

Tip #60

Watercolor Pencil Revisited -- What's New!



Since the last tip I wrote on watercolor pencils, there have been some new ones come on the scene. Faber-Castell's Albrecht Durer line is still my favorite, buttery soft, easy to blend, and pigment - dense, but you may enjoy exploring Derwent's new Inktense or Graphitint pencils. They're very different from other pencils, and very different from each other! Make comparisons between brands and types ... a few sheets of paper dedicated to this kind of exploration will save you from a lot of frustration down the line.

And speaking of paper, remember that the surface you choose makes a huge difference, with watercolor pencils. A soft, delicate paper that may be wonderful for regular watercolor will be very frustrating to work on. That's because it's difficult to get enough pigment to transfer to the softer surface-but a hard-surface paper with good sizing will be a dream to work on.

I prefer Fabriano hot press or Strathmore 300 (or 400) watercolor paper for best effects, as they're tough enough to stand up to harder rubbing with the pencil point when putting down a strong color or dark value.

Art 60-1, Graphitint color tests

Watercolor pencils often change color substantially between their dry and wet forms. With the Graphitints, which combine graphite and pigment for normally quite subtle effects, there's even a significant difference between the pencil on paper, when you wet it, and the color you get when you wet the tip of the pencil with a brush and then paint with that, as you can see here.

Art 60-2, Inktense sampler

Inktense pencils usually blend much more readily than the Graphitints, with very intense color as the name implies. You can use these with subtlety ... but it's not easy!



Art 60-1



Art 60-2

Art 60-3, Compare your watercolor pencils

To get an idea of comparative properties of the brands you have-whether you choose these two new ones or not!-do a page using 2-3 pencils of each brand or type. Try to choose similar colors for a fair test, and do them wet and dry. You'll have a much better idea what to expect and which pencil to choose for the job at hand!



Art 60-3

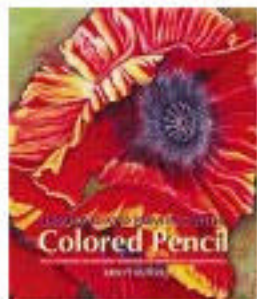


Art 60-4

Art 60-4, Keith

I really enjoy the Graphitints for linear sketches. The lines can be softened slightly with clear water, reminiscent of charcoal drawings that you smudge here and there.

For more on using watercolor pencils, see *Drawing and Painting with Colored Pencil: Basic Techniques for Mastering Traditional and Watersoluble Colored Pencils* by Kristy Kutch, available at <http://amazon.com>,



or my own out of print book *Watercolor Pencil Magic*, available at <http://amazon.com>.

Also available in my catalog, <http://cathyjohnson.info/bookpages/watercolorpencil.html>.



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