

# Pressing the Point

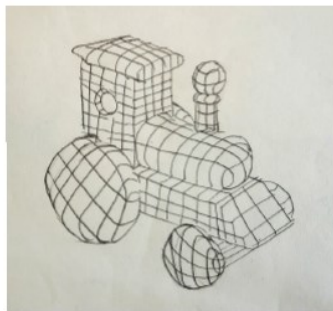
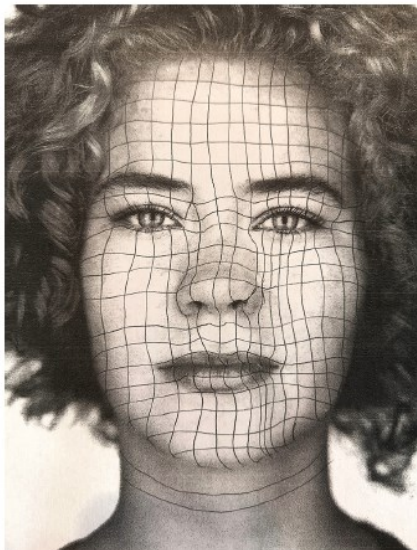
Jan — Feb 2026

**CPSA**  
Colored Pencil Society of America

District Chapter 117 | Palm Coast FL



We meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month at 1:00 PM (except July & August).  
*Please check the website for any scheduling changes.* [www.cpsa117.org](http://www.cpsa117.org)



**Unlock Your Artistic  
Potential with Cross  
Contour Drawing with  
Liz Monaco**

**March 15, 2026 at 1:00 PM, Eastern time  
on Zoom**

What is *contour drawing*? **Liz Monaco** will demonstrate a technique that brings a keen eye for form, depth, dimension, and realism to your drawings. Boost your drawing skills with quick, effective cross contour exercises. Join us for a draw-along so you can begin to master the fundamentals of contour lines.

**Level:** Suitable for beginners and experienced artists alike.

**Supply list:** You will need printouts of **2 images** - "Rose color 8x10" and "Rose GS 8x10" (pg 2 and 3 of this .pdf, available on the chapter Facebook page, or attached to the chapter email with the meeting link coming soon), an **eraser**, and a **graphite pencil**. You will draw directly on the print of the grayscale picture. If you want, you can use tracing paper over the image but the image will not be as clear.

**Reference photo:** Original photo by Liz Monaco.

**Welcome  
New Members!**  
Debbie Cushing  
Helen Rose

[January  
Recap](#)

[February  
Recap](#)

[Membership  
Information](#)

## Colored Pencil on Stipple Paper

### *Draw-along with Kathie Miranda*

January 18, 2026

Kathie Miranda's lesson focused on using **stipple paper with colored pencils** to create textured, lively artwork that mimics traditional pen-and-ink stippling. She explains that stipple paper has a **pebbled surface** designed to leave small "pinpricks" of white showing through the color. These dots of light create sparkle and visual interest and historically helped artists imitate stippled illustrations used in mid-20th-century black-and-white publications.

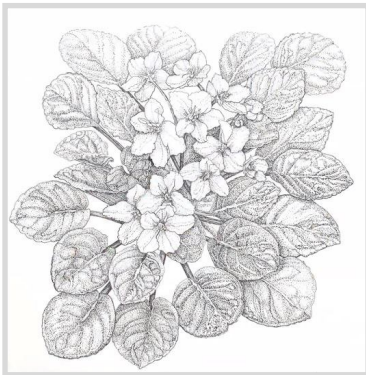


A key principle of the technique is **working lightly** so the paper's texture remains visible. Instead of pressing hard, artists should build color gradually in layers, often using the **side of the pencil rather than a sharp point**. This allows pigment to touch only the raised "hills" of the paper while leaving the "valleys" white, producing the characteristic dotted effect.

Kathie demonstrated several practice exercises:

- Filling small boxes with color to learn how the pencil behaves on the surface
- Creating a **saturation gradient** from dark to light while keeping pressure consistent
- **Blending multiple colors** smoothly while preserving the paper's texture

