

Mixed Media Painting Workshop

PDF Companion
Bonus Demonstrations and Contributor Gallery

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Leafing on Textured Paper

What You'll Need:

- Textured paper
- Assorted brushes
- Glue
- Leafing



1 Begin with the textured paper as your support. Brush glue on the paper using a wide, rough brush stroke. Next use a smaller brush to write some script with the glue. Write with brush.



2 Wait a few minutes for the glue to get tacky. Then, place the leafing face down on the glue.



3 Carefully lift away the paper.



4 Continue placing leafing over all tacky glue.



5 Use a soft brush to brush away the residual leafing.



6 Final result on textured paper.



Gallery: Harlequin

16" x 20", mixed media on Arches 140 lb. paper

After painting the image with watercolor, gouache, gesso and acrylic, I measured and gridded diamonds. Every other diamond was filled with glue and leaf was applied to create this pattern behind the model.



Gallery: Land Lines

30" x 30", acrylic on canvas, from the Farm Fragment series, collection of the artist

This piece incorporates a build up of gels and mediums to create surface texture for the brush to catch. It offers an opportunity for a variety of edges. Splatters and drips on damp paint were wiped back, leaving shapes. Pencil marks and scrapes from credit cards offer additional textural interest.

Demonstration: Mylar Collage

What You'll Need:

- Canvas, board or paper (I used canvas)
- Assorted fluid acrylics
- Self-Leveling Gel
- Matte Medium
- Soft Gel
- Black pencil crayon
- Collage paper
- 3 or 4 Mylar sheets photocopied with some of your favorite snapshots

Prepare a ground by throwing paint and mediums on a surface as demonstrated in Chapter 4. Let ground dry. Choose a photograph that you like and photocopy it onto 3 or 4 Mylar sheets; the transparency of the Mylar allows all of the great colors and textures of your ground to assimilate with the photo.

I took some great photos of a dragonfly and was just waiting for an opportunity to use them!

Cut out a rectangle around your Mylar image and begin moving it around in the composition until you find a placement that feels right.

Use soft gel to glue the pieces to the canvas ground. Be sure you flip your image to apply the gel, and then flip it again to place it on the canvas.

Try obscuring your Mylar image in places with some tinted white gesso.

While the gesso is wet, write into it with a black pencil crayon. I chose to record my thoughts about the day that I came across this lovely and cooperative model.

To add more collage opportunities to the composition, I also placed a strip of painted paper near the edge of the surface.

Next, let's pause and consider. The tinted white gesso helped create value contrast to pop out the poppy pod and the dragonfly, but also results in a stark contrast to the previous surface. To integrate the new layer into the composition, choose one color and repeat it through stamps, drips, splatters and brush marks.

Here, the collage paper and ground already had some turquoise, I took the opportunity to splatter and stamp more turquoise paint over the surface.



1 Prepare your ground and beginning of your collage composition.



2 Do you need to repeat the image somewhere else in the composition? Pull out some more of your Mylar images and move them around the surface to see if it improves your composition.



3 This piece did not improve by placing another dragonfly in the composition, but I felt I could increase the importance of the dragonfly already collaged.



4 Try taking another identical image on Mylar. Cut around the silhouette of one side and collage directly on top of the other image to emphasize some of the value contrasts.

Now, your viewer really knows where to look. The dragonfly is emphasized. The dark area at bottom right was compelling with the dragonfly before, so I strengthened the value contrast and showed a hard edge.



5 To collage the Mylar image, flip it over and apply soft gel medium to its back side. Brush soft gel medium to the back side of your Mylar photocopy. I used a sheet of non-stick palette paper as a surface on which to apply the glue, protecting my work in progress.



6 Turn the Mylar again so that the gel side is down and place the Mylar in the desired position.



7 With a fine brush and tinted white gesso, highlight some of the edges of the Mylar image to make these areas pop more. Use pencil crayon to soften the hard edges a bit. Sketch a few lines loosely around the shape to make a more interesting quality of edge around the hard cut edge of the Mylar





Sections
10" x 10", mixed media on board





Relaxed

12" x 12", mixed media on board

I toned the surface, sketched the figure into simple shapes, and then began painting. Some artists don't draw their subject, but use a brush to paint each shape as they develop the image.

Demonstration: Organic Painting

In this demonstration, you will concentrate on creating organic shapes, and choose a prepared ground, or create one.

Apply several layers of paint and gels to the canvas, and allow yourself permission to play with the materials. Practice balancing colors, shape values, lines and textures. Developing a ground can help warm you up for the painting process, help you know your materials better and develop a beautiful surface that will show through in places providing you with areas that are mature and satisfying.

What You'll Need:

- Prepared ground on canvas
- Fluid acrylics
- Gels, mediums
- Brushes and tools



1 After choosing a subject, sketch your basic shapes. I will attempt to paint a dancer in motion so edges will not be too defined. The soft edges and round shapes all lend themselves to organic painting.

I sketch with my brush using thinned gesso to establish some shapes.



