

Pastel Painting

Although these Live Online Art Classes are primarily for Pastel artists and the majority of illustrations and demonstrations here are in pastels, they are also of extreme importance to artists working in any of the other mediums.

Introduction to Painting

With Pastels

(Watercolour and Pastels)



Dennis L. Clark

Pastel Painting

Publisher

Paint Basket TV Ltd
Torbay
New Zealand

Artist and Author

Dennis Clark

<http://www.paintbasket.com>

Legal

The author and publisher have made their best effort to provide a high quality, informative document. However, they make no representation or warranties of any kind with regard to completeness or the accuracy of the contents of this text. They accept no liability of any kind for any losses or damages caused or alleged to be caused, directly or indirectly, from using the information contained herein.

Painting with Pastels

Copyright 2014, All Rights Reserved.

No part of this publication may be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or reproduced in any way, including but not limited to digital copying and printing without prior agreement and written permission from the authors.

Please Note

This lesson is for personal use only and is part of a course available at <http://www.paintbasket.com>
You may NOT sell, rework, extract, or use any part of this book for any reason whatsoever unless as stated below.

If you are a business, tutor or instructor and would like to use our material, please contact us first.
You don't like it when others steal your artwork / ideas. This book is our work of art, so please don't steal our art either.

You May

Make photo copies of the reference material in this manual in order to paint your own version of it.
You may NOT sell the artwork produced from following the course. The course and artwork remains our intellectual property and copyright. All other copyrighted materials remains with their respective owners, as credited throughout the manual

Photographs by Dennis Clark or as otherwise noted.

Pastel Painting

Many people have the completely wrong idea of pastel painting. When they hear the word Pastel they immediately conjure up an image of a painting that is so pale that one can hardly make out what it is even from a short distance away.

I wonder just where that notion originated? Could it be that the Cosmetic Industry advertised their products as soft pastel colours? The same expression is also used in the fashion industry. Funnily, a lot of people also have the image of watercolour painting as being soft as pastel!

Nothing can be more from the truth. The pigments used in the making of pastel sticks are exactly the same as for oils, watercolours and acrylics, yet no one sees them as “pastel shades”.

Basically pastel sticks are made from a paste (the root word for pastels) made from the pigments and a special binder – the less the binder the softer the stick. Tints are made by adding differing quantities of clay, gypsum or white chalk. There is no set standard for this. That is why each manufacturer's pastels handle differently. Once the sticks are dry they are ready for use.

There are artists who make their own pastel sticks. This is only worthwhile if you are painting fulltime with pastels and like to mix your own special colours. We will not even consider this at all.

Another point: Pastels must not be confused with Chalk (for use with blackboards) – they are two quite different entities. Chalk is quite unsuitable for fine art drawing and painting.

Pastel is a Dry Medium

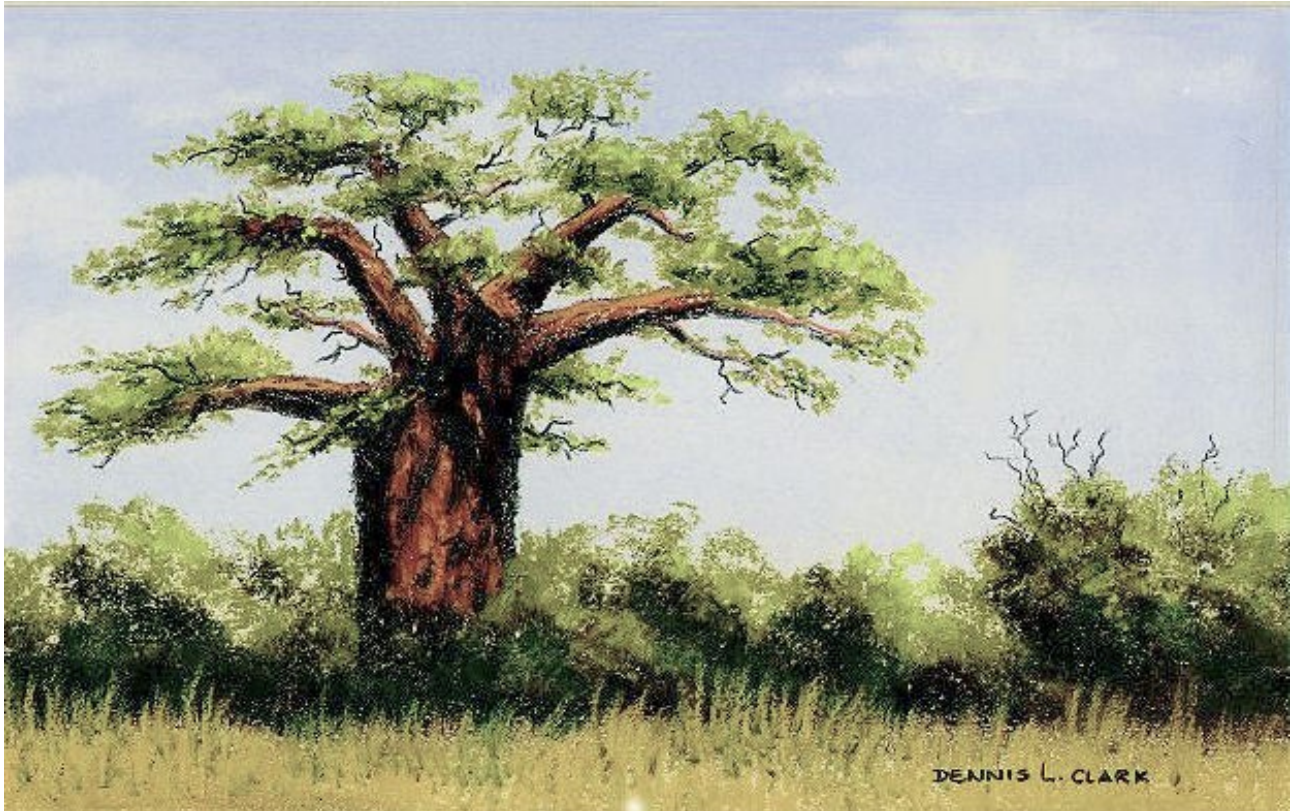
This has many advantages:

