

# Out of the Pan

## Pastels, not in a stick or a pencil, but in a pan?



**Professional Artist Sue Ford** enjoys putting this versatile new product to the test, capturing this joyful bubble blower on the streets of New York

Artists today have many materials available at their finger tips, and just when I thought there couldn't be any more, a new product sample called PanPastel arrived in the post.

At first glance one could be forgiven for thinking that PanPastel was eye shadow; instead it is a soft pastel that has been compressed into round plastic dishes called pans. The pastel is applied using special applicators in a similar fashion to using paint.

The unique application method presents

exciting new possibilities for pastel and mixed media painters. PanPastel is compatible with pastel pencils, conte, charcoal, watercolours, acrylics, other media and drawing, as well as with printmaking mediums and fixatives. It can be used on all pastel papers, even watercolour paper.

The unique packaging protects the colours, keeping them separate and clean; the pans and storage jars interlock securely together, making it easy to store and organise the colours and tools, and minimising the amount of storage space required. The manufacturers state that each pan consists of 35% more colour than the average pastel stick and is acid free with outstanding light fastness.

Each pan comes with an applicator stored in the base of the pan, with an additional 23 different applicators available in the full range.

The colours can be mixed and blended like paint, by using a damp brush on paper, however you can't wet the surface of the pans, as this will ruin the finish. After use sponges and applicators can be washed with soap and water ready for re-use.

As a long time user of soft pastels in the traditional stick format I was excited about the prospect of applying pastel in what seemed to be a looser, less restrained manner so I started experimenting.

For the purpose of this demonstration I am using an image of a street seller blowing bubbles with his bubble machine. I'm using the PanPastel



Painting Set, which comprises 10 colours, though the full range consists of 60 artist quality pastel shades.

The application tools, art sponges and plastic painting knives have flexible absorbent foam heads. They are easily cleaned between colours by wiping the applicator with a clean cloth, allowing a new colour to be selected and applied without contamination. Using the applicators you can create a variety of marks or spread the pastel quickly onto the paper.

### Demonstration "Bubbles"

This picture was taken last year in New York; I couldn't resist the image of this street vendor who looked so happy in his work.



### Materials

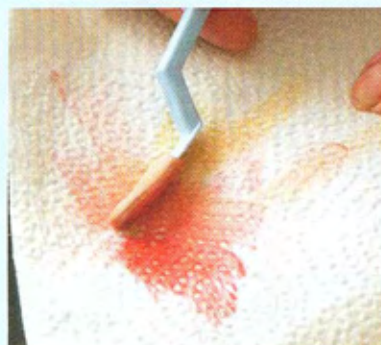
Painting Set containing 10 PanPastels

Various applicators and sponges

Pastel pencil for drawing  
Colourfix paper by Art Spectrum,  
Black  
Clean cloth



## PanPastels are so easy to use...

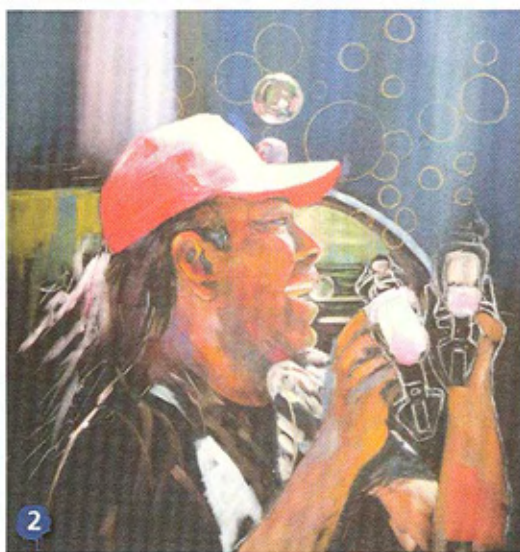


△ Tools can easily be wiped clean on a cloth



△ Large areas of colour can quickly be applied with the palette knife or sponges





**1** I started by drawing the picture with a white pastel pencil onto the surface. The paper used for this demonstration is Colourfix paper. It's available in lots of colours, however I like to use black to medium dark colours as the dark tone of the paper contrasts with the medium and lightest tones in my painting.

**2** Here I blocked in the colours using the sponge and applicators. Firstly I used the sponge to apply the colour in the background. It's amazing how quickly the sponge spreads the colour with minimal dust. I tried picking up several colours together by wiping the sponge across the pans and found there was very little colour contamination. Next I tried the applicators to achieve lines and details.

I found I could apply pastel liberally and loosely using the knife, similar to using a traditional palette knife. For some details such as the eyes I found myself reaching for a conventional stick, but those with a looser more abstracted style should find this product can stand alone.

**3** I continued building up the picture using mainly browns, orange and blues for the skin tones, red and cream for the hat, the dark paper helps with the darker tones and helps accentuate the greens and blues in the background. With the background now complete I

introduced the bubbles, using a white pastel pencil. Next I used the smaller applicators to apply the detail to the bubbles, using mainly cream with various colours reflected from the hat and bubble machines.

A little more work on the hands area and bubble machines. For the skin I used the browns and oranges as before; however for his bubble machine, I used a Unison soft stick pastel to achieve the desired pink colour, it blended very well with the PanPastel.

#### In conclusion

I enjoyed using this new product; it's certainly different and a new way to use pastel.

I liked the way the sponge covered large areas very quickly lending itself to skies and broad landscapes. The applicators are great for mark making and more abstracted work. PanPastels will mix well with other stick pastels. For those pastel artists who don't like the dust element of pastel then this new product reduces the amount of dust and the mess on your hands.

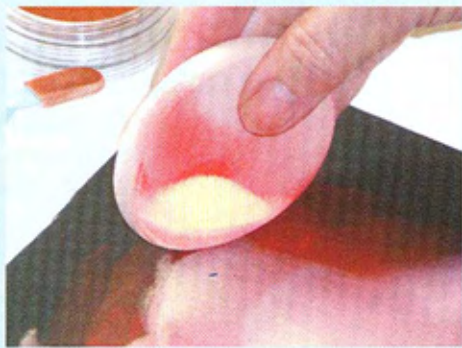
Draw, paint and blend like never before – experiment and have fun!

See page 18 of your Spring SAA Home Shop catalogue for a special introductory offer.

Sue runs painting holidays and workshops in the UK and abroad, including Sardinia, Balmoral Castle, The Hebrides, The Grand Hotel in Scarborough and Cober Hill, plus workshops and weekly classes in the Middlesbrough area. Sue is available to do demonstrations and workshops for art societies in a variety of subjects and medias. Full details see [www.saa.co.uk/art/sford](http://www.saa.co.uk/art/sford), [www.sueford.co.uk](http://www.sueford.co.uk) Phone 01642 712926, email [sue\\_ford@email.com](mailto:sue_ford@email.com)



△ The range of different tools are ideal for creating a wide variety of marks



△ More than one colour can be lifted and applied at the same time without contaminating the pans



△ An eraser or clean tools can be used to lift out the pastel where required