Strathmore Artist Papers™
A division of Pacon Corporation
Artist Newsletter
VOLUME 13 ISSUE 1 WINTER 2015

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A Lifelong Pursuit

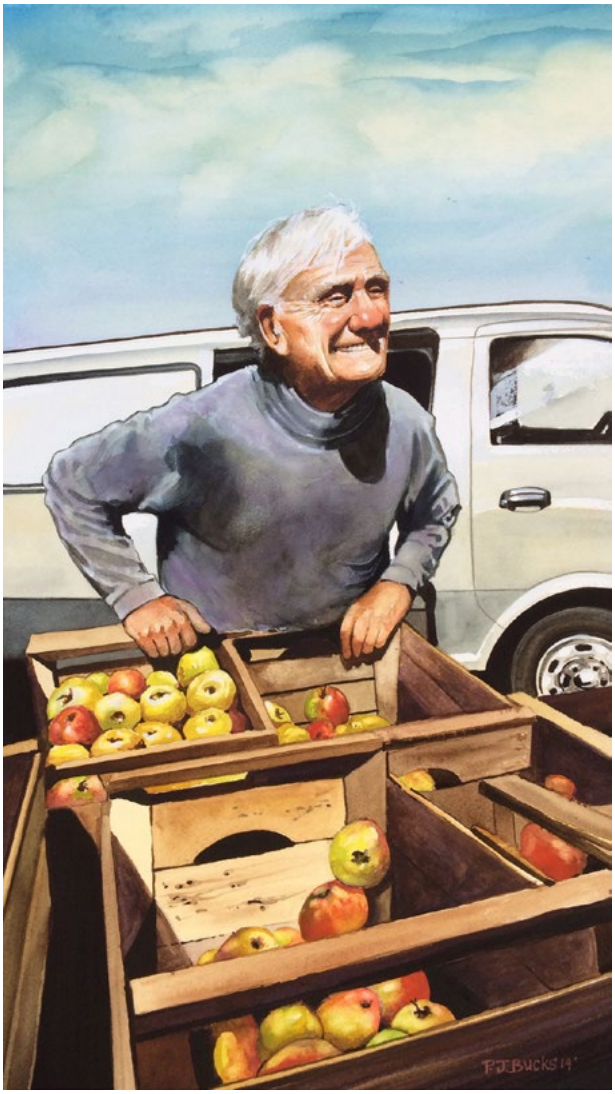
Written by: Peter Bucks

When people ask me, "how long did it take you to paint that," I usually reply, "my whole life." Creating art has been a lifetime of learning, a continuing pursuit of education. I think most artists could attest to this.

The basic anatomies of objects and an understanding of what allows the building blocks for drawing, design and composition are the core to my paintings. The basic principals for figure drawing and of human anatomy are the shapes of negative and positive space, perspective, foreshortening, light/shadow, and color. These are the foundations of my skills. Using nature or a natural environment has been my best teacher for learning to draw. Technique and style come and go for me. I guess style and technique are just more about my feeling of how to make a painting "look" rather than branding me to a specific style. I like to keep it simple. I feel that color will then follow suit based on what I see.

Fred and Ina, Peter Bucks
Watercolor

Neustadt, Peter Bucks
Watercolor



Apple Man, Peter Bucks
Watercolor

I believe that my art is about how I see something and then how I interpret it. Personally, I like to paint what I see and I like to create a representation of my vision. Then, I like to add "artistic license" by adding to or subtracting from what I see as well as making some changes in color or composition.

I prefer to work from life as the most natural environment, but most of the time I work from my own photographs due to time constraints or lack of opportunity to be in the environment when time allows me to paint. Every time I take a photo, I have composition in mind for the next painting. Viewing through the lens or viewfinder of a camera allows me to instantly crop a particular moment in time.

Given any painting or drawing, I believe that no matter which medium is used, the same principles of creating form, or the illusion of three-dimensional form on a two-dimensional surface, will apply. The only difference is the outcome of the medium used. Every medium has

its own quality of recognizable differences. Drawing and painting are one and the same, only different approaches are used within the scope of the medium to create the image. In other words, if I paint a sphere on any surface in any available medium, it's still going to be a sphere. The only difference is the "look," given the medium used.

When I'm ready to paint, my preferred medium is watercolor. I am well-versed in most other mediums, but I find that watercolor has a boundary-breaking feel to it. Watercolors are fast, expressive, vibrant, and have a great light-capturing quality with immediate results.

