



The following 29 artists, who are members of the Appalachian Pastel Society, participated in this virtual group activity while “Sheltering-in-Place” at their homes. The artwork they created is shared here. Hugs and best wishes to all until we can meet together safely.

APS Adventures in Pastel

Adventure AA-4: “Let’s Go Abstract”

Welcome to our Fourth Pastel Adventure in Series AA. One of the somewhat controversial events in art history is Norman Rockwell’s painting called “The Connoisseur” which mixed Jackson Pollock’s drip painting style with Rockwell’s trademark illustrations. What is less known is that Rockwell submitted a portion of his “Pollock” to two art exhibitions under a fake name and won awards in each of them!

In this adventure we invite you to enter into creating an abstract painting of your own. Abstract painting is usually defined as art that does not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of a visual reality, but instead uses shapes, color, forms and gestural marks to achieve the desired effects. For more inspiration, you might want to look up Mark Rothko, Vassily Kandinsky, Pablo Picasso or Vincent Van Gogh.

See also the attached painting by Nicholas Wilton, who said, “Abstraction like poetry does not dictate a clear narrative, but quietly offers a fragment, a piece of a mysteriously familiar narrative.”

Step 1: To begin, look around your home or go outside and look at nature around you. Relax, let go and use your imagination.

Step 2: Select the paper, size and color that will enhance your idea. All is your choice.

Step 3: Take a photo of your painting and send it **along with your title and size** to Kay Gordon (jkaygordon364@gmail.com) by April 28th at 6 PM. Please feel free to include a brief commentary about your choices, process and experience in doing your painting.

Step 4: Remember, this deadline is firm and nothing can be posted that is received after 6 PM on April 28th. Your painting does not need to be finished. The adventure is designed so we can be painting, exploring, experimenting and enjoying pastels together!

Anne Allen, Hendersonville



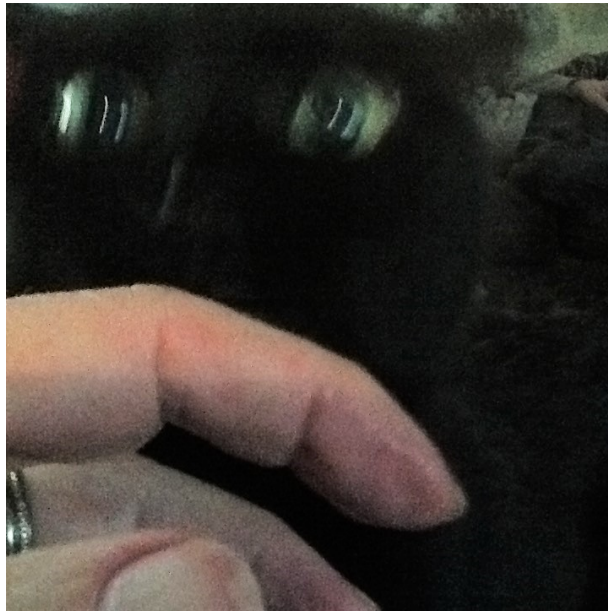
Invite Me In 8 1/2 x 12 1/2

Dutch Irises herald Springtime in the North Carolina garden. A friend gave me a little basket of iris bulbs in October, the year my mother died.

I planted them that Fall where I would see them bloom every year.

Recently, my family finds me up at night looking at old world textiles. I am learning to incorporate patterns in a painting and use decorative panels to amplify a story. I painted this textile pattern on 400-grit sanded paper to encase the scale of the irises.

Kathy Amspacher, Hendersonville



Frodos Mint Frenzy 11.5 x 8.5

Lots of fun doing this one!! My kitty Frodo is the inspiration.

I was growing mint and squished a little on my fingers. Frodo was sitting on my lap about 1/2 hour later, and he went crazy!! He proceeded to wash my whole hand. He LOVES fresh mint. And he wonders why I won't give him catnip! YIKES

I took pictures of him during his Purple Haze moment.

Thanks for this happy activity! While fun, I am not too at ease with abstract!



Catharin Banta, Hendersonville

I did not have a lot of time to work on this, but once I got started I had a great time.

I used a cracked sidewalk pattern as my inspiration though that somewhat disappeared as I continued to layer on the colors.

I decided to use a split complementary scheme for my colors at the beginning of the piece and then embellished it somewhat when I finished.

