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Finding Your Style In Pastel



Synopsis

As artists, we have choices. There are very few rules that apply across the board. We can create highly realistic paintings, or perhaps more expressive paintings, or paintings that have very little basis in reality, including those that are totally non-representational. We can record color as we see it or as we'd like it to be. As pastel artists, we have even more choices. We can use a wide variety of pastels, strokes, surfaces, and techniques to create many different looks. The choices we make form the framework of our individual style, our signature as artists. Any subscriber to The Pastel Journal realizes how varied the medium of pastel can be. For the experienced artist, these articles are stimulating, offering possible ways to experiment with alternative approaches. For the beginner, the panoply of choices can be overwhelming. Painting is primarily an intuitive process. But intuition is gained through study and experience. Part of my impetus in writing this book has been to create a more structured approach to help those fairly new to the medium understand its many possibilities. The book is aimed at all levels of pastel artists. Beginners will find a wealth of helpful information and intermediate artists will gain insight into how to take their work to another level and develop a style. Many advanced artists teach pastel; the organization of ideas and the exercises included should be of assistance. I offer a variety of suggested approaches and sometimes make up terminology to describe my experiences with the medium. The instructions in the book are based on my preferences and the guidance that I offer my students. The diversity of styles and techniques evident in the paintings of contributing artists should make it clear, however, that there are many ways to successfully work in pastel. Having acknowledged the many possibilities, I want to note a few musts. Representational paintings must be well-drawn. Poor

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Customer Reviews

Hello to all pastel artists or those interested in trying the soft pastel medium. Recently I purchased this book, "Finding Your Style in Pastel," by Jean Hirons. Jean is a Signature member of the Pastel Society of America, Signature Member of the Maryland Pastel Society and Pastel Painters Society of Cape Cod. She is a teacher and avid painter and has worked in the medium of pastels since 1994. Her paintings have also won many, many major awards. I love this book. Well worth having in your art library because it is one of the best. This book is a great way to fire up your motivation for the new year if you are looking for inspiration and more knowledge about the pastel medium. It is a must for all levels. . . from beginner to the experienced pastel artist. If you are a beginner in pastels, you will appreciate and learn much from this book. Amazing how all levels can learn from this book. I am delighted with this book and truly have to rate it at 5 stars. It is well written with tons of information on the pastel medium. It also includes painting exercises. There are at least 197 pages of the author's shared knowledge about the pastel medium. It covers types of painting supports/boards/papers to use, techniques, styles, toning and underpainting, values, demonstrations, color studies, limited palette, color theory basics, initial lay-in, compositional studies, kinds of pastels, oil or acrylic undercoating, types of strokes and layering.....and so, so much more. The book is also full of color photographs.

I read all the rave reviews, looked at the Preview & decided to try it even though it seemed pricey for a paperback. I'm glad I did because this book is fantastic. I have read the chapter on surfaces for pastel several times & this alone is worth buying the book IMO. This is the most complete guide to Pastels I have ever found. I wish I had saved my money on all those other books & just bought this one!

I started working with pastels around 7 years ago, and in the beginning learned the medium on my own just by working with it and seeing/feeling the outcome. From then till now, I have bought several books on Pastel and though each had their unique information to share, the basic thing they talked about was materials, step by step and some technique. But this is the first book that taught me so many things, that now I feel that I am a total novice in this medium. Some of the topics that I loved in this book are: Working cleanly and safely (this was so helpful) When and how to use different kind of pastel i.e. hard, intermediate or soft Surfaces, how that impacts the outcome Strokes: painterly or

linear and how surface impacts each type (this is the first time I heard about this)Underpainting and toning: why this is required and all details about these.Different kind of look of pastel paintingand many more....This book doesn't have many beautiful paintings that one can rave about, but what this book has got is 100% useful information that you won't feel bored to read and images that will explain what is being talked about. Once you start reading you would like to grab everything this has to offer since once you got that you know your main weapon and now you can use it at its full potential at the appropriate time and space. It is correctly named 'Finding your style' and now you don't just have to copy somebody else.

If I were to buy only one book for the pastel artist, Finding Your Style in Pastel would be it!Written by Jean Hirons, Finding Your Style in Pastel is a comprehensive and beautifully illustrated go-to guide for pastel painters from beginners to experts. There are so many variables in painting pastels today, and they are all addressed here. There is a very complete section illustrating how different pastel brands react to different painting surfaces, as well as a chapter about the various possibilities and techniques for toning and underpainting.The book lives up to its name. Ms. Hirons doesn't express preference for a particular technique; rather she exposes the reader to many styles and includes color illustrations by a variety of artists. She lays out useful exercises to promote experimentation. Pastel painters will use this book as a reference guide in order to answer questions about paper types, pastel qualities, underpaintings, color, composition and problem solving. I have found it so useful!

This book is loaded with really useful information for pastel artist. Having painted for many years, I do not believe there is another medium that varies so much between brands, supports, and methods of working as much as pastel. This author describes them all in clear concise language. Her focus on the specific medium of pastel, rather than generic information that could be applied to any type of painting medium, is excellent. There on tons of how-to art books out there that describe painting good pictures but few that really nail the diversity of the medium of pastel that this author has achieved. The only downside to this book is it's price but if you are new to pastels it might save you money in the long run because you understand what products and methods will achieve the results you are seeking and which ones won't.

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