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Featuring: Kate Woodliff O'Donnell

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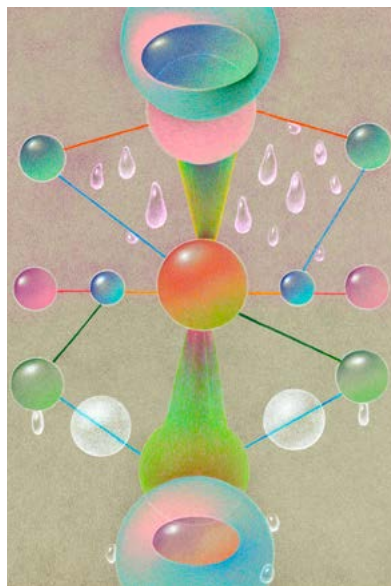
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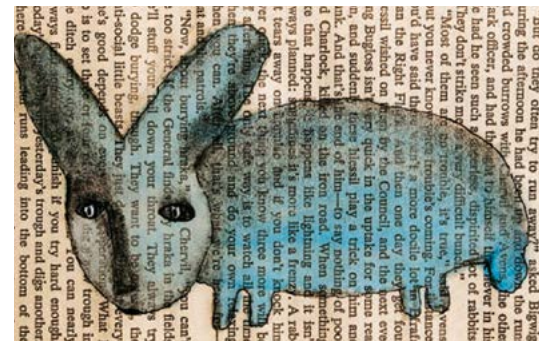
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EDITOR'S NOTE

It's so great to have a month to celebrate LOVE! To get started is featured artist Kate Woodliff O'Donnell whose artwork carries a theme of love. Her large-scale images are detailed and well thought out, making them the perfect inspiration for February.

To inject a little fun, we have the Whimsical Animals of Erika Clarke. How brilliant to perfectly render these creatures and then add humor with fun accessories. We have more out-of-the-box creations from the Non-Objective Art of Alessandro Keegan. He uses colored pencils to produce smooth and mesmerizing patterns and shapes that evokes the imagination.

Love is in the art! We wanted to see where you create and nourish your love of colored pencils, so we asked for some images of your art spaces and to tell us what you love most about it. Thank you to all who answered the call to give us a little tour.

Next, we are spotlighting Derwent Coloursoft. Check out these affordable artist-quality pencils to see if you want to add them to your collection!

Our Book of the Month is *Drawing Lab for Mixed Media Artists* by Carla Sonheim. Follow two labs, from the 52 projects that are included, to make drawing fun. Subscribe to win or follow the link to buy it.

Announcement! We are excited to let you know that Mandy Peltier is our new Q&A columnist. We know she will give you some fresh insight on many topics, pulling from her vast experience as an artist, brand ambassador, and teacher. Mandy's list of credentials is impressive and too long to post here, so visit her website at www.mandypeltier.com to learn more. Get familiar with her style as guest instructor for this month's Workshop Series. Mandy has provided a gorgeous red rose on drafting film (something many have asked to learn more about). Perfect for your Valentine!

Finally, the moment I've been waiting for . . . the **NEW Clownfish Grizaye Drawing Kit** is now available. It's not just any kit - it is part of a new Limited Edition Artist's Series that we are launching with the artwork of Lisa Clough that you can only purchase through 2022. Draw her amazing "Clownfish" when you use your colored pencils on top of a grayscale image on Legion Stonehenge paper. Since Lisa is famous for her work on the Derwent tins, they are providing each kit with a FREE blender pencil. Download the bonus list of recommended Derwent Procolour pencils for this kit (available in our store while supplies last). Be sure to take Lisa's online class to help you get pro results. Buy both the kit and class, in the same order, and we will throw in an extra Grizaye sheet - free! Visit www.grizaye.com to learn more.

Last, 3-month Print & Digital Subscriptions are back, this month only, and on sale for just \$24.99. Membership includes many perks, like winning some of the \$1,200 in prizes in our White to Bright Challenge that ends April 1st.

Thank you to all who participated in the Valentine's Exchange, and a Happy Valentine's to you all! ❤️



Sally Robertson
Editor-in-Chief
sally@coloredpencilmag.com



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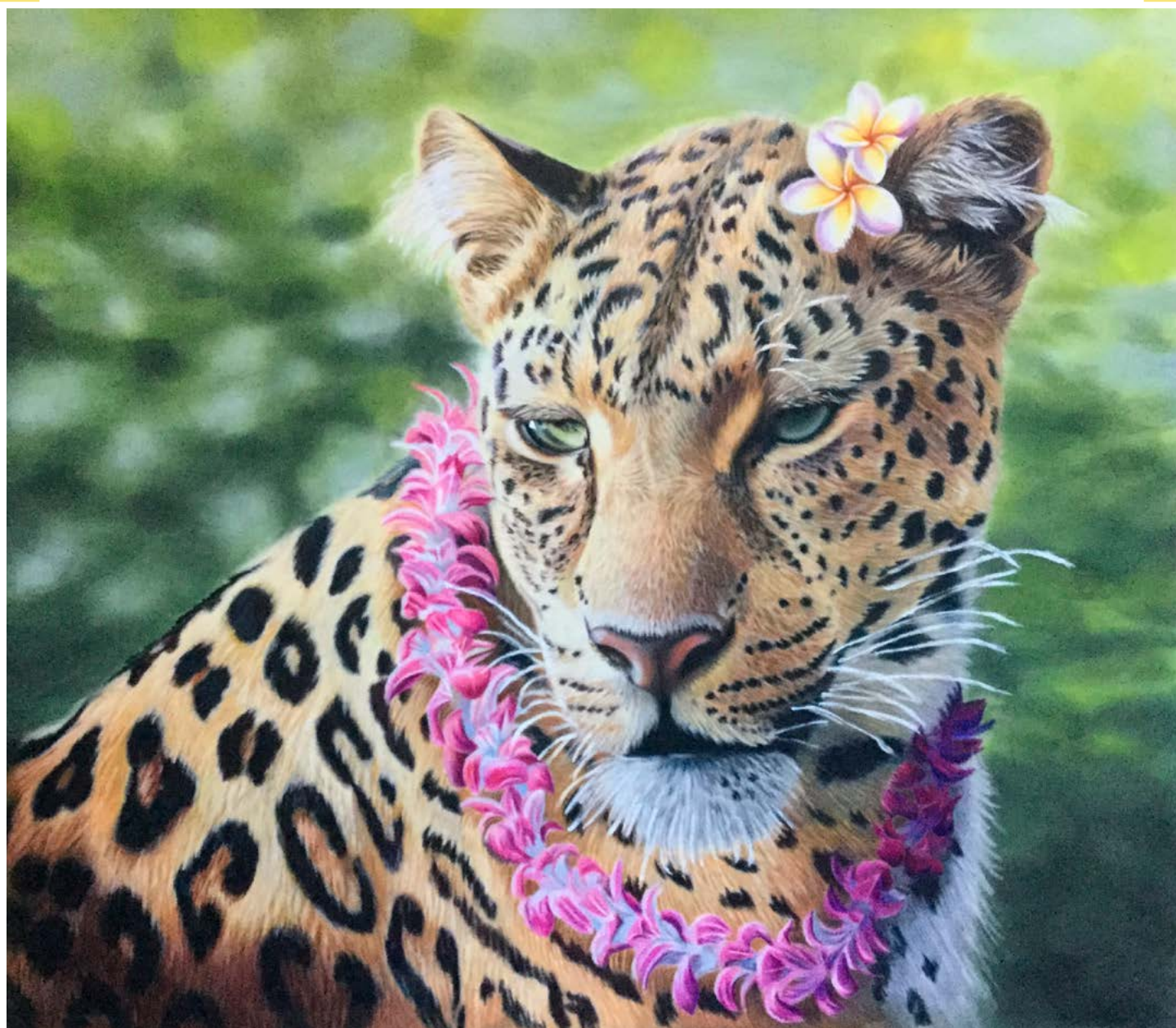
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Whimsical Animals

by Erika Clarke



"Aloha Leopard"



"BAAAA! To Valhalaaa!"

When I started drawing, I aspired to be able to create pieces that I could really call my own. I admired artists with the creative ability to conjure an image all their own but had no idea how to do it for myself. I also have a love for realism. I'd practice for hours and hours trying to make my drawings as realistic as possible. Once I became more comfortable with realism, I started to feel the urge to put my own spin on realistic images.

My first try at adding elements to my drawings came during the first part of the pandemic. In a way, it was an escape from the reality of what was going on. It was something positive to focus my energy on instead of all the negativity. The first character I drew was "King Otto van Otterburg." I happened across a reference photo of an otter in a package of photos I had purchased. I felt he had a regal look on his face. I decided to get silly with it and draw him wearing a crown (the bigger and more ridiculous the better).

