

Pastel Artists.Ca

PASTEL ARTISTS.CA

A COMMUNITY OF PASTEL ARTISTS

“Purely Pastel”

www.pastelartists.ca

August, September, October, 2015



Naniamo Bottling Ltd
By Marni Koelln



Roadside Attraction
By Sheila Mather
Grand Prize Winner
“Purely Pastel” 24th Annual Open Juried Exhibition 2015

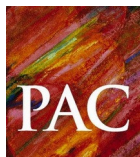


Mangoes Party
By Sofia Cristanti
9” x 12”



Painting Glass with Pastel

See **Trish Acres**, PAC, MPAC, step by step illustrations on how she painted this glass preserving jar on the back cover.



Pastel Artists.Ca

was founded in 1989. First known as Pastel Artists of Ontario, Canada, the name was changed in May of 2003 to Pastel Artists Canada. In August, 2007 it was incorporated under its present name, Pastel Artists.Ca., still expressed as Pastel Artists Canada.

Pastel Artists.Ca (PAC) is a mentoring organization and as such we encourage artists at any level to participate in our activities.

Learning and Fellowship Opportunities

If you are looking to improve your skills or knowledge of the pastel medium, PAC offers:

- workshops with well-known instructors
- local one or two-day member paint-ins/outs

Public Appreciation

PAC sponsors three shows a year:

- Members' Show - open to members at any level
- Annual Juried Show - entries are selected by a judge
- Online Members' Juried Exhibition

Recognition

PAC offers two levels of accomplishment:

- Signature status (PAC)
- Master status (MPAC)

Newsletter and Website

Our quarterly newsletter and our website offer:

Marketing Opportunities

- posting of your teaching workshops
- advertising solo shows
- noting acceptance into various exhibitions

Information Resources

- upcoming national and local events
- tips on painting and framing
- new products or marketing information

Affiliations

- Pastel Society of Eastern Canada (PSEC)
- International Association of Pastel Societies (IAPS)

Membership is based on the calendar year and renewal is due on January 1st. New members joining after September 1st will have the following calendar year included with the initial membership fee.

Annual Membership: Basic \$50 CAD/Premium \$80 CAD
Outside Canada: Basic \$60 US/Premium \$90 US

Annual membership fees can now be paid using PayPal.

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From
the
President's Easel

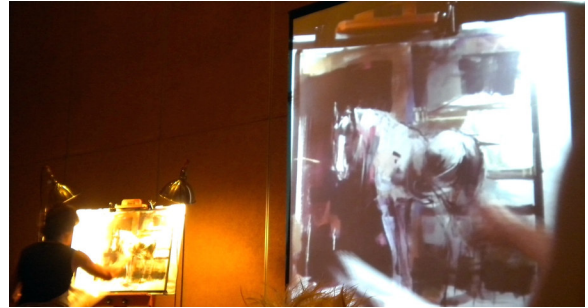
By Ruth Rodgers, PAC, MPAC

IAPS 2015 report

Thanks in part to PAC funding support, I again attended the IAPS (International Association of Pastel Societies) convention in Albuquerque on your behalf in early June this year. This biannual event is the highlight of most pastellists' professional development, and the 2015 experience again lived up to my expectations. For us as a member society, it's an opportunity to recruit new members, promote our society, and check out potential future workshop instructors, and I appreciate the opportunity to attend.

I volunteered to facilitate the Presidents' Forum again this year, and look forward to receiving the transcription of our very interactive session, during which the almost forty presidents/ reps in attendance generated answers to questions about how their societies handle signature status, engage senior/accomplished members, recruit new artists into active participation, and make use of online channels. My observation is that the PAC is a leader in the use of web channels to engage our members (a necessity given our geographic reality), and have one of the most well developed signature programs. I'm hoping to gather some new ideas about how to keep both accomplished and novice members fully engaged. Stay tuned!

In terms of demos, I attended one by Aaron Schuerr, whose work I have always admired in the Pastel Journal. While the work he produced was lovely, I would say that this young man requires more experience and seasoning in terms of teaching/explaining his process - we shall wait some time before considering him for a PAC workshop. Dawn Emerson, on the other hand, was a pure delight to watch as she literally DANCED her way through two wonderful paintings of abstracted horses. In fact, I couldn't resist purchasing her first demo! This artist is unique in her approach, fearless in her use of unusual materials (printer's ink splashed on with a 6" brush as an initial design, monoprints for her underpainting) and just plain good fun (ever paint to twangy country and western music?). She's one I'd love to have come teach our members!



