

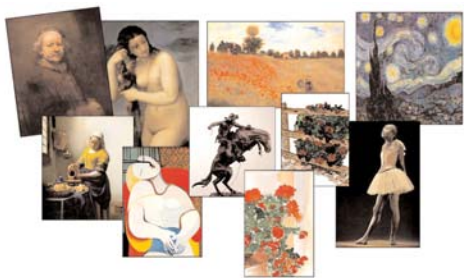
A DAY IN THE ARTS

Making art accessible to all

March 20, 2009

ADA0030

www adayinthearts.com



WATERCOLOUR MEDIUMS WHAT THEY DO AND HOW TO USE THEM

By Greg A Howard

I have written this article particularly to help newer watercolour artists that may be starting out or indeed for artists that have been painting a while and are unsure about the proper use and application of the various watercolour mediums available.

The world of watercolour mediums can be confusing and it might seem like sacrilege to talk about mixing watercolour mediums and additives with watercolour paints. It is, after all the purest of paint types, relying on its translucency to allow the whiteness of the watercolour paper to glow through. However, there are several traditional mediums and additives which can make life easier for the watercolour artist and add new dimensions to their paintings.

Please remember as with a great many things in life - less is more! These products can greatly enhance your paintings when used correctly and sparingly but they can also ruin a painting when overused. It is important to remember at all times that these products are meant to compliment existing techniques and not act as a substitute for them.

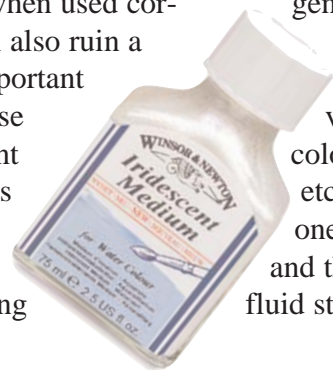
There will be purists out there that will object loudly saying

that if you can't produce all the effects you need with paint alone you shouldn't be painting anyway. To them I say - Rubbish. Watercolour mediums were made for one reason and that is to compliment artists existing skills they do not and will not in any way replace good painting practice. So if you are looking to watercolour mediums to help you achieve miracles you will be sadly disappointed. With that in mind let us continue.

Masking Fluid

Masking fluid is a latex rubber solution for brushing or drawing onto your paper that dries yellow so that you can see where it has been applied. Once dry you can paint over the masked area, which then resists the paint. After the paint has dried, remove the masking fluid gently with a clean finger or a putty eraser.

The white area revealed can be left as a highlight or tinted as desired. There are various ways to apply the fluid e.g.; brush, colour-shaper, pen, credit card, cotton bud, etc. Please remember if you intend on using one of your brushes make sure it's an old one and that you wash it out immediately. Masking fluid starts drying very quickly and can ruin



brushes. A good tip here is to apply some washing up liquid to the bristles before you start then wash it out immediately after. This puts a protective coating on your brush that goes some way to protecting the bristles. Masking fluid is ideal for reserving highlights and intricate shapes (window and door frames, tree trunks, thin grasses, etc.) However, use it with discretion!

Masking fluid is available in a number of forms. There is general purpose Art masking fluid. Permanent masking fluid is well, permanent and cannot be removed once applied and colourless fluid is exactly the same as general purpose art masking fluid except it is specially designed for soft-sized papers where there is a higher risk of staining occurring.

Iridescent Medium

Add to transparent colours to give a pearlescent (*) or glitter like effect. It can be mixed with the colour or applied over a dry wash and is most effective with translucent colours and over dark backgrounds.

Texture medium

Texture medium is used to produce a textured finish for watercolours, this medium can be

(*)-pearlescent - having a play of lustrous rainbow colours; "an iridescent oil slick"; "nacreous (or pearlescent) clouds looking like mother-of-pearl"; "a milky opalescent (or opaline) lustre"

applied directly onto the paper, or mixed with watercolours first. The solution contains fine particles that help give the impression of depth and more structure to watercolour paintings and to emphasize areas of naturally occurring texture such as sandy beaches, bark and other such naturally occurring textures. It can be used with multiple washes and can be mixed with colours or applied directly to paper.

