



Pastel Fundamentals

OBJECTIVE

- To gain an understanding of the basic techniques and applications of chalk pastels through material experimentation, exercises and extended study.

Unit Overview...

- During this unit we will explore the following topics:
 - **Methods & Materials:**
 - Overview of materials and options for surfaces to work on
 - Layering
 - Blending vs. not blending
 - **Color:**
 - Working with complementary colors
 - Working with a limited palette
 - **Composition:**
 - Creating balance with shape, value and color

Pastels

- **Pastel** is an art medium in the form of a stick, consisting of pure powdered **pigment** and a **binder**.
 - The pigments used in pastels are the same as those used to produce all colored art media, including oil paints; the binder is of a neutral hue and low saturation.

Methods and Materials

Pastels

- Rich color is achieved through **layering**
- Wonderfully expressive effects possible with loose mark making and **minimal or no blending**



*East 9th Street, pastel on U-Art sanded pastel surface
Anne Kullaf © 2008*

Methods and Materials

PAPERS or GROUND things to consider...

- **Tooth**
- **Texture**
- **Color**
- **Thickness**
- **Archival quality**
- **Flexibility**
- **Availability**
- **Cost**

Methods and Materials

- **Pastels**

- **Hard** pastels – excellent for under layers
- **Medium** pastels – are excellent medium hardness pastels, use these for layering on top of hard pastels
- **Soft** pastels – are ultra soft and best used for the upper most layers

all make dust – do not eat or drink in class during this unit. This dust is harmful to ingest. Do not blow dust on to table or floors. If you are making dust you are over working your surface. Shake dust into trash can and always wipe work areas clean before leaving.

Methods and Materials



*Fifth Ave, pastel on Wallis sanded
pastel surface
Anne Kullaf © 2008*

Working in layers

- Begin with a light sketch
- Apply dark / medium values first (complements only) to establish values
- Continue to layer, migrate to medium hardness pastels as you add lighter and brighter colors
- Finish with soft pastels for the highlights and lightest areas of the painting



