

BONNY SNOWDON FINE ART

Pet Portrait & Equine Artist

coloured pencil hints and tips **dog eyes**

Being as accurate as possible with your outline is very important. The shape of the dog's eye is part of the character - angle of the eyebrow, whether the dog has droopy eyes or very round eyes - ensure that you have everything in the right place and the right size.



I like to work on the outside of the eye first. This gives me a good frame to then create the inside. It also means that I'm more likely to get the size right and the shape right. Add in the eye lids, and any subtle shading around the outside of the eye. You can revisit this later, but just having something to give context to the eye will really help.



For me - less is always more. My eyes are created using very soft pressure, quite loosely to begin with, layering gently to get the lovely subtle look with glowing highlights. I tend to always start off with dark indigo for the pupil. Try to keep any bright highlights free of pigment.



Add colour gradually and lightly. At this point if things go wrong, you can still lift most of the pigment off and start again, so working with light pressure is always a good idea. Use colours that match the dogs eyes, and also choose some brighter colours just to help with the lighting.



Increase the intensity of the colour, again gradually using very soft pressure. I like to work in small circles when drawing eyes. And envisaging working on an actual sphere will help to create the lovely roundness you are wanting.



Use dark browns and dark reds to add intensity to the pupil area. If you're using oranges in the iris, this will help when blending the two areas together. If you use black and blue for the pupil and blend into an orange iris - you are likely to get green.



As you get to know your pencils and the colours and what effect they have on other colours - you'll soon find your favourites. One of mine is the warm grey ii polychromos. A neutral grey, brilliant for blending and smoothing - and in eyes amazing for adding subtle lighting - this is my go to pencil for creating realistic looking eyes.



Finish off with the tiny detail. Details are much easier to add once you have a few layers down. Working on the pastelmat does mean you can get light over dark. Use the polychromos white over your highlights as a last step - it's quite a hard pencil to layer over the top off. You don't need to burnish your eye, but if it's looking grainy, use your warm grey ii to help smooth.

