

The following 23 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 AAA-4: “Send in the Clouds”

Welcome to our fourth Pastel Adventure in Series AAA. The focus of this Adventure is painting clouds:

“I’ve looked at clouds from both sides now,
From up and down and still somehow
Its clouds illusions I recall
I really don’t know clouds at all.”

These lyrics are from Joni Mitchell’s 1967 song, “Both Sides Now”. Interestingly, at the end of the song she switches the lyrics to “I really don’t know life at all.” Here’s how this challenge will work:

Step 1: Review the lyric of Joni Mitchell’s hit song “Both Sides Now”. Then consider the many artists that are known for painting amazing clouds, such as, Maxfield Parrish, NC Wyeth and Eric Sloane to name a few. (See illustration below.) The clouds were often the main character of the painting and, even more often, they played a significant supporting role.

Step 2: Make a decision to go bold or mild with your cloud painting. In other words, you can make them the focus or you can employ them in a significant secondary role. The choice is yours. Likewise, feel free to add mountains, people, water, trees or whatever suits your style.

Step 3: The details as to size, color, surface, etc are all up to you the artist. You might just find out that after this challenge you really do know clouds!

Step 4: Take a photo of your painting and tell us why you chose this particular inspiration. Be sure to include the title and the size of your artwork. Also, please feel free to make comments on the surface and the pastels you used for this challenge.

Step 5: Send the photo of your artwork, your comments, and the title and size of your painting to Kay Gordon (jkaygordon364@gmail.com) by October 27th at 6:00 PM.

Step 6: Remember, this deadline is firm and nothing can be posted that is received after 6 PM on October 27th. Your painting does not need to be in its finished form. This adventure is so we can paint and learn together. So relax and have fun looking up at the sky!

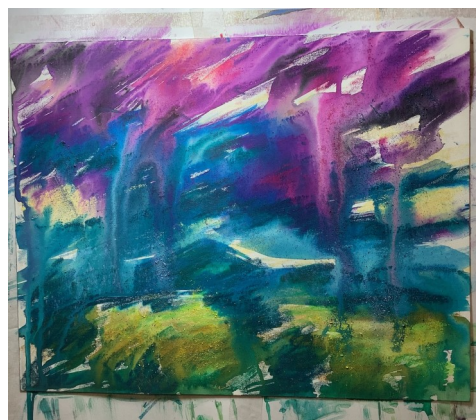
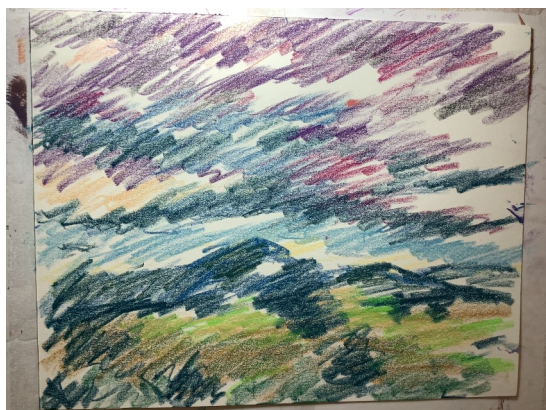
Kathy Amspacher, Hendersonville

Lux Archival paper

Neocolor II stix underpainting

Enjoyed using neocolors by using water wash over the dry crayon.

The scene was photographed out the car window on Route 81 in Virginia. Lovely day!



Clouds over Virginia 11 x 14



Catharin McCarthy Banta, Hendersonville

Colorado Afternoon 12 x 9



Uart 400, Terry Ludwig

I chose this picture because I was drawn to the big sky and streak of golden Aspens. The sky is not full of billowy, puffy, clouds , but I felt like they were interesting enough to create a big sky.

I created an orange underpainting and tried to create grays with yellow and violets.

My intent was for the sky to be the main focus ,but once I finished I am not sure that the trees did not come front and center!

I enjoyed really looking at the clouds, and appreciated this challenge.

Jane Best, Morganton



Voluminosity

9 x 12

On dark Uart paper with mainly Unison and Terry Ludwig pastels.