Thank you for this opportunity!



Cracked 12 x 9
on Uart 400 pastel paper

Jane Best, Morganton



Moody Blues 10.5 x 14
on gessoed matboard

I ordered some new blue pastels this week and decided to try an abstract painting with them. After the blues were on, I decided to add the dark horizontal line and create a lake. Then I added the trees, foreground, and sky. This was an enjoyable new adventure.

Beryl Bradley, Brevard

I've been wanting to get into abstracts but wasn't even really sure how to approach it. I tried something similar awhile back but wanted brighter color. I decided to just use the colors I love and "Just Do It" to steal Nike's tagline. I'm hoping this will inspire me to do more abstracts as I do love them.

Thank you! Enjoying these challenges!

Red Sky

12 x 16 Premier sanded paper



Deborah Chase, Hendersonville

I really enjoy abstracts but there are so many choices and it is tough to know when to stop.

I had two goals, one to work intuitively with mark making using no reference image and the other, to utilize pan pastels with stencils.

I spent a lot of time trying different things out and this is one of the results.

Tumbling
13.5 x 10.5



Nancy Clausen, Swannanoa

Celebration 16 x 20



Here are my images.

The first one I called Celebration.

It's on a 16 x 20 Canson board. I found this very difficult to work on and it seemed to eat up my pastels.

I put down a red under painting in pan pastel and used other brands. Some Great American and others I'm not sure what the brand was.

Space Dust 9 x 12



The second painting is on a 9 x 12 Pastel Premier sheet. It was much easier to work on.

Again I used mostly Great American, Faber Castel and some others.

I enjoyed doing the abstracts. It was somewhat less stressful than other Adventures we've done. I hope everyone enjoyed it.

Ruth Crowe, Matthews, NC

An Iris 10 x 8



This is my attempt at an abstract iris.

I would like to do it again, but will have to wait until I get back from a family visit in Mississippi.

I tried to use very few strokes for the iris, but did not get the abstract well done.

Hope to be able to attend a meeting soon. I am so ready-like every one else-for this time to be over.

Diane de Grasse, Black Mountain

Thank you for this challenge! Since I'm spending a few days on OXB, my communications are awkward on my iPad. However, I wanted to send you my contribution. I've got 2 versions of a scene in abstract, at least as my literalist nature will allow.

Red Roof 9 x 12



This is my first attempt across the marsh from our cottage. The day was cloudy bright so I started with a light cool ArtSpectrum 9x12.

Using a mixture of mostly soft pastels, I got a pleasant, dreamy image which I thought would do.

But it didn't seem ABSTRACT enough.

This second go at it was inspired by the fabric on the sofa here - a wild mix of dashes, wiggles and curlicues that suggested vitality.

The image is still the marsh, but I felt bold and adventurous in adding my own marks.

ArtSpectrum again, a 9x12 cream for the sunny day.

Thank you again for the opportunity to experience something different.

Hatteras Marsh 9 x 12





New Beginnings 8 x 6 sandpaper

- I tried to follow Tom Walker's concept for painting abstract (APS posted Secrets of Dust video on Facebook on 2/2/21). After smudging a collection of pastels on sand paper, a woman's silhouette has emerged - I barely had to add any additional outline to the figure at all. It was all improv. I added a dogwood branch behind her. I would like to get some feedback for painting the river / water she is standing in...



Washington Tulips 6 x 8 on paper

Washington tulips - 8x6 on paper - an image that is imbedded in my mind after visiting Washington state a long time ago.

Without much detail, but a picturesque view.

Daffy Wash

12 x 9



I was going through some old reference photos I had taken from quite a few years ago and culling the pack. I came across this brilliant, backlit photo of daffodils in a pitcher. Simplifying as much as possible to express a feeling of light and texture mostly, I painted this.

When I turned it around in my photo app, I liked it even better!

Sometimes it's fun to play in the dust!

Will Evans, Fairview

A 5"x7" abstract titled "Spilled Wine" on 600 grit white sanded paper. No underpainting, no brushes, used a palette knife to distribute the small bits of pastel directly to the paper. It was an attempt to get away from the standard "drawing" with the pastel.

This challenge turned out to be just that, a stretch way outside my zone but that's what it's about, exploring the different.



