

Pastels do the trick on watercolor, pencil goofs

By David Messing
special writer

I had so much fun writing about tips last week and this week that I decided to have one article a month totally devoted to this subject.

If you love watercolors or colored pencils, you better buy some pastels. Why? Because pastels are excellent for watercolor repairs and soft backgrounds behind colored-pencil renderings.

If you make a mistake in watercolor you can usually add pastels over the problem area and rub the color into the tooth of the paper. If you do it well, nobody will even know.

Colored pencils can produce beautiful results ranging from expressionistic to photographic realism. But on the big scale, pencils seem too small and even prismcolor sticks show the grain of

artifacts

the paper or board.

YOU CAN, however, lay in beautiful soft backgrounds with pastels. All you do is take a wad of paper towel and stroke it with a pastel stick. When you have a good amount of pastel dust on the towel, gently rub it into the background of your picture. The pastel rubs smoothly into the background showing no tooth and does not stick to the waxy surface of the colored pencil.

WHILE I'M on the subject of pastels, with this same technique you can rub the colored paper towel over torn paper cloud patterns, mountain ranges or horizon lines. This tip will give the

airbrushed look to your work and most would never guess that it was done with pastel.

Here's a little tip I read in a magazine. To help you start the ink flow when you work with pen and ink, try premoistened tissues. When needed, simply pull one out and touch your pen to the tissue. This will immediately start the ink to flow.

Did you know you can greatly extend the life of your pencils if you use a little hand sharpener? Any other sharpeners will grind the points to long, sharp points which really is a waste of any pencil.

I recommend a little hand sharpener by Rogers and it cost about 75 cents. It has two extra blades, will produce short, sharp points and will last for years.

IF YOU like to design logos or symbols, do all your sketches on graph pa-

per. The horizontal and vertical lines help you stay consistent and allow all your creative energy to go directly onto the paper without the hesitation and correction of a straight edge.

My favorite is a little glossy-covered pad called Grid by Pentallie. My pad is about seven inches by seven inches and costs \$2.95.

If you like sketching people, here are a few tips that are easy to remember and will help you correctly proportion even a loose drawing.

The size of the hand is equal to the length of the collar bone, the height of the sternum and the height of the shoulder blade. From the heel of the hand to the middle finger tip is equal to the distance from the chin to the hairline... except on me. You see, I'm not losing my hair, it's just that my hands are getting shorter.

There is always one eye width be-

tween the eyes. If people appear to have close eyes, usually you will note that their eyes are very narrow. If their eyes appear widely set, then they probably have very wide eyes. So the rule is rarely broken.

The ears should fall somewhere between the line of the eyebrows and the bottom of the nose.

HERE'S A good one: Many drawings of children look like "ET." or little old people. Why? Because the whole face, including the eyebrows, is at or under the half line of the head. As little children approach adulthood, the half line gradually moves toward the line of the eyes.

The body of an adult is approximately 7 1/2 to eight "heads" high. Which is about 3 1/4 to four heads for the upper torso including the head and 3 1/4 to four heads for the legs.

Please mail or call in your tips. If

you are bashful, just tell me and I won't print your name. I'll just mention the city. Share your knowledge.

This is another in a series of lessons on art and drawing by special columnist David Messing. He has taught for 10 years and operates two art stores, Art Store and More, 18774 Middlebelt, Livonia, and 265 N. Main, Plymouth. Messing encourages questions and comments from his readers. You may write to him at his store or in care of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 33203 Grand River, Farmington, Mich. 48024.



Take the time to make friends, smell the roses

Many of our readers beginning to pull their suitcases out of the closet and prepare to take off for warmer climates.

If you can afford the time to drive you will have a wonderful experience. For years we drove south and savored visiting with the residents of various states, really prying into what made their area "tick."

That is really the way to get the most from the travel experience. Don't forget this technique of savoring areas, whether in our country or on another continent, is the way to receive the maximum travel dividends.

Here's a sample ice-breaker. "Good afternoon, I am from Michigan and have been enjoying the beauty of your community and the rural areas of your state. It shows a fine character, just like reading the expression on a face."

If the farmhouses or houses in a small community look cared for, be sure and make a comment about the quality of their community as you make needed purchases.

You will be surprised at the human interest stories which you will hear from strangers who are proud of their community. You haven't really traveled until you take time to invest in knowing the viewpoint of casual strangers you meet while traveling.

MANY YEARS ago when I became a widow, I entered a travel office and said, "I want a ticket with many stops to go around the world and meet the citizens of many countries."

Golly it was a good experience. I took time to remark about the beauty that I saw. I noticed how people built their houses. In Norway they have such long winters with lots of darkness, so they intro-



down to earth
Alice
Burlingame

duce color on the exterior of their homes and in the decor within.

I remember in New Zealand, a housewife and home gardener said to me, "Won't you come to tea?" So at the appointed hour we walked across her lovely lawn and had tea at a circular tea table, and as we sat under a spreading tree, enjoying the treat we talked about beauty, the relationship of color to form in ending up with a good pattern of flowers. My, those cookies were delicious. Twice I have been to New Zealand to re-taste the beauty of my favorite country in the world. Of course, I would not sell the U.S. short.

You can see if I whizzed through New Zealand in a plane or car, I would miss that feeling of the heart of this beautiful country. All you have to do when you travel is to look for beauty and take the time to "smell the flowers."

Many of you have established plans for your travel this winter but remember if you get out and walk, talk to people, take time to observe homes and gardens, plus have casual conversations with inhabitants, you will really receive a bonus for your efforts.

Remember, bonuses from people you meet, will give you a warm fund of memories.

● Twice a week is better ● Twice a week is better ● Twice a week is better ●

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