The Port du Val Cliffs and Beach at Etretat

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STARTING WITH A SCANNED DRAWING

In the first part of this chapter, you'll learn how to scan a drawing that you can use as a basis for artwork in the computer. In the first technique, you'll rework a scanned drawing in Photoshop to resolve its composition, and then use the reworked sketch as the starting point for a loose, boldly colored study completed in Photoshop, reminiscent of the traditional technique of combining opaque watercolor (or gouache) and transparent watercolor with a drawing. For the second project, you'll start with another drawing and paint right over it using the Oil Pastel brushes in Painter and develop a painting with energetic brushwork and atmosphere. Following these two projects are helpful sidebars that demonstrate how to paint watercolor washes over a drawing.

For many years, I had dreamed of visiting the small town of Etretat on France's Normandy coast. Etretat, with its spectacular limestone cliffs, was a favorite painting location of many of my favorite master artists—Eugene Delacroix, Gustave Courbet, and Claude Monet, among others.

In 2000, my husband and I visited this scene at Etretat several times. I loved the towering limestone cliffs, the negative spaces around the arch and needle, and the way the light-colored cliffs picked up the light at different times of the day. I sat on the beach and drew on Vellum finish Bristol board and in my sketchbook using HB and 2B graphite pencils. The Bristol and sketchbook have subtle texture and are ideal surfaces for drawing with pencils. To record details and different moods, I drew several sketches. The drawings have now become the basis for a series of color paintings of the area. After scanning the drawings, I used a Wacom tablet and pen, and Painter and Photoshop to color the drawings and to create the paintings.

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Using Painter to Work Over a Pencil Drawing

Chunky Oil Pastel, 30 pixels, using various sizes and opacities

Variable Oil Pastel, 30 pixels, using various sizes and opacities

This scanned drawing of the Port du Val at Etretat has a broader view of the beach.

ARTIST'S MATERIALS

Tablet: Medium-soft pressure

Program: Painter

Paper: Basic Paper: a versatile, medium-grain texture

Paint: Mix color using the Mixer

Brushes:

• Chunky Oil Pastel: opacity and grain vary with pressure; also blends with underlying color based on pressure

• Variable Oil Pastel: opacity and grain vary with pressure; strokes also change subtly, depending on the bearing (direction) of the stylus

This technique was inspired by my traditional experience with conventional pastel and oil pastel. Here I've combined a scanned pencil drawing with digital oil pastels in Painter. I colored the scan with a dark sepia brown that blended with the color theme. After painting with the oil pastels, I composited the sketch with the image because it would contribute value and detail.

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1 **Drawing and scanning.** Draw a detailed sketch. (I drew the pencil sketch shown above on 9 x 12-inch vellum-finish bristol board.) Now scan your drawing into Photoshop. My settings were 300 pixels per inch, at actual size.* Then crop your scan and adjust its tonal range.*

Copying your sketch to a new layer. To put a copy of your sketch onto a layer for safekeeping, choose Select > All, hold down the Alt/Option key, and choose Select > Float. To rename your new layer, double-click the layer's name in the Layers palette, and enter a new name in the Layer Attributes dialog box.

The sketch colored with the Sepia Browns gradation

Adjusting the tones. You can use the Equalize feature in Painter to adjust the tonal range of your scan. To add more contrast to your sketch and reduce gray tones, choose Effects > Tonal Control > Equalize. When the Equalize dialog box appears, move the black point marker and the white point marker under the histogram closer together to reduce the gray tones. Move them right or left to affect the line thickness and quality. You can preview the adjustment in your image before you click OK to accept.

2 **Coloring and making a layer.** For this study, tint the sketch with a color that will complement the color palette you plan to use in your painting (I chose a warm sepia brown).*

Next, put a copy of the sketch onto a layer, leaving the original on the Canvas.* Reduce the Opacity of the layer to 20% using the Opacity slider on the Layers palette; and then

Automatic color mode conversion. Painter's native color mode is RGB. If you open a grayscale scan in Painter, the image will be converted automatically to RGB color.

temporarily turn its visibility off in the Layers palette, so you can see the pastel strokes more clearly as you begin to paint over the drawing.

Coloring with sepia. Open your scanned sketch in Painter. Click the Gradient Selector near the bottom of the Toolbox, and choose the Sepia Browns gradient from the list. With the selector still open, open the palette menu to the upper right of the gradient list, and choose Express in Image from the menu. Then click OK. The Sepia gradient will automatically be mapped to your image.

Using the Colors palette and Mixer (left), and trying out colors with the Chunky Oil Pastel over Basic Paper texture (right)

Blocking in the first light tones

3 **Mixing paint and trying out colors.** You can use the Mixer palette* to try out colors on-the-fly as you paint. The Mixer features an oily brush to apply color and a palette knife to blend paint.

