



Color Saturation

The basic techniques we use in colored pencil particularly in doing botanicals are layering and blending. We can create interesting and beautiful colors by layer and blending different colors together. We also create **value** by layering darker colors with medium or light colored pencils.

Saturation refers to the amount of actual pigment on the paper. We create saturated color by trying to fill in all the white of the paper. This does not mean getting darker but simply **adding pigment**. So we can have saturated pastels as well as saturated dark greens- think of a pink camellia. As you know when you work with yellow it is easy to get too saturated too quickly.

Don't confuse adding pigment to adding value. If you want to get darker use a darker pencil.

We can create saturated color in several ways.:

- ❖ If we continue layering we will eventually get to a place where we cannot add anymore color. Sometimes that happens before we expect it to and before we have established values. Try to plan ahead and carefully add value and color to build up and saturate.
- ❖ Burnishing.- using the burnishing tools- the Colorless Blender made by Prismacolor and the Splendor made by Lyra. Burnishing with white or ivory or a pale pencil. This is very handy for creating pastel shades, for toning down certain colors or for adding a hint of another color to your work. Yellow is often nice for burnishing some leaves and gives a feeling of sunlight on them. Lyra makes a Bluish Pale that can be a nice for burnishing violet or blue flowers. You can burnish with the Prismacolor Verithins which have much less pigment but are hard and help to blend colors together and clean up edges.
- ❖ Not all pencil work has to be burnished or fully saturated. Note the work of Bet Borgeson and Janie Gildow (*The Colored Pencil Solution Book*). Each artist should have her own style. The test is does your work to look finished- intentional? You want people to stop and look at your work. You want beautiful color. Do not be afraid.

"But to colour well requires your life"...John Ruskin, The Elements of Drawing