For the first time in my IAPS experience, I opted to register for two hands-on workshops as well. My first was with Barbara Jaenicke, titled *The Poetry of Trees*. Barbara did a wonderful demo, and I enjoyed working on my own tree painting afterwards, but didn't feel I learned a lot that was new to me. A beginner would very much benefit from her patient and organized approach, however. In contrast, my workshop with Jeanne Rosier Smith on *Making Waves* infused me with excitement and inspiration!



I was thrilled to be able to follow her excellent demo with the creation of two wave paintings I'm very happy with. I haven't stopped painting waves since I got home - loving the chance to use those intense phthalo greens and blues!



continued.....

The trade show (or “the candy store” as it’s affectionately called) tempted me with its array of new and gorgeous pastel painting materials, but other than grabbing a couple of books (including Richard McKinley’s new collection) and a small box of Blue Earth pastels (which I’ve been eager to try), I limited my time there to choosing new DVDs for the PAC collection (they were on sale!!) - watch for 9 new titles available to you soon, including new ones by Liz Haywood-Sullivan and Alain Picard, and a few brand new artists (Mario Robinson, Luana Luconi Winner, and Ian Roberts) who I think you’ll really enjoy and find that you learn a great deal from.

On Friday evening, society members were encouraged to dress up in a manner representing their origins, and I’m pleased to say that the small but mighty group of Canadians was out in full red & white force. We literally waved our flags and let everyone know we were there!



l to r: Christine Obers, Pat Lindley, Fran Hutton, Kathy Hildebrandt, and Ruth Rodgers. We were joined later by Andrew McDermott, Roberta Combs, and Suzanne Godbout (PSEC).

The Saturday night banquet revealed just how many were attending the conference as we gathered in the great hall for a delicious dinner, a fascinating slide lecture by a museum archivist on the history of pastel in 17th c. France, and the honouring of this year’s IAPS award winners. We were delighted to be there to congratulate our own Roberta Combs as she celebrated her achievement of IAPS Master Circle status.



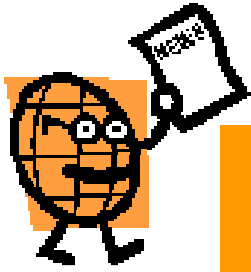
Congratulations Roberta

Finally, congratulations are also in order to PAC members whose works were displayed in the IAPS juried show at the conference. Along with Roberta, Trish Acres had a lovely still life, which was one of the few works that sold, and Kathy Hildebrandt had two works on show as well. Well done!



IAPS will be in Albuquerque again in 2017, and I urge you to make plans to attend - it’s always a great shot in the arm, fresh inspiration, good company, and lots of fun - not to mention a chance to stock up on pastel supplies at sale prices AND shop in nearby Albuquerque Old Town!

Hope to see you there!



Member News

Welcome New Members

Who have joined PAC since the last newsletter

Patricia Barbero, Calgary, AB
Lynn McCleary, St. Catharines, ON
Paige Axelrood, Vancouver, BC
Mary Conley, Victoria, BC
and Welcome Returning Member
Cheryl Roller, Richmond, BC

Congratulations **Marni Koelln**, Airdrie, AB.
Marni was awarded a second place ribbon in its class at the Calgary Stampede Arts and Crafts Show for her painting *Naniamo Bottling Ltd.* (See front Cover)

This Mini-Bio was sent by new member
Sofia Cristanti, Edmonton, Alberta

My origin is Indonesian. I have been living in Edmonton, since 2010. I have been working in art since 1998, when I finished my degree education in Fine Art major in Painting back in Indonesia. I have explored many kind of painting materials, such as pencil, charcoal, water color, pastels, acrylic, oil painting, and mix media. I then expanded my art medium to art installation, art performance, and video art.

However, I had to put a pause in my artistic career due to personal circumstances in 2007. I got chance to start my art again in Edmonton, I was honoured to be one of the recipients of Cultural Diversity Award (CDA) at the end of 2011. With the grant I be able to buy art materials and support, and can start over creating artworks. I start intensely painting on 2012 using oil pastel, the medium that simply can be used regarding to my workspace. In late 2014, I became interested in soft pastel; I like the intensity of the colours that contain very rich pigments, and it just dusty, not a problem at all! (See *Manggoes Party* front cover.)