This painting is based on a photo I took in Morganton late one afternoon last August.

This is the first time I've made clouds the primary subject of a painting so it was an excellent learning experience and I look forward to trying more of them.

Beryl Bradley, Brevard

I love clouds and am always taking photos of them.

This was a storm building up at the beach. There were so many colors!

I used black sanded paper and a variety of soft and hard pastels.

Thanks for keeping us painting!



Storm Clouds

10 x 12

Deborah Chase, Hendersonville

What's Brewing

7.5 x 9.5



I took this picture because the dark blue violet cloud in front of the others was interesting to me.

Compositionally not that good but it fits the criteria for this adventure.

Nancy Clausen, Swannanoa

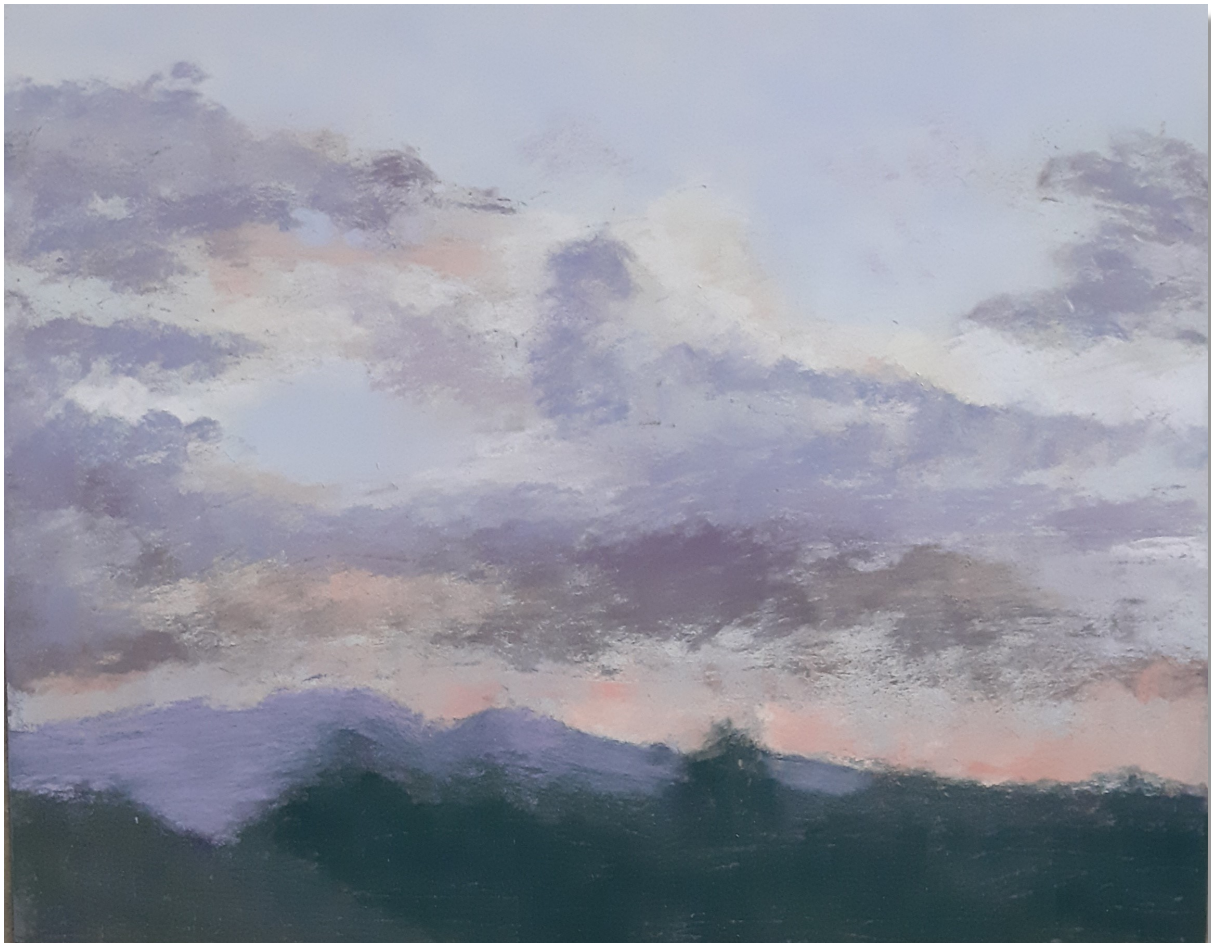
I'm always intrigued with the clouds in the evening before the sun goes down. I see from my photo that I need to bring up the colors in the back clouds.

