Strathmore 2017 ONLINE WORKSHOP SERIES

ETHEREAL ART ON TONED MIXED MEDIA PAPER

with **Georgina Kreutzer**

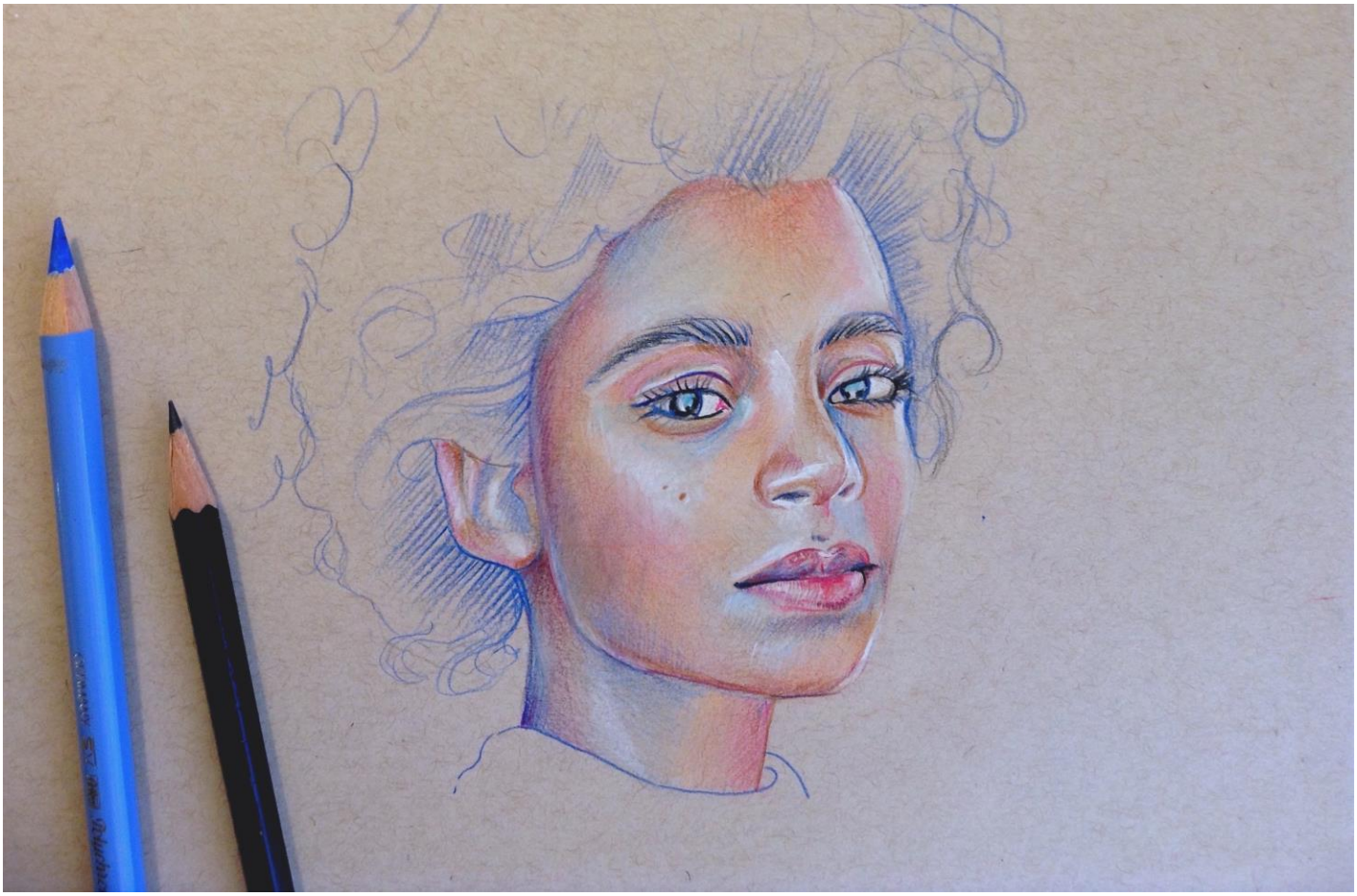
Week 3: Mixed Media Portrait Artwork

Basics of portraiture - I will walk you through techniques and structural control for sketching facial element, and raise some tips I wish I had when I decided I wanted to delve into portraiture.

Supplies:

- Paper: Strathmore 400 Series Toned Mixed Media Paper
- Colored pencils
- Soft pastels
- White charcoal pencil
- Workable Mat Fixative (Instructor uses Micador)
- Artist tape (optional)

Reference Image: The perfect pensive face – Alecia Morais Photographed by Mireya Acierto/Getty, with post editing for drawing by Georgina Kreutzer.

