



## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE



### 500 Series Charcoal Paper

Trusted by charcoal and pastel  
artists for over 115 years.  
-more-



### 2022 Online Workshops!

See the lineup for this year  
-more-



### New Artist Spotlight

Mixed Media and Watercolor  
by Laura Wellnitz  
-more-



### How Is That Brush Made?

See it all in these videos  
from Princeton Brush  
-more-

## MAIN FEATURE

### Play Like Yourself

By Riad



“  
*Sometimes you have to play a long  
time to be able to play like yourself.*  
-Miles Davis

”  
So true, Mr. Davis. I feel like I still have a long  
way to go to be able to draw and paint like  
myself. This is true for many professional

artists. Student artists find an established  
artist that they admire and latch onto their  
style, almost stroke for stroke, without  
knowing why they are doing what they do.

Many moons ago, I studied watercolor  
painting in Spain under master watercolor  
artist Alvaro Castagnet. The technical  
foundation he laid bare was of little  
importance because the heart of his lessons



was to paint with passion - in other words, "play like yourself." We tried. We failed. There we were, 25 students trying to paint like Alvaro. Stroke for stroke. But there is only one Alvaro, as there is only one you and only one me.

I cannot teach someone how to draw or paint. Yes, there are fundamentals that artists must learn but that is information you can get anywhere online or at your local art academy. The best I can do is take the viewer on a creative tour

*“Be honest with yourself and why you want to create. Strive for authenticity, not perfection.”*



personal achievement. Creating should always be purely out of the love of what we do. Discipline, perseverance, and dedication are the pillars that will hold up our work, not likes or re-shares on social media. There is pressure right now to "create for fame" on social media. Becoming TikTok famous will not make you a better artist. If that is your end goal, then that will come with a great deal of disappointment, as social fame is fickle.

Be honest with yourself and why you want to create. Strive for authenticity, not perfection.

of my thought process as I develop an illustration. It is my own process, right or wrong. Yet, in reality, there is truly no wrong way of creating, as there is no wrong way in interpreting the creation.

### MY TWO CENTS

#### **Rule number 1: THERE ARE NO RULES**

It is all subjective. Walk through any gallery on earth and you will find hundreds of different styles, pleasing to some and offensive to others. What we create is not based on the types of pencils, pens, brushes or paints we use or any secret formula that must be adhered to in order to achieve success. I define success as completion and

### MATERIALS

The video demo that I will give insight to is found [HERE](#). This charcoal piece was illustrated on **Strathmore 300 Series Bristol smooth surface paper**. I use Strathmore Charcoal paper pads as well but most of the time, I will get more use out of a blending stump on a smoother surface than a textured one. I will also be using a kneaded eraser, blending stump, and white and black charcoal pencils.

### SUBJECT

What I choose to draw or paint on any given day is based solely on what I am feeling or what is inspiring me at that moment. My



wife, a song I heard, a quote from someone I admire, a sci-fi movie or spending time at a farm up north - inspiration is endless and is everywhere.

### PROCESS

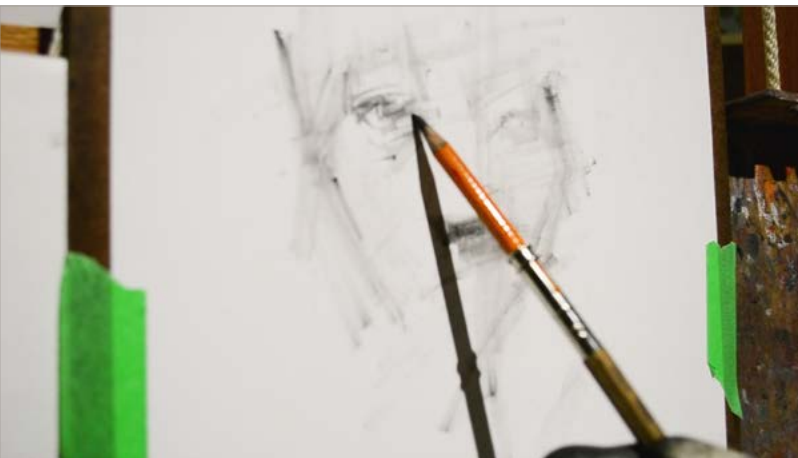
Starting my day with a warm-up sketch has been part of my daily routine for many years. Sometimes the sketch will serve the purpose of getting an idea down for a painting and other times, it is to loosen up my arm and focus my vision, like stretching before a morning run.

