

# Techniques for Drawing on Toned Paper

By Scott Burdick



This is my studio setup with the photograph I'm going to draw. I took the photo at a market in Tanzania, Africa. Then I converted it to a black-and-white in Photoshop to keep all the bright colors from distracting me while drawing.

My MacBook Pro laptop is plugged into a computer screen I've mounted next to my easel. The nice thing about this is that the screen can swivel horizontally or vertically, depending on what I'm working on.

For this drawing I've selected the tan Strathmore® 400 Series Toned Sketch paper that features one of my drawings on the cover. I really enjoy drawing on toned paper since I can let much of the paper show through and simply add a few accents of white chalk for highlights.



*Finished drawing on Strathmore 400 Series Toned Sketch.*





I tend to start with the nose when doing a profile, since it gives me a lot of good landmarks to measure from for other features. When doing a straight-on portrait, I usually begin with the eyes.

But whatever your starting point, the main thing is to constantly check your horizontal and vertical plumb lines to see that everything lines up properly with the marks you've previously put down.

At this point, I just map out the proportions correctly and do not put much thought into modeling or shading.

I really like the sweep of the design from the woman's face, down the front of her cloak to the chicken she's holding. With that as my focus, I plan to leave a lot out that would take away from this area of interest.

I often find that the most important part of a drawing or painting is what you decide to leave out and how you simplify what you render.

Once I map out the proportions, I start blocking in some of the large dark shapes of the face. Notice that I treat the entire eye-socket as a single, dark shape. Always start with large, simple masses of dark and light, and then go into the details on top of that.

The natural tendency is to start with shadows, look for anatomy and over-model. There is nothing that will destroy the illusion of form more than lightening up your darks by staring into them.







As you approach each area, continuously compare it to the lightest lights and darkest darks of the subject and ask yourself where it falls in relation to those extremes. It is very difficult to identify a particular value in isolation. Always compare it!

I love the patterns on the woman's scarf and clothing. However, there is a danger of getting too detailed and losing the larger forms so I try to simplify these with as few strokes as possible.

Notice how nicely the white chalk can be used to define a few of the light areas. Use your white chalk sparingly, because if it starts to bleed too much into the charcoal you will get a muddiness that you might not want.







And then the chicken. No trick to drawing a chicken. Just think of it as abstract lines and shapes like anything else. In fact, whatever you are drawing should be thought of in these terms. You are not drawing a nose or lips or a tree, but only the light and dark shapes and patterns that make up this object. The longer I paint, the more I embrace this lesson.

This is a relatively quick drawing that took me about three hours total. You can see in the final drawing how I only include the parts that interest me and help create a strong design. If I render her entire figure and everything in the background, it will have a lot less impact, in my opinion. There are a hundred other ways one could have designed this, so always put some thought into your drawing before you start. Don't just start drawing and slavishly copy whatever is in the photograph. You are an artist, not a camera!





## About the Artist



Scott Burdick was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1967 where his mother and father encouraged his interest in Art early on. “I spent a lot of time in hospitals as a child and remember my mother showing me how to transform simple shapes like circles, triangles, and squares into objects like planes, helicopters, and fish. It seemed such a magical thing and made spending so much time in casts and on crutches much more bearable,” says Scott.

In high school, Scott began taking life-drawing classes at the American Academy of Art under the legendary Bill Parks. “Though I’d always loved drawing, it was Mr. Parks who filled me with the enthusiasm and discipline necessary to improve my skills. His love of painting and creative expression infected us all,” explains Scott. After finishing the Academy, Scott continued his study informally with Richard Schmid at the Palette and Chisel Art Club, where he met his wife to be, painter Susan Lyon. “It’s a wonderful thing to be able to paint together all the time and grow as artists together,” Scott says.