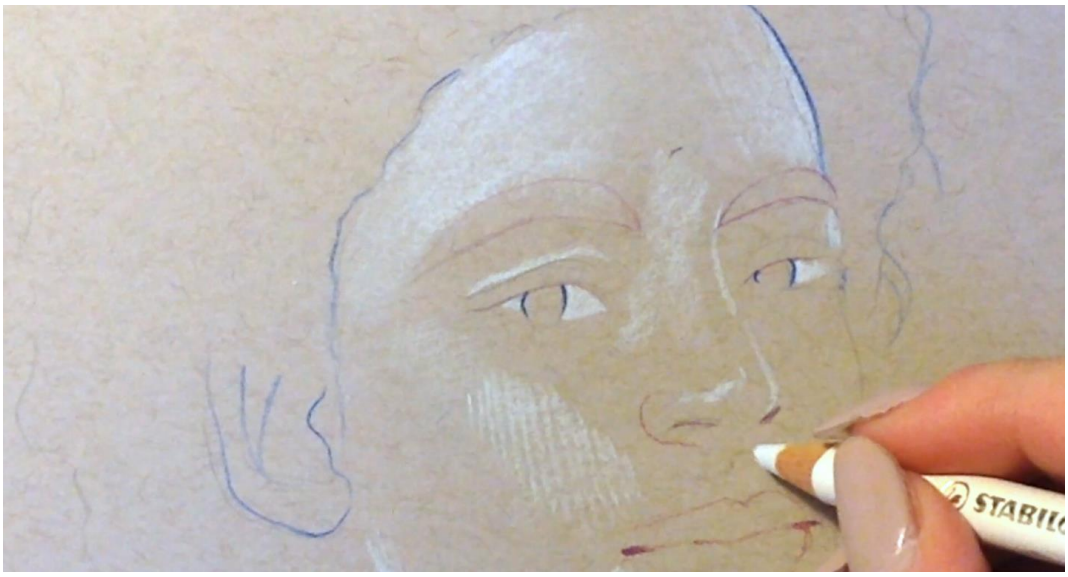


Method:

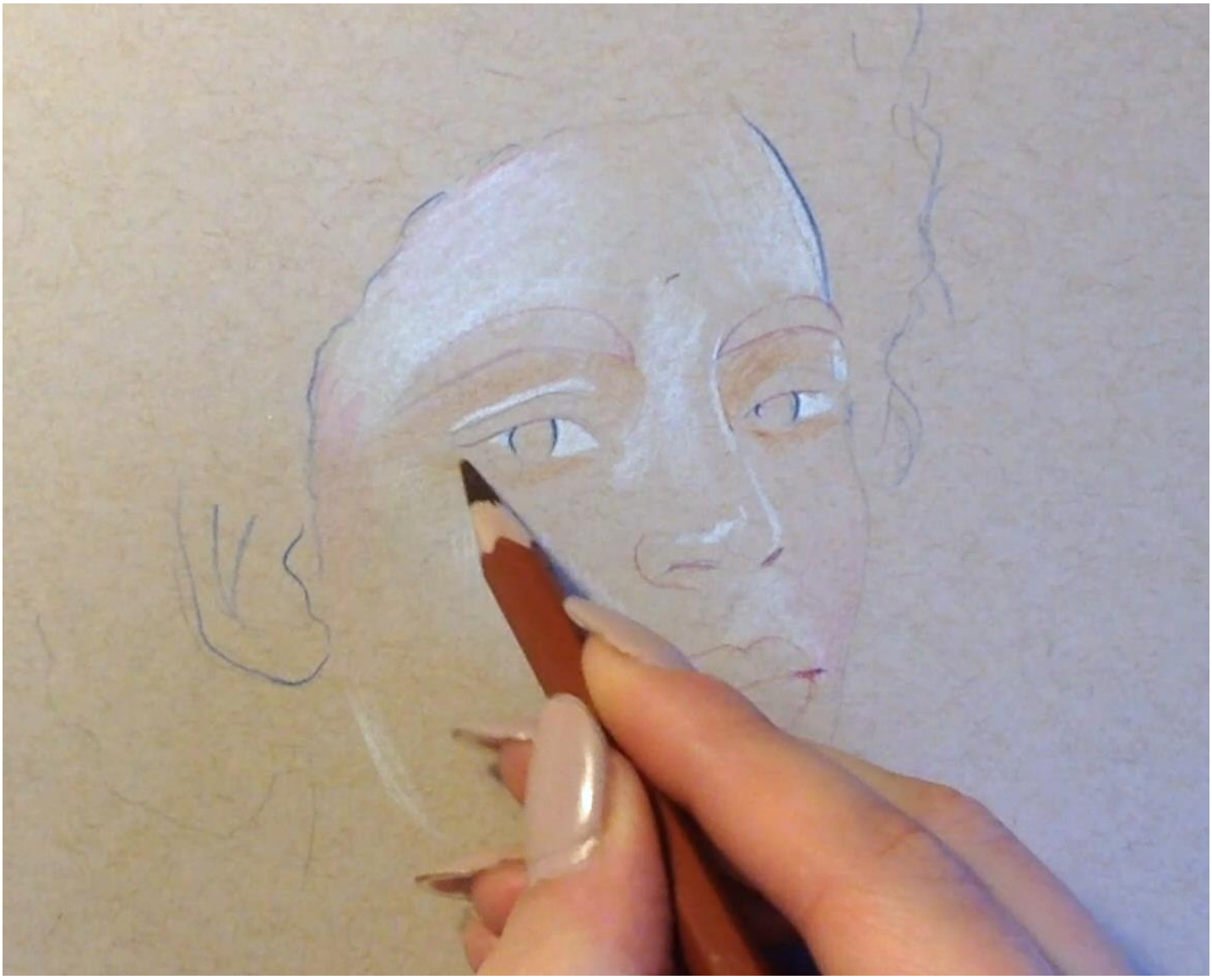
(Optional first step – secure paper to table with artists' masking tape)