"King Otto van Otterburg"





"Dapper Kitty"

The inspiration for my drawings seems to come from different sources. My ideas can start with either the theme, a particular reference photo, or a particular species of animal. I spend time thinking of different props or themes, and I keep a list of different things that pop into my head. I also talk my ideas over with my husband. I'll ask him, "What kind of animal do you think would wear this?" or "Which reference do you like better?" I'm glad he can accept this as normal conversation!

Once I have an idea that I'm excited about, I look through royalty-free photos to find something that will fit what I have in mind. At times it's a specific animal and other times I'll know it when I see it. Then I search for a photo of the prop I have in mind.



"Who's Dat!"

I use Photoshop (poorly) to give myself an idea of how large the hat (or other prop) will have to be and vaguely how it will be positioned to look right on the animal. I always change various things about the props I'm adding (in relation to the reference). I may add or remove parts depending on the vision I'm having. I usually have to adjust the way the light is hitting the object in order to make it seem as though the animal is really wearing it. Really, what I do is a mixture of the reference photo and imagination.



"The Meerkaptain"



"Curiosity"



"Me Ducky"

My goal is to create whimsical, unrealistic images that appear to be realistic. Through my drawings, I hope to bring a little joy into the world. If I can give someone a smile or a laugh with my creations, then my art has served its purpose.

I can be found on Facebook and Instagram as Erika's Pencil Drawings, @erikaspencildrawings

www.instagram.com/erikaspencildrawings

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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ABOUT

Apply bold, vibrant color to your art with the highly versatile Derwent Coloursoft Pencils that feature a soft, velvety texture. These wax-based pencils are highly blendable allowing for an infinite spectrum of rich color.

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www.derwentart.com

SETS

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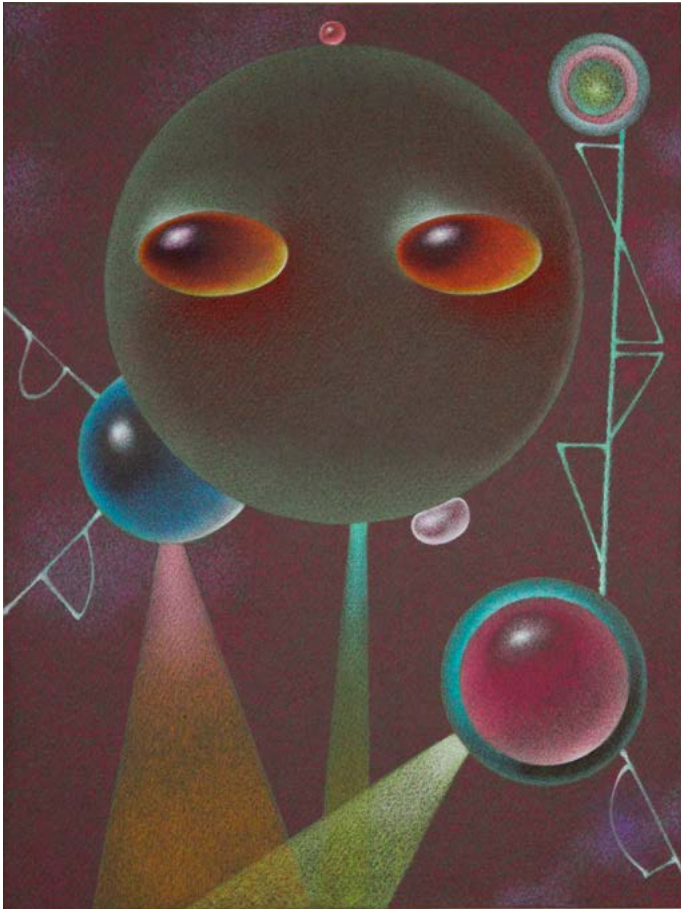
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<https://bit.ly/coloursoftchart>

NON-OBJECTIVE ART

by Alessandro Keegan

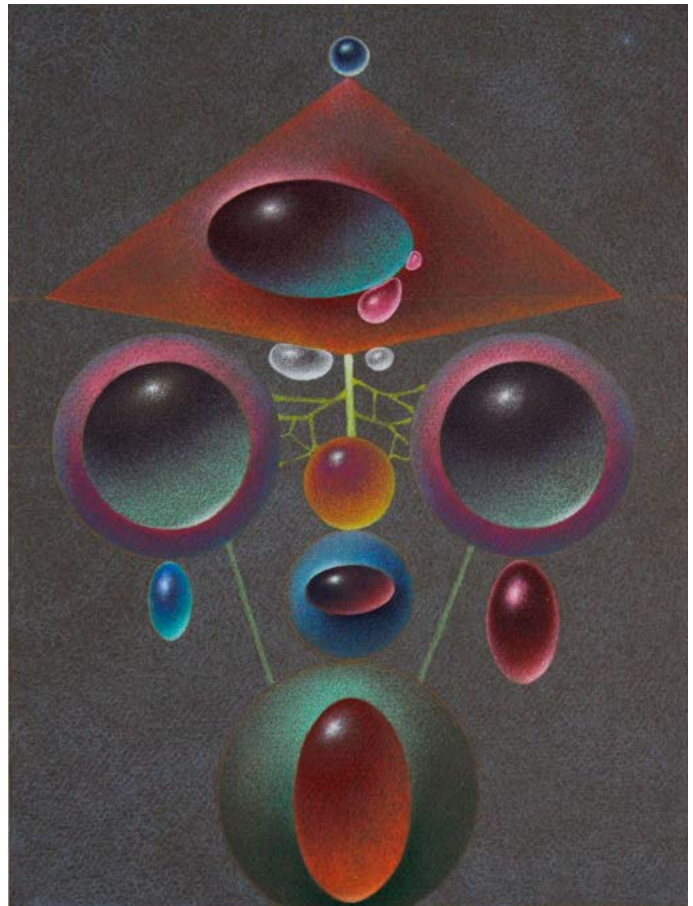
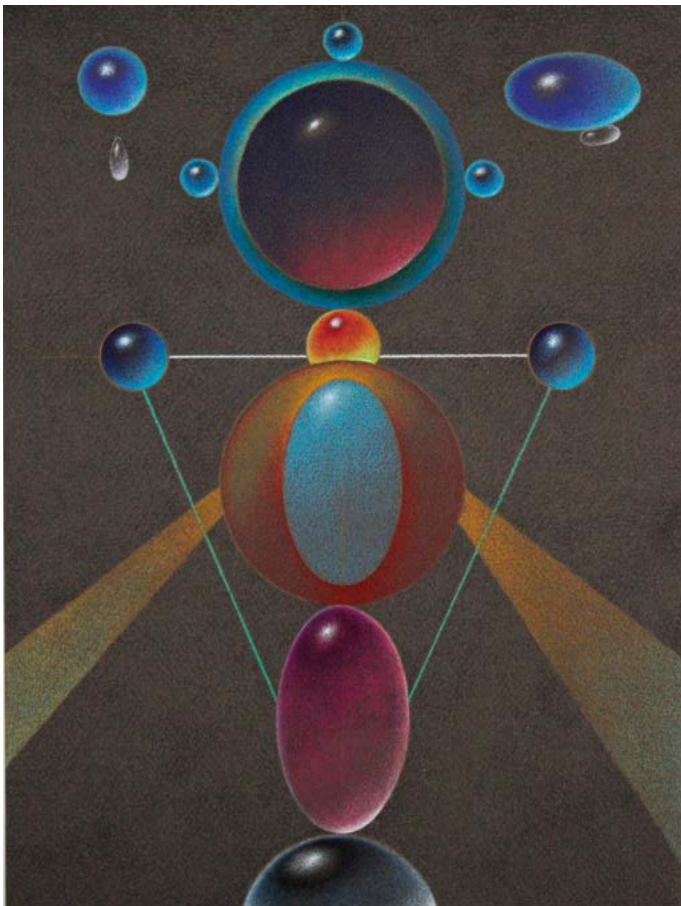
Every oil painting and colored pencil drawing I make takes a different approach with color and composition, but a specific collection of personal iconographies is repeated in each piece.

