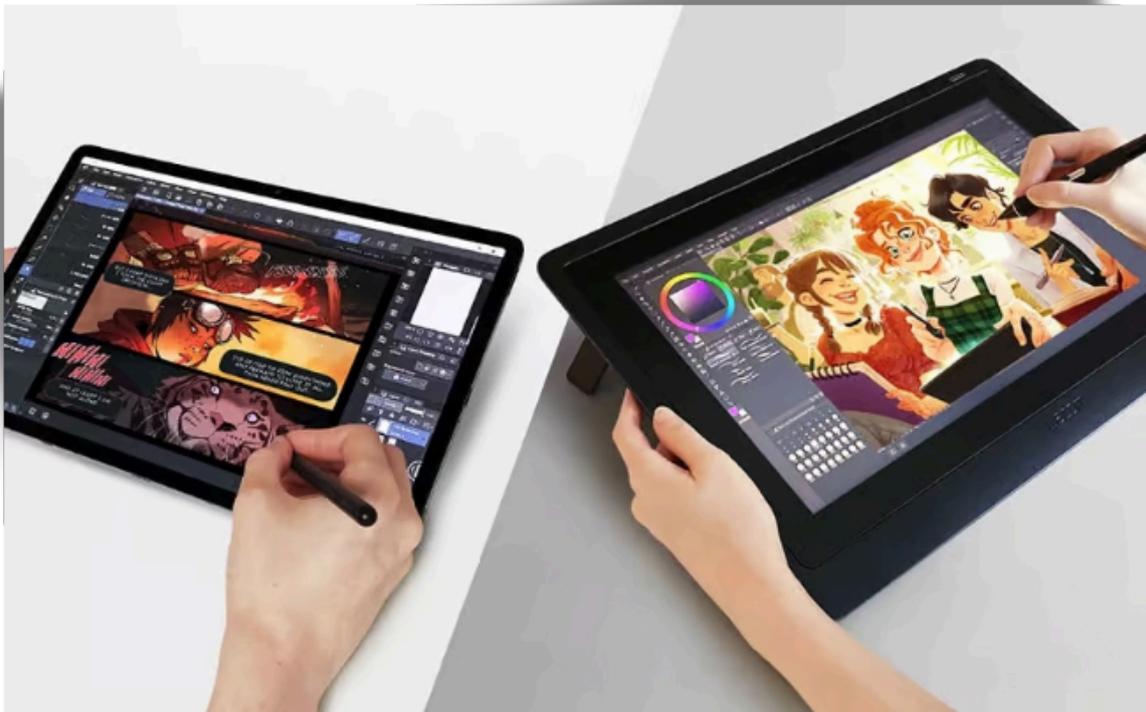


Art Techniques Student's Guides

Digital Art



Curated by
Ms. Mila Vasconcelos



Disclaimer

I am not a master of all art techniques. My main medium is [Digital Photography](#). This study guide is a curated collection of resources from digital artists, educators, and platforms across the web. All content is shared here strictly for educational purposes, to support my IB Visual Arts students and fellow educators. I do not claim ownership of the tutorials, images, or methods included unless otherwise stated. Every effort has been made to credit original creators and provide direct links to their work.

If you're an artist and would like your work removed or modified here, please contact me. I value and respect your contributions deeply.

I hope you all make good use of this material and all the resources shared.

Let's be creative today!

Ms. Mila Vasconcelos



What Is Digital Art?

Digital Art refers to artworks created or modified using digital tools such as drawing tablets, styluses, computers, and software like Procreate, Photoshop, or Clip Studio Paint. Artists use layers, brushes, and other features to simulate traditional media or explore new styles unique to the digital space.