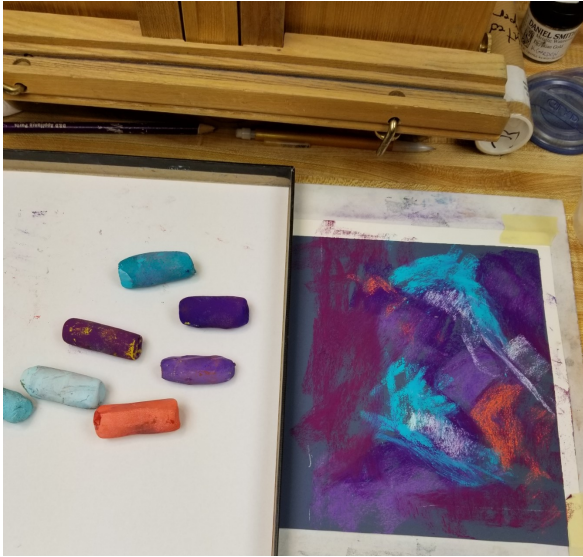
Spilled Wine

7 x 5

J Kay Gordon, Weaverville

This can't be me!

No reference photo this time!...How can that be?! Not even a plan!...just whatever seemed a good idea at the time!



I picked out a very limited pallet of Paul deMarrais pastels...they are VERY high pigment pastels.

I made a quick "design" on the paper, and then drenched with alcohol, purposely just loading the alcohol with a brush (no scrubbing) so that it would wash down across multiple colors.

While the alcohol was still wet, I re-applied the same pastels in a similar design.

Wet surfaces REALLY grab pigment... giving me the intensity that I sought.

Neither Fish nor Fowl!
8 x 6 on blue Art Spectrum



Yellow Calla Lilies (or How I Murdered an Innocent Abstract Painting)

9 x 12 on Richeson Premier Pastel Surface



Abstract art has always been an enigma to me. I think and paint as I see things and feel things. One of the reasons that I love the pastel medium is because it a tactile medium... I can feel it as I paint.

Thus, this month's assignment was a real CHALLENGE for me. To accomplish it, I decided to take an image of an abstract painting by one of my favorite contemporary artists and put my own spin on it.

Dagger Dogvinci is an abstract expressionist who I became aware of recently via a short documentary about him on PBS. He enjoys spending time in the studio with his mentor and loves to paint. All of his works are sold to benefit homeless and rescued pets. By the way, he also was homeless at one time... so he is now painting to pay forward the kindness that was given to him. I have included a picture of him in his studio and his original oil painting, "Golden Meadow" that I tried emulate. And yes, Dagger is a Labrador Retriever!

Here is Dagger's website in case anyone wants to check him out: <https://www.dogvinci.com/>



Toni Hutcheson, Pisgah Forest

8 x 12 on dark blue Pastelmat

I chose this image because of the angles of the church which I felt lent itself to a modernistic interpretation.

Starry Night in Taos 8 x 12



Lynn Jackson, Brevard

Bubbling with Enthusiasm

19 x 24



19x24 soft pastels

I enjoyed experimenting with different color combinations in my abstract.

Thanks for the challenge!

Karen Knaub, Lake Lure

“Cypress Knee’s” 9x12 on black uart using only nupastels.

Abstract is not my favorite form of art. But it was fun to let go and see where this painting would take me.

Thank you for another fun challenge.



Cypress Knee's 12 x 9

Golden Gate

9x12



Attached is my painting; it is 9x12, entitled "Golden Gate"

Since I generally don't paint abstract, I checked for some paintings done by others that might lend itself to be painted in an abstract fashion. I found a painting by Ray Strong, entitled "Golden Gate Bridge" which was done in 1934.

I thought if I flattened the objects, I might "abstract" the image; not sure if I succeeded, but it was my way of being able to be "adventurous".



Here is my pastel adventure for this month. My husband suggested that I paint our flame azalea. I hope this passes as an abstract painting! It was fun to research abstract artists in preparation for painting.

This is a 6 x 6 on UArt 320 paper. I did an under painting with cretacolor hard pastels, then used Richardson soft pastels. I didn't draw anything ahead of time - decided to wing it instead!

Thanks again for this fun adventure!