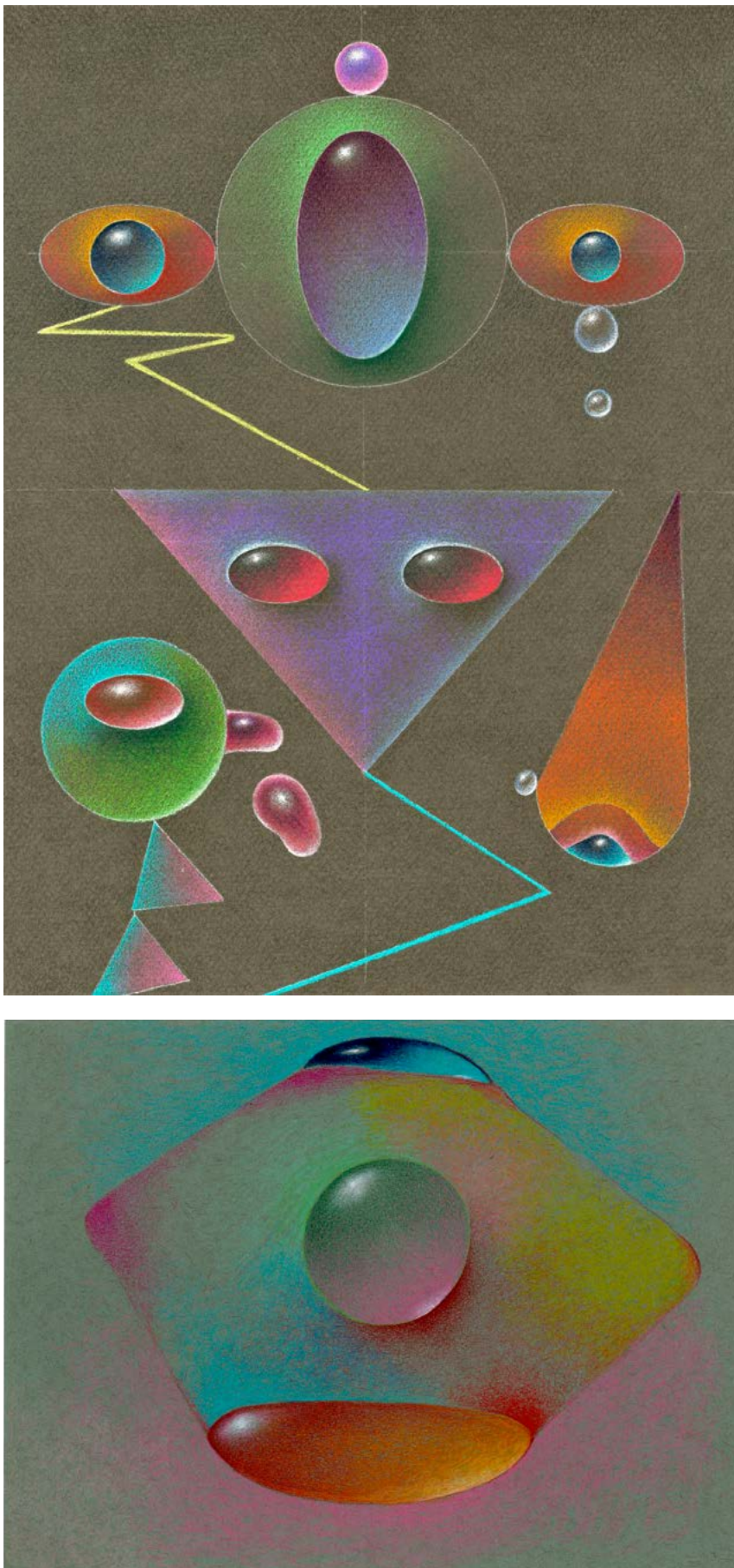




Crystalline orbs, teardrop shapes, schematic lines, and multifaceted geometric forms are just a few of the recurring characters in my work. Though the tone of the paintings may change from one work to the next, by seeing these familiar forms reimagined differently each time, a sense of implicit meaning is built up. While the philosophical meanings in my works may remain esoteric, there is an intuitive message being transferred through the repeating of my visual language in my art.

For my drawings, I prefer to work in colored pencil because of the layering effect I can achieve with color. Colored pencil is also at once a simple, humble medium often associated with illustration and childhood drawings while at the same time being a medium that is endlessly versatile and complex in the varieties of ways it can be applied and the types of emotion it can evoke. I choose to work in oil paint as my primary medium because it is deeply ancient and at one with the eternal persistence of time. Oil paint is one of principle mediums of tradition, the chief conveyor of “high art,” and yet it is born of the most primal geological and biological materials that have existed since before humanity. Paint, a substance that is both enduring and ephemeral, links past and future together in endless cycles of return.

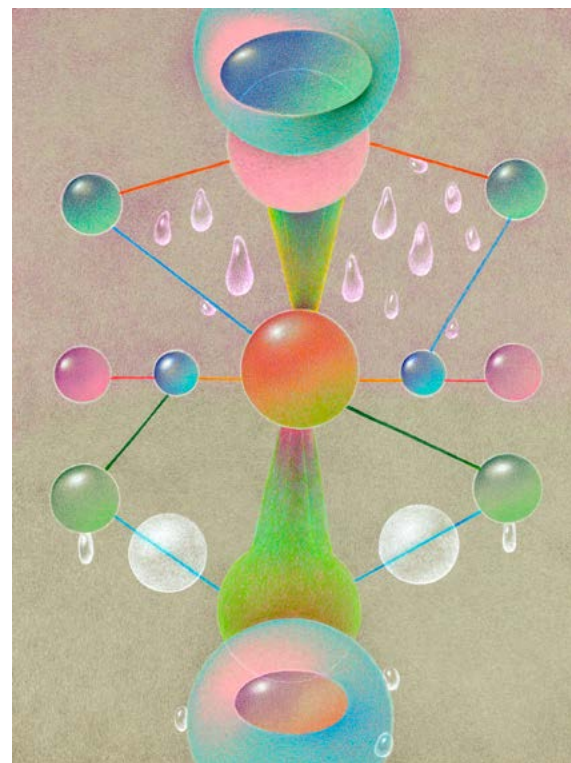




The images I make have depth and surface qualities that are representational while at the same time being abstract. They look like crystal orbs, eyes, biological forms, and the other hard-to-identify elements that make up my vocabulary of images. For me, they represent cosmic forces, the understructure of the universe, and otherworldly sentience. They are drawn from my own experiences with altered states of consciousness but have been developed over my entire life from influences that come from all over.

The general composition for my work comes in a sudden flash, but then I work on realizing this in a drawing for a very long time. The original image usually fades a little over time, and I find myself working to perfect a representation that is as close as I can get to the first inspiration.

I don't have a particular method for choosing colors. Color is something that comes to me very organically. I have lots of pencils and lots of paints, and I just feel the color in my mind and my senses.



I don't have any confirmed exhibits coming up but I will post updates on my website.

ALESSANDROKEEGAN.COM

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Featuring:

Kate Woodliff O'Donnell

I seek to represent life in a hyper-realistic way.

I think about this line every time I step into my studio and whenever I'm researching my next piece. How can I create an image that goes beyond realism? What does that look like for me, and how does it appear to the world?



Thinking about the definition of hyper-realism, I concentrate on the elements of vivid color and glow, elements beyond what a photograph can capture, drawings that elicit strong emotions of surprise and wonder for the viewer. I feel this best happens in the pieces “Cameo”, “Jewelry Box”, “Lite Brite I love you”, and my Incandescent series. A specific nod to detail is my top priority in my studio.

When I was young—really young, three or four years old—I have a vivid memory of walking into a neighbor’s workshop. He was an old man who was loved by everyone who knew him. We called him Grandpa Granger, and he was an artist in his own right—a woodcarver. On this particular day, I still see the wood chips on the floor, I can smell the clean, newly carved wood, and I still see this old man sitting at his work bench, creating exact replicas of each of our town’s houses, the houses he lived amongst. The thing that I still remember is how important it was for him to see and

recreate every little feature that made each home unique, matching paint colors and including small details like flowerpots, flags, or a tattered old blanket draped on a rocking chair carved out of wood. I attribute this memory to my own strong feelings of the importance of heightening every detail in my own studio work to this day.

I do think this memory also influenced my focus on the theme of my work: love. Many of the images in my work are symbols of love, memories, or the nostalgia of love and sometimes even the words “I love you” spelled out, as in my “Candy Love” drawing. This theme of love in my work is something I don’t see going away anytime soon. Whenever I think of my next drawing, I am intrigued by the content and the feeling my viewers will have when they see my work and experience the nostalgic qualities of a candy, a sweet, or a stuffed animal they used to love. Images of love and nostalgia are still major focuses as I move forward in my studio in the 2022-2023 year.





