Mixing Mediums

Can you guess how many different art supplies were used to create this seahorse drawing?

This lesson will explore ways to combine various mediums in a drawing to create unique results.

For intermediate to advanced students.

Seahorse by Katie Oostman, Advanced Masterpiece Art Student

See if you guessed right...

The seahorse project above used the following mediums:

- Watercolor paints
- Black ink pen
- Colored pencils
- White pastel

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Can you tell where each medium was used?

Watercolor paints were used to create the background.

- The entire page was wet, and then drops of watercolor paints in harmonizing colors were added. These were allowed to bleed together.
- A large brush was used to gently blend them a bit.
- Finally, a crunched up paper towel was used to blot the entire page to even out the colors and create a subtle texture.

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Black Ink Pen was used to outline the seahorse drawing. • The seahorse was first drawn on another piece of paper and transferred to the dry watercolor page. • Then, the fine line black marker was used to outline the drawing.	
Colored Pencils were used for coloring in the shaded areas of the seahorse. • The same harmonizing color scheme that was used for the background was also used with the colored pencil step. • The colors, however, are deeper inside the seahorse.	
White Pastel was used for the finishing touches on this drawing. All areas not covered by the colored pencils were filled in with the white pastel. This makes the seahorse stand out from the background. *Note: White colored pencils will not cover sufficiently for this step.*	

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Here is another student's work, but done in a cool color scheme.

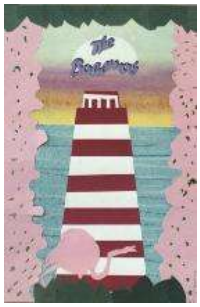
Seahorse by Jake Backes

As with all mixed medium projects, applying fixative can be a sticky issue. Although it appears to be needed to keep the pastel from smudging, it should be avoided since it will cause the watercolor paint to run.

Other multimedia projects from Masterpiece:

Mixed Pencils

Watercolor and gesso background



Pastels and cut paper

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