PAC LENDING LIBRARY

Here we grow again with six new DVD titles added to the Lending Library

ALAIN PICARD - Landscapes in Pastel, Capturing Light & Color
Tips for capturing the light and form of the landscape through color and creating composition
ALAIN PICARD - Painting the Figure in Pastel
Tips for creating accurate proportions and achieving vibrant colors and values that capture the light
IAN ROBERTS - Design, Landscape Painting Techniques for Success
Create a 3D world on two dimensions and how to set the picture plane
LIZ HAYWOOD-SULLIVAN - Landscape Painting, Surface Color and Texture
Choosing the best surface and adjusting colors according to the color of the surface
MARIO A. ROBINSON - Portrait Painting, Pastel & Watercolor on Paper
Pastel techniques for crosshatching, shading etc. and watercolor techniques for washes
LUANA LUCONI WINNER - Pastel Portraits, the Easy Way
Learn the breakdown of each feature from different angles to capture realistic expressions

For a complete list and description of the 44 available DVDs and instructions on how to borrow them please visit our website at <http://pastelartists.ca/contents/dvd-lending-library>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at Jennifer@croftbeg.com

Jennifer Ross
DVD Librarian

Please Note:

In the spirit of fellowship between sister Societies, PAC and PSEC, members of each society are to be reminded that they may participate in fellow Society's juried shows, without membership adherence and at the same cost as the fellow Society's members .

***“Purely Pastel”* 24th Annual Open Juried Exhibition 2015**



I am delighted to report that our 2015 juried exhibition at Vancouver's Federation of Canadian Artists' Gallery on Granville Island in May was an enormous success, not only in the number of people who viewed it (259 guests through the doors for the opening reception and 1,256 total visitors for the duration of the exhibition!) and sales (8 sales), but overall in terms of finances.

In contrast to a trend in recent years of an overall loss for our juried show, this year saw a modest profit of just over \$200 into the PAC coffers after all the expenses, awards, and payouts to artists who made sales were calculated. This is an excellent result, and, frankly, a relief, given that we took a leap of faith in using an expensive venue for only half of our usual exhibition time (two weeks versus a month). As this was our first show in the west in many years, there were many unknowns, so we are happy that it turned out so well.

I am so pleased that it was such a great success, and want to thank the core team (Kathy Hildebrandt, Roberta Combs, and Christine Camilleri) as well as those who assisted in the hanging, marketing, and in other ways. It is due to your efforts that we were so successful!

Ruth Rodgers

See more of the exhibition on the PAC website.

Part III of III

The Accidental Artist in Margaret Ferraro Workshop &

appreciating the 8 months painting with pastels
By Patricia Lowe

A three day workshop in the beautiful setting of the McMichael Gallery in Kleinberg, Ontario with Margaret Ferraro was a wonderful way to say good bye to the summer 2014 and prepare for a busy September.

Viewing Margaret's blog I see she is technically savvy in this cyber world. She says her intent is "*Studying and illuminating the nature of human life is the central theme of*

her art making. Defining our commonalities, celebrating our spirit and passions is of particular interest to her. Whether this expression comes through the figure, landscape or imagery, the metaphor remains... Either way, her paintings are about shared experience and beauty."

For me this was a very productive and successful workshop, I think primarily because it was 3 days, which allowed me to warm up and slow down at the same time. I would add that Margaret was also a great teacher, like Casey Klahn and Ruth Rodgers, she is able to take a small group of painters, at various levels, and give each their own individual journeys. We had limited formal instruction and demonstrations and rather as a collective, we gathered around Margaret each day to listen to the writings of Robert Henri from his book, *The Art Spirit*, which takes a look at expression through brushstroke.

I felt extremely relaxed, not something I can do with any consistency in my everyday life, so enjoyed the process of my paintings. We got to take a kick at some plein-air painting and glimpses into the McMichael Gallery to break up the studio time. This I thought, for me anyway is a good way to bring in some structure and discipline as my inside voice said "I gotta get this done, we are going to the gallery in 20 minutes." We were asked to individually and collectively constructively critique the paintings of the Group of Seven. Now there is something you don't get to do every day. We came away understanding how posthumously, your worst painting could be priceless and offer nothing more than an example of how not to paint. We looked at their great, good and not so good works, garnering tremendous insight into better composition, value, emotion and the discipline required to ensure that less is more. So lesson learned, even your worst painting may have a purpose, besides being an under-painting in the future.