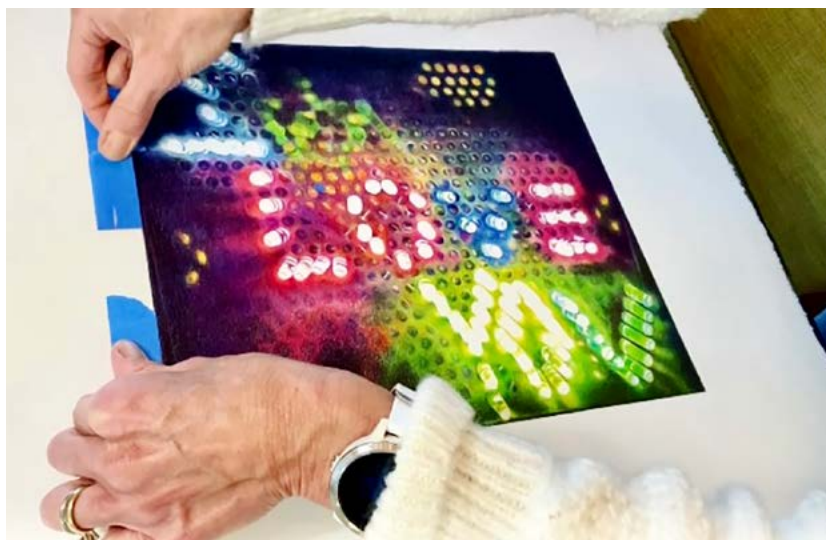
The ideas of love and nostalgia became even more important to me during the pandemic. I noticed how necessary it felt to create work that shared hope and memories in that time of isolation. Over the course of 2020, I created the "Lite Brite I love you" piece, my Incandescent series, and a series of three Muppets. It gave me so much joy to draw these images! I had this overwhelming urge not only to create happiness for my viewers but also to create my own simple feeling of joy as I worked on the pieces.

In 2020, I had the honor of working with the Denver Art Museum on a special project around Valentine's Day. It was an outreach

project over Zoom with people who had dementia or Alzheimer's disease. The session focused on highlighting my work as an artist and focusing on everything "Love" for the holiday: candy, sweets, foods, flowers, etc. As we looked through images of my work, I started to ask the audience questions to spark their memories of love and childhood. As the conversation flowed, beloved times sifted to the surface. My own favorite memory of that session was when Cookie, my Cookie Monster drawing, was projected. A gentleman's eyes lit up as he began to recall a memory of his whole family watching The Muppet Show every Friday night, a happy memory long forgotten but now recalled through a single image.



"Bear Hugs" 50x40"



"Lite Brite I love you" 30x28"



"Cookie!" 26x24"



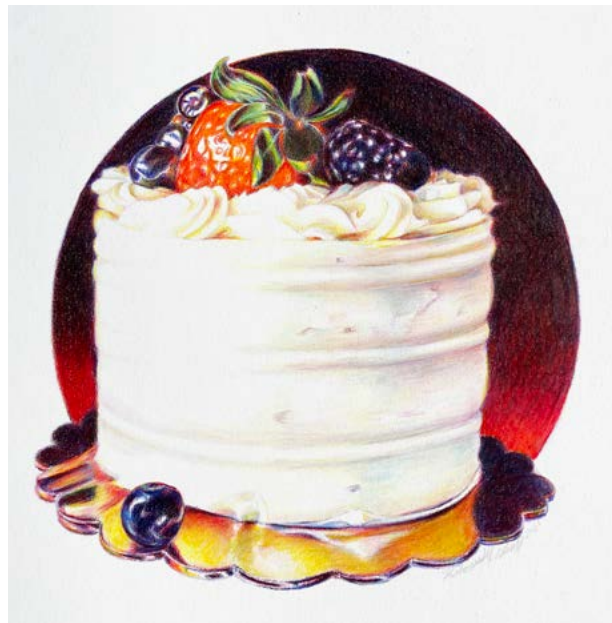
A few tips from my studio:

Many of my drawings are created in a small A-frame cabin in the mountains of Colorado in a small town called Nederland about 3,000 feet above Boulder. It's not particularly convenient to run out of materials, so I make sure I have the following in my studio at all times:

1. A stock of Prismacolor pencils bought in bulk (for example, 60 white colored pencils purchased at once). I use white for burnishing. I usually have 20-30 of all other colors at a time.
2. A large roll of Stonehenge paper.
3. A drafting table and other large boards when moving my work.
4. Coffee and chocolate!
5. Turpenoid and multiple soft brushes.
6. Good lighting and an area to take pictures of drawing content for each of my pieces. Each of the subjects I draw is bought, arranged, and photographed by me. No stock photos are used. This is very important to me and the feeling of my work. Each piece of candy and each flower is put into place by me. Stuffed animals and Muppets are fluffed, illuminated, and photographed to find the perfect composition.
7. Running shoes to hop on the local trails with friends and clear my mind.



"I Love You Soup" 8.5x11"



"Chantilly Cake" 15x12"



"Happy Birthday to Me Once More" 32x38"

I attended graduate school at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia and graduated in 2002. During my time there as a fine arts major, I focused on installation work and printmaking. After school, my work still focused on installations and stepped into large sewn fabric non-traditional quilts that told stories.



"Cameo" 18x10"



"Still Life with Flowers" 53x41"

It wasn't until 2013 that I picked up my first Prismacolor pencil, partially in preparation for drawing classes I was teaching at a Denver college. While my work has always held the same themes, I fell in love with colored pencils as I began to explore levels of detail and technique that are far beyond the scope of fabric. The vibrant end result through the layering of colors to achieve depth and saturation of color and the challenge in mastering the techniques involved are things with which I am deeply in love. An example I sometimes bring up is that I never use a black colored pencil for any black or dark details in an object or background. I notice the colors surrounding the dark area and then select layering colors—they might be reds, greens, blues, purples, and even yellows—to build a chromatic black or dark area and a sense of depth that relates to the other colors and harmonizes the composition.

The limitless medium of colored pencil has given me satisfaction I never dreamed of as an artist, and I always look forward to what will spring forth when I stare at a brand-new sheet of paper on my table. I do not plan on looking back from this material. I am home!

2022 will be an exciting year in my studio and will feature many of the themes I love, but I look forward to exploring new content and ideas as well. There are still many unknowns, and that is exciting to me. I plan on growing my body of work and look forward to connecting with and having a positive impact on a wider audience.

Kate Woodliff O'Donnell



"Jewelry Box" 35x48"



"Chocolate Bear" 17x9"



"Gold Bow" 40x43"

Love is in the Art!

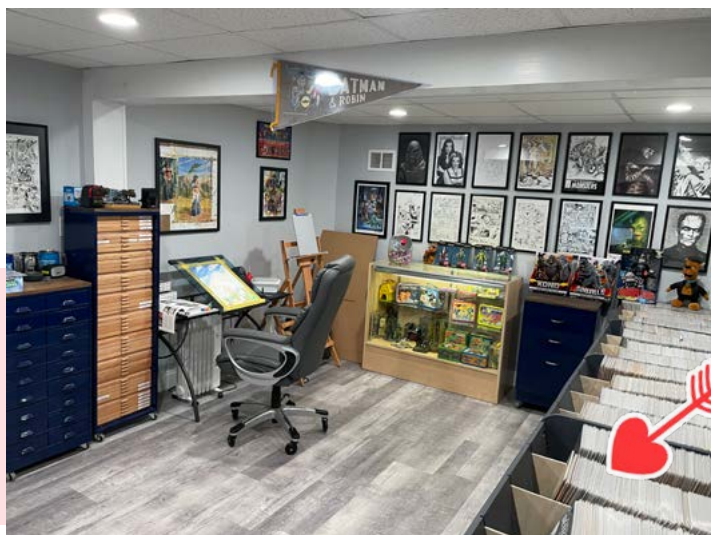
SHOW US YOUR
ART SPACE

We asked you to share your art space and tell us why you love it so much and got an amazing response. We are sorry we couldn't include them all, but thanks to everyone who submitted.

*Whether your art space is big or whether it's small,
it's the place you give back, so we celebrate it all!*

My work space is organized and a great place to create. I feel at peace while I am sitting at the drawing table. With the music playing loudly while I am drawing, I can totally lose track of time. Just wish I had more time to spend creating in that space.

- Chad Becker • beckerhistoricart.com



I love this space as it is removed from the rest of my house, it also the place that is solely mine and has all the things I love in it. Which can be a negative as all my distractions from art are here as well. I spent some time on this creating the blue cabinets you see. All were purchased used and reconditioned by me. The tall blue cabinet I built for storage of all my pencils. - Robert Younce

My art space has a lot of natural light, a priority for me. The white cabinets give me a sense of calm. The built-in pencil drawers have most of my pencil collection color-coded and divided by brands. At the moment I am most in love with my pencil storage unit on the wall. I designed and built it in house to fit 120 colored pencils. The idea is to expand and manufacture a second one. It's very practical to see the colors and its easier to keep track of stock. My workspace is a work-in-progress, always evolving. This is how it looks between projects.