The painting is on an 11 x 14 Ampersand board.

For my sky my underpainting was done with pinks and yellows and then blues and violets over it.

I used violets from Terry Ludwig. Other pastels were hard pastels by Faber Castell. Soft pastels were Schmieke , Great American, and Unison.

Night Clouds 11 x 14



Ruth Crowe, Matthews, NC

I wanted my clouds to be my focus. I used art spectrum paper with mostly girault pastels, some of which were a gift from a special art friend. I will do the final strokes later.

As I have been wanting to do clouds—I really enjoyed this challenge



Clouds at Sunset

Diane de Grasse, Black Mountain

Holdouts

9 x 12



Just under the wire, only 3 hours this afternoon...

Here is my clouds pastel from my reference photo taken in Florida, land of clouds.

It was shot through a lanai screen at the end of the day, so I call it "Holdouts".

Mostly soft pastels - what was I thinking using all my black - but used spongy "backer rods" to spread it out.

It's on ArtSpectrum Blue Haze, 9X12.

Thanks once again for a very good challenge!

Marcia Donley, Zionville, NC

Suncatcher Clouds...North Ridge

11 x 14



There are beautiful colors in clouds at any time, but especially at sunrise and sunset.



Hunting for Seashells
9.5 x 12.5

I find that painting clouds is always a challenge, whether I am painting outside from life or inside from a photo/sketch reference. This Challenge was a very good exercise. Thank you so much!

I have always wanted to capture this scene of my husband and my Dad hunting for seashells. It was such a special afternoon. The Florida skies are so wide and blue, accented by bunches of puffy cotton clouds being pushed by the strong winds. The beaches are pinkish, flat and very deep.

I wanted to convey the magnitude of this scene and power of the sky through these tiny figures on this huge expanse of beach under the massive Florida sky, two friends so engrossed with each other in hunting for shells.

The clouds are playing a secondary role in this painting (though perhaps a large one). To me it is all about the men hunting for seashells on this Florida beach.

i used La Carte sanded pastel paper (Green/Grey colour) and soft pastels (Unison, Terry Ludwig, Richeson, Rembrandt, Diane Townsend Soft Form, with Nupastels and Rembrandt for the dry underpainting).

Terrilynn Dubreuil, Asheville

To see clouds really well, space is needed, a good atmospheric space between the viewer and the cloud. From huge flat plains, the edge of the ocean, and atop high mountain ridges are the best locations.

I was driving north to Maine and took a northern section of the Blue Ridge Highway through Virginia. As I was coming around a hairpin turn, there opened an amazing view over the valley, crowned by an amazing cloud.

Ever the photographer .. I pulled over and took the shot. I have tried to capture the immensity of the cloud and how it dwarfs the mountains below. Clouds like this look almost solid .. but there's an elusive, ethereal quality to them. That's what one tries to portray.



Mountain Cloud 12 x 9

Will Evans, Fairview

Summer's Last Breath

4 x 4



Attached is my submittal for the Clouds challenge.

4"x4" on Uart 400, sketched in with vine charcoal, a variety of hard and soft pastels.

Titled: Summer's Last Breath.

J Kay Gordon, Weaverville

My reference was from several photos I took of this storm across the bay from our campground in Maine this summer.

With a couple of exceptions, all pastels used in this painting were from the **Thunderstorm Grey set of Mount Vision Pastels** that is the prize for this series (well, from MY set, not the ones that are the prize!)

This was done on Canson Mi Tientes paper...the smooth side. That is not a sanded paper, but when you understand how to use it, it can help you create wonderful effects.



