

Creative World trade fair in Frankfurt/Germany

Four months before the start of the Creative World trade fair 2016 in Frankfurt the managers of UArt, a New York-based producer of pastel paper found me on the PGE website. They were looking for a pastel artist who lived close to the trade fair and who could present their pastel paper during the fair. A few short Email later, payment and working hours were agreed upon and I received three packages of different types of Premium Sanded Paper. I tested it and was really excited about it! I found the surface less abrasive than the Sennelier La Carte I had previously used. UArt offers a wide choice:

- 7 different grades from 240 to 800
- •240 – the largest tooth available in a sanded pastel paper
- •280 – ideal for those with a heavier hand or who want texture to show
- •320 – perfect for artists who desire extra layering
- •400 – a favorite of many professional pastel artists and ideal for those trying UART for the first time
- •500 – a moderate tooth for any medium
- •600 – perfect for those with a focus on detailed work
- •800 – finest tooth, popular for super fine pastel or colored pencil application
- the trial pack with one sheet of every available grade in 9x12” and 12x18”
- 10-sheet packs from 9x12” to 21x27”
- the new paper pads in 9x12” where the pages are separated by acid-free glassine preservation sheets
- single sheets and mounted boards from 9x12” to 27x40”
- rolls with a width of 56” and a length of 10 yards.

PH neutral and acid free, all UART paper is beige in color, allowing you to prepare the background and tone the paper to your taste. No matter the grade you prefer, UART accepts underpainting using a wide variety of media, including water, oil and alcohol. It is sturdy enough to ensure the liquid you use doesn't damage the tooth or seep through to the other side.

UArt paper has a consistent grade over the whole surface and doesn't buckle. It is unnecessary to use a fixative. Bigger sheets can be easily cut to size with scissors which reduces the costs.

About the run of events; on Friday I picked up my parking- and entrance ticket in Frankfurt and drove directly to the trade fair grounds. We prepared the booth with our materials. A black screen had already been prepared for me where I could hang my 4 framed paintings which, of course had been done on UArt paper. That took up much less space than the easels other artists had put up. I also had a table where I could spread out my pastel sticks and the paper sheets. I also put up a board with 7 small pastel paintings, done on the 7 different grades; thus their different effects were visible and tangible for our visitors. A small example of underpaintings with water, alcohol and turpentine showed the different properties of the solvents very clearly.

The Saturday started with a lot of visitors to our booth. I not only made the acquaintance of the very aristocratic-looking grandson of Maitre Sennelier, but met a lot of other business people who wanted to know about the paper and its price, so they could offer it in their shops. The discussions with vendors from Australia and Asia became very interesting! I gained a deeper understanding of trade negotiations, haggling about prices and fix channels of distribution. Some of the companies wanted to sell the paper under their own name or buy it at production costs, which, of course would never do! UArt wants access to the German market and make it possible for us artists to buy at lower prices. Wonderful!

During the weekend at the UArt booth I had enough time to paint to 9x12" pastels on UArt 600. It was easy and a lot of fun, to be able to explain my technique and the finished pastels. I also got a visit from PGE member Brigitte Courté!

During these days I was invited by PanPastel and also the art supplies shop Boesner to do demos on UArt paper. I accepted with pleasure; and UArt signed me up for the next trade shows! The two UArt managers invited me and my husband for dinner in a typical Frankfurt cider inn and we spent a long and convivial evening together with a lot of laughter.

On Monday I had the day off and went to the trade show only as a visitor. I spent two hours strolling from booth to booth, which was very interesting. On Tuesday we took down our booth; I was impressed by the generosity of the UArt managers who not only presented me with trial packs for our PGE meeting in May, but also gave me enough paper in all sizes for my next paintings. They are still discussing a possible sponsorship for the 'Get Dusty'. The paper comes from the US, so they need to find a way to prevent the Dusty winners from being burdened with custom fees.

I was very proud of PGE when I showed them our website. They were particularly impressed by the size of the Scribbler. The gallery convinced them through its clear structure and the numerous high-quality paintings. The high number of articles about pastels made even the Chinese from the CarbOthello booth curious. They told me that although pastel painting was currently all the rage in China, the art school pupils missed how-to tutorials. They sure would find a lot of that on our website! Carbothello offer a big pastel stick in a wooden holder at their booth; clean hands for our guild?

Be that as it may, this weekend showed again that one should try out new materials without reservation; one often gets a lot of good results. The 400 to 600 grades are now my absolute favourites!

And with this job at the trade fair I haven't only gained a lot of new impressions but two new friends from the US as well!