



Calligraphitti
The Memphis Calligraphy Quilt
NEWSLETTER

Leadership / Letter from President / Article about Revival

April / May / June Meetings (Beth's Exemplar) + Photos

A Sharp Pencil and A Keen Eye Amity Parks Workshop

Article by Peggy Kunkel
Photos by Judy Meagher

This was a workshop unlike any we have had – no broad-edged pens, no gouache, no graph paper. We were limited to pencil, graphite and carbon.

Amity started by having us draw a graph using pencils ranging from 6H to 6B. We did a row using almost no pressure. Each succeeding row we added more pressure until we reached the last which had full pressure. The full range of these pencils became apparent once this was finished.

Next, she had us drawing shapes and shading them both inside and outside. We also drew shapes within shapes and shaded them. Finally, we drew knots, letters and loops and shaded those.

From shapes we moved onto letters. Amity emphasized that this lettering is a slow process, which will train our eye to see the minute details of our letterforms.

We started by drawing vertical pressure and release lines. This is not as easy as it sounds. I found that I had trouble drawing a straight line but kept practicing. Then she had us work on curved, diagonal, horizontal and the dreaded “S” curve. After working on those, we tried a simple monoline alphabet sentence.

Amity discussed how to vary an alphabet by changing the weight of the thickest parts of each letter. She then showed us how to shade those thick areas and how to shade around the letters to make them pop off the page. She urged us to make as many different “A’s”, “B’s”, “C’s”, etc. as possible. From these experimentations we will find other letterforms that we can use in our work.

Two items that I found to be most useful were the eraser shield and the Pentel Graph Gear mechanical pencil 0.3. I have had an eraser shield but rarely used it. When working on these letters I found that it was extremely useful. I could isolate areas for erasing easily and didn’t damage other areas. The extra fine mechanical gave me great control over the area I was shading. The one drawback is that it

comes with HB lead, which works well but does not give you extra dark shading. I did find some B lead that would fit, but it is extremely fragile. It also did darken the shaded areas.

Amity showed us how she did her pencil sketches. Most of her work was done in a journal. We could see exactly how she did her sketches and then turned them into finished work. Her letters were drawn with no space between the lines. She had to think carefully how-to layout the lines and letters. Also, she urged us to use a variety of letterforms to add interest to our work.

On Sunday, we worked with Water-Soluble Graphite. We pulled out all our water-soluble pencils and wrote on watercolor paper. Then we left a third of the sheet dry, spritzed a third of it and used a wet brush on a third. This way we could see what each was capable of making.

From pencils we proceeded to the Art Graf Black Carbon Block. Amity had us draw designs on watercolor paper, then spray them and let them dry. We also drew large letters with the block and wet the line. This caused shading. We also drew on portions of the watercolor paper with the blocks or sticks then sprayed them and let them dry. These created lovely abstract backgrounds that we could then letter over.

Amity had us letter on the watercolor paper with a broad edged brush and clear water. Then we scrapped graphite onto the sheet of paper using an xacto. We tapped the page to distribute the graphite and let it dry. Then we carefully blew off the excess powder. This created a very unusual texture (almost rock like).

I thoroughly enjoyed this workshop and have been working on my lettering since it finished. Her handout book had lots of examples for us to see. Everything she covered in class was in that booklet.

Ann's Pamphlet's for Workshops