My beginning process for paintings vary wildly but illustrations like this demo generally start off the same, using a blending stump and loose charcoal

from a jar to roughly block in the larger structures of the face.

If I am working on a commission or a personal piece and I need to get the proportions and likeness precise, I will use the sight-size method. For demos like this, it is entirely freestyle. I may have seen an interesting light cascade down a woman's face and will use that lighting as a reference, making up the rest as I go along.

I continue working with the stump and a kneaded eraser until I am satisfied that everything is relatively proportioned. The stump strokes are free-flowing and not constrained to the actual form of the face.





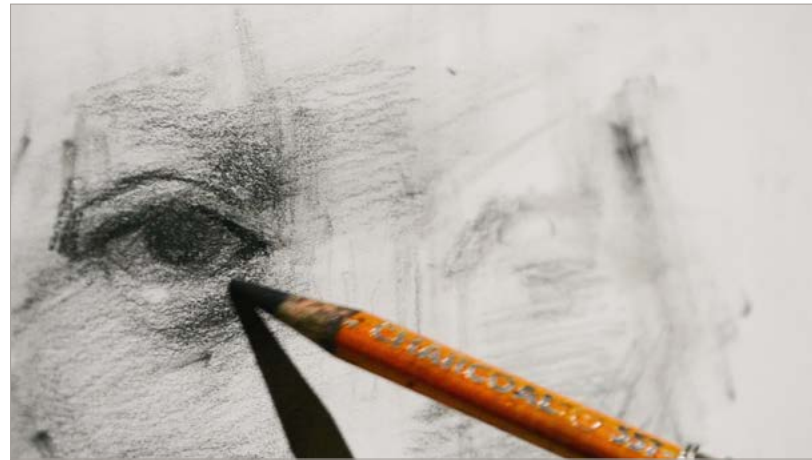


The kneaded eraser is an important tool in the initial stages to correct mistakes and also deeper into the process to bring out highlights or reduce values.

Once satisfied with the stump stage, I will bring out the darkest charcoal pencil I can

hyper-realistic, proper values will create the illusion of what we see around us.

When working with charcoal in this loose style, I leave myself plenty of room for improvising and imagination. I may leave off an entire area or work diligently on another.



get and begin grinding away at some of the details in my focal area, but more importantly, I am plotting the values.

Regardless of the medium I am using, the importance of laying in the darkest darks and the lightest lights to have the proper value reading cannot be understated. Values are king. It does not matter if the work is in black and white or color, impressionistic or

*“...the importance of laying in the darkest darks and the lightest lights to have the proper value reading cannot be understated.”*

When inspiration conspires with imagination, you need to know how to respond and adapt. In this case, the details of the left eye became my focal point and I decided to merely hint at the right eye. This skill of adaptation evolves from volume.

The more we create, the more mistakes and discoveries we make, lessons we learn, and we improve, learning along the way how we want to express ourselves in a unique manner.

I move onto the details of the nose. There is something beautiful about turning the form on the cartilages of the nose. Most

look marvelous but if you are drawing from imagination, having a sturdy foundation will open up an endless stream of creative possibilities. Additionally, having a strong understanding of color theory and value scales are equally as essential. Only once you understand these foundations can you work towards dismantling them, if you so choose.



artists focus on the eyes but for me, a good nose rendering can say a lot about the skill of an artist.

It is critical to have a solid foundation of human anatomy, or in the case of portraits, facial anatomy. Illustrating without knowledge of what you are rendering is like coloring by numbers. The outcome can still

I will start to define the jawline and cheekbones, being aware of the form of the bones, the light source and making decisions along the way as to what to leave off and what to focus on.

Should I do fully rendered lips? Leave it abstract? What is the purpose of this drawing? Should I share it publicly? If so,



should I work on it a bit further? There are too many questions that occupy the brain in these later stages and answering them all can disrupt the flow of creativity.



Creativity is combative and contradictory - the harmony of warm and cool tones, loose and tight strokes, hard and soft edges, knowing when to work quickly and when to slow down. In an instant, without breaking that flow, we need to resolve these issues and find harmony in our work.