In this technique, you'll use the texture-sensitive Oil Pastels that can blend and smear color, so it's a good idea to experiment with how these Oil Pastels will react with the texture on an image as you try out the colors. Open a new file (mine was 700 x 1000 pixels) and try out the Chunky Oil Pastel and Variable Oil Pastel variants of Oil Pastels using your stylus. Experiment with color until you settle on a color theme that you like, and your "palette" is complete. For this painting with soft, warm light, I chose a color theme of primarily pastel colors; a few brighter, more saturated colors; and a few grays and browns.

4 **Laying in paint over the sketch.** To begin painting, choose the Chunky Oil Pastel variant of Oil Pastels and block in color right over the top of the original sketch on the Canvas. (If I painted over an area completely and then needed to see it, I could always make the sketch layer visible, and turn up its opacity.) I recommend using light- and medium-toned colors with lower saturation for the underpainting. This will create a rich layering of color as you build up more Oil Pastel strokes over the underpainting.
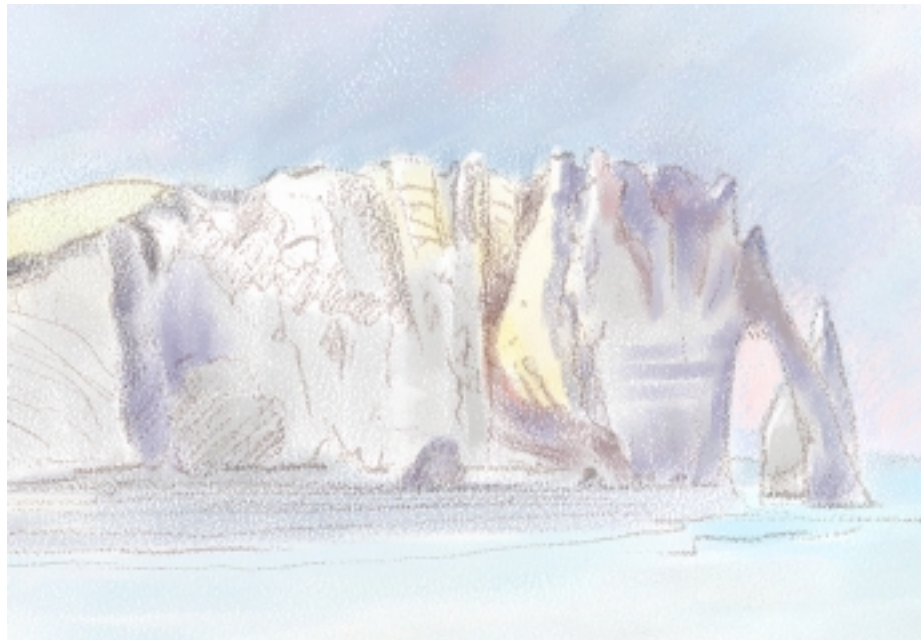
A sense of atmosphere. In this project, you will use an atmospheric technique that employs hatched strokes to build the volume of the land mass and to suggest the planes of rock. The layered brushwork will also create shimmering light on the beach and water. For variations on this technique, see Chapter 7, "A Sense of Atmosphere."

Chunky Oil Pastel strokes (left) and Variable Oil Pastel strokes (right)

Beginning to model the forms of the cliffs

5 **Understanding the brushes.** The Oil Pastels offer great expressiveness when combined with a tablet. Vary the pressure on the stylus, and these brushes vary the opacity and also reveal more or less grain. The Chunky Oil Pastel slightly smears new color into existing paint, and it has an uneven broken edge, just like a traditional, crumbled soft oil pastel. The Variable Oil Pastel allows a natural-feeling stroke that changes as you rotate your hand while painting, and it allows you to smear new color into existing paint more easily. Experiment with the brushes by making squiggly lines, while varying pressure. Notice how wonderfully the colors blend as you overlay the colored strokes.

6 **Sculpting the forms.** Look at your sketch, and plan how you'll sculpt the forms. The Variable Oil Pastel 30 has a rectangular tip that makes it ideal for blocking in the crevices and cracks near the top of the towering cliffs. Using the Variable Oil Pastel 30, paint the larger crevices. Begin at the top and pull a stroke down, while slightly rotating your wrist as you paint. You'll notice a wonderful variation in the density of the stroke. When you've painted the deeper, darker top crevices, switch to a smaller brush—the Variable Oil Pastel 20. To suggest the horizontal stratification on the cliff face, use lighter pressure.

Looking at my sketch and remembering the crevices and indentations in the cliff face, I began modeling the cliff by pulling medium-toned purple strokes vertically down the top crevices. The cliff also had intricate horizontal stratification, which I chose to simplify, by painting subtle horizontal strokes in just a few areas.