I start by setting the outlines of the face – Mainly mapping the position of eyes, nose, mouth, jawline and hairline – composition is not the aim of this tutorial, instead how to render the surface textures and build atmosphere through colour.

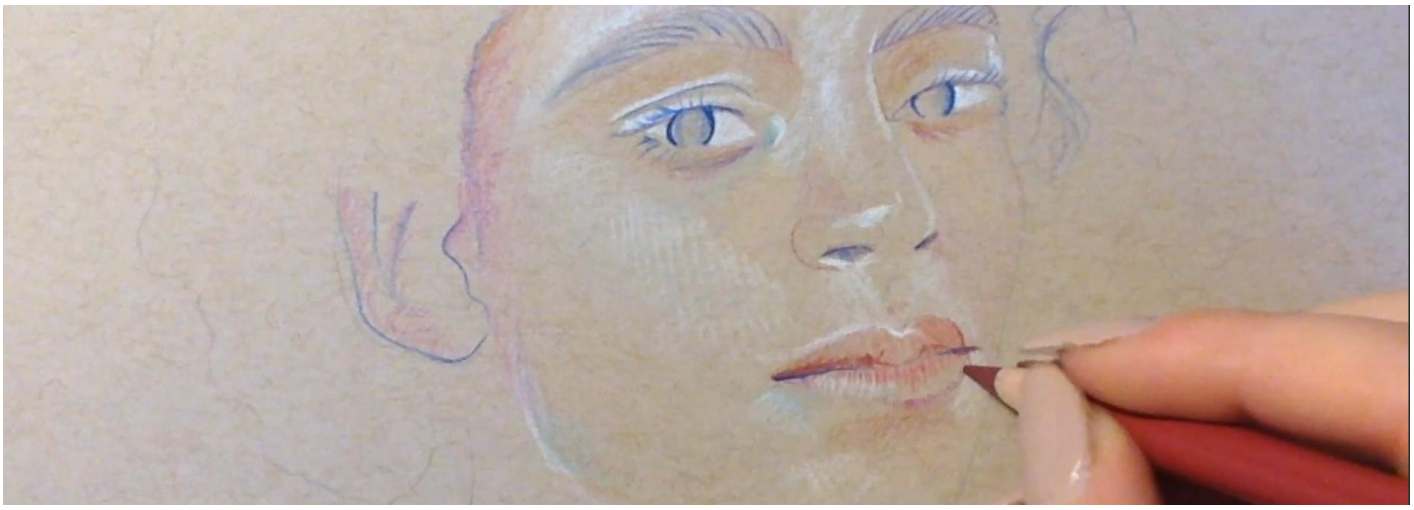
Highlights first – I apply soft pastel liberally to areas of extreme/direct highlight. Do not feel a need to be too delicate with the details at this point; we dedicate plenty of time to refinement later.

