

## TIPS...TRICKS...and REMINDERS

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### 1.) You are an Artist = creating from what you “SEE” vs. what you “KNOW”

Artists are always going between these 2 thoughts - what you “SEE” to “Know”. For example, I **see** that the mountains in the distance are blue in color ....but **know** that there are trees on the mountains and they are green + brown..how could this be ? Artists must be aware of the difference — art is a visual medium and artists always have to make decisions about creating what they **see** vs. what they **know**.

### 2.) Creating art work for your audience.

Always ask these questions when beginning your painting :

- 1.). “ What do you like about your subject ?”
- 2.). “ What do expect the audience to get from viewing your art work ?”
- 3.). “ Why are you creating this painting ?”

There could be an emotional connection between you and your subject.

Perhaps you want to explore your technical skills and try different media and techniques Maybe you are making it for someone else and do not have a connection but can use your skills to create what you see + know as accurate in the rendering.

There should always be a reason for you to make a work of art. Figuring out what that reason is will bring forth the necessary connection needed to create a meaningful work of art that others will connect with and “like” as they view your painting.

### 3.) Photo references

Use more than 1 photo to help you “**see**” your subject — different views to see color changes + values, perspective and composition. Always print your photo example in Black + White to see the lights/darks more easily for where shadows fall, shapes, and depth of space created from value changes. You should remember to “Crop” your work to reduce the focus area to specifically what is important - what areas you want the audience to focus on. \*\* Remember that a photo is ONLY a reference >

.....to be “referred” to while creating your work. If you copy it exactly -- you might as well just frame your photo and not paint !

### 4.) Art Rules = Elements + Principles of Design

The rules for making “good art” are listed as Elements and Principles of Design

The **Elements** : **Line, Shape, Color, Value, Texture, Form, Space**

The **Principles** : **Contrast, Balance, Emphasis, Pattern, Rhythm, Movement, Unity**

Artists may choose one of these as their main focus of their work but still include others to create a quality piece. Your eye is attracted to “Line” and “Pattern” (more interest), then “Shape” + “Color” ( quiet and visually simpler). “Composition” is most important when you set up your work space — need to be aware of “Balance” on the paper for

placement of your subject. You could use symmetrical balance or asymmetrical balance > which provides the most “interest” to the viewer (diagonal composition is the most dramatic as it pulls in the viewer into the work on the diagonal line direction. “Color” becomes important in your art work. It is used for “Emphasis” of the subject, or to develop “Space” in your work with depth/distance, and change of “Values” will show both depth and dimension to your art work. “Contrast” can be shown with changes of size, shape, and value. It also provides dark and light changes that separate objects and create dimension of shape from 2D to 3D “Form”.

## 5.) Define “color” + “color theory”

“Color” are the colors we see in the rainbow - in the light spectrum. They do not include black, white, brown ....**Black is not a color.** Black Hole in outer space is a place that does not receive light. Caves are dark in their deepest parts because of lack of light. If there is not enough light - then our eyes cannot “see” color. When you get up in the night, you try to “see” shapes and color — it is difficult. We have named items “black” because there is not enough color for us to say what color it is. Sometimes we can see more of a reddish black, or bluish black...like the fur color on a dog might look more orange or blue. **“White” is really all of the colors** blended equally together. When you did “spin art” at the carnival — all the colors spinning looked “white” cuz you could not make out any one particular color. **“Brown” are blends** - Orange+Blue **“Gray” not a color.** It is a “Tint” of Black + White mixed together ...dark gray or light. **“COLOR THEORY”** - the study of how Light shows color and how we see these different hues and shades of color in our world. The color wheel helps us to choose correct colors for mixing and balancing the art work. Blending colors creates new colors. **Primary Colors - red, blue, yellow.** When you mix these colors together you get a “black” sort of color. Tuscan Red + Dark Green + Indigo Blue will make the best Black using colored pencils. **Secondary Colors - orange, green, blue.** Add White for tints - Add Black for Tones. **Never start with black...**Use a color first then add black so that the color has “depth” + “richness” -if you use only Black it will flatten your image.

## 6.) How to choose your colors + make your palette

Choose your colors by matching a pencil to your color chart **OR** photo. Then find other pencils that are light and darker in that shade. And include the “opposite” color from the Color Wheel ....and include Indigo (Verithin)\* to use for real dark/black areas. Lay these pencils alongside your work in order of Light to Dark. **ALWAYS** begin with the lightest color and build to the darker layers. As you work, you may find that some of these colors are not what you want - remove them and continue. This order of colors is **VERY IMPORTANT** when using colored pencils. Some people make marks of each color in they use ...if you **CHANGE** the order - you will get a different color ! See the difference between Greenish-Blue...or Bluish- Green ? Red-Orange vs. Orange-Red? **YOU ARE A PAINTER** - when you “see” a red apple and choose your colors by matching the color reds to the photo...then you must use your “knowledge” of how that apple grew. What color was it before it turned red? What other colors do you “see” in the apple ? Yellow ? Orange ? Green ? What colors make Orange - red + yellow, so as the artist, you are allowed to add Orange to the apple painting. Green is opposite on

the Color Wheel so you can add green and get some dark red areas, too. If you experiment with blending colors and write which colors used gave which color blends, this may extend your color choices. A painter wants to be “painterly” and include as many of colors as they can into their work to create a rich painting. Remember your painting does not have to look exactly like the apple viewed !!! You are the ARTIST !!!

