



The following 37 artists, who are members of the Appalachian Pastel Society, participated in this virtual group activity. The artwork they created is shared here. Hugs and best wishes to all.

## APS Adventures in Pastel C-1 “In the Bleak Midwinter”

Welcome to our NEW Adventure Series C. Our first Adventure in the series is all about the challenge of painting winter landscapes.

The name winter comes from an Old Germanic word which refers to cold rain and snow. The scientific definition says winter occurs when a hemisphere is oriented away from the sun, due to a tilt in the Earth’s axis. More commonly we refer to it as a season of weather that is bitter, cold, crisp, icy, raw, snowy, frozen, frigid, nippy, etc. On a more positive note, artists and poets have found real inspiration in winter.

Robert Louis Stevenson’s last verse in his Winter poem reads:

Black are my steps on the silver sod,  
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad:  
And tree and house,  
and hill and lake,  
Are frosted like a wedding cake.

Clearly, winter can be more than bleak and cold. It can be a time of peace and quiet; remembering childhood joys, plus reading a good book by the fire and all the holidays and family visits. Nothing can compare to taking a walk on a sunny winter day and seeing the beauty of trees without their leaves and looking up at the mountains capped with rime ice.

So now with the holidays past, we want you to take out your pastels and do a painting focused on winter.

**Step 1:** Come up with a subject that represents winter to you. The palette, size and type of surface used are all of your own choosing.

**Step 2:** Feel free to search out how other artists have approached painting subjects in the bleak midwinter. (See below) You may also find some helpful inspiration in the Pastel Journal, Winter 2022. It features an article titled: “The Winter Landscape”.

**Step 3:** Send a photo of your painting along with the title and size to Kay Gordon ([jkaygordon364@gmail.com](mailto:jkaygordon364@gmail.com)) by January 25th at 6:00 PM. Be sure to include your comments on how you experienced this challenge.

**Step 4:** Remember, this deadline is firm. Nothing can be posted that is received after 6:00PM on January 25th. Please note that your painting does NOT need to be in its finished form. The Adventure is about painting together and experimenting with new ideas and techniques that we can then share with our fellow pastelists.

GET READY, GET SET, BE COOL. AND PAINT WINTER!

Kathy Amspacher, Hendersonville

setup

I loved this challenge! Thank you for the inspiration to get back to painting.

I enjoyed using a variety of colors as per a recent Karen Marguilis palette and demo for snow scenes. (see the setup photo) These are two of a herd of 6 deer visiting our yard. They are patient when I throw out corn for them. I believe I am not the only human doing this in our neighborhood!



The snow was a challenge. Especially how much color is too much? I was fearful of losing the bright snow light. Kept adding and alternately taking color out of it. Ended up pretty bold, for me. Always good to try new things.

My camera's pixel count may be too high because the photos almost always have a ragged edge look. It picks up the raised bits of pastel.

Stay warm, flowers emerged on trees in downtown Hendersonville on February 19 last year.



Peace and Quiet

11x12

Lux Archival paper

Sennelier and Terry

Ludwig pastels

Notan Underpainting:

Black pastel and alcohol

**Catharin McCarthy Banta, Hendersonville**

Uart Terry Ludwig

This was taken on a walk in Highlands with my husband. It was the first snow of the season for me , and I was struck by the light hitting the leaves and coming through on the snow and rhododendrons. There was a quiet stillness to the whole area and a beauty to the whole place.



*Laden Rhododendrons*

12 x 9

Claire Benton, Riverview, FL



*South Florida Winter*

9.5 x 7

I don't think this is finished.

I've lived in Florida for 49 years and winter here means it's time for hot chocolate, not usually snow.

