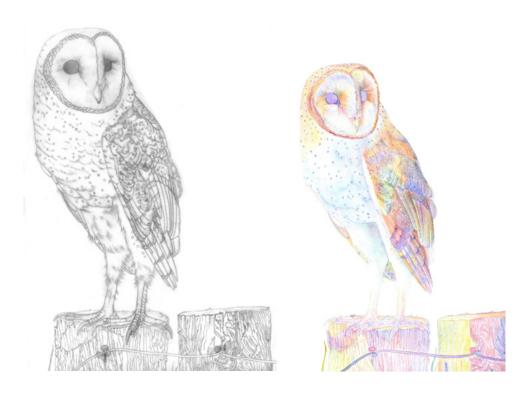Today the sun is shinning and the sky is the most brilliant blue the sunlight reflecting off the snow. But yesterday, well then it was snowing and snowing. We are now buried in 18 new inches of snow, this on top of 12 or more inches from previous snows. When we were out walking – or more accurately trying to walk, even snow shoes did not help that much in the deep snow, I could not help but be fascinated, absorbing the colors, Even white snow is not white at all. The shadows reflected the color of the sky which by then had just the slightest hit of the setting sun, and the color of the snow in the deep foot prints which was a beautiful green blue. Of course the mind was not concentrating on walking but was recording the colors for future paintings, which meant I fell a lot. How about that as an excuse for not staying on my feet?   I am quite happily in the studio working. It is the first time in a few years I have had an extended time for my own work and it feels wonderful. I am working only in graphite, on fully toned backgrounds erasing back the lights and adding the darker tones with pencil. I am not quite ready to upload the images here yet, but will shortly after I have clarified my explanation of the process and had them photographed.   In the meantime here is a series of images showing the progression of a painting I did of a Barn Owl. It was done on 300lb HP Fabriano Artistico Bright White, I used the smooth side.

#1. Detailed graphite drawing Initially on tracing paper, then transferred to paper.

#2. First glaze of primary colors. The palette I chose: VR (Violet Red), VB (Violet Blue), OR (Orange Yellow).

#3. Second glaze of single primary colors creating secondaries.

#4. Third glaze of single primaries creating tertiaries.

#5. Using mixed primaries now bringing the colors up to full value.
To create volume I use VERY thin glazes of complimentary colors, using the three primaries I did not use for the local color, in this case GY (Green Yellow), GB (Green Blue) and OR (Orange Red).

#6. Before putting my signature on any painting I scan the image and in Adobe Photoshop I check the image in gray scale. This helps me see volume, contrast, and texture more clearly.