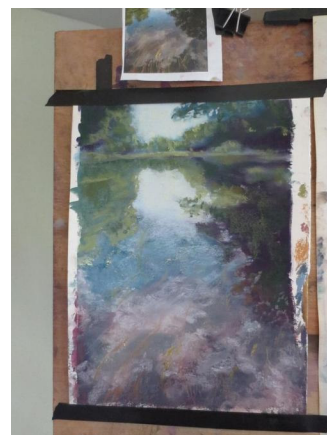
There were some learning outcomes from a technical perspective as well, which I refer to as soft and hard lessons. There is apparently more ways to skin a pastel as I picked up some nu-pastels, (yes, pretty hard), and put them to work as an under painting to conserve some tooth as I worked through my painting. That opened up a few new possibilities and calmed my tooth filling fears. The hard to soft lesson was that I could actually place layers of paper as a cushion between my medium and the board. Wow, it gave me great peace, that is no scratching and a different relationship vibration between my pastel and my fingers and hands.

One of the reasons I found the workshop so enjoyable, was that I was able to pick a selection of current images of places I had been and was drooling over all summer, but just did not get the time to paint. I was also catching up with some of my Accidental Artist experiences from the past 8 months where I could finally appreciate them and put them to work. Quite simply I felt like I was playing a little more than usual.



The best takeaway tool was putting some purpose into stepping away from a painting when it is about 90 percent complete. I now make a hand written list of what needs to

be done to complete it. Giving the painting 24 or 48 hours and distance between your eyes and the easel creates a calm and calculated process for adding the finishing touches, is extremely satisfying.



Fast forward, the Accidental Artist buys a small painting at the Sedona Plein-Air Festival in October. Size does matter when you travel and when you travel on a budget. You see I had taken a one-day plein-air (plain-air in American) oil painting workshop with artist Scott Gellatly, the product manager for Gamblin Artists Colours while I was in Arizona, and got the shock of my life. Oils ain't easy! The Sedona landscape is the colour of a Caribbean sunset 24/7, red, red and more red rocks. The wind can blow your palette and your unsecured painting off your lap and into the crushed leaves and dirt you are standing on.

After a rather large cold beer, the Accidental Artist and her husband reflected on the experience and agreed unanimously, let's just buy a painting instead. So we did and then proceeded to lose the nicely packaged painting that the artist Tracey Frugoli so carefully wrapped (it was still wet, as she just painted it the day before) at the Toronto International Airport as we moved and loaded our baggage at the parking garage. A frantic return to the airport and countless calls to the lost and found, resulted in a lot of disappointment and shoulda, coulda, woulda second guessing.

Well not to worry, a fellow traveler put everything back on track, by contacting the artist who then contacted me and through the wonders of email and a courier, the painting now hangs proudly in our home.

Lesson learned, **Keep Calm and Paint On**, the journey is the destination and the destination is the journey and the Accidental Artist will prevail.

Editor's Note: This is the last of the series on the Accidental Artist's 2014 adventures into painting with pastels.

SOME THOUGHTS ON COMPOSITION

By Fred Fielding, PAC, MPAC

Any piece of visual art has a composition made up of interacting parts as its basic skeleton. The success of a painting depends on how we design and place those parts and how well we flesh them out using value, contrast and color harmony to lead the eye through to the center of interest.

Way back in the 1990's, I dove into learning black and white photography, partly to avoid having to rely on my poor drawing skills. I found the composition and the camera did the work. To avoid wasting costly materials and spending time processing useless images, I learned to spend most of my time with my viewing filter exploring possible images from all angles, zooming in and out, really contemplating the shapes, values and areas of contrast. I also developed the ability to pre-visualize a finished print, knowing how it could be manipulated in the darkroom to make it more exciting.

Fast forward to two thousand something when, starved for colour, I decided I wanted to paint again and I found that the compositional skills that I developed during my journey in photography served me just as well in my quest for pleasing pastel paintings. I would encourage anyone who is struggling with the process of composing to buy a viewing filter and try it out, I think you will find that it really helps you to narrow the possibilities and see the potential of a prospective painting.

This Viewfinder from **Picture Perfect**, gives you three formats in both clear and red filter which allows the user to evaluate value without the distractions of colour.



Getting back to composition, earlier in my learning process I did not pay much attention to composition as it seemed to have too many rules and every teacher seemed to have a different grasp of the concept. Eventually, certain things were repeated enough times that they began to stick with me

The rule of thirds.

This is one of the first things taught to us as beginners. Draw a tic-tac-toe grid on your paper and make sure you do not put anything important in the middle square. This is generally good advice as placing the center of interest in the middle of the painting keeps the eye from exploring the rest of the picture.