**Jane Best, Morganton**



*Silent Sentinels*

9 x 12

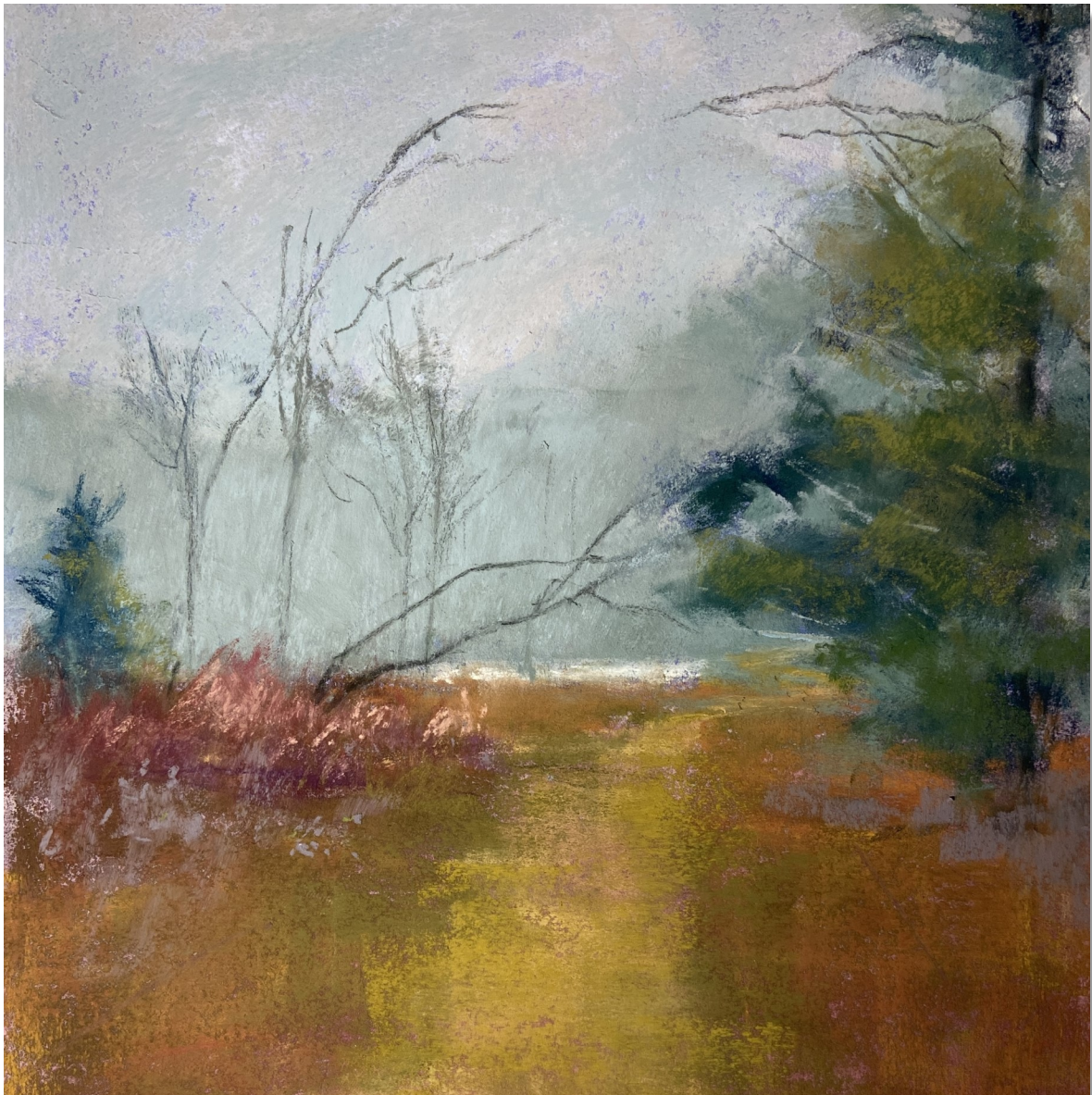
assorted pastels on art spectrum paper

Several years ago, I drove up to Roan Mountain (nc/tn border) to take snow photos. The scenery was amazing and it was like being in a winter wonderland. This painting is based on one of the many photos I took that day.

**Daphne Boder, Pittsboro, NC**

I live in a place where snow is very rare but we do get fog. This is from a photo I took on a trail near where I live.

