

EAA February Zoom Demonstration
Monday, February 5, 2024 @ 7:00p.m.
Chris Cozen - “The Role of Color and Stencils in Acrylic Composition”

Artist **Chris Cozen** captivated an audience of 32 members and guests with her zoom demonstration, “**The Role of Color and Stencils in Acrylic Composition**”, from her home studio in Palm Desert, CA. Chris, a member of EAA, continues to split her time between California and Ohio, planning to return to Euclid in April. President, Rozenia Cunningham, introduced Chris.

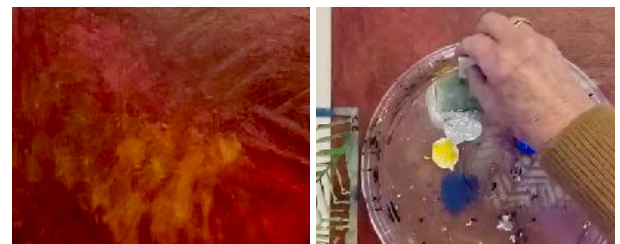


Chris Cozen is a self-trained acrylic and mixed media artist, who loves color, pattern, and line. She was trained in the use and understanding of acrylic products through years of affiliation with Golden Artists Colors, Inc., where she worked as a Certified Working Artist and Artist Educator. An active acrylic instructor since 2008, she published five books on the subject and produced over 10 DVDs through Artists Network. She currently serves as the Education Coordinator for the Artists Council in Palm Desert where she coordinates classes, workshops and lectures as well as teaches. Her favorite subject matter comes from nature. Chris uses her camera to capture what interests her. She then uses the images as inspiration to manipulate, expand, explore, and create.

Chris started her presentation with a slideshow of her artwork, showing how she incorporates bits and pieces of stencils within each piece. She uses color to integrate the stencil into the composition. This creates a complex background upon which the composition can be placed. See examples below.



For the demonstration, Chris started with a toned, gray canvas and added colors to create a background. Selecting colors red, yellow and brown, she worked quickly to create movement with light and dark passages. “Don’t over mix. I like to see the manipulation of colors. Move rapidly to get movement in the background,” she said while adding more yellow in the middle. It’s on this background that she then placed the stencils. Chris uses takeout container lids for her palette, having acquired a number of them during the Covid period. “The lids are great for mixing colors.”



A word about stencils . . . use makeup sponges to apply the paint to the stencil and don’t go to the outside edge. Then, feather the edges. This builds texture in the background. Chris considers a stencil a ‘painting tool’. “I have stencils from way back. Lot’s of them!” Stencils never go bad and can be reused over and over. She even created her own set of botanical stencils and one patterned after a doorway in Italy. A favorite place to purchase from is Stencil Girl, at stencilgirl.com. Chris suggests looking for “angel” companies as their stencils can be used in compositions without issues.



Chris continued her demo using a variety of different stencils. She created straight lines and busy patterns throughout and repeated a pattern in the upper left, varying the colors from turquoise, teal to bright green. She feathered in the edges to remove any stencil lines, sometimes using a baby wipe to take out lines. For the background, it is important to have lights and darks; value changes are useful. She pulled shapes out of the background, in what she called 'negative painting' to create movement from forceful and strong to delicate and pretty.



Chris uses Golden High Flow and Fluid acrylic paints. She stressed the importance of buying good paints. Cheap paint doesn't have much pigment. "If you have good paints, it goes farther. Buy the best and learn to use it well." Some of her paints are 10 to 15 years old and are still good.

Planning to finish the painting later, her next steps will be to 'marry' the background and stencil layers by pulling shapes out of the background with acrylic paints. She will switch to her acrylic brushes, angle brush or pens for this step. "It's all a surprise."

Chris finished the painting a few days later and shared it with us. Amazing and so very beautiful! Here's her finished painting. Thank you, Chris for sharing your time and talents with us and inspiring us to want more. We look forward to a possible workshop with you in September when you are back in Ohio.