Main Applications in This Guide

- Character Design & Illustration
- Visual Storytelling & Moodboards
- Sketching, Line Art, and Color Blocking
- Digital Painting Techniques
- Expression through Stylization
- Portraits, landscapes & Mixed Media in Digital Art

Tools & Platforms Commonly Used

- Procreate (iPad)
- Adobe Photoshop / Fresco
- Clip Studio Paint
- Krita (Free)
- Medibang Paint (Free)
- Autodesk Sketchbook (Free)

****To make this guide easy to follow and ready to be used in our school, we will be using PROCREATE as the main digital tool.***

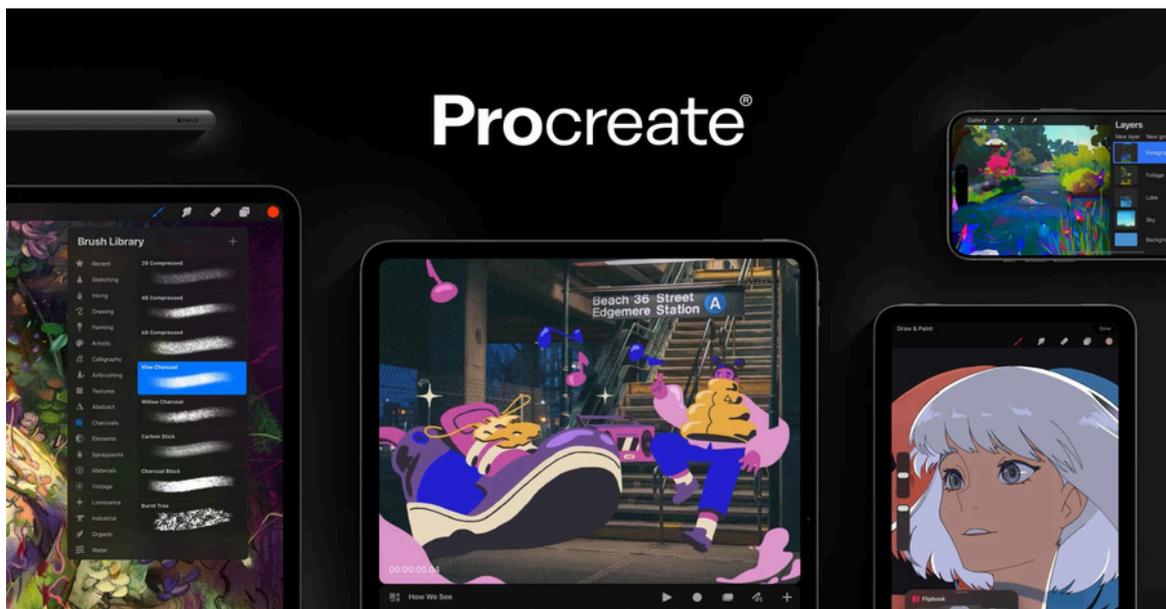


Image credits: Procreate.com

5 Things You Must Know about Digital Art

- **Layers are Your Best Friend** – Use different layers for sketching, coloring, shadows, and highlights to stay organized.
- **Brush Settings Matter** – Customize or download brushes to fit your art style (textured, soft, inking, etc.).
- **Undo is a Tool, Not a Crutch** – Use it to explore, but don't be afraid of mistakes – they teach you style.
- **Reference is Not Cheating** – Study poses, lighting, clothes, and expressions from real life or photos.
- **Backup Often** – Save your work regularly and keep versions if your app crashes.

Understanding Layers in Procreate

- In digital art, layers function like transparent sheets stacked atop one another, allowing artists to add or modify elements without altering the existing artwork. Procreate provides a robust Layers menu to manage these effectively.

Key Features of the Layers Menu:

- **Layer Preview:** Displays a thumbnail of the layer's content for quick identification.
- **Creating New Layers:** Tap the '+' icon to add layers, keeping in mind that the maximum number depends on your device's capabilities and canvas size.
- **Selecting Layers:** Tap a layer to select it; the active layer is highlighted in blue.
- **Layer Visibility:** Toggle the checkbox on the right to show or hide a layer's content on the canvas.