Odd is good.

The shapes or masses that make up a painting are more pleasing to the eye in odd numbers. If you look at some paintings that you admire, you will see that many groupings of shapes are 1,3,5,7 etc.

Interaction of positive and negative space.

The negative space between the major masses is very important and it should be varied. If you have some groups of trees against the sky, focus on the shape of the sky between and around the trees. Be sure it is uneven. Get in the habit of carving out your tree shapes with your sky colour, this will make you more aware of that negative space.

Balance.

Visual balance depends on the amount of attention any area of the picture commands. A large mass in the foreground may be balanced by 3 smaller masses toward the back.

Flow and movement.

Movement is created by the elements of the composition that lead the eye through the painting. Since we read from left to right, top to bottom, we tend to scan images the same way. Because of this, it is especially important not to place something of importance in the lower right corner as it will lead the eye out of the painting. The same is true for the other three corners as well. Notice many water scenes lead in from the lower right area. Diagonals tend to be a little more pleasing moving downward from left to right. If you place a diagonal mass it is wise to have something moving from front to back and intersecting it.

Putting it all together

On the next page is a recent painting of mine from a reference photo taken at a nature preserve near my house.

The only major compositional change was to move the left side grasses diagonally out of the frame so I could make the shadowed water a larger mass.

The rule of thirds.

To my eye, the center of interest is the tension created between the foreground grasses and the closest shrub above it, and possibly the reflected trees in the water.

Positive and negative space.

The background reeds and trees between the 3 shrub masses. The odd number of shrubs recede back to intersect with the horizontal reeds in the background. I feel like the three shrubs also balance the one large mass that is the foreground grasses and the reflected trees.

And finally, the shadow of the grasses in the foreground water leads the viewer into the painting, in an "S" shaped manner towards the center of interest.



To be honest, I did not really notice most of these things until after I researched and wrote this article, it was just a scene that was pleasing to my eye and had lots of potential, however I am sure finding these is much more second nature after all that time spent with the viewfinder.

Seek Strong Abstract Shapes

Borrowed from *Mastering Composition* by Ian Roberts

If you look at the work of the best early black-and-white photographers you'll see that they really understood the value of strong abstract shapes. It was all they had to work with. They also had to make decisions before taking their photos since there was only so much they could do in the darkroom. Have a look at the work of Edward Steichen, James Craig Annan, Paul Strand, Henri Cartier-Bresson and Edward Weston. They were using photography as an art form, not just as a means to record data. Because black-and-white photography is so limited, they really had to push the abstractness and drama of their designs.

You can learn three important lessons from those photographers:

1. Think about the visual strength and beauty of your shapes. This will affect how you crop and frame your image.
2. Think about those shapes in terms of light and dark value masses.
3. Plan those shapes before you start to paint.

It's not that you see only simple shapes and no longer see details. When you squint, you simply subdue their importance so they won't distract. Then, when you come to paint the details after you've established the major shapes of your composition, you'll see that the shapes are already carrying the painting. Then you'll be able to choose which elements to eliminate and which to integrate. Thus the details will mesh with rather than conflict with the abstract shapes.

Two day Plein-Air event with Michael Chesley Johnson

Lowville Park, Burlington, Ontario - May 15 & 16, 2015
By Rosemary Simpson, PAC, MPAC

Michael is a PAC member with an MPAC signature. He is a great instructor as well as a painter. He gives workshops in the Canadian Maritimes and in the States. Look him up in Pastel Journal.

Michael, wife Trina and Saba their lovely dog arrived at my place in Lowville, Thursday, May 14th. PAC was lucky to be able to have Michael stop for a workshop on his journey back to Campobello Island, New Brunswick from Sedona, Arizona.

Lowville Park is a beautiful spot with a creek, bridges, and wonderful ancient cedars. The creek is full of life with salmon and spotted trout. Children love to wade in and out catching crayfish. Michael started Friday morning with a demo along the creek edge. The reflections in the water were wonderful as there was no wind and although rain was forecast we were lucky, it held off.



Michael the set up for Plein-Air pallet along the creek edge. **Note – his travelling pallet, it is light and compact.**



Michael uses a spray bottle for a wet underpainting. Here he used rubbing alcohol as it dries faster than water. If it is only a light spray then taping the edges of the paper is enough. If you plan to really wet it then the paper needs to be stapled to prevent the paper from buckling. Not all papers can be wetted so check first. Once dry, the paper is ready to accept your layers of pastel.



