

MARCH 2019  
VOLUME 231

Ann Kullberg's

# Color

a colored pencil magazine

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Sample  
Issue

4

Step by Step: Dramatic  
Sky and Cloud Textures

14

Memoirs of a Young Artist  
DIANNA WALLACE SOISSON

34

Getting Out of Your Comfort Zone  
An interview with ANN KULLBERG

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Ann  
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14



28



13



10



34



## CONTENTS

**3 From My Desk****4 Dramatic Sky and Cloud Textures**

by Denise J. Howard

**10 Showcase**

This Month's Featured Artists

**13 SOAR**

Colored Pencil Workshops

**14 Memoir of a Young Artist**

by Dianna Wallace Soisson

**22 Caran d'Ache Pastel Pencils**

by Ivor Harrison

**27 The Importance of Storytelling**

by Corrina Thurston

**28 Jumpstart Your Creativity with Classical Music**

by Jan Fagan

**32 Arty, The App That Will Enrich Your Colored Pencil Experience**

by Lisa Smith

**34 Getting Outside Your Comfort Zone**

An Interview with Ann Kullberg

**38 New Studio Challenge**

Everybody Wins!

**39 The Pencil Box**

Featured Artworks

**40 Q&A**

You Asked, Ann Answered

**Cover Art***Gloria*

3" x 3"

by Denise Howard

(page 4)

*Nothing is Hidden*

7" x 19"

by Dianna Wallace

Soisson (page 14)

*Early artwork of**Ann Kullberg*

(page 34)



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Whew. After my first *very cold* winter in Illinois, I was extremely happy to teach a workshop in San Diego, California, last month, as you can imagine. Lovely, lovely group, and I enjoyed teaching them, and I also enjoyed the warmer temps. As you read this, I'm in Sarasota, Florida, teaching another workshop and you can bet I'm enjoying the warm sunshine here, too.

I am finally feeling at home in my new house and most of the boxes have been unpacked and my studio is nearly up and running. I will post a few pictures on Facebook once it's a working studio again. I continue to adore small town living, even with the occasional sub-zero temperatures.

We've got beautiful new colored pencil projects coming this month. Judith Selcuk starts off the month with another stunning (and stunningly simple to do) Windmills & Tulips Jumpstart tutorial (Easy Colored Pencil Lessons for Beginners). Later in the month, get ready to be awestruck by the Fuzzy Peaches In-Depth by SOAR instructor Mandy Peltier. Definitely something to look forward to.



## 20TH ANNIVERSARY MEMBER SHOW BOOK

We are so, so, so excited about reaching this 20th anniversary landmark that we will be creating something brand new to celebrate — a book featuring ***all Member Show entries!*** You read that right; we will publish a commemorative book featuring every entry. This means you'll want to take extra care to take great photos/scans of your entry. Read how by [clicking here](#).

### MEMBER SHOW FAQ:

- You must be a *COLOR Magazine* subscriber.
- Your submission must be 90% colored pencil.
- Your photo reference must be *your own* photo.
- Limited to one entry per subscriber.
- Entry deadline: May 17, 2019.

Member Show information is also [here](#).

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STEP BY STEP

# Dramatic Sky & Cloud Textures

BY DENISE J. HOWARD, CPSA, CPX, UKCPS, MPAS

When I signed my book contract to write *101 Textures in Colored Pencil*, one of my concerns was the fact that many of the textures I was to create were ones that I had never attempted. Who was I to instruct someone how to draw something I'd never drawn myself? I began by completing some textures familiar to me to get into the swing of my production schedule, and after a while I developed an approach that enabled me to successfully render any texture. I now teach this approach in workshops, and it can be summarized as a set of steps:

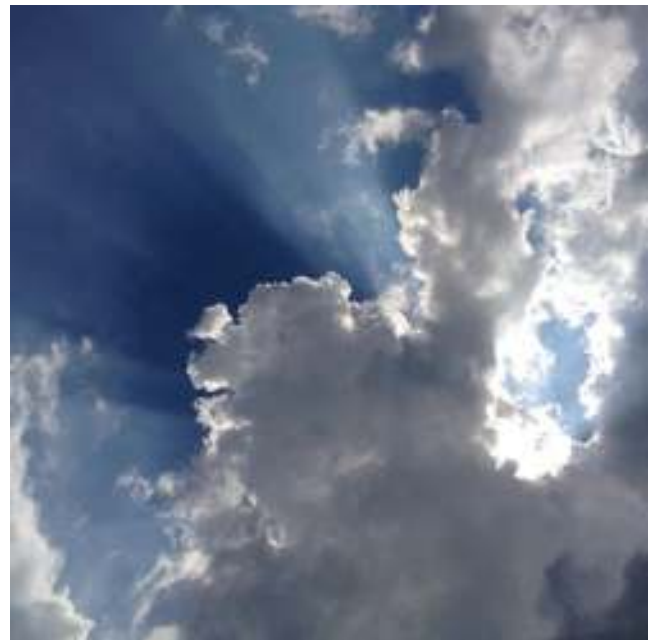
1. Closely observe and analyze details.  
Is it rough? Shiny? Curly? Translucent? Dull?  
Where is the light source?  
Are there shapes?  
Are the edges sharp, indistinct or blurry?
2. Determine the colors.
3. Determine the right technique(s) to use.
4. Determine the sequence of steps  
to develop the texture.
5. Do it!

A most valuable approach has nothing to do with pencils, paper, or tools. It's divide and conquer. When confronted with something that seems overwhelming in its complexity or contains many details, place the largest features first, then the next-to-largest around them, and so on. This allows you to decide when it's detailed enough, instead of being sucked directly into working on microscopic details in one area, never to emerge. This is useful to keep in mind when tackling textures such as fire, foam, clouds and curly hair.

A subject we don't often see done with colored pencil is clouds, and indeed from what I've heard many folks say, they are generally intimidated by skyscapes due to their complexity. So for this article I've chosen an especially dramatic and challenging sky, and I'll show you how easy it is to divide and conquer. Let's go through the steps.