- *Sources:*

[Procreate Classes by Freya](#)



- **Blend Modes:** Accessed via the 'N' icon, blend modes allow for various effects by altering how layers interact.
- **Background Color:** The bottom-most layer labeled 'Background Color' lets you set or change the canvas's background hue.

Layer Options:

- **Rename:** Assign descriptive names to layers for better organization.
- **Select:** Activates the non-transparent areas of a layer, enabling targeted edits.
- **Copy:** Duplicates the layer's content for use elsewhere.
- **Fill Layer:** Fills the entire layer with the selected color.
- **Clear:** Removes all content from the layer.
- **Alpha Lock:** Restricts edits to the existing content, preventing changes to transparent areas.

- **Mask:** Allows non-destructive editing by concealing parts of the layer without erasing them.
- **Clipping Mask:** Confines a layer's visibility to the content of the layer beneath it, useful for applying effects.
- **Invert:** Reverses the colors within the layer.
- **Reference:** Designates a layer as a reference for actions like color fills on other layers.
- **Merge Down:** Combines the current layer with the one directly below it.
- **Combine Down:** Groups the current layer with the one beneath it, aiding in organization.

Organizing Layers:

- **Selecting Multiple Layers:** Swipe right on layers to select multiple at once.
- **Deleting Layers:** Swipe left on a layer and tap 'Delete' to remove it.
- **Duplicating Layers:** Swipe left and choose 'Duplicate' to create a copy.
- **Locking Layers:** Protect a layer from accidental edits by selecting 'Lock.'
- **Rearranging Layers:** Tap, hold, and drag layers to reorder them.
- **Grouping Layers:** Combine multiple layers into a group for streamlined management.
- **Merging Layers:** Pinch multiple layers together to merge them into one.

Mastering these layer functionalities in Procreate enhances your digital art workflow, allowing for more complex and organized creations.

All insights are credited to Freya Kotchakorn. For a comprehensive guide, refer to her original article.

[Procreate Classes by Freya+1](#) [Procreate Classes by Freya+1](#)



Types of Brushes

There are many different types of brushes available in digital art software :

- **Round Brush:** A basic brush with a circular shape that is used for painting and drawing.
- **Flat Brush:** A brush with a flat edge that is used for creating sharp lines and filling in large areas.
- **Textured Brush:** A brush that has a unique texture or pattern that can be used to add depth and dimension to your artwork.
- **Watercolor Brush:** A brush that simulates the effects of watercolor paint, creating a soft and watery look.
- **Airbrush:** A tool that simulates the effects of an airbrush, used to create a soft and diffused look.

Source: <https://www.codingireland.ie/>



There are many different types of tools available in digital art software :

- **Smudge Tool:** A tool that is used to blend colors together, creating a smooth transition.
- **Eraser Tool:** A tool that removes color from your digital canvas.
- **Clone Stamp Tool:** A tool that copies an area of your artwork and allows you to paste it onto another area, creating a duplicate.
- **Gradient Tool:** A tool that creates a gradual blend between two or more colors.
- **Pen Tool:** A tool that creates precise lines and shapes.

Practice with Brushes and Tools

Experimenting with different combinations of brushes and tools can help you create unique effects in your artwork. Here are some ways to practice using brushes and tools:

Source: <https://www.codingireland.ie/>



- Use the round brush to create different line widths by varying the brush size and pressure sensitivity.
- Use the smudge tool to blend colors and create a smoother transition between them.
- Use the eraser tool to create interesting negative space in your artwork.

