

News from the Creativeworld Trade Fair 2018

Back in October 2017, the UART company from New York had hired me once again to do demos on their sanded pastel paper at their booth at the Creativeworld Trade Fair in Frankfurt, Germany. By now, we work well as a team and I was really looking forward to it. As part of the preparation, I not only organized my reference photos, but also bought bottled water and the obligatory gummi bears for our visitors and the team. While I was packing my materials, I thought about how I could best use the limited space on my workbench. Bringing my usual pastel box was not possible, because I would then be left with only a few inches of space to paint. Instead I chose the Unison landscape set and my Carbothello pastel pencils. The 70% alcohol I normally use for my underpaintings was not suitable for the fair because it is highly inflammable.

In the evening, I thought a lot about how I could demonstrate the difference between the different paper grades. During the last two fairs, I had painted a small landscape and left part of the paper without pastel. That way, visitors could feel how rough or fine the paper was. But after two years I needed to come up with something new. The next day I taped together 6 sheets of 240 to 600 graded paper. Then I roughly applied the main colours. As before, I left the border of the paper free of pastel. I brushed in the pastel with the alcohol and let it dry. Although this was not a bad idea in itself, I had not considered that the alcohol would seep between the sheets and dissolve the glue. As a result, each sheet curled a little, but there was nothing to be done about that. On my dry underpainting I painted one of my waves of Hawaii with Terry Ludwig's beautiful pastels and added the paper grade numbers on each sheet.

I also stuck a sample of dark UART paper and black Sennelier LaCarte onto my chart. With a single stroke I drew different pastel sticks over the paper samples from top to bottom. It showed how much the UART Dark 400 support enhanced the vibrancy of the colours!

At the booth, I placed the display board on a half-height easel. I put my little parrot painting on the counter which I had done on UART Dark 400. I was very happy when these two colourful feathered birds got a huge response. On Saturday and Sunday a lot of visitors came and looked over my shoulder, while I painted.

For my first pastel "Winter Sun" I used UART Dark paper and let the black work for me. I used a light touch with my pastels, so the small areas that remained uncovered stayed visible through the snow.

It was particularly surprising for the visitors to see that hardly any pastel dust is produced when using this paper. Unfortunately, this dust still keeps many artists from painting with pastels. The UART Premium sanded pastel paper really impresses with its ability to take up to 24 thin layers of pastel.

Just when I was telling a visitor about the possibility of buying UART paper in single sheets at Victor4Art in the Netherlands, the owner of the shop appeared at our booth. He is looking forward to our 2nd PGE member meeting in May at his shop and hopes that he will have enough UART paper left for our small planned demos and workshops.

I also talked to some very nice dealers and artists and I often took a short break from painting to explain the advantages of the UART paper and to show it on a sample.

During my break, I strolled through the fair but unfortunately, I hardly found anyone who took time for a conversation. At the Royal Talens booth, I asked about the possibility of sponsoring and was told to send my request via email. At Sennelier's and Schmincke's I was not even welcomed or asked about my interest in the products; that was very disappointing.

On a positive note, I discovered a young artist from Sweden who offered 3-D colour charts. I liked that idea a lot. These 'globe' structures were assembled of different parts and each showed a colour in all its tones, tints and shades. You could take them out and immediately see what each colour consisted of. This is a great help for schools and workshops. Sara Beach sells these little colour globes for about 10 euros. There is a nice video about it on their website (www.kolormondo.com).

At the booth of MT Kamoi (www.masking-tape.jp/en/) from Japan I was looking at the colorful masking tapes when a dealer handed me a roll and their leaflet. A nice polite gesture, in accordance with Japanese culture! I used it on my third pastel to create a clean horizon line. After I had finished the sky, I put the same tape above the horizon line, over the painted sky and fixed it to the sides of the pastel paper. This allowed me a clean application of the dark blue colour for the sea. The masking tape can be removed from the painting without lifting off any pastel.

For me, the highlight of the Creativeworld Fair was to receive the material prizes for the next 12 Get Dusty competitions. On behalf of PGE I want to thank our current sponsor UART for this. I am looking forward to sending out not only the certificates, but also the pastel paper sets to the winners!

To round off the weekend, I invited the two UART managers for dinner at our home. My wild boar stew convinced my guests of the finesse of the German cuisine that doesn't offer only sauerkraut! We chatted about a lot of things, and my husband particularly enjoyed sharing his passion for American Football with our friends from New York. It was after midnight when I drove them back to their hotel in Frankfurt.

P.S. As soon as I get information about where UART Dark will be available in Europe, I will announce it on our website. In this sense - happy painting!