



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE



Holiday Watercolor Cards

Make 4 handmade cards
with artist Leslie Tieu
-more-



2022 Online Workshops

Workshop 4, Art Journaling 101
available now
-more-



LYRA Tutorial

A colored pencil tutorial by artist
Jennifer Morrison
-more-



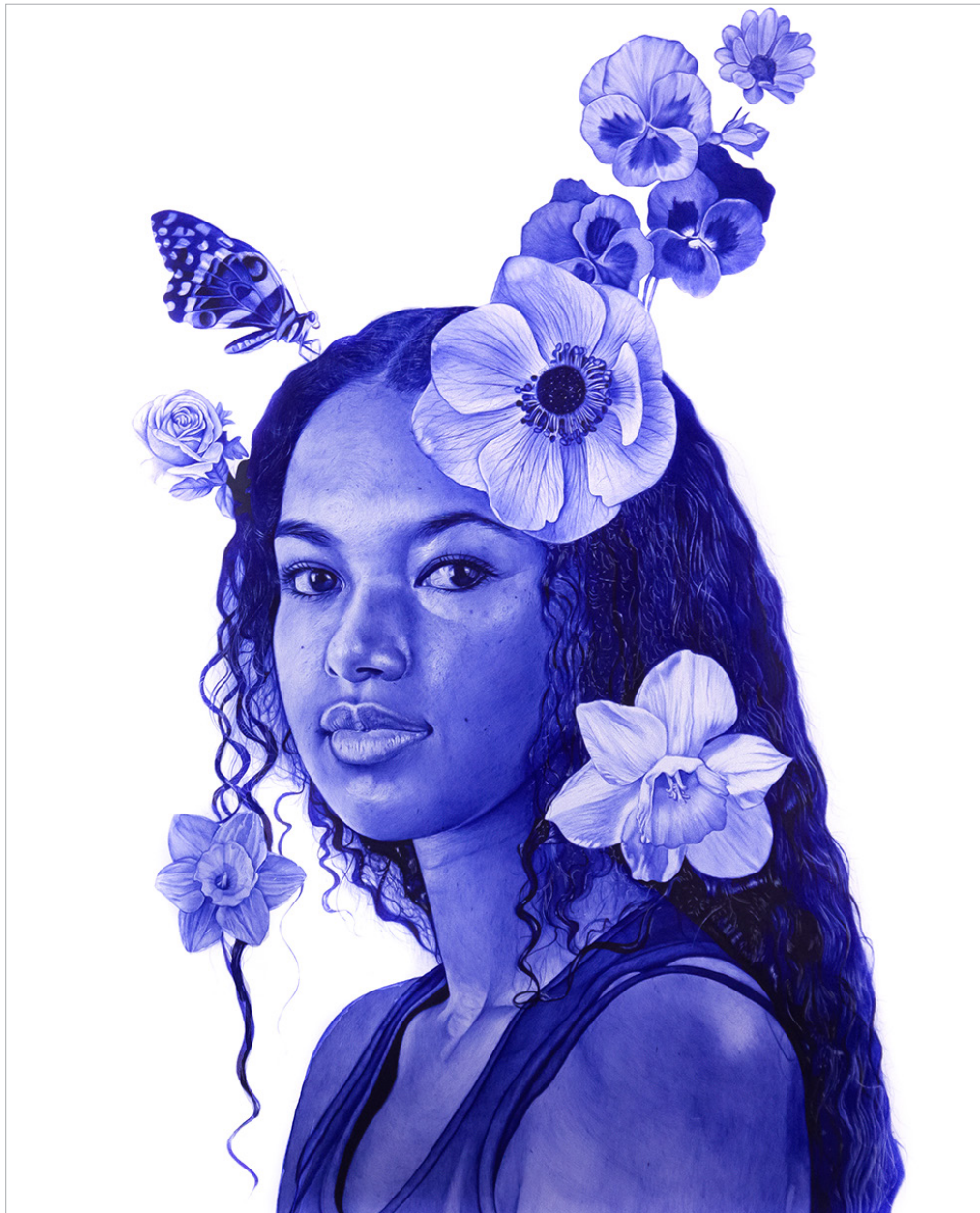
Proper Brush Care

Tips for properly taking care of one
of an artists greatest investments
-more-

MAIN FEATURE

Finding Inspiration and the Keys to Creativity

By Patrick Chuka



"You can't use up creativity. The more you use the more you have." - Maya Angelou

As a young artist, I often ponder what it means to be creative, what inspiration is, and how to find it. I have read a lot of books on these subjects and although the knowledge I've gathered has helped me fine-tune my creative process, I still believe

in the power of self-actualization and diving in deep to figure out what creativity and inspiration can mean for oneself.