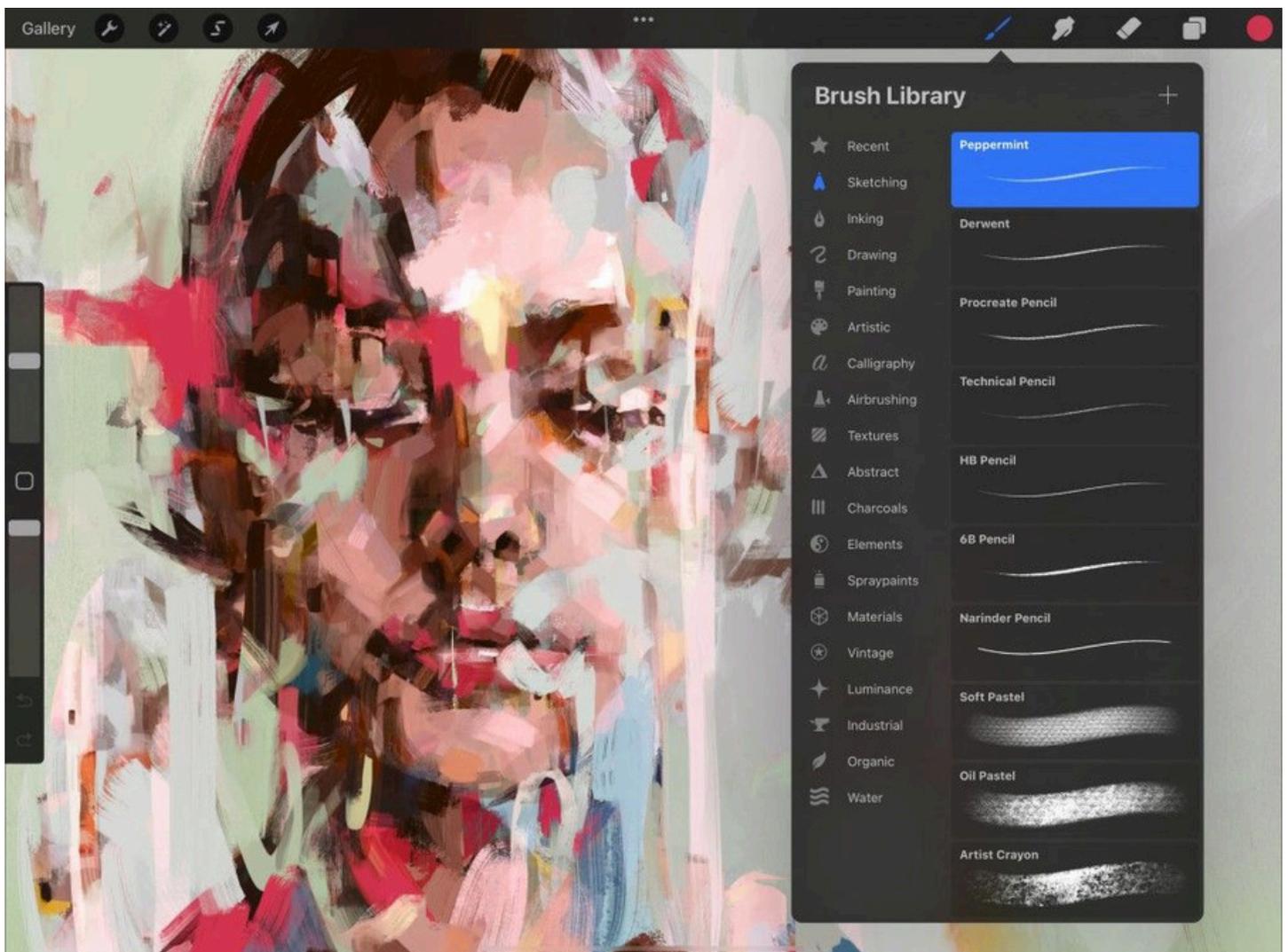


Image source: help.procreate.com

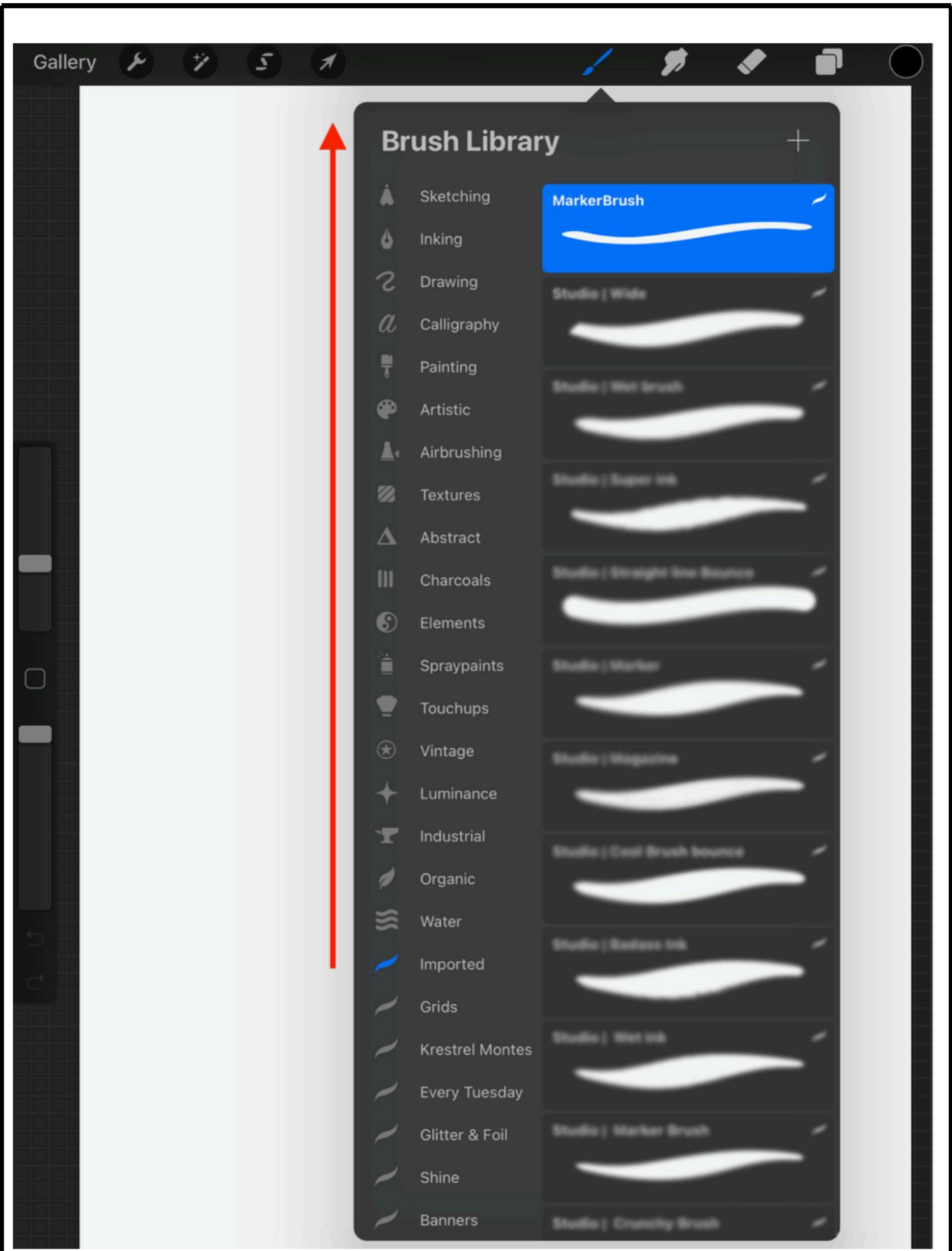


Image source: designbundles.net



Procreate Reference Layer

In Procreate, a Reference Layer is a powerful tool that allows artists to streamline their coloring process by designating a specific layer as a reference for color dropping, without altering the original line art.