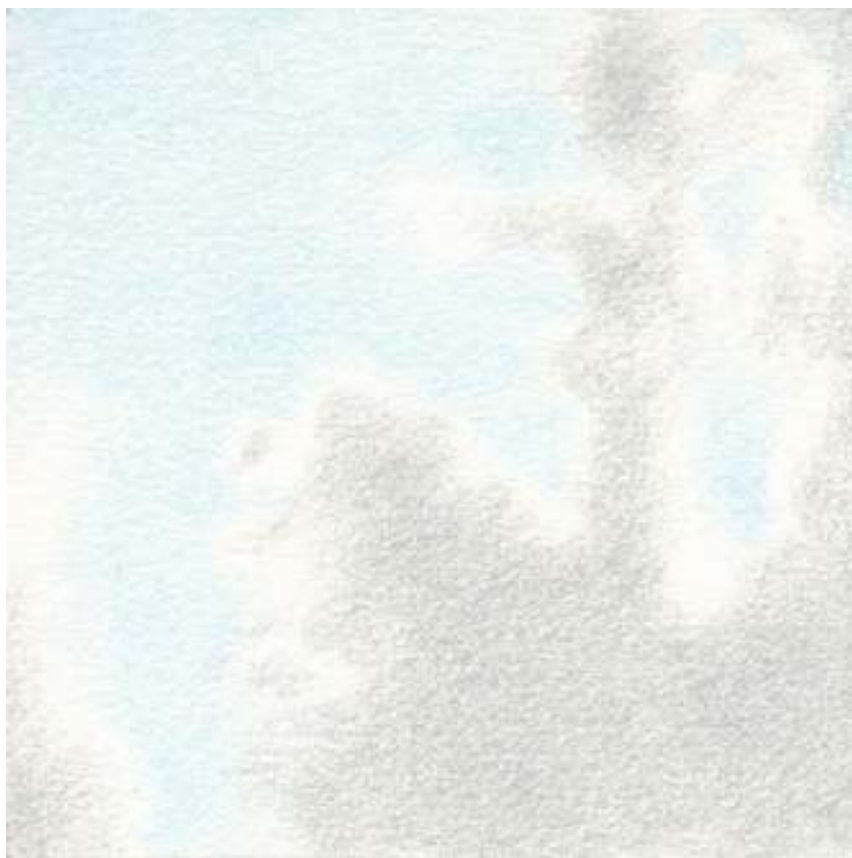
## REFERENCE

1. First, notice the rays of sunlight. See how the sky is darkest right next to the rim of the cloud, and the cloud is brightest where the sun is almost coming through. So, those determine the value range; all other values in the sky and clouds are between them. The only crisp edges are where very bright light rims a thick cloud, at the center. Some parts of the cloud are wispy and see-through, while others are quite dark. There are no straight lines or circles. This is very freeing, because we can make blobby shapes and we don't have to exactly duplicate the reference to resemble these kinds of clouds.
2. The color range is simple: blues and grays. Since I'm using Prismacolors, I selected Cool Grey 20%, 30%, and 70%, Sky Blue Light, Light Cerulean Blue, Ultramarine, and Indigo Blue.
3. The complex shapes call for divide and conquer. Since we want very smooth results, we'll use a white wash layer at the beginning and a colorless blender at the end. You must keep pencils very sharp at all times.
4. We don't want any outlines to show, so we'll skip outlining and go straight to blocking in areas with light color, and then gradually develop the colors and details.
5. Here we go! I'm using 3" x 3" white Stonehenge paper.



1

After applying a wash (thin, smooth layer) of white to provide a waxy base for smoother blending of subsequent layers, lightly block in the sky with Sky Blue Light and the clouds with Cool Grey 20%. Leave a thin margin between them for the bright sunlit rims and edges.



2

Ultramarine is a very strong color, so add it with very light pressure atop the Sky Blue Light, creating more coverage where the sky is darker and less where the rays are. Add a few touches of it in the darkest areas of the clouds; this will help unify the overall drawing.







3

With Cool Grey 30% and light pressure, cover almost all of the Cool Grey 20%, but allow a few areas to peek through and around. Allow your coverage to be uneven; this will be the basis for the blobby cloud look.



4

Use Light Cerulean Blue with light pressure atop all the Ultramarine to smooth and lighten it, and to begin to define the complex edges of the clouds. Stroke in the direction of the rays. Use Cool Grey 70% to darken some blobs in the clouds, where they are so thick that the bright light can't come through at all. Start to suggest smaller blobs.

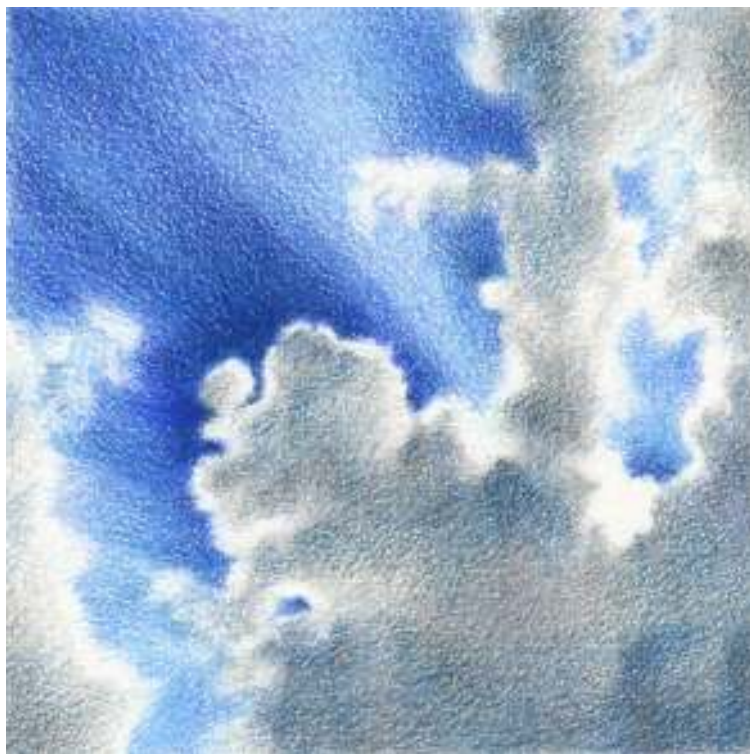
5

With Indigo Blue and very light pressure, enhance the appearance of the rays. Use medium pressure next to the bright rim to make the strong contrast and crisp edge. Also add some touches of Indigo Blue in the darkest areas of the clouds to add depth and unify the overall drawing.

6

Depending on the scale you're working at, you might be done at this point. However, if you're working very small (as I was for this exercise: 3" x 3"), you probably wish to smooth it out more. If so, use a colorless blender all over to finish. When blending in the rays, be sure to stroke in their same direction.

Now that you've seen how few colors are necessary for a cloudscape, and how freeing it is not to have to exactly replicate the reference photo to make convincing dramatic clouds, I hope to see more landscapes done in colored pencil, which include expansive skies.