Pastel Application



Reflected Color

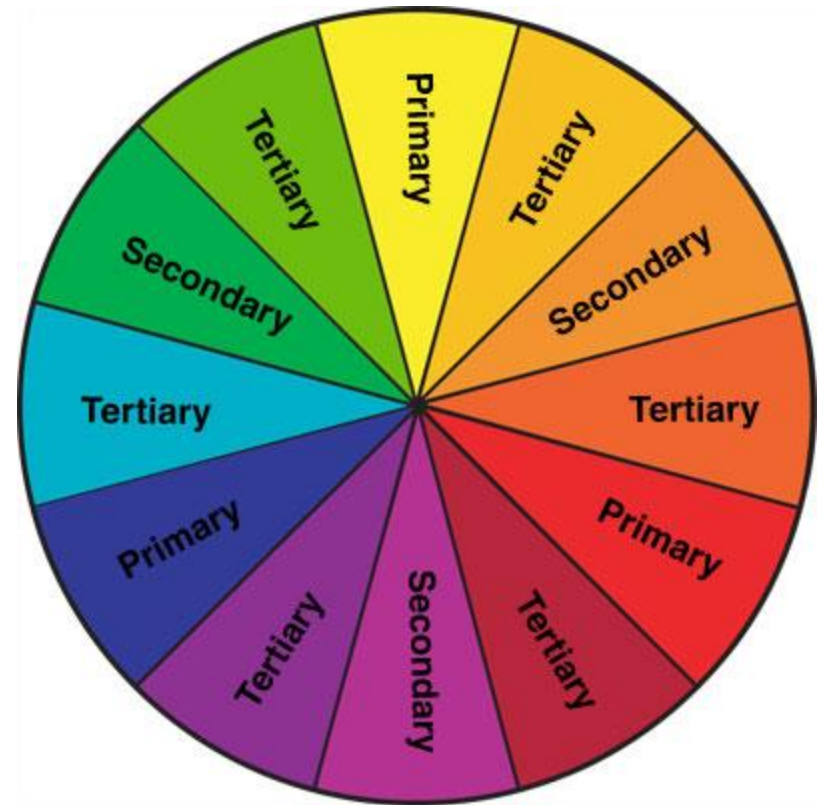
Color



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Color Basics

- Colors that complement one another should be used to create shadows and darks **NOT BLACK**
 - colors that appear opposite one another on the color wheel**
 - Example: shaded area on a lemon (yellow, primary color) use violet (secondary color)
- Mix your secondary colors whenever possible instead of using them directly from the box





Blues and Purples in Shadows

The Limited Palette

- This is a little more complicated with pastel than it is with paint because you need to mix your colors optically on the surface rather than on a palette
- Try limiting yourself to primary colors as you begin your painting
- Add in more colors (secondary) as you move along, choose brighter shades as you begin layering
- At the very end when you add in your highlights and brightest colors with soft pastels



Tying it all together...

- Painting with pastels provides rich color and a sense of expressiveness
- You can work on a variety of surfaces including paper and special surfaces designed specifically for pastel
- Layering is key to color depth and dimensionality
- Focus on shapes and values
- Experiment with larger loose strokes and avoid over blending for a painterly feeling
- Use complementary colors for shading
- Try working with a limited palette



Apple looks FLAT or like a sticker



FLAT...lacks interest

PASTEL EXERCISES – DUE 1/5

- 1) **COLOR WHEEL RIBBON**: Using only the primary colors and hatching / crosshatching create a color ribbon. Begin with yellow and work your way around the color wheel until you have all of the colors in the ribbon. DO NOT BLEND WITH YOUR FINGER.
- 2) **COLOR MATCHING**: 6 color squares (at least 1" x 1")
 - Cut out 3 color squares from magazines. You will try and match the color by blending just the primary colors. Start with a base color and lightly layer another color on top to create a third color. For example: Start with red and mix to rust. Start with blue and mix to light yellow. Layer lightly! If you are getting piles of dust you are pressing too hard.
 - Cut out 3 more colors from magazines. This time you can use the full range of pastels we have to mix your colors but you should still be layering your marks to create the color.
- 3) **OBSERVATIONAL COMPLEMENTS**:
 - Gather two pieces of fruit from the still life closet. Sketch both pieces of fruit life size on pastel paper. Using layering and complementary colors for shadow areas, create a representational full color drawing of each fruit.

REMEMBER: Start by layering the complements in the shadows. Work dark to light. No smudging. Layer lightly and slowly to keep from getting dust and overworking.

Composition



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Composition Basics

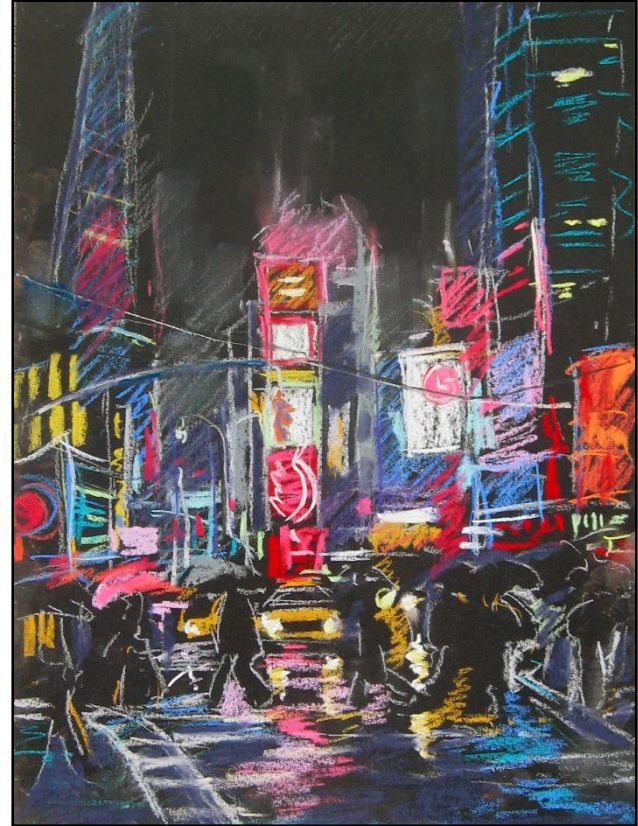
- Composition refers to the way you arrange the elements/objects contained in your painting in order to create and maintain:
 - Balance
 - Harmony
 - Viewer interest