So now I enter into the final stage - finishing. When is artwork finished? That is the age-old question. That is where intuition kicks in. It is a feeling. If that is under-developed, you will be drawing or painting the same thing forever.

I now step back and take a look at the work, walk away, make a cup of tea, and come back half-hour later and look at it with fresh eyes, even trying to imagine what it looks like through someone else's eyes. How will it be perceived? I am hyper-critical of my work, always believing it could be better but knowing I need to stop at some point or I will drive myself crazy with self-doubt. I am endlessly looking for flaws and may erase and rework entire areas if it does not feel right. Satisfaction with your own work, regardless of who sees it, gives you the confidence to do it all again the next day.

To this end, I want to remind all artists to be critical of, yet confident, in your work. Do not beat yourself up over it. Frustration will happen. It is inevitable. We will have days where we do not want to pick up a brush or pencil. Days where we are uninspired, tired, bored and feel the work is redundant. That's ok. Be kind to yourself. At the end of the day, you are just trying to be the best you in expressing yourself.

Peace.

Riad (aka Gorilla Brigade)

See more of Riad's art here:

Website: [www.gorillabrigade.com](http://www.gorillabrigade.com)

Instagram: [@gorillabrigade](https://www.instagram.com/gorillabrigade)

You Tube: [thegorillabrigade](https://www.youtube.com/thegorillabrigade)

# 500 Series CHARCOAL



The staple for charcoal and pastel artists for over 115 years, this 100% cotton fiber paper has a traditional laid finish that provides precise shading control.

- Traditional laid finish
- 64lb. / 95 gsm
- 100% Cotton
- Acid Free

500 Series Charcoal paper is available in pads of all white, or 8 assorted tints. Colors include:



Bright White



White



Black



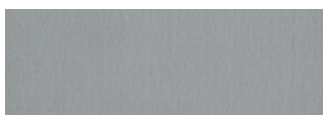
Desert Sand



Olive



Blue Gray



Smoke Gray



Charcoal Gray



# Strathmore® 2022 ONLINE WORKSHOP SERIES

## Join us for Strathmore's FREE 2022 Online Workshops!

Strathmore's Online Workshops feature free video lessons and downloadable instructions created by experienced artists. Follow along in the online

classroom as instructors guide you through various art topics. After a lesson is released, it remains on the site for viewing the rest of the year.

Share all the fun on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) using **#StrathmoreWorkshops**

Workshops start March 7 and continue through December 31, 2022

### WORKSHOP 1

Easy Breezy Beach Art with Acrylics

Instructor:

Ashley Krieger

Start Date: March 7, 2022



Acrylics are a remarkable permanent, rich, colorful, versatile, and adaptable medium that gives artists endless possibilities. No wonder they attract artists all over the world! These lessons will teach you how to get started with acrylics and take you on a journey to the ocean with them as we paint some simple beach art.

### WORKSHOP 2

Joyful Watercolor - Finding Your Style

Instructor:

Shayda Campbell

Start Date: May 2, 2022



Join Shayda Campbell in this joyful and inspirational series focused on both watercolor education and play. While filling the pages of a watercolor sketchbook with practice illustrations, floral compositions, watercolor techniques and finished pieces, Shayda will help you feel confident, calm and creative in your art-making journey.

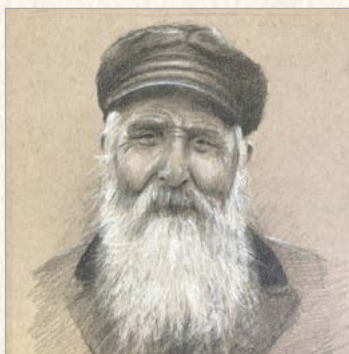
### WORKSHOP 3

Sketching & Drawing - The Foundation of All Art

Instructor:

Brandon Schaefer

Start Date: August 1, 2022



Discover the world of sketching and drawing; the foundation of creating any type of art. Together we will learn the fundamentals, which will help you grow in confidence while deepening your knowledge and understanding of sketching & drawing. You will learn about values, shading and how to create more realistic drawings.