Key Points:

- *Reference Layer vs. Reference Image:*
 - Reference Image: An external picture used for visual guidance while drawing; it doesn't interact with the canvas layers.
 - Reference Layer: A layer within Procreate set to guide color fills on other layers, enabling efficient coloring without merging line art and color.

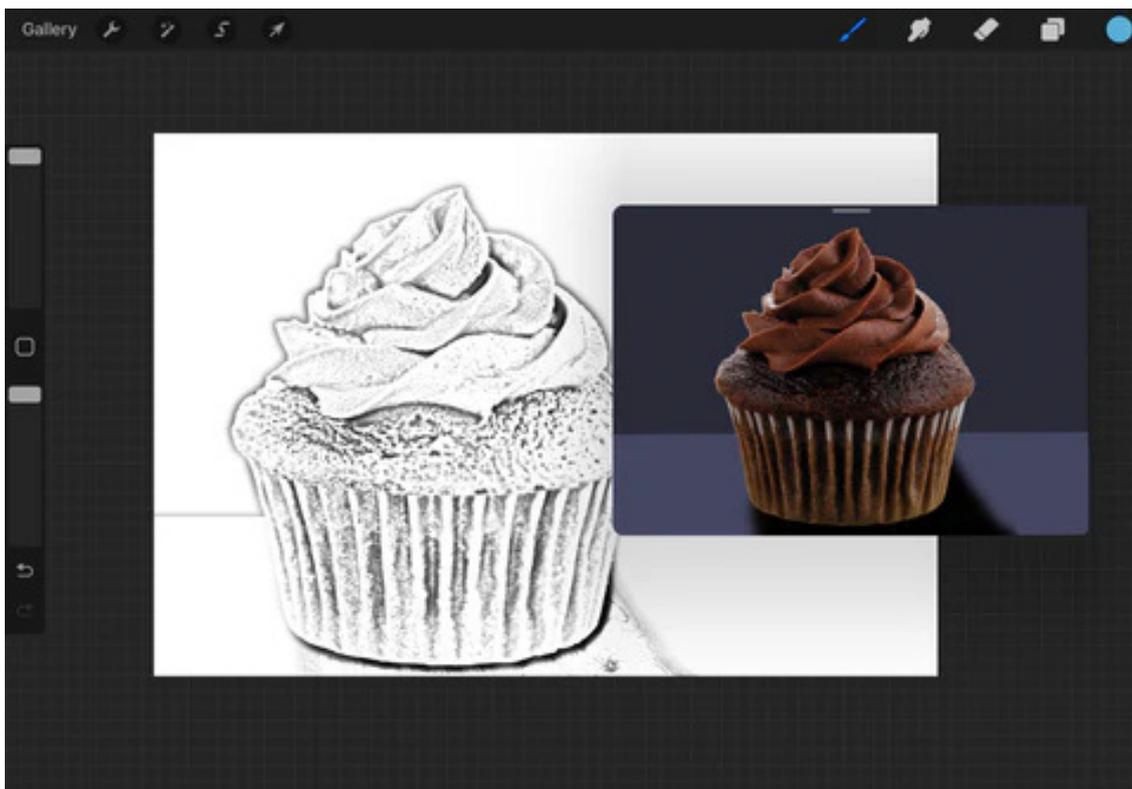


Image source: thecreativitycity.com

Procreate Reference Layer

How It Works:

- Create your line art on a layer.
- Set this layer as the Reference Layer by tapping on it and selecting 'Reference' from the menu.
- Add a new layer beneath the reference layer. areas; Procreate will use the shapes from the reference layer to contain the color fills on the new layer.

Take a look at the picture below to see an example of a reference layer. (Layer 1 is the reference).