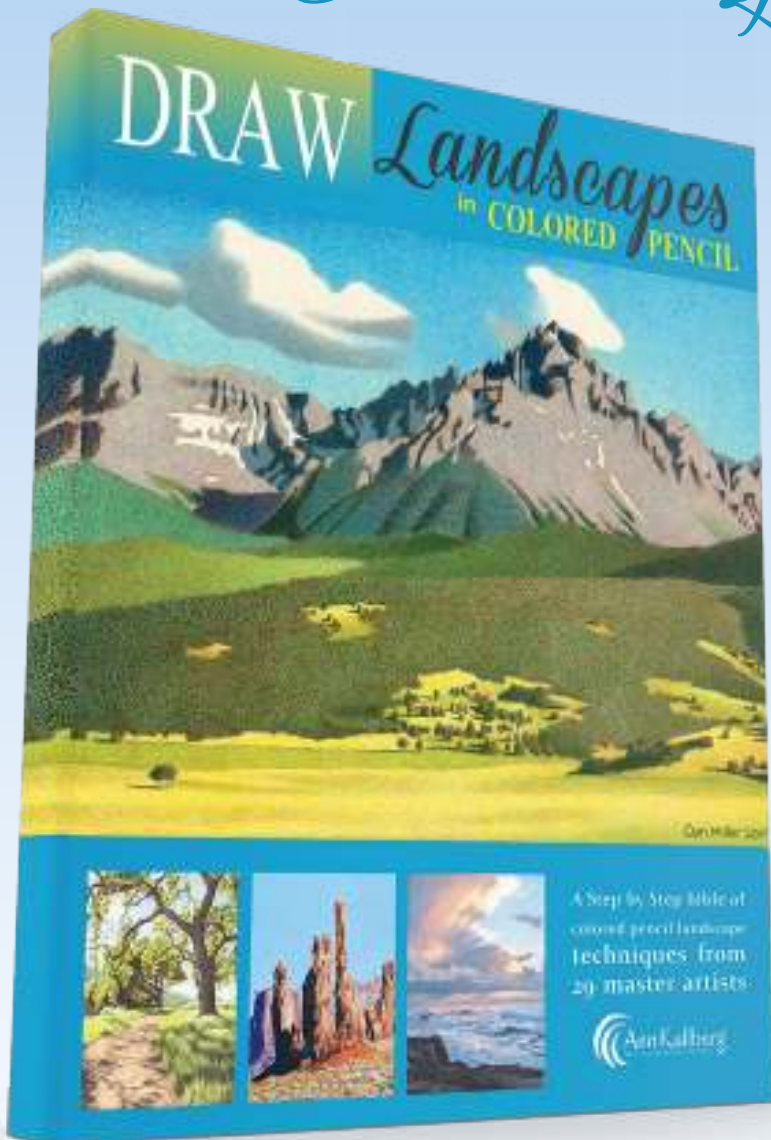
## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Denise Howard is the author of *101 Textures in Colored Pencil* from Walter Foster Publishing and serves on the national governing board of the Colored Pencil Society of America. She lives in Santa Clara, CA.

[www.denisejhowardart.com](http://www.denisejhowardart.com)



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# SHOWCASE



## WILDCAT PRIDE

11" x 14" • by Dina Kowal • <http://commission.dinakowalcreative.com>

"I spend quite a bit of my creative time working on commissioned pet portraits. During a break between orders, I wanted to apply my acquired skills to a drawing of a wild animal and see where that took me. Our small-town mascot is the Wildcat, so I chose to work on a big cat."

[Click to continue reading >>](#)





## THE HEART OF PASSION

11.25" x 14.27" • by James Thomas • <https://www.facebook.com/lumberjackartist/>

"Passiflora Incarnata is commonly known as the Passion Flower or Maypop. I think they are one of the most beautiful native flowers that I have ever seen. After seeing the flower for several years I just had to attempt to get it on paper."

[Click to continue reading >>](#)

# SHOWCASE

## COLORED PENCIL ART GALLERY



### LIESE

10" x 11" • by Greg Smith • <http://animalsandpeoplebygregsmith.weebly.com/>

*Liese* was a commissioned portrait. The only reference the client could manage for me was a 1.5" x 1.5" black and white photo from a high school year book. Apart from being told the subject's eye color, I was left to my own devices to determine skin tone, as well as the color of flowers and clothes." [Click to continue reading >>](#)



# Soar

## 2-Day Colored Pencil Workshops

The SOAR Colored Pencil Workshop Network is growing by leaps and bounds — *we've recently added new cities!* Every workshop is taught by an instructor who is trained and certified by Ann Kullberg herself to lead you in a two-day class covering a huge variety of surfaces, techniques and subjects. You won't be disappointed!

**FIND A WORKSHOP NEAR YOU at [www.annkullberg.com/SOAR](http://www.annkullberg.com/SOAR)**



**Young Lad on White Paper**

*Instructor: Rhonda Bartoe*

**Cedar Rapids, IA – Mar 30-31, 2019**



**Rose and Glass on Drafting Film**

*Instructor: Gretchen Evans Parker*

**Nashville, TN – April 27-28, 2019**



**Iris Botanical on Watercolor Paper**

*Instructor: Jeannice Gordon*

**Vancouver, WA – May 4-5, 2019**



**Green Reflections on White Paper**

*Instructor: Michelle Sanders*

**Hamilton, OH – May 18-19, 2019**



**Hummingbird on White Paper**

*Instructor: Pearl de Chalain*

**Richmond, VA – May 4-5, 2019**



**Mountain Landscape  
on White Paper**

*Instructor: Dan Miller*

**Clinton, OH – May 18-19, 2019**



# MEMOIR OF A YOUNG ARTIST

BY DIANNA WALLACE SOISSON



*Diversity, 9" x 19"*



# I was born and raised in the small town of Kane, Pennsylvania.

My parents' strong work ethics, morals, values and endless faith in God were instilled into our family of four children. This is the root of my life's journey and my art's journey.



*Nothing is Hidden, 7" x 19"*

My love for drawing began at an early age, with the anticipation of receiving a brand new, unscathed coloring book along with perfectly sharp, color-arranged crayons in my Christmas stocking. Coloring was my favorite activity during Christmas vacation. Staying inside those bold black outlines was my goal and shading the objects without visible crayon strokes was by far my ultimate challenge.

All that hard work paid off (insert giggle) when I won a coloring contest in the second grade

coloring the American flag. My prize was an American flag rhinestone pin. To this day I keep it in my jewelry box and I wear it with pride, reminding me of my persistence as a young girl and hopeful artist.

A memory that will never fade is one of Sunday afternoons after dinners I would ask my daddy to draw me a horse. I would then take his sketch with me to the coffee table and draw one just like his. I thought my dad was the best artist in the world!

My parents created a spot in the basement for me to work on my drawings and paintings when I was in high school. My dad made a wooden sign for my area, "Dianna's Art Corner." As a tribute and memory to him, I decided to use this as my domain name for my website. Daddy also built an easel and an art supply box which I cherish today.

My father provided the spirit to help me believe in myself and my mother provided me with art

lessons from a dear friend. I attended Edinboro State University and received my Bachelor of Science degree in art education. After leading the high school art program at Rocky Grove High School in Franklin, Pennsylvania for many years, my husband and I moved to Saline, Michigan, where we started our family. I took a hiatus from my oil painting to raise our three children for approximately ten years, after which my passion to draw ignited once again. Christmas of 1999,

my husband gave me with a complete set of Prismacolor colored pencils, and it didn't take long for me to realize that I could get the same vibrancy of oil paints with my Prismacolors using the burnishing method and a heated board.

In 2004 I collapsed from a pulmonary embolism only to repeat that near fatal collapse again in 2014 with a saddle pulmonary embolism. I was grateful for the doctors discovering a blood disorder but even more grateful for a merciful God. I felt that I needed to share what I was brought here to give: my art.



*Beyond my Domain* 12.5" x 18.5"

---

**“Representations,  
rather than  
concepts, make  
impressions more  
lasting.”**

---



*Flawless, 24" x 16"*





## AND SO IT BEGINS

My instruments used in these creations are simple and few, but together they wield the power to capture the essence of life. My tools through this journey vary. Stonehenge paper, 800 grit U-Art paper, primed canvas, and most recently Canson mixed media paper have been my drawing surfaces. Prismacolor pencils, Luminance pencils, and Caran d'Ache Pablos are my favorite colored pencils. During the past few years I have been incorporating Caran d'Ache oil-based Neopastels, which work very well when combined with my colored pencils both on and off the heated board.

