

## STILL LIFE IN CHALK PASTELS

### STEP 1: A PRELIMINARY LINE DRAWING

**TECHNIQUE:** Using chalk pastels begins with a line drawing to establish the basic shapes of the group and some of the reflected details on the objects.

**NOTE:** When you are working with chalk pastels it is not good practice to start your drawing using a black pastel or charcoal pencil as it will contaminate the purity and freshness of any colors applied over it. In this case the initial sketch was done sketching very lightly with a violet pencil.



### STEP 2: ESTABLISHING THE DARK TONES

**TECHNIQUE:** The next step in creating our still life in pastels was to focus purely on the dark tones, with a view to rendering the form of the objects, before applying color in the later stages of the work. A violet pastel was used to establish the areas of dark tone which were then smudged and blended using a blending stick.



**NOTE:** Be careful not to overwork the dark tones as it is easier to darken pastels than it is to lighten them. Make sure you leave an adequate amount of unshaded paper to accommodate the lighter tones and colors. If you apply the dark tones too heavily at the start of a work you will have difficulty in keeping the lighter colors bright as the darker tones will persist when you blend them together.

### STEP 3: INTENSIFYING THE DARK TONES

**TECHNIQUE:** A burnt umber (very dark brown) pastel was used to intensify the darkest sections of tone. Adding this deeper level of tone will enhance the form of the objects and increase the impact of the still life.

**NOTE:** Once you establish the general areas of dark tone, it is necessary to look more closely at the objects to find the darkest sections that lie within their areas of shading.



## Chalk Pastels

① I can create the illusion of depth using various values

Art Goals Critiques

### Chalk Pastel Still Life:

- Zoom in on one part of the still life display and take a picture
- It must include 5 or 7 objects (they can be partially shown)
- Sketch it out first
- Use your pre-drawing as a guide when are sketching out your final drawing
- Refer to the technique papers on your step by step when using pastels
- Make sure you have clean hands – at all times, and don't drag them along your paper
- Make sure to have high lights, low lights, and shadows
- It must use multiple colors that are layered
- Do not make it too dark
- Sign your name at the bottom when you are done
- Make sure to have it sprayed with a fixative by Ms. Swenson when you are done
- Don't put anything on top of it until it is sprayed (it will smudge it)

Take a picture  
tially shown)

etching out your final drawing  
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## HENRI MATISSE (1869-1954)

- Henri Matisse was one of the great masters of 20th century art.
- Matisse was one of the founding leaders of 'Les Fauves'.
- Matisse simplified his drawing and exaggerated his colour for expressive effect.
- Matisse believed that colour had a therapeutic power. It is said that he arranged his artworks around the bed of a sick friend so that he could benefit from their healing glow.
- Matisse ignored the great social and historical events of the 20th century as suitable subjects for his art. Instead he explained his preference, 'What I dream of is an art of balance, of purity and serenity devoid of troubling or depressing subject matter.'
- Matisse said that he wanted his art to have the same effect as a comfortable armchair on a tired businessman.
- In later years Matisse was confined to a wheelchair and could no longer paint. Instead he would draw directly in colour by cutting into large sheets of colored paper which would then be collaged onto canvas. He said that, 'Cutting into color reminds me of the sculptor's direct carving.'



## WILLEM KALF (1622-1693)

- Willem Kalf was born in Rotterdam, worked for a while in Paris, before he finally settled in Amsterdam.
- Kalf was one of the great Dutch masters of still life painting.
- The type of still life that Kalf painted was called 'pronkstilleven'. These were lavish displays of exotic food and objects associated with an affluent lifestyle.
- His clients were the prosperous merchants of the day who had made their fortunes on the Dutch trade routes.
- His still lifes depict objects that are rendered in great detail and which luminously glow out of dark backgrounds.
- The same objects often appear in different still lifes. As Kalf was also an art dealer, he probably had easy access to these expensive artefacts.
- Willem Kalf's still lifes have become much more valuable than the precious objects they portray. The poet Goethe stated, 'If I had to choose between the golden vessels or the picture, I would choose the picture.'



## GIORGIO MORANDI (1890-1964)

- Giorgio Morandi was nicknamed 'il monaco' (the monk) due to his reclusive lifestyle.
- Morandi is the greatest Italian still life painter in the 20th century.
- Still life painting is called 'Natura Morta' in Italy.
- Morandi's still lifes have many influences spanning seven centuries from the early Renaissance to the 20th century.
- Morandi's still life arrangements have a monumental quality.
- Morandi contemplates his still lifes for a long time before he paints them.
- Morandi tries to communicate a sense of tranquility in his art.
- You have to slow down to look at and appreciate the beauty of one of Morandi's paintings.
- They are simplistic but yet very detailed at the same time. Morandi really takes his time to get the placement and the shapes of his objects just right before he starts.



Pick 1 Artist and  
write 1 sentence  
about why this  
art form interests  
you

## JUAN GRIS (1887-1927)

- Juan Gris was born in Madrid and his real name was José Victoriano González-Pérez.
- Gris studied engineering drawing before he became an artist.
- He was a friend and neighbour of Picasso in Paris.
- After Picasso and Braque, Juan Gris is thought of as the third Cubist but he was the artist who was the most consistently dedicated to the style.
- Gris painted mostly still lifes in a synthetic cubist style often using bold colours and collage techniques.
- Although his paintings may appear quite methodical in their design he was quoted as saying, 'I prefer the emotion that corrects the rule', which suggests his instinct and not his intellect was the controlling factor in his art.
- Gris also created sculptures and worked on set designs for Diaghilev's ballets.
- Juan Gris died at the young age of 39.