It is 8 x 8 and I used #500 Uart Paper.



*Foggy Morning*

8 x 8

**Chris Carroll, New Bern, NC**

The name of the painting is Icy Walk to the Ridge.

I have not done a snow scene prior to this one, and I had a lot of fun, but not sure that it came out the way I intended, and that's ok.

And I love the snow and don't see much of it now. Good experiment. Thanks



*Icy Walk to the Ridge*

8.5 x 12

Deborah Chase, Rutherfordton, NC



*Shelter*

*14 x 11*

It has been a busy week but here is my entry for the Adventure.

This was my first time using LuxArchival paper. It has **a lot** of tooth and was white. I underpainted to establish my values and the paper took longer to dry than expected.

For the snowfall I scraped a pastel with a knife over the painting then used paper to press the scrapings into the painting to get the look of snowfall that I wanted.

It was a fun adventure.



**Nancy Clausen, Swannanoa, NC**

Here is my submission for our Winter Adventure. I call it A Cold Day for Ducks.

It was done on 8 x 10 Ampersand Bord. I used a variety of pastels.

I started with a yellow underpainting and then proceeded from there.

I was inspired by a photo I took at Owen Park Lake on a very cold day. It's done for now although that's not to say I may go back and rework some things.



*A Cold Day for Ducks 8 x 10*

**Diana Coidan, Raleigh**



*That Warm Feeling*

*14 x 11*

Gazing outside of my brother's home East of Pittsburgh, PA there was a warm sky with reflection in water bordered by a recent snowfall on the ground. That warm feeling gave way on that chilly day.

Claire Crook, Hendersonville



*Winter Solace*

14 x 12

This was an adventure that I couldn't wait to begin. I had the perfect reference photo. Never having attempted snow or fog before, it took me a while to get it right, but I'm happy with the result. Thank you for the challenge.

Canson paper 12x14". Ludwig soft pastels and various nupastels.

**Ruth Crowe, Matthews, NC**

This picture is done on dark 400 grit UArt size 8x10.

I used a picture from my file that was taken from our back yard when we lived in Johnson City, TN. It had snowed and our yard was in shadow and the sun was shining on the field behind us.

I have never been comfortable painting snow—probably because I lived most of my life in the deep south.

As usual I enjoyed this Adventure. It is nice to feel like participating again.



*Sunshine on the Snow*

8 x 10

**Tracy Davis, Asheville**

UArt 400 Asheville

This is my submission for the Adventures series. This is my first time submitting a painting as I am a relatively new member and very much a beginner with my art.

I took the photo that I used for this painting on a day when it was -9 degrees in Indiana this winter. These 3 starlings were truly huddled together trying to stay out of the wind and cold as they fluttered between the feeder and their safe place.

Thanks for the challenge I learned a lot from my first attempt at snow!



*Hunkered Down*

9 x 12

**Jennifer Donolo, Burlington, ON, Canada**

Thank you for this challenging adventure! Finding a subject that “represents winter” to me was difficult because in our area, the Germanic meaning of winter is dominant! As is the lack of sunshine! For six months! We must find our sunshine elsewhere.

So...during one such attempt, I e-mailed my Dad in the sunny south, “Latest newsflash as at 2:04 as we tried to leave [again] after reboarding is that an engine not working...not sure if we will get there today?”

In fact it was FROZEN! And I looked out my slushed-covered window to find someone inside it! EEK!

*Waiting for Take-Off\_EEK!*

Pastel on paper (Colourfix Pastel Paper, leaf green dark)

January 22, 2023

11.5 x 8.4 inches

I used Unison and Terry Ludwig soft pastels, NuPastel hard pastels, and several pastel pencils.

*Waiting for Take-Off\_EEK!*

*11.5 X 8.4*



## Terrilynn Dubreuil, Asheville

Just as a huge storm here in Maine was waning, (and I know AVL had it too as a limb of a tree fell through my daughter's bedroom ceiling), I went to the coast which, standing firm with those solid Maine ledges, was facing the onslaught of the huge, oversized waves that were riled up by the imposing winds. One photo, out-of-focus (through the misted windshield), gave me a source for painting this image. The waves appeared nearly as large as the trees on the promontory. I like using the UArt buff because I'm finding that the soft underlying warmth of the surface really increases the luminosity of the pigment and offsets the cool blue-greys of a storm.