A heated drawing board, one built by my husband and another called the Icarus board, is used for blending and layering to create an intense color palette. Occasionally, I use a small brush and Gamsol solvent for detail. Lately my pieces are smaller in size so that I may bring them to work on when I travel. Because of this I have relied more on the Gamsol and soft blending alone.

My passion for art comes from within; I am the sole creator. My art is the language I use to communicate the things I cannot articulate. Every creation must begin somewhere; mine begins through the lens of a camera. Through this lens I view and capture the subjects that inspire me with their beauty, innocence, and simplicity.

I am drawn to water that displays the contrasting shadows and strong light, combined with the



*Commitment to Consistency, 18" x 12.5"*

captivating textures. In short, the flawless subjects of nature become my immediate focus.

To choose a reference photo, I upload my photos into my computer and the process of elimination begins. Initially, I create good compositions by cropping. Next I look for strong contrast of color and light and may use Photoshop to adjust the contrast of the potential photo. After choosing one of several photos, I prepare for the journey using a projector to lightly block in major objects.

After sketching my subject I begin the exploration and the layering of the colors and



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## “I am drawn to water that displays the contrasting shadows and strong light.”

---

movement on my own time. Using my photo as a reference, I've learned to trust my instincts in creating only what I can describe as God's work. I layer color starting with the background and work my way to the foreground. I love working with the combination of Prismacolor and Luminance pencils. They have a higher content of wax and tend to grab tightly to paper with tooth and become very workable on the heated drawing board. The heated board allows lighter colors to be layered on top and blended if needed. The heated board gives me the richness of oil paints because I can layer and intensify the hues.

To enhance the smoothness and add detail, I sometimes use a light brush of Gamsol at the end of the process. Even though I choose to draw each detail (as a traditional artist) I enjoy adding additional color to create a more abstract and interesting view of God's work.

### **SURRENDERING CREATES SPACE TO MANIFEST**

In my studio can be found a small but intimate collection of inspirational books, my Bible, and a few leather-bound journals where I write down inspirational quotes and scripture verses



*Obstacles and Challenges is 15.5" x 12.5"*

that touch me deeply at an emotional period of my life. Very often these quotes and verses are intertwined with the drawing in progress and the title becomes the name of my story.

## THESE ARE BUT A FEW OF THE THOUGHTS FROM MY READINGS:

- Know that not one good thing that God has planned for you will fail.
  - What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?
- Worrying is considered stewing without doing. It's an attempt to control the future and instead it paralyzes us.
  - Faith is the audacity to believe in the not-yet seen.
- Reality has peeled away layers but my strength and authentic spirit remain.
- I will experience the calm times and the storms. From both I'll discover my purpose.



My water scenes have become a journey through my life; my journey as a witness of God, my challenges, and most importantly, expressions of my soul. Every artist dips his own brush into his own soul. I believe that art must be an expression of the artist's life or it is nothing. Representations, rather than concepts, make impressions more lasting and forceful.

Water is a sign of renewal. Every time I paint or draw water, I am renewing my faith and I share that with my viewers. Just like one's life, nature changes every moment; from turbulent and unexpected to calm and inviting. Life isn't about the destination; it's about the journey, the milestones, the sacrifices and the miracles along the way. I embrace each painting as my life unfolds with every pencil stroke.

As I create these works of art, I bond with them. They are my children with whom every stroke of the pencil I give another breath of life. Through my art I develop a relationship that is so

*State of Surrender, 18.5" x 11.5"*





*The Color Honeycomb, 9.5" x 6.5"*

strong it completely envelops me, enriching me with its innocence and beauty.

As with children, I care for my art and tend to its every need. When children are young, parents nurture and protect them. As I begin, I am very shielding, not allowing myself to make a single stroke on the paper until I have mentally prepared myself for the journey that lies ahead.

A painting changes my life just a child changes an adult's life. Raising children reveals so many things about ourselves we didn't know and my painting does the same for me. Parents grow with their children, and I grow with my paintings. Each painting provides me with a newfound understanding of life.

The hardest part as a parent is letting go. With the completion of each work I feel that I am one step closer to fulfilling my dream. As with any dream, once you reach it, there is another waiting to be born. My paintings have filled me with joy, pleasure and satisfaction. It is not a feeling that can be described; it must be felt with the soul.

I want to share my children with the world; I want them to draw you into their story, their energy and their passion. Only then has my real dream come true.

## See more from Dianna

» [Instagram/diannawallacesoisson](https://www.instagram.com/diannawallacesoisson) | [facebook.com/dianna.soisson](https://www.facebook.com/dianna.soisson)

» <http://www.diannasartcorner.com/>

Ivor (Harry) Harrison runs the Art Gear Guide website and YouTube channel, where he reviews art supplies and accessories. In this column, Harry shares his opinions on the colored pencil tools and supplies that we are all (or will be) talking about.



# Caran d'Ache Pastel Pencil Review

BY IVOR HARRISON

My wonderful family gave me a set of 76 Caran d'Ache Pastel Pencils for my birthday in November and as an early Christmas present. If you have been following me for a while, you have noticed that in the past six or seven months I have become particularly enamored with pastels. I have seen so many wonderful works of art on Instagram and Pinterest that I really wanted to give it a try.





## CARAN D'ACHE PASTEL PENCIL SETS

I don't normally start with the types of sets available. However, with the Caran d'Ache Pastel Pencils there are a lot of choices, so I thought I would get this out of the way first before getting into the actual pastel pencils.

Although I am reviewing the Caran d'Ache Pastel Pencils 76 set, it is important to note that Caran d'Ache also makes pastel cubes. The pigments in the pastel cubes are exactly the same as that of the pencils and of the exact same high quality.

Pastel Pencils are also available in sets of 12, 20 and 40, and the wooden gift box set of 84, which includes a few additional pigments not in the 76 set, and additional pencils such as Grafwood and charcoal.

As I previously mentioned, Caran d'Ache sells the pastel cubes in sets of six, such as earth tones, portraiture, etc. You can also buy the cubes in open stock. This is excellent for those just wanting to purchase a few samples to test.

Caran d'Ache also offers sets that mix both pastel and cubes. There is a landscape and portrait set of 20 (20 pastel pencils and 20 cubes). They also have a 40 set of assorted pigments (40 pastel pencils and 40 cubes) and the smaller sets of six pastel pencils and six cubes.



## CHARACTERISTICS

The first thing to note about the pencils is their chunky barrel, which I love. There is a feel of real quality to the pencil in the hand. The barrel encapsulates a gorgeous 4.7mm highly pigmented core, and the barrel is hexagonal, which is helpful to artists, because it's less likely a pencil will roll off your desk. The barrel is 8mm; however, I am unsure about the origin of the wood. Most pencils from Caran d'Ache are California cedar wood. However, I know that recently Caran d'Ache invested a lot in Swiss-sourced wood. I think they mentioned 20% of production wood is Swiss and the remainder 80% is California cedar. Either way, the barrel has beautiful, exposed wood grain, making it aesthetically pleasing to even non-pencil enthusiasts such as my wife.

As I mentioned, I have the 76 set for this review; however, in the set there are two different types of information on the pencils, one with the pigment names printed on the barrel and one without. This is due to the phasing out of pencils without pigment names on the barrels and the introduction of the pencils which have the pigment names on the barrels.

