

BONNY
SNOWDON
FINE ART

Pet Portrait & Equine Artist

coloured pencil hints and tips **hair and fur**

Some tips for creating fur

My biggest tip for creating realistic fur is using a really really light pressure in the first initial layers. Imagine you are drawing on a tomato, but you don't want to indent the skin - try drawing on the back of your hand - again don't indent the skin. That's the pressure you're looking for initially. And as you develop, you'll know when to increase the pressure and when to decrease. Oh and forget detail! Don't even think about detail to begin with - that will come as you build your colours and your tonal values.

Look for the lightest colour you can see in the ref photo, and start with a light layer of that. For black fur, try a light blue if it's a cool photo, or a pink if it's warmer. For chestnut or tan fur, a cinnamon pink is wonderful as a first layer, or a light cream or ivory.

As you fill in your first layer, using light pressure, follow the direction of the fur, don't fill the paper in completely, but allow your pencil strokes to create the feel and texture of the fur - you'll end up with gaps in between your strokes - these will be filled in with the next layer of colour and will help to create the feeling of fur.

Build up your layers gradually. When you first start to use pastelmat you will notice that the initial layers can be quite grainy. If you lay a light colour over a dark colour and vice versa, this will help to eliminate the grainy look. But it's about experimenting and finding which colours work for you. Although the pencils in each brand are all made the same way, the pigments work very differently. For example you can lay down a layer of black or dark indigo in the polychromos range and they will look, honestly, terrible, but layer over them with a cold grey i or ii and the grainy look will be smoothed out.

Increase your pressure slightly to start to add in tonal values - bone structure and veins.

