

American Society of Botanical Artists

25th Annual Meeting and Conference
Pittsburgh 2019

Advanced Graphite Techniques: More than just Paper and Pencil

Deborah Shaw

Friday, October 18, 2019

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

(full-day classes include a one-hour lunch break)



Expand your repertoire of graphite techniques! This workshop will explore water-soluble graphite, graphite dust application, and more, to create deep ranges of tonal values; effortless smooth, even tones and detailed textures. Specialized supplies will be provided. Intermediate to advanced.

Supply List

Water soluble graphite (in several different grades and forms) will be supplied by the instructor.

Please purchase only professional materials, not “student-grade”. If you have something that is roughly equivalent to the supplies below, feel free to bring them instead of running out and purchasing new supplies. Also feel free to bring “best-beloved” supplies. I’ll have additional supplies with me if you would like to try something new before you purchase it. Better to buy fewer materials of quality than a lot of a cheaper quality.

Where to buy: I like to frequent our local brick-and-mortar art supply shops, so they don’t all disappear. If you shop online, and would like to support ASBA while shopping, go to <https://www.asba-art.org/shop/our-sponsors> and click on the “Click Here” words. This will take you directly to Blick Art Supplies online site. By clicking from the ASBA site to get there, Blick will donate a portion of your purchase price to ASBA.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Graphite:

Bring your favorite graphite: wood; mechanical; woodless; drawing leads and holders; or, mechanical pencil. Please bring at least one soft (4B, or 6B), and one harder (2H), as well as a 6H and a 9H. If you would like, you may bring a full range of graphite pencils. In the studio, I use everything, from 9B (the softest) all the way through to 9H (the hardest).

- Drawing paper or hot press watercolor paper:

Bring a sketchbook with high quality paper or sheets of drawing paper, or other papers (watercolor hot press, Bristol, or other favorite surfaces).

AND/OR bring two or more quarter or half sheets of the hot press paper on which you usually paint with watercolor, (Arches, Winsor-Newton, Fabriano, etc.) OR Strathmore 500 series, 4 ply, bristol finish.

OR bring hot-press painting paper that you tried to paint on but decided you hate for watercolor. Smooth-surfaced (hot press) discarded watercolor painting papers are usually perfect for drawing. It's a great way to use up that neglected paper sitting in the drawer.

AND/OR if you're a big fan of painting on vellum, bring that.

I will bring some paper for exercises.

- Drawing board: (small) or piece of foam core to use as backing for drawing (not necessary if you're bringing a sketchbook or pad of drawing paper or watercolor paper)

- Brushes:

High quality brushes with a great point that will be permanently designated for water-soluble graphite work only (never to be used with watercolors again). Minimum of two (2) brushes, a larger brush, #8 or #6 round, and a small brush for details, #1 or 00. Any other additional brushes you prefer.

- Bring one or two synthetic brushes to use for application of graphite powder. Cheap brushes are fine, and can be flats or cat's tongue shapes. Again, these are brushes that will never again be used for watercolor.

- Ruler or divider

- Magnifying glass (Don't worry if you don't have one. I'll bring a few.)

- Small task light: Ott light or other portable, battery powered light. Many conference workshop spaces have less than ideal lighting. A good light source isn't an imperative requirement for this workshop, but if you would like to have one, please bring it. We won't have accessible electrical outlets, so battery powered is best.

- Erasers, white plastic and a new kneaded eraser.

- Water container.

- Rags or paper towels.

- Pencil sharpener, or lead pointer if you're using a lead holder. I will be bringing at least one pencil sharpener. Hand powered or battery powered is best.

- Subjects: I'll bring some subjects, and we'll have subjects available from the local Pittsburgh area. If, however, you have a favorite something on which you would like to work, please feel free to bring it. Great subjects for our workshop would be dried seeds and fruits, dried leaves, stems, bark, anything with interesting textures. Please keep in mind that we don't want to transport any pests or plant diseases to new areas.

Optional items:

- Tracing paper
- Tape
- Clips, or other useful devices to hold specimens
- Watercolors and other watercolor supplies

MY PERSONAL PREFERENCES:

I'm always asked about my personal preferences, so here they are. I will be bringing extras, so if you would like to "try before buying" feel free to do so.

Graphite: Pencils can either be encased in wood, or leads used with a lead holder. I use them all, depending on the drawing at hand. Some of my favorite brands are (in no particular order): Derwent, Palomino Blackwing, Caran d'Ache, Faber-Castell, Staedtler-Mars, Tombow. When using pencils encased in wood, I like to have two or three of each hardness sharpened and ready to go so I don't have to keep stopping to sharpen them. If you choose to use a lead holder, it's easiest if you have one holder for several of the different leads you're using at the moment.

Blick Art Supplies has all the sizes you would ever need, and now carry my all-time favorites, Palomino Blackwing pencils too (Hooray!). Palomino Blackwings (Motto: "half the pressure, twice the speed), and other specialty pencils are available at <http://pencils.com>

Mechanical pencil: Either the 0.3 mm and/or the 0.5 mm you can get in office supply stores and art stores, HB lead. OR an Orenz 0.2 mm mechanical pencil with HB lead. As far as I know, they only are available through <http://www.jetpens.com/Pentel-Orenz-Mechanical-Pencils/ct/2137>

Erasers: I usually have a variety, including: Pentel Clic Eraser, Staedtler Mars Plastic, Papermate Tuff Stuff, Mono Zero Fine Point, and Pentel Hi-Polymer Erasers. I don't use them very often. I am addicted to using Blu Tack from the UK (the original blue variety, not the white) instead of a kneaded eraser. In the US, we have a similar product by UHU that's white. Alas, it is not the same as my favorite Blu Tack.

Instructor's Bio

Deborah Shaw has a degree in fine art as well as studying botany, native California flora and scientific illustration. Ms. Shaw is a member of ASBA, two ASBA chapters, and the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators. She teaches botanical art, and taught illustration, design and information design at UC Irvine Extension, where she was recipient of the "Distinguished Instructor" award. Deborah's work is in the permanent collection at the Hunt and in private collections. Her preferred media include graphite, watercolor, colored pencil, scratchboard, Illustrator and Photoshop.