I will be taking you on a journey and by the end of this journey, I hope you will be able to fine-tune your creative process and find for yourself how to tap into your creativity.



Growing up in Nigeria as a wildly creative kid I met a lot of roadblocks to my creativity. My family had certain expectations of how my life should go professionally and I had very few resources that could foster my creative growth. However, my passion for creating was far greater than the circumstances I was presented with. I always found a way to create, either by drawing, painting, or sewing. I would often look through books and magazines to see what I could copy or recreate in my way. I found myself finding excuses to sneak out of the sight of my guardians so I could escape into my little world where I felt whole. A world where I could create anything I wanted. A world with unending possibilities.

As I got older, I found myself drawing more and more. I placed importance on flexibility and freedom in my artistic process. I needed tools that could support my growth so

naturally, I gravitated toward drawing with a pen and a small sketchpad. It was easy to carry around and I found myself drawing obsessively at every point of the day.

“
I placed importance on flexibility and freedom in my artistic process.
”

“
Creativity to me boils down to combinations. Combining two or more values to create a new value. I like to also think mathematically about creativity because it helps me create good formulas for each project. At the base of some of the most creative endeavors by great artists, they had a good source of inspiration which oftentimes are works by other artists, and you will always find striking combinations. Taping a banana to a wall can be seen as an act of creativity because there is a combination of two or more values, a banana, a tape, and a wall. Do you catch my drift? Imagine all the endless ideas that would be inspired by Maurizio Cattelan's artwork 'Comedian'. That's the base of creativity.”



Comedian by Maurizio Cattelan



“

*Understanding yourself and
your reality is paramount
to the creative process.*

”

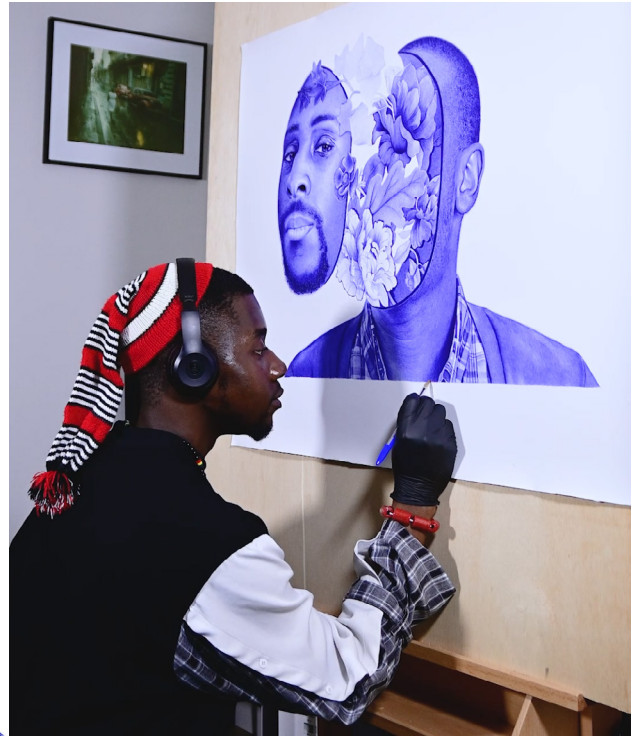


The secret to finding inspiration as an artist lies within you. For inspiration look to yourself. Inspiration doesn't have to be fleeting or elusive. Inspiration is an engine that lives within you, it can be sparked awake by intentional action and focus. Before I start any project, I think of what I want my message to be and how that speaks to me first. I look to my immediate surroundings for ideas and as a portrait artist that means I'm looking to the people around me for inspiration. Your personal experiences, past, and present can be a powerful source of inspiration. Understanding yourself and your reality is paramount to the creative process. I find inspiration from the love I have for my family members and my friends, and I must investigate deep within the things I love about them and why. This guides my creative flow and helps in bringing my messages to life.

Your environment as an artist reflects what goes on within, so look around. Your environment can also include the artists you surround yourself with, especially in this social media age, which could mean the top 5 artists whose work you love and whose point of view you value. Take inspiration from them by combining the things you like about their works and filter it through your unique lens of experiences and skill.

Inspiration also comes from a lot of practice and hard work. As a portrait artist, I have spent over 20,000 hours studying portraiture, working on my craft, and polishing my skill. The more I practice the better I get at what I do. The more I use my brain to think of ideas and subject matters for my art, the more ideas I get. Basically, the more you do, the more you become. A lot of patience is being asked of you to tap into your true creative potential. A lot of grace is also asked of you because that is something you must give yourself, especially on those days when you just can't get it right. You must be kind to yourself and show love to your art and your process; it will reward you greatly. Fall in love with the hard work and the process. After all, art isn't always about the product but the 'doing'.