*Besieged 9 x 12 UArt*



**Will Evans, Fairview**



*Snow Dune*

8 x 8

An 8x8 offering on Lux Archival.

Underpainted for darks with creatacolor, Paynes Grey, washed in with alcohol. A variety of soft pastels, mainly Terry Ludwig.

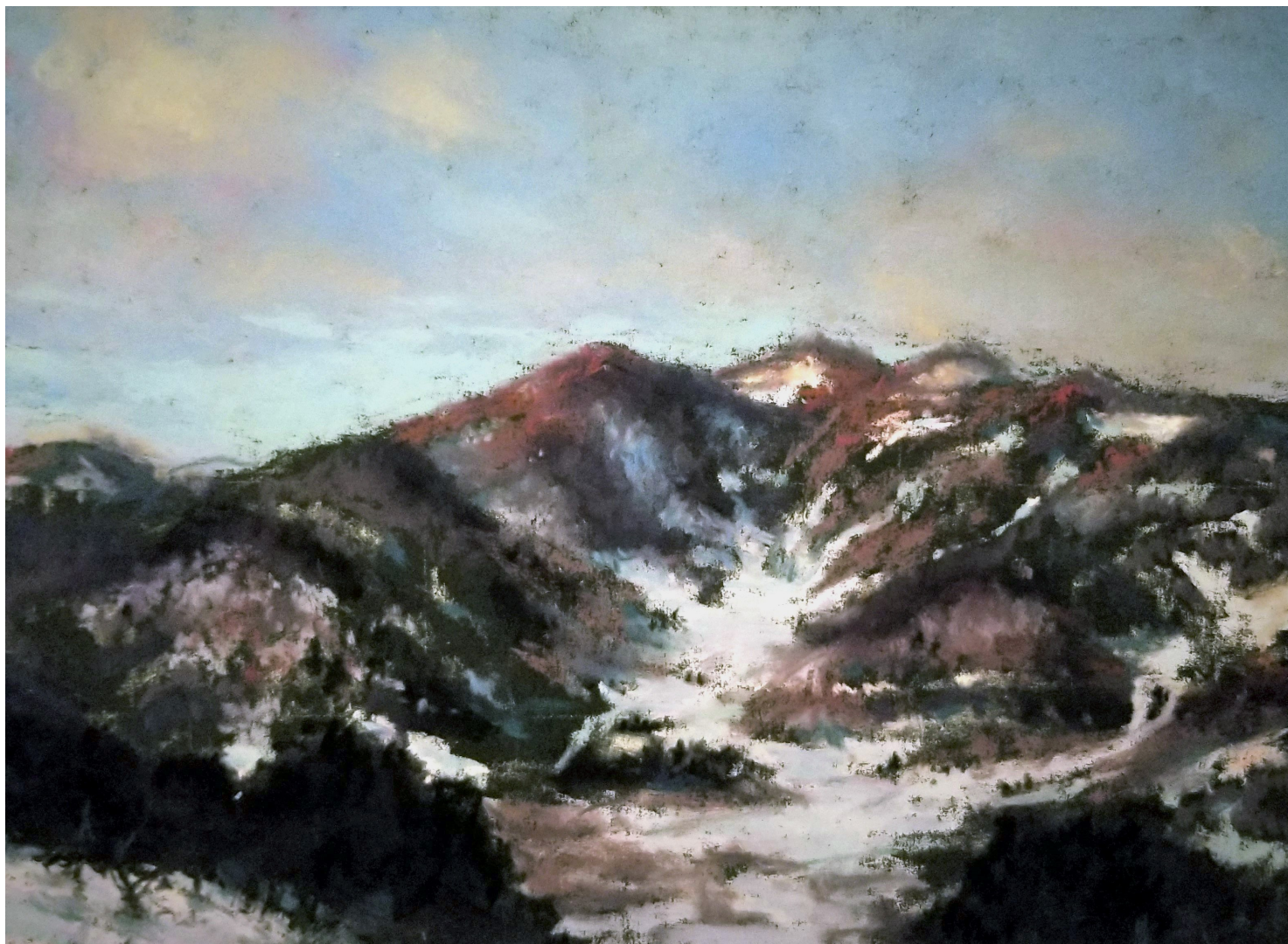
Title "Snow Dune".

