Art Journal
FREEDOM

How to Journal Creatively with Color & Composition

Dina Wakley

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Introduction

BIRDY

Why study composition and color? Art journaling has no rules, right?

Right.

I firmly believe there's value and beauty in every art journal page. Every single one.

But knowing (and then wielding) composition and color principles gives you a certain expressive freedom. The rules help you make conscious decisions about your art. They give you the freedom to express yourself in an effective way. And, for me, that's the goal of an art journal—personal expression.

This book is not a comprehensive review of all design principles. Instead, we explore several principles of composition and color that apply to making art journal pages. It's a true exploration. We experiment with the principles, twist them, break them and have fun with them.

Each chapter of this book has a brief description of a principle. I give you examples and suggestions for when you might use that particular principle in your journaling. Then there are page challenges for you to put the principles into practice. Lastly, each chapter has one of my favorite art journaling techniques.

When you explore the rules in this book, make dozens of pages. No, make hundreds. The more you create, the more you'll discover what works for you and what doesn't. Plus, you'll become better at your craft. There's no substitute for working consistently in your journal. Play, experiment, have fun and express. Give yourself permission to make pages you don't like. Not every page will be a masterpiece, nor should it be. Use the rules to help your soul spill out onto your journal. Remember, they'll make more paper. Ready, set, go!

Power Through Knowledge

When you understand design and color principles, you have power over them. You have power to arrange them, twist them and make them do what you want to convey your meaning and intent. You even have power to break them.

Tools and Materials

Journaling supplies are very personal. Each journal artist has her own preferences for paint, paper and pens. I have found it valuable to try many brands and types of tools. When I find something I love, I stick with it. I'm happy to share with you what works for me. Your personal tools and materials list may have fewer items than this list or many more.

Pens

My main requirement for a pen is that it writes over dried ink and paint. The key here is "dried." I can't tell you how many pens I've ruined trying to write over wet paint (patience is not my strong suit). These are my go-to pens:

My go-to pens: water-based poster paint Sharpie (black and white), Japanese brush-tip pen, Marvey LePlumes dye-based marker, Fude 1.5mm roller ball, Faber-Castell pen.

Sharpie Water-Based Poster Paint Marker: This is my most-used pen. I buy the black and white in extra-fine point. I have nicknamed these "shaky pens" because you have to shake them a good long time to mix the ink (especially the white). You also need to "burp" the pen regularly (i.e., press the nib into the pen to keep the ink flowing).

Sharpie Extra Fine Point Marker: Extra Fine point is different than Ultra Fine point. The Extra Fine pens may be trickier to find. I have to buy them by the dozen at the office supply store. The nib is reinforced well, and they stand up to heavy use and rough surfaces.

Faber-Castell PITT Artist Pen: The India ink in these pens is lusciously dark. I like the medium nib, but many different sizes are available.

Ohto Fude Ball 1.5mm Roller Ball Pen: This is a Japanese pen that has a big 1.5mm roller ball. I've had good luck writing with this, even over bumpy surfaces.

Dye-based marker: I often turn to dye-based markers (like Marvy LePlumes) to give a quick swipe of color to stamped images.

Brush pen: I'm obsessed with buying Japanese calligraphy brush pens. They are fun to use and give a unique look to journaling.

Pencils

I use pencils to sketch, journal and scribble.

Pencils for sketching and journaling: Stabilo Marks All, B soft lead pencil, white Stabilo Marks All, charcoal pencil, Ebony pencil.

Stabilo Marks All: This pencil is made for writing on slick surfaces like glass and plastic, which is what makes it so great for writing over dried paint. The lead is soft and gives a dark, impressive line. I call this the "magic pencil" because of its properties. It's water-soluble, so you can run a wet brush over your lines to get a painted look. If you mess up, you can get most of it off your page with a baby wipe. Because it is so easily removed, I often seal my work with Workable Fixatif (addressed later in this chapter). I buy these pencils by the dozen in both black and white.

Ebony pencil: These are dark, soft pencils. Though not water-soluble, they are great for giving you a dark line when a regular pencil is too light.

Charcoal: Charcoal comes in many incarnations (pencil, stick, twig, different hardness levels). I have many different types, but I most often use a soft charcoal pencil (easy to grab out of my pencil box). It's delightfully smudgy. After I use charcoal in my journal, I seal it with Workable Fixatif.

Paint & Brushes

Painting tools and materials, from left to right: old gift cards for scraping paint, selection of acrylic paints and spray paints, paintbrushes, watercolor palette, palette knife.

Gloss matte medium, matte gel medium, modeling paste, gesso.

Gesso: Gesso is like underwear for acrylic paint. You can get by without it, but something isn't right. Most of my pages start with a thin layer of gesso. The gesso coat gives acrylic paint something to hold onto. We call this "tooth." Gesso helps me use less acrylic paint because the paint doesn't soak into the paper. Try putting paint on a piece of paper with gesso and a piece without gesso. You will see that the paint behaves differently on the gesso than it does on the plain paper. Many techniques I do are gesso-dependent. They just don't work if the gesso isn't there. Some gessoes are grittier than others. Try various brands and see what you like best. I admit to liking inexpensive gesso. It's great for journaling. I'd rather spend money on acrylic paint than on gesso.

Acrylic paint: I have many brands of acrylic paint in my paint drawer. My most-used brands are Golden (artist grade), Liquitex (artist grade) and Amsterdam (student grade). I prefer a heavy-body formulation, but many brands of paint also come in fluid formulations. Try both and see what you like best. I've learned that although artist-grade paints are more expensive, they are so densely pigmented that the color goes a long way.

Spray paint: I'm no expert at spray paint, so I often use brands from the hardware or craft store. I have treated myself to some artist-quality spray paints (such as Montana Gold), and oh my, they are fun. What's nice about artist-quality spray paint is that you can buy different nozzles for your cans of paint to get different spray patterns. Mostly, though, I just use regular black spray paint (such as Valspar, Krylon or something similar).

Watercolor: My most-used watercolors are a travel set of Koi colors. These are great for making washy, ethereal backgrounds. I bring them when I'm traveling, along with a waterbrush.

Paintbrushes: I admit to being a chronic paintbrush-abuser. I do everything to them you're not supposed to do, like leave them in water pots for days at a time. Because of my bad brush habits, I buy inexpensive paintbrushes. I tend to like flats or brights and rounds in various sizes. I like synthetic bristles that have a nice spring to them and natural (hog) bristles that are stiff.

Palette knives and scrapers: I use palette knives constantly. I often apply gesso with a knife because it's much easier to wash gesso off a knife than it is to get it out of a brush. I love to start backgrounds by scraping on paint with a knife or a scraper. You can buy lovely metal palette knives, and I have a few, but mostly I use the cheap plastic ones. For scrapers, I use old gift cards, hotel room keys, etc.

Journals and Substrates

Journals: I've used many types of journals over the years. Because I love layers and tend to really abuse my pages, I find that I get the best results from a journal that has watercolor paper in it (versus sketch-weight paper). I need the paper to be heavy, at least 110 lb. to 140 lb. (200 gsm to 300 gsm). My most-used journals are by Global Art and Moleskine. There are various wire-bound journals on the market now, too. Try different kinds and fill them up with glorious art while you discover your favorite.

Loose paper: You can always journal on loose paper and then bind your work into a book. Or buy loose paper and create your own journal. I love rough, bumpy handmade watercolor paper (such as Nujabi or Shizen). Those types of papers are very absorbent, so a gesso layer is essential. I also go through copious amounts of Canson XL watercolor paper. It's student-grade paper with surprisingly good quality and strength (plus, it is inexpensive). Strathmore makes some lovely papers, and I have friends who swear by Stonehenge paper.

Mixed-Media Playthings

Ephemera: Old sheets of music paper, book paper, printed paper, etc. are great for collage and backgrounds.

Gel medium: I like matte gel, though you can buy it in semi-gloss and gloss formulations. I find matte gel to be the best adhesive for my journal (especially for collage adhesive). I apply it with a palette knife or my finger. I'm a messy gluer, and matte gel is unobtrusive on my work. If there's glue where it shouldn't be (and knowing me, there will be), it dries matte and doesn't draw attention to itself. Gloss gel is good for resist techniques and also gives a crystal-clear photo transfer.

Spray ink: I am a slave to spray ink. I love it. I own hundreds of bottles. Spray inks give you a look that you can get no other way. However, spray inks are messy and unpredictable. I always say that the three words you will say most when you use spray ink are, "Oops! Oh, well!" Be at peace with the "oops" and you'll come to love spray inks as much as I do. My most-used inks are Dylusions and Color Wash by Ranger. These inks are densely pigmented and are reactive with water, giving you many technique options. Dylusions inks are bright and vibrant. Color Wash inks are earthy. When I need a more permanent ink option, I use Maya Mist by Maya Road. These inks are not reactive to water and give nice, solid coverage.

Inks, from back left to front: spray inks, re-inkers, ink pads.

Stencils: There are great art stencils on the market if you don't feel like making your own. Crafter's Workshop has dozens of designs, and the stencils are sturdy and can take a beating. StencilGirl Products is another fun source for art stencils.

My much-used stencils.

Ink pad: I love a good black ink pad, and the Jet Black Archival pad by Ranger is my most-used pad. It stamps well over acrylic paint (a must for me!) and is permanent when dry, so there is no smearing when you color your image. You can also buy Archival pads in twenty-four colors. They are practically the only ink pads I use in my journal.

Stamps: Stamps are a great way to get imagery into your journal, especially if you're not comfortable drawing. You need stamps. Lots of them. I buy wood-mounted, cling-mounted and unmounted. I love to use stamps to add texture to backgrounds, too.

Rubber stamps, both mounted and unmounted.

Mark-making tools: Cardboard circles, combs, awls and even Legos are great to use as mark-making tools.

Modeling paste: Modeling paste and stencils are made for each other. Modeling paste gives a raised, dimensional look. It's paintable and sandable and so fun to play with. I always apply paste with a palette knife.

PanPastels: PanPastels are unique. They are artist-quality pastels packed into a clear pan. Just about anything you can do with paint, you can do with PanPastels. They are very low dust, so you don't make a big mess when you use them. I love to use them to make backgrounds and color images. I've even painted faces with them. The colors are extremely blendable. And if you don't like what you did, you can remove some of the pastel from your page with a white eraser.

Workable Fixatif: I rely on this to seal pencil and charcoal work when I don't want it to smear. I use Workable Fixatif, from Krylon, rather than a spray polyurethane because I often want to keep working on my page after I seal it. The Workable Fixatif leaves some tooth on the page so you can continue to apply more layers. Other sprays are meant to be sealants, and you use them at the end to seal your work.

Transfer paper: This is great if you love to draw but feel like you aren't very good at it. Find images you like and trace them onto your work with transfer paper. Super-easy!

Sandpaper: Get a variety of grits so you can sand through layers of paint and modeling paste with ease.

Cutters: I love a good pair of scissors. If I do something that requires measuring, I use a scrapbooking-type paper cutter.

Punches: I use $\frac{1}{8}$" and $\frac{1}{16}$" (3mm and 2mm) hole punches constantly to punch through signatures for quick book-binding techniques.

Corner rounder: The Corner Chomper by We R Memory Keepers will cut through heavily layered art, chipboard and even acrylic.

Spray bottle: I keep a spray bottle filled with water on my desk at all times. I use it to refresh ink on stencils, add water to my page and even add water to paint that I'm mixing.

Paper towels: I'm picky about my paper towels. I only use Viva because of its strength and lack of an embossed pattern. Paper towels will help your spray ink endeavors be more successful. I don't remove the paper towels from the roll. I simply spray, remove the stencil and make one pass over my page with the paper towels. I use the paper towels until they're super dingy, and then I just tear off the inky sheets.

Handy tools and materials, from left to right: spray water bottle, corner rounder, Workable Fixatif, hole punch, transfer paper, sander, bone folder (for making sharp creases), adhesive, scissors, masking tape (for adding texture under gesso), paper cutter.

Symmetry and Asymmetry

Symmetry and asymmetry describe how elements are arranged on a page.

Trees

Symmetry

I am a docent at our local art museum, and I often give tours to schoolchildren. When I explain symmetry, I have them pretend to draw a line down the middle of a painting. I ask them to look at each side of the painting. Do the two halves mirror each other? In other words, is what is on the left side the same as what is on the right side? If the two halves are mirror images of each other, the painting is symmetrical. When you learn about symmetry, you start to notice it everywhere. Our brains like symmetry. We're used to symmetry; we're surrounded by it all the time. There's symmetry in a basic seashell, in architecture, in furniture, in product design. Symmetry is comfortable and dominant in life.

Symmetry is when the elements on one half of a composition mirror the elements on the opposite half. Symmetrical art journal pages are calm, harmonious and pleasing. Types of symmetry include:

PURE SYMMETRY	NEAR SYMMETRY	RADIAL SYMMETRY
The two sides are exact mirror images of each other.	The two sides are not exactly the same but are very close.	The images radiate out from the center.
Often derived from math or geometry.	Occurs often in nature (e.g., a leaf may be symmetrical, but when you fold it in half, it's not exact).	Occurs both in nature (snowflakes, flowers) and in man-made forms (mandalas, stained-glass windows).
Rigid to use because the structure is strict. Predictable.	More versatile than pure symmetry because it allows for slight variance. This is the type of symmetry you may use most in your journaling.	Decorative.

If you draw a line down the center of my *Trees* journal page, above, you can see that the left half of the page mirrors the right half in a near-symmetrical composition. The trees are not identical, but similar enough to mirror each other and not be unexpected in any way.

Green Circles

Asymmetry

I love asymmetry. I am not sure if it's a reflection of my right-brained mind, but I find asymmetry exciting. When I start a page, I tend to automatically move toward an asymmetrical composition. I tend to resist rigid structure in my art (and even in my life). Asymmetry speaks to me.

Asymmetry is when the elements on one half of a composition do not mirror the elements on the other half, but there is equal visual weight on both sides. Asymmetrical compositions are informal, energetic and even chaotic. There's no one formula for asymmetrical compositions, and that is what makes asymmetry so interesting. Oh, the possibilities! With asymmetry, you're not bound by the rigid structure that symmetry requires.

Every now and then, though, a symmetrical page will pop up in my journals. Sometimes symmetry is what a page needs to express what is in my soul at that moment.

If you draw a line down the middle of my journal page, *So This Is Progress*, the asymmetry is obvious. The black silhouette is on the far left. I balanced the visual weight of the strong figure with the three white circles that start behind the figure and move to the top right. The white space on the bottom right also gives visual weight to the right side of the page.

So This Is Progress

One way to create an asymmetrical composition is to use the rule of thirds. The rule of thirds is a compositional tool that helps you know where to put your focal point. To use the rule, divide your surface into thirds vertically and horizontally. The areas where the lines intersect are called "power points." By putting your subject in one of the power points, you create balance and visual interest.

The rule of thirds is related to the rule of threes. In its simplest form, the rule of threes means that the human eye tends to prefer seeing odd numbers of things, particularly three things. For example, if you are using circles on a page, the eye tends to prefer seeing three instead of two or four. If you're creating a page and something seems off, check to see if the rule of thirds and the rule of threes can help your composition.
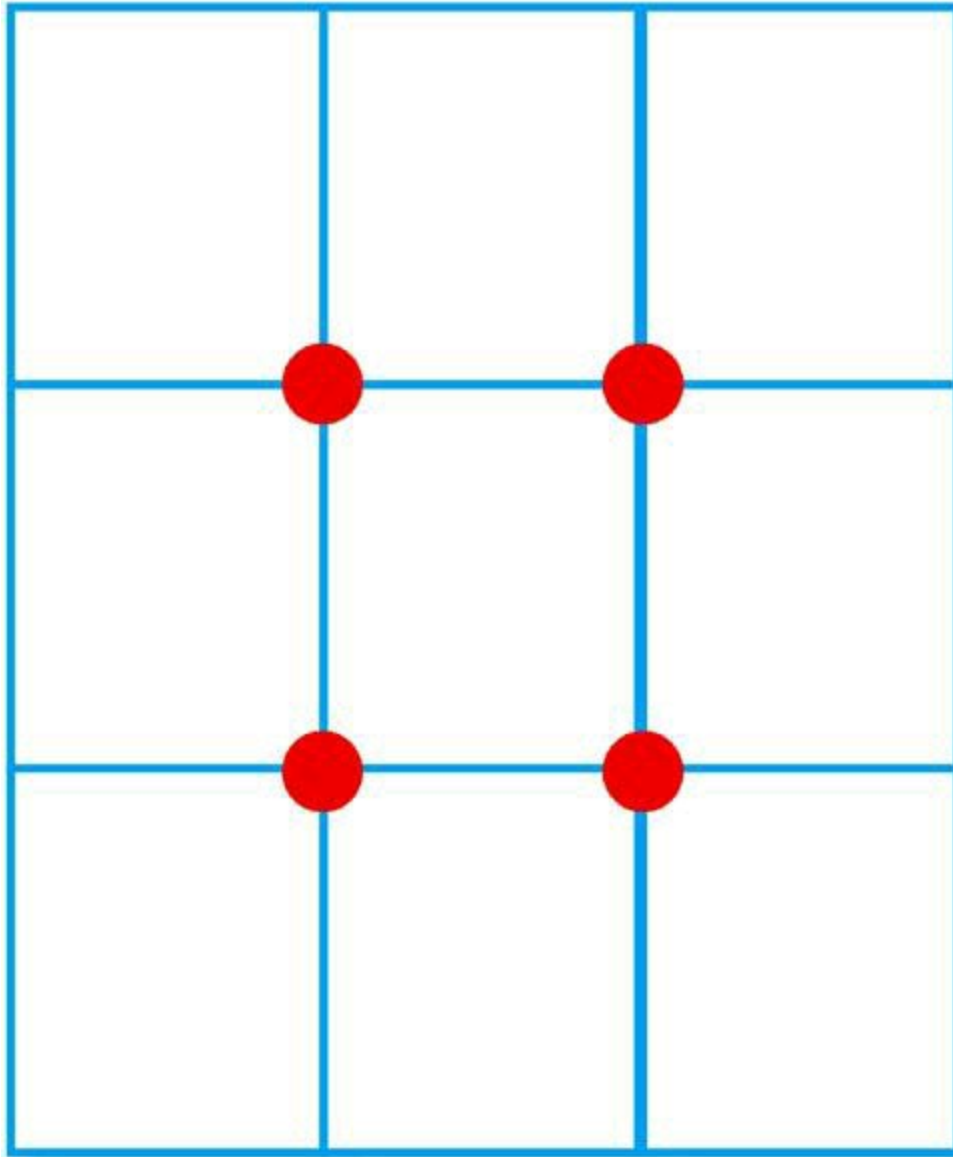
When you use three elements on the page, your eyes look at each one and connect them together to form a visual triangle. Our eyes like visual triangles! A visual triangle adds stability and flow to a composition. In *So This Is Progress*, the large silhouette is in the two left power points. The three white circles in the background form a visual triangle. If there were only two circles, the eye would bounce back and forth between them. Because there are three, the eye follows the visual triangle around the composition.

Confidence

Is Your Art Unbalanced?

If you create an asymmetrical composition with unequal visual weight on both sides, it is considered unbalanced. Unbalanced art is an art school no-no, but anything goes in an art journal! It can be harder than you think to make an unbalanced page. Even large areas of empty space can be a balancing influence (more on that in Chapter 3).

Exploring Symmetry and Asymmetry

Use a symmetrical composition when you want to:

- Play with pattern, repetition and order.
- Force a viewer to look at every detail equally in your page.
- Convey a sense of calm.

Use an asymmetrical composition when you want to:

- Heighten drama in your work.
- Create a sense of motion and play.
- Create visual interest and complexity.

Orange Silhouette

Page Challenges

Create a grid composition.

An easy way to add some symmetry to your work is to use a grid. You could draw a grid right onto your page and create in the squares. For *Butterfly Grid*, I created a grid with inky and painted papers. The gridded composition forces you to look at all the squares. None of the squares is overly dominant, so you must discover them all equally.

Butterfly Grid

Create a center-weighted composition.

I very rarely put my focal point smack in the center of my page, but doing just that is a simple way to create a symmetrical page. For *Girl With Attitude*, I placed my silhouetted figure right in the middle. Instant symmetry! I surrounded the figure with journaling so the visual weight of the journaling would be spread across the entire page.

Girl With Attitude

Use the rule of thirds.

Try using the rule of thirds to create an asymmetrical composition. Divide your page into thirds and put your focal image in one of the power points. In *Process of Play*, I put the bulk of the collage (and the stamped girl) in the bottom right power point. The gray watercolor background adds weight and importance to the collage. The empty white space on the top left helps to balance the weight on the bottom right.

Process of Play

Use the rule of threes.

Create a composition with three main elements. *I Need My Friends* has three circles with drawings and text. I varied the placement of the circles so they would be close to each other but not line up exactly. If you draw an imaginary line from circle to circle, you create the visual triangle.

I Need My Friends

Breaking the Rules

Now you know the rules. Time to break them. Or at least tweak them. Or tickle them a little bit. Or even throw them out the window completely!

Create an unbalanced composition.

This is harder than it seems. Find an image from a magazine, or print out a photo of yourself and cut it out. Find an unfinished page or background in your journal, and position your photo over the background in various areas. Try angling the photo or even turning it upside down. How does the placement affect the composition and the meaning of the page? Which combinations are unbalanced?

Look at the combinations I tried. The one that is most unbalanced to me is F. I am floating in the composition, not relating to anything else on the page. This composition might be perfect if I want to create a page that shows how stressed out I feel. The most balanced compositions are B and C. On B, I am in the bottom left power point. On C, I am in the top right power point. Which one is your favorite?
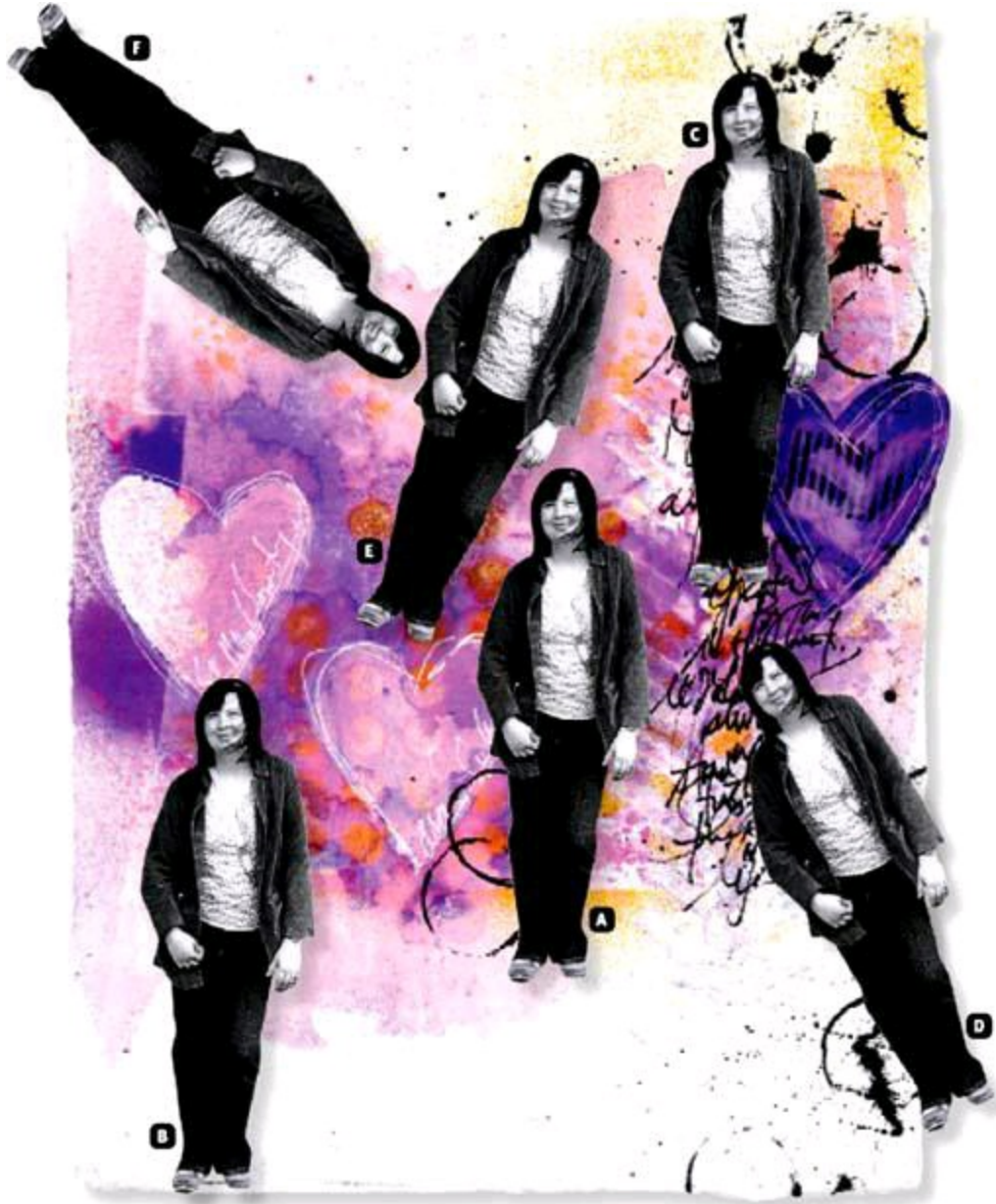
Floating Dina

Watercolor Spray Ink Backgrounds

I came by this technique by accident when I was spraying with ink and stencils. I did a bad job spraying, and there was ink in areas I didn't want it. I grabbed a wet brush and added water around my stenciled images in the hope that I could make them stand out better. Lo and behold, all that over-sprayed ink dissolved into a cool organic watercolor background. Now I often soak backgrounds with spray ink to play with their reactive properties. Let's use this technique to practice our symmetry and asymmetry skills. We'll create a spray-ink watercolor background and then cut it up to use as a grid foundation for a journal page.