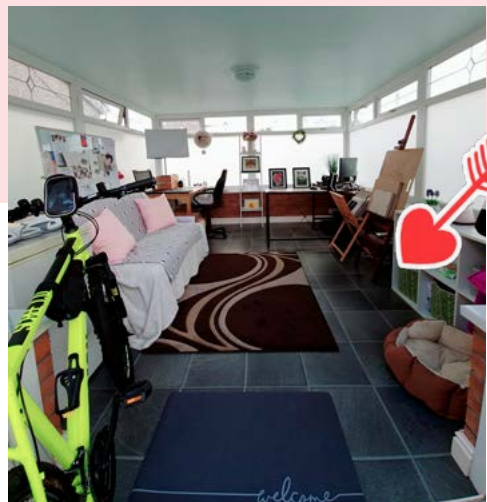
- Vânia Colaço • www.instagram.com/vaniacolaco.art





Each material or object in this space has its history and origin that are very special to me. I love the sunlight coming in through the window, it invigorates me for the work to be done.
- Simone de Moraes • www.simonedemoraes.com

What I love about my art space is that I am surrounded by all my favorite things. Just to name a few - my ever growing pencil collection, my artwork, my art books, my statues, and the list goes on. At a glance, I can even look down at some of my previous work done with oils where I collaged them into an oil cloth. My happy place for sure! - Ruby Allan



This is my happy place! During the pandemic, my husband and I finally set everything up and it is now my little sanctuary where I can create my drawings without any distractions. I love my little hideaway and the time it has given me to be creative.
- Sun-Kyong Clifford • www.fineartbysun.com



My studio is my refuge where I can listen to music, read, write my poetry, and create my artwork. I am very lucky indeed. The space consists of two rooms, one of which is equipped with all the materials, devices, and surfaces I need to create, reproduce, and promote my colored pencil drawings. This includes an Epson Perfection 4180 Photo Scanner used to scan my drawings in sections. I then use the Photoshop Photomerge feature to stitch them into one file that I can then publish to Facebook, Instagram, and my website. The resulting resolution is suitable for high-end archival color printing using an Epson SureColor P800 printer on Epson Legacy Fiber paper. For storage, I use wooden storage trays labeled with the brand and pencil for easy retrieval and to keep track of inventory levels. The second adjoining room has a work table for prep and finishing work and shelves for storage. My only wish is to have more wall space for display!
- Victoria Twomey • www.victoriatwomey.com



I love how I have been able to arrange all of my colored pencils that I use most next to my desk, so I can see exactly how many I have at all times. I also get wonderful light at my desk in the mornings and afternoon.
- Jennifer Slouha • www.jenniferslouha.com



My art space is a quaint Shepherd's Hut based in the Piddle valley in Dorset, UK. Working from the kitchen table wasn't working for me, always having to put my pencils away to make room for the family! So I decided to get my own studio to work from. The shepherd's hut was designed to my spec to have good natural lighting and appropriate size. Reclaimed and up cycled furniture give the hut a natural and cozy feel. In the summer I work with the stable door and windows open right into the evening listening to the evening bird song and during the winter months I have a little fire to keep the hut warm and cozy. I have lots of little personal touches inside including original local shepherd's tools, handmade curtains, hare tie backs and vintage dresser. It is now so lovely to be able to start a drawing and not have to pack it all away every night! My hut is very much my haven.

- Tracey Walder • www.traceywalderillustration.com

This is my art room. In the spring of 2020, I almost lost my Dad to Covid and needed to do something to keep myself occupied since I couldn't visit him in the hospital. It is the first time I have ever got creative painting a room, and it's my favorite room in my home. This is only one angle, but I was able to make every part of this room my dream art room. The closet was revamped to organize my pencils, store paper, printers, and everything else I use. In the other corner by the windows is a spinning white craft tower. It's the first time everything has a place that makes sense and I don't feel overwhelmed when I am in there. I have room to work on several projects and actually love being there. The best thing was being able to show my Dad when he recovered that I finally did what he had been encouraging me to do.

- Kelli LaCoy • [FB@KellisColorPencil](https://www.facebook.com/KellisColorPencil)



My Expressive Domain studio is located within the Artisan Forge Gallery, so I benefit from their customer base. Here, I create bold experimental colored pencil images, such as a recent piece on the easel 'Clutching Pearls'. The rent on studios is based on square footage, so I use every inch of my small space! This includes a workspace in the back where I create my colored pencil images, teach student lessons, and write historical fiction like my latest book, 'Born with a Tarnished Spoon.' In front, I sell my original artwork, prints, mugs, totes, pillows, and more items with my images. Working in a larger artist community of 50 artists who have studio spaces here, there is always an event or new projects to provide inspiration. As a hub of art in our community, we are a tourist destination and frequently host bus and school tours. Besides hanging my latest work in the Artisan Forge main gallery, I show my work at other local galleries and currently have my 40 image collection 'Color Eau Claire' on a semi-permanent display at the Chippewa Valley museum.

- Patricia Hawkenson • www.facebook.com/ExpressiveDomain



"My lair", my study, where I create my drawings. I love the welcoming atmosphere and the scents of colors.

- V.Cinzia Chiavetta

QA

Your Art Question Answered by Mandy Peltier

Working Through Artist's Block

Question:

What are some ways to work through artist's block?

Answer:

Artist's block happens to most of us at some point, and different things can trigger it. Sometimes it only lasts for a few days, but it can also, unfortunately, persist for weeks or months.



WHAT IS IT?

Before offering some suggestions to help work through artist's block, it might help to first define what it is. To put it succinctly, **artist's block is when you have run out of ideas.**

Whether that be for your next project or the next step in your current project, you feel stuck and don't know what to do next. Sometimes, the motivation and desire to create can be present, but the inspiration to do so is lacking. Other times, an idea is present, but the struggle is in how to execute that idea.

No matter what type of artist's block one is experiencing, it can cause an artist to completely freeze and stop creating all together.

I have experienced artist's block at various times in my career under different scenarios. A self-inflicted sense of pressure to create something good, being distracted by other things going on in my life, or not being able to think of a good idea have all been contributing factors. I have learned that experiencing artist's block doesn't have to be wasted time, and even if it doesn't go away as fast as one might like, there can still be creative productivity in the season of waiting.

1. TRY A NEW MEDIUM

Maybe you have been wanting to try oil paint or another medium for a long time. Experiencing artist's block could be the perfect opportunity to branch out and apply yourself to a new medium. See if a local art center offers classes or workshops in a medium you are interested in learning. You will be supporting a local art center, learning from an instructor who can offer immediate feedback and help, and working alongside other students who you can meet, interact with, and learn from.

If a local art center is not an option, artists across all media offer online classes and workshops, digital catalogs, membership courses, and more. While you will lose the perk of learning from someone in person, there is still a wealth of knowledge that can be learned digitally. Depending on where you live, online learning could provide better access to a living master of the particular medium you are wanting to learn than what could be found locally.



For some less expensive options, instructional books can be checked out from the library, written projects can be purchased online, and free instructional videos can be watched on YouTube. Some companies, such as Michaels, have even started offering live

and free online classes for various media. No matter how a new medium is learned, it could be just the thing to get you out of the artist's slump and creating again.

2. TRY A NEW SUBJECT MATTER, SURFACE, TECHNIQUE, OR STYLE



Another idea to help work through artist's block is to create artwork that is atypical from your current portfolio while still using colored pencils. This can be done by creating something on a new-to-you surface, with a different subject matter, or using a new technique or style.

Maybe your usual subject matter of choice is animals. Consider creating a figurative portrait or still life as your next piece instead. This can feel as hard as learning a new medium, but you may discover a new subject matter to add to your portfolio. In 2018, I was experiencing artist's block and didn't know what to create next. At that point in time, I had not yet drawn flowers, so I

decided to give flowers a try, since I didn't know what else to create. From that artist's block came Orchid Blossoms. I enjoyed creating this piece far more than I thought I would, and now flowers are a regular subject matter that I create.

Keeping your usual subject matter but creating it on a new surface could also be just the thing to keep your creative juices flowing. Artist's block can make it difficult to pick a new photo reference, so if this is an issue, you could redraw a past piece on a new surface. The new surface doesn't have to be a huge change. Instead of white paper, you could try colored paper. A new surface will inevitably be the chance to try a new technique as well, as different surfaces lend themselves to certain techniques. Try subtraction on drafting film or odorless mineral spirits on Pastelmat.

Another idea is to create something in a new style. Colored pencil lends itself quite naturally to the style of realism, but there are colored pencil artists who create artwork in other styles, such as abstract or impressionism. Revisit a past piece, and try to envision it in a new style. The artwork could be recreated using a single type of stroke, such as a stippling stroke, to yield a piece in the style of pointillism.

3. STUDY

During artist's block, you can still be productive and grow as an artist without actually creating artwork. I believe the best artists are those who are always students. Use the down time from creating to study. Much in the same way as learning a new medium, check out art books from the library, buy a few instructional books or

tutorials online, study art history, or watch YouTube videos from other colored pencil artists. Absorb knowledge through reading and watching. When creative inspiration strikes, you can draw from this knowledge bank to create your next piece.

