



Produce your own artistic masterpieces with a little help from Walter Briggs

When ArtWorks was released, it was acclaimed as one of the most powerful drawing packages available on any platform. But there is still a feeling among many users that you need to be an accomplished artist to realise its potential. Not so! This article will show you how to create a real picture, and at the same time will give you an insight into the techniques of using this amazing piece of software. In the course of this article I will assume you are familiar with the basic functions of ArtWorks, in particular fills and blends.



The tiger shown here may seem a little daunting, but I think realistically most people could produce an acceptable image following the basic steps I've outlined! The image of the tiger seems rather complex but I hope you will soon see that appearances can be deceptive. In reality, the whole is more complex than the sum of its parts. In fact, you can learn a lot about the way any picture is created by dismembering it and examining the pieces.

The easiest way to start is to find a picture that you can work from, and somehow get it into your computer (you may want to try the tiger - feel free!). One way is to trace an image and stick it onto your monitor; don't worry about the size. You can then trace around it using ArtWorks. The other, probably easier, option is to scan your picture, and drop it onto the

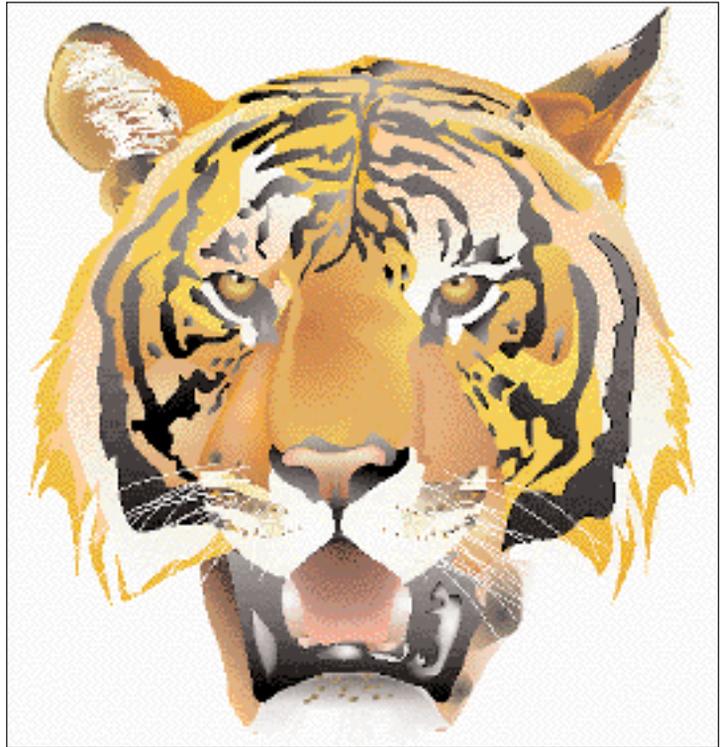


Figure 1. Tiger, by Walter Briggs

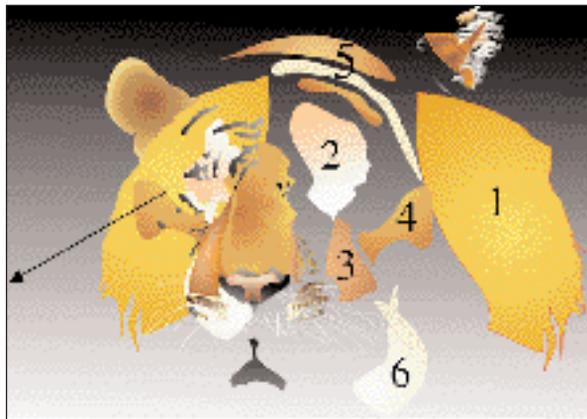


Figure 2. Exploded view of the main

Background layer in ArtWorks.

Layers are a wonderful concept. They allow parts of your creation to be switched on or off at any stage so you

can see how your masterpiece is developing. I normally work on a particular part of an image until it's completed, before moving on to the next

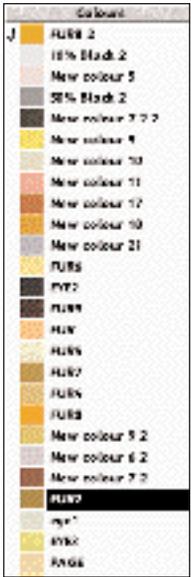


Figure 3. Artworks colour menu, showing some of the new colours created.

area, but this is only my own preference, and not necessarily the best way!