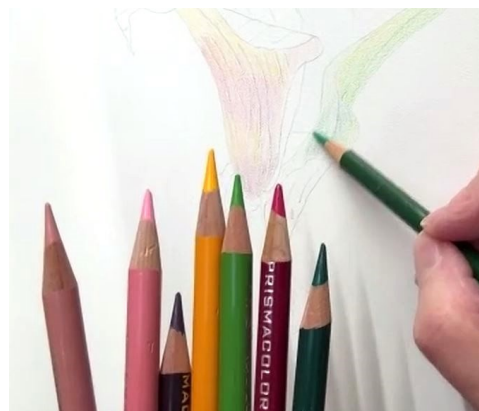
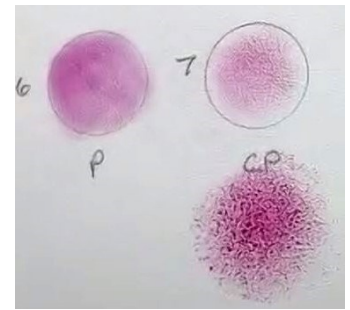
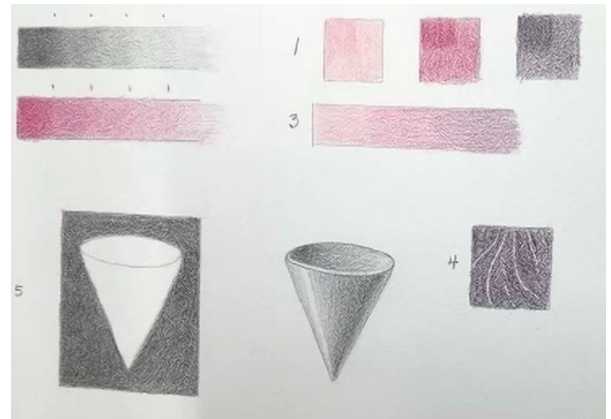
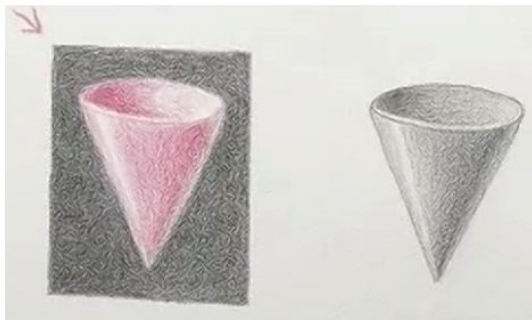
She emphasized that most colored-pencil techniques—layering, blending, lifting pigment, or using solvents—can still be used on stipple paper. However, techniques like **scratching (sgraffito)** are not recommended because the delicate paper texture can be damaged.



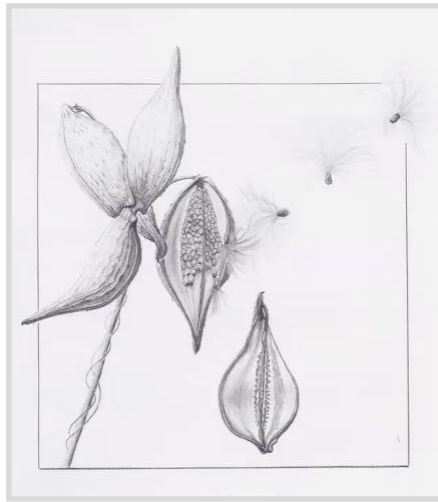
Another technique Kathie highlighted was **impressing lines** before adding color. By pressing lines into the paper with a stylus (often through tracing paper), artists can preserve crisp white lines for details such as veins, hairs, or whiskers.

Overall, Miranda encouraged artists to **embrace the visible texture and light of the paper**, experiment with layering and color, and enjoy the unique sparkle and dimensionality that stipple paper brings to colored-pencil artwork.

**Thank you, Kathie**, for introducing us to this new medium, giving us the opportunity to explore new possibilities and to expand our creativity!



# Some of Kathie's Artwork



## Creating the Perfect Reference Photo Using Your Cellphone

**Christopher Bishop**  
February 15, 2026

Christopher Bishop's presentation centered on how artists can use **cell phone photography as a practical tool for gathering reference material and improving their artwork**. He emphasized that modern smartphones have powerful cameras, making it possible for artists to capture high-quality images without investing in expensive equipment. His main message was that the most important factor is not the camera itself, but **how the artist observes and composes the image**.

A significant portion of the presentation focused on **composition**, particularly the use of the **rule of thirds**. Chris explained that many phone cameras allow users to turn on a grid that divides the frame into thirds horizontally and vertically. Placing key elements of the subject along these lines—rather than directly in the center—often creates a more balanced and engaging image. For example, when photographing a person, positioning the eyes near one of the top horizontal grid lines can make the image feel more natural and visually appealing. At the same time, he reminded participants that the rule of thirds is simply a guideline and should be adapted or broken when necessary to serve the artistic vision.

Lighting was another important topic. Chris cautioned against relying on **direct flash**, which can flatten an image, wash out colors, and create harsh shadows or red-eye. Instead, he recommended using **natural light whenever possible** or experimenting with alternative light sources such as a small flashlight positioned at an angle to the subject. Adjusting the phone's exposure settings can also help control brightness and reveal more detail.

