



Sketch out the plant in graphite pencil, using a very light touch.

Include some of the grass bits that are going to be within your drawing area, per the notan.





Look at the color.

Start with the shadows and shaded areas on the flower, gourd, leaves, stem, and background.

If the local color is green or blue, start shading the darkest areas with dark red.

If the local color is yellow/orange, start with dark purple (or light layers of red and blue = purple).





Extend the shading to include all darker areas of the object... keep clear of the parts you want to remain light.

If the local color is green or blue, move to your dark greens and blues.

If the local color is yellow/orange, move to your deeper oranges, reds, and golds.

Don't color in the whole object with the local color yet!





Now reserve those highlights or lightest areas of the objects.... Use either the lightest color (light blue, light green, yellow), a light color you are going to use as part of a layer in that area (for example, if you want a very light green you might use a pale yellow in this area) or use a very, very light touch with whatever color you want to try.

The VALUE of this area must remain light, so it's better not to put much colored pencil down at first.





FINALLY!

Add in the local color, in a very thin layer, and not all over the place. You want to add color to your shadows and darker areas but not obscure them.

This takes patience and time, and a good deal of experience, as you will work one color and then another back over the same parts of your drawing until you get the desired

COLOR and VALUE

Expect to spend several hours working on a colored pencil drawing so that you can get the details just right (and not in a 30 minute rush, like we did for this sketch!)

I tend to work on a drawing over several days, a little at a time. It gives me time to think it out.





Colored Pencil: Drawing beautiful plants and fruit

- Interesting colored pencil drawings are achieved by looking for all the colors that you can see, or can build by using underlayers of complementary colors
- Choose a subject matter to draw that already contains contrast and complementary colors. Add a note of a complementary color if you need it, like orange or red cloth under green plants, or a red apple beside a green one.
- Mess about with your colored pencils to see what they can do. Each brand layers a little differently.
- Consider doing a mix of graphite and colored pencils while you get used to working with colored pencils, and for interesting effects.
- Look in the world around you for 'reflected light'. Once you start looking, you will see it everywhere. Being attentive to these reflected colors will make your artwork have some zing!
- Ask yourself, why? Why are the shadow areas right there? Why does that leaf change color in a certain place? Where is that reflected color coming from?

2 of my favorite books on drawing with colored pencils:

Botanical Drawing using Graphite and Coloured Pencils

Sue Vize

Botanical Portraits with Colored Pencils

Ann Swan

Elizabeth R. Whelan

www.elizabethwhelan.com

Instagram: @elizabetwhelan

Facebook: @elizabethwhelan

erwhelan@gmail.com