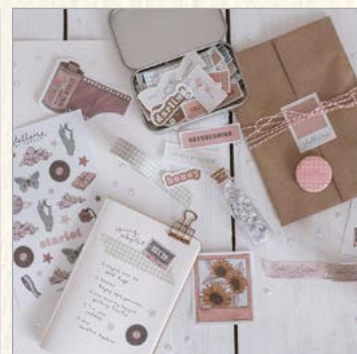
### WORKSHOP 4

Art Journaling 101

Instructor:

Jordan Clark

Start Date: Nov. 7, 2022



Learn the basics of art journaling to strengthen your ability as an artist. Use a variety of mediums to make beautiful illustrations, sketchbook pages, and postcards. Learn how a regular art practice will help you improve as a creator! You can take these techniques and ideas to incorporate into your own work and spark creativity when you're in need of inspiration.

LEARN MORE  
about Workshop 1

LEARN MORE  
about Workshop 2

LEARN MORE  
about Workshop 3

LEARN MORE  
about Workshop 4

Join us for our free workshops at: [strathmoreartist.com/artist-studio](https://strathmoreartist.com/artist-studio)



# NEW ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

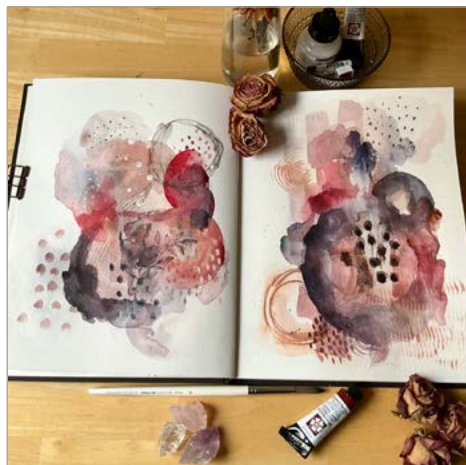
Welcome to "New Artist Spotlight". This feature provides us with an opportunity to share the work of promising, new artists who are just starting their careers. This edition we meet **Laura Hausen**, a mixed media and watercolor artist who used pandemic lockdowns as an opportunity to rediscover her creative side and start her own art business. Learn more about Laura in the bio and links below.

## LAURA HAUSEN

My name is Laura. I am a 35 year old mixed media and watercolor artist living in Landshut, Bavaria. I am a pharmacist who works at a small local pharmacy. Art has always been part of my life. I remember crafting with my grandmother when I was a child. We were making amazing things out of seemingly nothing! I guess it's her who gave me my creativity, thus I devoted my "business" to her. Wellnitz was her last name.

During my studies and the first years in my job I almost forgot about painting due to my workload. About three years ago I needed a change in my life, I wanted to have creativity back! So I reduced working hours to have more creative time.

I took out my old watercolors and started with some sketches. I was surprised how they turned out! I got more and more supplies, started with mixed media techniques, and took a lot of art classes.