Painting vertical brushstrokes while rotating the stylus and varying the pressure

Defining the arch and needle

Adding brighter color to the horizon, and darker shadows to the arch and needle

7 Adding brighter color and deeper tones. Next, use both brushes as you add more color. Switch back and forth between the Chunky Oil Pastel 30 and the Variable Oil Pastel 30, as you continue to block in the planes on the cliffs. I added warmer colors to create an afternoon glow on the cliffs, and on the backlit arch in my painting.

Smearing and scumbling with Oil Pastels. When you apply a new color, the Variable Oil Pastel can smear the new color into the existing paint, which is helpful when building up layers of varied color. The pressure you apply affects smearing. If you apply heavy pressure, more new color is applied. If you use medium pressure and pull at the edge's existing color, you smear more color. The Chunky Oil Pastel smears more subtly. Both of these Oil Pastels paint a grainier stroke when you apply a light pressure, which is useful for scumbling new color over the top of existing pastel.

Blocking in a large shaded area on the cliff using a purple-gray

Using feathered strokes to suggest the planes on the cliffs and the motion of the water

Painting overlapping feathered strokes of blues, greens, and purples in light and mid-tone values on the water

8 **Feathering and sculpting with hatched strokes.**
Now that your painting is laid out, step back from the image to look at its overall composition. Do you need to add more detail or contrast in certain areas? Is there movement in the brushwork to help guide the viewer's eye around the composition?

To add movement and varied color while sculpting the forms of the cliffs, I overlaid cross-hatched strokes, using a conventional pastel technique known as feathering. I wanted to create motion in the water, rather than have it appear smooth. The water was moving up and down on the beach, so I lightly sketched in light aqua and blue horizontal strokes, varying the brush work using slight angles. I used the Variable Oil Pastel, and sized the brush smaller to lay feathered strokes over the top. By varying the pressure on my stylus, I was able to control the opacity of the brushstrokes. (This brushwork is shown in the illustration on the right.)

Painting the beach and water using feathered hatched strokes of varied colors, creating shimmering light and color on the beach and in the water

You can see the reflected light and the final linear details on the cliffs in this close-up view.

Using similar colors on the sunlit areas of the cliff and the beach helps to carry the effect of the soft afternoon light, as shown in this detail

9 Adding final details. It's good to make a proof print before completing your painting, so you can see where you want to paint final accents and details. My proof print showed me where to add darker tones; for instance, in the small cave, the lower crevices, and at the base of the arch.

Before beginning to paint your final details, add a new layer, and position it above the Canvas and below the sketch layer. Then, using a small Variable Oil Pastel, paint the details that your image needs.

I darkened the cave, the crevice, and also added definition to the outer edge of the arch. Using more saturated purples and oranges and golds, I used the Variable Oil Pastel 20 to add lively accents of varied color to the beach and water. The water was moving up and back, rising and falling on the gently curved beach. To emphasize the motion of the surges, I added short overlapping angled strokes. These layered strokes added more complexity, giving the water a more natural, shimmering look with broken color. This brush-work is shown in the upper-right illustration.

The angled, hatched strokes overlap, and are drawn using many directions. This helps to suggest the layers of limestone rock on the cliff. Layers of overlapping strokes also help to build the reflection. It is sketched right over the top of the moving water.

The grainy, scumbled texture on the sky lends to the atmospheric effect. Hatched strokes help to sculpt the rounded hills, and angled strokes add energy and character to the planes on the shady cliff face.

The overlapping strokes of purples, grays, and golds add interest and color activity to the beach. Thick and thin horizontal and angled strokes add motion to the waves, and squiggly lines suggest the rolling surf line.

Next, I used varied pressure to paint thin strokes of light orange and gold (using the Variable Oil Pastel 10) on the cliff face in areas where it was hit by the sun, and in areas where light reflected on the cliffs from the water. I also added loose overlapping angled strokes to the gently curved beach. Then I used a small Variable Oil Pastel to add gentle, curved strokes to suggest the rolling surf line, where the waves spilled onto the sand.

To carry the reflected light to the foreground, I recommend using similar colors to those you used to paint the brighter accents on the cliffs. Finally, add more texture to the sky by "scumbling" with very light blue pastel. Here's how: Choose the Chunky Oil Pastel, and a color that is different from the underlying color. Apply light pressure to your stylus as you paint new color just on the peaks of the paper texture, over the top of the existing color.

You can see the entire final image on page 88. In the next four pages, you'll learn about painting washes over a drawing. Then you can take a break, or move on to the next chapter.

The final image. To achieve a look of oil pastels with a complex texture, I needed only a few layers. The sketch layer contributes subtle line work to the composition, and sits at the top of the layer stack in the Layers palette, with its opacity set to 20%.