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Art and Design Basics

Don Wightman Papers

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Drawing Tools

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CHALKS

During the 15th Century in Europe, the development of movable type, lead to the establishment of paper mills to answer the need, created by the increase in printing. This increase in the availability of paper and the use in Italy of black chalk, originated drawing as it is known today. This chalk was actually a soft, natural slate cut into strips and gave drawing a freedom and excitement not previously known. Shortly french red chalk or sanguine and white chalk followed suit. Chalk drawings served both as finished artwork and as preliminary studies for final works during the Renaissance. Often the chalk work was complemented by watercolor or ink to strengthen the drawing.

PASTELS

These were the final development of chalk and were composed of dry pigment with a gum binder. They were graded as to hardness. They are best used on a toothed surface which grips the soft colour and must be protected when complete with fixative or covered with glass.

CHARCOAL

Originally this medium was produced by burning grapevine roots, but more recently a close grained wood such as willow is used. Pure charcoal should be considered distinct from compressed variety. This latter is composed from ground charcoal plus a binder and handles much like black chalk.

METALS

Traditionally this thin rod of lead or "Stylus" was used to effect a delicate fine line drawing on paper, treated, tinted and often highlighted with white tempera. Toning and shading was done thru painstakingly building up areas of fine hatch or crosshatch lines and was therefore extremely tight, detailed and controlled. It is now almost completely replaced by the more versatile lead pencil.

PENCIL

Originally this term referred to fine brush used by painters. The earliest lead pencils were made of natural graphite. Further development of this medium was made by N. J. Conte in 1795, whose method of combining graphite and clay is still the basis of pencil manufacture. It is now available in stick or pencil form and is graded from 6B (soft) to 9H (hard) and can be used for line or tone or both.

DRY MEDIA - TECHNICAL

PENCILS

- Composition - clay imparts, hardness to lead and graphite imparts softness.
 - Designations - alphabetical, H - Hard, more clay present - F - Firm medium, HB - Medium, B - Soft, more graphite.
 - Numerical - These indicate the degree of hardness or softness, eg., 4B - soft, 6H - Hard.
- In soft or B group the higher numbers are softer, in H or hard group the higher numbers are harder.

Basic Types - Ceramic Lead - outlined above.

Charcoal - 7B to 6B - wood encased on stick, brittle requires kneaded eraser, smudges easily, fixatif necessary.

Carbon - gives matte finish deep black, requires fixatif and kneaded eraser.

Coloured pencils - composition, paste and wax, difficult to erase, fixatif not necessary.

Carpenters pencils - various grades, excellent sketching medium, wide lead, bold statement.

Sharpening - Use razor knife and sandpaper, experiment with point styles some of which are conical, chisel, wide flat point, side of lead flat.

The instrument may be used in any position from almost vertical to flat in the palm of the hand.

DRY MEDIA - GROUPS & RELATED EQUIPMENT

Paper -

Tooth - Refers to file like action of the papers' surface, varies with type of paper.

Experimenting with various lead and paper combinations produce interest and effect.

Related Equipment -

Mech. Pencil Any grade of lead procurable

Kneaded Eraser - Clean up drawing without smudging, lighten dark areas.

Raz Gum Erase soft pencil, generally clean up drawing.

Erasing Shield - (metal) - mask areas - edge of paper can be used.

Razor Knife - Sharpening

Sand Paper Pad - Sharpening

Smudge Stick - Produce flat smudged areas.

Fixatif - To prevent smudging when using soft pencil, charcoal, etc.

Application of Fixatif - work 2 to 3 feet from drawing, constant movement of container, avoid soaking, apply in light layers (will run if too heavily applied).