The challenge was to find the shadows and reflected light in the snow, leaving very little true white.



## J Kay Gordon, Weaverville

*Winter Stillness* 6 x 8



I have many wonderful memories of the winters when we lived on our NC mountain farm. We built our retirement home half-way up the side of the mountain. We looked down at our own farm, but also could enjoy restful views up and down the valley. This was the view from my studio windows...looking west, just after sunset... toward a similar farm on Farmer Mountain across from us. Winters were wonderful. A heavy snow would muffle sounds and all our world was at peace.

I started with a white charcoal sketch on black Uart 800. As I often do, I had my reference photo on my iPad.

I used primarily Creatacolor, but supplemented with Terry Ludwig, Sennelier, and various pastel pencils.

**MaryAnn Grib, Gray, TN**



*Glowing Winter Woods*  
10 x 8

This is a pastel rendering on 8x10 multi media paper primed with clear gesso. I used yellow acrylic ink as a base for the painting because I wanted to get the glow that was evident in the reference photo I used.

The scene was a mostly shaded snowy woods with sunlight streaming through the trees in the distance. It had a beautiful luminous feeling and that was what I was trying to capture.

Calling this one Glowing Winter Woods.

**Alec Hall, Hendersonville**

*Early Snow*

12 x 9



Surface: UART 500 grit

Before moving to the mountains of North Carolina, I lived on an 80-acre farm in southwest Michigan. We typically had our first snow in early November and it served as the harbinger of a long, cold winter. Whitetail deer were plentiful in our county and scenes like this were common when that first snowfall occurred. However, as beautiful as this first snowfall might be, winters on the lee shore of Lake Michigan were usually harsh, bleak, and tough on both animals and humans. We all went into survival mode and waited impatiently over the next 6 months for spring to arrive.

Keep warm!

Alec

**Susan Harkins, Vilas, NC**

For this “Winter” art adventure I decided to use a painting I did in an intuitive watercolor class as my underpainting. The colors felt like the beautiful sunrises I’ve been enjoying this winter, with a snowy mountain in the clouds and glimmering village in the valley.

This was a challenge for me as I usually work from photos or life, but I enjoyed stretching my artistic imagination. I’m happy with the results except for the mountain, it needs some work or maybe to turn back into clouds.

Thank you for this new Art Adventure series!



*Frosty Sunrise*

8.5 x 11.5

*watercolor underpainting*



## Mona Hearne, Matthews, NC



I took this photo of the creek outback my previous Matthews home a few winters ago.



For the value sketch I used Tom Bows. Probably a 15-20 sketch. I enjoy value studies.

Outback Snow Creek  
9 x 12



Pink/alcohol under-painting on a 9x12 Uart 400.

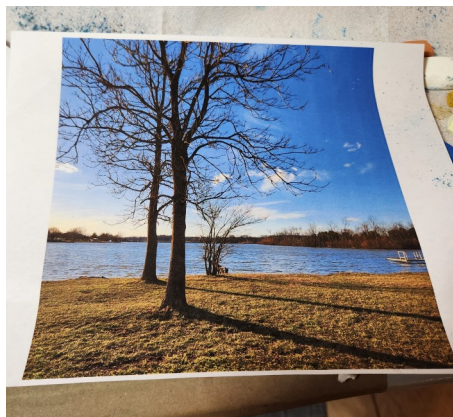
Sketched with grey Nupastel and so far (which is very little :)) I've used Nupastels to begin value place-

ment. I did throw in a few sky marks with softs (I don't know what brand.)