Storm over Schoodic 6 x 8

On dark gray Mi Tientes

The Boot

8 x 10

on UART 500 grit



Pastels: Rembrandts, Great American, Terry Ludwig

Many years ago when I had completed my first pastel painting, a fellow artist suggested that I put a few clouds in the background to add more interest to my painting. So I did, but I was never satisfied with how the clouds looked... they looked “odd” or “fake”. That’s when I realized that just as Joni M. says... “I really didn’t know clouds at all.”

Since then I have studied clouds, so I could accurately portray them in the landscapes behind my animal paintings. I discovered that to make clouds look real, I needed to treat them as solid objects with highlights, shadows and cast shadows, and I needed many accurate reference photos to work from.

Whenever I am out, I keep my phone handy so I can record unusual cloud shapes and groupings. This painting is based on a photo that I took earlier this year... it reminded me of the boot that a certain dashing cat wore along with his wide-brimmed hat and belted sword scabbard... Puss ‘n Boots.

In my reference photo, there were some tree silhouettes in the lower right corner... but I have decided to leave them out for now.

Toni Hutcheson, Pisgah Forest, NC



Storm Clouds

12 x 10

Nothing is more beautiful to me than the moon shining through clouds...

...here's my version of that scene.

Kathy Hutchinson, Rutherfordton, NC

On buff sanded paper

The photo was shared with me by a friend who had been visiting Colorado during last year's terrible wildfires.

I could not resist asking permission to paint this scene.. thanks for the challenge as it got me moving on this one.



Wildfire Sunset

5 x 7

Lynn Jackson, Brevard, NC



Cloud Study

9 x 12

I enjoyed working with the many colors in the clouds and incorporating them in the rest of the painting.

Karen Knaub, Lake Lure

After brushing off 2 other paintings with individual clouds, I had to go with a cloudy day.

I just couldn't pull off fluffy clouds.

I listened to and sang along with this Joni Mitchell song many times, many years ago.

But I have to say when I downloaded the words it was the first time I truly heard the song. So thank you for that.



Fall Sky
12 x 9

Margaret V Lyn-Soroken, Black Mountain

Clouds

6 x 9



Medium: pastels on Uart 600

A dramatic direction of clouds I photographed in FI

I don't think I did justice but a

good exercise...thanks for the challenge

Susan Simmonds, Petaluma, CA

“It's cloud illusions I recall.” I recall that when I was young, a major form of entertainment was watching magnificent cloud formations, and seeing what forms emerged. Great fun, and creative outlet for my sister and me.

My “It's cloud illusions I recall” painting is just that - hope you can have some fun and find some emerging things from the clouds. Clues: Man, lady sleeping, cat, horse, steer, teddybear, crocodile, bear, raccoon, boats (2)

Susan Simmonds Art Spectrum Colourfix 9x12



“It's cloud illusions I recall” 9 x 12

Andrea Stutesman, Black Mountain



Sky on Fire

9 x 12

Paper: 400 UArt

Pastels: Unison and Sennelier

Artist: Andrea Stutesman

I tried to recreate a beautiful photo I took of sunset on the marsh in South Carolina. The colors were so brilliant. I am fascinated by the clouds and the variety of colors, though we usually think of them as white.

They reflect and have shadows with depth yet wispy and soft appearing. As much as I try, I am really bad at landscapes, especially clouds. I still gave it a try. These challenges make me stretch my limited abilities.

Donna Tweedle, Leesburg, FL

The painting Inclosed has a border that shows it better, hope that's ok.

Title : Sun Rise In the Bahamas painted on 8x10 Richeson slate colored board .using hard and soft sticks.

The inspiration is from a photo taken years ago that has been floating around in my "gonna do sometime" in the studio.



Sun Rise in the Bahamas

8 x 10



Sawyer Bear Whitemiller, Cape Coral, FL

Peace, Love and Bunnies

10 x 12



The first thing that came to mind when it said clouds was Jack and the Beanstalk.

I always liked fairy tales and this reminded me of bedtime stories.

The first time I painted it didn't turn out very good, so I changed my idea to shapes in the clouds. I feel pretty proud of my cloud shapes.

I can't wait for the next Adventure!

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