Chris also discussed **practical techniques for capturing stronger reference photos**. These included stabilizing the phone to avoid blur, paying attention to the background so it does not distract from the subject, and taking multiple photos from different angles. He encouraged participants to crop and edit their photos afterward, since simple adjustments can dramatically improve the composition.

When photographing people or animals, Bishop stressed the importance of focusing on the **eyes**, which often serve as the emotional focal point of an image. Capturing a moment of expression or personality can make a reference photo much more useful and inspiring for artwork.

Finally, Chris encouraged artists to **experiment and keep practicing**. By observing light, composition, and storytelling in everyday photos, artists can strengthen their visual awareness and build a library of reference images for future projects. He concluded by reminding participants not to compare themselves to others but to focus on personal growth, curiosity, and enjoyment in the creative process.

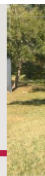
## Clips from Chris' PowerPoint

### RULE OF THIRDS

- The **rule of thirds** is a simple way to make photos look more balanced and interesting—even if you know nothing about photography.
- Imagine drawing two vertical lines and two horizontal lines over an image, dividing it into **nine equal rectangles**.
- Instead of putting the main subject right in the center, the rule of thirds suggests placing important parts of the scene:
  - **Along those lines**, or
  - **Where the lines intersect** (the four crossing points)



### TURNING ON THE GRID



- Both operating systems have a built in grid to compose your images
- To turn it on on IOS
  - Go to settings
    - Tap Camera
      - Grid and Level
- This can help ensure your horizon line is flat

### CLEAN THOSE LENSES

- Make sure the lenses on the back of your phone are clean
- Fingerprint and dust will cause your image to be hazy
- You need your image to be sharp for a good reference

### USE TAP TO FOCUS

- If you have a stationary object, tap the screen on the image.
- It will automatically make sure that is the subject and focus the camera to it.

### ADJUST EXPOSURE MANUALLY

- tap the screen to set focus,
- then drag the sun icon up or down to adjust brightness
- Or click if you have the newest update, click the 6 dots in the top right and click exposure.

## Clips from Chris' PowerPoint

### TURN OFF YOUR FLASH

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- It will wash out your image and it get rid of too much detail

### AVOID USING DIGITAL ZOOM

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- It will shrink the image and be less sharp
- Instead use the zoom levels on your phone to alternate between the lenses
- Moving your feet to zoom in is the best way

### LIVE PHOTO

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- Live Photos are when your phone captures the 1.5 seconds before and after you press the photo button.
- It will be like a mini movie
- You can adjust the image in the settings after the shot to be the exact moment you want

### BASIC EDITING

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- Editing can take months if not years to master
- The magic wand is an auto mode that will take care of most of the editing for you
- There are many apps such as Lightroom and Snapseed that give you unlimited control of you image
- Avoid filters!
- RAW images edit better than JPG

### TIPS FOR PHOTOGRAPHING ANIMALS

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- Focus on their eyes
- Get down on their level or get above them and have them look up
- Try to capture eye shine

### PLAY WITH LIGHTING

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- Have someone hold a flashlight off to the side to cause different effects
- Don't be afraid to rotate around your subject to see the different effects the light has.
- **KEEP THAT FLASH OFF!** Its too powerful and washes out the details

### PLAY WITH ELEVATION

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- Getting low on the ground makes something look larger than life while elevating the camera will make something look smaller
- For people, have them stick their face out like a turtle. It will feel funny but you won't get a double chin

## Clips from Chris' PowerPoint

### FINAL NOTES

- I like to have my subjects in the light and a darker background
- Natural light is often better than artificial unless you have access to off camera flashes and strobes
- Play with editing to bring exposure up of certain areas
- Play with elevations.
  - Getting low makes something look larger than life while elevating will make something look smaller

### CONTACT ME

- Chrisbishopphotos@gmail.com
- IG: chris\_bishop\_photography or chrisbishopbooks
- Website: [www.chrisbishopbooks.com](http://www.chrisbishopbooks.com)
- Scan the code to get access to TAP sheets and free to use images



*Thank you, Chris ~*

Absolutely fascinating and so much information. A real eye-opener and techniques that we can use right now!



## Membership Information

Our chapter membership runs from **Nov 1 through Oct 31** of the following year. For simplicity and ease of management, we follow the old CPSA membership term.

If you join as early as **May**, your chapter membership will run through **Oct 31 of the following year**.

CPSA has instituted a membership effective the month that you join, so please don't confuse the two; those memberships can be tracked via the member portal.

Your new or renewing membership is easy to do. Just go to the website **www.cpsa117.org** and click on Membership. Follow the links to the checkout page.

CPSA remains firmly dedicated to the fundamental principles of inclusion and diversity, and to racial justice as an inalienable human right.