Next day the reflections were again stunning. The group spread out along the creek. Lucky us again, no wind to ruffle the surface of the water, only a few ripples over the rocks. Here is Michael's demo, he used pastel over the dried underpainting, letting it show through here and there for depth.



On Friday we had a BBQ and a gab session at my house which is just up the hill from the park. This social time together was a plus. Sharing is often a big part of any workshop. Everyone was delighted with what they had learned and hope that more such events will be coming.

Be sure to support PAC events such as workshops as a lot of time goes into arranging them for you by volunteers,

sometimes as much as a year in advance. PAC will take suggestions and help with arrangements if there is interest, so it really is up to the membership (you) if more workshops are offered. Get active!



Thank you Michael for a great two days...

Tanya Tang, Margaret Tough, Sheila Mitchell, Christine Komarncky, Kirt Lapham, John Mullenger, Michael, Susan Dzida, Karin Meilinger, Lynn McCleary

Michael Chesley Johnson has a New Book!

OUTDOOR STUDY TO STUDIO: *Take Your Plein-air Paintings to the Next Level.*

Do you wish you could do more with your plein-air paintings? Michael Chesley Johnson (author of ***Backpacker Painting: Outdoors with Oil & Pastel***, and frequent contributor to *The Pastel Journal* and contributing editor for *The Artist's Magazine*) will show you how to take your field work to the studio where you can enlarge your canvas, widen your scope and deepen your thinking. 114 pages, 146 images with 13 demos in oil and pastel. \$24.95 print, \$19.95 Kindle.

Available at www.amazon.com/author/johnson or visit www.MichaelChesleyJohnson.com

WHY ESCAPE TO COSTA RICA WITH PASTELS IN HAND?

By Margaret Ferraro, PAC, MPAC

#1—I love to work in pastel

#2—the beauty of Costa Rica, the luscious colours, varied landscape and unending flowers

#3—escape Canadian winters!

#4—enjoying the company of like minded artists

It's been my privilege to lead groups to travel in Costa Rica and paint in pastel. Last year we had many painting opportunities, from arid mountain ranges, flowers, trees, paintings in every direction. Last years group had 8 students, with two leaders, myself and Martine Racette of RREscape. One of the things I try to do with my trips, is give people a sense of the culture framework of whatever country we are in. Costa Rica abounds with natural beauty, interesting geographical history, an indigenous people, that continue to leave their artistic mark, and great healthy food.

This is my 4th year taking a group to Costa Rica to paint en plein air, in pastel. My business partner is a fabulous dynamic Canadian girl, just in love with Costa Rica. Martine is a walking encyclopedia of information from economics to history to animals and plant life. She plans my excursions, and I teach. Most of my students are middle aged +, who like to travel and paint. It's been great fun travelling together as a group. Something magical happens when you escape your every day life and drop all responsibilities to paint. The first few days, we start by warming up. After that, I notice I speed up. My work gets clearer, and ideas start to abound. I have the time to paint! No distractions to use as an excuse.

This year from January 23 to 31, 2016 we are returning to the magical mountains of Chirripo, a refreshing mountain art retreat. Painting possibilities? Waterfalls abound, Chirripo river, fabulous gardens, great views and vistas of mountains, adobe like structures.

When we are not painting, we'll be visiting local coffee plantations, take a chocolate workshop (making chocolate from scratch, using organic and locally grown cocoa beans!), whale and dolphin sightseeing, plus a spectacular garden where there are more species of flowers than you have ever seen. We also hike according to the ability of the group, often finding new places to paint, and new views.

If you'd like more information on painting with me on this exciting trip, please contact me at margferraro@xplornet.ca.

Painting Glass with Pastel

By Trish Acres, PAC, MPAC



The initial drawing on Uart paper with vine charcoal.



Create an underpainting in the opposite colour of the glass jar.



Spraying rubbing alcohol allows the pastel to be brushed smooth.



Apply cool-darks first.



Slowly with large strokes, build with cool darks.



Use stroke direction to help give the jar dimension.



Build the background colour with cool purple, no need to blend yet.



Introduce lighter cool tones.



Use a hard pastel to blend glass slightly (warm green Grey).



Lighten background and add detail to lid.



Again, a hard grey pastel works nicely as a blending tool.



Applying warmer green-blues to bring the glass forward.

The final last step, add detail to the glass jar. See the finished painting on the front Cover.