
gg designs' Gazette

Q--Sketches and Challenges!

Any cardmaker has at least a few favorite layouts that they use to create cards. Like a favorite tried and true recipe, a **layout or sketch** can be a fast way to make a card that works which is perfect for a birthday card, a thank you card to Aunt Tilly or a card to friend. If you are like me, laying out your card can be time consuming and difficult. But what if you are bored by the same old designs? Where do you find inspiration and new ideas?

There are many websites and blogs that offer new ideas and designs. One way to inspire you is a **sketch** and the other is a **challenge** and sometimes designers will combine both into a single project. Here is how they work:

Sketch

This is another name for a **layout or diagram**. In sewing you use a pattern to create the pieces of a dress to sew together. In cardmaking, you might look at a sketch for an idea on how to assemble various elements to create a card. Usually the designer will create a few samples to illustrate ways to use their sketch. Some blogs and message boards post a weekly sketch to stretch your creativity. A designer will sometimes provide exact dimensions to follow and other times just a general diagram. If it is a contest, you'll want to follow the sketch as closely as possible but for a regular sketch use it as a starting point for your own creation. The designer will usually invite those who use her design to share their creations with other via their blog or gallery.

True story- Last year I followed a weekly sketch discussion on a message board and would attempt to use the sketch every week- and some weeks were tougher than others. One week I made a card of which I was particularly proud. I uploaded my attempt and realized a few minutes later that I had missed adding an element to my card. My card was glued, finished and frankly I really liked it the way it was so I decided to leave it as is, and I made a joke about forgetting the extra layer. I had many people compliment my card. I learned that day that I could use a sketch as a starting point and to assist me in creating my own time consuming layout.

Challenge

A challenge is when a designer asks you to think outside of the box and be extra creative in your cardmaking. There are several types of challenges and sometimes a designer will combine two challenges or use a sketch and add a twist by adding a challenge to the project as well. These can be difficult but the results can be stunning.

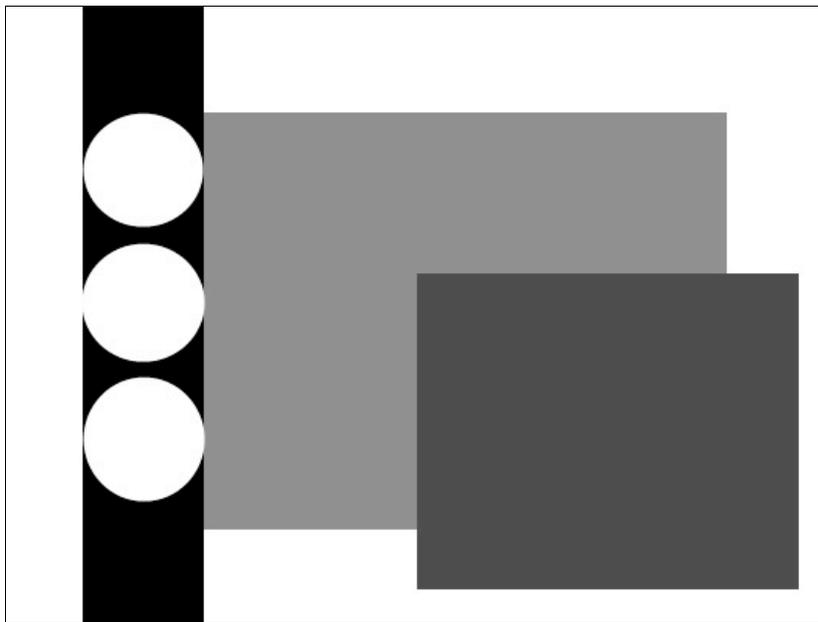
Color challenges are among the most popular challenges such as: use two or three specific colors or create a holiday card using non-traditional Christmas colors.

Inspiration challenges involve creating artwork based on a photo or object. Catalog pages or websites are a great place for inspiration- who knows where you'll find a unique color combo or design or texture or...

Elimination challenges are a great way to stretch your creativity. Such challenges might be: create a card without layers or create a card without using any floral images or embellishments. While it sounds easy, it does take some thought. I like these challenges because it makes me look at my stamps and supplies in different ways. One of my favorites was to create a holiday card without using any traditional holiday elements I was amazed at how card artists made images such as seashells into elegant holiday cards.