I've got a long way to go on this painting, let it snow!

Joyfully, Mona

Anne Hudson, Lexington, KY



I enjoyed the painting adventure. The sun came out a few days ago in Lexington, KY and the temperature got up to 66 degrees. I got out and snapped some pictures and took a walk. My idea of winter is 80 degrees the day after Christmas. I don't really like the cold and snow. So every chance the sun comes out, I take advantage of the opportunities.

The paper is Uart Premium Mounted Board I had laying around, 9x12". I used various soft pastels. I chose dark violets, greens and

blues and a bit or yellow/orange for the sunlight. I attempted to concentrate on on my

values and temperatures, more than color. This is very hard for me to do. I tend to have a heavy touch, so I have been practicing lightening up. I have a huge respect for all artists who do this easily. I am sure it took years of practice and hard work for some.

Thank you for these challenges.

I am learning something new every day.



It's such a wonderful experience for me.

I love pastels, especially the mess. I feel like a kid playing in the dirt.

I added the reference photo. This location is close to my house, Jacobson Park. I think I will call this one, "Sun Sweater on my Bare Limbs".

Many thanks and blessings to you,

**Kathy Hutchinson, Rutherfordton, NC**

Title: Ruby's Snow Fox

Size 12"x 9" on Colourfix Deep Ultra.

Various pastels

I have included my inspiration painting of my granddaughter Ruby's Fox in the snow. She painted this as a gift to me when she was 8 years old. She was staying with me when this challenge was issued and she agreed to allow me to copy her design.

I also included the sketch I did in practice for creating the smaller fox in the painting. I had wanted to try Rita Kirkman's underpainting technique but my fox was just too small. Next time!



*Reference*



*Fox Sketch*



*Ruby's Snow Fox 9 x 12*

Lynn Jackson, Brevard, NC

*Morning Sunshine* 6 x 8



I used tangerine colored Mi Tientes pastel paper for this painting. I used the untextured side of the paper. I liked how it gave the landscape a golden tone from the rising sun.

It was hard to draw lightly with pastel pencils and pastel sticks as to not cover up the color of the paper.

I liked the effect Rita Kirkman used in her pastel demonstration with light.



Jan Jackson, Hendersonville, NC

Winter Shadows, 5" x 7" on UART.

I enjoyed the challenge of not allowing myself to use any pure white in a snow painting!



*Winter Shadows 5 x 7*

**Karen Knaub, Lake Lure**

I enjoyed this challenge. Since we are snowbirds I reached out to my cousin in upstate NY to send some photos.

It helped to put me in the right frame of mind. I did this on black uart paper.

Thank you for another fun challenge



*Johns View*  
12 x 9

**Cindy Lidd**, Garner, NC

*Winter Scene*

12 x 9



Attached is my unfinished painting "Winter Scene", done on Uart 400, 9x12.

Thanks for the challenge.

Hope everyone is enjoying winter.

**Anne Lunney, Melrose, MA**

Here is my 8x10 on uart 400 paper Winter in the Dunes. This is a study that I completed this week in an online course with Lana Ballot. She is a wonderful teacher and I have learned so much from her feedback. I am so lucky to live near the ocean, and one of my favorite places to go is Crane Beach in Ipswich, no matter how cold it is! I squint my eyes and see all the colors in the ocean, skies and dunes.

Artfully yours, Anne Lunney



*Winter in the Dunes*

*8 x 10*

**Margaret V Lyn-Soroken, Black Mountain**

Title Snow scene

Size 6x9

Medium pastels on pastel  
paper



First attempt at snow scene...started out as thumbnail from photo taken a year ago.  
Challenging...project ..thank

Linda Medders-Jackson, Cross, SC

*Carolina Wren Chillin'*

4 x 4



I have sent you an unfinished hot mess,...whew!!!!