Along one side of the barrel, printed in clear white type, is Pastel Pencil, followed by the Caran d'Ache name and logo, and ending with

Swiss Made. Painted on the very end of the pencil is painted a 3-cm or 1¼-inch pigment indicator. I compared most of the pencils' pigments to the indicators and the results were excellent, almost identical in every test.

Printed on the pigment indicator is a six-digit number. All of them start with the same first three digits, 788, which lets both retailer and consumer know this is a pastel pencil. The next three digits refer to the pigment for open stock value. When reordering a new pigment, you can quote the last three digits and receive the pencil you require.

On the opposite side of the barrel, the pigment name has been printed in French and English. Of course, there were a few of the pencils without this information, making the pigment number on the end of the pencil vital for ordering replacements.

Finally, on another side of the barrel, the lightfastness is rated using stars — more about that below.

I don't normally discuss packaging, but Caran d'Ache nailed it here. When you spend a lot of money on anything, especially if it is going to be shipped, you need to know it is protected. Caran d'Ache has practically made their high-end products bomb proof.





Each pencil tray is made from a tough cardboard and has a rubber foam base, with slots for the pencils. None of the pencils touch each other; the rubber foam keeps them firmly held in place. There is also a layer of rubber foam on the underside of the pencil trays, ensuring that each layer protects the pencils below. It is full all-round protection of your precious and expensive Caran d'Ache pencils.

## PERFORMANCE

With these beautiful pastel pencils, I've completed a landscape painting of a place close to the hearts of my wife and me, called Grange in Keswick, The Lake District. I completed the drawing on Clairefontaine Pastelmat, which is my preferred surface for pastels, and the tests I have

conducted have also been done on this surface.

As you can see from the test below, I have applied a few colors very lightly and heavily to the light gray Pastelmat. For the light application, I held the pencil as far back as I could and almost allowed only the weight of the pencil to move across the Pastelmat. As you can clearly see from the images and video (see links below), the pigments are bright, vibrant and absolutely gorgeous. The Pastelmat grips the pigment well, allowing very little to fall off the paper when the painting is moved.

With some other pastel pencils, you can occasionally get a slightly gritty consistency, but this is not the case at all with the Caran d'Ache Pastel Pencils. For the most part, blending pastels is enjoyable and effortless, but with the

gorgeous buttery consistency of the Caran d'Ache Pastel Pencils, blending is a dream. The strength of the pigments also makes applying color theory and mixing easy.

## LIGHTFASTNESS

An important distinction to make about lightfast testing is that it is not the be-all and end-all for all artists. There are many artists out there, such as me, as well as adult colorists and crafters, who are not necessarily looking to sell their art. For those artists, lightfastness is not such a huge deal. On the other hand, for any artist who is trying to make a living by selling their work, lightfast information is of the utmost importance and



using lightfast materials will also allow you to put a much higher value on your work, as it will stay bright and colorful for a 100 years plus.

Caran d'Ache takes lightfastness very seriously with their high-end products, such as these pastel pencils. In the Caran d'Ache rating system, as I mentioned earlier, five or four stars indicate the highest grade, and good enough for professional use. Three stars are considered good, but your work will require UV glass protection or something similar for longevity. Two and one stars are the lowest ratings, and not considered good enough for displaying in a museum or hanging on a wall.

Of the entire 84 pigments in the Caran d'Ache Pastel Pencil range, 37 are considered five-star, 24 are four-star, 19 are three-star and only four are considered two-star on the lightfast scale, which is pretty excellent.

## CONCLUSION

As I mentioned at the beginning, these are high-end pencils. They are more expensive than other pastel pencils, but I hope I have demonstrated reasons for the extra expense. If you are a colorist and enjoy using adult coloring books or if you love creating pastel art for yourself as I do, a set like this is not a necessity, but more of a luxury. On the other hand, if you sell your work and want to enter it in competitions and shown in galleries, then these pastel pencils will enhance your work slightly due to such rich pigments, and you could also ask for a higher price for your work due to the excellent lightfast ratings.



I absolutely adored using these pencils, and I think the only reason my first pastel landscape came out so nicely was because the quality of the pencils. If your budget can stretch to a set, and you know you will benefit from using them, then I would say get one. By the way, “benefit” does not just mean monetary. Your state of mind and increased joy when using beautiful art supplies are huge benefits.

Consider purchasing a few of the pastel pencils or cubes open stock if you are unsure. Reviews such as mine are helpful guides, but there is nothing that beats using the products and testing your skills with them.

For a real-time demonstration of the pencils [click here](#) and check out a speed painting video of my first pastel landscape art [here](#). Or, if you prefer non-video demos, [this page](#) has still images of my pastel art at various stages.

Ivor (Harry) Harrison helps artists decide if a particular art supply is right for them. Connect with him and read his reviews at his website, [theartgearguide.com](http://theartgearguide.com), and at The Art Gear Guide on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).





## THE WORDS YOU USE

# The Importance of Storytelling

BY CORRINA THURSTON

The most important thing for you to consider when communicating about yourself and your work is the story. People love stories. Stories are memorable. Stories get retold. Stories garner intrigue.

When you pitch the media, send a proposal, or write or talk to customers, they are going to be more interested if you include a (brief and relevant) story.

What's special about your process, materials, design and creative life?

Everywhere we look people are trying to get our attention. We're constantly bombarded with information and only allow a few seconds to pass before we decide if we're interested in reading further.

The best way to hook your audience is with a story.

When people ask me what I do for a living and I say I'm a professional wildlife artist while handing them a business card, it's common for them to ask me how I started drawing. This is a great segue for me to tell them the story behind how I began drawing at the age of 20 after falling chronically ill and being mostly bedridden for a number of years.

But don't worry, it doesn't have to be heart wrenching to be a good story.

Think about how you began creating. What triggered it? Did you like it at first? Did you think it was going to lead you to doing more? Why do you feel the need to create? Why colored pencil? Who or what inspired you?



*Corrina Thurston is a wildlife artist specializing in vibrant colored pencil drawings. She's also a consultant, speaker and author of [How To Communicate Effectively - For Artists & Creatives](#). Visit her website at [www.corrinathurston.com](http://www.corrinathurston.com)*



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# JUMPSTART YOUR CREATIVITY WITH *Classical Music*

BY JAN FAGAN

William Congreve once penned, “music hath charms to soothe a savage breast.” We’ve all felt the power of music. How many times have you listened to a song that brought back pleasant memories or made you smile just when you needed it? We all know that a beautiful ballad has been known to melt the hardest of hearts, but did you know that music also hath charms to break a savage creative block?

I was very fortunate to grow up with parents who, by their example, taught their children to value creativity. Mom loved to decorate, entertain and explore crafting. Dad loved theater, history, writing, singing and music — especially music. He opened up a world of magic and wonder for me by showing me to do more than just listen to the notes. I learned to understand why, and by whom, certain pieces were written. I was delighted to find out that many classical pieces were actually stories and I listened to those while vivid images danced through my mind.

I still remember the first time Dad purchased a high-end set of headphones to plug into our stereo reel-to-reel tape player. I was instantly transported to another world. More importantly, it was







also the beginning of understanding that art and music can be intricately connected. I still credit my dad with teaching me how to make my art experience deeper by connecting my creative self to music.

