

Kay Brathol-Hostvet Art Workshops

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Introduction to Painting with Soft Pastel

Saturday, April 5, 2025 10-4

Heyde Center for the Arts

Many students “fall in love” with pastels after taking this comprehensive workshop! Soft pastels are fun to use, colorful, versatile, and expressive. You’ll be introduced to this dry painting medium through two exercises on different papers. You will be using soft pastels, not oil pastels or Craypas. Be sure the product you buy or bring is the “chalk-like” type of pastel. Pastels can be expensive, but they last a very long time and don’t dry out like other painting mediums. Buy the largest set of pastels you can afford (see list below). It is a frustrating experience to be hampered in your art-making by having a very limited palette. **I require you to have at least 24 different colors of pastels for this introductory class—but more is definitely better.** I will be providing all of the paper you will be using, as well as having tripod easels and drawing boards on hand. The required materials are available in stores and online (Dick Blick, Dakota Art Pastels, Jerry’s Artarama, etc). Feel free to email me if you have any questions. I look forward to a colorful, happy day with you! **We only break for about 30 minutes, so please bring a bag lunch.**

SUPPLY LIST

REQUIRED:

- 1) **Set of pastel sticks**--24 minimum—more is better! (*see recommended brands below). Do NOT bring any of these: oil pastels or Craypas; Alphacolor, SMI, Heritage, Art Loft, or Loew-Cornell brand pastels; or any brand of iridescent soft pastels. You get what you pay for; inexpensive sets are disappointing. If you are just starting out and on a budget, I suggest a 36 or 48 count set of NuPastels. Do not buy or bring pastel pencils only. You need to have sticks to paint with pastels.
- 2) **Workable Fixative spray** (Krylon recommended) Make sure the can reads “workable.”
- 3) **Masking tape**, ordinary beige
- 4) **Small tray** to hold your pastels while working (old cake pan, the lid from pastel box, etc)
- 5) **Small clean rag in a zip-lock bag** for finger clean up.

OPTIONAL

*Clean newsprint or glassine to cover and transport your finished works home.

*Additional soft pastels in hard, medium or soft density—bring more than the minimum if you can.

*Pastel pencils (not colored pencils) and X-Acto knife or sharpener

*Freestanding floor or table easel that is easily transported IF it holds a board completely vertical

*A large assortment of your own photographs, **printed out** rather than on a digital device (no copyrighted images from cards, calendars, magazines, etc)

These are some of the recommended brand names to look for in pastel products:

Soft Pastels - Hard to Medium density: Nupastels by Prismacolor (NOT Neopastels), Van Gogh, Holbein, Cretacolor, Pastels Girault, Richardson Semi-Hard, Rembrandt, Great American Art Works, Art Spectrum. Note: Richardson Semi-hard and Nupastels are great values and your best bang for your buck. If you are on a tight budget and can only buy one type, get a larger set of either of these. A half-stick set of Rembrandts is also a great way to start with a slightly softer brand.

Soft Pastels - Soft to Extra-Soft density: Daler-Rowney, Unison, Schmincke, Sennelier, Gallery, Unison, Terry Ludwig, Diane Townsend, Conte Soft, Mount Vision. These will be more expensive but are worth it to have some soft sticks, too.

Pastel Pencils: Conte, Carb-Othello (Schwan-Stabilo), Van Gogh, Faber-Castell, Derwent, Cretacolor