



Mixed Media Painting

MIXED MEDIA PAINTING, AS THE NAME SUGGESTS USES MANY MATERIALS IN THE CREATION OF A PICTURE IN ORDER TO CREATE INTEREST USING TEXTURE.

We will be making 2 experimental pieces on paper and a final piece (on a support which you may provide, such as hardboard, card, MDF, canvas board, foam board etc. Paper tends to wrinkle a lot during the process)

The theme based on the sea and harbours, is a suggestion to get you going but it could be anything you choose.

During the sessions we will also be developing drawings to help as reference for the final painting.

If you miss a session then this is a really good video on how to develop small drawings for painting. Its for a traditional oil landscape but the same principles apply view from 7min 24 secs

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1mhrO_fkA4



Paintings by Mike Bernard
http://www.mikebernardri.com/gallery/gallery_of_works/index.htm

Step1 Gesso Ground

The basis of the painting is a gesso ground - which gives an initial structure onto which paint and collage and other materials can be applied without the surface (be it paper, board or canvas) absorbing the colour or glues.



Gesso is a substance made with a binder (the glue - which may be acrylic , PVA, or for oils rabbit skin glue or proprietary glue), a filler - chalk / plaster / talc, and a pigment such as titanium white acrylic paint.

You can buy acrylic gesso from art stores or make your own using equal parts binder and filler and 1/3 pigment with some water to vary the consistency.

Apply the gesso using a brush or spatula and create textures within it so that you can see how the paint varies according to differing surfaces. Completely cover the surface.

Step 2 Apply Collage Shapes

Collage is another method of applying texture. Cut or tear a number of shapes - up to 10 to stick to the surface. Think about the size and position. It is generally good to use large



shapes (though you shouldn't cover all the gesso - leave over half of the area free of collage . For this theme you may wish to try shapes which suggest buildings or boats, cliffs, hills, sea etc.

Remember that you are simply trying things out so it doesn't matter if things don't turn out the way you want them.... We're looking for happy accidents.

Use PVA to stick things down well and apply glue or gesso over some of the pieces.

Collage materials could be newspaper, tissue paper, craft paper or paper which has been painted or printed on in the previous projects. Thicker materials such as card - corrugated is good, hessian / fabric. Sand can be used and you can get proprietary collage materials such as glass beads etc.

Make sure everything is dry before moving on.



Step 3 . Base ground of wet in wet ink.

Sometimes you may choose to create a single colour ground as we have in previous paintings (blue or burnt Sienna) However for fun, this time choose a limited palette (just couple of colours) and spray your collage with water then apply inks over the collage and gesso.

Watch how it runs, and see how the colours respond to each other. Look for areas which remind you of the land / sea scapes. You could use L shaped frames to help you isolate areas to focus on. There may be hard edges which remind you of a hillside or a wave, a sunset, or trees etc.

Sometimes you may see a face or a silhouetted figure. This part of the process is important as it helps develop imagination (like seeing things in the clouds) - it even has a name - 'pareidolia'.



This ground will be painted over and there are 2 points for reflection here;

- If you were to try to recreate the interesting parts how would you do it?
- What is the general feel of the ground. Are there dark and light areas - what is it that causes you to see what you see?

Make sure it's dry before you begin the next step.

Step 4 Identify. The main tonal values and choose your main colour palette

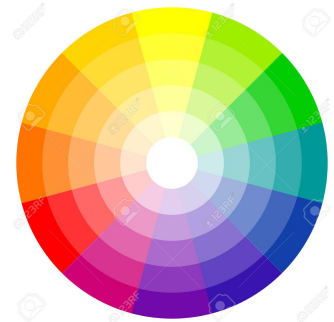
Tonal values are the areas of light and shade. You will be developing these in your pencil sketches. Make sure you can identify the lightest and darkest areas from your image and then a couple of. Mid tones. These should be large shapes to start with, and over the course of the design work in to the detail.

Generally, in the background / distance there will be lighter tones with less contrast and very little detail. In the foreground there will be more contrast and detail - but just keep this in your head and sketched for now.



Most effective paintings use just a couple of colours as their main structure - the 2 paintings above use orange and blue - which are opposites in the colour wheel.