My appreciation for all kinds of music has only increased as the years have passed and my tastes have become pretty eclectic. Among my favorites are pop, R&B, classic rock, jazz, country, classical, opera and even an occasional Hawaiian song. They all work to inspire at different times and for different reasons, but my all-time favorite is still classical for busting through a stubborn creative block.

One of my best examples for using classical music as a muse is my colored pencil study of the mystical fellow in the boat. He started as just a face while listening to Bach's Toccata & Fugue

in D Minor. There was no plan to go beyond his eyes, nose and mouth, but I soon found that I couldn't stop while the notes danced in my head. This handsome fellow ended up in a boat, with a lantern, on a dark night searching for someone or something he alone could find. (He's never told me what the mystery was, but it has always been fun to ask others what they thought the story line should be. I got the most creative answers.) It's not a finished piece, nor will it ever be, but I keep it as a reminder. It doesn't happen very often, but if I do feel blocked, the old fellow reminds me there is a way through the wall.

What if you've never listened to classical music? Perhaps you have heard a little but didn't use it specifically as a means for getting yourself out of a creative rut? Where do you start? What pieces would you listen to first? There are so many choices and much may depend on your tastes.

Do you prefer piano over violin? Symphony or solo? If you are having trouble deciding, look at the suggestions below. I am willing to bet you'll be at least a little familiar with one or two of them, and they will work whether you prefer to draw portraits, landscapes, animals, abstracts or whimsically.

If you're ready to give your creative self a boost using classical music, give one or all of these choices a try. I even included a few fun facts just like Dad used to do! So, get your headphones ready and have a sketchpad nearby. Whether you go with just graphite, pen or all colored pencil it doesn't matter at this point. The aim here is to get cozy with your creative self. You can listen with your eyes closed, and then draw when the music is done, or draw while you listen. If no images come to you then draw or doodle your way through the music. There could be a fabulous abstract in the making. You may be inspired to use specific colors from your set instead of graphite. There is no right or wrong. The most important thing is to get your pencil moving on the paper. You may be pleasantly surprised with what you draw.

- Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*: Fun fact No. 1: "What's Up Doc?" This was even an important part of an old Bugs Bunny cartoon. Fun Fact No. 2: Franz Liszt had so many people requesting locks of his hair that he bought a dog and sent fans hair of the dog.

- Tchaikovsky's *Waltz of the Flowers*: Fun fact: While at the Moscow Conservatoire, Tchaikovsky and his friend Saint Saëns liked to clown around together and imitate the ballet dancers.
- Bach's *Toccata & Fugue in D Minor*: Fun fact No. 1: This piece has been used in more than 25 movies, including Disney's *Fantasia*. Fun Fact No. 2: Both Bach and Handel were blinded by the same eye surgeon, John Taylor.
- Copland's *Hoedown*: Fun fact No. 1: Some of you may recognize portions of this from a commercial some years back. Fun Fact No. 2: Copland's first performance in Boston was such a flop that some said he had colluded with the conductor to prove how bad American music was. *Ouch*.

Are there other forms of music that can inspire you to get those colored pencils out of the tin? Absolutely. As I mentioned before, I listen to it all. I even have pieces that are inspired by '60s and '70s rock, such as the young man with the orange hair. Music can obviously be a personal choice and you may find a genre that works fine for you. But why not explore something a little different and see what happens? Your creative self will thank you.



Jan Fagan creates and teaches in the Pacific Northwest. Her newest project is a creativity-enhancing workbook series that combines her training in therapeutic guided imagery with her love of art and writing. She is also vice president of the Seattle chapter of the *Colored Pencil Society of America* and a member of the *Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators*.

See more at [janfaganart.com](http://janfaganart.com) and [www.etsy.com/shop/JanFaganArt](http://www.etsy.com/shop/JanFaganArt)



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Cruises are heaven on earth for CP artists!

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new friends, lots of laughs... all topped off by wonderful instruction  
from master colored pencil artists.

### *Ann Kullberg*

With over 20 years' teaching experience, Ann Kullberg really knows how to help you quickly grasp her unique method for capturing glowing skin tones and believable likenesses. Ann has created a new portrait project for cruises so repeat cruisers will have something new to look forward to!



### *Barbara Dahlstedt*

A multiple award-winning artist, Barbara became infatuated with drawing people at a young age. She earned a BFA in Graphic Design and Master's Degree in Education. Join Barbara as she walks you through drawing an absolutely stunning, close-up portrait on black paper.



### *Rhonda Dickson*

Hitting the colored pencil scene like a storm, Rhonda Dickson has quickly earned awards and a following with her beautiful, uniquely stylized artwork. Let Rhonda show you how to work effectively on drafting film, a versatile and very forgiving surface that allows you to easily create bright, vibrant colors.



# ARTY

The App That Will Enrich Your  
Colored Pencil Experience



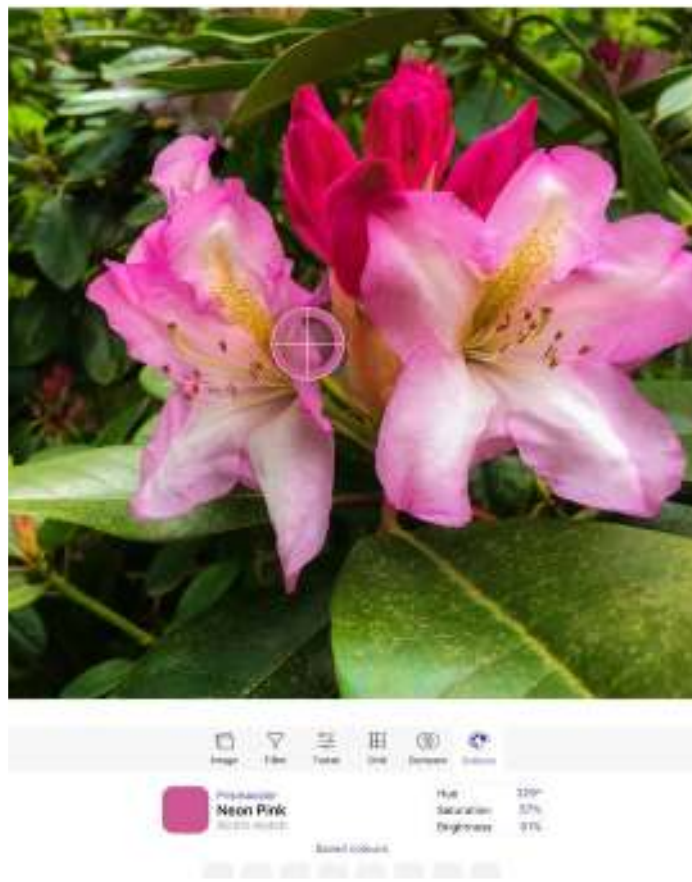
BY LISA SMITH

Looking for an innovative and easy-to-use app that will enhance and aid you in your artistic process? With hundreds of different photo editors available to download, choosing the right one can be intimidating. Free apps tend to lack important features that go beyond just placing a filter over a photo, while paid apps tend to get expensive and you never know what you're paying for.

What if you could download a free app that has advanced features? With Arty, the photo editor designed with colored pencil artists in mind, you will get useful features such as photo reference comparisons, grid overlays, and the creation of accurate line drawings. Best of all, Arty can color-match individual colors in the photo to the colored pencil needed. Arty, developed by Andy Drizen in 2017, is available for free for iPhone and iPad.