Materials List

your journal or watercolor paper
9" x 12" (23cm x 30cm) watercolor paper
smooth white cardstock
spray inks (Vibrant Turquoise, Concord Grape, London Blue, Lemon Zest)
permanent ink pads (Black, Manganese Blue, Aquamarine)
Distress ink pad (Spiced Marmalade)
stamps (numbers, dots, harlequin, women)
stencil (harlequin)
sheet music
manila tag
white Stabilo Marks All pencil
dye-based marker
paintbrush
water
paper towels
adhesive
paper cutter
scissors
sewing machine & black thread

adhesive (Tombow); cardstock (Mohawk); Archival permanent ink pads, Distress ink pads, Dylusions spray inks (Ranger); manila tag (XpressTags); music paper (vintage); paper towels (Viva); pencil (Stabilo); stamps (Ranger and River City Rubber Works); stencil (Ranger)

Inks for This Technique

This watercolor technique works with inks that are reactive to water. If an ink is permanent, it won't work with this method. Check out Chapter 1 for suggestions on inks that are reactive. Also choose spray ink colors that won't make mud when they mix. Review Chapter 6, and remember that colors that are opposite on the color wheel make brown when they mix.

Step 1

Spray one-third of your watercolor paper with turquoise ink. Don't be afraid to coat the paper well. I always say, "No namby-pamby spraying!" Spray blue ink on another third of the paper.

Step 2

Spray purple ink on the remaining third. Let the ink dry.

Step 3

Wet a paintbrush and draw large water circles on the inky watercolor paper. Use lots of water; let it puddle in the circles.


Step 4

Lift up the watercolor paper and let the water run down and off the sheet. Blot the watercolor paper with one pass of a roll of paper towels. Set the paper aside to dry completely.

Wielding the Paper Towel Roll

One pass with a roll of paper towels removes excess ink from your page. Making more than one pass or rocking the roll of paper towels back and forth may smudge the ink or transfer some of the ink from the paper towels back onto your work.
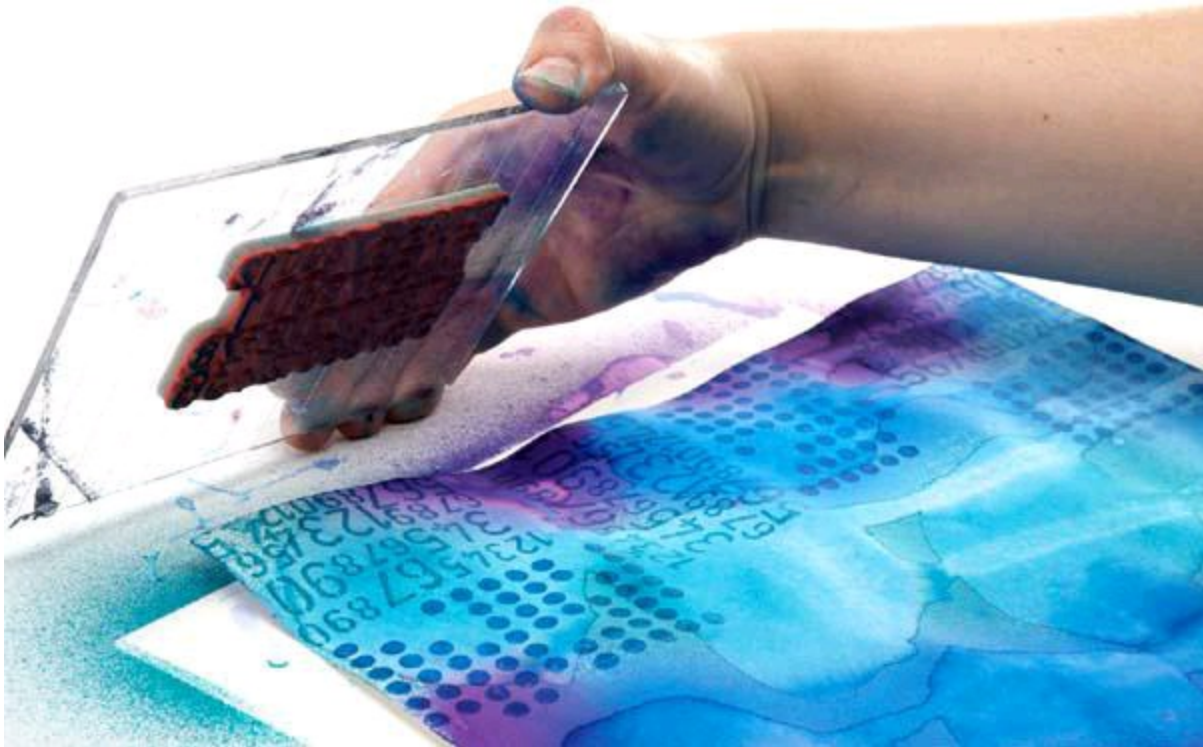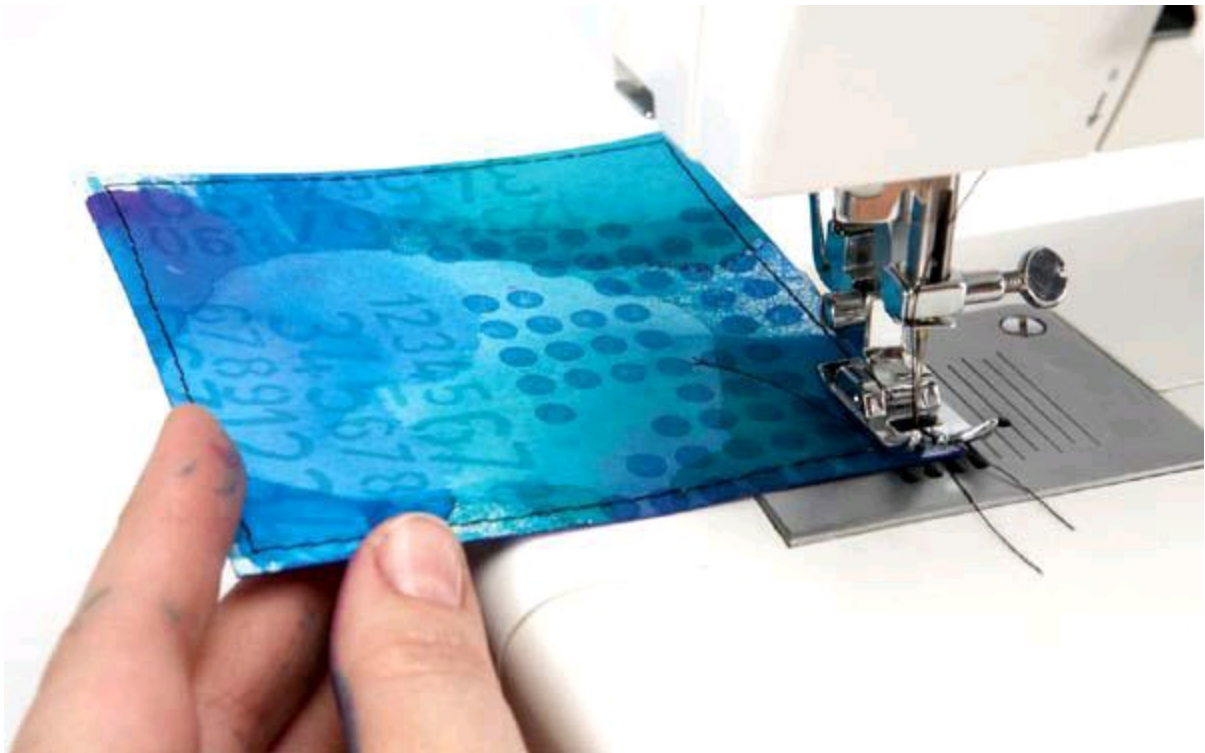

Step 5

Stamp a dot stamp with blue ink onto the paper. I like to use permanent, archival ink to stamp with. It stamps over anything and dries fast. Stamp a number stamp with aquamarine ink onto the paper.

Step 6

Cut the watercolor paper into 4½" x 4½" (11cm x 11cm) squares. Save the scraps for a future project.

Step 7

Use your sewing machine to sew around the squares. I tend to use black thread

because it stands up to the bright colors I use in my work.

Step 8

Open your journal to a new page. Use yellow spray ink and a harlequin stencil to add some imagery to the white page. I like to add a little bit of stenciling in two or three corners.

Glue the four squares onto the page. This is the foundation for a symmetrical composition.
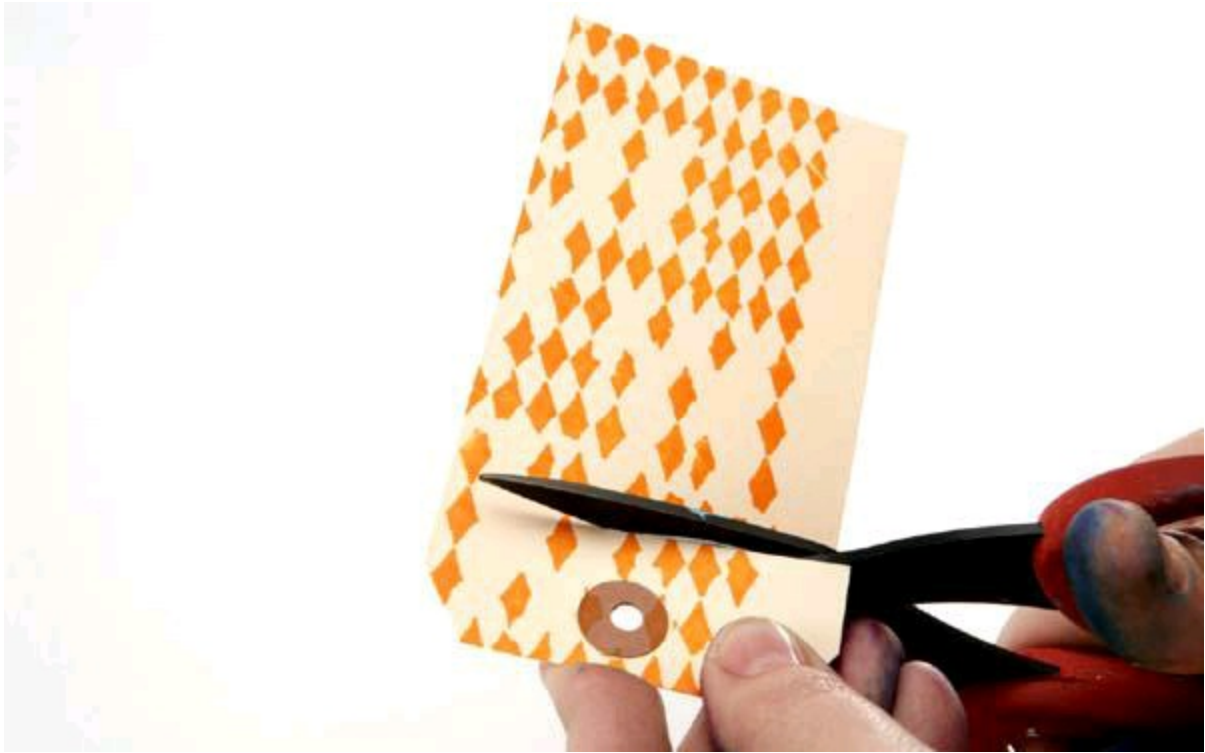
Step 9

Stamp a harlequin stamp with orange ink onto a manila tag. Cut up the manila tag. I first cut the tag into strips. Then I cut a chevron into the end of each strip. I like the way the chevron edge looks.

Step 10

Use black permanent ink to stamp some images of women onto smooth cardstock, stamping each image twice for symmetry. I love to use ultra-smooth cardstock. It gives a crisp, vibrant image. Cut out the images.

Step 11

Tear a few strips from the sheet music. I find old sheet music at thrift stores and used bookstores. Use the strips of tag, pieces of sheet music and stamped images to make little collages on the squares. Glue down all of the collage elements.

Step 12

Use the white pencil to add journaling in the squares. The pencil lead is very soft, so you will need to sharpen it often. The white pencil looks striking against the vibrant background.

Use a marker to give rosy cheeks to your stamped images. I can never resist giving my stamped figures a healthy glow.

Mixing Symmetry and Asymmetry

This page plays with both symmetry and asymmetry. The page is asymmetrical because of the strong grid. There's asymmetry inside each square because the collages are asymmetrical.

White Space, Continuance and Closure

White space, continuance and closure are three principles that help with the flow of a composition.

Means So Much

White Space

I love white space. Love. White space is the compositional tool that I use the most. Why? It is a simple principle that has great power. I find that if I use white space effectively, I can better control the crazy colors and heavy layers that I use on my pages. My art journaling students struggle with white space all the time, though. It's hard to leave some areas unfilled.

White space (sometimes called "negative space") is the space in a composition where the subject is not. It's the space around a subject and major page elements. White space matters because it is not just empty space. It has shape. Anything that has shape affects your composition. When you're aware of white space, you can wield its power as a composition tool.

Emphasize your subject and add value to what is on the page.

By limiting a page's content, you emphasize and put more value on the content that is there. In *Raven*, the painted and collaged area is surrounded on three sides by white space. The large area of white space surrounding the imagery guides your eye toward the text and images.

Raven

Balance your composition.

White space is a great balancing tool. A large area of white space has significant visual weight. You can easily balance an area heavy in imagery with a similarly sized area that is devoid of imagery. In *I Love*, I balanced the colorful and textured imagery on the left by leaving a large portion of the right side of the page empty. If you're working on a page and cannot get it to balance, remove an element and create more white space. It really works!

I Love

Allow the eyes and mind to rest before absorbing more.

Think of white space as breathing space, as a visual gulp of air. It's like breathing room for your mind as it looks at your artwork. In *Feel the Loss*, there are many strong colors and textures. The white space around the image gives your eye a place to land and rest as it processes everything that is going on in the page. If you include well-thought-out white space, your page design will be easily accessed and interpreted by your viewer.

Feel the Loss

Refine your composition.

Graphic designers often use lots of white space on their designs for high-end clients. When you create with lots of white space, it gives your page a refined feel because white space (in our culture) is associated with luxury. *Lucky*, (further in this chapter), has a sense of refinement because of the large amount of white space above the circles. If the circles were covering the entire area, the page would have a different look and feel.

Motivate your eye to move in a specific direction.

When areas of white space connect to each other, they form a flow for the eye to follow around your composition. In *Open Heart*, the white space on the left flows into the heart on the right. That flow pushes your eye into the subject and the journaling.

Open Heart

Continuance

Simply put, continuance is a principle that means that our eyes like to follow lines. Lines are paths that can literally move a viewer around your page. When we look at a piece of art or a magazine advertisement or a photograph, our eyes will follow any lines that are there. As an artist, you can purposely create lines in your work for viewers to follow. By controlling lines, you can direct what the viewer sees first and where she looks next.

In *Family*, continuance comes into play in the way I wrote the journaling. The heart is in the middle, and the journaling moves up and out from the heart, almost like rays of the sun. Your eye looks at the heart and then follows the journaling out and off to the top of the page. The journaling lines give the page energy and visual intensity.

Family

The directional raindrops on *I Like It* help to direct the eye toward the bird images. The vertical droplets are raining directly onto the birds, drawing the eye down. The horizontal droplets are pointing toward the birds. The eye follows the directed paths and rests on the birds.

I Like It

Closure

Closure is a principle about filling in what's not there. To use closure, you purposely leave out some elements or lines of an image. When we see the incomplete image, our brains fill in the missing parts to make sense of it. We have to look more closely at the image and engage with the artwork to decode it and fill in the missing details.

Closure is a fun way to play with your imagery. It can create a sense of intrigue and mystery. Can you tell that the circles on *Help* are not closed? I left areas of them open, and the white space flows out of one circle and toward the next. Each circle gives energy and flow to the next, and the page has a more open feeling than it would if I had heavily outlined all the circles.

Help

Exploring White Space, Continuance and Closure

Use a lot of white space when you want:

- Your central image to be powerful and dramatic.
- Your viewer to feel forced to look closely at your subject.
- Your page to look sophisticated and upscale.

Use very little white space when you want:

- A viewer to spend a long time exploring your work.
- A high level of visual complexity.
- Your subject to be so large that it fills most of the page.

Use continuance when you want:

- Your viewer to look at page elements in a certain order.
- A sense of motion and flow.
- A fluid connection between elements on your page.

Use closure when:

- You want to hold something back, to have a little mystery in your work.
- You want the viewer to engage in your work and actively fill in details.
- Putting in a complete line or image would be distracting or create an unbalanced composition.

Lucky

Page Challenges

Make two pages with similar subjects but different white spaces.

Create two pages with the same or a similar subject (like the same photograph or image). Take one of the pages and fill up most (or all) of the white space. How does the white space affect the page? Does it affect the page's meaning? Take a look at my pages titled *Lost to Me*. Both have the same background and journaling. Where they differ is in the number of stamped images and white space. Despite similar elements, each page has its own feel because of the white space. Which do you prefer? How does the visual meaning of each page change as the images and white space change?
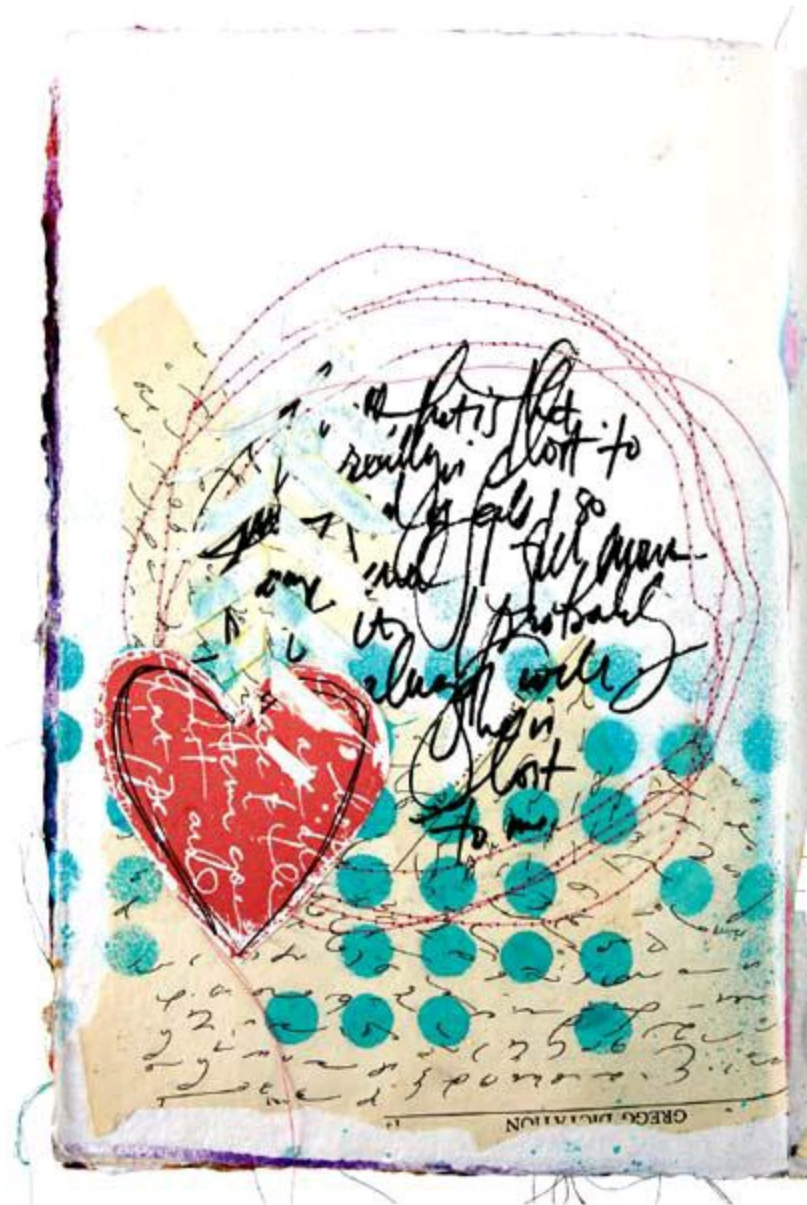
Lost to Me

Lost to Me

Create a continuance path with a cluster or grouping of page elements.

You can group page elements so they form a path for the eye to follow. In *Life Is Short*, I created a path with torn pieces of book paper. To reinforce the path, I journaled on it. The path leads the eye to the focal image on the right side.

Life Is Short

Play with closure by creating a broken object or image.

Take a figure or collage element that interests you and cut it up. Put it on your page, but leave some of the pieces out of it. For *Piercing Me*, first I drew a face on a separate piece of paper. I tore the face up and glued some, but not all, of the pieces on my page. We know it's a face, but our brains are forced to fill in the missing details. You could also try leaving out words in your journaling!

Piercing Me

Breaking the Rules

You can play with white space, continuance and closure in fun ways. Try taking a principle and using it for a purpose opposite its intended effect.

Make a page that has continuance, taking the eye in unexpected directions.

You can surprise or even make your viewer uncomfortable by leading his eye in an unexpected direction. In *Intimidating*, there are many drips of paint. The drips are visually jarring because they go up the page instead of down the page. Our minds expect the drips to go down with gravity.

Intimidating

Write with very little white space between your letters.

For words to be legible, they need to have some degree of spacing. Try writing your journaling with little or no spacing. Your writing takes on a form of its own, and its illegibility is mysterious. In *For the Best*, my writing is illegible and overlapping and adds to the intensity of the page.

   You could also try filling up a page completely with collage elements. Leave no space untouched! How does the page feel to you?

For the Best

Scraped and Painted Backgrounds

I love to scrape paint onto my pages. When you scrape paint, you can get very thin layers that overlap and play with one another to create lots of intensity. One reason I use this technique often is that I hate to waste paint on my palette. If I have extra paint, I will pick it up with a scraper and put it on a blank journal page (or on two or three). I let the paint dry and come back to it later, sometimes even months later. The scraped paint is always a nice surprise and provides a simple starting layer for a new page.

Try using this technique to practice the principles you've learned in this chapter. I used it to create continuance in the background while the rubbed stencil imagery in the background leads the eye around the page.

Materials List

12" x 12" (30cm x 30cm) canvas
watercolor paper
gesso
acrylic paint (Sky Blue Light, Medium Magenta, Indian Yellow Hue, Payne's Grey, Titanium White)
black spray paint or black acrylic paint
permanent black ink pad
old book pages
large image of a person from a fashion magazine
old gift card for scraping
stencil (raindrop)
white pen
gel medium
adhesive
cotton rag
palette knife
scissors
sewing machine & black thread

acrylic paint (Amsterdam, Golden); adhesive (Tombow); gel medium (Liquitex); gesso (Dick Blick); ink pad (Archival by Ranger); spray paint (Krylon); poster paint pen (Sharpie); stencil (Crafter's Workshop); watercolor paper (Canson)

Step 1

Coat your canvas with a thin coat of white gesso and let it dry. Scrape some light blue paint onto the top left area of the canvas. A little paint goes a long way.

Step 2

Scrape some magenta paint onto the top right area of the canvas. Overlap the magenta

and the light blue slightly.

Step 3

Place a stencil over your painted areas. Use a damp rag to rub through the stencil and remove some of the paint. This takes a little pressure—don't be afraid of pressing hard. Remove some of the paint from both the blue area and the magenta area. Turn the stencil with each color so the pattern goes in different directions.

Step 4

Scrape some yellow paint below the magenta area. Use the damp rag and the stencil to remove some of the yellow paint. As you remove paint, the rag will get dirty. You can use the paint on the rag to add some stenciling below the yellow paint.

Step 5

Scrape some gray paint onto the canvas over three small areas. Don't be afraid to scrape it right over the other colors.

Use the damp rag and the stencil to remove some of the gray paint. Also use the rag to add some stenciling to the canvas below the paint. The rag will be dirty with paint, and you can drag some of the excess paint to other areas of the canvas.

Step 6

Scrape some white paint onto the canvas over three small areas. Again, layer the white over other colors and layers.

Step 7

Use the damp rag and the stencil to remove some of the white paint. Each time you add

some paint and remove some of it through the stenciling, you add visual complexity and texture to your background. The scraped colors overlap and interact with each other.

Let all of your paint layers dry completely.

Step 8

Use gel medium and a palette knife to cover a sheet of watercolor paper with pieces of torn book paper. Be sure to put gel both on top and on the back of each piece of paper. Scrape any excess gel from the top of the book paper so there are no globs. Let the gel dry.

Step 9

Cut out some freehand circles from the paper. I don't worry about the circles being perfect. I like them to be wonky!

Ink the edges of the circles with permanent black ink. Inking collage elements can help them stand out from a busy background.

Step 10

Sew around the circles with black thread. I love the added texture that sewing provides. I have an obsession with leaving my threads loose and untrimmed, too.

Step 11

Cut a silhouette from a fashion magazine. Paint the silhouette black with spray paint or acrylic paint. Let it dry.

Step 12

When the paint is dry, use a white pen to outline the silhouette and add journaling. To make sure your white paint pen is nice and opaque, shake it for at least 60 seconds.

   Glue the book page circles and silhouette onto your canvas.

Proximity

Proximity is a principle that helps define the relationship of elements in a composition.

Cherry Trees

Have you ever created a page and felt that something is just off? You've got text and images, but the page doesn't seem connected? Or there's an element on your page (an image, a word) that's floating in the background, disconnected from everything? I would put money on the idea that proximity is the reason you're unhappy with the page.

Proximity is a principle that says we perceive items that are grouped together as belonging to or relating to each other. When elements are close to each other on a page, we think of them as having a relationship. The closeness makes our brains connect the dots between them and consider them as a group. By thoughtfully using proximity, you can control meaning in your work simply by where you place your page elements.

Take a look at the next image with six circles. The circles are equidistant. Their symmetrical layout makes them look like a pattern. No one circle stands out.

Now take a look at the image after that with six circles. The circles are intriguing! Some of the circles are in close proximity to each other. We know they belong together; they have a relationship. One circle is alone on the bottom of the page. What is that lone circle telling us? Is it sad? Is it breaking free from the others? The proximity of the six circles tells us a story. We can sense meaning simply by how the circles are arranged.