4. TAKE ON A COMMISSION

Under normal circumstances, when an artist is not experiencing artist's block, taking on a commission can be a personal inward battle. The end result is always wonderful: the client receives a meaningful work of art that they will cherish for years to come, it puts the artist's artwork in someone else's house, and it generates income, which is always a plus. The inward battle can come when the subject matter isn't something the artist personally connects with, but they don't feel like they can say no. When the commission is not something that motivates or inspires the artist personally, it can feel like drudgery to get to the finish line.

When experiencing artist's block, however, getting asked to do a commission can feel like nothing short of manna from heaven. Even if the artist doesn't personally connect with the subject matter, commission work keeps the artist creating and growing without feeling the pressure of having to figure out the subject matter or photo reference (since both are generally provided by the client). The time it takes to create a commission buys the artist a bit of time to work through their artist's block while still providing the client with an original work of art that is meaningful and personal to them. While commissions may be a personal battle during normal times, they are a no-brainer during creative droughts and a win-win for all involved.

5. BROWSE THROUGH OLD PHOTOS

Browsing through old photos is exactly how I created the piece I mentioned earlier, Orchid Blossoms. At the time, I didn't know what to create next. I decided to scroll through old photos to see if I would stumble upon something that would inspire me. I came across a photo of an orchid plant that I had taken a couple of years prior, and, after lingering on it, I decided the black background and the depth of the blossoms would be a good challenge to tackle. If I hadn't taken the time to browse through old photos, I probably would have forgotten about that photo and never drawn it. I am so glad I did.



6. TAKE NEW PHOTOS

Another way to try and get the creative juices flowing is to take as many pictures as possible over the course of a day. Call it a "Reference Day" for fun, and take photos of anything and everything: random things around the house, lifestyle images of your friends or family, shots from a nature walk, or photos from running errands (produce section of the grocery store, flower bouquets, etc.). Don't worry if people look at you like you are crazy for taking so many photos—this may be just the thing to capture the perfect photo reference and get you out of your slump.



7. TRY A DRAWING PROMPT IDEA GENERATOR

A quick search on the Internet with the phrase “drawing prompts” or “drawing prompt idea generator” will bring up a host of results. This can be a good springboard to get your creative juices flowing and keep you practicing as an artist. Set a goal for yourself to sketch one drawing prompt per day or perhaps three in a week. Use colored pencils, graphite pencils, markers, or whatever media you have laying around to create these sketches. They do not have to be big or take much time to create, either. It may help to set limits for yourself when doing this. For instance, the set paper size for these sketches could be 5x5”, and 20 minutes could be the time limit set to complete the drawing. When the 20 minutes are up, the pencil goes down. Sketching the drawing prompts in a drawing journal could also be a good idea so that the sketches stay together in one place. What is sketched from these drawing prompts may not translate into a future full-fledged colored pencil piece, but who knows? These prompts may do just that!



8. ORGANIZE AND CLEAN STUDIO SPACE

Maybe you're not like me and you don't need this gentle push repeatedly, but if you are like me and your studio space becomes disorganized and chaotic in a very short amount of time, using the season of artist's block to organize and clean your studio space could be of real benefit. Even if you are a tidy person, there still could be some things you could organize in your studio. Organizing could spur the next idea as you sort through old projects, drafts, and art magazines. My studio has a wall filing system where I keep all the sketches and drafts from previous projects, and each folder is labeled in case I need to refer to it at a later date. Oftentimes, drafts and sketches from more recent projects will mount into a rather large pile until I take the time to sort the various projects, stuff them into different folders, and label them to add to the existing folders in the filing rack.

While this could be its own article, I also have my colored pencils organized by color family in mason jars on a bench. After finishing a colored pencil piece, I generally have colored pencils all over the place—in a pencil holder that sits on my drafting table (where they are all supposed to be!), laying all over and in every which way on my drafting table, and—gasp!—sprinkled all around the floor as well. Yes, I know. Take care of your investment, Mandy, for crying out loud! Organizing for me includes gathering all these wayward colored pencils and putting them each in their correct mason jar. If I'm in the middle of a piece, however, and do not want to put the pencils completely away, then I will gather them up and put them on the pencil holder I mentioned above, so they are at least tidy and all together.

Organizing and cleaning doesn't have to be limited to your art supplies, however. It can also include what is on your computer. Are the digital images of your finished artwork all over your hard drive? If yes, you could use this time to neatly organize them in one place on your computer. Are there files you could delete to free up space? Now could be the time to do that.

No matter what cleaning and organizing looks like for you, having a tidy studio may allow you to think more clearly, which could help break your artist's block.

9. FOCUS ON THE BUSINESS SIDE OF THINGS

The season of artist's block could be a great time to catch up on the business side of being an artist, which sometimes feels like a full-time job in and of itself! Summer intern, anyone? Use artist's block to take the time to explore new opportunities and expand your reach.



Here are some ideas to consider:

- Prep for tax season (compiling receipts, recording miles, tracking income, etc.).
- Start a website, or freshen up an existing one. I am a big proponent for artists having a website, and there are many free options.
- Look into selling at an art fair, craft fair, or even a local farmers' market. Sell only original artwork or order prints, greeting cards, stickers, and other merchandise to sell at these events alongside original artwork.
- Make professional connections. Take the time to reach out to a local gallery to see about selling your artwork there. If you are an instructor, see if any local art centers are hiring.
- Take the time to search for exhibitions you can enter artwork into (onlinejuriedshows.com and callforentry.org are good places to start).
- Respond to emails that have been neglected.
- Write and submit a potential future article to *COLORED PENCIL Magazine*.
- Consider starting a new social media account. For instance, if you have Facebook but not Instagram, start an Instagram account. Even a small number of followers is better than no followers at all!
- Advertise for commissions or other work.
- Open an Etsy, Society 6, or Redbubble shop, or open one on your website if your web provider offers that.

10. TAKE A BREAK

If all else fails, do not feel bad about taking a break from art altogether. If you have other interests and passions, maybe this is a season to focus on those things. Who knows? Your next artwork idea may stem from your other hobbies. Do you like knitting? Maybe your next piece can feature needles and yarn. Do you like

gardening? Take pictures of your harvest, and consider drawing that. Even if your other interests don't spur your next big idea, don't feel bad. Sometimes having a break from something is just what we need to recharge and refocus.



Mandy Peltier

Visit www.mandypeltier.com for free tutorials in various media and follow Mandy on social media @mandypeltierartist



Send your questions to: qa@coloredpencilmag.com

Two-sided drafting film is one of my favorite supports for colored pencil. With a polyester base and a translucent surface, this film is truly unique. Erasing is a cinch, both sides of the film can be utilized, pieces work up fairly quickly, and finished drawings yield a vibrant, luminous appearance.

Flowers are a perfect candidate for this surface, and with Valentine's Day taking place this month, a red rose seemed like the obvious choice. When working through the steps for this tutorial, use the photo reference as a guide rather than an absolute. Sometimes we colored pencil artists get caught up in the details. It's okay to simplify things, especially with the center of the rose where things can feel complicated. Omitting a petal or the visible veining on the petals is fine. The end result will still look realistic.

MATERIAL LIST:

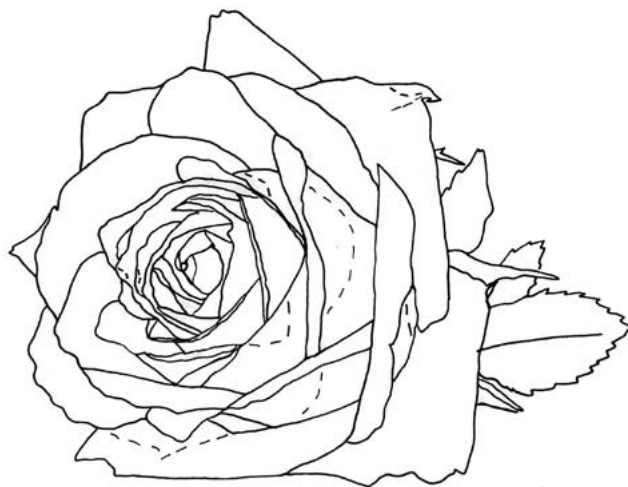
- .005" 2-Sided Grafix Drafting Film, trimmed to have one 8x8" sheet
- Tombow Mono Zero Eraser
- Vinyl Eraser
- Artist's Tape
- 8.5x11" Sheets of Printer Paper
- Swiffer Wet Jet Pad or Panty Hose
- Grafix Double Tack Mounting Film or Acid-Free Double Sided Tape (optional)
- Acid-Free White Cardstock or Foam Board

Faber-Castell Polychromos Pencils:

White (101)
 Cream (102)
 Ivory (103)
 Dark Chrome Yellow (109)
 Scarlet Red (118)
 Pale Geranium Lake (121)
 Rose Carmine (124)
 Beige Red (132)
 Dark Indigo (157)
 Grass Green (166)
 Raw Umber (180)
 Cinnamon (189)
 Dark Red (225)
 Alizarin Crimson (226)
 Burnt Umber (283)
 Permanent Green (266)
 Pine Green (267)
 Warm Grey II (271)
 Warm Grey IV (273)



Photo reference & line art can be downloaded at:
www.coloredpencilworkshop.com



Tips: Drafting film has very little tooth, so using lighter than handwriting pressure throughout this tutorial is important to save room for additional colors and to not exhaust the tooth prematurely. To help keep a light touch, it may help to pull back on the pencil a bit. I held it about halfway down the body of the pencil so that I was unable to put as much pressure on the tip. I used primarily a tight back and forth stroke when applying colors in this tutorial, but I did use a scumbling stroke in smaller areas as well. I also sharpened my pencil regularly, and I turned my pencil every few strokes to help maintain a sharp point in between each sharpening.