His ideas for paintings come from everywhere. “What makes a subject attractive to me are the same things that attract us all. The beauty of a young girl, the character of a weathered face, the solitude of a farm at sunset, or even the story itself behind someone or something that makes it interesting.” Scott believes it is the job of the artist to recognize this when it happens, analyze why, and use his technical skills to convey the feeling to someone else. He notes that some paintings are as simple as stopping at the sight of something interesting, while others may take more time to research than to actually paint.

Today, Scott and Susan live in a rural area of North Carolina. Surrounded by forests and the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, their house is a perfect resting place after the many trips they take throughout the world in search of subject matter to paint.

Scott has self-produced online educational videos through his website and DVDs published through Lilidahl publications.

To find out more about Scott Burdick, please visit [www.ScottBurdick.com](http://www.ScottBurdick.com)

## Strathmore® 2013 ONLINE WORKSHOP SERIES

**Registration is open! Workshops are FREE!  
Series starts March 1.**

Learn techniques from experienced artists through online videos and downloadable instructions.

Get inspired by other students in our virtual classroom. Keep motivated with ideas and tips from your instructors.

Our online workshops are free and self-paced. Workshops are held in our virtual classroom website. Each workshop consists of four video lessons and supporting downloadable instructions. Students can participate in conversations on our discussion boards or share work in the classroom photo gallery.

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### Workshop Schedule

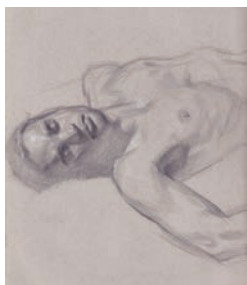


#### Workshop 1. Abstract Fine Art Painting with Mixed Media

Instructor: Robert Joyner  
Start date: March 1, 2013

This course is designed to give artists of all levels the confidence and tools necessary to paint expressively on Strathmore® 500 Series

Mixed Media paper. Learn valuable painting techniques that can easily be applied to any type of painting surface and subject matter.



#### Workshop 2. Sketching and Drawing with Toned Paper

Instructor: Stephen Cefalo  
Start date: May 1, 2013

Toned paper with black and white pencil brings a whole new dimension to drawing. Since the middle tones are already in Strathmore 400

Series Toned Sketch paper, it is possible to work in both light and dark tones, creating an instant sense of relief from the page. Integrating white pencil with black can be scary, but knowing the pitfalls to avoid can make it easier. With shared photo sources provided by the instructor, this class will lead students through essential toned paper techniques from the quick sketch to a fully realized drawing. Tonal drawings make excellent studies for paintings or stand alone as beautiful pieces. Practice these concepts in your toned paper sketchbook and you'll soon be ready to take on any subject with confidence!

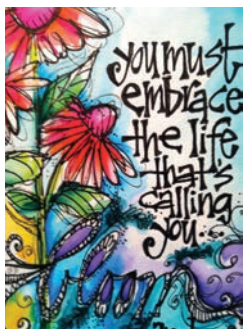


#### Workshop 3. Artful Card-Making Techniques

Instructors: Jane LaFazio and Joanne Sharpe  
Start date: September 3, 2013

A blank card is much like a blank canvas. Unlimited potential! Jane will guide you in sketching and watercoloring

an original card in a step-by-step, clear, easy method using Strathmore blank cards. She'll also show you how to artfully collage cards, with paper, fabric, glue and with stitching for all kinds of occasions. This workshop will inspire you to create original cards that will be cherished by those who receive them.



Joanne Sharpe will share her popular artful lettering techniques and color rich design ideas to make a collection of whimsical cards. Explore a variety of playful hand lettering styles and simple illustrations to showcase greeting card sentiments and messages.

Combine assorted mixed media techniques with creative lettering tools to adorn your mini masterpieces.

**Register for free workshops today at:**  
**[www.strathmoreartist.com/workshop-reg](http://www.strathmoreartist.com/workshop-reg)**



## Featured Product

# NEW! Greeting Cards

Two new ways to create and send unique, hand decorated greetings!

## Mixed Media Cards

Our 400 Series Mixed Media paper is now available in blank cards.