Your unique perspective is your key to creativity and inspiration. I have spent a lot of time studying the lives of really great artists and I often find the same invisible thread that ties them all together. That thread is called 'Perspective'. In my work, this is reflected in the titles of my drawings and the purpose behind them. As a young man



growing up in Africa and eventually traveling across the world, I have seen a lot of different cultures and have met so many different people and this has gifted me with a unique perspective of the world at large and my position in it. Trusting where I stand, I create from that place, creating with a message of global unity, truth, and togetherness. I highlight people from different cultures as they relate to my world and I'm not afraid to take inspiration from the experiences I've had as a global traveler, especially at a young age. This I employ you to investigate. What is your perspective and where do you stand in relation to your audience and the world at large? Create from that position and the world will open to you. The world loves all things new, and your perspective of life is devastatingly unique and beautiful.

Intuition is often misunderstood; however, I've also come to realize that intuition can be an artist's greatest asset. It guides every step of the creative process whether you are

aware of it or not. Familiarizing yourself with your intuitional pulls and learning to trust it can benefit your creativity greatly. Personally, my intuition has manifested itself in my decision to combine pencils and ballpoint pens as the primary medium for my work. It started as a hunch, a hunch I pushed back against because drawing with a ballpoint pen can be seen as incredibly difficult to do. I was insecure and unsure I could pull it off the way I'd want to, but who would have thought I'd find a burst of creativity from simply trying something new? Like I said earlier, "Combinations". I keep finding many reasons to be thankful that I trusted my intuition in this aspect of my creativity.

My mother often says, "Reach for the stars, even if you don't get there you'll land on the moon." Those are words I hold dear to my heart. In the creative process, these words simply mean to have ambition and get innovative. As creatives, people often want to throw us in a box and keep us there, but



boxes and creativity do not go together. Creativity is explosive, your ambition should be too. Push yourself to take risks and try new things. Explore other mediums because there is always something new to learn. Think outside the box and innovate. Take simple materials and create something extraordinary with them. The best part about this is when you start to push your creativity, it expands and unlike a rubber band, it doesn't snap back, it keeps on expanding.

As I progress in my artistic career, I try my best to stay creative and stay open to trying new things. My ballpoint pen portrait drawings that I do on [Strathmore's 500 Series Bristol Vellum](#) papers have received global acclaim because it's a manifestation of my creativity and my sources of inspiration are very clear in every drawing. However, this is not the end of the road. Art is not about the product but about the doing, so I hope to keep exploring other mediums and continuing to push the barriers of what art is and what it should be.

Let your creativity burst out by following these tips and letting everyone and everything around you inspire you to be more creative, whether in art, hobbies, work, or life. Creativity is the spice of life, it adds flavor.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Patrick Chuka is a multidisciplinary artist from Lagos, Nigeria currently based in Dallas, Texas, USA. The subject matter for his work revolves around portraits of loved ones. He tells intricate stories of life and shared experiences between himself, and his subjects as seen in his 2022 Book "The Human Project". Chuka's drawings have been acquired by numerous private collections and his career is still only just beginning.

See more of Patrick's artwork:

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[TikTok](#)

[Twitter](#)



HOLIDAY WATERCOLOR CARDS

with Leslie Tieu

**Give the gift of art!
Get started with this 4-part tutorial video series!**

Follow along with Leslie Tieu as she demonstrates how to paint 4 handmade watercolor greeting cards. We hope you're inspired to create fun, festive and memorable cards for your loved ones this year!

SUPPLIES:

- Strathmore Watercolor Cards, 5"x6.875"
- Strathmore 500 Series Ready Cut Watercolor paper, cold press, 8"x10"
- Daler-Rowney Aquafine Watercolor Travel Set, 24 colors
- Princeton Velvetouch Brushes, Round size 4 & 8

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch the full tutorial series and give it a try!

STOCKING STUFFERS FOR THE ARTIST IN YOUR LIFE

If you're looking for a few gift ideas for the creatives on your holiday shopping list, check out these supplies that any artist would love!

Princeton Neptune Travel Brush Set

While collapsed, Princeton travel brush heads fit into their capsule for storage and protection. When you're ready to paint, flip them around for a full-sized brush. Sets contain Round sizes 4, 6, 8 and 10.

Daler-Rowney Aquafine Watercolor Travel Set

This watercolor pan set comes with 24 vibrant colors made from high-quality pigments that have been milled to perfection for vivid hues and even washes.



Strathmore 400 Series Mixed Media Pads, 3"x9"

Our versatile, heavyweight mixed media paper is available in a slim, portable landscape pad giving artists fun and unique possibilities in all mediums.

Lyra Aquacolor Water-soluble Pastels

Made with high-quality pigments, these unique water-soluble pastels can be used for conventional dry techniques or diluted with water for rich color washes and limitless blending possibilities.

