

VIKTORIA MALIAR

OIL PASTEL ART

About This Ebook

This ebook is a collection of insights, methods, and lessons gathered directly from my own artistic practice. Everything here comes from years of exploring oil pastels, studying art, experimenting on my own terms, and learning from both failures and breakthroughs. The information is entirely original and deeply personal — shaped by real experience, not by theory alone.

The design and layout were created in Canva and Adobe Acrobat Pro. To refine the language and ensure a smooth reading flow, I used ChatGPT as an editing tool, but every idea, explanation, and piece of guidance in these pages comes from me. All brands mentioned throughout the book are included simply because I use and trust them — none of the recommendations are sponsored in any way.

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Foreword

(Or, How I Accidentally Fell in Love with Oil Pastels)

Hello everyone — I'm Viktoria, your guide into the world of oil pastels.

I'm a professional painter, a graduate of the Art Academy in Berlin, and since 2019, a full-time freelance artist. My work has taken me from solo exhibitions to group shows, from intimate workshops to international collectors' homes.

These days — winter 2025 — more than 300,000 people follow my art journey on Instagram and other platforms. It's a joy, a responsibility, and a constant reminder that I have an incredible community walking alongside me.

I like to think I'm one of those artists who's helped bring oil pastels out of the shadows. Not too long ago, they were an underrated, almost forgotten medium. Now they're finally stepping into the spotlight — and I'm proud to have played my small part in their renaissance.

But here's the thing: my story with oil pastels wasn't love at first sight. In fact, *I discovered them completely by accident.*

The Break-Up (and Make-Up)

Some of you may know that I used to be a deeply devoted oil painter. I adored the richness, the depth, the sheer juiciness of oil paint. No other medium could match it — or so I thought.

After I first tried oils, nothing else felt quite the same. I already had a few boxes of oil pastels in my Berlin studio, along with all the other mediums I'd tried, but my hands kept reaching for the tubes, the brushes, the palette knives.



Photo by Tom Borchwardt

And then I got pregnant.

Now, as much as I love oil paint, it does have its drawbacks — namely, the toxic solvents, mediums, and varnishes that come with it. I realized this was going to be a break from oils. But I couldn't take a break from making art. That was non-negotiable.

So I started researching: What medium could give me the same richness, the same color intensity as oils... without the fumes?

Some of you might immediately think acrylics.

I say: *absolutely not*.

The Plot Twist

Only oil pastels have the same unapologetic, straight-out-of-the-tube color power as oil paint. Their formula is deceptively simple: mostly pure pigment, with wax and non-drying oil to hold it together. That's it.

Of course, this is where things get confusing — there are pigment sticks, oil sticks, soft pastels, wax pastels... all cousins, but none quite the same. We'll sort through all those differences later in the book.

For now, just remember this: in their look and feel, oil pastels are the closest you can get to oil paint without actually opening a paint tube. If they had existed 150 years ago, I'm convinced the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists would have gone wild for them.

That's how my "temporary" switch became a complete artistic transformation. Oil pastels didn't just fill the gap left by oils — they opened up a whole new world of texture, color, and expression for me. And now, I can't imagine my art practice without them.

And that brings me to something important. In this ebook, I didn't want to simply hand you technical information and neat, polished tips — though you'll absolutely get those. I also wanted to bring you into the studio with me, into the real process, the surprises, the experiments, the doubts, the wins.

This year I taught several in-person workshops and retreats, and I noticed something again and again: people are endlessly fascinated by the behind-the-scenes reality. The things we artists take for granted — the peculiar habits, the strange discoveries, the unexpected failures — often surprise, inspire, or completely defy people's expectations.

No profession carries as many myths as the artistic one.

The artist's path is beautifully unordinary.



Every artist has their own story, and part of my joy is sharing a piece of mine with you.

What I've observed — both in my own journey and in those I teach — is that making art isn't just about mastering the medium. It's intertwined with personal growth. Sometimes your art deepens not because your technique improves (though that's wonderful too), but because life shapes you, and your work follows. It becomes more honest, more grounded, more you.