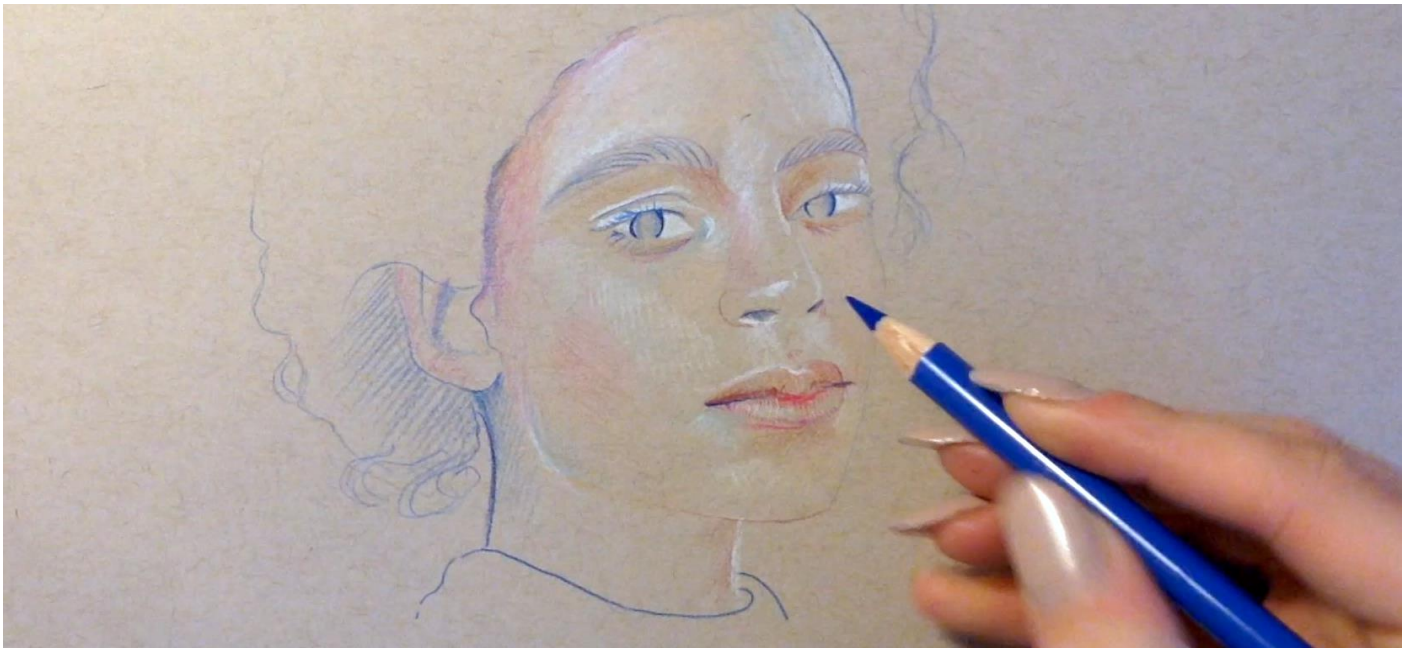


Next, we begin to lay down the first layer of skin tones. For this, I like to work in gentle layers, building up a rich, multilayered surface of warm and cool hues. To begin, I have taken a burgundy pencil and commenced shading in the shadowed parts of the face, around the left, and around the eyes. With a lighter warm shade of reddish-brown, work over the cheekbones, temple, neck, and sides of the nose. One of my favourite hues for this is Faber-Castell's Venetian Red.