2 Use thinned, dark gesso to block out shaded areas and further develop the image. We have obscured areas of the under-painting by applying a thinned semi-opaque gesso.



3 Continue to add light and dark values to pull out shapes and unify the surface. Your goal is organic: you want mostly soft, fuzzy edges, so keep your values and colors similar to reduce the attention that the strong edges demand.



4 In this painting, we are describing the shapes through values more than through color. Color has been reduced in intensity; it is not taking the main role of describing the subject. I pushed my value scale so that I have greater range of lights and darks.



5 Continue to eliminate more color intensity and strengthen the dark values.
Add more darks to imply figure.
Further reduce intensity of color from the under-painting. The patterns and colors still influence the look of the surface.



6 To give the impression of movement, begin adding subtle repetitive shapes that mirror some initially painted areas. Play with the shapes in the corner and remember that marks imply movement.
Vary the colors, thickness and opacity of line.



7 Brush on some periwinkle blues and light buttery yellows to the light areas of the painting. Try to keep the edges soft.



8 Layering paints and gels create the mood of a figure, a dancer, shifting positions.



Gallery: Shift
36" x 36", mixed media on canvas



Higher Ground

48" x 48", mixed media, canvas, collection of the artist

These flowers were a gift from a friend as I moved into my new studio. As the sun lit them in the windowill, the flowers were calling to be painted.

I painted a small maquette first on a mixed media ground, and then recreated the image on a larger canvas. I played with different mediums, and had fun letting it all drip and mingle. I made marks on the surface with various objects to make a satisfying ground. The final painting shows variations of transparency and opacity where some areas show through to the original ground while other areas are covered by subsequent paints.



Stroke of Green
acrylic on canvas, collection of the artist

Marginalized (Unabridged Demonstration)

What You'll Need:

- Quinacridone Magenta
- Tissue paper
- Matte medium
- Gel medium
- Prepared ground
- Graphite sketch
- Assorted brushes
- Assorted paint
- Pencil



1 I drew a loose graphite sketch of my subject breaking down the model into simple shapes.



2 Prepared ground



3 A ground was prepared and then I sketched my image on top using a brush and paint. Simple shapes were used to block in the composition.



4 To calm the surface, I used opaque paint to define some of the outside negative shapes around the left shoulder. Positive painting was utilized to define the elbow and parts of the dress. I took time to include a line element with a pencil.



5 Detail of hands shows blocking in and defining of hands.



6 Glazing can be a great tool to tie your painting together. By glazing with Quinacridone Magenta, I added unity through color and temperature. Although I am not a fan of pink, I need unity to move forward and know that it is only temporary.



7 So what would happen if I did the opposite and added lime green? I continue to establish a color pattern and start to think of how to integrate collage.

Time was also taken to better define the anatomy of the hands.



8 I wanted to communicate the dominant media trend and public perception for aging and in particular how we devalue women as they age. I can remember my Mom telling me that at a certain point in her life she suddenly felt invisible. At a certain age she found herself asking for help at a store only to be ignored while a younger model was recognized first. I see more of this as my ageing relatives require more help and become dependent on nursing homes.

While this lovely woman is not elderly, she not in her youth. I chose to take tissue paper printed with numbers and add them to the model and to the background, carefully balancing the graphic quality with the organic woman.



9 I used matte medium over the top of the tissue as it would soak through the tissue. The thinner paper can be affixed using medium just on the top. You can place the matte medium on the surface and then lay the thin tissue on top but it is likely to just wrinkle and tear.

By adding the tissue to the subject and the background, the painting is balanced.



10 Tissue is laid out ready for gluing. The matte medium is poured out beside the painted surface.



11 Matte medium is applied on top of the small pieces of tissue paper to adhere them to the surface.



12 I painted the surface and gently placed the tissue on top. The matte medium will soak through the paper and thoroughly glue the collaged piece.



13 Thick pieces of collage require heavy gel medium. I am wiping excess medium from around the edges of the collaged piece.



14 Note the texture of the heavy gel as it retains ridges and puckers while the matte medium slumps.



15 Apply the gel on the back of one of these little chunks.



16 When it comes to something chunky, like these big chunks of acrylic from my palette, use some heavy gel on the back. Smooth around the edges so there are no big globs of medium to dry afterward.



17 For a larger collage piece with heavy gel, place some non-stick paper (like wax paper) over the applied area and use a brayer or a big metal rolling pin to flatten the gel and smooth out the undulations on the surface.



18 Once these were down, I didn't want the mechanical part to take over the focus of the painting so I obscured with transparent paint. The glaze kicked back the value contrast between the black numbers and the skin tone so that it doesn't draw too much attention. You really have to look closely to see the numbers in her chin and another on her shoulder. Repeating that mechanical iconography over and over throughout the painting helps to tell my visual story. The painting should look good from far away and up close you'll see all these little jewels popping out.



19 Look at your work and learn to see balance, unity and comfort. I went back in and plopped in a few little colors here and there to strengthen the image. Even though the model is more important than the numbers, the numbers support the visual imagery.