MASTERCLASS The Birches

Watercolor and Ink on watercolor paper

Preparation before class. ***N.B. This step can be concluded in class but for those who wish to prepare ahead of time – suggest you follow the Second Method. *** using a carbon paper.***

Preparing a line drawing for a masterclass in colored pencils involves transferring a clean, light outline onto your final art paper so it does not interfere with your pigments.

1. Gather Your Materials

- **Reference and Line Drawing:** Print out the provided line drawing to the exact size you need.
- **Art Paper:** Use a 140lb watercolor paper – white cold press. Do not use less thatn 140 lbs asit will curl and not withstand the ink and water.
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- **Transfer Medium:**
    - A **soft graphite pencil** (like a **4B**) or **Tracedown / graphite transfer paper** for standard white/light papers.
    - **Black transfer paper** if you are working white paper.
- **Tracing/Securing Tools:** Low-tack masking tape, a soft **HB** pencil, and a kneaded eraser.

2. Prepare the Line Drawing (Back-Graphite Method) *This method can be messy and leave traces or smudges on your paper. Suggest you use the carbon paper method below.****

If you do not have transfer paper, you can coat the back of your printout:

- Turn your printed line drawing face down.
- Shade the back of the paper completely behind the lines using a **soft 4B graphite pencil** (or a soft graphite stick).
- Wipe away any loose dust gently with a tissue so it does not smudge your clean art paper

3. Position and Secure the Drawing

- Place your art paper on a flat, firm surface.
- Lay your prepared line drawing face-up on top of your art paper.

- Align the edges carefully and tape the **top edge** down with low-tack masking tape (this acts as a hinge so you can lift the paper and check your progress).

3. Trace the Lines

- Using an **HB graphite pencil** trace firmly but softly (do not press as it will embed a line in the paper and it will disrupt your colouring) over all the lines of your drawing.
- Periodically lift the bottom corner of your printout to make sure you haven't missed any sections.

4. Lighten the Outline Before Coloring

- Once the transfer is complete, remove the printout and tape.
- Use a **kneaded eraser** to gently dab and roll over the transferred graphite lines until they are as faint as possible.
- *Why:* Heavy graphite lines can mix with the graphite , creating a dark, muddy outline that is hard to cover up later.

Here is a video demonstrating how to transfer a line drawing onto your art paper cleanly:

https://youtu.be/DbUzoiDJ-Tc?si=SImcZTz6SrqNY4UO

ALTERNATE METHOD ***

Using **carbon paper** (or specialized **graphite transfer paper**) is one of the fastest ways to transfer an outline
For colored pencil art, it is highly recommended to use **wax-free graphite transfer paper** (like Saral or Tracedown)

1. Set Up Your Layers

Stack your materials on a flat, hard surface in the following order:

1. **Bottom:** Your watercolor art paper (face up).
2. **Middle:** The carbon or graphite transfer paper, with the **shiny/inked side facing down** against your art paper.
3. **Top:** Your printed line drawing (face up).

2. Secure Your Template

- Align all three layers perfectly.
- Use low-tack **masking tape** or painter's tape to secure the **top edge** of the printout and the transfer paper to your surface.

- *Tip:* Taping only the top edge creates a "hinge." This allows you to lift the papers to check your transfer without shifting the alignment
- Trace the lines of your drawing using **very light, even pressure**.

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1. Check and Lighten

- Lift the bottom corner of the transfer paper to ensure the lines are transferring clearly but faintly.
- Once finished, remove the top sheets.
- If you used standard carbon paper, immediately use a **kneaded eraser** to gently dab (do not rub) the lines. You want them to be just barely visible, so the ink doesn't bleed into or stain your colored pencil layers.

You are now ready for class to begin