CorelDRAW Studio Techniques...

Variations on some Projects

A Mea Culpa

David Huss and Gary Priester are both talented designers. They also happen to know how to use Draw and Photo-Paint very well. In the last ***mini***-newsletter (hint, hint) I praised their collaboration, *CorelDRAW Studio Techniques.* I made one significant error, however. I said it was *not* for intermediate and advanced users, when I meant to say it was geared more towards intermediate and advanced users.

It is not that beginners can't learn something from the book, but both authors make the assumption that the user is somewhat familiar with Draw and Photo-Paint, and don't need remedial instructions on basic things like drawing a circle or duplicating objects.

A Focus on Design

Why this book is useful to all levels, is its emphasis on the concept behind the artwork and delineating the elements needed for a good rendering. The authors are actually teaching you a little art and visualization as they explain the steps they used to achieve the effect.

Wayne's Way

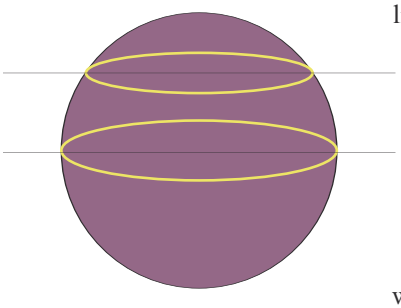
For me, a non-artist / good technician, this book is particularly useful. I am able to borrow their artistic insight, then decide whether I want to follow their techniques or do some exploring and find my own methods. Let's take a look at parts of a couple projects in the book.

The Wine Glass

In this one, I followed much of Gary Priester's methodology, then decided to explore ways I might produce the same result more efficiently and maybe even more effectively. I quickly found myself looking for alternatives and even went back and redid some elements in a more logical way

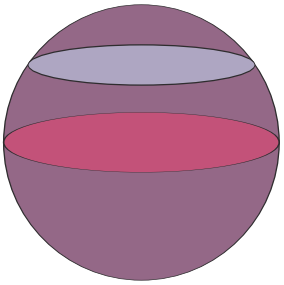
The Basic Shapes

We are only going to look at the bowl portion today. We'll tackle the stem another day. To create the bowl, Gary started with 5 basic elements: A large circle, two smaller ellipses and two lines, as shown. here. I went back, and tried this again, and found I didn't need to use the lines at all to get the shapes we needed.

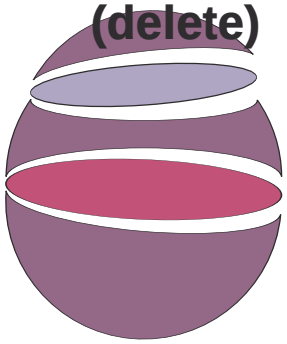


I used the trim and weld tools, as did Gary, but found I could use fewer steps to create the same required shapes. My steps were as follows:

1. Draw a circle (ellipse while holding the Ctrl key)
2. Duplicate and Squish the circle, by dragging the top center handle downward, while holding the Shift key, and tapping the big + key to leave the original.
3. I dragged and "duped" to create the top ellipse, by dragging the ellipse created in step 2 while holding the Ctrl key, to keep it moving just vertically; and again tapping the + key to leave behind the original.
4. By holding the Shift key down, and dragging the left center handle towards the center, I sized it as shown.
5. The next step would have been to select the two ellipses and use them to trim the circle, but I found a little bug, and had to enlarge the lower ellipse slightly, first.



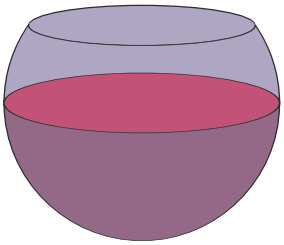
6. After trimming, I broke apart (Ctrl+K) the resulting curve, leaving three shapes, and the two ellipses. The topmost curve can be deleted.



For Gary's approach, we would now have almost all the pieces needed to complete the bowl. (He later creates a rim to the bowl and some other shapes that enhance the realism of the bowl, but you can see that we have the basic shape completed.

Gary and I diverge...

Gary's approach at this point is to use a lot of custom fountain fills to simulate the translucency of the wine and the transparency of the glass. This is fine, if the glass is not ever going to be placed on top of anything.



I also used custom fountain fills (though again somewhat different from Gary's), but also decided to make use of object transparency, so that I could place my wineglass on top of a background and it would still look realistic.

To do this required only a few more steps. All I had to do,

was make a duplicate of the ellipse representing the wine surface, and weld it to the shape representing the unfilled portion of the glass. I gave this a similar fountain fill as Gary did, but with a transparancy applied. Below you can compare the final results. We will explore together how to make use of the interactive fill tool to easily create the various custom fountain fills used in this piece, as well as how to create the rim and other embellishments shown.

An easier way to make Leaded Glass...

Yikes!

I took one look at Gary Priester's chapter on creating Stained Glass in Draw, and decided this would be way too much work for a lazy guy like me. So, I set about finding an easier and more flexible way—and I think I found it.

If I draw an open curve, and give it a white fill and no outline—yes, I know that sounds nuts—I can apply a 9 or 10 step contour to it, and create strip of "lead."

I can easily duplicate and reshape my generic strip to create an entire frame. Similarly, I can create a small closed "blob" and contour it to make a solder joint. This to can easily be duplicated and resized and shaped as needed.

At right is a partially completed example, created using this technique. Once completed, it would be fairly easy to lay in some stained glass pieces behind it.