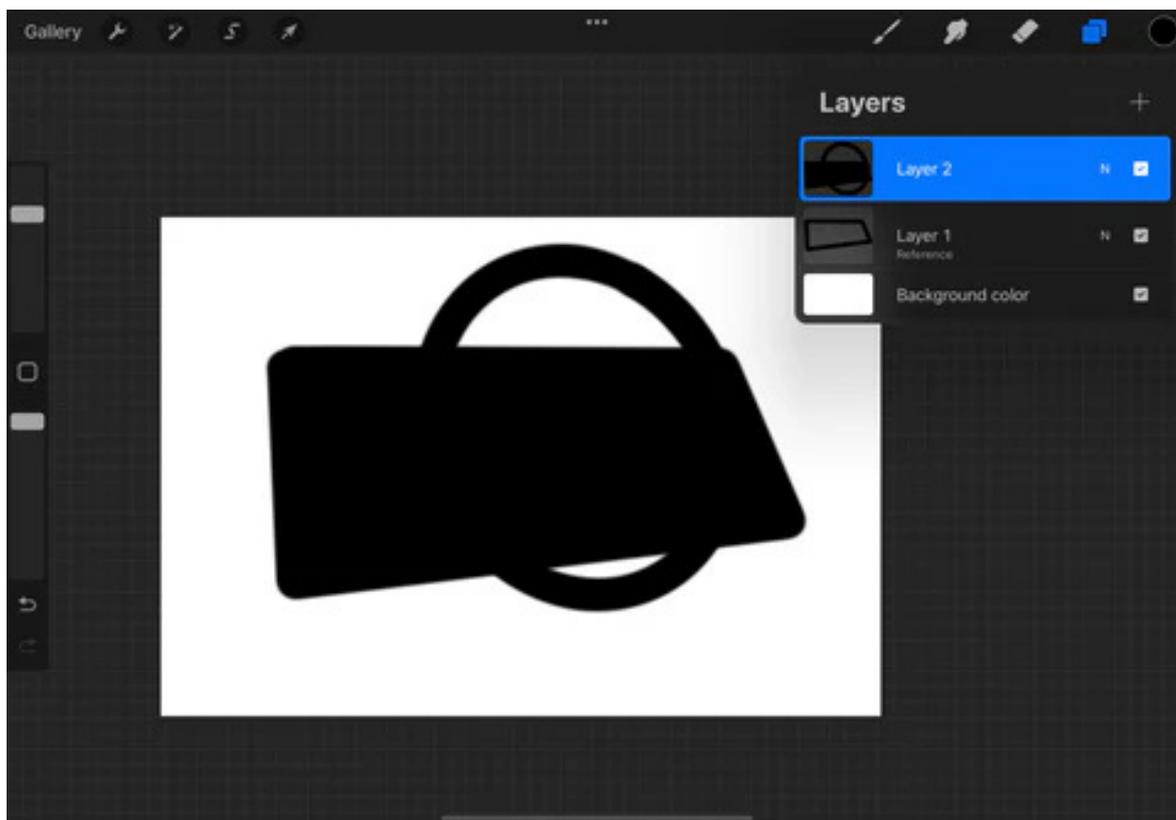


Image source: thecreativitycity.com

Procreate Reference Layer

- **Benefits:**

- Keeps line art and coloring separate, allowing for non-destructive edits.
- Facilitates efficient color application across multiple layers.
- Enhances workflow by maintaining organized and editable layers.

Utilizing the Reference Layer feature, artists can achieve a more organized and flexible coloring process in their digital artwork.

All insights are credited to The Creativity City. For a comprehensive guide, refer to their original article.