*Magnolia Tree, pastel on Art Spectrum
sanded pastel surface, Anne Kullaf © 2008*

Focal Point vs. Overall Movement

- There are many approaches to composition, all are a matter of personal preference and what you want to say with your painting
- For example, you may wish to have an overall sense of movement rather than a strong focal point—either one can work but each will convey a different mood and feeling in your finished work



Times Square, pastel sketch on Canson paper, Anne Kullaf © 2008

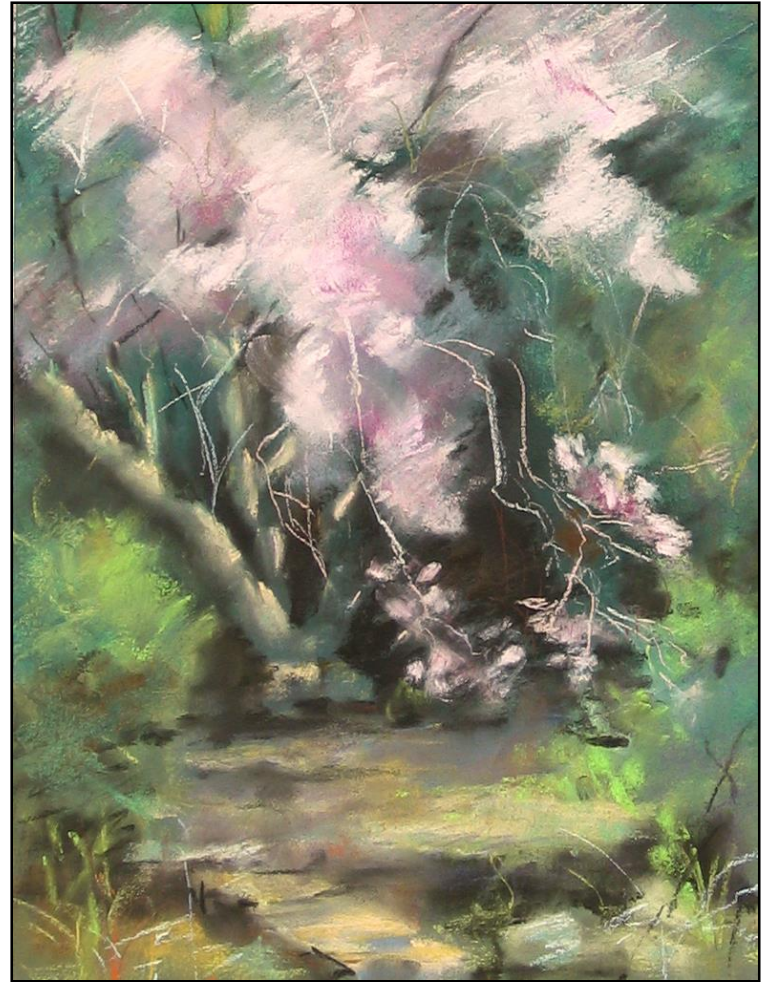
Composition Basics

- Look for things that repeat to keep your composition cohesive and to engage your viewer:
 - Shapes
 - Colors
 - Directional movement
 - Motion

Look for examples of the items listed above in the painting at right



Tying it all together...



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