Gum Arabic

Most watercolour paints contain a proportion of gum Arabic. It is a soluble gum (remember the old bottles of light brown office gum?) which when used on its own increases the gloss and transparency of a watercolour. Gum Arabic slows down the drying time of paint which can be very useful if you are painting plein-air during the summer months. You add the medium to watercolour in small amounts until the desired level of transparency is achieved. It may be thinned with water. Gum Arabic should not be used straight from the bottle as thick films can be brittle so remember to always thin with water. The medium can also be added to your jar of dipping water.

Blending Medium

Blending medium when mixed with watercolour slows the drying time of colours allowing more time for blending. It is also ideal in very warm climates or the studio when you have the central heating on and can be used undiluted with watercolours to maximize your drying time. You can actually get the same effect by adding a little alcohol to your water. This also works in very cold outdoor sit-

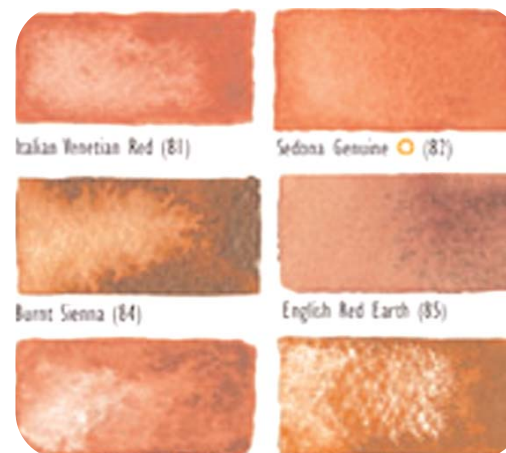
uations, where mixing plain water with watercolour paint can actually freeze it on the paper. When dry further washes can also be applied.

Granulation Paint Medium

Watercolour artists have always recognized that the use of certain colours such as viridian or French ultramarine can produce a wonderful granulating effect as the colour settles and dries on the paper especially when using a rough surfaced paper (this can be quite disconcerting for newer artists that don't understand the properties of various pigments). This effect can when used properly help produce wonderful textures and depth in a painting. Granulation medium encourages all watercolour pigments to granulate producing this mottled or granular appearance with colours which usually give a smooth wash. For maximum effect, dilute colours with medium alone, it is resoluble simply by rewetting.

Lifting Paint Medium

Lifting preparation medium is applied to the paper and allowed to dry before applying paint, this enables you to lift off colours for highlights etc. more easily. This makes it ideal for beginners to more easily correct mistakes which may help them paint with a little more confidence. It allows dry washes, including staining colours, to be lifted from paper more



The chart above, from Daniel Smith, shows how granulation medium may affect the paint.

easily, using a wet brush or sponge. Please remember that this medium must be applied to the paper and allowed to dry before applying paint.

Ox Gall Liquid

Ox gall (clarified) is a pale colourless liquid that increases the wetting properties and flow of watercolours on the paper with a few drops added to your

water pot. This is very useful for 'marbling' techniques on hot pressed paper. It can also be used on hard sized papers to reduce surface tension. If a paper is resisting taking a wash leave it to dry then cover with diluted Ox Gall, when the solution is dry you can then paint as normal.

I hope that this has cleared up any confusion and that you have all found this article helpful and informative you can purchase all these mediums from <http://www.thewatercolourartist.com> and from other retailers. 🐘

Greg Howard is a professional watercolour landscape artist based in Derbyshire, England. You can view some of his work online at www.derbyshirewatercolour.com He also runs a website for watercolour artists thewatercolourartist.com where watercolour artists can buy watercolour supplies, view 100's of free tutorials and access expert advice and resources

Article Source:

http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Greg_A_Howard



ART NEWS

MORE PRICE INCREASES

The **Brooklyn Museum** announced today that it will increase its suggested admission fee to \$10 for adults and to \$6 for older adults and students with valid identification, effective Saturday, March 21, 2009.