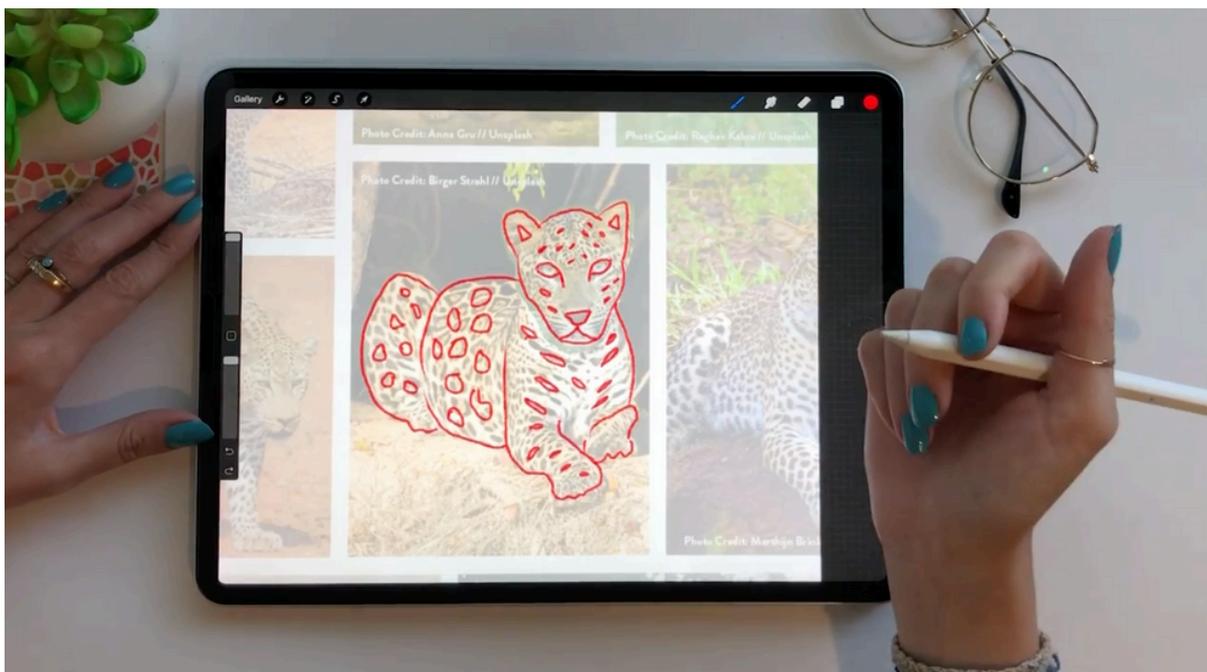


Image source: [catcoq.com](https://www.catcoq.com)

Creating Your Digital Art Projects

If you're just starting or looking to expand your digital art portfolio, here are project ideas inspired by the IB Process Portfolio.

Choose 3 different types of work to explore various techniques, subjects, and concepts:

Category	Project Idea	Focus	IB Connection
Portraits	Identity Mask – Create a self-portrait that blends your face with cultural symbols, traditional patterns, or emotions.	Stylization, symbolism, cultural reflection	Personal/cultural context, materials manipulation
Landscapes	Sacred Place – Digitally paint a real or imagined place that holds emotional or spiritual significance (temple, beach, forest, etc.).	Light, color, mood, texture	Space and environment, visual literacy
Mixed Media	Cultural Contrast Collage – Combine traditional art forms with modern life (e.g., a mosaic background with neon signs).	Juxtaposition, layering, visual impact	Artistic intention, conceptual depth
Character Design	Mythological Remix – Design a character inspired by a myth, folktale, or tradition from your home country or a place you admire.	Design, cultural research, imagination	Investigation, originality, global context
Poster/Graphic Design	Activism & Awareness Poster – Create a digital poster addressing a cultural or environmental issue you're passionate about.	Typography, composition, message clarity	Artistic intention, audience engagement

Tips for Selecting Your Projects:

- Include at least one figurative (people/portraits) and one non-figurative (landscape, abstract, or concept-based).
- Vary your techniques: try digital painting, collage, photo-manipulation, or illustration.
- Document each step: brainstorming, thumbnails, references, experimentation, and reflection.
- Connect your projects to your personal experiences or cultural background for stronger IB connections.