Using Arty is fun and simple. After downloading the app, you will be prompted to choose an image. Select the photo you want to transform into your next colored pencil piece, and you're ready to begin.

Arty provides six options: Image, Filter, Tweak, Grid, Compare and Colours. The Colours tab has a cursor you can easily drag across the image. The cursor pinpoints individual colors and provides the color names of three brands of colored pencils. Simply select the color set located above the color name and choose from Faber-Castell Polychromos, Prismacolor Premier



or Caran d'Ache Luminance. Moving the cursor around the image will display the colored pencil the app has selected. Match accuracy is provided under the color name.

For those artists who would like an outline of their photo, the Filter feature provides just that, in addition to other useful and commonly used filters such as Posterize and Shadows. If you are on iPhone or iPad, you can also print image variations directly from the app using Apple's





AirPrint. For those who prefer to draw their own image onto their surface instead of copying a line drawing, the Grid feature will be useful. Sliding the circle across the size bar will help you determine how large or small you want to draw your image.

Other fun features presented by Arty include the ability to document how long you have been working on your project, as well as the capacity to zoom and pan around your image to see the very fine details that might otherwise be missed. By using the Compare option, users can compare the photo reference to your artwork using your device's camera.

These are the basic features Arty offers colored pencil artists. Now comes the question of what

you trust more when it comes to color matching. Do you trust the human eye or the computer's choice of which color is accurate? Every individual sees color differently, and you may not necessarily agree with every color option that is chosen for that section. That's okay. Part of the joy of colored penciling is taking artistic license and ultimately choosing which colors you want to use. There may be times when layering multiple colors will be the only way to achieve your desired color. Regardless, Arty is still a fantastic app for all the useful and incredible features it offers artists for free.

So download and explore Arty, regardless of your skill level. Who knows? It might just become your new must-have in your artistic toolbox.

Lisa Smith recently relocated to Charlotte, North Carolina from New England. She has 12 years of experience in colored pencils and has taught CP for 10 years.

# Getting Outside Your *Comfort Zone*

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANN KULLBERG

BY RHONDA DICKSION



*Ann Kullberg's very first colored pencil drawing.*



**Are you bored with your artwork?**  
**“Wait? WHAT?” you are saying.**  
**“Me, bored with colored pencil? You gotta be crazy.”**

Okay, maybe you aren't bored, exactly, but you've been making art for a while now and it's become pretty routine. Are you making the kind of art you want to be making? Do you feel like there is a technique or a style inside, wanting to come out, that you can't quite grab onto?

Most of us tend to find a certain way of doing things and stick with it. We get comfortable and settle in, and do things the same way every time, because we can count on the results. This works great until it doesn't. Until we get bored. And boredom is the surest way to completely lose interest in something we once loved doing.

The answer is to shake things up, to challenge yourself.

Getting outside your comfort zone is where all the magic happens. Nobody knows that better than Ann Kullberg, so let's talk to her about it.

**Ann, I heard that you developed your technique because of a dare. How did that happen?**

It's true! I had been scumbling (an extremely tight, circular sort of stroke) and my larger pieces were taking me well over 200 hours to complete. I was whining about that over lunch to a friend who was also an artist, although he was mainly a potter. He told me I was my own worst enemy and that I should go home and do an entire colored pencil piece in three hours.



*Ann's first vertical plus horizontal line piece.*

I just laughed at him. But it was like a dare, and I felt like I had to at least give it a stab. I thought about it on my drive home and decided I'd try a longish vertical line stroke, contained by long horizontal strokes. Since I was only drawing Japanese images at the time, I thought the technique would be reminiscent of the pattern of a tatami mat, which I thought would complement the artwork.

So, on top of a sketch already traced out, I drew in horizontal lines in graphite, placing each new horizontal line about three-quarters of an inch above the previous. Then, in between the lines, I started drawing the piece with colored pencil with vertical strokes. I had a new rule, too — no more than three layers in any one spot. With this



*Three Boys*

new technique, I managed to finish a large piece in eight hours. I was ecstatic!

### **How did it feel to be doing something so completely different?**

It was exhilarating. The possibilities seemed endless. It seemed like it would be so much fun to get work out more rapidly. It was a little challenging, but mostly it was just exciting. And once I finished that first piece, I couldn't wait to tell my potter friend what I'd accomplished in just eight hours.

### **What happened as a result of your developing this new technique?**

I continue with this horizontal plus vertical technique with three pieces, but then decided the horizontal lines were too distracting, so on my fourth try I got rid of the horizontal lines. I also quit following my "Only three layers in any

one area rule" because I suddenly realized I could get a lot of depth, richness and value quickly with this new, faster technique.

My fourth piece was "Three Boys." The same potter friend encouraged me to enter it in the rather prestigious Frye Art Museum show. It took first place. I was beside myself. Clearly this was going to be my new path. It was faster, fun and it was getting attention!

### **If an artist is comfortable with what they are doing, why should they challenge themselves?**

Well, I'm really not one to tell someone to change if everything is working for them, if they are still meeting all their goals with what they are doing. But if an artist is feeling bored or unchallenged, or keeps procrastinating and never actually sits down at the drawing table anymore, then it's time for a change. I personally think



workshops are one of the best places to get fresh inspiration, especially if the workshop is offering something completely different. New surfaces, new subject matter, new ways of working — these don't necessarily need to be adopted so much as integrated into your own technique, which can breathe new life into your artwork.

I do online private mentoring sessions, and have had two real success stories in the past month in regards to challenging artists to try something new. One was struggling with a very colorful, loose, moody sort of background. I urged her to try Pan Pastels for that area. She did try them, absolutely loved them, and was so excited by the results that the rest of the portrait went very successfully.

The other artist was struggling to find a quick way to do pet commissions, but in a way that would make her work unique and interesting. Since this artist has experience with paint and other mediums, I suggested she mask out the pet portion of a drawing with masking fluid, and then create a loose, quickly painted background that would suggest clouds, night skies or green landscapes. She tried it and it was fantastically successful and she had a blast, finishing that first

one in less than a day. Since then she's done many more, refining the new technique as she continues exploring. And what's best is that it's been very well received by the public.

So yes, trying something new can get an artist re-invigorated and lead them down paths that are more uniquely themselves, which is probably always every artist's ultimate goal.

### **Where is a good place to start with a self-challenge?**

That is really a tough question. There are so many ways to challenge yourself as a colored pencil artist. I'll list a few I can think of off the top of my head:

Change your subject matter. Never done a landscape? Try one! Portraits scare you? It's only paper; give one a go!

Change your palette. If all your paintings are very warm, start using just cool colors: blues, pinks, purples.

Time limit: Decide you'll finish a small piece in a matter of hours. What can you do to accomplish that?

*Ann's very early vertical line piece on watercolor paper that no one has ever seen.*



Change perspective: Maybe start drawing only things from a bird's-eye view, or from the back, or?

Add a medium to your colored pencil drawings, preferably one you don't know too much about, which will force you to start learning again, which is always exhilarating.

Choose a color scheme that you love — say, white, blue and yellow, one of my favorite themes. Now draw three drawings in a row that strongly use those three colors. See if that leads you somewhere new and exciting.