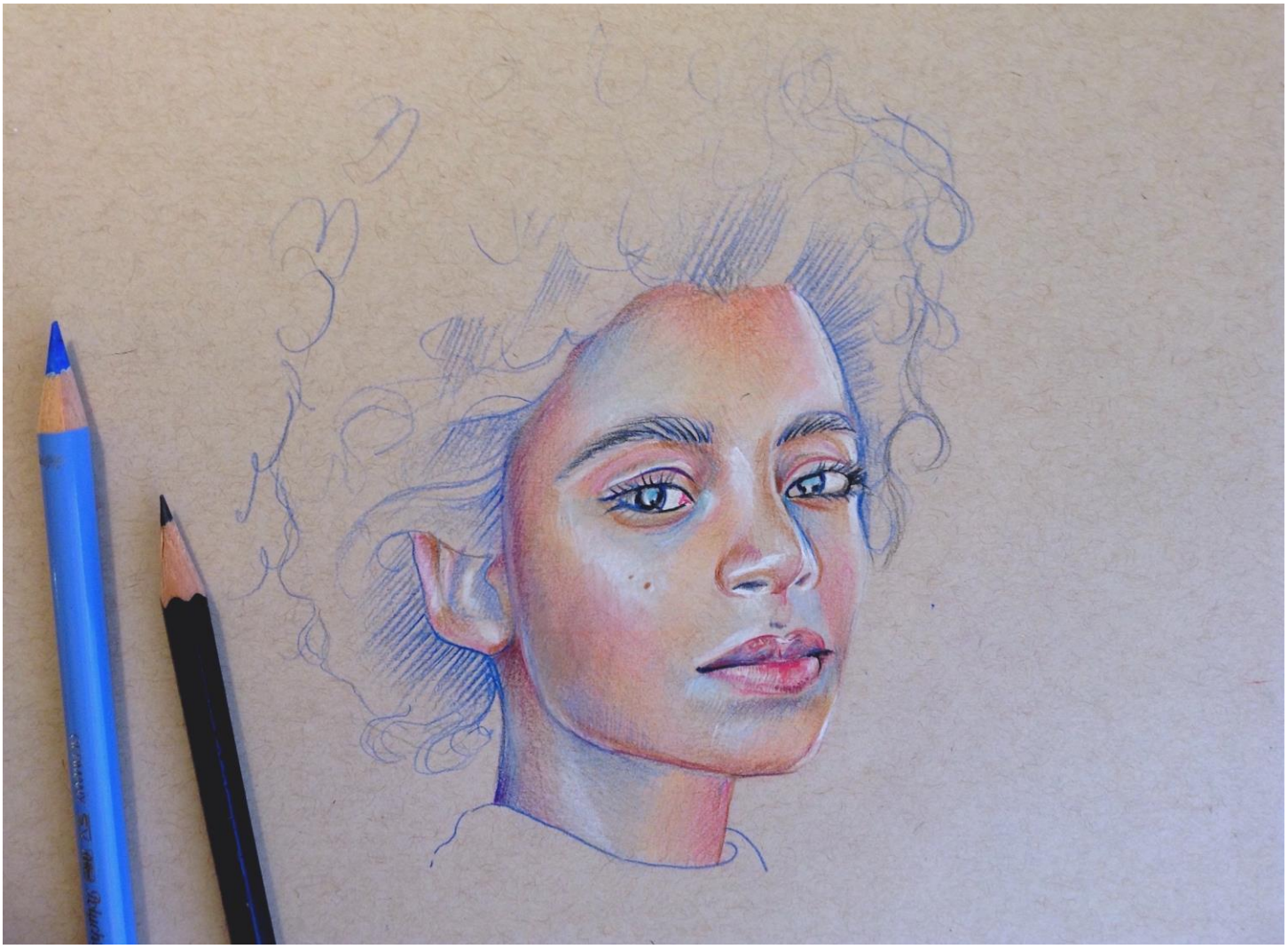


I like getting lip and eye details done early – My trick for natural looking lips is to never shade them in an entirely a different colour to the rest of the face, rather try to blend in your tones. I darken the corners of the mouth, and blend in the colours gently from there. In this instance I picked a fairly vibrant red/pink to shade in the lip creases. (Note I have already shaded the eyes with a single blue shade.)
With a black pencil, and if you want a bolder look early on, black ink, darken the eyes, concentrating the media to under the eyelid.
To accentuate the pensive look, I sometimes dismiss pupils altogether. I love how this infers a sharp reflection in the eyes, in contrast to the softness of the rest of the face.





We're ready to fill in the skin tone for the rest of the face. This part is more time consuming, and perhaps tricker to follow along, so allow yourself to watch the video more slowly, or even frame by frame.
I prefer to alternate between the hues I selected early on for the skin tone – a range of burgundies/reds, neutral pinks, and blues, and continually rotate them until the final skin render is achieved. This can take many thin layers of colour.
Whenever I lay down pencil, I try to 'balance' it elsewhere around the face before moving to the next colour. For instance, the pink pencil in the image below was added to the neck, chin, cheek, and nose. The same blue is used for hair, eyebrows, corners of the mouth, eyes, and shadows around nose and hairline.

When you are feeling happy with the look of your skin tone, it's time to deepen the shadows and darker details around the face. Instead of opting for black, I take a sharpened deep blue for this, and work over the central facial details (without neglecting some extra detail in the hair, to balance composition).

Finally, it's likely that after all this layering, your highlights have become a little subdued. Take a white soft pastel and work it back over those areas, before sealing with a matte fixative. Clean up any further details you like, but at this point, we are done!