While I think it is difficult to learn mark making from an artbook, I did expect Ms. Richter to cover some of the basics because the title of the book: ‘Make Your Mark in Pastels.

There were scant four examples on page 17. Compared to some of the complex marks needed for the painting demonstrations, I was disappointed by the content. If you are not a fan of cheap, matte paper in artbooks, be aware this book has it. I enjoyed seeing Ms. Richter's painting demonstrations, and I enjoyed getting an introduction to a different way to paint. However, I found the instruction contained within not quite enough.

I don't know what I love the most about pastels. Is it the vibrancy and the huge and tempting array of colors? Or is it their immediacy and very tactile nature? Holding a stick of pure pigment in my hand is the ultimate way to paint. Once I got past the learning curve I was able to make a wide variety of marks with the fattest stick of pastel. That's what I really love. The ability to paint and draw with color. I love the control I can get from a pastel....

A pastel is a stick of pure powdered pigment combined with a chemical binder. As a medium, it sits comfortably between drawing and painting, giving artists both a sketch-like fluidity of line and the rich iridescent colour of paint. But unlike paints, pastel colours are blended on the paper itself, and artists develop their own unique ways of doing this, using either their fingertips or a cloth, perhaps even a little water. Jean-Etienne Liotard achieved a staggering level of detail and tonal subtlety in his pastels. Pastel remains a popular medium today. Here are some top tips from Royal Academicians who use pastels in their work.

Ellen Eagle, Pastel Painting Atelier. Beautifully published book with Eagle’s own work taking pride of place. She is a wonderful painter (and writer) and takes you on an informative pastel journey. She discusses everything from different types of pastel, making your own pastels, papers and colours. A word on different subjects and practical lessons are also included. By no means the bible of pastel but a nice book with some good info.

It is a great technique for getting accuracy and likeness and although I don’t always use it, it is great to fall back on in case things go pear-shaped in my work. Anthony Ryder, The Artist’s Complete Guide to Figure Drawing Juliette Aristides, Lessons in Classical Drawing or Classical Drawing Atelier. These drawing crayons, called pastels, are made of powdered pigments combined with a minimum of nongreasy binder, usually gum tragacanth or, from the mid-20th century, methyl cellulose. Made in a wide range of colour values, the. Made in a wide range of colour values, the darkest in each hue consists of pure pigment and binder, the others having varying admixtures of inert whites. Once the colours are applied to paper, they appear fresh and bright. Because they do not change in colour value, the final effect can be seen immediately.

Be on the lookout for your Britannica newsletter to get trusted stories delivered right to your inbox. Pastel. Quick Facts.