Step One:

Place the drafting film over top of the provided outline and secure it in place with a couple pieces of artist's tape. One bonus of drafting film is that transferring an outline is unnecessary since the outline can be easily viewed underneath the translucent film. Apply Scarlet Red to all of the red hues on the petals, whether they be light, middle, or dark in value. Work only one petal at a time and be sure to follow the curvature of each petal as strokes are applied to achieve a more natural and realistic appearance. Doing this tedious process now will make it easier to continue the framework laid in this step with future pencils. Apply Cream to all of the yellow and yellow-orange hues on the petals in the same manner that Scarlet Red was applied. Then, following the same process, apply Grass Green to the green hues on the leaves and Cream to the non-green hues on the leaves.



Step Two:

Use Alizarin Crimson, Geranium Lake, Dark Red, and Scarlet Red in this step. Work on the red hues on the petals and begin to establish the values as well. Continue to work one petal at a time and follow the curvature of each petal as you apply color. Begin by applying Alizarin Crimson to the middle and dark values on each petal. Then, apply Geranium Lake to the light values, and if needed, apply more Scarlet Red to the lightest hues. Overlap colors as necessary to help with transitional values. Finally, apply Dark Red to the dark values on each petal. Dark Red is not as dark as the darkest values on the rose, but it is the local color of the rose and the darkest of the three colors used in this step.

Step Three:

Values will continue to be darkened in this step and vibrancy will continue to be developed by adding additional layers of color. The dark values will be established without the use of black. Black will be created by layering opposites on the color wheel and then adding Dark Indigo to the darkest areas. The opposites on the color wheel that will be used in this tutorial are red and green. Pine Green will serve as the green hue to darken red areas, and Dark Red will serve as the red hue to darken green areas. Apply Pine Green to the dark values on each petal, and then apply Dark Indigo to only the darkest values, going over the Pine Green in these sections. After applying the dark values, apply Dark Red to the red hues on the petal, going over the Pine Green and Dark Indigo, if necessary, to tone them down. Wherever a pink hue is observed on petals, Rose Carmine can be applied. If any areas need to be brightened up further, apply Dark Chrome Yellow. This will add a bit of a glow and bright orange hue as the yellow pigment is mixed with the red pigment that is already on the surface.

To the petals that have cream sections, once again apply Dark Chrome Yellow to the yellow and peach hues. Then, apply Cinnamon to the pink hues on these areas and use it to darken portions of these sections as well. The Cinnamon and Dark Chrome Yellow layered over each other yields a slight orangish brown shade. This step will be the longest yet, but it is helpful to gradually build up layers and vibrancy versus applying too much pigment at once and then struggling to reverse an overworked section. It may take a lot of back and forth between the above pencils to achieve even coverage and depth. If necessary, use the



Tombow Mono Zero eraser to lift highlights and make corrections, but be sure to use a light touch with the eraser to not damage the tooth of the drafting film.

To the leaves, use Deep Red and Dark Indigo to darken values in the same way that Pine Green and Dark Indigo were used to darken values on the petals. Use Permanent Green on the leaves in the same way Deep Red was used on the petals, and continue to use Dark Indigo on the darkest values. To draw the center vein on the bottom leaf, use Burnt Umber. To the forefront leaf, apply Cinnamon to the white tones and to the light green hues. Then, apply Grass Green to the green hues and use Burnt Umber to draw in the brown markings on that leaf. By the end of this step, the drafting film can be lifted from the outline and placed over a blank sheet of printer paper.



Step Four:

Flip the drafting film to the backside and work from the horizontally flipped image of the provided photo reference. While the last color applied on the frontside of the film is perhaps the most influential or visible to the eye, the opposite is true for the backside. The first colored applied on the backside will most influence what the eye sees on the front side, and the last layer of color applied on the backside will have the least influential effect on the frontside. As a result, the backside is used more for “blocking in” color to lighten what needs to be lightened, darken what needs to be darkened, and to achieve greater vibrancy and coverage. To the lightest valued areas on the rose and leaves, apply Ivory. Then, apply Dark Indigo to the darkest values.



Step Five:

Continue working on the backside of the film by blocking in the basic colors observed on each petal and leaf. This will cause the rose to look more developed and saturated when looking at it from the frontside. For the petals, apply Scarlet Red to the lighter red hues, Deep Red to the middle and darker red hues, and Dark Chrome Yellow to the yellow-hued areas. For the forefront leaf, apply Grass Green to the green hued portion only. Apply Grass Green to the entirety of each remaining leaf.



Step Six:

It is time to make final adjustments. In this step, flip back and forth between the front and backside.

Outline the edges of the petals on the frontside using a very sharp Deep Red. Outline the highlights on the petals on the frontside by using a very sharp White.

Make any further adjustments to the rose or leaves as needed on the frontside. On the backside, White can also be applied to the ivory-hued sections on the petals to brighten them up further.

For the cast shadow, work on the backside of the film to yield a softer look. Apply Warm Grey II to each section of the cast shadow. Then, apply Warm Grey IV to the darkest portions of the cast shadow. Add a touch of Pale Geranium to the red hues on the cast shadow. Make any other final adjustments to the backside.

Step Seven:

After making final adjustments, you may notice an uneven waxy shine as well as visible strokes from the buildup of wax. These issues can be resolved and the artwork can be buffed by using a small piece cut from the center strip of a Swiffer wet jet pad. Alternatively, panty hose can be used to buff the artwork.

Throughout the process of working on the artwork, pigment may have smeared onto the unused areas of drafting film. The vinyl eraser can be used to remove unwanted pigment, and the Tombow Mono Zero eraser will help remove smears in tight areas.

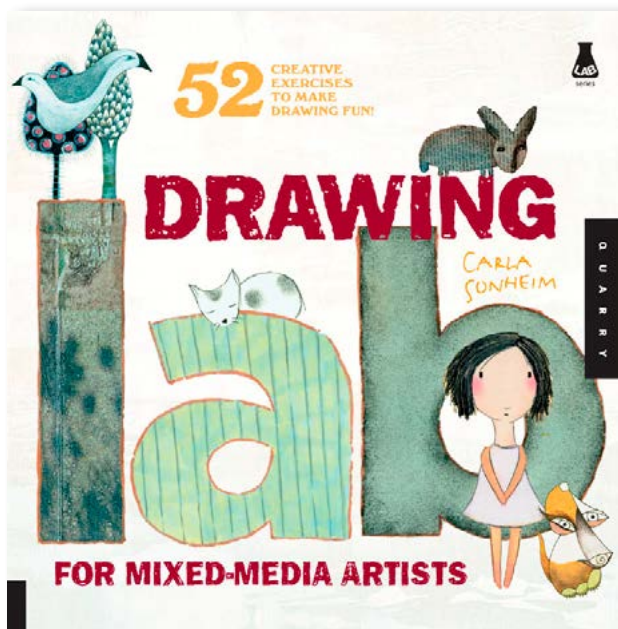
Artwork on drafting film looks best when hung with a sheet

of acid free paper or foam board placed behind the artwork. Different colored paper yield a different effect, so have fun experimenting with different options. To keep the background white on this piece, hang it with a piece of acid-free white cardstock or foam board. The drafting film can optionally be adhered to the cardstock or foam board using an 8x8" sheet of Grafix Double Tack Mounting Film. Alternatively, acid-free double sided tape, squares, or dots can be inconspicuously applied to the corners. Truthfully, this artwork is small enough that the backing of a photo frame should be sufficient enough to keep the cardstock or foam snugly against the drafting film without the use for adhesive, so adhering the drafting film to a backing with tape is optional.