Choose something to create a series from. It can literally be anything: eggs, birds, umbrellas, babies, rectangular format, or a favorite color scheme. Commit to do a bare minimum of three images following that series. I can almost guarantee you that by the time you finish three, you'll be on your way to some exciting new stuff. How can I be so sure? Because boredom is so awful that we humans do whatever we can to

avoid it. By the time you're in the middle of the second egg piece, you'll be wondering how to make those eggs more interesting. And just like that you'll be halfway on your way to something new, challenging and exciting!

### Where are you heading next with your own art, Ann?

Oh, I wish I knew! I still have virtually no time to draw, but my expectation is that in the next two years, I will have more and more time to draw. I will be following my own advice: to come up with a series to commit to for at least a few pieces. I am always thinking about what I might want to draw next, and my only answer for now is that it's sure to have lots of rich color and high contrast. Light and shadow have always really excited me and I can't see that changing. The main goal, though, will be to try to find something I am so excited about that I forget to eat when I'm drawing!

Ann Kullberg's  
**Color**  
a colored pencil magazine  
**STUDIO CHALLENGE**



For more info: [annkullberg.com/pages/april-2019-studio-challenge](http://annkullberg.com/pages/april-2019-studio-challenge)

In traditional art shows, artists compete against each other.

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All skill levels are welcome.

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2. Once your artwork is done, submit it by April 17, 2019.
3. We'll print your lovebird in the digital edition of the May 2019 COLOR Magazine!

The rules are simple:

- One entry per person.
- Image must be done primarily (75%) in colored pencil.
- Entry dates: March 1 – April 17, 2019.
- Submissions will appear in the digital version of COLOR Magazine in May 2019.
- Have fun!





*Mr. Toad's Broken Chair* by Diane Masek-Blow



*Owl Attitude* by Susan Morris



*Jar of Marbles* by Elaine Whiteside



*The Red Sweater* by Maria Villioti

[Read more from these artists on the blog >>](#)



THE PENCIL BOX

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# You Ask, Ann Answers

**QUESTION:** How do I get better?

**ANSWER:** In about two weeks, I heard this same question three times, so I'm glad to get the opportunity to answer this in *COLOR*. To me, it's a very touching, almost plaintive question. I guess you could say that it seems like an awfully broad question to ask, but I think it's maybe one of the most important questions I get.

I can tell you how I got better and I can also tell you how I've watched and perceived how other artists have improved. I think it's best to answer this question by breaking it down into the five major components of getting better.

## Passion

It helps tremendously if you are filled to the brim with passion for drawing and colored pencil. If you are just drawing because it's a fun way to avoid doing laundry, or because you bought all these pencils so you'd better use them, or because you wish you could somehow make money from home. Then your road to getting better will be longer and you might never actually arrive. Passion is the beating heart. If you wake up madly wishing you had *more hours* for the drawing board, you're already halfway down the path.

## Practice

Goes without saying, right? Back when I was ballroom dancing, I got better at waltzing by dedicating six months to practicing a two-minute



waltz routine with my dance instructor. We danced the same routine for an hour every week for 12 weeks. Same moves, over and over and over again. When I got home, I'd practice the hardest moves for hours in front of a mirror.



Sometimes, at the following week's lessons, I'd learn I'd been practicing a certain move wrong. Oh, dang! It didn't make me want to quit, though, because I had a *passion* for dance, and because I knew I had another week to practice it right this time. Even practicing wrong is moving your feet forward on that road to Betterland. Not practicing is what gets you stuck.

## Focus

Most top colored pencil artists who have reached the top of this small colored pencil world of ours have something in common – they stuck to one theme or subject or surface. You know the names – Jesse Lane (himself,) Tanja Gant (portraits,) Barbara Dahlstedt (portraits), Allen Woollett (birds), Lisa Ann Watkins (animals), Holly Siniscal (her daughter) and Julie Podstolski (Paris) to name a few. They may have experimented a little to begin with, but then once they found something that seemed to work, they kept on that path instead of continuously branching off. To use the dance analogy again, I got *a lot* better at waltzing in those 12 weeks. If instead, we'd practiced the foxtrot, waltz, tango, hustle, swing and rumba, I would have only gotten *a little* better at each dance.

## Staying Inside the Box

Related to focus, I've also noticed that those who get better are often those who make themselves a very small box and then they stay inside it. Seems counterintuitive, but hear me out. When I first started, I drew all kinds of things – birds, food, people, flowers. But soon I decided I most liked drawing people. Then I discovered I most liked drawing children. Then I discovered I *loved* drawing Japanese children, so I only drew Japanese kids for about two years straight,

producing at least two dozen drawings. Japanese children – now that's a pretty small box. But it was a perfect box because I love drawing, colored pencils, children's faces and Japan. It was a perfect confluence of passions that kept me excited to draw as many hours in a day as I could possibly set aside. Guess what I got good at? Drawing straight black hair, drawing Asian skin tones, capturing expression and, often, drawing colorful clothing (kimonos). But I didn't just get better at drawing those things; I started to understand them. I started to be able to almost feel my way around drawing them. It's a little hard to explain, but when you are drawing in a small box, magic starts to happen.

## You

And last, you have to be you. I became practiced at drawing Japanese children. Then, when asked to draw someone's non-Japanese daughter, I was pretty prepared. I understood hair and how it lays on a head. I understood how and where it catches highlights. I understood that my skin tones need to be built up slowly. I understood how light plays on fabric. But mostly, I had a pretty good idea of what I liked and what thrilled me: light and shadow, strong contrast, drama. It was those things that made my heart sing, so I made sure in my portrait commissions that I'd have something that I just loved, even if I was no longer choosing my subjects: strong light. It's what made me happiest. What makes you happiest? Look at your past work. What parts do you love? Even if it's a tiny little section of a drawing, if it makes your heart happy, then analyze that section. Figure out what about it makes you happy. Then go. Go do more of that. Lots more.

You'll get better.

**Want more advice about getting better?**

**Join a live online conversation with Ann on March 13, 2019! [Click here>>](#)**

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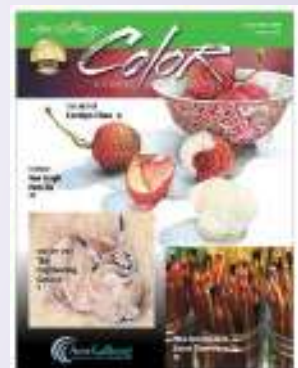
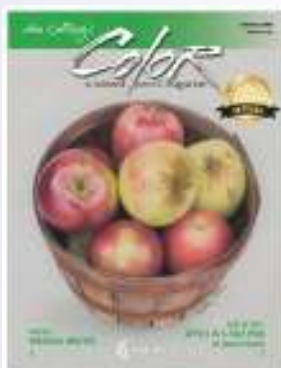
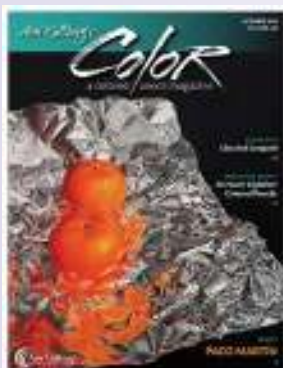
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