Another wonderful feature of ArtWorks is its amazingly powerful Undo. In theory you can undo any sequence of operations right back to the start provided you have enough memory for a large undo buffer. The undo facility allows you to try out any

operation and see its effect before deciding whether it is what you want. It is particularly useful when blending, as you can undo the blend, shift the position of one of the shapes, and re-blend until you get it just right. The tiger uses a number of blends.

First steps



The fundamental steps in creating a picture such as this are to decide what shapes will make up the image, and what colours to use. Figure 2

shows part of the tiger with the right side exploded. From this you can see that each side of the face is made up from six basic shapes. These can be drawn freehand at first, and then pulled into shape by using the Select tool on the points at a reasonably high magnification. Once you have created the shapes for one side, they can be duplicated and flipped over to form the other side (and modified if not exactly symmetrical, as here). This is a



simple procedure which can be performed by selecting the Scale tool and just clicking on the X icon on the info bar to flip on the horizontal plane, or Y for the vertical plane.

When choosing colours, I refer to the colour guide supplied with ArtWorks, something I recommend since the colours on your screen are deceptively bright (I am assuming that the final destination for your masterpiece will be a printed copy). I use the Hue Saturation and Value (HSV) colour model as this is the most intuitive method. The colour menu in figure 3 shows the new colours I created for the tiger. The basic head shape (shape 1 in figure 2) uses two colours; for the yellow-orange lighter colour I chose:

H - 56%; S - 67%; V - 100% and for the darker colour, which is more on the orange side:

H - 43%; S - 97%; V - 88% This may appear very bright, but trust the colour chart, and choose your



Figure 4.

remaining colours accordingly, using your original preferences as a guide.

I have used radial fills on many of the shapes that make up the tiger; in shape 1, for example, I started in the centre of the head section, pulling the line out until I found the gradual colour tone that I wanted (see the arrow in figure 2). Note that the gradation of colour goes from the left-hand colour on the tool bar to the right-hand one following the direction in which you drag the pointer. At times you will want to fill an area that is low shaped, as with the top of the head. It is difficult to get a curved merge of colours with either radial or linear fills. What you

can do, as I did here, is select the shape you want, then select radial fill and begin to pull the arrow from outside the shape. This time I wanted the colour to graduate

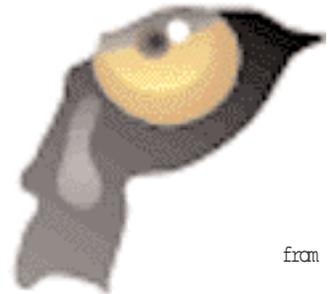


Figure 5. The eye in close-up

dark to light, so I chose the left-hand colour to be the darker of the two.

To get the white fur surrounding the face, I duplicated half the face, moved it so that it overlapped and partly covered the original, then filled it with a radial fill, using mainly white this time.

At this stage I was primarily concerned with selecting forms that would constitute the various shades and shadows of the face, not being too concerned that they appeared a little incongruous, even the areas of white above the eyes. The white brows were shaded just as I wanted, that is appearing to curve up and over the brows. What I was primarily concerned with at this point was trying to give the impression of depth, i.e. a 3D effect.

Putting Your Head Into The Blender

As I said earlier, the tiger's head makes good use of the blend facility, one of ArtWork's most powerful features. This fills in a specified number of steps between one shape and another, using the control points as a guide - a bit like morphing except that all the intermediate steps are added together to produce a graduated blend. A blend can give you much more complex shading than using a fill. I have used blends for many of the tiger's features, specifying 15 steps in each case. It's actually quite difficult to control