4 x 4 unfinished (alot) UART 320

Mixed soft pastel,Nupastel and pastel pencils

**Meryl Meyer, Weaverville**



*Blue Jay in the Snow*

6 x 8

6 x 8 on Velour( toned blue green) paper

Assorted Soft pastel

I enjoyed this challenge especially since it coincides with the winter.

I love watching the birds in Winter with their bright colors accented against the white snow.

I felt quite peaceful while painting. I had fun adding the snowflakes. The velour paper was conducive to the softness of the fluffed up feathers.

I used this paper from an assorted sampler pack. My greatest challenge was painting the detail on this soft velvety paper which required using broken sharp pieces of pastel.

Thank you for this challenge.

Barbara Moerk, Hendersonville



*Hush of the morning after*

9 x 9

This is the view through my living room window. It's a treat to see the newly fallen snow when I start my morning. My reference was taken on an overcast day and was almost monochromatic gray. The challenge was to add color without destroying the quiet mood of the scene.



## Christine Robinson, Leicester, NC

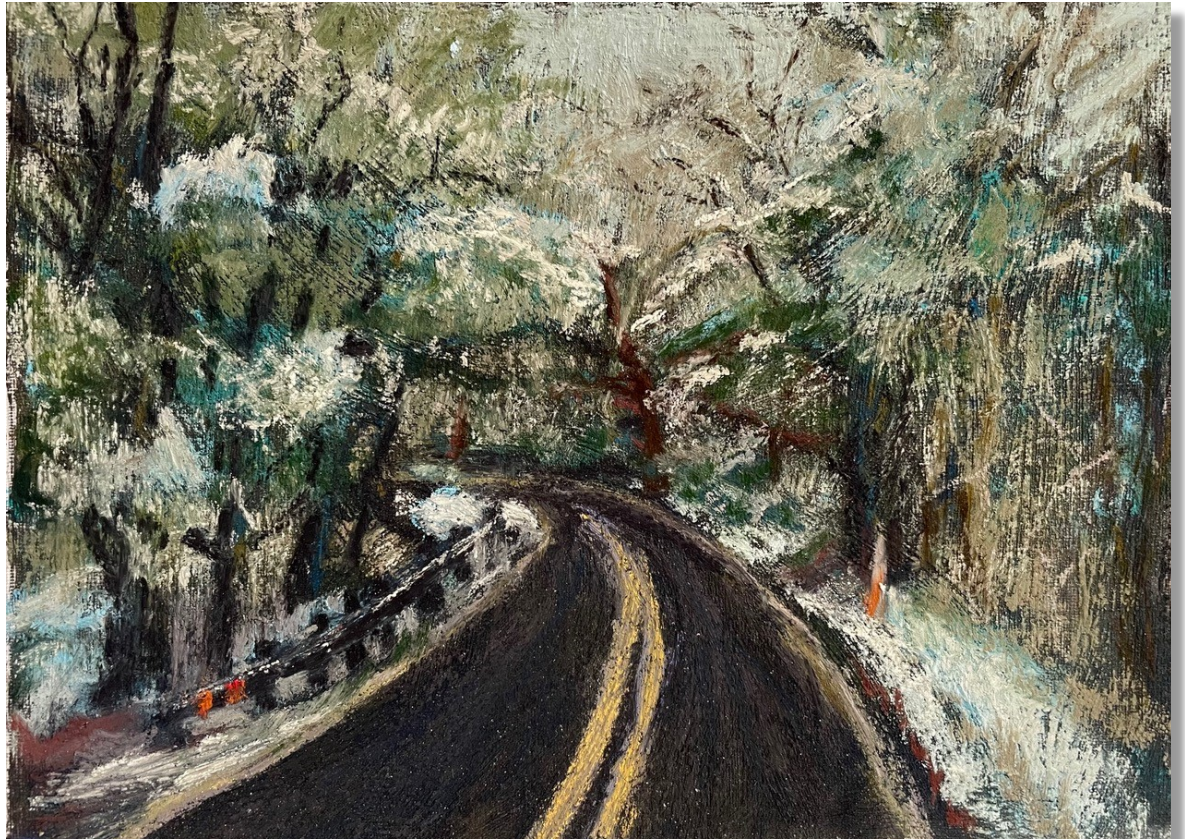
I finally got a chance to participate in the adventures again. Yay!