Strathmore Hardbound Watercolor Art Journal, 8.5x5.5"

Our hardbound art journals are a luxurious option for any artist. They have a durable matte chocolate brown cover and contain 140lb/300gsm cold press watercolor paper inside.

Strathmore® 2022 ONLINE WORKSHOP SERIES

Join us for Strathmore's FREE 2022 Online Workshops!

Strathmore's Online Workshops feature free video lessons and downloadable instructions created by experienced artists. Follow along in the online

classroom as instructors guide you through various art topics. After a lesson is released, it remains on the site for viewing the rest of the year.

Share all the fun on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) using [#StrathmoreWorkshops](#)

Workshops start March 7 and continue through December 31, 2022

NOW OPEN!



WORKSHOP 4 Art Journaling 101

Instructor: Jordan Clark

Learn the basics of art journaling to strengthen your ability as an artist. Use a variety of mediums to make beautiful illustrations, sketchbook pages, and postcards.

LEARN MORE & FOLLOW ALONG



WORKSHOP 1 Easy Breezy Beach Art with Acrylics

Instructor:
Ashley Krieger

All Workshop 1 Videos Available Online Now!

Acrylics are a remarkable permanent, rich, colorful, versatile, and adaptable medium that gives artists endless possibilities. Get started with acrylics as you paint some simple beach art.



WORKSHOP 2 Joyful Watercolor Finding Your Style

Instructor:
Shayda Campbell

All Workshop 2 Videos Available Online Now!

Fill the pages of a watercolor sketchbook with practice illustrations, floral compositions, watercolor techniques, and finished pieces. Shayda will help you feel confident, calm and creative in your art-making journey.



WORKSHOP 3 Sketching & Drawing: The Foundation of All Art

Instructor:
Brandon Schaefer

All Workshop 3 Videos Available Online Now!

Learn the fundamentals of sketching and drawing, the foundation of any type of art, which will help you grow in confidence while deepening your knowledge and understanding.

SEE THE VIDEOS

SEE THE VIDEOS

SEE THE VIDEOS

Join us for our free workshops at: strathmoreartist.com/artist-studio



COLORED PENCIL HYDRANGEA TUTORIAL

with Jennifer Morrison

Artist Jennifer Morrison creates beautiful, hyper-realistic colored pencil drawings. Follow along with her as she swatches and tests her colored pencils, then demonstrates how to draw a stunning hydrangea.



SUPPLIES:

- Strathmore 400 Series Printmaking Paper, 280gsm
- Lyra Rembrandt Polycolor Pencils
- Princeton Select Artiste Flat Shader Brush, Size 2
- Colored Pencil Solvent

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch the swatching video and the hydrangea tutorial!



8 TIPS FOR PROPER BRUSH CARE & CLEANING

Paintbrushes are an investment, and one of the most important tools for an artist. That's why it's crucial to take care of them. When properly cared for, your brushes can last a long time and continue to perform beautifully.



Don't rest your brush on its head



Keep the ferrule clean



Never leave brushes soaking in water

See all 8 tips [HERE](#)



PAPER FOCUS: Recycled Papers

What is the difference between pre-consumer fibers and post-consumer fibers that get used for making recycled papers?

Pre-Consumer Recycled Fiber:

Material that has not been used by an end-consumer and is generated during a manufacturing process. Examples of pre-consumer fiber are paper scraps generated from trimming at an envelope manufacturer or a paper plate factory.

Post-Consumer Recycled Fiber:

Material that has been used by an end-consumer, typically generated by households or by commercial, industrial and institutional facilities. For example, household recycling of paper products and businesses that recycle their office papers.

How is recycled fine art paper made from pre or post-consumer fibers?

Regardless of how the scraps were generated, they are sent back to a papermill to be re-worked and made into recycled fine art papers. The scraps get beaten until they break down into small particles, and the fibers are diluted with water and other additives like sizing to make pulp.

From there, the papermaking process continues. [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about how paper is made.

Any post-consumer fibers that get used for making our recycled fine art papers are rated Grade A for cleanliness to ensure paper performance and appearance are not compromised. Strathmore pads with **green covers** indicates the paper is recycled.

400 Series Toned Sketch



Recycled Material Content:
100% Recycled
30% Post-Consumer Fiber

400 Series Toned Mixed Media



Recycled Material Content:
100% Recycled
30% Post-Consumer Fiber

400 Series Recycled Sketch



Recycled Material Content:
30% Post-Consumer Fiber

400 Series Recycled Drawing



Recycled Material Content:
30% Post-Consumer Fiber

400 Series Artagain Paper



Recycled Material Content:
30% Post-Consumer Fiber

Recycled Drawing Art Journal



Recycled Material Content:
30% Post-Consumer Fiber