

## Drawing the Collection Lesson 12 – Conté Crayon

Conté Crayons are made from a blend of natural pigments, kaolin clay, and graphite. They are waxier and much firmer than soft pastels, so they produce little dust and are easy to control, making them an excellent drawing medium for sketching. Let's practice with a sketch based on a piece from the permanent collection, John Mac Whirter's *Donkey in the Snow*.



We'll be using four basic conté crayon colors: black, bistre, sanguine, and white.



John Mac Whirter | DONKEY IN THE SNOW | etching on paper | c.1870



1. Starting with the sanguine stick, sketch and block in the main shapes. The beginning stage should be kept loose.



3. Next, add black conté crayon to the darkest areas in the composition, blending each layer.



5. Finally, use the white to add highlights and layer over the previous colors in the sky. Voila!



2. Use the bistre stick to darken the middle and dark values. You can also blend or smudge the two layers together with your finger or a cloth rag.



4. An eraser can be used to lighten some areas and refine shapes.



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