

My beginning high-school art students—fresh from middle school—are a real pleasure. Interested in their chosen elective, eager to learn more about art, and yet armed with *some* knowledge, they are a special group. In our fundamentals course, the various units are recurrent themes, and how to approach each area of study is unique to each individual teacher.

When covering the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design, I like to talk about them, show examples, and have the students apply these terms in a visual way. The final step helps students remember what they are and how important they are to the artist. So basic.

Throughout my career of teaching art, I have observed that, unless we give students some concrete examples, just saying the words doesn't mean much. It is important to illustrate the words and make them real.

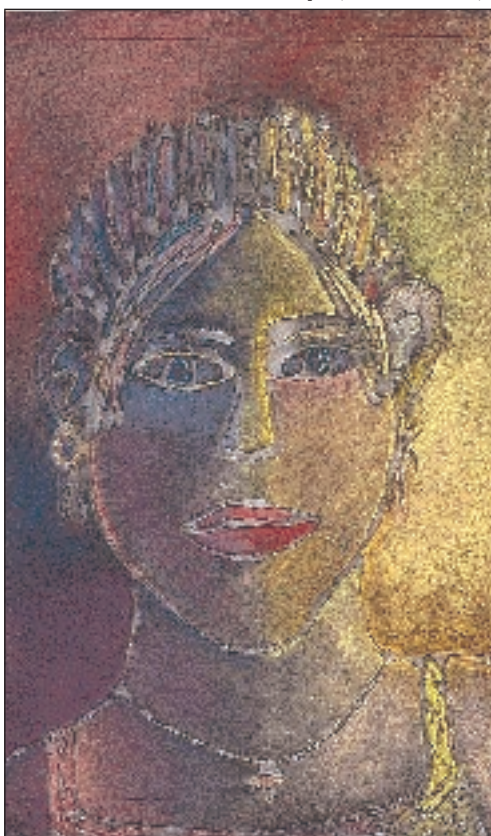
I liken the elements to a "toolbox"—either the traditional concept of a toolbox, with hammer, pliers and nails, or the more contemporary one of the computer toolbox, with the eraser, lasso, magnifying glass, etc. The tools are there for us to use, and those terms—line, shape, color, form, texture, space and value—are the artist's tools.

I had touched on each of these terms by describing and showing my students their concrete manifestation: elements that help us create. We had practiced contour and continuous-line

drawing, creating shape from closing lines, and we created the illusion of form by shading and casting shadows.

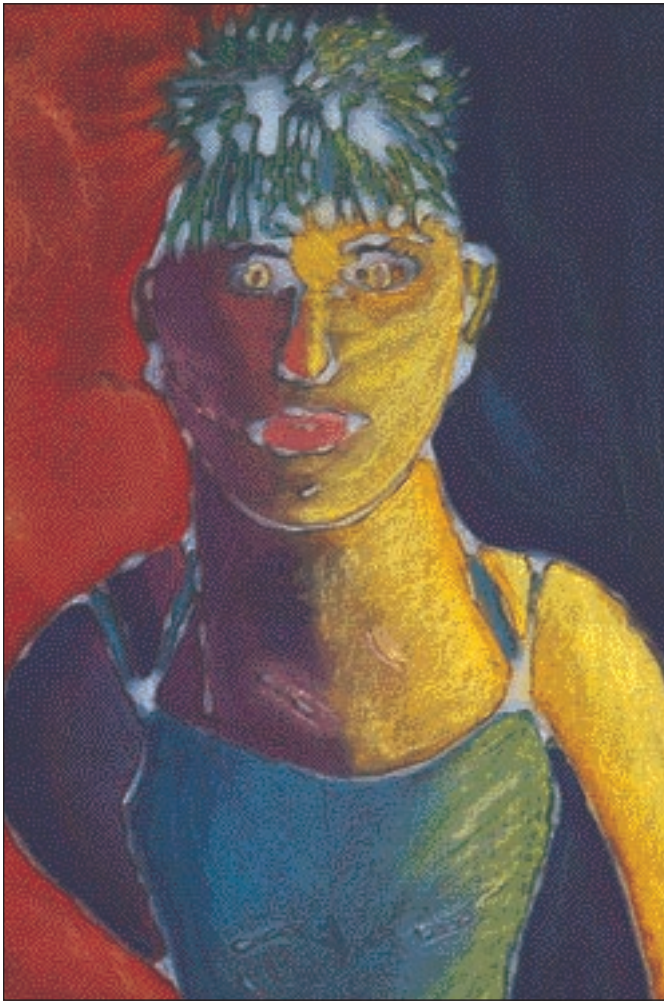
So, the next step was to employ line in a continuous "flow" by actually drawing with school glue on black poster board. The poster board is preferable over construction paper for this

RIGHT Usman Mahmood
BELOW Rachel Van Ryn (also on cover).



LINE, SHAPE, COLOR

by Geri Greenman



particular use, in that there is less chance of the base curling.

I had my students do a continuous-line pencil drawing of themselves or the person next to them. When they were comfortable with their portraits, I had them translate them on the black poster board using glue for the line. I encouraged them to squeeze generously so that a ridge of glue would result. Once dry, the glue created little, walled shapes and areas that described the segments of the face.

I demonstrated how to use soft pastels, and shared some suggestions of how the students might consider using warm and cool colors to bring parts of the face toward the viewer, or naturalistic hues to suggest flesh tones. Some students used very bizarre and expressionistic colors, which was entirely their choice.

A few students decided to color their line drawings to actually resemble the person, but many chose to have some fun with the colors, layering colors or placing unlikely colors near each other so that they would



“vibrate.” I showed them examples of artists known as colorists, Paul Gauguin and Franz Marc, so they could see how one might choose to manipulate the viewer’s eye.

As it traveled over the ridges of dried glue, the chalk could retain the scumbled color or could look almost translucent. The black board kept some colors opaque while,

TOP Laura Mason

ABOVE Tracy Korbus

LEFT Kate Haas

in other cases, when some of the colors were blended or rubbed off, it gave a unique quality to the colors.

The students enjoyed experimenting with the pastels and their vibrant colors, along with using glue for something other than adhering an object to a surface. This was a terrific way to explore line, shape and color; the results are exciting! ■

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