



Paintertainment



e-Newsletter • November 2018 • Issue 70

INTRODUCING: NEW STEP IT UP STENCILS

by Gretchen Fleener

Ever sign up for something you have never done, thinking you'll learn along the way? I find that this process generally suits me well because it usually brings with it some sort of built in motivation, such as a deadline, a paying client, and a purpose. After all, a goal without a plan is just a wish...in order to make something happen you need some sort of parameters. When clients request something I've never done, it turns from something I've thought about doing in my own head to something I must conquer!

I am excited to announce something that I have been working on for years...I've just released the first few items in my new line of face & body art stencils! And I'm going to admit that it was not easy, and I was not a pleasant human being throughout the whole process! It has been quite a laborious and expensive process that has included a LOT of frustrations, bad language, money, sweat, money, tears, money and repeated thoughts of throwing in the towel all together! However, I am happy to say that I persisted through it all and have something tangible to show for it, finally!

I have been working on ideas for stencils for years. It was a goal without a plan...one of those many side project ideas in my head that I'd get to during my now non-existent "slow season" or whenever I had some of that elusive "free time."

But I do set goals to grow my business every year and last year I decided to take the plunge and purchase a Silhouette machine. Later I would find out it was not going to cut it, literally and figuratively. I was set on 7.5 mil mylar, the same quality and thickness of BAM stencils, and after deeper research and much wasted material learned that the Silhouette just does not have enough force. I would have to invest in a machine that costs about 4 times as much, not including all of the accessories I'd need: the Silver Bullet! I tabled the idea for a while as the minimum \$1,000 required was a lot of money to throw at an idea.

Fast forward to this fall. As I was preparing to

teach at the Jamvention in Belgium, I was asked if there was anything I would be willing to contribute to the attendees' gift bags, being distributed in celebration of their 10th year. Of course, you can probably guess what I volunteered to do...*STENCILS!* After all, they are small and flat, easy to bring in my suitcase, and I already had ideas. Then I thought simultaneously, "What was I thinking?!" and "This will be great! I can launch my new stencils at Jamvention!" followed by "What was I thinking?!" For a moment I forgot

"I HAVE NEVER TRIED THAT BEFORE, SO I THINK I SHOULD DEFINITELY BE ABLE TO DO THAT."
-Pippi Longstocking

about all the pain and frustration I had gone through trying to create just a handful of decent stencils, and focused on this new motivation: a *deadline!* With a quantity of *100!* And for a client of other humans, not just my brain full of ideas! I saw this quote from Pippi Longstocking above that a face painter friend posted recently on Facebook which really fit my attitude on so many things. I knew that this was just the kind of motivation I needed to really buckle down and get this thing happening.

With just a few weeks before the Jamvention I knew I had voluntarily bitten off more than I could chew, so I needed to **chew harder!** This sort of thing works for me though, and I know it doesn't for everyone. But no matter what you bite off, you CAN swallow if you just...keep...*CHEWING!* You also have to decide if the reward will someday be worth the risk. I took a gamble spending over \$1,000 on the machine I had researched (after receiving a recommendation on it from Corey Morgan!), and hundreds more on

necessary accessories, mylar, packaging and printing to create my finished product. This is not a lot for a big corporation, but for a mom who works out of her basement it was a lot! After burning through expensive mats and blades, countless sheets of mylar, and endless hours of online video tutorials, I struggled my way through the creation of my first run of 100 free giveaway stencils. I barely squeaked out 100 in time for my trip! Some of my freebies turned out better than others, but forcing myself to work through the learning curve with a deadline fast forwarded the process to a point where I could finally launch them!

And so, I finally introduce to you: Step-it-Up stencils! These stencils are designed to step up your speed, step up your detail, and step up your game! They have steps etched right into the stencil to walk you through, and come with step by step, full color, illustrated instructions. I have

many more ideas in my head but the first few focus on jewels and eyes.

While creating my jewelry book, I was frustrated with the stencils currently on the market for jewels. I am into realism, and these stencils all left cartoony looking lines between all of the facets of a gem, making it nearly impossible to render a really realistic looking gem. After all, in the real world everything does not come with cartoony outlines. Rather, the surfaces of a gem are defined by the contrasting shades of the planes that sit next to each other, not lines between them. So, to achieve this look, I've broken down common gem shapes into steps, telling you what shades to use when, to create a more realistic gem. I've also released a princess eye stencil, aimed at helping those who struggle with creating delicate, consistent princess eyes.

I hope that you enjoy these first few stencils, and assure you that there are more in the works! Stay tuned for more designs to launch this winter! And if you're not sure if having deadlines or clients' expectations motivates you, try biting off just a little bit more than you can chew and give it a try! You may learn something new about yourself!



What's News?



Artistbeat Fotografie
Worm, Bochum



Jamvention 2018

I had an awesome time teaching at the Jamvention last month! Stay tuned for a recap on the blog soon!



NEW in the Shop

Check out our brand new line of Step-it-Up Stencils, available exclusively at Paintertainment!



Wet Paint Magazine

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