

## Painting Foliage

### Notes:

- This is MY way of painting foliage, not the only way.
- This is a relatively small piece, 10" x 12"
- Because of its size, I chose to use pastel pencil primarily, along with a few soft Rembrandt pastels and PanPastel black. Its primarily Caran d'Ache pencil, which has a waxier feel than other brands. I'm new to this pencil so for me there is some learning curve here. It layers quite differently.
- The paper is PastelMat, dark gray. If you haven't seen it, it's a cork surface. It doesn't feel sanded, and it doesn't behave like sanded paper surfaces. But it does take lots of layers.
- KNOW that when you use different materials, as I often do, your results will look differently. For example, doing these steps with softer pastels and/or a sanded surface will make a looser look.

### Process:

1. The first image shows the beginning done. But, you can see a light pencil outline and color of the original paper. I do tend to work in sections because I don't want to drag my hand or arm through what I've done, but you don't need to follow that if you don't wish.

Once the sketch is done, I put in black PanPastel where I wanted larger areas of foliage. While some of this is done, you can see the black layer on the right, and bottom of the working area. A problem is brewing here, but I hadn't seen it yet. Do you see it?



2. This is a close up of the same stage. Here you can see some more aspects. Over the Pan Pastel, I started with the tree trunks. These are very minimally done with two shades of gray purple pencil, and a brownish gray. I then tapped all the areas with the sponge applicator I'd used for the PanPastel which softened the lines.

Background trees went in next. The further back the tree, the narrower the value range, and the cooler the green. I applied a pale cool gray green in spots (it wasn't pine). Over that I used a dark green to blur the edges of the lighter green. I don't use this technique with most other pencils where I tend to work dark to light. So you'd need to experiment with that.

After that a very pale light green was applied to the upper areas of the pine needle masses. Because this is pine, these aren't dots, but linear strokes. A slightly darker green is under it, with black on the bottom that you really can't see unless you are very





close (it guides me on sky. Then, again perhaps specific to this Caran pencil I went over the whole thing with that cool but dark green.

The sky goes in next. Big areas of sky go in with Rembrandt. Small areas of sky seen between the branches and needles, are done with a pencil, after the rest of the foliage in the area is done.

**3.** Here's the materials used for this so far (Black ring is my system for indicating I have spares of these colors).



**4.** Here are the first two layers of the next pine tree mass. You also see a tiny bit of adding spots here and there of rust and gold, to indicate older needles and forming cones that are typical in these trees in the fall. The lighter green pencil is Conte. The rest is Rexel Derwent. The goldish is another Caran.





5. I used a light yellow to lighten up the top of the needles that are in the sun. The gray lightens up the closer pine trunk a bit, and cools it. The light blue made the sky holes in the tree mass, and the green at the bottom is the one I used to go over the whole tree mass (except sky holes) to soften everything.



6. Next I put in the blue sky (center of this picture), laid in the PanPastel black for the next section, and sketched in some branches to break up the sky areas when I do the sky. Also added trunks for the next section, and sketched a tiny bit of green to mark a different type of tree. Then I went to bed. Company came the next day. Touring them in the studio I took one look at this and saw the right triangle brewing up there. Mentioned it to my friends and we all had a good laugh.

***OOPS! Can't believe I hadn't see this before! Note to self, fix this when company is gone.***





## 7. A lot has happened here:



Right triangle has been corrected with a reworking of the center sky section. I used compressed air and an eraser to clear the previous sky and rework it using the same methods previously used. It shows a bit, but only if you saw it before, so I'm not worried.

I've moved through the next section, and started the one after that (roughly three sections across). The dark area you see now is a deciduous tree in front of the pines. I marked its edge with a pinkish red.

I've worked in the trunks of this tree.

There is a slight red sketchy stroke over a section of very red tree in front in the center.

I've put in some more trunks. I've also remembered that pine trees here have lichen over the trunks on all sides, anywhere deer can't reach to eat it. I applied a very cool pale green (not in this image--in image #3, it's the green that is two below the purple) to the trunks everywhere to show this.

You can also see the colors that will go in the deciduous trees.

And in an experiment, I brushed a bit of Sennelier Fixative onto the black area I'm about to do, hoping it would keep the foreground foliage very bright. I've done that a lot on other papers, but not on this. Fingers crossed (and nightmare during the night that it didn't work!). \*

**8.** I'm going to finish up here with details of the deciduous tree that I'm working on now (they land on the next pages). You can see the stroke is different because its leaves and not needles. After that, it's all just repeats of the same techniques. While I often work dark to light, here I work light to dark for the most part, but the technique is still the same. Layer strokes over strokes until I like what I see.



This area is roughly 2" wide on the painting, but enlarging it gets a clear image of the stroke difference:

*\* The fixative idea worked on this paper!!! Yippee!*





A bit further along....





Where I am now...





Full image right now.

