

# Betty Lemley

## Beginning Pastels

### Description:

Since Pastels are a mystery to some who would like to learn more about their uniqueness and the pleasure of painting and drawing with them, I would like to extend an invitation to anyone interested in learning about the pleasure of Pastels to join me in January, 2009, for a Beginner's Class. Following the four week-long Beginner's classes, I will start a new series of classes for Intermediate and Advanced painters.

Pastels have been used as a dry painting medium by binding pure pigment with gum since the early 1500's. Leonardo daVinci used this medium by adding color accents to charcoal or red-chalk drawings. Later they were used mainly for portraits and figure groups.

Pastels are quick and responsive to work with; they can be used as both a drawing and a painting medium; by twisting and turning the sticks, using the tips and sides, overlaying of colors, many different effects can be made; they are simple and convenient to use. No mixing, little clean up; can be intense in color, or soft and delicate. There are many colors to choose from: luminous, vibrant, fresh and lively, from extreme darks to the lightest of values of the color wheel. Pastels are a very satisfying medium, and in many ways ideal for beginners.

Beginners will learn about the different selections available of color and types of pastels. The different types of paper used; how to mount the paper on backing surfaces to prepare for painting; a bit about the color wheel and values; how to overlay colors to create the effect you want. All of the things you might have questions about the Pastel medium.

(For further information I refer you to The Pastel Artist's Handbook from Barron's in the VAC library, and an excellent resource book. I give it credit for much of my information.)

### Materials:

PASTELS: The more selections you have to choose from, the better. Although pastels cannot be mixed, as one mixes paints, they can be layered lightly on paper for a blended color, or applied to the paper with varying pressure for different values of the same color. There are four types of pastels available – soft and hard, pastel pencils and oil pastels. For this class we will use only the soft and hard pastels, and pastel pencils.

## PASTELS WE WILL USE:

**HARD PASTELS:** Nu-Pastels, made by Prismacolor, are used for both finished work and establishing the first layer of paintings. Holbein is another brand of hard pastel. As a beginner, I suggest you buy only a small box of Nu-Pastels

**MEDIUM/SOFT PASTELS:** Rembrandt and Windsor-Newton, plus Grumbacher, Holbein and Art Spectrum are a few brands available. Start with buying a box of **HALF-STICKS** of GRUMBACHER.

**SOFT PASTELS:** The following pastels are some that I use. They are soft and very soft, are great for finishing touches. They can be expensive. You can go on-line for different sources of Art Supplies, but also watch for art supply sale catalogs – especially at Jerry’s Artarama, off I35 and 291 in Austin. When making your selections, try to get a mixture of light colors and dark colors, as well as the in-betweens. Just remember to get what you feel you can afford or want to spend, until you have an idea of continuing with pastel painting. To begin with, I recommend buying a box of UNISON; set of 18 sticks, mixed colors, from light to dark.

Sennelier: Half-sticks: Very soft; rich colors

Unison: Soft, nice variety of colors. One of my favorites

Terry Ludwig: Soft and very rich colors

There are many other brands available, but these are good ones to start with.

**PASTEL PENCILS:** Are the hardest pastels; are great for sketching or drawing initial shapes or for signing your name. CARBO-OTELLO is a good brand. Rather than buy a box, I would select a few pencils of your favorite colors. You can add later.

## PASTEL PAPERS & SURFACES:

**BACKING BOARD: MUST HAVE:** Used for mounting your pastel paper on. Masonite, Plywood (1/8 to 1/4” thickness); or Gator Board which is excellent – light weight and sturdy. Get the 1/2” thickness, WHITE in color. Quarter inch thick Foam Core is oke, too. We will not be working large, so I suggest no larger than an 18” x 20, or 24” in overall size. You will need a board at least two inches larger than your sheet of pastel paper.

**PASTEL PAPER:** Your paper **MUST HAVE A SANDED TOOTH** to hold the pastel onto the paper. The following papers I suggest:

WALLIS – Professional grade sanded pastel paper; it is heavier and more durable than other papers, is 100 % rag, acid free; water resistant. Mistakes can be removed with a stiff brush, and/or water. **BUY ONE OR TWO SHEETS, OR**

ONE 9 X 12" OR 12 x 18" PADS, PREFERABLY, WHITE PAPER. Get professional grade rather than Museum quality for now.

ART SPECTRUM (COLORFIX) archival sanded pastel paper is good. Get middle value color (blue, taupe, mauve). High quality; can take washing, soaking, etc. and still retain its shape and tooth. One Sheet is all you need now.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS: (I will put a (\*) by the necessary items)

\*Drafting tape (3/4" to 1" width) or masking tape to tape your paper to the board.

\*Bulldog or ledger clips (4)

Shop Towels or Viva paper towels or some old rags

\*1/2" inexpensive bristle brush and/or one or two different sizes of old painting brushes.

\*Small Sketch Pad

Charcoal stick

Kneaded Eraser

\*Small Jar with lid (size of a baby jar, or pimento jar)

\*Bring old bath towel (this is used on the table to place pastels on as you work – helps to keep from breaking them. (Pastels are fragile and easy to break)

Small soft chamois cloth

Odorless mineral spirits (I will have some available)

\*PHOTOS, preferably taken by you, for something to work from.

Table easel, if you have one. The club has a few.

I look forward to working with you. If there are any questions about the materials or other questions please call me at 512/864/0370, or e-mail:

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NOTE:

The underlined items and starred \* items are really necessary for working with Pastels. You will not need a lot of paper at first, so buy a pad or a sheet or two to get started on. I will have some paper available at a reasonable price. BBL