1. No airline restrictions.
2. Can stop and start at will.
3. No drying time.
4. It is a direct and immediate medium.
5. The colour will always remain fresh and vibrant.
6. It is rapid and responsive.
7. No glare off the painting.
8. No palette to clean.
9. No brushes to keep clean.
10. No pre-mixing of colours.

There are also the disadvantages:

1. Smudges easily.
2. Not easily transported.
3. Special storage of paintings if not framed immediately.
4. It can be messy (same as oils and acrylics).
5. Sticks can be very fragile and/or crumbly.
6. Have to work with an existing range of colours and tints
7. Need many more colours and tints if you want to major in pastels.
8. Need reasonably drawing skills.
9. You will need pastel pencils for small details and more precise control.
10. Need to work in a well ventilated area.
11. Depending on how you work, it can be dusty (dust mask).

Pastel Painting



Baobab Trees



Two Pastels painted en plein air in South Africa many years ago in the Northern Transvaal.

Equipment needed

Pastel Painting



If you sort your pastels this way and keep them separated from each other then they will stay clean and not be contaminated by other colours.



Some of my colours sorted in small boxes. It is not about the name of the colours but the tints of the colours. Each artist has his/her own special way of keeping the colours sorted according to their own preferences.

Pastel Painting



This is a set of NOUVEL semi-hard square pastels in 9 containers. These are very useful for laying down the initial background. It is much easier to work with the subsequent soft pastels over them (the sliding factor).



Pastel pencils are very useful when it comes to the detailing of certain areas. It is not always easy to get fine detail with the pastel sticks. It is recommended that you slowly build up a supply of colours as needed.

Pastel Painting



Dust mask – Rubber gloves – Pastel Fixative.



This is my large set of 144 pieces by Rowney. You are definitely NOT required to purchase one for the Course. As each stick gets used up I simply replace them. (In the beginning make a list of all the colours because, as the covers are removed, you will eventually not remember what you initially had)

Pastel Painting

LIST OF SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Starter (for those who are not yet sure about pastels)

1. Small set of soft pastels (20 to 30 pieces)
2. Paper - We will use the same watercolour paper as we used for the watercolour lessons. For you who want to go further, I will demonstrate on various other kinds of paper such as Canson Mi Teintes, Matboard, Colorfix (special sandpaper), etc.
3. Pastel/pencil Fixative (some pastel artists never use fixative)
4. Stumps – bought or handmade (shown during lesson) Earbuds are also handy.
5. Small craft knife and/or fine sandpaper
6. Putty Rubber or similar. (Brown Bread works well)
7. Small bristle brush (#2 or #3)
8. Charcoal pencil or charcoal stick (preferable above normal graphite pencils)
9. Kitchen Roll
10. Damp cloth for wiping the hands.
11. Dry cloth.

(Optional – depending on personal preferences)

12. Dust masks, surgical gloves
13. Tracing paper or similar to cover the final painting for protection
14. Masking Tape.