I am a true believer that fine equipment and materials give any artist an edge to the work he/she creates. The watercolors I use are mostly Holbein and Windsor Newton. I like soft hair sable brushes and a few stiffer nylon brushes for extracting color from the paper, if necessary. I also like using longer haired round liners. As for the paper, Strathmore 500 Series Gemini watercolor is my choice. I purchase the 300 lb. (638 g/m^2) weight in 22" x 30" sheets. I like the cold press surface and the thickness of the heavier 300 lb. over the 140 lb. press. The less the paper buckles the better; therefore, the heavier weight suits me. The cold press quality of this paper is perfect. It's not extremely rough but not slick enough to be considered hot press.

My website is www.peterbucks.com

Wissembourg, Peter Bucks
Watercolor

About the Artist

Peter Bucks

Peter Johannes Bucks was born in the city of Chicago in 1971 and grew up in the neighborhood of Albany Park located on the city's North Side. Peter's father, also an artist, and an immigrant of Germany was trained in the traditions of the German Impressionist Heinrich Deege. While growing up, Peter was taught the fundamentals of perspective and proportions.

In 1989 Peter Bucks submitted a still life in the medium of watercolor for the Fifth Congressional Art Contest and placed third overall. The painting was exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago, and Peter was awarded an American Flag which was flown over the Capitol in his name.

In fall of 1990 Peter Bucks was accepted at Ray College of Design and studied to become a professional artist under the supervision and teachings of Fine Artist, Bruno Surdo. While studying, Peter was also instructed by illustrators Thomas Gianni, Kurt Mitchell, and Fine Artist Don Pollack.

In Spring of 1994 Peter graduated and began a professional freelance career illustrating for various companies and agencies in the Chicagoland area. In 1996 Peter achieved a full time position at Skyline Design where he learned the principles of building stain glass windows, sandblasting glass, faux finishing, and painting large scale murals. Many of Peter's commercial works from Skyline Design are scattered throughout the United States and Europe.

Currently Peter has been working on private commissions, and on various illustrations on a freelance basis. Peter is also currently an associate member of the American Watercolor Society.

My website is www.peterbucks.com

MADE IN THE USA

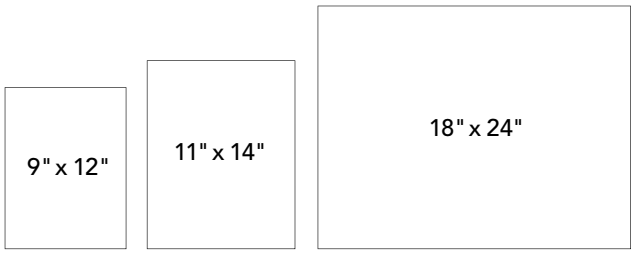
Colored pencil has met its match!

Introducing 400 Series Colored Pencil Paper

It can be difficult to find the right quality surface that will stand up to the demands of colored pencil. Professionals and newcomers alike have tried many different paper types, and now the search is over! Strathmore is proud to introduce a heavyweight paper perfect for colored pencil. The fresh white, toothy surface allows for smooth, even coverage. Each pad features a micro-perf which ensures a clean tear edge and true-to-size sheets. The heavy weight stands up to applications of multiple layers and repeated reworking. Try it with graphite, charcoal, and sketching sticks too!

400 Series
Colored Pencil Pads
100 lb. (163 g/m²)

Available in three popular wire bound pad sizes:



Strathmore® 2015 ONLINE WORKSHOP SERIES

Strathmore's Online Workshops feature free video lessons and downloadable instructions created by experienced artists. Follow along as instructors guide you through various topics and demonstrate useful tips, techniques, ideas, and inspirations to get you creating and learning even more about art.

Workshops start March 2 and continue through December 31, 2015 - register today!

Workshop 1: Bold, Expressive, & Unconventional Printmaking
Instructor: Traci Bautista
Start date: March 2, 2015

Explore how everyday objects can create beautiful, expressive marks. Dive into unconventional techniques to create one-of-a-kind monoprints, relief prints, and patterns. Experiment with creative ways to adorn the surface and create colorful, textured layers on your mixed media artwork! Unleashed your inner artist and join Traci Bautista as she shares inventive ideas for making marks with handmade tools, nontraditional materials, and simple DIY printmaking techniques.