I often consider proximity when I write my journaling on the page. I like my journaling to have a strong relationship with the background and/or the imagery on the page. I like it to overlap, outline or support other page elements. When I begin to write on the page, I look at what elements are already there. I consider how the page will look if I write in various areas. I choose my journaling spots purposefully so the words form a relationship with the elements.

Beware of Floaters

Proximity can help you avoid "floaters"—words or elements on your page that don't seem to belong to anything else. Any time you add an element to a page, consider its proximity to other elements. Does it make sense where you are putting it? If the element is jarring, move it closer to one or more page elements.

Combining

Combining is a way to create proximity. Combining means that you use one element to combine other elements together. So instead of just putting page elements near each other, you actually use some "visual glue" to combine them. Visual glue could be:

- A line on which page elements sit or are arranged around.
- A color or pattern that runs under or around the grouped elements.
- A shape in which your page elements are organized.

- A layer of something, like a layer of paint, paper, words or texture.

Using a combining method, aka a combining device, reinforces the relationship that you've already created by grouping the page elements. It makes the overall effect of the proximity stronger, and it anchors your page elements to the page. In *Friends*, I put an inky tag on my page. Some of my page elements (the stamped women and some of the sheet music circles) are on (or touching) the tag. The elements do have a relationship with each other because of their close proximity. The tag combines the elements and strengthens their proximity even further. The blue drips create a continuance path that leads the eye down to the isolated circle at the bottom of the page.

Friends

Overlapping

Overlapping is a technique you can use to create proximity. By overlapping page elements, you make their relationship to each other especially strong. You also give an illusion of depth—elements that are behind look farther away than the elements on top.

In *Forgiving*, some of the large circles are behind the stamped image, and one is on top of the image. As the circles and the stamped figure touch and overlap, they create a strong bond and a strong visual presence. Page elements that overlap exert pressure and influence on each other, and this influence is interesting. Also notice that the orange drips form a continuance path that draws the eye down toward the stamped figure.
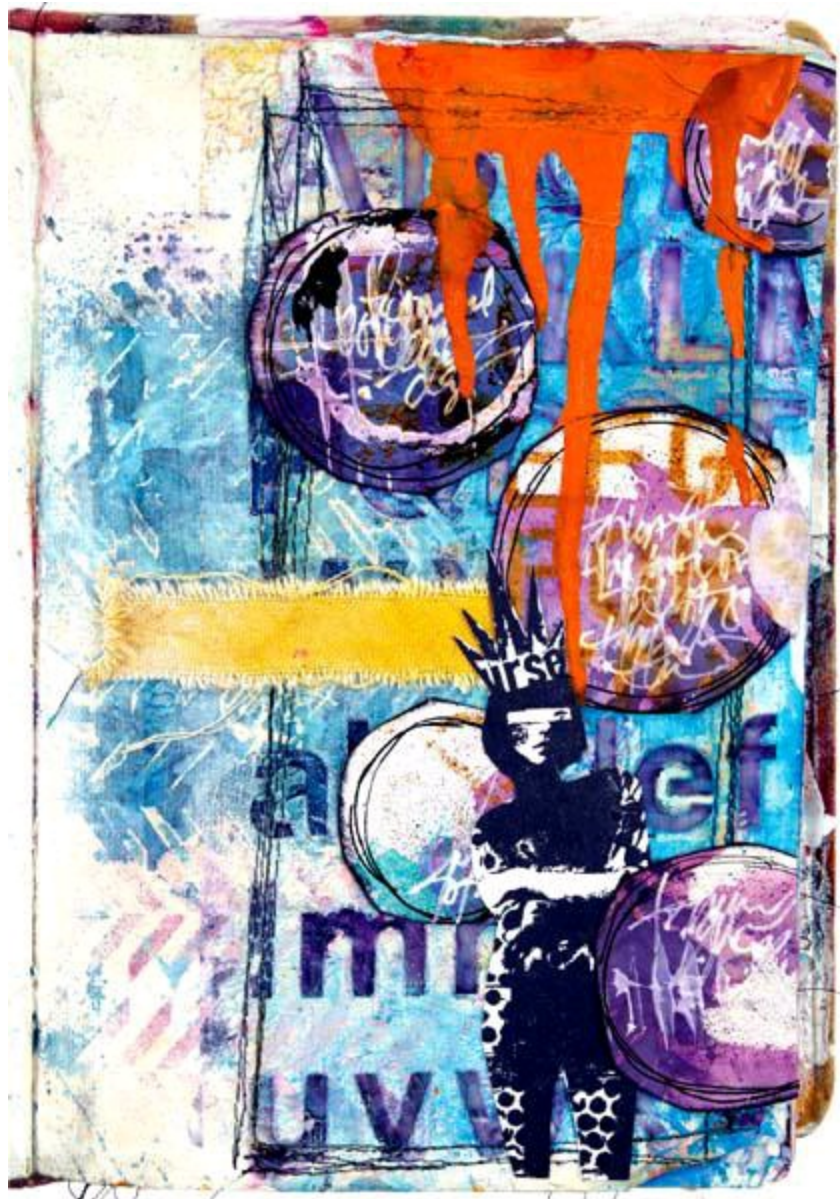
Forgiving

Exploring Proximity

Put your page elements in close proximity when you want to:

- Make sure the viewer sees the relationship between the page elements.
- Avoid any jarring floating images or words on your page.
- Organize your visual information so your page is more easily understood by a viewer.

Spread your page elements far apart when:

- You want page elements to stand on their own and create a sense of disconnect.
- You want to create discord and tension between page elements.
- You want your page meaning to be obscure.

Use a combining device when you want to:

- Be very clear that the elements you are placing near each other are meant to work together.
- Emphasize a strong visual focus in a certain area on your page.
- Visually anchor your page elements to the page.

Use overlapping when you want to create:

- A strong relationship between your page elements.
- A sense of distance and perspective.

The Difference

Page Challenges

Create a page with elements that are spread apart.

Create a page and put your elements (images, words) far apart from each other. How does the page make you feel? Is it challenging to get your meaning and point across without a strong focal point or without a connection between your page elements? In *What I Do*, the artsy-looking trees are spread out all over the page. Because the trees are not in close proximity to each other, they don't really have a relationship with each other. They look nice and orderly. What feeling would this page have if I would have grouped the trees differently?

What I Do

Create a page with elements that are in close proximity to each other.

Try grouping some page elements together so they have a strong relationship. In *I Stand Alone*, three stamped girls are standing next to each other. By their proximity, we assume they are related somehow. Then I added one more girl, this time farther away from the three girls. Suddenly there is a story to be told. Who is she? Why is she separate? How different would this page look if the girls were scattered throughout the page? The strong, flowing journaling creates a continuance path that leads the eye toward the group of stamped girls and then on to the solitary girl.

I Stand Alone

Create a page in which the elements are in proximity to a combining device.

Start your page with a swath of paint or a line or a circle, and build your other page elements around it. In *Anticipating ArtFest,* I combined the bird, journaling and a few of the little eggs with the stitched circle and the purple circular background color. I often start a page with a combining device. I put color down somewhere and use it as the foundation for the rest of my main page elements (image and words).

Anticipating ArtFest

Create a page with overlapped human figures.

Make a background and then add three (or more) human figures (stamped images, silhouettes—whatever you like). Before you glue down the figures, move them around on the page. Separate them, put them in a line, stack them and finally overlap them. Which version do you like better? In *How It Is*, the four figures on the right are overlapped. The overlapping gives them a strong bond. That bond amplifies the solitary nature of the figure on the left. The pink tag serves as a combining device for the overlapped figures.

Breaking the Rules

Do you have to put your elements in close proximity? Of course not. You can control their placement and play with their meaning.

Make a page with a large floating element.

Try making a page that has a floating element, an element not in proximity to anything. In *Day of Peace and Rest*, the butterfly floats within the large frame. How would the page look if I removed the frame? The frame adds visual weight and helps draw the eye in toward the butterfly.

Day of Peace and Rest

Butcher Paper Collage

I love to make butcher paper collages. This technique uses up paper scraps, and it helps me create unique patterned paper that I can use in my journaling. I make several large sheets of the collage paper at a time, as it's a great way to fill a day with art when you don't feel like creating a specific page. I reach for the collage papers over and over again to use in my journaling. They show up in my journal as hearts, circles, strips and backgrounds. For this project, we'll use the collage paper to create a little artsy journal cover. When you decorate the pages of this little journal, keep proximity in mind. I kept the collages on each page small and kept the elements close together.

Materials List

16" x 14" (41cm x 36cm) butcher or kraft paper

$8\frac{1}{2}$" x 11" (22cm x 28cm) white cardstock

5 pieces, $9\frac{1}{2}$" x $5\frac{3}{4}$" (24cm x 15cm) each, of white mixed-media or watercolor paper

spray inks (yellow, magenta, green)

acrylic paint (Light Blue Permanent, Vivid Red Orange, black)

stencils

scrapbook or other printed papers

printed tissue or sewing pattern tissue

kraft tags

kraft label

18" (46cm) length of ribbon

waxed linen thread (purple)

matte gel medium

adhesive

masking tape

paintbrush

water

palette knife

old gift card for scraping

chipboard circle or lid

$\frac{1}{8}$" (3mm) hole punch

corner rounder

paper cutter

sewing machine & black thread

acrylic paint (Liquitex, Golden); adhesive (Tombow); cardstock (Mohawk); corner rounder (We R Memory Keepers); gel medium (Liquitex); kraft paper (Duck); kraft tags and label (Maya Road); scrapbook papers (Lily Bee, Jenni Bowlin Studios, Hambly, Collage Press, Fancy Pants, 7 Gypsies); watercolor paper (Canson); spray inks (Maya Road); stencils (Crafter's Workshop)

Step 1

Use a gift card to scrape some light blue paint onto a few areas of a piece of white cardstock. I scraped the paint over three or four areas scattered around the sheet.

Stencil a few areas of the cardstock with a stencil and magenta spray ink. I added stenciling to three random areas.

Step 2

Stencil a few areas of the cardstock with a stencil and yellow spray ink. Again, three random areas are great. Overlapping the stenciling with the other areas is great.

Stencil a few areas of the cardstock with a stencil and green spray ink.

Step 3

Dip a chipboard circle or lid into black paint and add some black circles to the sheet. I like to add five or six circles randomly around the sheet.

Step 4

Water down some orange paint. You want the paint to be fluid, but not so watery that it's transparent. Load a paintbrush with the paint and scrape it on the edge of the cardstock. Let the paint drip down. Set the cardstock aside to dry completely.

Step 5

Take a piece of butcher or kraft paper and tape it to a stable surface, like your craft table or a craft mat. Taping down the paper keeps it from rolling up while you are working with it.

Cut several different patterned papers into pieces. Also cut up your stenciled cardstock. Apply some matte gel medium to a small area of the paper. Put a piece of paper from your pile onto the glue, and then seal the top with more gel medium. Continue randomly adding pieces of paper until you've covered the entire sheet.

Step 6

Tear some pieces of printed tissue and glue them onto the butcher paper. Crinkle it and scrunch it so it's dimensional. Let the butcher paper dry completely.

Step 7

Use a sewing machine to randomly sew all over the butcher paper. I love the texture that the stitching adds.

Step 8

Cut a 10" x 6" (25cm x 15cm) rectangle from your large butcher paper collage sheet. Fold it in half to create your journal cover.

Step 9

Fold the five pieces of mixed-media or watercolor paper and nest them to form a signature.

Use a corner rounder to round the corners of the cover and interior pages.

Step 10

Put a $\frac{1}{8}$" (3mm) hole punch over the seam of the signature and push it as far as it will go. Punch a hole. Repeat with the other side of the signature. Punch holes in the cover

(again by pushing in the punch as far as it will go).
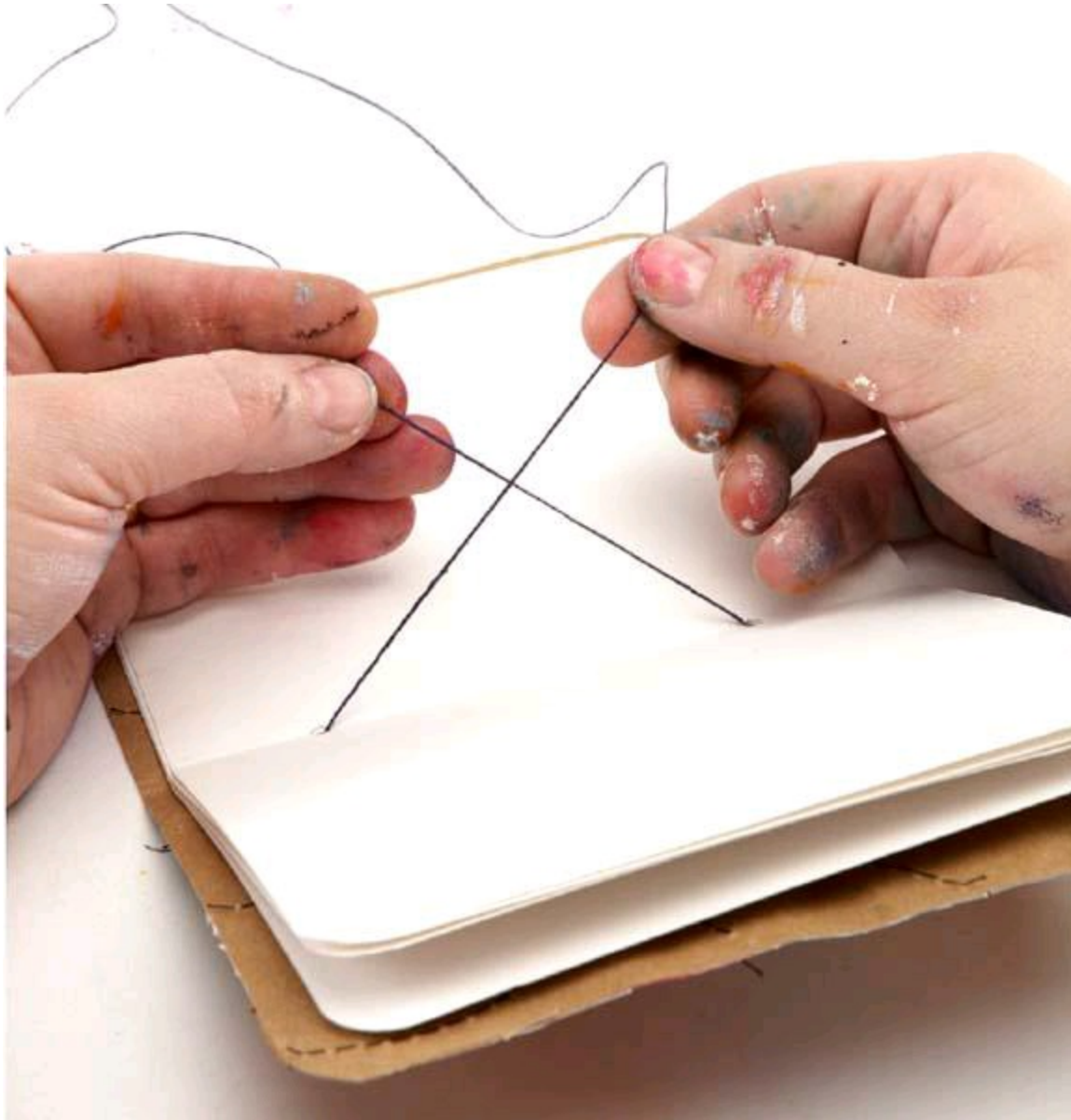
Step 11

Take a length of waxed linen thread and thread it in from the outside of the cover to the inside of the signature. Cross the ends in the middle and pull them down through the opposite hole (so the thread is now on the outside). Pull the thread taut and tie a square knot on the outside of the journal.

Step 12

Decorate the little journal with strips and hearts cut from the butcher paper collage sheet and with little kraft tags.

Glue ribbon to the inside cover of the journal. Add a kraft label to the front cover.

Dominance and Repetition

Dominance and repetition are principles that help you emphasize what's important in your composition.

Learn and Grow

Dominance

Dominance is like a pecking order for your pages. What do you want to be noticed first? An image? Words? Dominance means that something on your page stands out above everything else. Dominance is one of the many ways you can create emphasis and draw attention to your focal point. A focal point is the area where the viewer focuses first.

If you want to ensure something is noticed first on your page, make it big—bigger than everything else. You could even skew its proportions so it's King Kong big. *All I Can Do* has many hearts on it. One heart is significantly bigger than the others, so it is dominant. The size of the heart (and also the color, because the color contrasts with the other colors on the page) makes that heart the focal point. It's what you notice first when you look at the page.

Emphasizing What's Important

Emphasis is simply what you do to get a viewer to look at what is important on your page. Principles that you've already learned (white space, continuance, proximity) can also help you create emphasis.

Repetition

Did your mother ever say, "Don't make me repeat myself!"? In art, repetition can be a good thing. Repeating something, like a word or an image, can establish and reinforce its importance. Repetition can be bold and in your face, or it can be subtle. Repetition can also give a sense of energy and motion, and it can help you create continuance. One of the things I love about repetition is that it creates unity. Unity simply means that all of the aspects of a piece of art work together as a whole. Nothing seems unusual or out of place.

Here are some things you can repeat in your work.

Images

I love to repeat images, especially silhouettes. Don't shy away from using the same image over and over again in your journal. You're not in a creative rut; you're using a motif. You can learn a lot about yourself and about art by using an image in many different ways. In *Down Time*, I repeated a silhouette across a two-page spread. I varied the placement of each figure so some spill off the page, some appear in the foreground and some appear in the background.

Down Time

Words

Careful repetition of a word or phrase can emphasize its importance in your work. In *Work*, I repeatedly stamped the word "work" in the background. Then I traced my hand over the words and painted it. You can still see the words in the background, and their repetition and size give them a strong presence on the page and leave no doubt about the page's subject.
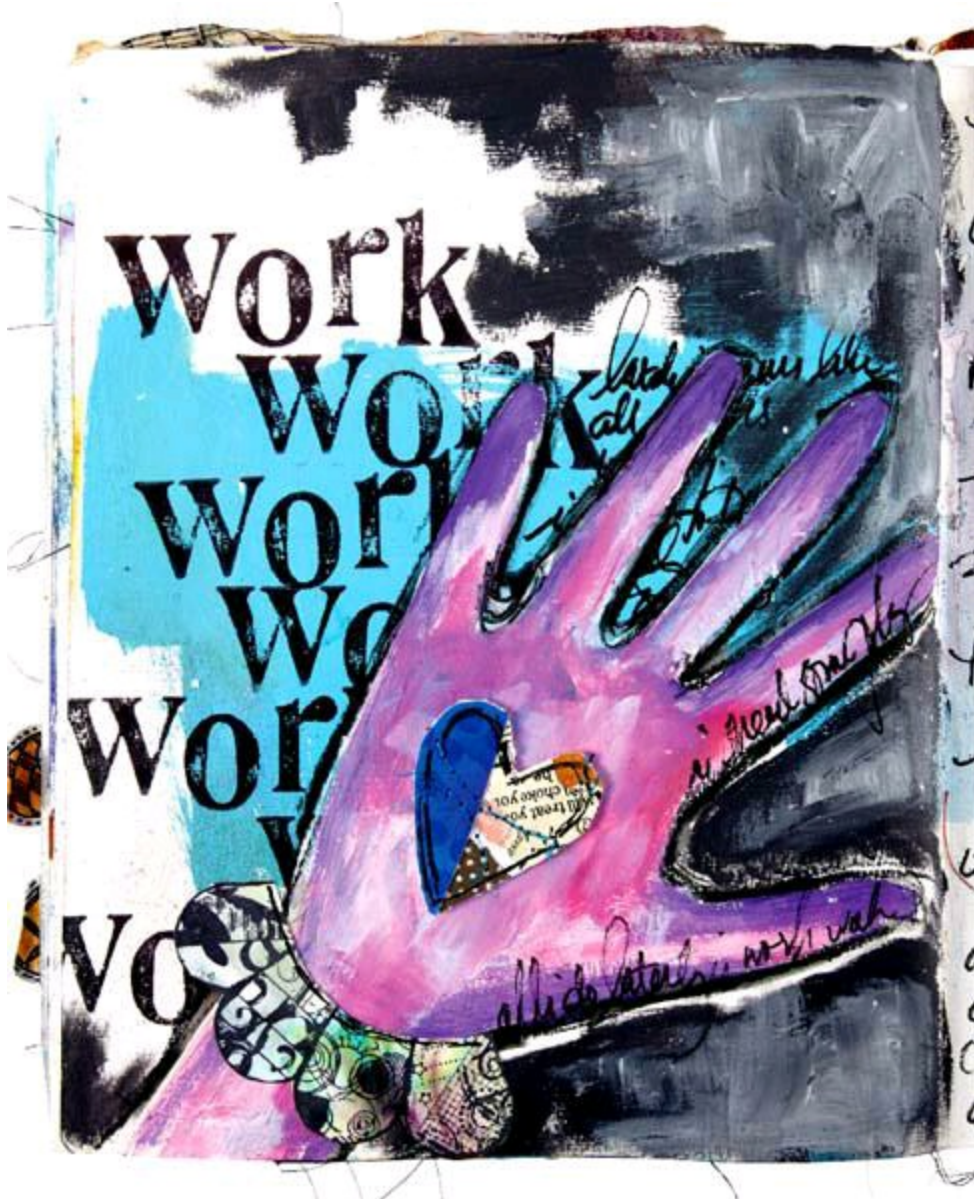
Work

Composition techniques

You can repeat any composition technique on your pages and create emphasis. For example, instead of creating one continuance path, you can create many. In *Fat*, multiple lines flow out from the stenciled pattern on the top. Each of those lines is an example of continuance, and when the technique is repeated, it emphasizes the motion of the flowing lines and gives the page a lot of chaotic energy. The energy is stronger

than it would be if there had been only one or two lines coming from the top.

Fat

Colors

I love to repeat colors on my pages. If I am working on a piece that just doesn't seem to be unified, I repeat a color throughout the page. The repeated color connects all of the disparate elements and relates them to each other. As I was creating *Younger*, I felt like the woman on the left was not relating very well to the text that I wrote around the page. I added the pink dots around the two-page spread to connect the woman on the left to the stenciling and journaling on the right. The dots seem random, but they actually help the eye move around the composition.

If you use a lot of repetition on your page, you begin creating a pattern. Maybe a pattern is your goal. However, be aware that in a pattern, you begin to lose emphasis. To avoid the monotony of a pattern, choose a page element and make it dominant.

Younger

Exploring Dominance and Repetition

Make a page element dominant when you want to:

- Create a strong focal point.
- Emphasize the element's importance.
- Play with proportion and scale.

Use repetition when you want to:

- Reinforce an idea, word or image.
- Focus on a particular compositional tool.
- Create a sense of unity throughout your entire work.

My Secret Weapon

Paint splatter is one of my secret weapons! When you add paint splatter to a page, you are essentially adding repetition. The scattered paint droplets help to unify the entire page because they touch many parts of the composition. The

droplets are small, so they are not the primary emphasis, but the repeated color brings everything together. I often say, "Paint splatter fixes anything!," and repetition is the principle behind why it works.

Worst of Times

Page Challenges

Create a dominant focal point in a heavily layered piece.

One way to make your focal point stand out against heavy layers is to make it dominant (i.e., large). *Love Her* has a lot of background layers and textures. There is paint, stenciling, modeling paste, book pages, tissue and journaling. I drew the woman on a separate piece of watercolor paper and cut her out to layer onto my page. I made her large so she would stand out from—and not be overwhelmed by—the background layers.

Love Her

Create a page with repetition in the background.

Besides repeating your focal images, you can use repetition in your backgrounds. I like to repeat shapes and colors. In *Confident*, I repeated the white circles. Even though they are in the background, they are a strong presence and give the page energy.

Confident

Create a page with a repeated word or image as a focal point.

Try repeating an image for your focal point. In *Weird and Wonderful*, I stamped five phrenology heads on cardstock and cut them out. I lined up the images over the inky tag background and over the yellow scalloped fabric. The tags and fabric act as combining devices for the stamped images.

Weird and Wonderful

Breaking the Rules

Remember, the rules are more like guidelines. Pull them out and use them when you need them, and play with them when you want to be surprising.

Make a page with an isolated element.

You can draw the eye to nondominant page elements by using other design principles, such as proximity and continuance. In *Fighting Dream*, I glued a rectangle on the right side of the page. Inside the rectangle, I put stamped images and canvas circles. One circle is on the left, outside of the rectangle. The pink circles in the background draw the eye to the isolated circle. The circle isn't dominant, but it is not invisible in the composition.

Fighting Dream

Re-Inker Backgrounds

Don't you love it when you play in your journals and make interesting artistic discoveries? In this case, I had just finished re-inking some of my ink pads, and the re-inker bottles were sitting on my table. I thought it would be fun to use the re-inker to draw right onto my journal page. I tried it, but the ink was so concentrated that no matter what color I used, it looked black. Disappointed, I grabbed my spray bottle and sprayed over the ink scribbles. The water diluted the ink and started running in interesting and unpredictable directions. Try using this technique to put repetition in your background. The free-form nature of the technique creates an organic, repetitive texture.

Materials List

your journal or watercolor paper
dye-based ink pad re-inkers (Watermelon, Raspberry, Stream)
spray inks (yellow, orange, green)
drawing of a bird (or clip art or a stamped image)
piece of canvas fabric
black pen
modeling paste
adhesive
spray bottle filled with water
palette knife
scissors
stencil
paintbrush
sewing machine & black thread

adhesive (Tombow); ink pad re-inkers (Ranger Adirondack); modeling paste (Liquitex); pen (Sharpie); spray inks (Maya Road, Ranger); watercolor paper (Canson)

Step 1

Take the Raspberry re-inker and use it to draw big circles on your page.