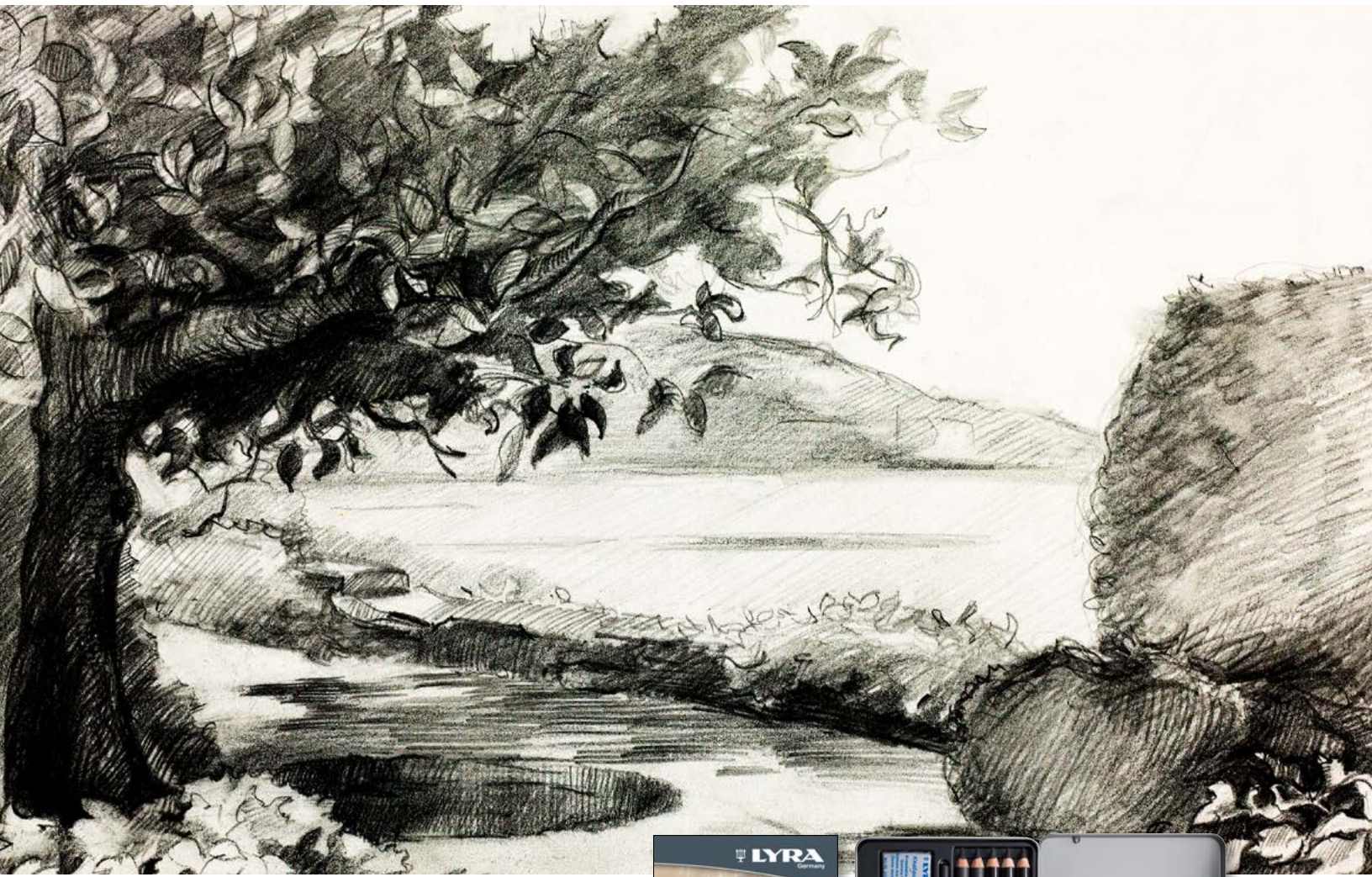


Then came the Pandemic. Painting became my secret place during the lockdowns here in Germany. I spent a lot of time painting and kept contact with artists worldwide via Instagram. My art desk became kind of a sanctuary. This was also the time I started taking my art seriously as a business.

My plans for this year are creating my own website to make my artwork more accessible as well as opening an online shop, and of course, making a lot more art!

See more of Laura's work here:  
Instagram: [@laura.wellnitz](https://www.instagram.com/laura.wellnitz)





# THE PERFECT BALANCE

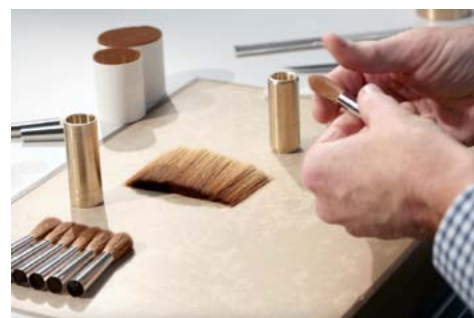


The Lyra Rembrandt Charcoal Set is an ideal assortment of high-quality charcoal pencils and sticks. An excellent balance of different grades of charcoal with soft, medium, and hard leads. Ideal for sketching, drawing, and monochrome sketches. Easy to blend and blur.

Each 11 piece set contains: natural charcoal, carbon 2B, carbon HB, charcoal 2B, charcoal HB, charcoal H, stick charcoal 2B 7x14 mm, stick carbon extra dark HB 7x7 mm, lead carbon extra dark 2B, kneadable eraser, paper wiper, and sharpener



# ART OF MAKING BRUSHES



A lot more goes into the creation of high quality paint brushes than you might realize. Brush making is an art in and of itself requiring the hand of skilled craftspeople. The Part 1 video shows how the bristles are measured, combed, tied, and inserted into the ferrule.

Part 2 shows several of the finishing processes including gluing the ferrule to the handle, crimping the ferrule, and stamping the handle.

Both videos are fascinating and strangely calming to watch.

See the Part 1 video [HERE](#)

See the Part 2 video [HERE](#)