WATERCOLORS BY ARTIST PATRICIA CRONIN AT THE BROOKLYN

A group of twenty-eight watercolors by Brooklyn-based conceptual artist Patricia Cronin, inspired by the work of nineteenth-century sculptor Harriet Hosmer (1830-1908), will be on view in the Herstory Gallery and Forum of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, June 5, 2009 through January 24, 2010. The Herstory Gallery is dedicated to exhibitions that elaborate on the 1,038 women who are named in Judy Chicago's iconic feminist artwork *The Dinner Party*, installed in the adjacent space. Harriet Hosmer's name appears on the Heritage Floor, near the place setting for Georgia O'Keeffe.

AVIATION ART COMPETITION

The **American Society of Aviation Artists** announces a call to artists for the ASAA International Aerospace Art Exhibition, June 21, 2009 - January 3, 2010 at The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah,

Georgia. \$10 per entry for ASAA members; \$35 per entry for non-members. See the Call for Entries announcement for eligibility requirements: <http://www.asaa-avart.org>. Deadline: April 15, 2009.

17TH ANNUAL JURIED INTERNATIONAL MINIATURE SHOW

Parklane Gallery in Kirkland, Washington announces a call to artists for the "17th Annual Juried International Miniature Show", held May 5, 2009 thru May 31, 2009. Over \$1000 in awards. Juror: Elizabeth Kincaid. <http://parklanegallery.com/> Deadline: April 28, 2009.

LACMA EXHIBIT

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) presents the west coast pre-

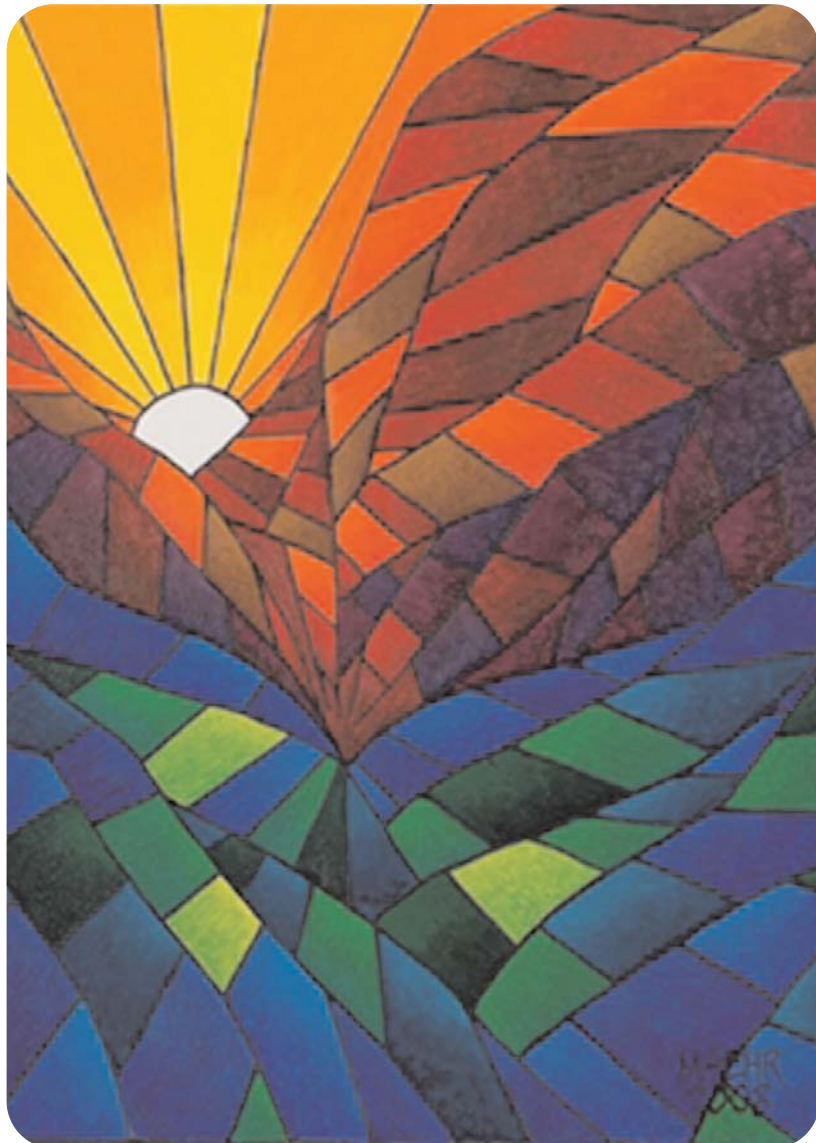
miere of "Franz West, To Build a House You Start with the Roof: Work, 1972-2008". The exhibition is the first comprehensive survey in the United States of the internationally acclaimed Austrian artist Franz West and includes more than a hundred objects that reflect the artist's extraordinary innovations in sculpture, design, and paper. Franz West, *To Build a House You Start with the Roof: Work, 1972-2008* will be on view at LACMA from March 12 through June 7, 2009.

