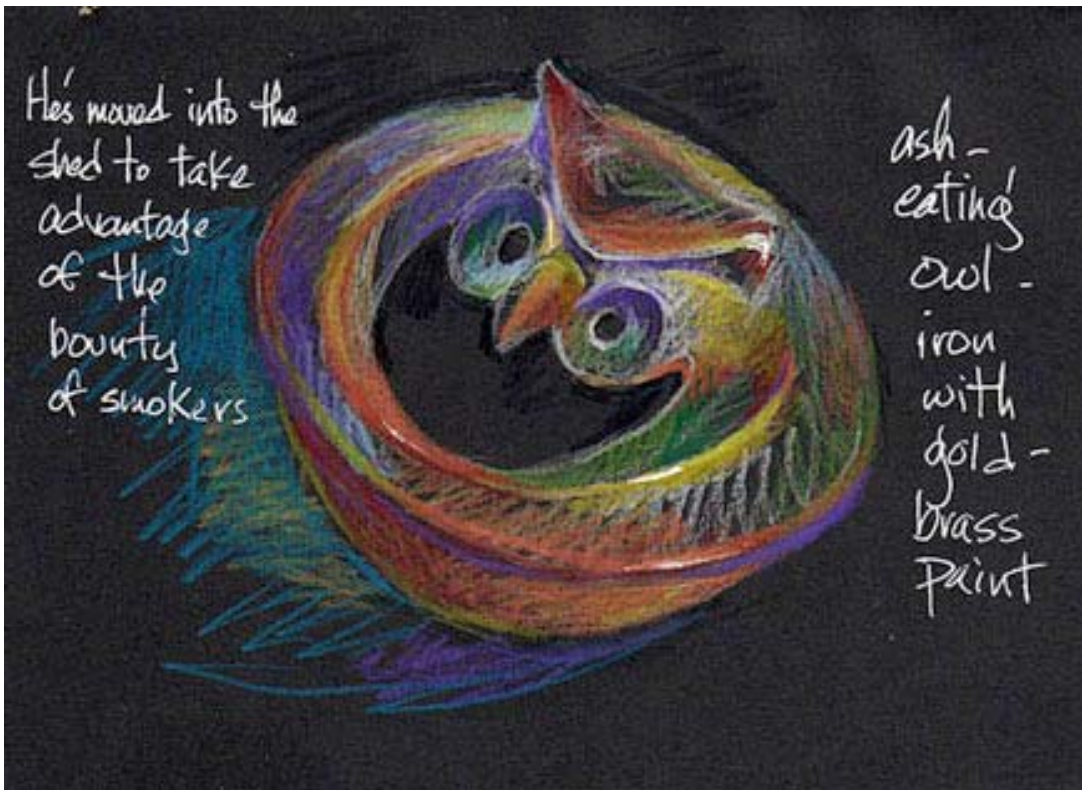
You can use this
trick to suggest
volume, form, and
the direction of light,
as I did on this
location sketch of a
limestone bluff...





120-4

Add a little color if you like! Here, I used brown ink, watercolor, and a touch of white to enhance a sketch of the little English-themed village of Hollister, MO.



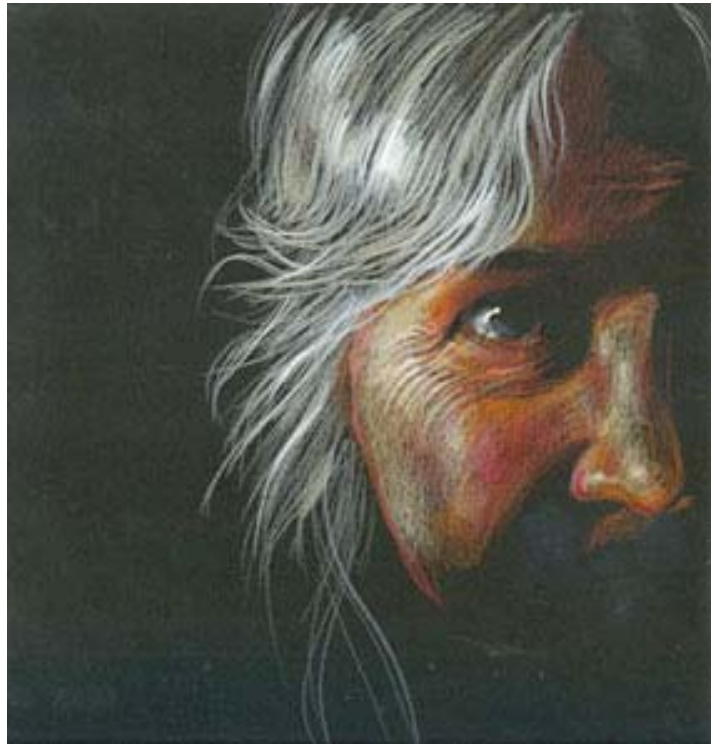
120-5

Go wild with color on a black background ... it's fun! Colored pencils were my choice here, but I've also used gouache or opaque watercolor with good effect.

120-6

You can work more delicately too, if you like, as I did in this partial self-portrait. Again, I used Prismacolor colored pencils.

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