My New Flame

6 x 6



Margaret Lyn-Soroken, Black Mountain

Green Shapes 12 x 9

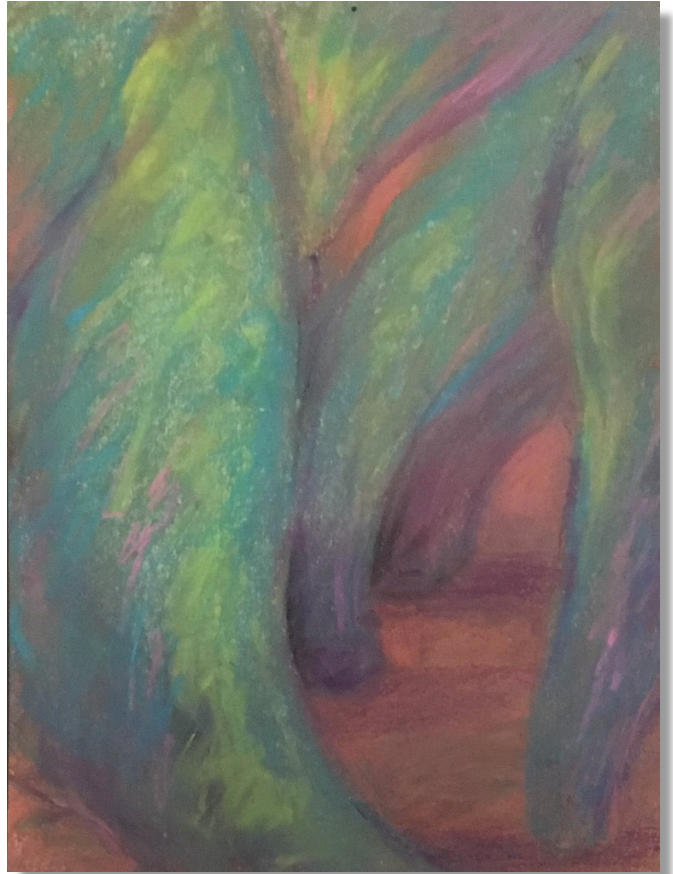
Title: Green Shapes

Size :12 x 9

Medium: Mi-teintes /pastels

It was hard to transition to abstract, and to ease into it I had to do at 3 tries. Green was second try and Orange became looser and a chance to use brights!

Good exercise.