Do you want cool or warm colours to dominate etc. In the paintings the coolness of the blue (which is actually a warm blue) is given extra heat with the orange - though not in equal measures



Draw the main tonal areas and then mix your acrylic paint in pools of differing shades. You may mix the two main colours together to create greyer or brownish hues.

You will continue to create colour / tonal mixes as you progress. Don't worry and have fun.

Step 5 Applying paint

Splish splash splosh! The fun never stops!

Gather together different painting tools. Brushes, palette knives, bits of card, willow pens, Even an old credit card is good. Think of it as applying paint rather than painting. You want to get the colour on and it is sometimes difficult with a brush. Getting the paint to stick to some of the surface.



Make sure you use light areas and dark areas and note how the contrasts work.

You will find that the paint drags on the textures leaving bright areas and dull areas and patterns. Or you may wish to completely fill a space - but try not to be too uniform it can be uninteresting, but then again it can look too messy. The aim is to achieve a balance.



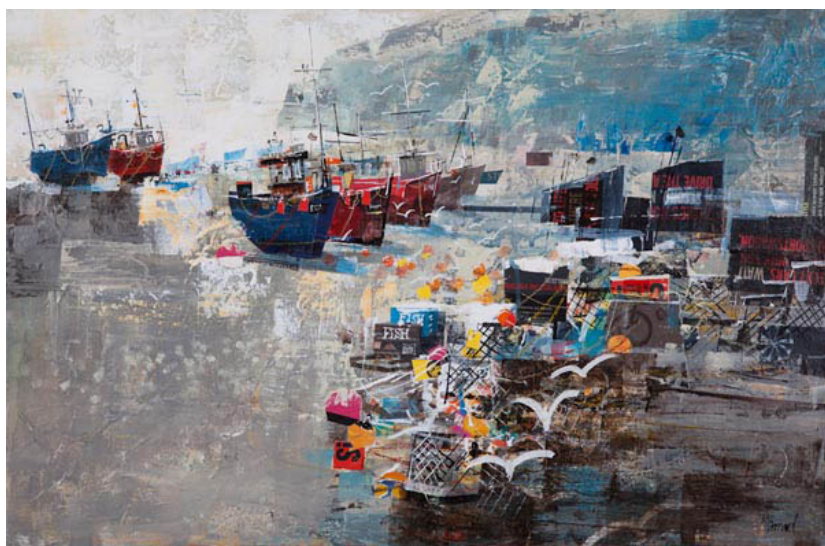
I use these words to remind me how to create different marks.

Scrape, drag, push, pull, glide, dab, slow, fast, sweep, strong, wide, thin, end, stop, one way, back and forth, staccato. Thick paint, thin paint, dry brush, wet, wet in wet, wet on dry etc.

Here are 20 methods to apply acrylic paint.

<http://magazine.greatart.co.uk/2017/01/26/20-ways-to-use-acrylic-paint/>

Try as many methods as you can in your experiments. It doesn't have to look like anything .. but it may end up doing so. Some tools will create shapes in one stroke, others may be more suited to repeated strokes or dabs. Areas of light and shade may also help.



Reflect on the different areas of your painting experiments.

Step 6 Sketching and resource image preparation.

You will now be ready to begin your mixed media painting.

Gather as many images as you can which have the places and subjects you wish to paint.

Make 4 thumbnail sketches of the scene, concentrating on the shapes of tones - subdued in the distance with more contrast in the foreground. (see introduction) Then make a larger sketch which will inform the textures in your gesso ground, which pieces of collage and colours etc you want to include - say for buildings and boats, hills etc. You may also make note of some colours you want to include. It's always best to have some thoughts prior to starting so you know where you're going. I often make a colour study using chalk pastels on coloured paper as well.

Step 7 Begin Your Final Piece.

Great! Now to begin - Remember this is the sequence

- Gesso
- Collage
- Ink Underpainting
- Draw the basic shapes of the image - use charcoal / pencil / thin dark paint with fine brush.
- Apply Acrylic Paints - Start with background shapes, blocking in with pale cool colours and gradually work to foreground with more contrast, warmer colours and finally add detail with fine brushwork, using pen tools or the edge of card for lines etc.