This is the basic equipment needed to be able to start the wonderful experience in pastels. We will be using some other helps in the future as and when they will be required. As you progress in the lessons, and feel that you want to continue with me, you may want to acquire bigger pastel sets, or even better, you can add extra individual colours and tints as the need arises.

Paper Sizes:

During the watercolour classes we used the 12” x 16” 140lb Cold Pressed paper. We will still use this at times but will also be using larger sizes where necessary. Advance warning will be given on what sizes and what paper will be used for the individual lessons.

Painting Position:

Except when using watercolours as an underpainting I will mostly be painting with the paper in a vertical position. This way the dust does not accumulate on the painting but falls down out of the way. We will use an easily made dust collector to keep the floor clean and tidy.

Floor Protection:

I highly recommend that you get a thick plastic sheet to lay down on the floor where you will be working. Accidents do happen. An accidentally dropped stick that is trampled on can really make a mess of the carpet. Even an old scrap piece of carpet will do.

Description of the Pastels.

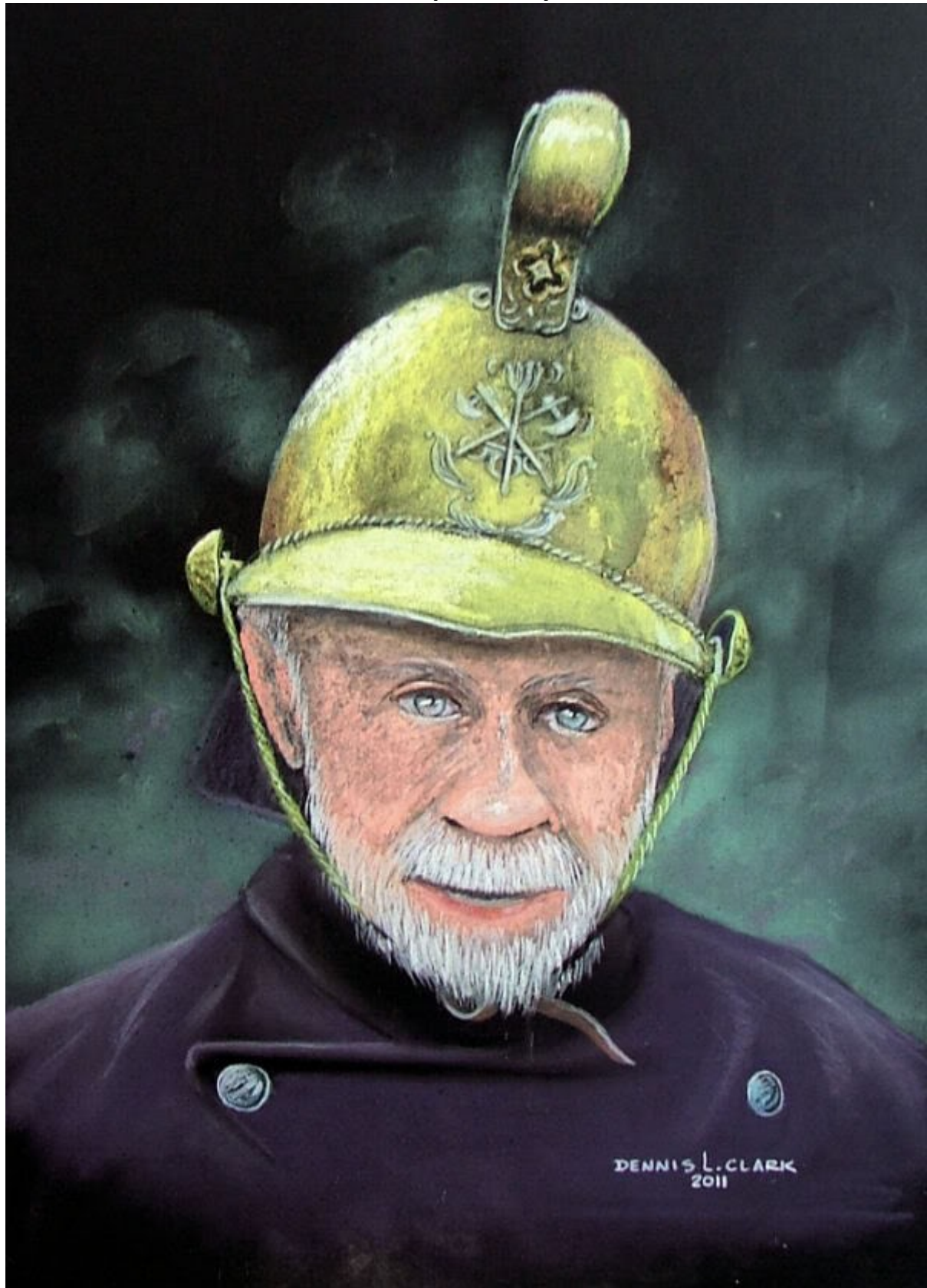
Pastels come in different sizes shapes (round, square, thick and thin) and tints. They even come in different hardnesses.