Workshop 2: Loose & Expressive Acrylic Painting
Instructor: Patti Mollica
Start date: May 4, 2015

Discover your creative voice as we explore an approach to art-making using acrylic paints combined with other mark-making techniques to produce pieces that are colorful, unique, and expressive. We will explore various techniques, both traditional and non-traditional, to paint in a style that is loose, free, and playful. All levels are welcome!

> *"Thank you for offering such quality workshops and the opportunity to post work and interact with other artists. I've just ordered several Strathmore journals that I'm looking forward to journaling in."*

Workshop 3: Exploring Pen & Ink
Part 1: Hand Lettering & Calligraphy
Instructor: Maureen "Marzi" Wilson
Start date: Sept. 7, 2015

Hand lettering turns the alphabet into art! Discover how to transform quotes into beautiful, impactful pieces with this two-section lettering tutorial.

Section I: Learn the principles of letter formation, techniques for designing a great layout, tips for successful sketching, and advice on inking.

Section II: Learn calligraphy basics using a traditional dipping pen. Determine which ink is best for your project, become educated on nib types, and learn the fundamentals of writing with a dipping pen.

Workshop 3: Exploring Pen & Ink
Part 2: Drawing
Instructor: Alphonso Dunn
Start date: Sept. 21, 2015

This workshop will focus on creating realistic textures with pen and ink and will cover the essential concepts, skills, and techniques involved. It will be comprised of two sections:

Section I: Learn basic aspects of drawing with pen and ink such as creating strokes, value, defining form, and proper use of a drawing instrument. Exercises will be given in creating texture that will enable you to learn and develop essential skills required for Section II.

Section II: Apply what we learned in Section I to creating a still life drawing comprised of various objects with different textures. Develop the drawing from start to finish and also address aspects of composition and design.

Register for our free workshops today at:
www.strathmoreartist.com/artist-studio/register

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Questions From Our Website:

How do I mount my artwork to a piece of wood?

If you are gluing or mounting artwork done on a sheet of paper to a wood surface, there are a few steps we'd recommend following.

STEP 1: Seal the wood

First, the wood should be sealed. Sealing the wood helps the glue go on smoothly and prevents it from sinking in. It also prevents the acidity of the wood from leeching into the paper that is glued on. There are several ways the wood can be sealed:

PVA Size: Gamblin makes a PVA Size (polyvinyl acetate) which can be thinned down with water to the proper consistency to seal canvas, fabric and wood. Cover the wood with a mixture of PVA Size solution and water. Let dry.

Acrylic Polymer: An acrylic polymer can be applied to the surface of the wood to seal it. Golden makes an Acrylic Polymer Sealer (GAC 100) specifically for sealing canvas, fabric and wood. This sealer prevents the acidity of the wood or substrate from traveling into the paper and causing discoloration of the paper or artwork, known as Support Induced Discoloration (SID). Cover the wood with a layer of the Acrylic Polymer and let dry.

STEP 2: Glue the paper to the wood

Make sure to use a pH neutral or acid free glue, such as PVA glue. Use a firm roller (paint roller) to roll the glue onto the surface of the sealed wood. Next, adhere the paper to the wood surface, and cover the artwork/wood piece with a clean sheet of paper as a protective barrier. Using your palm, press firmly over the entire surface to remove any air pockets. Place a wood board larger than the glued surface on top. Place weights (books work) on top and let sit for 48 hours.

When you remove the board and weight, check to see if the paper is completely dry. If it feels cold or clammy, place it back under the weight until dry. The moisture of the glue could cause the protective sheet to wrinkle under the board. Periodically check the interleaf paper during the 2 day drying process and replace it with a new sheet if it is wrinkled. If it is not replaced, there is a risk that the wrinkling of the interleaf paper could create a pattern in the glued paper.

STEP 3: Seal the Drawing

(this step can be done before Step Two)

To seal your artwork, use a varnish or spray sealer. We especially recommend a spray sealer versus a sealer that needs to be brushed on for graphite drawings as there is a risk of smearing the graphite. Many companies make protective spray sealers and fixatives, such as Lascaux Fixative and Protectant. Look for something that is safe to use on the medium that was used for the artwork. The best way to apply any sealer or varnish is by applying several thin coats in different directions, waiting for them to dry in-between coats. This assures an even application. Always wear a duel filter spray mask when spraying.

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