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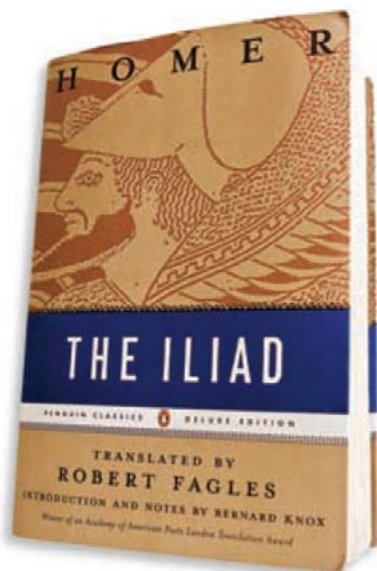
www.coloredpencilmag.com/giveaways



Enjoy the excerpts from the book . . .

LAB 49 Illuminated Pages

Materials



- a book
- ballpoint pen, or other mediums of your choice

"Everything in the world exists in
order to end up as a book."
—Stéphane Mallarmé

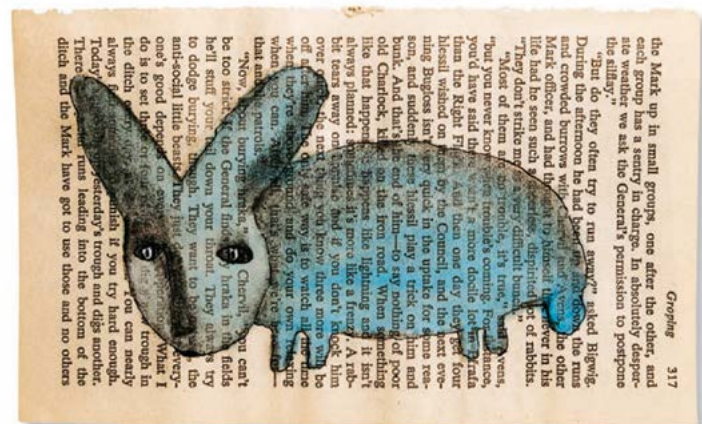
WE'VE BEEN TAUGHT not to draw in books, and yet most of us have marked up textbooks or novels by underlining or starring passages . . . why is drawing so different? In this exercise, you are set free to draw in a book . . . just make sure it's your own book that you are illuminating!



Fourteen-year-old Wes Sonheim made an assignment to read Homer's Iliad much more interesting for himself by doodling in the margins. Double benefit: a completely personalized edition of a classic read.

Instructions

1. You might need to talk to yourself a bit to get over the "sin" of drawing in books. Try to remember that it is your book, after all, and that marking it up in this way is no different from the underlining you may have done in college. If that doesn't work, take a deep breath and just start! (If you just can't draw in a new book, try drawing on an already damaged book instead.)
2. Pick a book and give yourself an assignment from ideas in the sidebar at right.
3. Draw!



The author's copy of Watership Down had deteriorated upon reading, and so the loose pages became canvases for a series of rabbit drawings and watercolor paintings.

Assignment Ideas

- Doodle aimlessly in the margins, without thought to content or outcome.
- Draw right over the text (whether it remains readable is up to you).
- Illustrate passages as you go in the margins on a miniature scale.
- Create full-scale drawings at the beginning or ends of chapters only.
- Are you reading a book about relationships? Then draw people or animals interacting with each other. Nature? Use the book as a field journal and draw from life.

LAB 43 Plein-Air It

Materials



- watercolor paper, or your sketchbook
- 2B pencil
- pencil sharpener
- eraser

CREATING ART EN PLEIN AIR is the act of drawing and painting outdoors. Mosquitoes, blaring sunlight, wind, or freezing hands may all be part of the experience, arguably actually enhancing the artwork by infusing reality into the process. Have fun!



Right: *River Meadow* took Sherrie York about fifteen minutes to create.
Below: *Pasture*; pencil on paper, fifteen minutes. All of the art on these two pages by Sherrie York.

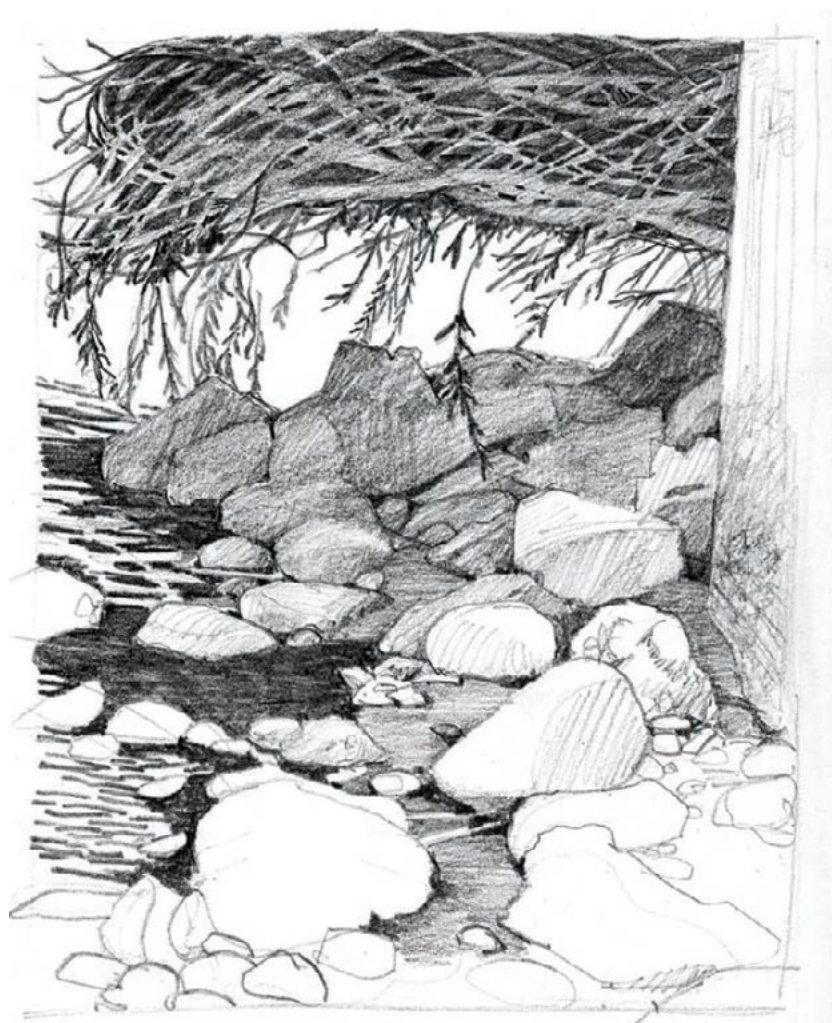
“Ever charming, ever new,
when will the landscape
tire the view?”

—John Dyer



Instructions

1. In this exercise, you will create several value studies while working outside. (For more about on-site drawing, see “A Day at the Zoo, Part I,” Lab 4.)
2. Start by drawing squares or rectangles on the page to contain the compositions. Make these small; about 2x3” or 3x4” (5.1x 7.6 cm or 7.6x10.2 cm), so several can fit on a page. It’s easy to get tangled up in a too-complex drawing if you don’t give yourself some limits in the beginning.
3. Very lightly sketch in the basic shapes of your composition, but build up the bulk of your drawing with shading and tone rather than line.
4. Try reducing the entire scene to just four tonal values (from light to dark).
5. Don’t overwork these drawings! They are meant to be relatively quick studies.



Sherrie used a Staedtler Lumograph 2B pencil for this series of drawings. Under the 291 Bridge; pencil on paper, forty-five minutes.

What is Value?

Value is the term used to describe the brightness or darkness of a shaded area. We use value to create the impression of three dimensions by observing and rendering how natural light falls on the object. The first step toward putting value into your drawings is learning to see how highlights and shadows determine the shape and form of the objects we see in the world.



“Florida’s Roseate Spoonbill” (top left)

15x10”

Prismacolor colored pencils on Strathmore 400 paper.

John Guiseppi

www.johnguiseppi.com

“Reminiscences of Christmas” (top right)

11x14”

Faber-Castell Polychromos and Caran d’Ache Luminance on Grafix 0.05 mm double-sided mat drafting film.

Duff Jennings

www.duffjennings.com

“Curiosity” (bottom)

A3

Faber-Castell Polychromos and Caran d’Ache Luminance with Createx paint for color tinting.

Steven Hulme

www.instagram.com/mixedartmediabystevenhulme



“Fall Breeze” (top)

8x10"

Faber-Castell Polychromos, Caran d'Ache Luminance, and Holbein on Canson Mi-Teintes paper.

Kathy (K'shia) Stocks

www.autumngypsystudios.com

“Beauty at a Glance” (bottom)

28x35cm

Caran d'Ache Luminance, Faber-Castell Polychromos, on Strathmore Bristol smooth paper.

Agata Panebianco

www.instagram.com/agatapanebianco



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