Along with sharing my love for oil pastels, I want to share a few behind-the-scenes moments from the artistic process — the kind that make the medium come alive in a whole new way.

So, if you're ready, let's start by answering the big question...

Why are oil pastels so special?

(Flip the page — I'll tell you everything.)



Why oil pastels are so special

Let's be honest: if oil pastels were people, they'd be the misfits at the party.

Not quite a crayon.

Not really a paint.

Too soft to be a pencil. Too stubborn to be erased.

And yet — utterly irresistible once you get to know them.

You might've met them once in school. They probably crumbled, smeared, and snuck under your fingernails. You wrote them off. Maybe you thought they were “kid stuff.”

If so, I'm here to lovingly say: *you were wrong.*

Oil pastels are one of the most overlooked mediums in the entire art world. Small sticks of controlled chaos — bold, untamed, and capable of a depth that catches you off guard. They hold the richness of oils, yet they demand no brushes, no water, no solvents. They stick to paper, wood, canvas — almost anything you throw at them. And their texture? It won't let you be indifferent.

Freedom in Simplicity



For me, their biggest gift is simplicity.

After years of working with oil paints — mixing palettes, cleaning brushes, setting up and tearing down — a part of me longed for freedom. Oil pastels gave me exactly that.

They were a fresh breeze: no studio, no fuss, no endless cleanup. Just pure color, right there in your hand.

They meet you exactly where you are — whether you have five minutes or five hours. They don't demand preparation or perfection.

Oil pastels invite play, and in that play you rediscover something essential: the joy of making marks just because it feels good. They remind you that art doesn't need to be complicated to be meaningful — sometimes the simplest tools unlock the deepest expression.

Why Artists Love Them, Once They Know How to Use Them

Here's the kicker: most artists don't fall in love with oil pastels instantly. They're not "easy" in the way watercolor invites you in with gentle washes. They're... tactile. Intense. Demanding. But once you learn to follow the direction the pastel naturally wants to move, something clicks. It's not about control — it's about cooperation.

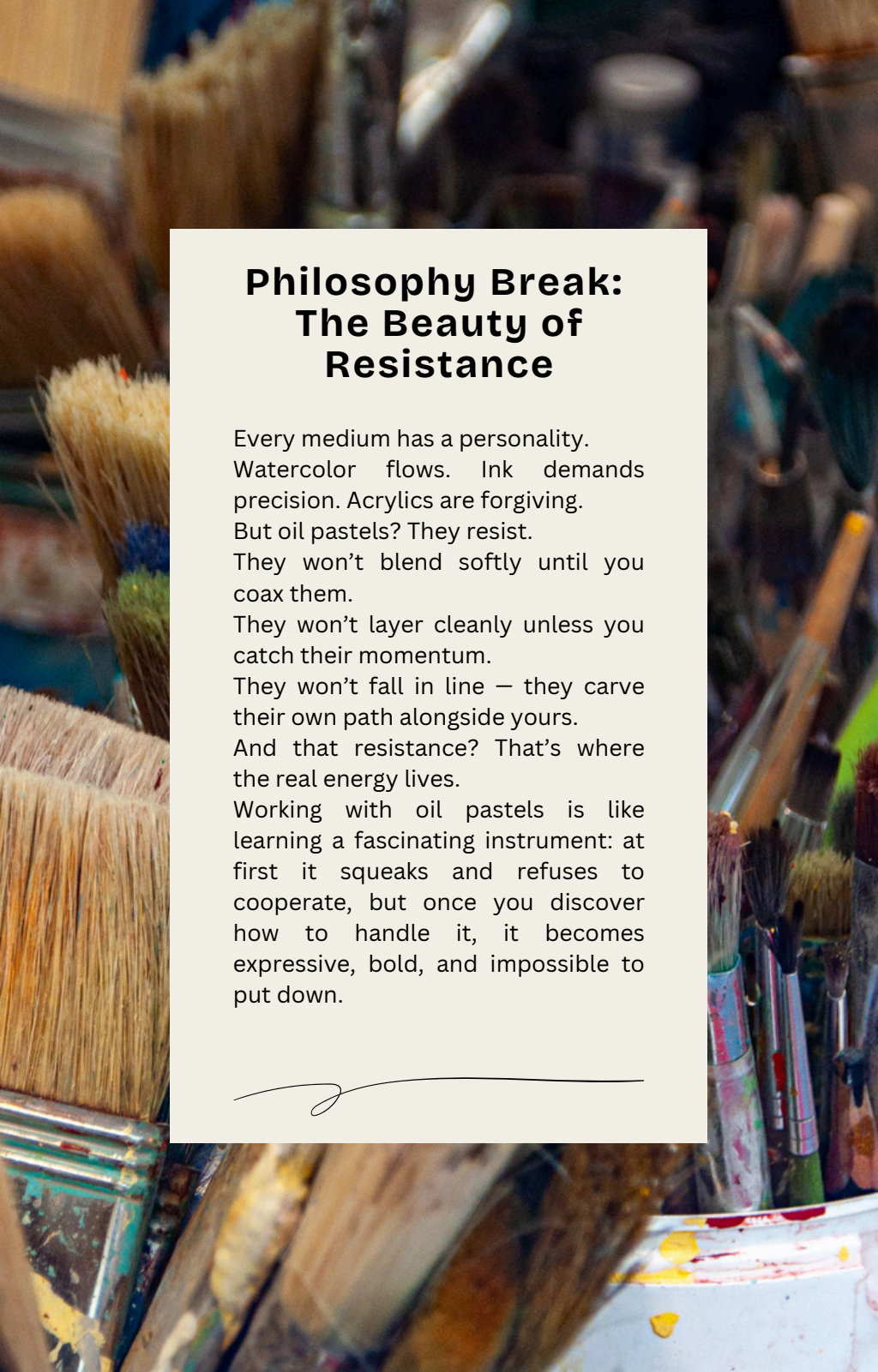
They'll teach you to:

- Layer boldly
- Embrace imperfection
- Make peace with smudges and happy accidents

In a world full of polished perfection, oil pastels are a joyful mess. They remind us to make art with our hands, to get dirty, to feel something.



A study after Jeffrey T. Larson



Philosophy Break: The Beauty of Resistance

Every medium has a personality.
Watercolor flows. Ink demands
precision. Acrylics are forgiving.
But oil pastels? They resist.
They won't blend softly until you
coax them.

They won't layer cleanly unless you
catch their momentum.

They won't fall in line — they carve
their own path alongside yours.

And that resistance? That's where
the real energy lives.

Working with oil pastels is like
learning a fascinating instrument: at
first it squeaks and refuses to
cooperate, but once you discover
how to handle it, it becomes
expressive, bold, and impossible to
put down.



So... Why Did I Decide To Write An Ebook About Oil Pastels?

Honestly? Because they deserve more love. Most people meet them once, get frustrated when they crumble or smear, and then write them off forever. I couldn't let that happen — especially now, after seeing the kind of work they can create and knowing how to guide others to do the same.

Oil pastels are paradoxical in the best way: strong and bold, yet soft and tender. A little stubborn, a little rebellious, but endlessly rewarding if you let them lead the way. And let's not forget the practical perks: they travel beautifully, they're affordable, and they make your art look confident and convincing — even if you're just starting out.

I know how frustrating art can feel when you're learning tricky mediums like oils, watercolors, or acrylics. Oil pastels give you amazing results faster, without all the extra fuss. Of course, they have their quirks — like the fact that they never really “dry” — but that's exactly where this ebook comes in. I'll guide you through all the technical details so you can stop worrying and start creating.

Once you understand how the medium behaves, you're free to experiment, explore, and discover your own voice through oil pastels.

My philosophy? *Our world needs more artists.*

This ebook is my small contribution to helping you become more confident, more productive, and ultimately happier with the work you make.

So... let's get started.





A Short (But Colorful) History of Oil Pastels

This is where the free preview ends. If the journey so far resonates with you, you can continue reading — and explore the full ebook — by purchasing it here:

[GET THE FULL EBOOK](#)