This piece was an explosion of experimentation, and it shows it. Lol.

I started by creating a paper with two 6x8 sections. This paper is from an Arteza acrylic pad. The weight is nice, but it does have a texture like canvas. In one section I painted on Art Spectrum pastel ground in aubergine. In the second section I painted a ground of Golden's Micaceous Iron Oxide. I liked the sparkle of the iron oxide and decided to use that. Because of the brush I used it was a LOT of texture, a bit too much, but there you go. Before starting the painting I did a value study to check composition, and to help with the busyness of the photo. I also enhanced the colors of the photo get more than just black, white, and gray.

I only had a limited amount of time, and I tried to paint from the value study without looking at the photo. Epic fail, but worth the exercise. I then printed a copy of the photo and set out to try to fix it. The paper took a good amount of pastel, and the sparkle of the mica in the iron oxide gave a bit of a sparkle, especially to the road. Of course I overworked it, so what's new. After all of that it turned out okay, but I realized too late that the road is too high and ends in the middle of the paper. Good think it's just a study.

But the good news is I painted, finally, after a long dry spell.



*Snowy Cathedral 6 x 8*



**Gary Rupp, Black Mountain**

Here's my painting for "In the Bleak Midwinter".

Title: "Christmas Reflections" Size: 9" x 10"

The painting is actually larger than what you see here, but I liked cropping it down to the section that I felt best expressed the joy of this past Christmas. I wanted it to be bold, bright and full of colors...just like Christmas! The title can be read two ways. One as the reflection of lights bouncing off the glass balls or, more thoughtfully, as memories or reflections on the past and the joy now gone for another year. I will let it up to the viewer to decide how they want to interpret it. Either way I know I had great fun in painting it! Gary

*Christmas Reflections*

*10 x 9*





I had already had a winter subject I wanted to paint, so this challenge arrived at the perfect time! My photo reference is an image of a coyote taken by a trail camera on my brother's property in Southern Oregon. Winter may be "bleak", but it is a wonderful time to spot wildlife. I love seeing footprints in the snow, and knowing some wild creature has passed by.

I used an old Pastelbord that I had refurbished by brushing off the image, painting over it, and then brushing with clear Art Spectrum pastel ground. I have a stack of these at the ready, and I chose one that was dark and relatively cool -- like winter. My objective was to create a vignette, and to let some of the background show through to create a more painterly look. I have a couple small areas to clean up, but I think I'm about finished...I don't want to overdo it!

**Diane Sparks, Cedarbluff, MS**

I have attached my pastel painting titled "Unexpected Beauty".

It is an 8 x 10 on LuxArchival sanded pastel paper.

This is a winter scene that I photographed several years ago on my property. It is rare because we don't get much snow in Mississippi.

I started out OK with the challenge. I used some NuPastels then I switched to Rembrant because I didn't have the value or color I wanted. I used a couple of Pitt pastel pencils to blend a little with and for the tree trunks. I have a new set of J-Luda pastels that I have been wanting to try and they worked great for the snow, but because they are so soft I filled the tooth on the focal point tree and ended up brushing some off. Overall my experience was good but I'm thinking of a redo with pastemat.

*Unexpected Beauty*

*8 x 10*



**Andrea Stutesman, Black Mountain**

I had difficulty choosing a subject for this challenge.

I wasn't in the mood for an a landscape, which isn't my strong suit anyway.

I thought about what I think of with cold and winter. Antartica has eternal winter. The Emperor penguins are so cute and majestic, I decided to choose them as my subject.



*Baby It's Cold Outside*  
16 x 12

Ruth Whitaker, Newnan, GA

*Winter's Light* 8 x 10



8x10 on textured paper.

Used assorted soft pastels and pastel pencil. I've wanted to paint on this textured paper for awhile.

A memory of a church on a hill in MN. MN is where I grew up as a small child, where I have my fondest memories of winter.

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