### **7.) Purpose of using Verithin Prismacolor Pencils\***

I call these my “clean up” pencils. They are hard like your school pencil but only put down a little bit of wax. Therefore, they are good for a first layering and then adding a Prismacolor pencil layer on top. I use Verithins to “clean up” my little spaces left by the Prismacolor pencils, since they fill in these spaces, while smoothing out the layers of Prisma pencil. So when I set out my “palette” of colors -- I include the colors of Verithin in between my Prisma pencils. Then I am constantly using them to add, smooth and fill all layers of work. They are easier to “erase” due to small wax amounts. **Remember....**Always layer (color) your pencils with a CIRCLE motion to create evenly controlled coverage of wax on the paper surface. When I say “Circle” I really mean an “oval, pancake shape” that gets covered as your movement overlaps and fills in spaces. I begin with a small oval about 1/4 inch long and go around til it is filled completely before “EXTENDING” it above, or to the side to continue to move across the paper.

Always hold the pencil gently using a “feather” light touch, hardly touching the paper with the sharp point as this will limit the amount of wax on the surface....which allows for more and more layering without getting too built up. If you DO get too much wax from making these layers too dark, then you could use a “solvent” (Mineral Spirits, Turpinoid, Gamsel) that dilutes the wax which compresses these layers. Then let it dry completely over night before returning to add new layers of pencil...sometimes I add ‘white” pencil to make a “new beginning” and then continue to add colors more carefully to control my final result of color needed. If you use the “Dusting Technique” you shave several different colored pencils using a tea strainer, then use a cotton ball and press down on these shavings, then move in a circle motion to blend evenly and completely. I use at least 3 colors in my dusting -- again, not just ONE COLOR will make a more richer and give the area a richer color. The Dusting is good for soft backgrounds where no details are needed -- like behind a portrait or to represent blurred sky for my butterfly.

### **8.) Background + Foreground - how to begin your painting**

Artist Painters usually work from the background to the foreground of their work. However, we like to start with the most fun subject....and the background is not always fun.....but it is important to start with a “road map” or light layers for the background to get the idea of color, depth of space, and values that will help showcase your subject or main area of the painting. Another reason for doing some work on the background is because if you start with the foreground area ( main subject) and then try to do the background “behind it” .....these edges, colors, shape will become lost. So you would have to re do these edges to make them “stand out” from the background after the background is finished .....because your Brain will only “see” the foreground in front if

it has been **physically done last!** So I suggest to do some work in background and then work the foreground but do not “finish it” until the Background is completed. Sometimes the background color will actually define and emphasize the foreground.

### **9.) “100% Colored Pencil” vs. other tools, medium and techniques**

*This definition means that any brand of Colored Pencils is acceptable. And in this club, you are also allowed to include “Watercolor Crayons” and “Watercolor Pencils”.*

*You are NOT allowed to use “Watercolors” found in tubes or trays.*

*Also, you can use ANY SURFACE — — paper, tree bark, sneakers, cardboard.*

*Some have found Vaseline or Baby Oil to bring out stronger colors as a solvent.*

*It is always FUN to explore and try new medium and techniques to say what you want to say as an Artist when creating art work.*

### **10.) Choosing the paper to use = Brands + Textures + Surfaces**

*Artists use various types of paper brands and surfaces to make their colored pencil work of the highest quality. Decide if you want “Smooth” or “Vellum” surface.*

*Vellum has a slight “tooth” or texture to the surface. Strathmore paper “Bristol” ( the yellow color pad ) in 96/100 lbs. is a good inexpensive choice. These are the beginning level of paper choice. The Stonehenge Paper is a quality paper, bit more expensive than the lower level of Strathmore. However there is the 400 Series, Brown color pad of Strathmore that has more quality. But an artist chooses surface based on the particular painting subject - if it has texture, then a more heavier or textured surface to enhance the image. I use a Heavy Weight Drawing Paper or Mixed Media Paper 400 Series— made by Strathmore - because I burnish alot and add solvents so I need a paper that can hold all of this working of its surface.....and I personally feel that if I have the talent to create, I can do that with any tool, and on any surface !! Plus- I am cheap. :)*

### **11.) Critiquing your own work**

*When you are working on your painting, you MUST self critique your work. I encourage everyone to **turn your work upside down** when finished and leave it upside down until you return to work. When you view a picture upside down, your brain is a bit confused. It is expecting to “see” the mage that your eyes have been staring at for hours.*

*But now cannot make out those images.....so what jumps out are **1.) Composition.***

*Are the images correctly placed? Crooked? Not centered or balanced in the space?*

*Then you notice **2.) Shape.** Then you notice **Color + Values.** When your painting is upside down, what the painting is about is no longer important...and you can now*

*focus on correcting areas that need attention. Some people use a mirror but that will reverse the image and perhaps may be too confusing for correcting when turned around. Always critique your work while working .....cover it up so you do not see it to keep the review fresh when viewing again.....remember to look for line, pattern, shape, values, contrast, balance, perspective, background, foreground, color, space and try to critique your work as if you are a person coming to look at it in a museum. What would you want a stranger to see first ? Did you emphasize what you wanted to for importance? **Are you happy with your finished art work == the answer is no.***

*An artist is never completely happy with their work .....there are always areas that could have been done differently, more successfully and then there are areas that came out great, by accident worked well and were successful. All artists learn as they go and continue to create because there is a need to show people the interpretation of how they see the world and bring these people to search themselves to see how they “see” their world around them. There are some people who “see” in color or prefer “line” and “pattern” as what they like. So when you view a work of art — they “like” it because of a connection to subject, or colors, or memories + emotional connections. Your audience needs to be pulled into your work to understand what you are trying to say and to decide if you were successful.*