

Ten Top Tips using Compressed Charcoal

by Debbie Adams

- 1** For finer detail, use the edge of the compressed charcoal to draw as if it were a pencil. Rotate it from one corner to the next to maintain a pointed edge.
- 2** Use a sandpaper block to shape the edge of your compressed charcoal.
- 3** To diffuse a sharp line or edge use a paper stump to soften.
- 4** For a cloudy misty effect around an image, cross-hatch strokes then blend with a paper stump to soften.
- 5** To keep your surface clean, use a clean piece of paper to lay your drawing hand on. Avoid touching your paper with fingers.
- 6** For areas that need highlighting use a kneadable eraser to lift off charcoal.
- 7** Step away from work and look at it from time to time to get the full perspective of what you have done. Looking at your work from a close range makes it difficult to see the full perspective.
- 8** For a smooth appearance, sand charcoal down with a sandpaper block. Then using the corner of a clean cotton cloth, wrap around your finger tip and dip it in the charcoal dust, apply to paper where desired. This is a great way to fill in a large area of paper that needs contrast.
- 9** Clean up artwork where needed with a plastic or battery eraser.
- 10** Practice often, and never judge your work harshly.