Step 2

Add a little bit of the Watermelon re-inker to the bottom of each circle. Just a small

line is fine.

Step 3

Spray the circles with water. Spray them just enough so the color dilutes and begins to spread a bit. If you spray too much water, the ink will run right off the page. Use a light hand at first; it's easy to add more as you need it.

Think Before You Ink

Choose re-inker colors that won't make mud when they mix. Review Chapter 6, and remember that colors that are opposite on the color wheel make brown when they mix together.

Step 4

Touch the tip of the Stream re-inker to a few areas of water. The water will "grab" the ink, and it will spread. You don't have to add a lot; just a little bit of ink will spread a long way along the water droplets that are already there. Carefully set your background aside and let it dry completely.

Step 5

Take a piece of canvas fabric and spray it with green spray ink.

Step 6

Spray the canvas with water so the ink spreads and soaks in well. Let it dry and cut it into five small squares.

Step 7

Use a palette knife and modeling paste to add a stenciled design to the top right area of your page. Using modeling paste with a stencil is like buttering toast. Put some paste on the knife and wipe it over the stencil in a thin layer. I generally just spread the paste in one direction. Be sure to clean your stencil to remove residual paste when you're done. It's difficult to remove after the paste dries.

Step 8

Use a sewing machine and black thread to sew a large circle onto your page. I don't worry about sewing evenly—I just go for it. Stitch around the circle several times to give it some bulk and visual appeal. On the last time around, sew the five squares of green canvas into the circle.

Step 9

Find a bird image for your page. My image is a bird that I drew with a charcoal pencil and then scanned into my computer so I could resize it easily. I made it smaller and printed it out on my laser printer. I added a bit of color paint to the bird with a brush and some spray ink. You could draw an image, use clip art or ephemera, or even use a stamped image. Glue the bird to your page, near the bottom right area of the sewn circle.

Step 10

Use a black pen to journal on your page. I like to journal around the stitched circle to echo the circular motion of the page.

Are You Itchin' to Stitch?

I sew in my art journal all the time. If you're working in a small journal, it's not too difficult to bend the covers back and insert a page under your machine's foot. I love that I can have stitching on one side of a page, and then the reverse of the stitching on the opposite side to incorporate into a new composition. Another way to get sewing into your journal is to sew on separate elements (tags, book pages, stamped images) and glue them in.

Color Basics

Color has emotional power and can communicate information in your composition.

Something to Change

One nice compliment that I get occasionally is, "You're so good with color!" I don't know that I'm particularly good with color, but I do know that I'm not afraid of it. In fact, I love it. When you understand a bit about color, you can make better choices for your pages.

Color is a complex subject. It involves physics and light wavelengths and the physiology of our eyes and our brains. In fact, "color theory" is a generic term for

many different theories of how color works. It gives me a headache just thinking about it. I'm not going to spend any time going over complex color theory. Knowing what light wavelength red is won't make a difference in your art journaling. However, knowing how to use red effectively will make a huge difference.

Let's start with an explanation of basic color principles.

Hue: A pure color. There are seven pure hues: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet (the colors broken from light by a prism).

Value: The relative lightness or darkness of a specific area or color. If you're using red, light pink and dark pink, you are using three different values. If you're using all pastel colors, they're similar in value. If you're using pastel pink and dark green, you're using colors with different values. In the example in the middle left, all three colors have the same value—they are all about equally bright. In example below that, the hues are the same as in the first example, but the values are different. Using colors with different values will provide interest and intensity to your work.

Tint: A hue + white. Add white to a color and you produce a tint. Pastel pink is a tint of red.

Shade: A hue + black. Add black to a color and you produce a shade. Many artists won't use black for making a shade, though, because black can do weird things to a color when you mix it. Artists instead will mix a hue with a bit of its complement or with a bit of brown like Burnt Sienna. For example, if you have red and want to make it a deeper shade, add a bit of green (red's complement) to it.

The seven pure hues

Colors with the same value

Tints

Colors with different values

Shades

Color wheel: There are many systems for explaining and displaying color, but the most common is the 12-color color wheel. I find a color wheel an indispensable studio tool. I have one right over my work desk. You could print out a color wheel and hang it in your workspace. Or buy a fancy-dancy commercial color wheel from the art store. What's great about commercial color wheels is they're printed with additional information to help you make color decisions.

Primary colors: Pure hues that cannot be obtained by mixing other colors. The primary colors are red, yellow and blue.

Secondary colors: Colors you get when you mix primary colors. Secondary colors

are orange (red + yellow), green (yellow + blue) and purple (red + blue).

Tertiary colors: Colors you get when you mix a primary color and a secondary color. Tertiary colors include yellow-orange and blue-green.

Warm and cool: Colors are considered either warm or cool. Warm colors include red, yellow and orange. Warm colors have energy and excitement. They also tend to advance toward the eye in a piece of art; in other words, they are more forward in the composition, and the eye notices them first. Cool colors include blue, green and purple. Cool colors are calm and serene. They tend to recede from the eye in a piece of art; in other words, they seem to be more in the background and farther away.

What gets confusing about warm and cool colors is that some colors can be either. For example, red that has a lot of orange in it is considered a warm red. Red that has a lot of blue in it is considered a cool red. A light, icy yellow is cool. A golden yellow is warm.

Color wheel
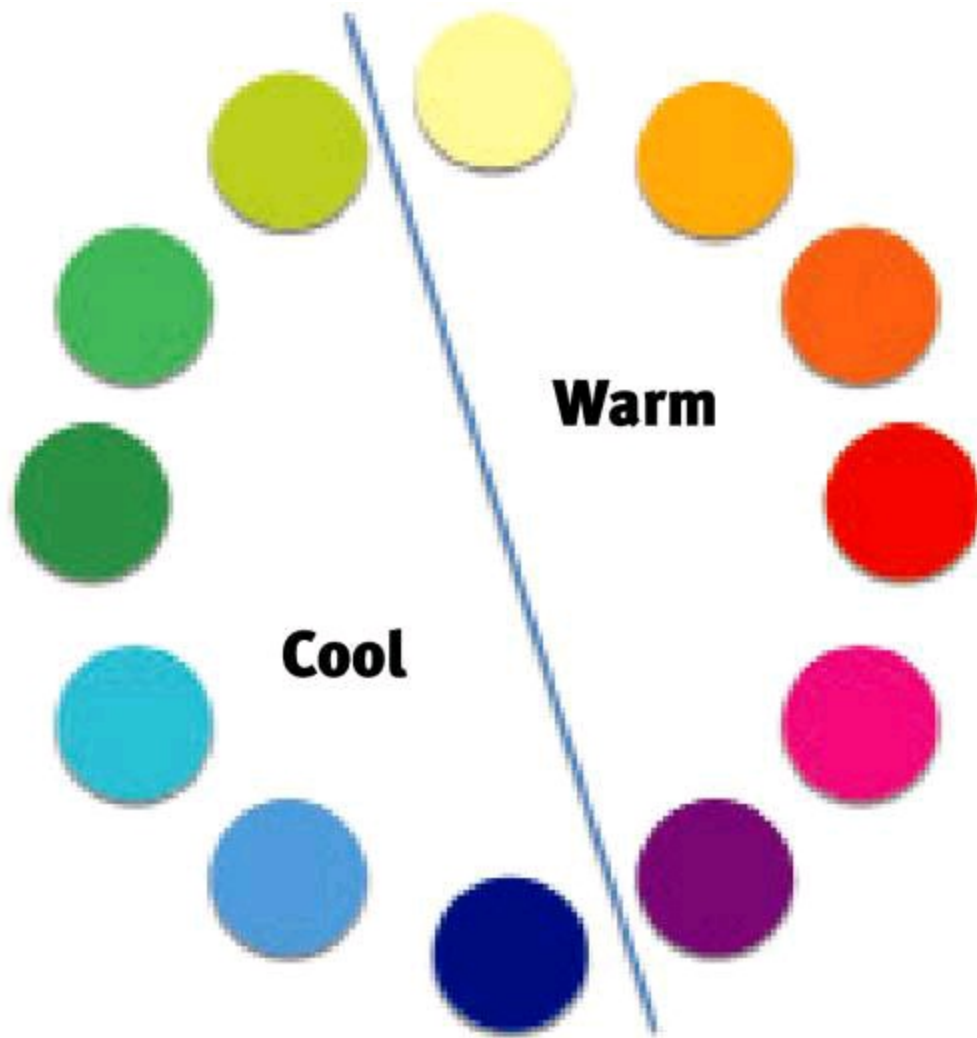
Warm and cool colors

Color Schemes

Color schemes are classic color combinations that are proven to work. If you're struggling with color, try turning to a color scheme. They remove guesswork and practically guarantee color success. Much of my work falls into one of these classic schemes.

Monochromatic

Various shades (or values) of one hue. Monochromatic color schemes are calm and serene and easy to manage. There is not much contrast in a monochromatic scheme, though, so you might find it a little boring. *Messy Hands* is various shades of blue. Even the ink on my hand in the photo is blue!

Messy Hands

Monochromatic

Cracking the Color Wheel

One of the best ways to become good with color is to become very familiar with the color wheel. Knowing the color wheel will help you make informed color choices. And when your page colors aren't working, you can turn to the color wheel to find out why.

Complementary

Two colors opposite on the color wheel, such as blue and orange. You can also use near-complements (colors that are almost opposite, such as blue and yellow). Complementary color schemes are visually exciting. When complementary colors are put beside each other, they make each other appear brighter. The contrast between the two colors is stimulating.

I love to use complementary colors! Complements have high drama and contrast, and provide a powerful visual pop. I started *Last Year* with the blue stenciling. Then I drew the face with a Stabilo Marks All pencil. I wanted the page to have lots of visual "oomph," so I used an orange ink as an accent. The blue and orange contrast nicely and provide visual drama.
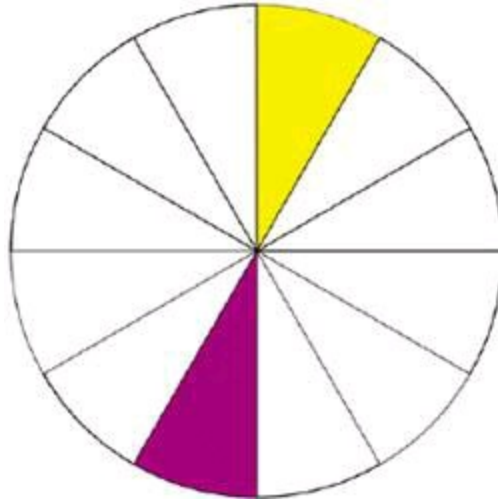
Complementary

Last Year

Analogous

Three or four colors next to each other on the color wheel. Because the colors are close to each other on the color wheel, they harmonize well and even blend into each other. The effect is similar to a monochromatic scheme but with more visual interest. The gradual changing of the colors is pleasing and suggests form and depth.

For *Spaces*, I used blues, purples and greens. The drama in the page comes from grungy textures and the proximity of the tag collages.
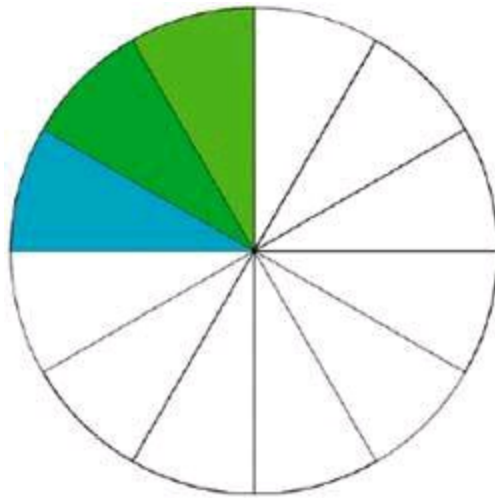
Analogous

Spaces

Make One Dominant

When using either a complementary or analogous scheme, choose one dominant color and then use the other color, or two or three colors, as accents.

Analogous with complement

Three colors next to each other on the color wheel, plus the color that is complementary to the middle color. This scheme gives you the harmony of the analogous scheme and a bit of pop from the complement. In *Phone Call*, I used blues and greens in the background. The orange drips are the complement to blue. The drips provide visual pop and act as a continuance path to the stamped figures.

Analogous with complement

Phone Call

Triadic

Three colors equally spaced from each other on the color wheel. Triadic color schemes offer contrast, but not as much contrast as a complementary scheme. The *Fellas* page shows a triadic scheme. I used yellow-orange, red-violet and blue-green.
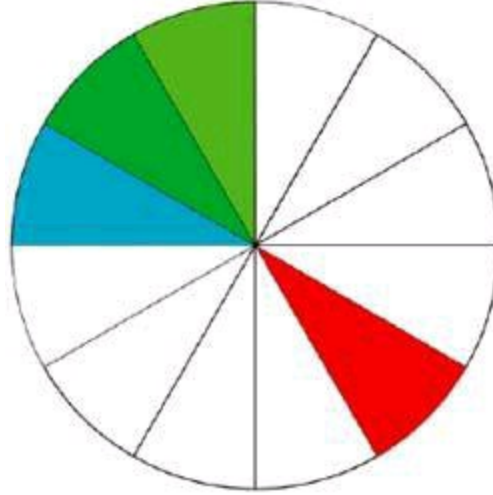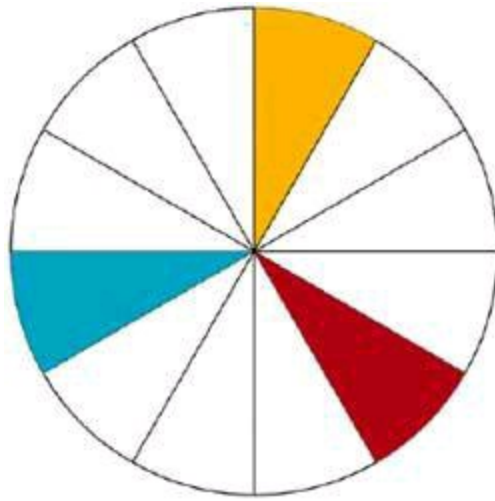
Triadic
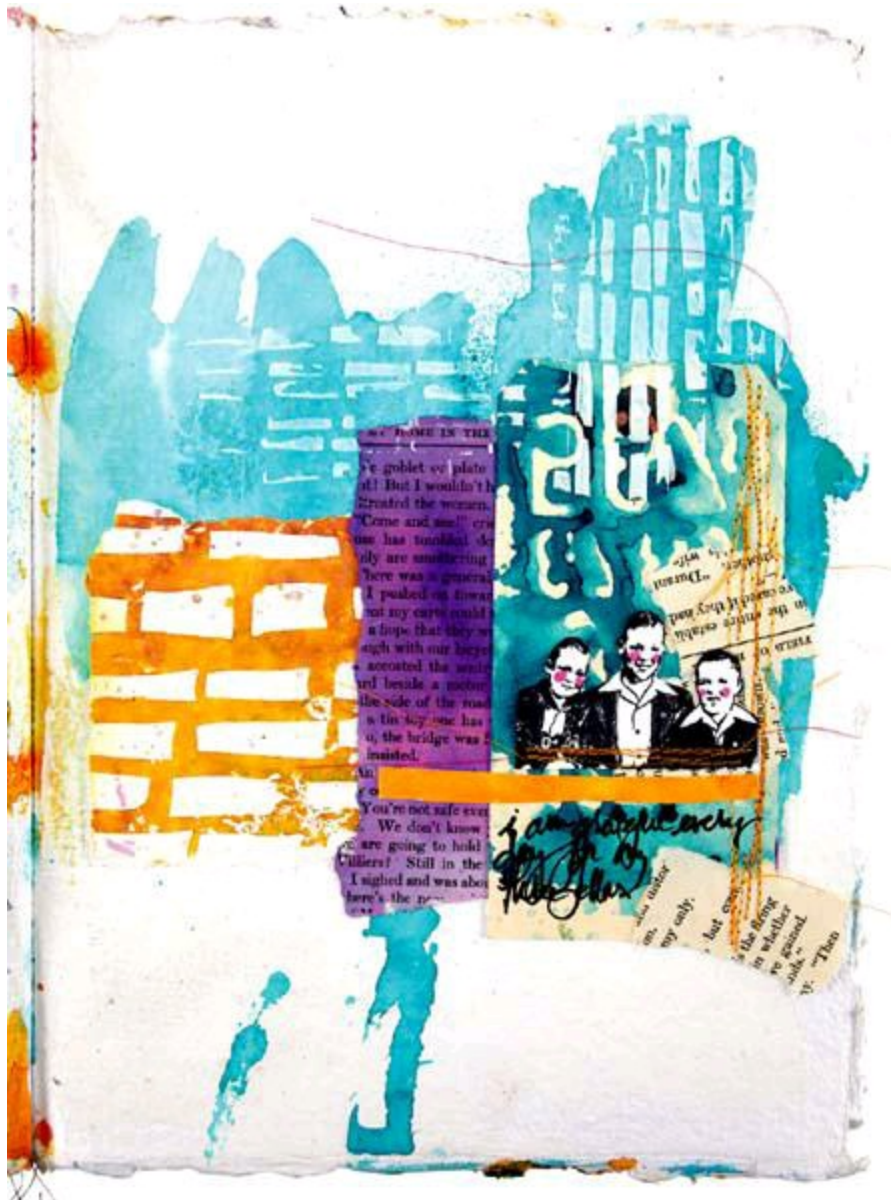
Fellas

Split complementary

One color plus the two colors that are on either side of the first color's complement. This scheme provides high contrast, but not as much visual tension as a complementary scheme. In *Acceptance*, I started with yellow-green. The complement of yellow-green is red-violet. To make the split complementary scheme, I used violet and red on the tag (violet and red are on either side of red-violet on the color wheel).
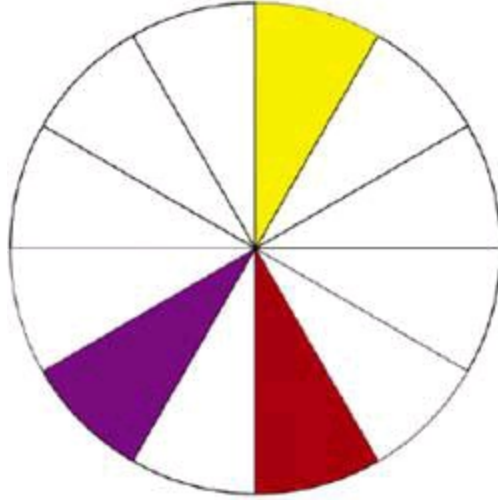
Split complementary

Acceptance

Double complementary

This scheme uses two pairs of complements. You'll have a hard time balancing this scheme if you give all the colors equal billing in your work. It's better to choose a dominant color and then use the other colors carefully as accents. This type of scheme offers lots of color variety but is the most difficult to balance. I started *Older* with a blue and purple background. To make the scheme double complementary, I needed to work in yellow and orange. I used graph paper circles to bring in the yellow. The orange comes from the collage strips under the stamped images and in the stenciled background dots.

When I work, I don't consciously set out to use a specific color scheme. I generally paint the background and then make my next color choice based on that background.

For example, let's say I've chosen to paint the background turquoise blue. The chart above shows the different colors that could come next. Which color would you add?
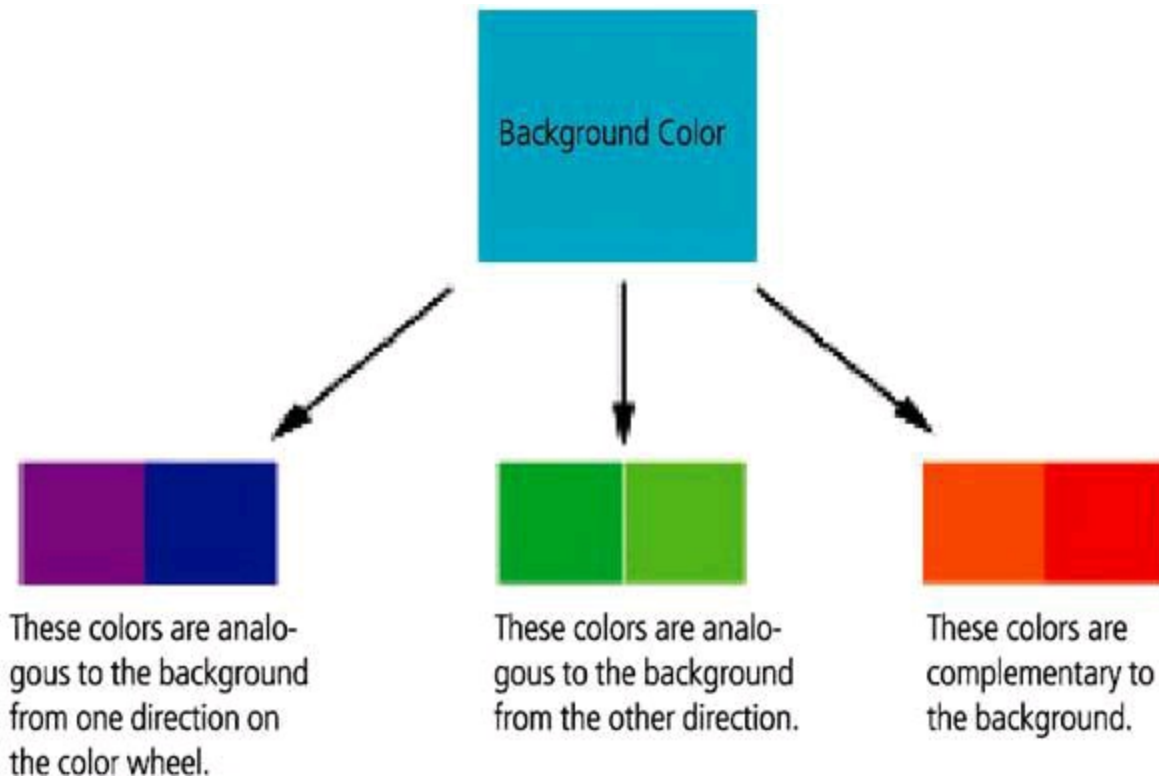

Double complementary

Older

Background Color

These colors are analogous to the background from one direction on the color wheel.

These colors are analogous to the background from the other direction.

These colors are complementary to the background.
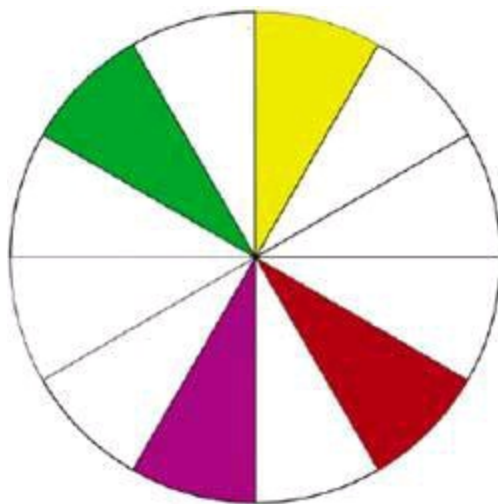
The color you choose next determines the look and feel of the page.

Limiting Your Color Palette

If you're struggling with color, limit your palette to just three colors. You can use various hues and tints of those colors, but don't add other colors to your spectrum. Choose one color to be dominant, and use the other colors as accents.

How Colors Mix

Many volumes have been written on mixing custom paint colors. Why so many books on a subject that seems so simple? To get orange, you just mix red and yellow, right? Well, right. But mixing paint is more complex than that. Paint is not necessarily manufactured in perfect hues. Instead of true red, you buy paint in cool red or warm red, transparent red or opaque red. The properties of individual paint colors depend on the manufacturer and pigment type. You can buy Cadmium Red Light from three different companies, and you'll have three slightly different reds. It's just the nature of paint production. Modern paints are usually not just a pure hue, either. Three or more hues may go into just one color. A brick red may be red, plus a bit of brown, plus a bit of orange.

I don't mix my own custom paint colors very often. For me, mixing most often comes into play on my art journal page itself. When you are creating a heavily layered piece, your paint and ink colors may start to mix right on your page. In fact, it's quite easy to have wonderful paint colors on your palette but have them turn into mud on your page. This especially happens with spray ink. Each color you spray will wet and activate the color underneath it, and they will mix. If you spray too many colors, your page will end up a lovely shade of brown.

It is helpful to be aware of the general properties of paint mixing; read on for a few tips.

• If you don't wait for paint to dry between layers, they will mix together. You may like the result; you may not. Experiment and see what happens.
• If you mix paint on your palette, stir the colors with a palette knife. If you stir with a brush, the bristles will soak up all of your paint before it's properly mixed.
• If you mix all three primary colors, you get brown. If you mix complementary colors (blue and orange, red and green, purple and yellow), you get brown.
• To mix gray, experiment with varying amounts of orange, blue and white.
• Adding black to a color muddies it more than darkens it. If you want to darken a color, try adding brown, like Burnt Sienna. Or add a color's complement to darken it.
• Cool and warm colors can exist just fine together on a page, but they don't like being mixed together on a palette to make a single color. If you are making custom paint colors, be sure to mix colors that have the same temperature (cool + cool and warm + warm). If you mix colors of different temperatures, you'll get a muddy color. For example, if you want to make orange, make sure you're mixing a warm red and a warm yellow, or a cool red and a cool yellow. Not sure what

temperature your colors are? Make color charts and examine the paint after it's dry. You'll be able to tell if it's casting off a warm undertone or a cool undertone.

Caution When Using Complements

If you tend to unintentionally make a lot of brown on your pages, the culprit is complementary colors. When they mix, they make brown. Try keeping complements away from each other in the same wet layer, and be careful as you layer them on your page.

Page Challenges

Create a page using a classic color scheme.

Choose a classic scheme and create a page with it. In *Conquer*, I used one of my favorite schemes: complementary, using orange and blue. I really have a thing for orange and blue. The combination is just so happy.

Conquer

Practice Makes Perfect

I recommend doing a page for each of the classic color schemes. It's great practice and helps cement the schemes into your head. If you have time, do each scheme several times, each time starting with a different hue.

Create different pages from the same starting point.