Choose from three sizes: announcement, full size and new, on-trend slim. These heavy weight 140 lb. cards offer the attributes of a watercolor paper but with a vellum drawing finish. They are ideal for watercolor, gouache, acrylic, graphite, pen and ink, colored pencil, marker and collage.



Card by Lesley Riley



Classic Emboss detail



Photo by Michael Cheang



## Photo Mount Cards - Classic Emboss

We've added a new Classic Embossed design to our Photo Mount Cards.

Full size cards are available in 10, 50 and 100 count packages. These 80 lb. cover weight cards are ideal for mounting photos or artwork. Double-stick tabs are included to mount up to a 4" x 6" picture.

To learn about our new Greeting Cards, visit: [www.strathmoreartist.com](http://www.strathmoreartist.com)

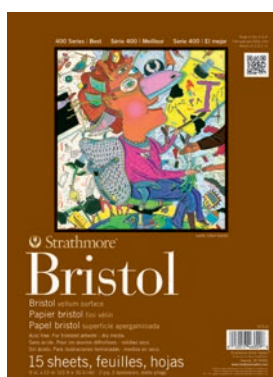
## Questions From Our Website

### Your 400 and 500 Series Bristol is measured by plies. What is the weight of the paper? How do I compare it to other papers?

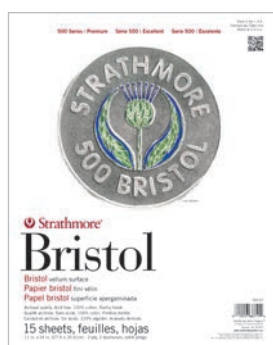
The difference in pasted vs. single-ply sheets makes it difficult to make “apples-to-apples comparison” in terms of paper weight. Multi-ply papers have increased dimensional stability (resist warping) compared to single-ply papers. Multiple plies of paper are pasted together, providing more stability than similar and even many heavier-weight papers constructed of single plies.

Another factor that makes it difficult to compare papers based on U.S. paper weights (lbs.) is that different paper types are calculated using different basis weight standards. The “basis weight” measurement is based upon weighing 500 sheets at the basis size for that type of paper. The basis size varies by type of paper. For example, watercolor paper weight is based on a 22" x 30" size sheet. Drawing paper is based on a 24" x 36" size sheet. There is a way to compare apples to apples. If you look at the metric measure-

ments of g/m<sup>2</sup> (grams per square meter), you can directly compare paper weights regardless of the paper type.



400 Series Bristol Vellum



500 Series Bristol Vellum

So, let's take a look at our 400 and 500 Series Bristol from a cover weight basis (20" x 26"):

#### 400 Bristol, 2-ply

Weight (lbs.): 88 lb. (“cover” basis weight)

Weight (g/m<sup>2</sup>): 238 g/m<sup>2</sup>

#### 500 Bristol, 2-ply

Weight (lbs.): 92 lb. (“cover” basis weight)

Weight (g/m<sup>2</sup>): 250 g/m<sup>2</sup>

*Note:* For comparison, 80 lb. drawing is 130 g/m<sup>2</sup> and 140 lb. watercolor is 300 g/m<sup>2</sup>. Our 2-ply Bristol is almost twice as heavy as a drawing sheet and slightly less than a standard watercolor sheet.

### What does the term “vellum” mean? Is it a type of paper?

Vellum is used to describe a paper finish and a paper type, which can be confusing. Our Bristol and Mixed

Media papers feature a vellum finish. When you look straight on, a vellum finish might look a bit smooth but at an angle, you will see subtle, roughness or tooth that helps “grab” dry media.

You might also hear the term vellum to describe a paper such as “translucent vellum.” In this context, vellum comes



300 Series Mixed Media

from a French term which refers to a parchment made from calf skin. However, today's vellum papers are technically not true parchment papers. Instead they are constructed of wood or cotton fibers and are typically translucent or semi-translucent to resemble traditional vellum parchment.