Pastel Colours:

Don't get hung up on the names of the colours as we will not be using them as such. I will only be referring to them as, for example, light green, red, dark blue, etc. You will use whatever is the nearest to those colours you have in your set. You are NOT required to match my colours exactly.

Pastel Painting

Samples of my Work



A Hard Night's Work - Veteran Fireman - Christchurch

Pastel Painting



Pastel based on a large watercolour painting I made years ago.



Also from my archives – Evening's Splendour - (570x410mm)

Pastel Painting



Maraetai Beach. Jan 4, 2014. Auckland Plein Air Group Meetup. 290X185mm Pastel



Photograph: Jen Stone

Pastel Painting

My Goal for You.

I don't want you to become a copy artist, or a “forger”, who wants to copy everything exactly as it is. This will only show technical skill – it will lack the personal emotional side of painting. A direct copy can be very unemotional and cold. It's only when you have a personal relationship with the subject that you can put “feeling” into the painting. This can be done by leaving unnecessary objects out, repositioning objects for better composition, changing the colour scheme (mood), resizing certain object, and so on – you get the picture? Let me give some examples of what I am trying to say:

You have a photograph of an elephant you want to paint. There are 2 ways you can start. The first is you can immediately draw it out and start painting – this has no emotion to it, it is simply a copy. The second, and better way, is to first take time to study the picture – all the details, how they look, study the skin textures, the colouring in different parts of the body, the difficult legs and the subtle differences, the eyes – particularly the size in relation to the size of the body, etc, etc. Study different photographs and best of all – try to actually see a live animal from closeup.

The first option is only an acquaintance, while the second option is like a personal friend whom you know well. One you hardly know, while the other is one you know well because you have taken the time to get to know them better.

Let's look at another example: The Sea.

I've seen excellent seascapes and at the same time seen some ghastly seascapes where the waves don't roll properly; the foam at the wave top is flying off in the wrong direction because the artist does not fully understand the dynamics of a wave. It was only when I took the time to study the [dynamics of wave actions](#) that I really began to paint realistic seascapes.

The moral here is to take the time to study your subject well if you intend to paint it well. When you study you are transferring and/or storing vital information into your memory banks that you can draw upon as many times as you like for later paintings. When you delve immediately into a painting there is no time for storage and the temporary vision is normally lost after a short period of time.

**Storage becomes knowledge;
Knowledge becomes understanding;
Understanding becomes vision!**

(Where there is no vision, the people perish: Proverbs 29:18a)

Understanding the why and what of techniques, and the why and what you are doing,
are the two most important ingredients of art.

INSTRUCTIONS

Preparing the Paper:

For the beginning I will be using a 12" x 16" (305 x 406mm) watercolour paper and the template (when supplied) is designed for this size. If, however, you prefer another size then you may either enlarge or reduce it to suit. Try and keep the same aspect ratio.

Measure accurately a border of 60mm around the paper and mark lightly with an HB pencil. Carefully stick strips of masking tape along the outside edge of the pencilled rectangle with the one edge exactly on the pencil line

You should now have an open area for painting of approx. 285 x 185mm.

How to transfer the template (when supplied) to the Paper:

Print out the template (PDF document). NOTE: this works only for the lighter coloured papers.

Turn it with the back of the sheet facing you and holding it against a window pane (with the sunlight behind) rub the pencil over the now visible lines with a soft pencil (3B or 4B) making sure that all the lines are completely covered with some rubbing on either side of the lines.

Turn the paper right way round again and with the rubbed face towards the pastel paper and centre the template over the area to be painted. The A4 sheet overhangs the painting area slightly.

Take 2 pieces of masking tape and stick the top 2 corners securely to the pastel paper so that the template will not move during the transfer process.

Now, with a 2H or HB pencil trace over the lines so that they are transferred to the pastel paper underneath. Check every now and again to see if you have not left out any lines by carefully lifting up the lower section of the paper and comparing the upper image with the lower image.

MAKE SURE YOU DO NOT MOVE THE TEMPLATE OUT OF ALIGNMENT.

When you are satisfied that all the lines have been transferred, carefully go over the transferred lines lightly with the HB or B pencil. If you do not do this then you may lose some of the lines in the process of painting,

You are now ready for painting!

You will be notified when we need to deviate from these instructions.