Sketches and challenges have inspired me to create some of my favorite cards and viewing the artwork of others has provided me with a lot of new ideas for my own work. Participating in challenges is a great way to push yourself artistically and to share your work with others. Go ahead- **I challenge you to try this sketch challenge and to share your results with us!**

Here is Heather's Sketch:



We hope this is the first of many "**Participation Events**" on this site. With this "inaugural effort" we'd love it if you'd create a sample (using at least one gg designs image, please) and send us a scan. We will be posting them as they come in, all month long. Send as many as you'd like, we will post them all so everyone can get a good idea of the value sketches and the variety of ways they can be interpreted.

Join the fun! Show us your stuff!

Some people are *fast!!!*

Mary Dinucci sends this card which she made using Heather's sketch above.



In addition to the use of the sketch, we see some DTP techniques, layering, of course, some "sparkle" and the lovely autumn color combinations.

From Mary:

The card was relatively easy.

* Base card: olive green 11" x 5-1/2", folded.

* Main design base and circles: white glossy cardstock 4-1/4" x 5-1/2" and scrap big enough for 3 circles. With VersaMark I randomly stamped 2 different tiny leaf stamps, then embossed with Indian Corn embossing powder. Using a cosmetic sponge I applied chalk inks,

burnt sienna, yellow ochre and olive pastel direct to the stamped paper. I trimmed the larger piece to fit the card base with a narrow margin and attached it.

* Intermediate base: designer paper 3-1/2" x 2-7/8". Attached as shown.

* Strip and greeting panel. Medium brown mounted on peach cardstock. strip 1" x 4-1/4" and panel 2-3/4" x 2". ggDesigns greeting stamped and embossed.

* Leaf circles: Punch (3) 3/4" circles from DTP piece created with main design base. Stamp and emboss tiny leaf on each. Attach to punched 1" peach circles.

* Assemble as shown, attaching greeting panel and circles with dimensional tape.

You asked how it felt using a preplanned sketch. I need inspiration. It can come from designer papers or a stamp or a need for a particular card for a certain person. Sometimes I just want to create a card but my mind goes blank. This is the 6th card I have made using a sketch for the layout. It is a challenge and **I really like it!** My method is to choose a stamp for the main panel based on the size of that panel. Depending on what stamp is used, bringing the rest of the card together seems easier. **I look forward to next month's sketch.**

Thanks Mary, for sharing this with us. Hopefully it will encourage others to join in.

? Comment for Mary..... 

Another Cyberstamper's Friend "Yogi" has "come out to play" Isn't this FUN?

Come on and join us!!!



Click on the illustration above to see a larger version and to visit **Yogi's** site. Very interesting!

Created: October 5, 2008

Modified:

GG Design has started issuing challenges on their web site and I thought I'd try it out. I've never done one of these challenges before, so I'm not quite sure how much lea way there is in comparison to the "sketch" provided.

One of the stipulations was to use one of GG Designs rubber stamps. Well I only have one, so I didn't have much choice... I rubber stamped the image using Ranger's Resist stamp pad onto white cardstock, then applying Pan Pastels in various yellow, orange and greenish tones (trying to get an autumn feel to it). I then rubber stamped the autumn leaves (Inkadinkado "Fall Trails") on to cream toned cardstock using the same technique but with a blue tone to it.

I used a dark blue Bazzell monochromatic cardstock and put it through my circle design crimper. On a piece of white cardstock, I did a small section of more of the yellowish Pan Pastels, and punched out my 3 circles. I used some of my calligraphic Peel Offs (under the name of Elizabeth Craft Designs) "My Friend" in the circles. All the elements were put onto a cream toned cardstock and I added the rounded corners. I thought that balanced out the round circles.

My Peel Offs can be purchased through your local stamping store or through the Canadian representative on line at ECraftDesigns

? Comment for Yogi..... 

Yet Another Answer to Heather's Challenge Flew In!



Michelle Moreland writes:

Thought I would give your challenge a try. I was so thrilled, Wanda got me your whole set of "Wandas Birds" stamps! [see Early Bird page] So I had to use those. The large one I stamped, cut out and reversed. Sure hope that you like it.