Paint two pages with exactly the same background color. Then make the pages different by using different color choices on each page. You can achieve different effects and even make the background look different, depending on the colors that come next.

I started both *Goofy* and *Green Rain #1* with the same elements: light blue paint, gray/black stenciling, hot pink stenciling and a stamped script in red. For *Goofy*, I continued by adding a blue-painted tag, a stamped image and a small strip of orange scalloped paper. The blue tag echoes the blue in the background. The orange scallop provides a complement to the blue and helps to draw the eye to the stamped image. For *Green Rain #1* I added red hearts and green-painted dots. Red and green are complements and provide lots of contrast. The green dots are analogous to the blue in the background. The two pages have a different look and feel, despite having the same background.
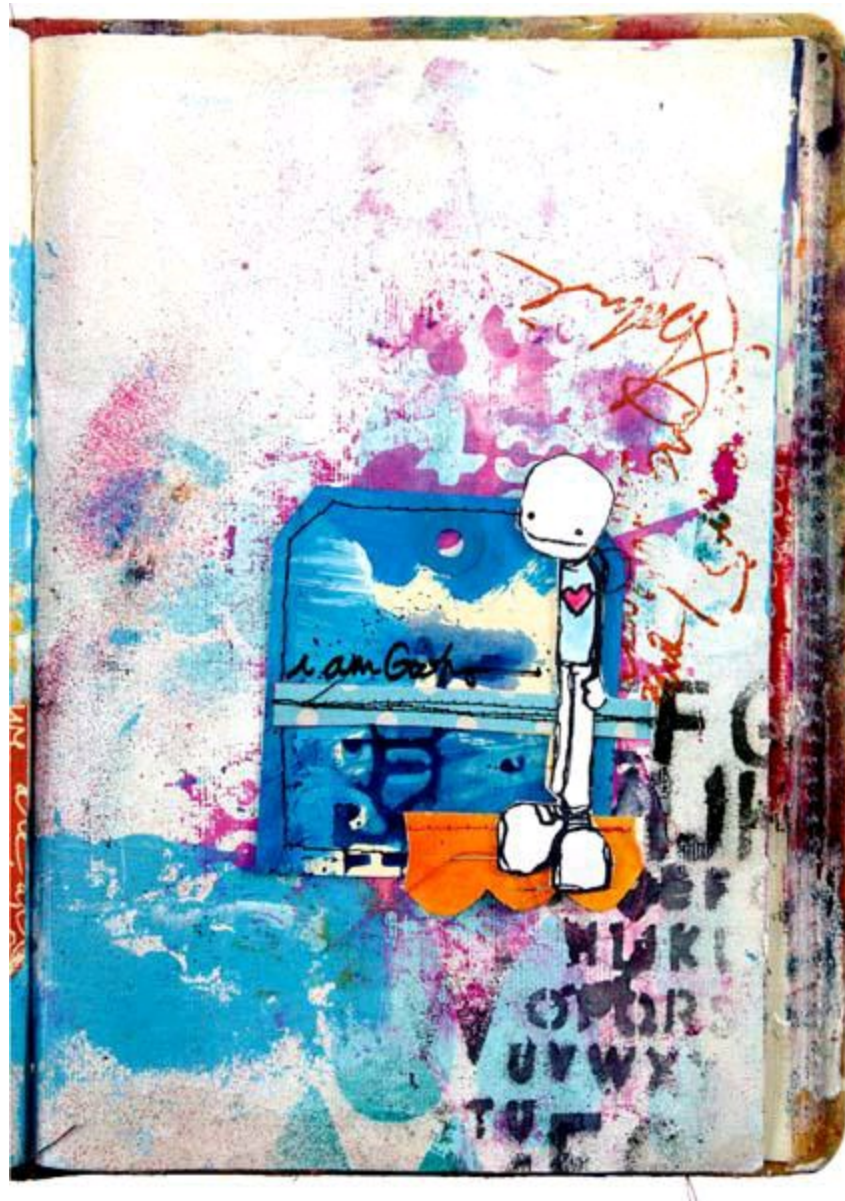
Goofy
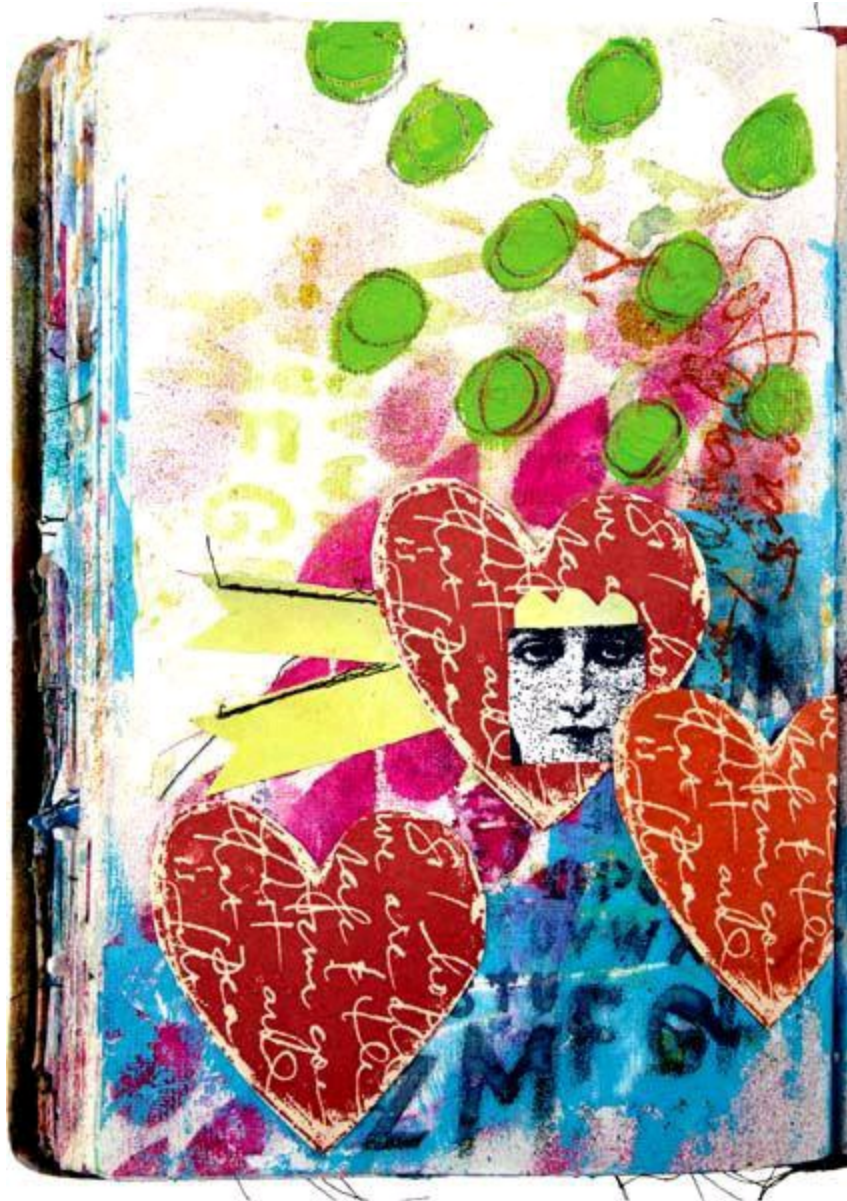
Green Rain #1

Breaking the Rules

We live in a colorful world. A century ago, the French had strict rules about what colors should and should not be used together. Early in the twentieth century, painters like Matisse and Cezanne pushed color boundaries. What was radical to them is normal to us. We're definitely more color savvy!

Create a page with discordant colors.

Colors that are far apart on the color wheel, but not complementary or triadic to each other, are considered discordant (for example, red and yellow). Discordant colors are thought to be visually disturbing. In other words, they clash. There was a time when using discordant colors was not done, but now you see designers and artists use discordant colors often to create contrast and visual impact. In fact, discordant colors

might not even seem out of place to you.

I used red and yellow in *Healing*. The blue is also discordant because yellow, red and blue are equidistant on the color wheel.
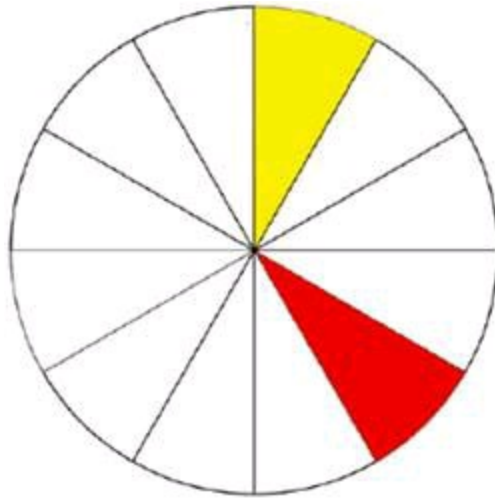
Discordant colors

**Healing**

PanPastel Rainbow Backgrounds

Oh, PanPastels are so much fun. I've drawn with them, stamped over them, created colorful backgrounds with them. Because they are so easily blended, they are a joy to create with. This colorful background comes together fast and has lots of visual impact. We'll create a pastel background and pastel stamped pieces to cut up and use in the book. Making a rainbow-inspired background is a great way to explore and reinforce the color wheel.

Materials List

3 sheets 9" x 12" (23cm x 30cm) watercolor paper

2 pieces 6" x 5½" (15cm x 14cm) canvas sheet from a canvas pad

2 pieces 6" x 5½" (15cm x 14cm) chipboard

cardstock

gesso

PanPastels (Permanent Red, Orange, Hansa Yellow, Diarylide Yellow, Permanent Green, Bright Yellow Green, Ultramarine Blue, Phthalo Blue, Violet)

PanPastel foam applicator

VersaMark ink pad

pages from a book

rubber stamps (little girls)

stencil

acrylic paint (black and white)

1 yard (91cm) ribbon

modeling paste

gel medium

adhesive

Workable Fixatif

paper towels

lid from a paint tube

cardboard circle

scissors

pen

bone folder

sandpaper

palette knife
sewing machine & black thread

acrylic paint (Golden, Liquitex); adhesive (Tombow); canvas sheet (Frederix); chipboard (Uline); gel

medium (Liquitex); gesso (Dick Blick); ink pad (Tsukeniko VersaMark); modeling paste (Liquitex); pen (Sharpie); sandpaper (Tim Holtz for Ranger); stamps (Dyan Reaveley for Ranger, Stampotique); stencil (Crafter's Workshop); watercolor paper (Canson); Workable Fixatif (Krylon)
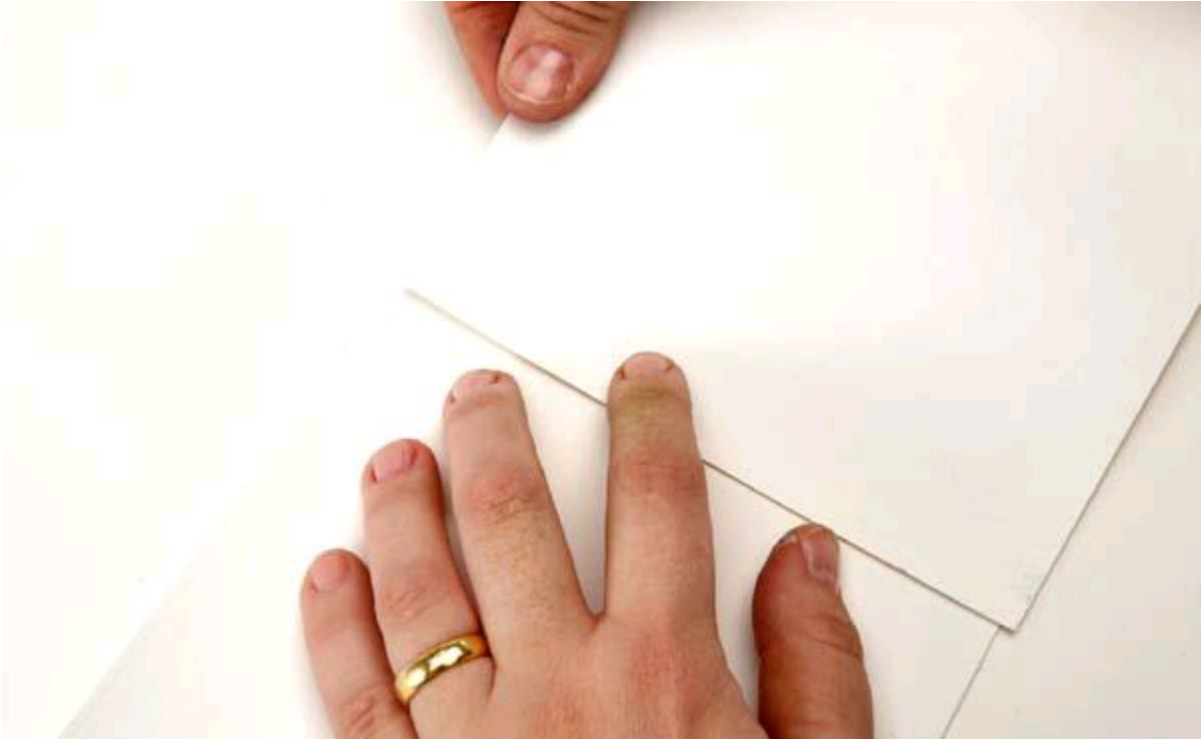

Step 1

Apply a thin coat of gesso to three sheets of 9" x 12" (23cm x 30cm) watercolor paper. PanPastels will stick to smooth surfaces, but I like the way the PanPastels look over gesso. The rougher surface helps grab the pigments in the pastels. Let the gesso dry completely.

Cut the watercolor papers as follows: cut one sheet to 6" x 12" (15cm x 30cm); cut one sheet to 6" x 11" (15cm x 28cm); cut the remaining into eight $4\frac{1}{2}$" x 3" (11cm x 8cm) pieces.
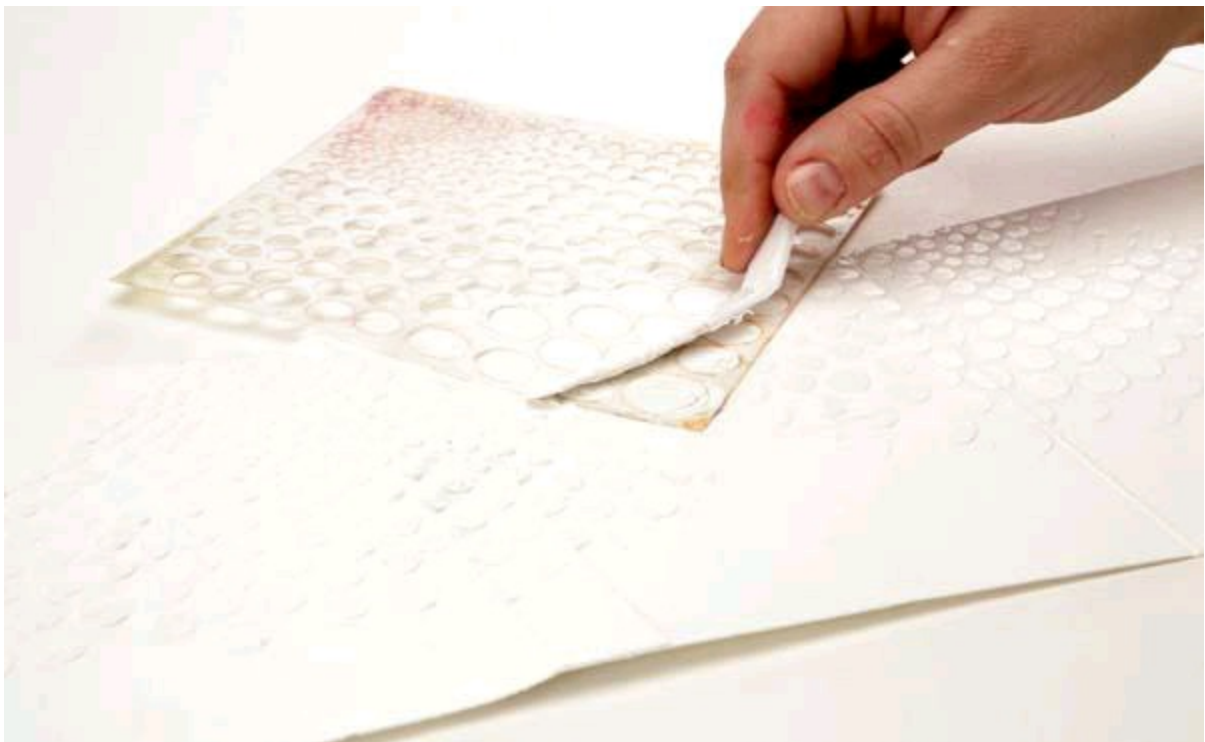
Assemble the accordion by gluing together the two long sheets of watercolor paper along the 6" (15cm) edge. Overlap the two pieces ¾" (2cm).
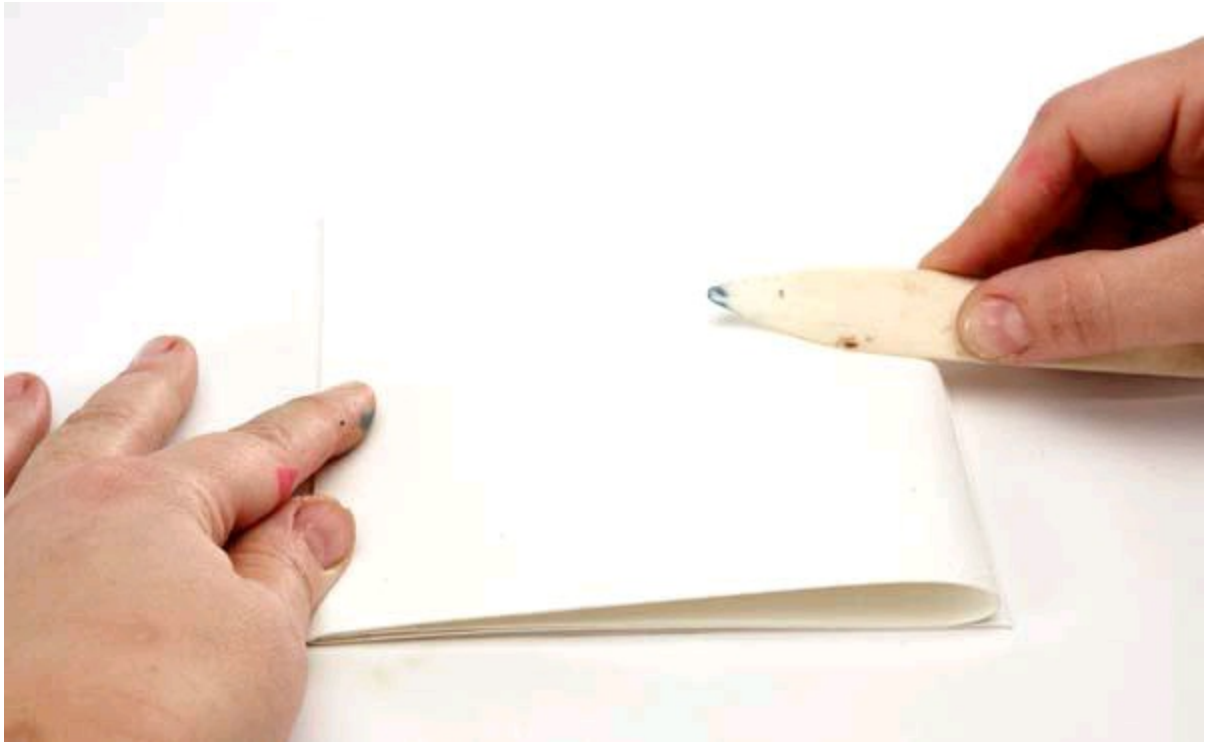
Step 2

Fold the piece in half. I like to sharpen my creases with a bone folder. Fold each end into the center fold. Arrange the accordion so there are two valley folds and one mountain fold.

Step 3

Lay the accordion flat on your work surface. Use a palette knife and modeling paste to apply a stenciled design on the top two-thirds of the entire accordion. Let the modeling paste dry completely.


Step 4

Stamp some images into the 4½" x 3" (11cm x 8cm) pieces of watercolor paper with a VersaMark pad.

Step 5

Use a foam applicator to apply PanPastels to your background to form a rainbow of color (red, orange, yellow, blue, green, indigo, violet). The traditional order is ROYGBIV. I changed the order of my colors so the blue and the indigo would have more contrast between them. I started on the left side and worked my way to the right side with the colors. I didn't extend the color all the way to the bottom of the paper. I left the bottom white so I could add journaling later.
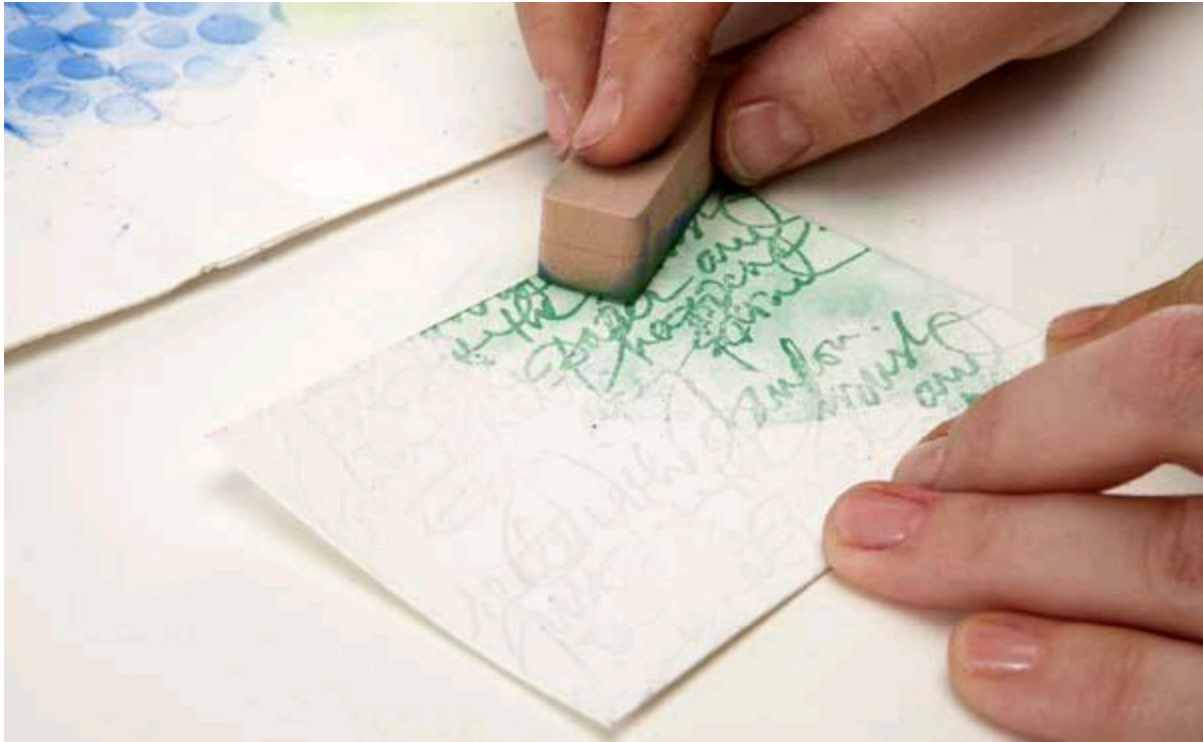
Step 6

As you apply each color to the background, grab one of the small pieces of stamped watercolor paper and apply color to it. The VersaMark stamped images will "grab" the PanPastel and pop out from the colored background. When you're done with each color, simply wipe the foam applicator onto a paper towel to remove the excess color. You can use the same sponge for all the colors if you wipe it in between.
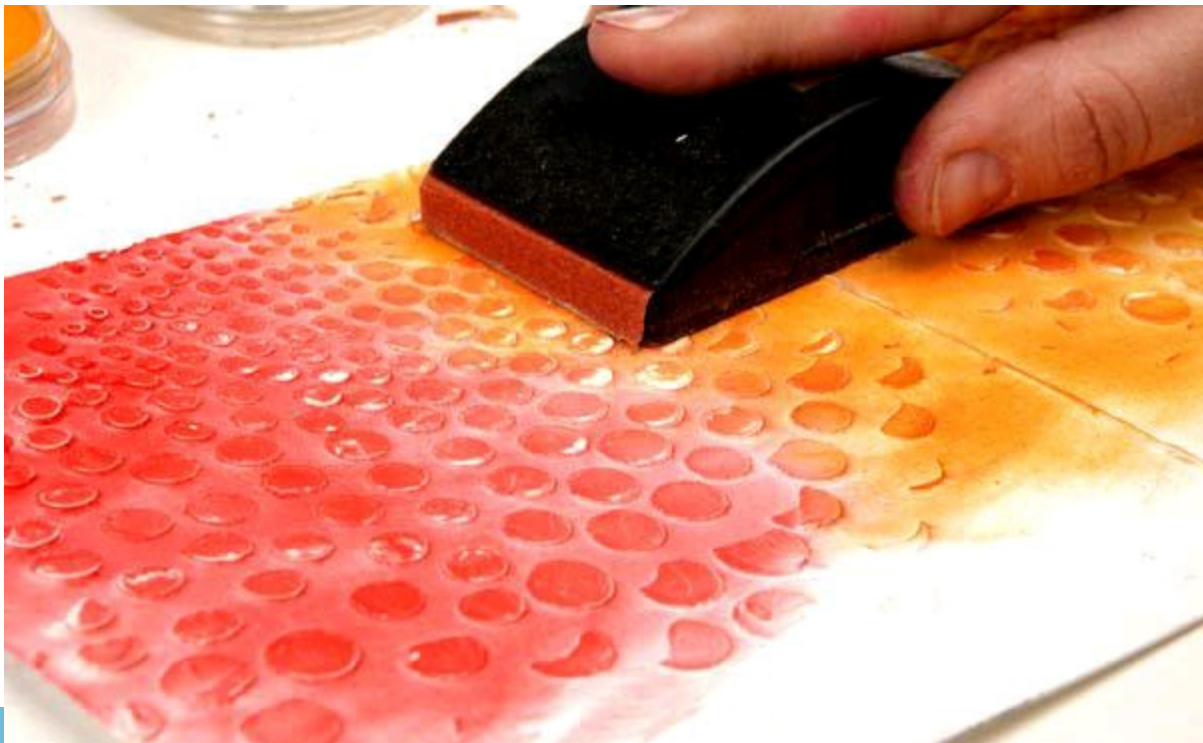
Step 7

When you're done applying the pastels to the background and the small pieces, seal them with a light coat of Workable Fixatif.