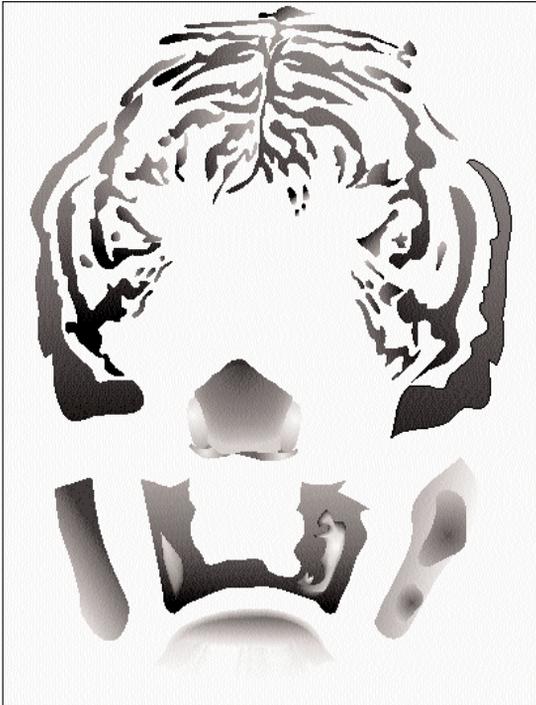


Figure 6.  
The stripes and the main elements of the

blends, as both the shape and colours amalgamate together. You will find it is necessary to experiment a bit, even when the shapes have the same number of points and a similar contour. This is where the undo feature comes into its own, as you can experiment to your heart's content and just undo anything you don't like.

Figure 4 shows the process I followed to create the nose. Looking at the bridge of the nose, first I chose the basic shape (remember the blend can be manipulated later), then filled it and removed any outlines. Next I duplicated it, and altered the shape of the duplicate so that it formed a second, smaller shape inside the first. If you follow this guide, you will be sure you have the same number of points in each shape, which is an important consideration since it means the blend will be much smoother. It is also best to use the same kind of fill for both shapes, i.e. either both radial or both linear, as a mixture won't produce a very good merge of colours.

Since I wanted a shaded nose which was darker on the left, I altered the smaller shape, darkened it and moved it to the left side of the nose before I began the blend. The lighter segment, the larger of the two, has the highlight in the middle; this means that the colours chosen for your fill from the tool bar will start with the lightest colour on the left. The smaller section has to start with the darkest colour on the left, which means the deeper colour becomes the centre, radiating out to the lighter hue.

The ears and nostrils are also blends, created in the same way (the nostrils are also shown in figure 4). There is a slight difference in the approach to the blend of the nostrils: they were selected and duplicated in the same way, but the fills were linear. This allowed more control over the graduation of colour from light to dark, and from the pink to a pale ivory colour, both shades having the darkest tone at the bottom.

The eyes in the finished picture may appear very elaborate, but as

figure 5 shows, they are essentially just four circles, and two of them are solid pigment: the pupil and highlight. The coloured iris is fairly simple; the outer part is a pure circle filled intrinsically with a radial fill, light to dark. The inner circle is graduated from light to dark as a linear fill, with the lightest hue at the bottom; this is because the eyebrows cast a shadow over the eyes, and so they need to appear darker at the top. The tint chosen, a yellowish green, gives a luminosity to the big cat's stare. The eyes are set in a socket that is an uncomplicated linear progression from grey to black. Because the eyes are so dramatic they appear to be half circles, though about three quarters of the eyeball actually shows.

At first it might appear that the polygons of gradual tints that make up the head do not seem to coalesce, but once the stripes are added, the tones will harmonise and appear to merge into a composite form that gives the desired effect! The stripes are just a collection of shapes graduated from grey to black (figure 6) - don't be tempted just to fill them solid black! The stripes are lighter on the top of the head.

The mouth once again is an elementary linear fill from grey to black, as is the shading in the chin (figure 6). The tongue is a blend in the same fashion as the nose and nostrils, joining two shapes of a similar configuration.

Once these sections are added the cat comes to life! Also, the areas of dark colour under the eyes give the impression of the face being depressed, as if under a cheek bone. The finishing touches include the whiskers - simply single curved white lines, some of which need to have their width increased to give the feeling of depth, and density. There are also a few additional elements added in various places, for example around the mouth, and a few white lines and cream shapes in the ear to give the impression of tufted fur.



## REVIEW

---

And that's it! You may need to experiment a lot more with ArtWorks before you create your masterpiece, but you should now have a better idea of some of the techniques involved.