Here are Michelle's directions:

- Started with a cream cardstock, distressed the edge with a dark brown ink.
 - Tore a green paper for the background .
 - Second square in the layer has a complementary green under a large abstract print with a small border of the green showing. Glue down.
- Tore two strips of orange card stock. Layered one on the lower right and the other on left hand of card.
- Tore another thin strip of the first green and glued it over the edge of the strip of orange on the left.
- Tore three circles out of the first green, stamped smallest "Wandas Bird' on each and glued them over left orange strip. Drew small dots at their feet with brown marker.
- Layered scatter joy sticker over bottom right orange strip. Drew lines around it with brown marker.
- Stamped largest 'Wandas Bird' on second green card stock, cut it out and reversed it.**
- Drew feather, shading and tail flourishes with brown marker, also **carved into the card stock to add feather texture.**
- Gluedown, putting a little foam behind body of bird to give dimension.
- Drew abstract lines around the second green card stock square, adding white dots with an Inksentials opaque white pen.
- Distressed the background of the large print behind big bird with edge of scissors.

The first green paper I used is actually some packing paper, that luckily, **my 13 yr. old daughter noticed before it was thrown away.** A budding artist, and fellow paper lover!

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LOVE IT!--Reuse, recycle and get to "play" with with your daughter! Who knew a rubber stamping project could do so much?

(gg designs note: We are particularly pleased that Michelle "came out to play." She is an excellent carver in her own right, so it's very gratifying to see that she uses gg designs stamps as well as her own creations. Thanks Michelle.)



Here is a note from Michelle and a look at the first of her designs to be made into rubber:

Here are some images that I have carved and recently had the blessing of being made into 'real' rubber! It was such a thrill to see the finished product.



Click on the illustration to send a comment to Michelle.

This is gg designs' "Lucky Sunday"

Just after Michelle Morland's Bird's flew in, we received an email from **Arlene Faber** with her submission.



Here's what **Arlene** had to say:

I thought it would be fun to use "Heather's Flowers for the background. The words were computer generated. The card is for a 6 year old grand daughter who loves pink and purple.

Not only did Arlene 'meet the challenge" she met a granddaughter's needs. (Almost nothing more satisfying than that!) And gg loves the idea that she used Heather's Blossoms for Heather's sketch!

Thanks Arlene!

? Comment for Arlene..... 

Each of these submissions is totally different from the others and gives a great example of how useful a "sketch" can be and how much variety it offers. If you thought a "sketch" would turn out "canned," repetitious art work, these cards definitely dispell *that* worry!

Confession--When initially introduced to the sketch concept, ggd was skeptical, feeling a sketch was unnecessary, almost intrusive. But these submissions have proven us wrong. ggd is now definitely a convert! Sketches, like any tool, can be over used, but, like any tool, can be a true help at times. Great for jump starting creativity when it is at a low ebb. AND, for the purposes of livening up the Gazette and getting longed for and missing participation, (particularly since Cyberstamper's hiatus) the sketch idea has been GREAT!

Thanks Heather and thanks to all of you who have participated! (There's still room for more submissions--**where's yours?**)

Here's Linda Blackbird's "Take" on Heather's Sketch



Leaf stamps embossed in New England Autumn e.p.
Postage stamp and monograms stamped in VersaFine Vintage Sepia and embossed in clear e.p.

Thanks for the challenge sketch, Heather!

And thanks to you, Linda, for adding your special touch!

P.S. Linda used a very early, and personal favorite, gg designs image. Haven't seen it used in a while so it was like an old friend visiting.

? Comment for Linda.... [Click Here](#)

Jeanette Waters recently "discovered" gg designs and the new Minimal [99c Store](#).

Here is her answer to Heather's Sketch Challenge.



I used a pale aqua pearlized card stock for the base card. The printed panel and strip are pieces of CosmoCricket designer paper, as are the 3 flowers on the strip. They are applied with pop dots. I didn't have paper for the small panel so I selected a color and texture from the computer (I haven't quite mastered sponging). The stamp is embossed in gold. Everything is outlined using a gold leaf pen.

There, my first submission to a ggdesigns challenge.*

* What timing! This is the first gg designs "sketch" challenge (Thanks to Heather.)

If you want to "meet" and get to know Jeanette better, visit her blog

<http://jeanette-h20creations.blogspot.com/>

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