

# Ten Top Tips using Studio Pencils

by Susan Christopher-Coulson

- 1 Get to know your colours to speed up finding the appropriate shades to use. Make a chart working each pencil from its palest to its strongest values.
- 2 Invest in a really good pencil sharpener and use it frequently! Studio Pencils hold a point well so are great for detailed work and maintaining clean edges.
- 3 Keep a sketchbook handy to practice laying down smooth, even colour.
- 4 Practice regulating the amount of colour you lay down by using different amounts of pressure.
- 5 Practice layering and blending the colours to achieve richer and denser tones. See if the order in which colours are used makes a difference to the outcome.
- 6 Use your sketchbook to keep reference notes on how you mixed successful colour blends.
- 7 You can use darker shades under lighter shades to help build up density and colour strength.
- 8 If colour has not been applied too heavily, some can be lifted off with a kneadable eraser for highlighting. Some colour will remain as the pigments will stain the paper.
- 9 Try to work so that you are not resting your hand on already worked areas of colour (if you are right handed then work from left to right and vice versa).
- 10 Regularly check that you are not accidentally rubbing any spatters of pigment into the paper with your hand whilst you are working. It may be useful to keep a clean sheet of tissue paper under your working hand.