Sand the modeling paste to remove some of the pigment. Bits of the white modeling paste will show through the background color.

Step 8

Cut the small pieces of watercolor paper into 1" (3cm) squares. Glue the squares onto the accordion at the bottom edge of your PanPastel background. Match the colors as you go, and vary the placement of the squares so they're in a line but not a straight line. Save the extra squares; we'll use them on the cover.

Step 9

Use a palette knife and stencil to apply a modeling paste design to the pieces of 6" x 5½" (15cm x 14cm) canvas sheet. Allow it to dry. We'll use the canvas pieces for the front and back covers of our book.

Brush a thin coat of black acrylic paint over the canvas pieces. I like to water down the paint so it's more sheer. If your paint seems too thick, remove some of it with a cloth or baby wipe. Allow the pieces of canvas to dry.

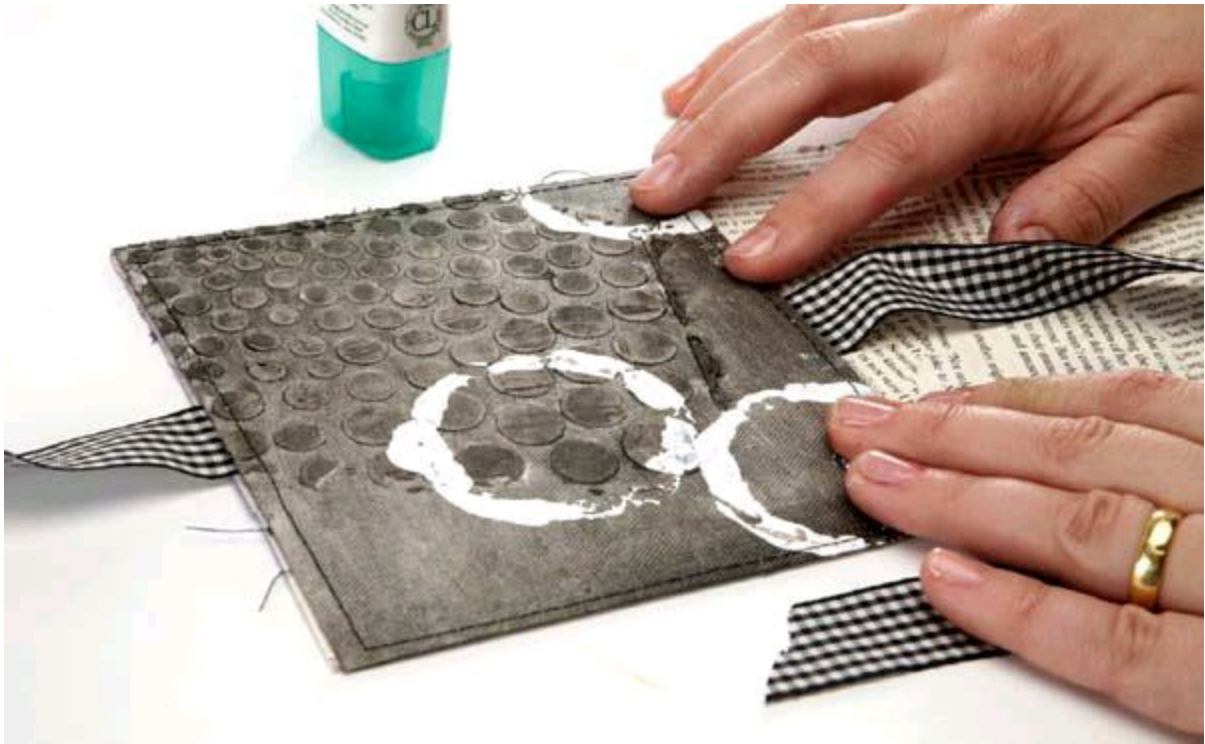Use a cardboard circle and white paint to add circles to the cover pieces.

Step 10

Take one square of each color and cut a chevron shape on one side. Glue all the shapes onto the front cover, keeping the order consistent with that on the interior. I put them on the bottom third of the cover and varied their placement so they're in a line but not a straight line.

Glue each canvas onto a piece of chipboard. Slowly sew around the edges of each cover, and sew the colored chevrons onto the front cover.

Step 11

Stamp some of your favorite images onto smooth cardstock. Cut out all the images. Decorate your accordion with the stamped images. Sew on the stamped images, if desired.

Use a small plastic lid and black paint to put some circles on the accordion. I repeated the circles throughout the background.

Use a black pen to write journaling along the bottom of the accordion. You could write a quote, poem, song lyric or anything that moves you.

Step 12

Flip the accordion over and use gel medium and a palette knife to cover the middle two sections with torn book pages. The book pages give the accordion book a nice look on the reverse side and cover up any smudges that may have appeared while you were creating. Glue a length of ribbon to the back side of the last page of the book. Glue the chipboard back cover over the same page, trapping the ribbon between the cover and the book page. Glue on the front cover.

Contrast with Color

Contrast with color is artfully using color for maximum visual effect in a composition.

Interested

Contrast

I love contrast. Contrast is what makes a piece of art surprising or interesting or even just plain good. Contrast is what helps you notice art in the first place, and it's what helps keep it in your mind long after you see it.

If you want to add more visual pop to your work, you just need to increase your contrast. Contrast is essentially the use of opposites on the same piece of art. Opposites used together will draw the eye and provide excitement. Think in terms of light and dark, big and small, smooth and rough, upside down and right-side up. Any sort of opposite will give you an interesting contrast. In *Alone All Day*, the strips of orange collage and the paint splatter contrast with all of the blue in the background. The orange stands out and draws the eye.

To create contrast, you can use:

Size: When you introduce one big element among a bunch of smaller elements, you create contrast that draws the eye.

Shape: When one shape is different than the others, it creates contrast. A triangle in a sea of squares stands out and creates contrast.

Texture: You can create contrast by varying the textures in your work. If your background is rough, making your focal point smooth provides contrast.

Position: An element in an unexpected position brings contrast.

Orientation: Putting an element upside down or even sideways creates contrast.

Color: Creating contrast with color is one of the easiest ways to introduce visual interest to your work. Complementary colors provide the most contrast because they are opposite on the color wheel. Black and white also provide high contrast (we'll talk more about black and white in Chapter 9).

Alone All Day

Color and Contrast

Contrast with complementary colors is one of my secret weapons! Complementary colors provide the visual pop and interest that I love. When I am stuck and don't know what to do next, I often add a complementary color. You don't have to add a lot of a complement to get the effect you want. Just a little bit of a complement can give you a visual pop. *Lost to Me* is heavy in purple and pink. The complement of purple is yellow. I wanted some contrast on the page, so I added the stamped banner and colored it bright yellow. It's the only yellow on the page, but it is just enough to draw the eye and provide visual interest.

If you're new to using complements, try to avoid using them in the same background layer. For example, if I start a background with blue, I won't put orange paint on the page with the wet blue paint. If I want to add orange, I will do one of the following:

- Wait for the blue to dry to start a new layer with orange paint.
- Change the medium to add orange (for example, spray some orange ink through a stencil).
- Introduce orange by including it in a collage.

Keep in mind that if you have complementary colors in the same background layer, you are working with high contrast. I find it hard to control a background that is high contrast. Often I will start with a low contrast color combination, like an analogous color scheme. If I start with low contrast, I can control my composition and add contrast just where I want it.

Lost to Me

How to Avoid Brown

Remember that when complementary colors mix, they create brown.

The following are some examples of the practical application of contrast with complementary colors.

Complementary-colored focal point.

Create a background with one of your favorite colors. When you add your focal point, add the complement to it. In *Seems Slow,* I started with blue paint and blue stenciling. I drew the woman as my focal point. To add the complement, I colored her dress and hair orange. I left a large amount of white space on this page.

Seems Slow

Don't Forget White Space

I like to have white space on a page when I'm using large amounts of complementary colors. The white space allows for some visual rest from the high contrast of the colors.

Complementary color used as a texture layer.

Create a page with analogous colors (colors that are next to each other on the color wheel, such as blue and green). Add the complement as one or two texture layers. In *Journals Are My Friend*, the silhouette is primarily purple and pink. I added the crosshatching in the yellow complement and a little bit of yellow/orange stenciling.

The yellow gives the page energy and helps move the eye around the silhouetted image.

Journals Are My Friend

Complementary color used behind a focal point to draw the eye.

You can use a small amount of a complement to draw the eye toward your focal point. In *Miss Her*, there is a little bit of orange stenciling just behind and to the left of the trees. The orange helps to draw the eye to the focal point.

Miss Her

Light and dark colors used together.

Using very light and very dark colors on the same page provides high contrast. *Circus* is a chaotic page for many reasons, one of them being the black-and-white face. The darkness of the black and lightness of the white have high impact. The orange crown also contrasts with the blue circles in the background. The page oozes contrast and drama, all created by color.

Circus

Exploring Contrast with Color

Use complementary colors for high contrast when you want to:

- Create lots of visual impact and drama.
- Control where your viewer looks first.
- Give your subject the attention it deserves.

Use low contrast when you want to:

- Evoke a sense of calmness.
- Blend your page elements together.

Glimpses of Every Day

Page Challenges

Create a page with a focal point that is a complement of the background color.

A simple way to draw the eye to your focal point is to make it a complement to the background. I started *Frustration* with a wide swath of bright yellow-green paint. I added the red-violet circle cut in half and the stamped face as my focal point. The violet circle gives lots of visual pop to the page and draws the eye toward the stamped image.
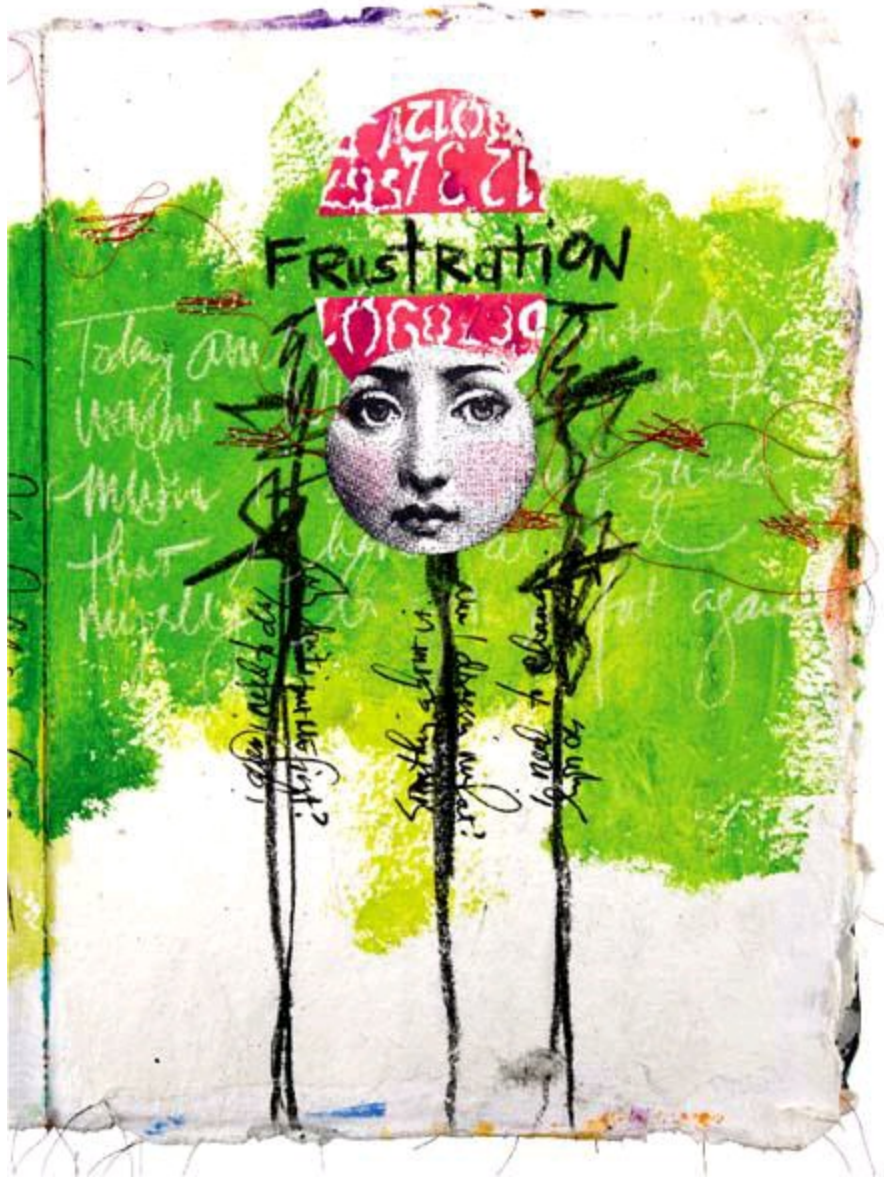
Frustration

Create a page with an analogous color scheme and use a complementary color to add accents.

Sometimes all you need on your page is a little bit of a complementary color. I used blue and purple (analogous colors) as my background for *No Time*. I added the tag with the stamping to the page. I wanted a little bit of contrast on the tag, so I glued on an orange moon and added an orange hat to one of the birds. Just a little bit of orange contrasts with the blue in the page and helps draw the eye to the focal point.

No Time

Breaking the Rules

I often say I don't use complementary colors in my background layers, but that isn't really true. When you look at my journal, you'll frequently see complementary colors in my backgrounds.

Make a page with complementary colors in the background layer.

Despite what I said earlier, it is possible to make a page this way, especially if you use a technique that prevents the paints from mixing too much. Wet watercolor washes aren't the best idea for this. I started *Spending Time* with the pink paint and added the blue stenciling over the pink. I then sprayed the orange ink on the right and let it flow down the page. The orange drips are a complement to the blue stenciling. The large amount of white space prevents the contrast from being too overwhelming.

Spending Time

Gel Medium Resist

I love a good resist. With gel medium and stencils, you can make interesting patterns on your pages that will resist paint and ink. Sometimes I'll go through a journal and add stenciling with gel on random pages. When I get to the page, it's fun to start working around the stenciling that is already there. While this technique works with any type of gel medium, I have had the best results with gloss gel.

Try using this technique to add color contrast. I used purple and yellow, which are complementary colors in my background. The two strong contrasting colors add vibrancy to the piece.

Materials List

canvas (regular or panel)
smooth white cardstock
gesso
acrylic paint (Cobalt Violet Hue, Medium Magenta, Cobalt Teal, Indian Yellow Hue, Raw Umber, Bone Black)
permanent ink pads (black and yellow)
small manila tag
number stencil
stamps
gel medium (gloss)
adhesive
rag
lid from an ink bottle
paintbrushes
palette knife
scissors
water
sewing machine & black thread
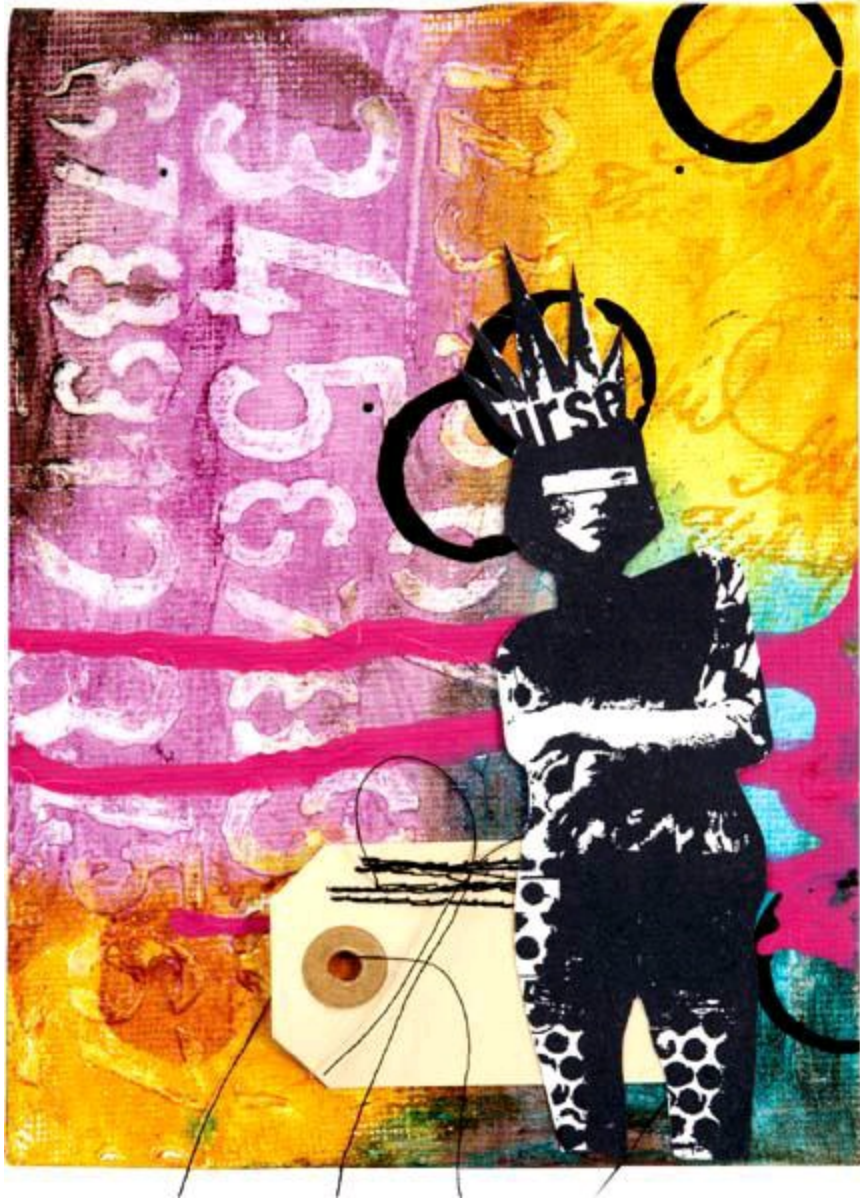
acrylic paint (Golden); adhesive (Tombow); cardstock (Mohawk); gel medium (Golden); gesso (Golden); ink pads (Archival by Ranger); stamps (Dina Wakley Art Stamps by Stampington); stencil (Dyan Reaveley for Ranger)

Step 1

Coat your canvas with a thin coat of white acrylic gesso. Let it dry completely.

Use a palette knife to apply a thin layer of gel medium through a stencil. Let it dry completely.

Step 2

Use a paintbrush or your finger, if you want more control, to apply violet paint to an area of the canvas. Water down the paint a bit so it spreads easily.

Step 3

Apply teal paint to an area.

Step 4

Apply yellow paint to an area.

Step 5

Wipe any excess paint off of the gel medium with a rag. The colors may start to

overlap a bit. A little overlap is the nature of the beast—it just sort of happens. Try to prevent too much overlap, though, so your colors don't make brown.

Step 6

Use a paintbrush or your finger to apply a small amount of Raw Umber paint to the corners of the canvas and a little in the middle.

Step 7

Use a yellow ink pad and a stamp to add some background texture to the yellow area of the canvas.

Step 8

Dip an ink bottle lid into black paint and add circles to the canvas. Let it dry completely.

Step 9

Water down some magenta paint and wipe it onto the side of the canvas with a paintbrush. Let the paint drip down the canvas. Add as much magenta as you'd like to create as many drips as you'd like. Let it dry completely.

Step 10

Stamp a focal image for your canvas with permanent black ink onto the smooth white cardstock. Cut out the image.

Step 11

Sew some messy stitched rows onto a small manila tag.

Glue the tag and the focal image onto the canvas.

Color as a Composition Tool

Color works hand in hand with design principles to be a composition tool on your pages.

It's OK

Everything that you've learned so far about composition goes hand in hand with color. You can use color to make design principles like continuance, proximity and dominance sing on your pages. And don't we all want to create pages that sing with meaning and expression? Following are some ways to use color as a composition tool.

Using color to set a visual path.

For centuries, artists have used color to guide a viewer around a piece of art. By strategically putting color in certain spots, you can control how a viewer looks at your work. In *Always Behind*, I used blue stenciling under my stamped image to give visual weight to that side of the page. The blue drips above my stamped image help lead the eye toward the image as well. The stenciling and drips create a visual path that keeps the eye at the focal point.

Always Behind

Using color to create rhythm.

When you repeat a color throughout your work, you create rhythm. Rhythm is a sense of movement or pattern. Rhythm helps a viewer bounce around an artwork in a controlled way. The repeated color also unifies the piece. In other words, the color helps all the elements feel like they belong together.

An easy way to create rhythm is to simply choose a color and repeat it in various places on your page. I repeated orange in several places in *Messy Growth*. The orange helps the eye bounce around the page and gives the page rhythm and energy.

Messy Growth

Using color to create emphasis.

Color is a fabulous way to create emphasis. When you put a bold or unexpected color in your work, you automatically create a powerful emphasis in that area. In *Look Inside*, the red in the background is striking. It draws the eye right into the drawing of the woman. The yellow blotches also keep the eye moving around the figure. Remember that red and yellow are discordant and provide lots of visual intensity.

Look Inside

Using color to enhance meaning.

Color meanings are powerful and very cultural. They're also varied and contradictory, which can be confusing. Sometimes artists even assign their own meanings to color. You can enhance the meaning on your pages by using colors that have a personal meaning to you. I used lots of turquoise in *Going Through*. Turquoise reminds me of my mother. She loves turquoise jewelry, and whenever I use turquoise, I think of her.

You can create your own color meanings, or you can pay attention to traditional color interpretations and use them to enhance meaning in your work.

Red: Engaging, emotional, stimulating. Red is actually proven to stimulate the body's metabolism. Meanings include love, danger, passion, heat.

Yellow: Sunny, optimistic, happy, but can actually cause anxiety in large amounts. Meanings include joy, happiness, sunshine, cowardice, jealousy.

Blue: Peaceful, tranquil. Evokes water and sky. Meanings include calm, trust, harmony.

Orange: Energetic, fun-loving. Meanings include confidence, sociable, positive.

Green: Mother Nature's color. Meanings include money, freshness, renewal, fertility.

Purple: The color of royalty. Meanings include power, nobility, spirituality, enlightenment.

Black: Classic, authority, power. Meanings include death, mystery, somber, depression.

White: Symbol of purity. Meanings include innocence, emptiness, transparency.

Brown: The color of earth. Meanings include nature, dirt, solidity, drab.

Going Through

Try a Stabilo Pencil

I love to draw over crazy backgrounds. The Stabilo Marks All pencil works well over acrylic paint because it is made to draw on slick surfaces. It will give you a nice, dark line even over slick paint.

Exploring Color as a Composition Tool

Create a visual path with color when you want:

- Your viewer to look at several areas of your page.
- A sense of motion and movement.

Use color to create rhythm when you:

- Need a unifying element on your page.
- Want all of your page elements to look like they belong together.

Use a strong color to create emphasis when you want:

- There to be no doubt about what you consider important on your page.
- Your focal point to stand out against a busy background.

Doing My Best

Page Challenges

Create a page with color to create emphasis.

Choose a color that will help draw the eye and emphasize an area of your composition. *Thin Ice* started as random ink blots on a blank page. The blots were very grungy and distracting. I added the red swath of paint and built my focal point over it. The red paint makes sure the eye sees the focal point amid the grungy, textured background.
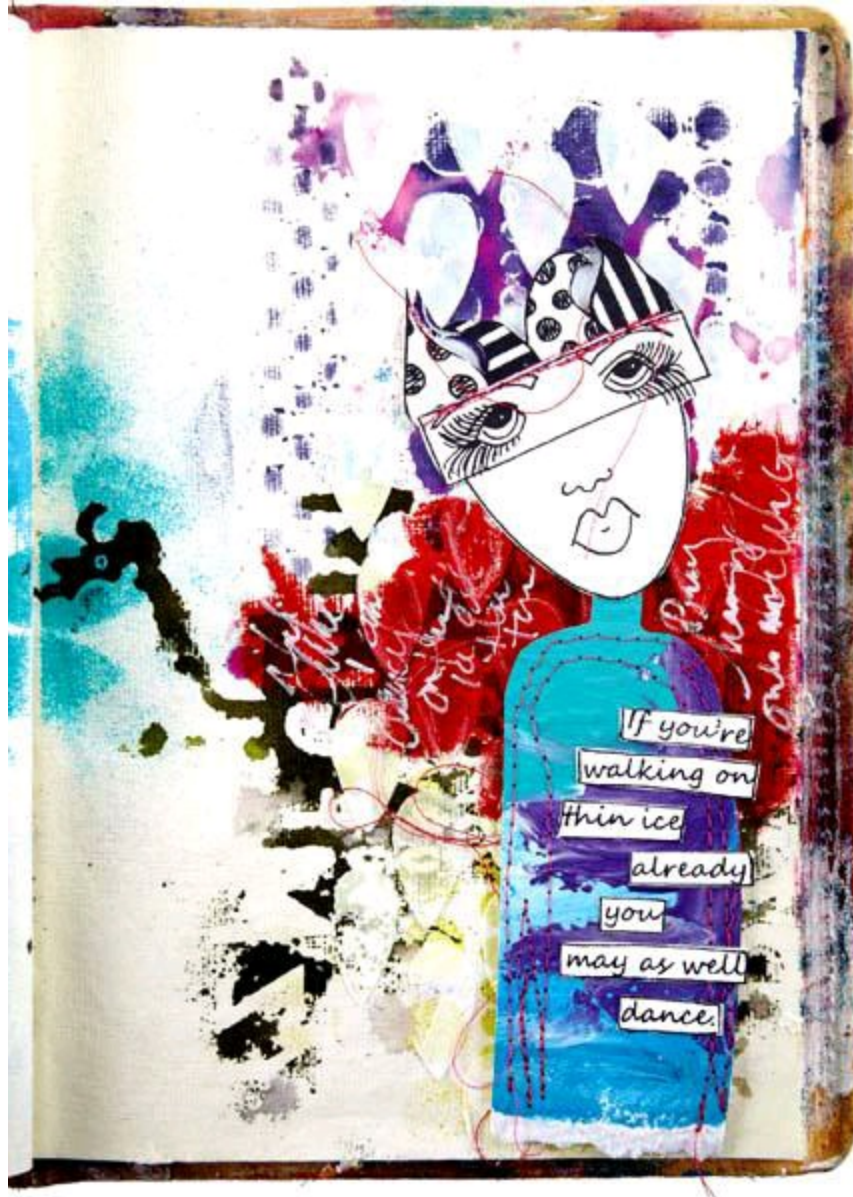
Thin Ice

Create a page with a repeated color to create rhythm.

