

We asked Master Pastellist, **Regina Hona** how she painted three different subjects - a water subject, an urban scene and a landscape.

REGINA HONA: Key Ingredients

How did you paint that?

The correct placement of the focal point



Not Alone, AS Colourfix Sienna paper, 30 x 40cm

My Inspiration

Water subject, especially with reflections and reflected light on objects are my passion and always inspirational to me. Boats on a sunny day always have wonderful reflections.

Design or Composition Strategy

With simple singular objects like this boat, I usually like to place the focal point towards the right and a little higher from the halfway mark as my natural instinct is to 'read' from left to right. If my story is about water reflection, the placement of a boat can be critical, especially if masts are involved. A painting can look cut in half if a larger boat sits horizontally in the middle by trying to include the mast and boat reflection, which is not very pleasing to the eye. The seagulls add balance and life to the piece. I also purposefully placed my signature to the bottom right to help lead the eye in a zig zag manner back into and around the painting.

Technique or Working Process

I usually begin a painting by loosely drawing the composition on my paper with Charcoal. Charcoal blends in very easily with pastel. These days I prefer a sanded paper for my pastel work and mostly like to use a complementary colour, allowing specks to show through that gives an added vibrancy to the work. Coloured paper, rather than white acts as a kind of under-painting to the work. I like to first block in the colours and the values that I see for the whole painting which allows me to determine if I am on the right track and proceed to refine the painting, working from the background forward, leaving small details and any strong lights to the very end. With rare exception I do not spray my work when finished and have my own way of preparing it for framing.

Why Pastel and why it has worked for this painting

Pastel lends itself well to water subjects and I was able to add subtle glazing effects over the water to achieve unity and added water depth.

"A painting can look cut in half if a large boat sits horizontally in the middle by trying to include the mast and boat reflection, which is not very pleasing to the eye."

How did you paint that?

Distance and Perspective



Not so Dry Creek Bed, Flinders Ranges, AS Colourfix Elephant Board, 87 x 67cm

My Inspiration

Reflections within any subject always captures my attention and inspires me.

Design or Composition Strategy

This is a large painting where I added and moved elements around. I began with a couple of thumbnail sketches before drawing it up in charcoal on the pastel board. Although sheep did roam not far from me, none were there when I painted my small studies in this area. I decided to open up the part with the distant trees for this piece to enhance the feeling of perspective and grandeur and I like how the large tree reflection leads the easily to my focal point.

Technique or Working Process

It's advisable to use a rigid board for larger works and for this subject I chose a neutral mid-tone AS Elephant colour. My goal was to keep everything in the foreground and background loose and understated to give attention to the middle ground and the lovely gum tree that was my focal point. I placed the sheep to complete my story and to add that element of life that I feel enhances most paintings.

Why Pastel and why it has worked for this painting

Pastel can lend itself to pretty much any genre. This subject was painted in pastel simply because that is what I felt like using at the time and it allowed me to achieve all the effects I was strivijng for.

TOUR: 15 days - Dordogne, France with Perigord-Retreats.
21 August - 4 September, 2020
More detail email Regina at
reginahona@gmail.com

WORKSHOP: 2 day Water & Seascape Pastel Workshop
9 & 10 November, 2019
Malvern Artists Society, Malvern, Victoria
Email Regina at reginahona@gmail.com for details

How did you paint that?

Contrasts - light and dark



Water Wall- National Gallery Victoria, AS Colourfix Aubergine paper, 25 x 25cm

My Inspiration

Water appears in many challenging formats but the strong contrast of light and dark with the almost silhouette figures made for an inspiring subject.

Design or Composition Strategy

I have been going through a phase where I love creating subjects in a square format and the challenge this brings. I feel that the gradual increase in dark as the figures walk into the gallery provide a good balance to the painting and focal point.

Technique or Working Process

Many of my studio pieces begin from inspiration captured in a small watercolour sketch which is then used together with a possible photo to develop into a larger painting. It wasn't until I did the cascading water down the glass that I realised how easy it really was to paint ... it all comes back to tonal values and shapes and we need three values to give anything form.

Why Pastel and why it worked for this painting

Pastel lends itself so easily to create the soft loose edges required for this piece.

About the Artist: Regina Hona AGRAF

Regina has been drawing and playing with paint from as far back as she can remember but she never planned an art career early on as it offered too much insecurity. So there was no art school, but rather she gained an Associate Diploma in Private Secretarial Practice and employment lead to roles working for company Managing Directors and later as Secretary/Bursar in Private Schools.

Regina was introduced to oil painting during the summer holidays when she was twelve, but it wasn't until 1980 just after she married that she seriously began to study classical tonal oil painting with Helga Ivanyi for four years, who had trained under Lance McNeil. Since then she has studied pastels, acrylics, watercolours with other notable artists, and now predominantly paints in soft pastels, oils and charcoal.

Her love for charcoal has taken her on many paths, from receiving top awards for work in competitions and exhibitions, to travelling Australia, Italy and the Greek Islands, teaching workshops, classes and giving demonstrations. Her participation in the Melbourne artists group - Fusion6 has inspired her to lift the bar and aim for greater heights in her art career, namely entering national competitions.

She has been a finalist several times in portrait prizes and winning Best Works on Paper in the A.M.E. Bale Art Prize.

Her style can vary with her choice of medium but she likes to experiment with light colour and form and tries to show an alternative way of seeing the world through her unique compositions.

"I love the world around me, and want to share its beauty and positive connection with it in what I paint."

"I paint what I like without trying to please anyone unless it is a commission work".

The subjects she loves and feels inspired to paint the most are the human form and water, particularly reflections in water. Regina hopes that viewers and collectors are inspired by the honesty and integrity captured in her work where she likes to invite a sense of wonder and exploration.

When Regina is not in her studio she can be found painting outdoors having stimulating discussions with her fellow Fusion6 artists or visiting other friends or family members.

She feels her life is very full and rewarding.

Regina's artwork can be found lighting up galleries and private collections. She is a Fellow of The Australian Guild of Realist Artists and Honorary Life Member of the Pastel Society of Victoria, Australia for her contributions to art.

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