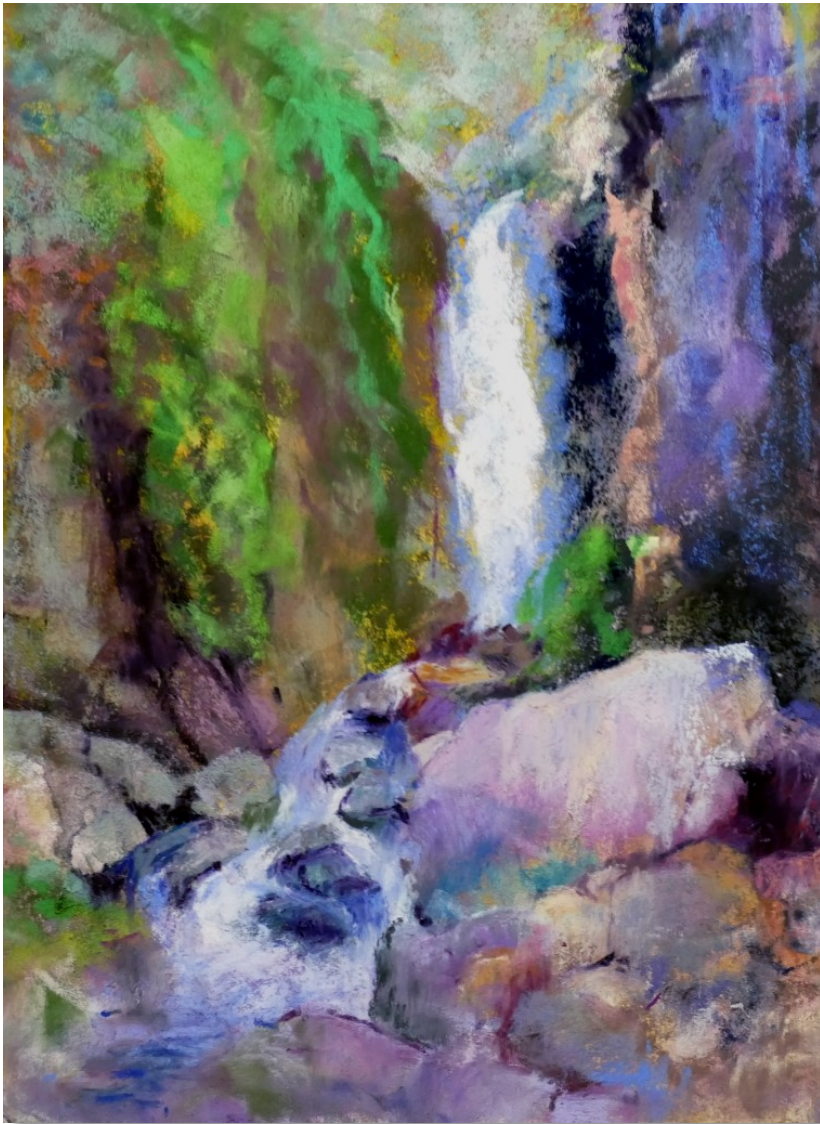
Orange Shapes 9 x 12

Title: Orange Shapes

Size :9 x 12

Medium: Mi-teintes /pastels

Meryl Meyer, Weaverville



Hidden Falls

11 x 8

on Lux Archival Sanded Paper

This was a fun and definitely new challenge for me. My style is realism with a touch of impressionism.

I applied an oil based washed underpainting to create some interesting drips and colors. I Just chose colors at random for unexpected surprises.

I used a computer program called Brushstroke to help me envision a more abstract piece. My brain needed a new orientation.

I also did a lot of squinting to focus on the shapes. I used various soft pastels.

This is a hidden waterfall we came upon while on a mystery boat trip adventure 2 years ago. It was in an estuary in the Great Bear Rainforest in British Columbia. It was hidden, sheltered, and quite peaceful.

I am encouraged to do more abstracts.

Don Osterberg, Hendersonville

I am not really into abstract painting but it was interesting.

I'm a person who likes to try almost anything at least once or even twice.

The title is not very unique, "Abstracted", 14" x 11", soft pastel on UArt 500 paper.

You may say abstracted from what? I'll leave it up to the viewer to decide.

Thanks again Kay for all you do.

Abstracted 14 x 11



Joy Rademacher, Southport



Rose Whisper

16 x 12

This is Rose Whisper, 16 x 12 on ivy Canson.

Abstract painting is not my strong point, but it was a fun exercise.

Inspired by my climbing rose.

Robbins Richardson, Asheville

Immersive Play

7.5 x 9



I adore fully immersing myself in our waterfalls and rocks that abound in our Western NC mountains. Truly one of my very favorite go to's and things to do.

So- with a fun challenge adventure, I packed up a few random colorful nupastels and with inner child in tow- actually leading the way- we headed out to Catawba Falls.

No one else was with me, so we happily bounced and explored all over the rocks and trails in the area, settling down for a bit to express what was before me and even taking in a 5 minute sound meditation.

Can it get more glorious than this?

Chris Robinson, Leicester

Abstract is perhaps the most difficult thing for me. My mind likes detail and order, but I'm working on loosening up.



Glory
20 x 16

Glory

16x20

Sennelier, Terry Ludwig, and Schmincke

Pastel Box 15 x 19



My inspiration was my box of pastels I try to keep them in order but they usually end up looking like this!

Andrea Stutesman, Black Mountain

Abstracts are a challenge for me. I worked on a couple of things before I completed this piece. I love bright colors, so this was fun.

A Bloom 7 x 5



Name: A Bloom

Size: 5"x7" Pastel Premier sanded paper - Italian Clay

Sennelier and Unison Pastels

Donna Tweedle, Leesburg, FL

While recovering from surgery recently, a Friend brought me this beautiful little red vase with a red anthurium plant.

t's been in my studio, and I look at it everyday.



A Gift 12 x 9

Sawyer Bear Whitemiller, Cape Coral, FL



The Blurry Bobo

6 x 6 abstract pastel painting on UArt paper.



I thought of abstract shapes when I prepared for this, and I decided to paint my scarecrow bear sculpture or “Bobo.”

My family and I won Bobo during the Hendersonville Bearfootin’ Auction in 2019. Bobo now lives in Florida under my Royal Poinciana in our front yard.

I had fun with the colors and did a dry underpainting.

Much appreciation to all who participated and shared their paintings and their comments!