Try repeating small amounts of a color around a page and see how the page's energy changes. When I created *Happy,* I was pleased with the drawing, and I liked the purple background. I journaled on the dress with a blue marker, and the blue blends well with the purple. I decided, though, that the page needed some visual oomph, so I splattered the orange paint. The orange splatter gave the page instant energy and

motion.

Happy

Breaking the Rules

A fun thing about color is you can manipulate it so it works for you and your purposes.

Create a page that has elements in colors that are unexpected and untraditional.

For example, instead of doing pink or red hearts, try blue or black hearts. Instead of a yellow sun, try a green sun. Who says the sky has to be blue in your journal? Make it hot pink! I like to draw images of women and paint their faces with fun colors. *Mostly Normal* has a familiar lollipop flower, but the flower is green and the stem is purple.

Mostly Normal

Artsy Painted Birds

I love painting birds. I like to give them crazy colors and use loose, painterly brushstrokes. The fun-colored birdies make me happy! Don't fret if you can't draw a bird. You can trace! For this technique, you just need the basic outline of the bird, so tracing works well to give you a shape to use as a starting point. In this piece, I traced an image from the Graphics Fairy, which is an extensive online clipart resource.

As you paint your bird canvas, think about the concepts in this chapter. Try using color to set a visual path, or to keep the eye moving around your composition. I put stenciling on each bird's body to keep the eye moving from bird to bird.

Materials List

8" x 10" (20cm x 25cm) canvas
clip art or picture of birds
gesso
acrylic paint (Raw Umber, Burnt Sienna, Cobalt Teal, Manganese Blue Hue, Light Blue Permanent, Quinacridone Rose, Ultramarine Violet, Titanium White, Payne's Grey, Permanent Yellow Deep)
spray inks (Wild Plum, Sunset Orange, Sailboat Blue)
Stabilo Marks All pencil
sheets of book paper
stencils
paintbrush
gel medium
Workable Fixatif
paper towels
transfer paper
black pen
dull pencil
palette knife
water

acrylic paint (Golden, Liquitex, Amsterdam); clip art (Graphics Fairy); gel medium (Liquitex); gesso (Dick Blick); paper towels (Viva); pen (Sharpie); pencil (Stabilo); spray inks (Ranger); stencils (Crafter's Workshop); Workable Fixatif (Krylon)
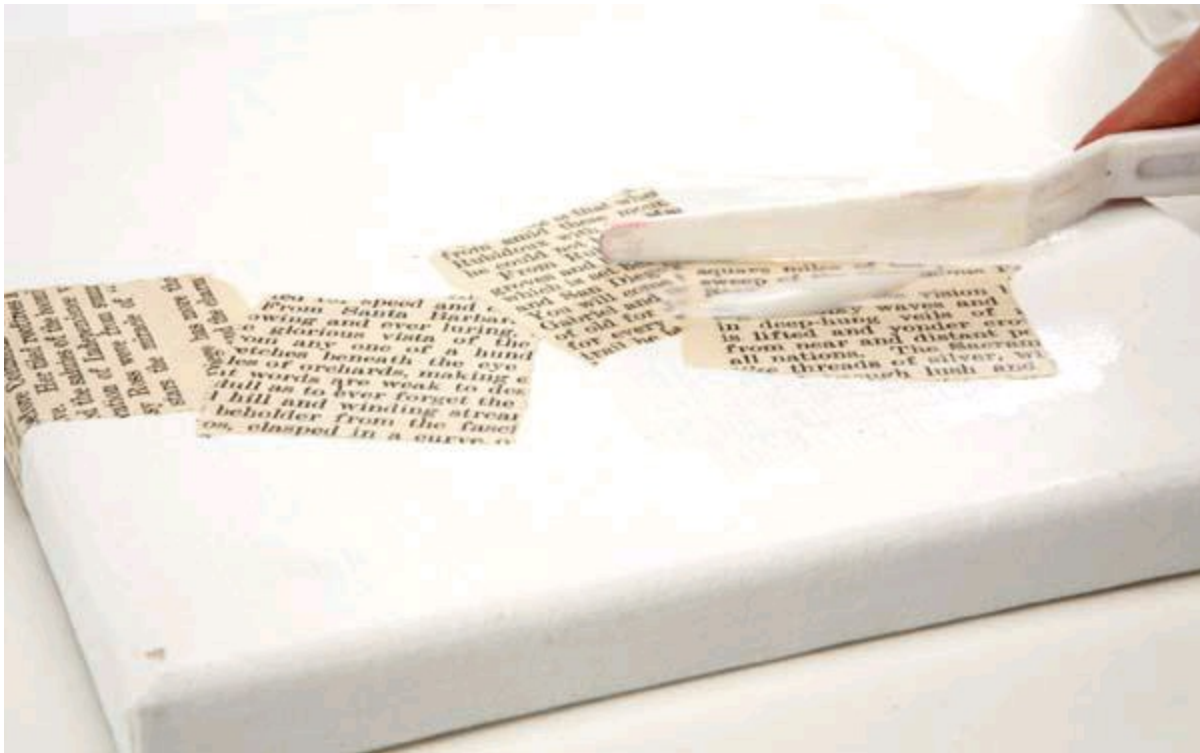
Step 1

Apply a thin coat of gesso to your canvas. I find even preprimed canvases need another coat of gesso to make the paint stick well.

Use gel medium and a palette knife to apply torn pieces of book paper along the bottom third of the canvas. Be sure to put a thin layer of gel both under and over the pieces of book paper.

Step 2

Brush light blue paint onto the top left and bottom right corners of the canvas. I like to add some water to the paint so it flows well and has some transparency.

Wipe the paint with a paper towel, leaving the center lighter than the edges. Drag some paint to the corners that you didn't paint, too.

Step 3

Add some teal paint to the edges. If the teal paint doesn't blend well into the blue paint, work it in with your finger or a cloth.

Step 4

Use your finger to put some Manganese Blue and Raw Umber paint onto the corners of the canvas. Work the paint until you are happy with the shading.

Step 5

Print out a picture of birds that you'd like to draw. I find lots of great copyright-free images on the Internet, or I use some of my own photos.

Place transfer paper on your canvas, and put your bird picture on top of the transfer paper. Use a dull pencil to trace the lines of the birds and branches. Make sure you use firm pressure so the image transfers to the canvas. You can fold the picture and transfer paper back to check your progress.

Step 6

Go over your traced marks with a Stabilo Marks All pencil. Don't worry about putting in every detail. The general outline of the birds is just fine. Use several strokes while you draw to give the birds a free-form, artsy look.
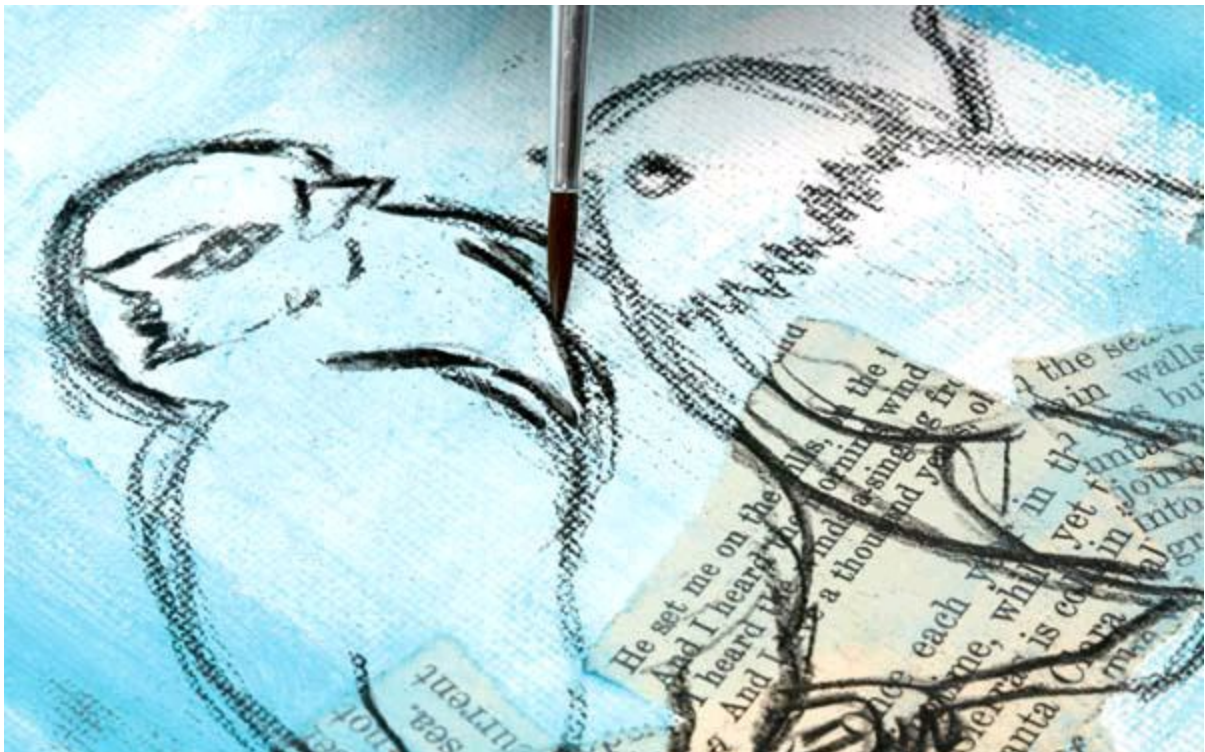
Step 7

Wet a paintbrush and trace over the lines. The water dissolves the pencil marks and turns them into paint. If you've drawn two or three lines, you can dissolve some lines and leave some as pencil lines.

Keep It Loose

I don't have a steady hand, so I find that if I sketch something with one line, it looks amateurish. If I sketch something with two or three loose lines, it looks artsy.

Step 8

Spray the birds with Workable Fixatif to prevent the black lines from smearing too much while you paint.

Take a good look at your bird photo. Identify the lightest areas on the birds. Use white paint to paint those areas on the birds' bodies. Don't worry about filling in every inch of the birds. We're making fun, artsy birds, not realistic birds. Make your strokes go in the same direction as the feathers. Your strokes will give the impression of feathers without having to fill in every minute detail.

Step 9

Look at your bird photo and identify medium tones or colors on the birds. Paint in those mid tones with violet paint. Be sure to overlap your brushstrokes and colors.

Step 10

Look at your photo and identify the darkest colors on the birds. Use gray to add those

dark areas.

Step 11

Add some Quinacridone rose to brighten the birds and add more visual interest and color contrast. If you paint over your highlights or white areas, simply put them back with more white paint.

Achieving Graceful Brushstrokes

Keep your brushstrokes loose and expressive. I get the best results from using a small, flat paintbrush. Load it with paint and press the brush onto the paper. As you drag the paintbrush, lift it up so your brushstroke has a feathered edge.

Step 12

Add yellow paint to the birds to add visual interest and emphasis. The yellow works well for beaks, too.

If you paint over any of your black lines, simply draw them back in with the Stabilo Marks All pencil.

Step 13

Use your pencil to define the eyes, and use a paintbrush to dissolve the pencil marks so they look like paint.

Step 14

Add catch lights to the eyes with a few dots of white paint. Catch lights are the reflection of light in the eye. Catch lights are what make animals (and people!) look alive. You just need one or two small dots of white in the birds' pupils to create good catch lights.

Step 15

Paint the branches loosely with Burnt Sienna.

Step 16

Use orange spray ink and a stencil to add stenciled texture to the birds' bodies.

Step 17

Blot the stenciling with one pass of a roll of paper towels.

Step 18

Use blue and plum inks to add stenciled texture to the background. Blot the stenciling with one pass of a roll of paper towels.

Step 19

Use a black pen to write journaling on the birds' bodies. You could write a poem, quote, song lyrics or anything that moves you.

The Power of Black and White

You can use black or white to add visual emphasis and fix problem areas in your composition.

Thrill

Black

My uncle is an artist, and once I was admiring a landscape that he had painted. I told him I liked it, and he said, "Oh, no, that painting is bad. I used black, and you're never supposed to use black when you paint."

What? Never supposed to use black? Yep, that's part of conventional art wisdom that students are taught in painting classes. The rationale is that not much in nature is truly black. Anything that appears black is actually just a combination of other colors. Shadows aren't truly black; they're more gray or brown. A black beetle isn't truly black; it is actually a very, very dark purple and red. Art students are taught to use dark versions of other colors instead of black.

Thank goodness we can do whatever we like in art journaling. What I love about black is that it provides contrast no matter what colors it's near. Black is:

- Strong, powerful and easily noticed. Because black is so strong, it can overpower what's around it, and you can use that to your advantage.
- A great tool for contrast. Black makes the colors around it seem even more colorful.
- Full of drama! Black adds instant drama and interest.

Loving

White

Ah, white. I think we take white for granted. In fact, sometimes we give white a bad name. Aren't we all a bit afraid of that blank white page?

The truth is, white is just as versatile as black. White is:

- Naturally bright and can highlight or brighten an overall dark work.
- Reflective. White reflects the colors around it and makes them appear brighter. This reflection provides emphasis.
- Restful. White can give the eye an area to rest in while it moves around your work (the same principle as white space but on a smaller scale).
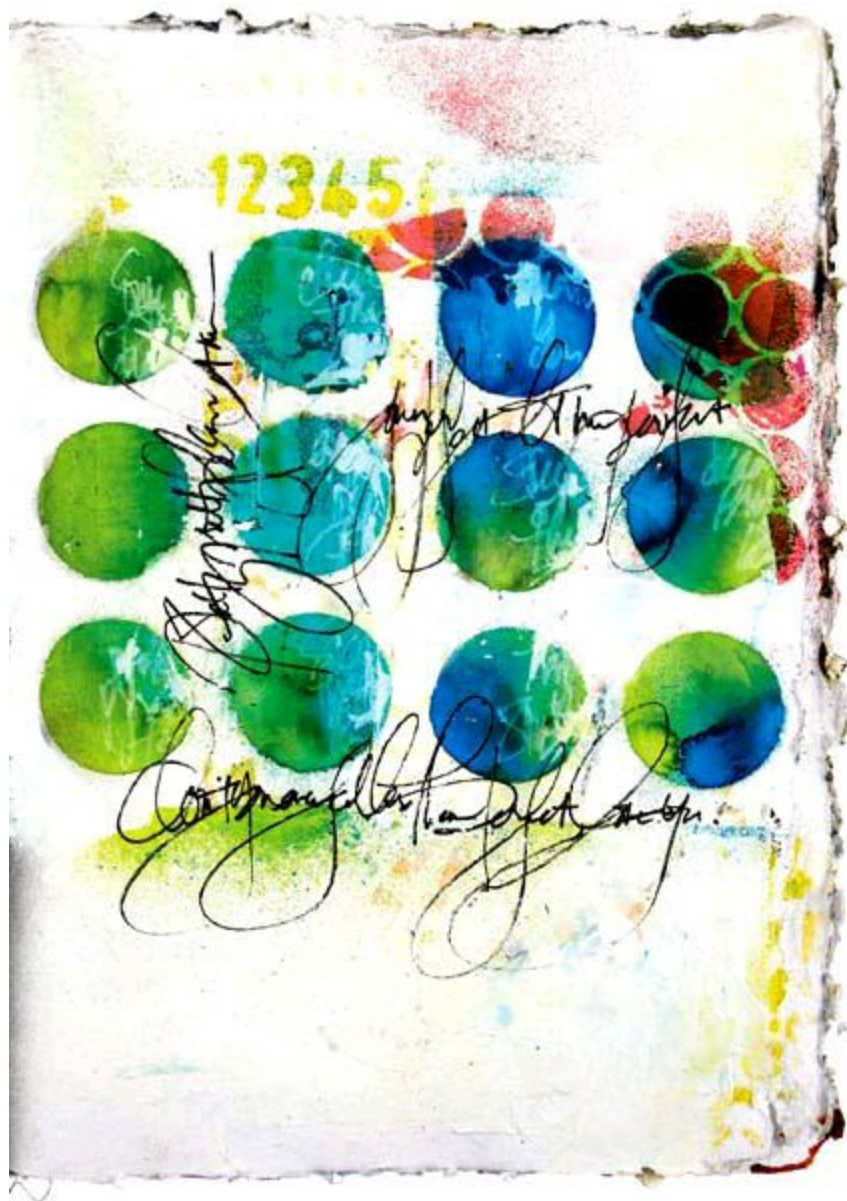
Perfect

The following are some ways you can use black and white.

Fix an overwrought page.

If you have an overwrought page (which I affectionately call my "puke on a page" pages—I seem to create them all the time), you can often make it work by adding black —a lot of black. To do this, I often create a silhouette with black spray paint. Or I simply paint a large black element right over the page. The black element becomes dominant, and the mess of the background is more visually manageable. *Trying Hard* started as an inky mess. I had sprayed ink through a stencil, and the ink bled underneath the stencil to create a messy image. I didn't want to throw the page away, but I wasn't happy with the ink. I cut a silhouette from a magazine and used black spray paint to spray around it. The black covers part of the inky mess and tones it down, and it leaves enough of the underlayers exposed to create an interesting pattern in the silhouette. You could also paint around the silhouette with white paint and get a similar (but perhaps less dramatic) effect.

Trying Hard

Make colors around it pop.

No doubt about it, black and white can make other colors pop. Adding a touch of black or white makes reds seem redder and yellows seem yellower. In *I Want It Back*, the figure's black dress and the surrounding white space help the colors in the background seem vibrant. The yellow and purple are complements of each other, so they also create intensity.

I Want It Back

Create a mood.

No doubt about it, strong black paint creates a mood. It gives a sense of power, of strength and even of sadness. I used a black background in *Somebody* instead of using my regular colors. The background is intense and moody.

Somebody

Add a strong contrast or a visually intense element.

If you want a page element to absolutely be noticed first, make it black and make it big. *Worry* has three strong black stamped images as its focal point. They are bold and strong and draw the eye immediately.

Worry

Having Trouble Stamping?

I love textured watercolor paper, but it can be difficult to stamp on with solid stamps. To get around this, I stamp solid images on white tissue paper and use gel medium to put them on my page. The gel makes the tissue transparent, and I can place the images where I want without worrying about messing up the stamping.

Outline elements so they are more visible.

If my page elements seem to be getting lost, I often take a black or white pen or pencil and give them a simple outline. The outline provides contrast and definition without

taking over the entire composition. In *Swing of Things*, I used a black pencil to outline the circles in the background. They seemed to be disappearing, and I wanted them to have more visual presence. The outlining helps them stand out a bit more but not take over.

Swing of Things

Lighten a dark area.

If I have an area on my page that is just too dark, I can lighten it up by adding some splashes of white. When I made *Today*, I felt like the silhouette was fine, but the composition as a whole needed brightening. I used a stencil and modeling paste to add a white design to the right side of the page.

Today

Add visual relief.

When you add some white in a busy page, it provides the eye a place to rest as it moves around the art. I think this is why I often leave white space in my background layer. If you leave some white space, your eye has a place to land. In *Thank Goodness*, the white areas inside the silhouettes help to brighten the composition and provide visual relief against the intenseness of the black background.

Thank Goodness

Exploring Black and White

Use black in your work when you want to:

- Create high contrast and drama.
- Fix an overwrought page.
- Make colors pop.

Use white in your work when you want to:

- Lighten up a dark area.
- Make colors pop.
- Add visual relief.

All I Can Take

Page Challenges

Create a silhouette with black (or white) paint.

I find the best silhouettes in high-fashion magazines. The models are often in fun poses that make for an expressive silhouette. In *That Is That*, I used black spray paint to paint around the silhouette. I painted over some of the black paint on the left side of the silhouette for a fun visual effect.

That Is That

Sizing Up a Silhouette

After I cut a silhouette from a magazine, I flip it over and look at it from the

reverse side. The reverse side gives me a good idea of what the silhouette will look like on my page (because on the front side, the model's features and the clothing details are distracting). If the silhouette looks funny from the reverse side, it will look funny on your page.

Create a page with a strong black or white element.

Try making your focal point black or white. In *Opportunities*, I used a pencil to draw the tree. I purposely made the lines of the tree strong and bold so they would have a strong visual weight on the page.

Opportunities

Breaking the Rules

You can't really break the rules when you use black and white, at least as far as art

journaling is concerned. So for this lesson, breaking the rules is moot. One topic I haven't covered, though, is using black and white together. Using them together is by no means breaking the rules, but it's something we haven't tried yet.

Create a page that has a strong use of both black and white.

Using black and white together is the ultimate contrast. Think about simple ink-and-paper drawings. They can have such power in their simplicity. When color is absent, the subject becomes paramount. The same is true with black-and-white photography. Often black-and-white photography is described as more expressive than color, simply because the absence of color puts so much emphasis on the subject of the photograph. I started *Exhausted* with a layer of black gesso. When it was dry, I painted over it with white gesso. Next came the drawing, some black stenciling and the white modeling paste.

Exhausted

Black Spray Paint and Silhouettes

Spray paint is so fun to use. It is permanent, opaque and quick-drying, and spray paint gives a more defined stenciled image than spray ink does. It's more precise and predictable than spray ink, too.

This technique is great to use on pages that you don't like. I stumbled on this idea as a way to fix a page that was a royal mess. I was about to gesso over the entire page, but instead I grabbed my black spray paint and a large mask. Magic happened. The black spray paint focused the mess, and I was able to create something interesting out of the page.

As you do this technique, don't be afraid to make an artsy mess. The black spray-painted figure will work to tone down and reign in the chaos of the background, just like we discussed in this chapter.

Materials List

your journal or watercolor paper
small piece of scrap paper or watercolor paper
gesso
acrylic paint (Light Blue Permanent, Bright Aqua Green, Medium Magenta, Crimson)
spray inks (Blue, Butterscotch, Hot Pink, Tangerine)
black spray paint
stencils
plastic canvas heart
silhouette from a magazine
modeling paste
adhesive
black pen
white pen
old gift card for scraping
palette knife
scissors

acrylic paint (Golden, Liquitex); adhesive (Tombow); gesso (Dick Blick); modeling paste (Liquitex); pens (Sharpie); spray inks (Maya Road, Ranger); spray paint (Krylon); stencils (Crafter's Workshop); watercolor paper (Canson)

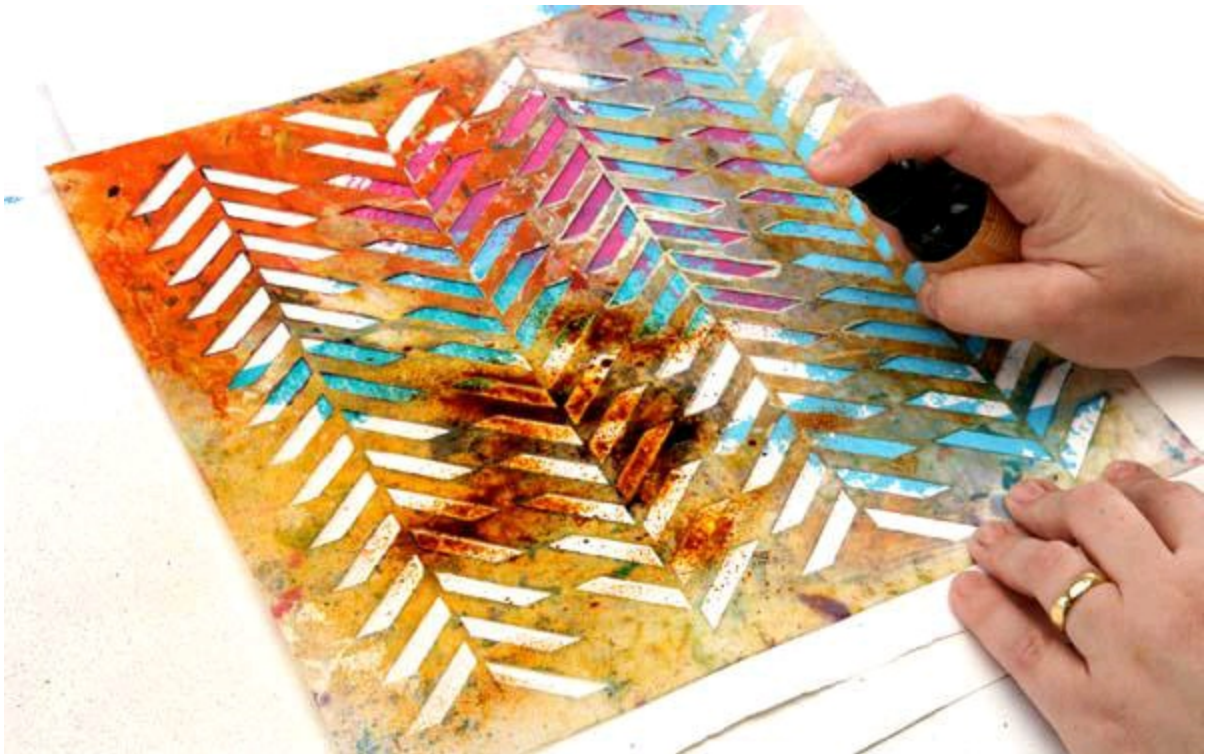**Step 1**

Gesso your page or watercolor paper and let dry.

