

The Shed

By Martin Watson



MATERIALS

- A2 sheet of Arches 300gsm watercolour paper
- 2 sheets of 300gsm black acid-free paper
- 1 pad of A2 cartridge paper
- Masking tape
- Stencilling knife
- Metal ruler
- Workable spray fixative
- PVA glue
- No 3 and 8 bristle brushes
- No 1 nylon watercolour brush
- Soft pastels (a combination of Rembrandt and Schminke): Lamp Black, Titanium White, Pale Yellow, Red, Raw Umber, Terracotta, Leaf Green, Bluish Green
- Gouache: Pale Yellow, Cobalt Blue, Burnt Sienna, Titanium White
- 5B pencil
- Medium willow charcoal
- Other materials included: recycled yellow paper and old stamps

I was originally quite dumbfounded by the prospect of documenting my work process. Usually I work quite intuitively, each work evolves over a period of weeks or even months. However, working from a still life gave me a fixed reference point in which to bounce off. This still life is a fairly random arrangement of objects found around my studio. I was attracted to the sense of narrative and drama between the objects. It was essential to do several rough drawings in order to get a feel for the final piece.



STEP 1



STEP 2

STEP 1

I've made a few rough pastel drawings on cartridge paper, based on a still life arrangement in the studio.

STEP 2

Some necessary adjustments to the composition become apparent at the start of the final piece. I've drawn the initial structure with a 5B pencil on to an A2 sheet of Arches 300gsm watercolour paper. With the No 8 bristle brush, I then block in some colour using gouache, mixing, in varying degrees, Pale Yellow, Cobalt Blue and Titanium White.

STEP 3

Using a stick of medium willow charcoal, I draw in the mannequin on the left and the suitcase in the cupboard on the right of the picture. I then use a



STEP 3

soft Leaf Green pastel to loosely block in the background. The colour of the top of the cupboard, its door and shelf have all been adjusted by rubbing in a soft Bluish Green pastel with my fingers. I then go outside to fix the drawing using a workable spray fixative.

STEP 4

I cut silhouettes of the mannequin's leg and bottles from a piece of black acid-free paper. Next I stencil the bottles in using the negative cutout by drawing and then rubbing soft Raw Umber pastel, followed by soft Lamp Black pastel. I've used masking tape to map out the base of the cupboard, its interior and its shadow on the left. The base, the interior and the shadow on the wall have been stencilled in by rubbing Lamp Black pastel; the shadow on the floor is Leaf Green pastel. The shadow under the lip of the cupboard's top is



Lamp Black, stencilled in by holding a spare piece of paper along the edge. The shadow of the leg has been stencilled in using the negative stencil with Leaf Green pastel. I fix the drawing again.

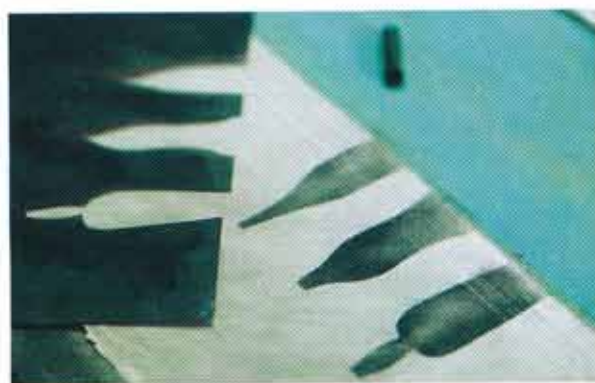
STEP 5

I cut out more objects from the black acid-free paper – the car, vice, ornate grill and sewing machine. I paint the sewing machine with gouache, a mix of Titanium White with a touch of Pale Yellow, Cobalt Blue and Burnt Sienna.





STEP 4



I've decided to totally block in the background and inside the cupboard with Leaf Green pastel. Using the negative cutout of the vice, I stencil the shape in by rubbing in Raw Umber pastel, then highlight the edge with a soft Terracotta pastel. I then cut the positive shape of the stencil to highlight the base of the vice. Using the same pastel, I rub some colour into the suitcase. The pipes on the back wall

have been masked with tape then stencilled by rubbing in Titanium White pastel. I have also decided to totally flatten the mannequin with Titanium White pastel. Again I stencil the bottles in with Lamp Black and Terracotta pastel. The third bottle is the positive from the stencil. None of

the cut out shapes have been stuck down yet. Again I fix the drawing.

STEP 6

The clock faces, playing cards and the bottle in the middle have been cut from a piece of cartridge paper painted with the gouache used on the sewing machine. The numerals are drawn with a sharp 5B pencil. The bottle label has been rendered in Red pastel and

detailed with the pencil and gouache just mentioned. The bicycle has been drawn in with Titanium White gouache, using a No 1 nylon watercolour brush. The tyres have been drawn in with the 5B pencil. Detail on the cards has been rendered using the same brush. I've crushed a tiny piece of Red and Black pastel on the side of my drawing board and added a dash of PVA glue and water, which is then applied with the brush. The back of the cards has been cut from paper attached to the back of some old stamps. The badges on the sewing machine have been cut from a piece of cartridge paper, painted with a mix of Pale Yellow and Titanium White gouache, then rendered the same as the cards, although a small piece of Raw Umber pastel is crushed into this mix. I have also used pencil and Lamp Black pastel to render the entire machine. The 13 sign is cut from a scrap of yellow



STEP 5

paper and rendered with Lamp Black pastel. The rings on the atom model are in Lamp Black pastel, the nucleus in Red. The support has been cut from black paper and drawn with pencil. The silhouetted face behind has been cut from black paper. The scroll of paper inside the cupboard is a scrap of cartridge smudged with Raw Umber pastel. The suitcase has been rendered with pencil, Raw Umber and Titanium White pastel. The front of the cupboard has been cleaned up using Titanium White pastel and masking tape. The black lines at the top of the picture have been masked with tape and rendered in Lamp Black pastel. I have also added a shadow to the right of the cupboard with Lamp Black and Leaf Green pastel. All the cut-out shapes are moved into their final positions and then glued down with PVA and the No. 3 bristle brush. The drawing is then given a final layer of fixative. ■



STEP 6

MASTER HINTS AND TIPS

by *Martin Watson*

- Don't be too precious with your work, you can always tidy up later.
- Let your drawing evolve. Be open to change and introduce unexpected elements into the work.
- Recycle paper. Keep all your drawings. Unsuccessful drawings can always be torn up and incorporated into a new work.
- Work in series, this way you will be able to build up momentum and have more sense of rhythm and continuity.
- Experiment with materials and techniques. A good art supply store will help you with any queries. Use materials you feel comfortable with.
- Read plenty of books. This is invaluable for stimulating your brain and developing ideas.
- The best subject matters are quite often right under your nose. Challenge yourself to transform the mundane into something of beauty.