JEFF KOONS' TRAIN

Jeff Koons is working on the largest and project of his career: a towering sculpture consisting of a life-size motorized replica of a locomotive dangling from a crane for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. <http://tinyurl.com/bpw2cg>



"Mission from Debden" by Wade Meyers, 2008 Boeing Spirit of Flight Award, American Society of Aviation Artists



MARTY MAEHR PAINTINGS

The **Agora Gallery** (New York, NY) is presenting Marty Maehr in their upcoming exhibition “In Reverie of Form”. Scheduled to run from March 21st through April 10th, the collection will feature a captivating selection of Marty Maehr's luminous oil paintings.

Like hypnotic stained glass windows, Marty Maehr's beautiful abstract paintings seem etched with light and energy. Configurations of colorful shapes usually outlined in black, are puzzled together to form sprawling landscapes including plants, animals, and architecture. With a keen sense for composition, Maehr's creative process produces a wonderful feeling of movement as the line work flows together and shimmering, multicolored shapes converge in an orchestra of brilliant hues. In both content and style, Maehr's art is instantly accessible to people from all walks of life. <http://tinyurl.com/cu97gs>

(Left: “Valley Vortex” by Marty Maehr, Oil on Canvas, 32" x 24", 2008)

REMBRANDT'S "NIGHT WATCH"

More than 365 years since the Night Watch was completed, the identity of

the men portrayed in the portrait has at last been revealed. Dutch historian Bas Dudok van Heel has unravelled the mystery after years of research in archives and inventories of estates. A precise description can now also be made of the great hall of the civic guard building known as Kloveniersdoelen (today's Doelen Hotel in Amsterdam), the room for which Rembrandt originally painted the Night Watch. These astonishing findings are premiered in the English edition of The Rijksmuseum Bulletin which is presented today at Tefaf in Maastricht.

Around 1715, a shield was painted onto the Night Watch containing eighteen names. Only a few of the names were known to belong to particular figures in the portrait. Dudok van Heel set out in pursuit of the men behind the remaining names. He researched their families, their financial position and their business contacts. He even found items of clothing and accessories depicted in the Night Watch mentioned in inventories of estates. He collated this information with the age of the various militiamen in 1642, the year the painting was completed. This enabled him for the first time to link each name to a figure in the painting. <http://tinyurl.com/b2bott> ➤

WORD OF THE DAY MING

A dynasty in China, 1368–1644, marked by the restoration of traditional institutions and the development of the arts, esp. in porcelain, textiles, and painting.



“Without atmosphere a painting is nothing.”

Rembrandt

ART AEROBICS

Practice your drawing skills

Use clay or Play-Doh to make a model of Gummy. Five minutes. ➤