Scrape some blue paint onto your paper. I scraped paint on the right side of the paper to start an asymmetrical foundation for my page.

Scrape some aqua green paint onto your paper, overlapping a bit with the blue paint.

Step 2

Scrape some magenta paint onto your paper, overlapping a bit with the other colors.

Step 3

Stencil some chevrons onto your paper with yellow ink. I put the chevrons just below the midline of the paper.

Step 4

Stencil a plastic canvas heart onto your paper with pink ink. I put the heart on the right, above the midline.

Step 5

Stencil some alphabet letters onto your paper with blue ink. I put the alphabet above

the heart.

Step 6

Cut a silhouette from a fashion magazine.

Lay your silhouette over your background and spray over it gently with black spray paint. Be sure to spray in a well-ventilated area. Let the paint dry.

Spray Paint Options

You can buy artist-quality spray paint (such as Montana Gold). The color range is great, and you can buy different nozzles to get different spray patterns and widths. For black paint, though, I just use the cheapie stuff from the craft store.

Step 7

Outline the figure with a black pen. I like to go around the outline twice.

Step 8

Add some artsy circles to the figure with a white pen and write some journaling along the side of the figure. The white ink looks striking against the black paint.

Step 9

Use modeling paste and a stencil to add some background texture. I put the modeling paste near the top of the page.

Step 10

Puddle some orange spray ink in the figure. A puddle the size of a quarter is perfect.

Step 11

Pick up your page and let the ink flow down.

Step 12

Paint a scrap piece of paper with red paint. Cut a heart from the paper and outline it with a black pen. Glue the heart onto the silhouetted figure.

Black Spray Paint as a Middle Layer

Another thing I love to do with black spray paint is use it as a middle layer on a page. What I mean by middle layer is I start the page as usual with acrylic paint and spray ink. Then I add a layer of stenciling with black spray paint. When the paint is dry, I continue creating on top of the black layer. The black spray paint gives the illusion of depth on the page. The layers under the spray paint seem to recede, and the layers on top seem to advance. The result is interesting and visually complex.

As you use black in your middle layers, you'll see the principles in the chapter come into play. The black layer helps the colors around it pop, and it gives a sense of calm to a chaotic background.

Materials List

your journal or watercolor paper
gesso
black spray paint
spray ink (magenta)
acrylic paint (Indian Yellow Hue, Light Blue Permanent, Titanium White)
silhouette from a magazine
stencils
paintbrush
adhesive
old gift card for scraping
cardboard circle
black pen
water

acrylic paint (Golden, Liquitex); gesso (Dick Blick); pen (Sharpie); spray ink (Maya Road); spray paint (Krylon); stencil (Crafter's Workshop); watercolor paper (Canson)

Step 1

Gesso your page or watercolor paper and let it dry.

Scrape some yellow onto the page. I scraped it along the top third of the page.

Use magenta ink and a stencil to add some texture to the page. To retain my white space on the bottom, I kept the stenciling along the top of the page.

Step 2

Use black spray paint to spray through an alphabet stencil on the page. I put some of the alphabet in the middle and a little bit of the alphabet on the left and right sides.

Step 3

Splatter the page with blue paint. In order for paint to splatter well, it needs to be fairly liquid. I put paint on my palette and add water until the paint is a nice consistency. I load my paintbrush with paint and flick it onto my page.

Step 4

Use a cardboard circle and white paint to make three circles on the right of the page. Let them dry completely. Write some journaling in the three circles.

Take a silhouette from a magazine and paint it black. Glue it onto your page. You could also draw on the page, add stamped images or create a collage.

Putting It All Together

Use one or more of the composition and color principles in your work to enhance your meaning and personal expression.
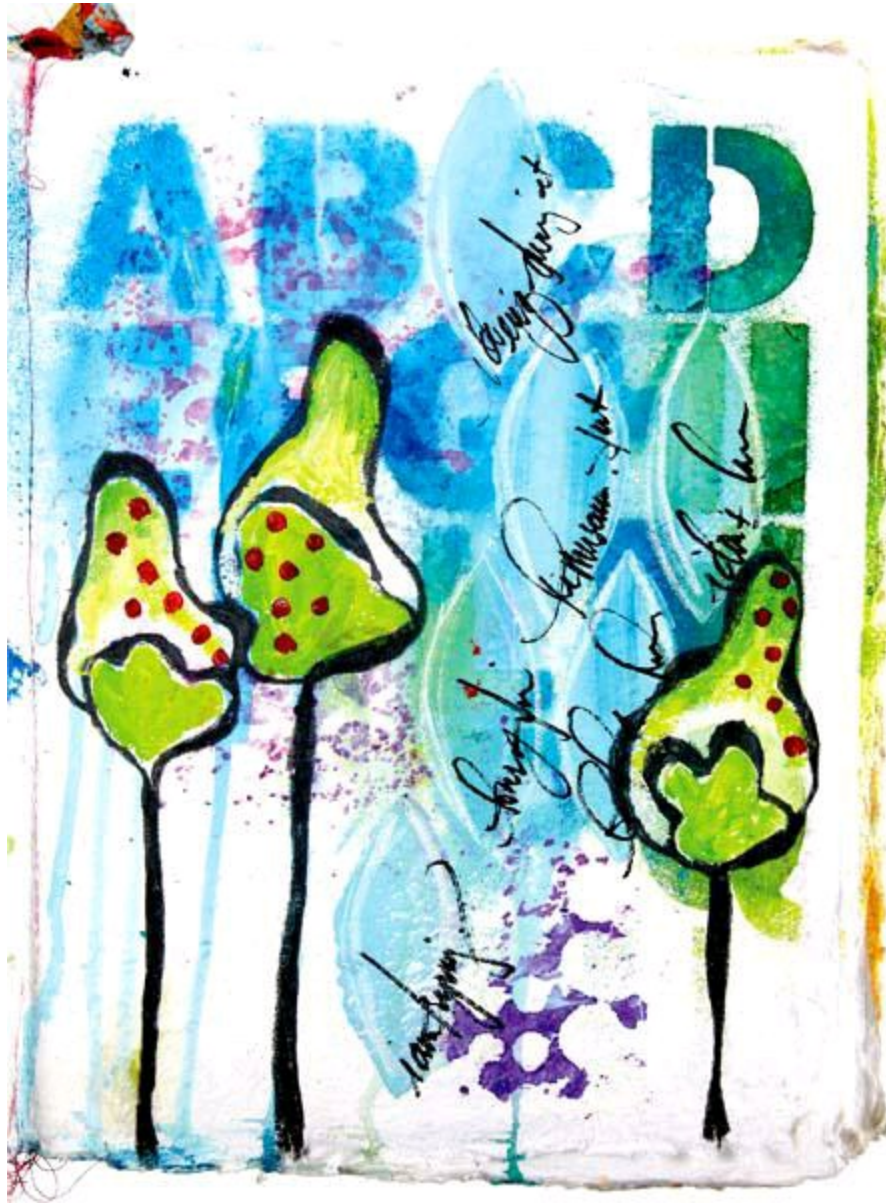
I Am Trying

Now you know some composition and color principles. Are you ready to put them into action?

My personal art journal process is very organic. I don't set out to consciously use a certain principle on a journal page. When I start a page, I never have an end result in mind. I just play. The principles are in the back of my mind, though. Sometimes they

come up unconsciously in my work. Sometimes I struggle with what to do next, and I turn to the principles for help. The more you use and practice them, the more you will understand when to use them.

For me, the journaling process is more important than the finished result. Expression, play, experimentation—these are your goals. Play and see what happens. Sometimes happy accidents occur that you can turn around and use to your benefit. You can refine techniques and style, and try it again and make it work in a different way.

No matter what, don't give up. Keep journaling. Fill up those pages with your soul.

My Art Journal Process

It's hard for me to describe my art journal process. One of the great things about art journaling is it isn't regimented. I do it differently every time I sit down to create.

Generally, I begin by putting down some sort of color. One day it might be scraped paint, one day a floaty wash, one day spray ink. I play with color and textures. Then I look at the page and listen to it. Yes, my art journal talks to me! I look at how the colors are interacting, how the paint flows on the page, and I decide what type of imagery to use. I sometimes draw, sometimes add stamped images, sometimes make little collages. When I'm happy with the imagery, I add journaling. I write whatever I am feeling right in that moment. Sometimes I am lonely, sometimes happy, sometimes sick of doing laundry. I don't edit myself, I just write. Then I add more layers and color.

Sometimes I switch up the order of things. I might start with words instead of color. I might draw first and then add stenciling. I might add tons of collage and no journaling at all. There's no wrong way to do it!
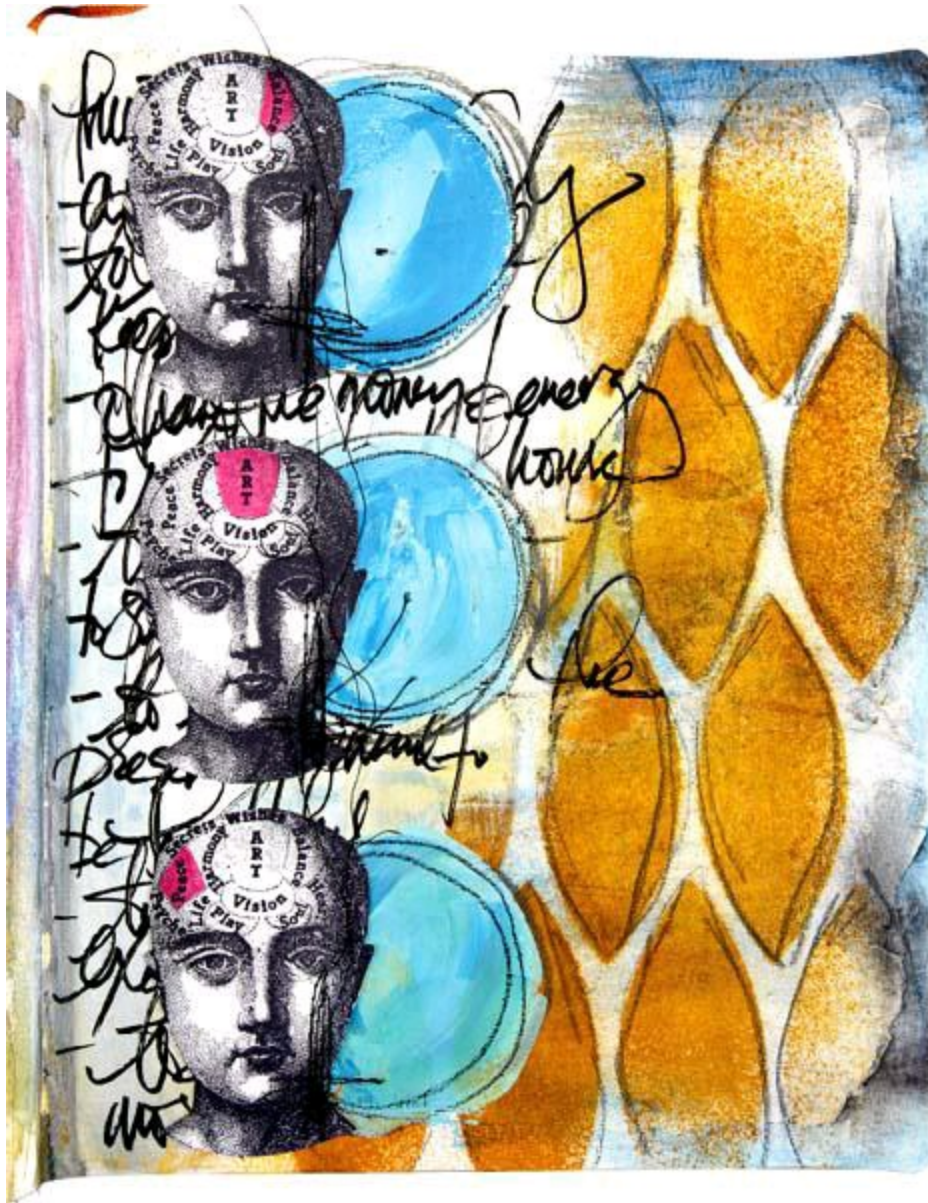
Vertical To Do List

They'll Make More Paper

If I make a page I don't like, I don't worry about it. My art journal is not fine art —it's expression. I learn from the experience, turn the page and create again.

Pages Examined

Let's examine these art journal pages and identify the composition and color principles at play on them.

I started *Juggling* by masking a tag three times on my page with blue and green spray ink. Next came the journaling in the masked tag area. I stamped the hands on cardstock, cut them out and glued them to the top of the page. I painted pink balls

falling out of the hands. I used a white Stabilo Marks All pencil to draw around the pink ball. I colored in the stamped images with dye-based markers.

Principles: complementary colors ([Chapter 6](#)), continuance ([Chapter 3](#)), rule of threes ([Chapter 2](#)).
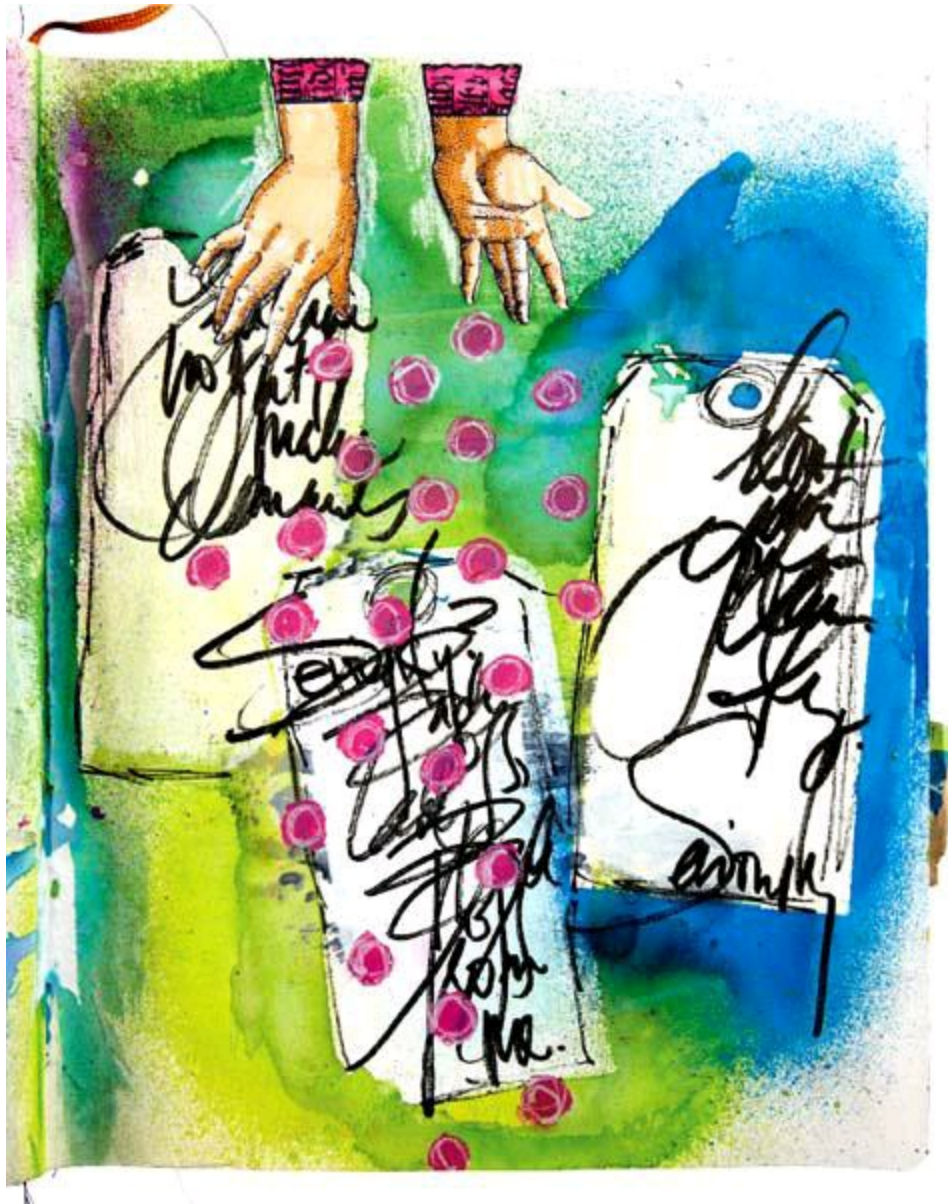
Juggling

Most Afraid began with pink stenciling at the top. I added squirts of blue spray ink at the bottom. I sprayed some water into the blue ink and lifted the page so the drips would flow. Next came the painted white circles going from the bottom left flowing up to the top right. I drew around the circles with a pencil to give them more weight and presence. I added journaling to mimic the flow of the circles. I drew the figure with a Stabilo Marks All pencil right over the journaling and circles, and I painted her face and body. I stamped the "Journey" stamp in her body with black archival ink.

Principles: contrast with color (Chapter 7), continuance (Chapter 3), asymmetrical composition (Chapter 2).

Most Afraid

This *Pensive* girl started with layers of stenciling in orange and pink. Then I drew the woman; I painted her face and made her eyes and dress blue. I journaled in two colors around the right side of her face.

Principles: complementary colors (Chapter 6), proximity (Chapter 4), continuance (Chapter 3), asymmetrical composition (Chapter 2).

Pensive

On *Do I Know,* I pooled up some watery amounts of spray ink that I allowed to drip down the page. I drew the woman on the right side so her body would be in the white area. I wrote journaling in the woman's body, varying its direction. I added inky blue circles and circles cut from a homemade collage sheet.

Principles: continuance (Chapter 3), white space (Chapter 3), complementary colors (Chapter 6), asymmetrical composition (Chapter 2).

Do I Know

Dance started as a completely different page. I had added ink, journaling and images. I overdid it, though, and the page seemed jumbled. I drew the three figures over the page with a pencil and painted around them with blue paint (leaving some of the background showing through). I added journaling with a white pen in the blue background. I added yellow paint in the bodies of the figures. I stamped the quote and glued it on the largest figure.

Principles: complementary colors (Chapter 6), repetition (Chapter 5), dominance (Chapter 5), proximity (Chapter 4), rule of threes (Chapter 2).

Dance

I started *Facing It* with an inky blue background and green stenciled letters. Next came three large black circles which I outlined with a white Stabilo pencil. I poured orange ink down the page so it would drip over the black circles. I stamped three faces, cut them out and added them to the page. I added a bit of corrugated cardboard under each face.

   Principles: continuance (Chapter 3), black and white (Chapter 9), rule of thirds, rule of threes and visual triangles (Chapter 2).

Facing It

I started *I Can Do It* with orange paint and blue paint. I used a brush to make energetic brushstrokes with the blue paint. I wrote in the blue area with a white pen. I added the painty circle and the stamped image to finish.

Principles: white space (Chapter 3), complementary colors (Chapter 6), asymmetrical composition (Chapter 2), using black (Chapter 9).

I Can Do It

Comfortable began with scraped layers of teal and purple paint. I removed some of the paint through a stencil with a rag. I added some stenciling with pink spray ink and orange spray ink. I glued on a blue strip of painted paper and a photograph. The last touch was some black stamping and journaling.

   Principles: white space (Chapter 3), contrast with color (Chapter 7), proximity (Chapter 4), asymmetrical composition (Chapter 2).
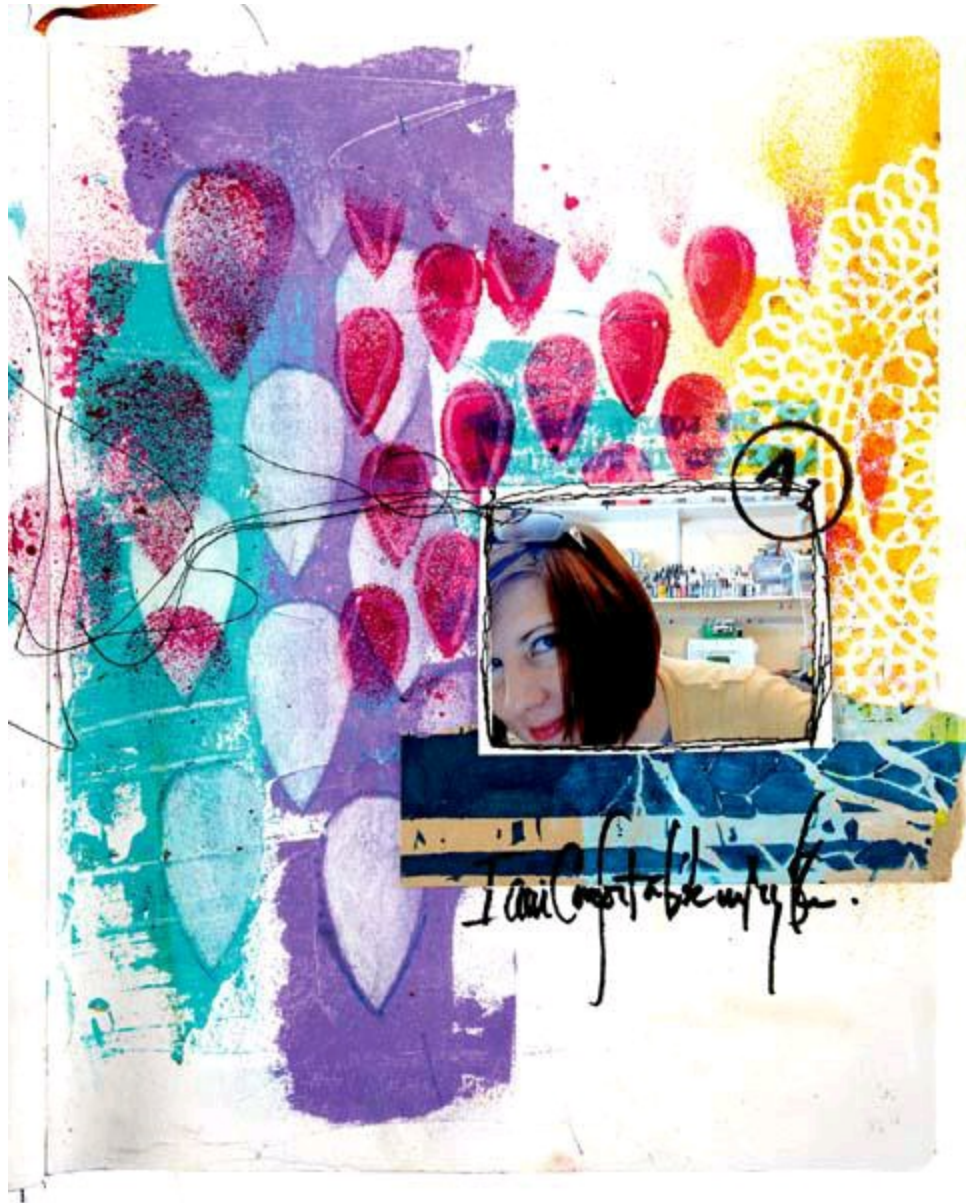
Comfortable

Resources

To create the projects and techniques in this books, I used products from the following manufacturers. Look for these products at your local art or craft supply store, or for more information, go to the manufacturer's website listed below.

Acrylic Paint

Golden Artist Colors www.goldenpaints.com

Liquitex Artist Materials www.liquitex.com

Pastels

PanPastels Artists' Pastels www.panpastel.com

Pencils

Stabilo www.stabilo.com

Spray Inks

Ranger Ink www.rangerink.com

Maya Road www.mayaroad.net

Stencils

Crafter's Workshop www.thecraftersworkshop.com

Jenni Bowlin Studios www.jbsmercantile.com

StencilGirl Products stencilgirlproducts.com

Rubber Stamps

Green Pepper Press www.greenpepperpress.com

Lost Coast Designs www.lost-coast-designs.com

Inkadinkado www.eksuccessbrands.com/inkadinkado

River City Rubber Works www.rivercityrubberworks.com

Stampotique Originals www.stampotique.com

Stampers Anonymous www.stampersanonymous.com

Cherry Pie Art Stamps www.cherrypieartstamps.com

Invoke Arts invokearts.com

Stampington & Company stampington.com/art_stamps.html

A Stamp in the Hand www.astampinthehand.com

Ma Vinci's Reliquary mavinci.net

Paperbag Studios www.paperbagstudios.com

Non Sequitur www.nonsequiturstamps.com

Catslife Press www.catslifepress.com

Digital Graphics, Clip Art and Images

The Graphics Fairy graphicsfairy.blogspot.com

Dedication

To Reed and "the fellas:" Curtis, Cole and Carter. My loves.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Christine Doyle and the whole North Light team for making this book shine.

Thanks to my friends (you know who you are). Your constant support keeps me going and helps banish self-doubt.

Thanks to my parents and family for being my biggest fans.

Thanks to my fellas for making life full, exciting and loud.

Thanks to Reed for love, partnership, kindness, acceptance and willingness to eat frozen meals and fast food when I am overwhelmed.

Still Need More Color in Your Art Journal?

We've got you covered! Visit www.createmixedmedia.com/art-journal-freedom for bonus techniques and colorful ideas.

About the Author

Dina Wakley is a mixed-media artist and teacher. She loves everything about art: creating it, thinking about it, looking at it and teaching it. She teaches both in-person and online workshops, and her work has been published in many magazines and books. Dina is a docent at the Phoenix Art Museum, where she gives tours to school groups and gets kids excited about art. She lives in sunny Arizona with her husband and three boys.

You can find Dina at www.dinawakley.com.

You can find Dina's line of rubber stamps at stampington.com/shoppe/dina_wakley_stamps.html.

You can find Dina's line of stencils at www.thecraftersworkshop.com.

Other fine North Light products are available from your local bookstore, art supply store or online. Also visit our website at www.fwmedia.com.

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