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Mixing It Up

By Robert Joyner

Expression is the key to my creative process. My subjects vary, but the sense of expression stays the same.

Watercolor was my first medium. The magic of transforming blank white paper into colorful paintings brought me back to the easel day after day. I soon began to add other mediums such as crayon and charcoal to my watercolors. This form of mixed media gave me a sense of personal style.

Having loved the outdoors all my life, I decided to start plein air painting. This experience opened other avenues

of creativity and techniques. It also brought me back to the subjects that I enjoy the most.

Having grown up in rural Virginia with a background in commercial fishing, I was quickly drawn to the coastal harbors, fishing boats, and the Virginia countryside. These subjects dominate my interest and subject matter but I'm always interested in new ideas.

One of the toughest things for me to do is to throw away unwanted paintings and brushes. Many of my favorite



Colorful Rooster, mixed media on paper, 15" x 22"

acrylic paintings on paper are completed with recycled watercolor paper and well worn, or frayed brushes that many artists would likely discard. It seems like painting on inferior works is less inhibiting. I believe the strength of my art is that I allow each painting to have a life of its own.

Even though I do not have a methodical way of painting, there are always certain techniques and methods I use throughout my works. Therefore, finishing a piece is always a unique journey.

Here are some of my mixed media materials and techniques that I use in my abstract representational work:

Spray Bottle: I like to achieve a variety of results when using different media. One way I achieve this is to use art materials on both dry and wet surfaces. I use a paper surface that can handle wet media such as Strathmore® 500 Series Mixed Media paper or board. I lightly mist a surface but also miss areas to create contrast when I apply different media to the wet and dry areas.



Pig Farm, mixed media on canvas, 30" x 30"

Artist Crayons: An artist crayon such as Caran D'Arche Neocolor II is one of my favorite art materials. I like to use them on both wet and dry surfaces. If I want a soft, almost broken line, I wet the surface prior to drawing. If I want a hard, sharp line, I use the crayons on a dry surface. I like to incorporate both wet and dry techniques into my work to create interest.

Compressed Charcoal: One way I use charcoal in my mixed media work is to outline areas of my subject that have lost shape. I also use it to add detail. I typically break my charcoal into 1" sticks, using the broadside of the stick to create thicker lines and cover larger areas. I use the tip to create a thinner line. I also experiment with the amount of pressure. I use more pressure for a heavier line and light pressure for softer lines.

Heavy Body Acrylics: I like heavy body acrylics because they have more texture. I add water to acrylics to increase transparency which allows the layers and under drawings to show through. I add white when I want to create opacity.

Acrylic Ink: I think acrylic inks are fabulous. I like to use them to build transparent layers and add a nice pop of color. I use the ink dropper to draw and create linear strokes or a brush to cover larger areas.

Acrylic Paint and Artist Crayons: Artist crayons and acrylic ink blend really well together to create different effects. I draw into the wet acrylic ink with a crayon to create a blended, broken look. I also paint areas with acrylic ink, allow them to dry and then draw on top



Touchdown, mixed media on paper, 30" x 22"

with crayon. This results in heavy, thick lines. I experiment combining wet and dry techniques and varying the amount of pressure on the surface.

Liner or Long Flat Brush: Many artists use a liner brush exclusively for signing paintings but I like to use one throughout my piece. The brush can create long and very thin strokes. I use it almost like a pencil, but of course I'm actually painting. I like to paint long, thin strokes and then combine thick, strong strokes for a more interesting painting. I also like to keep it loose.

Palette Knife or Brush Tip: I use a palette knife or brush tip to scratch back into wet paint. This reveals the layer underneath, and can create exciting and colorful lines. I use this method before the workable, current layer is dry.

About the Artist



Robert Joyner was born in 1968 in Hampton, Virginia. After spending many years as an entrepreneur, he decided to commit to his art in 2003. At the time he was a ballroom dance instructor and continued to teach until the spring of 2009 when he started to paint full time.

Robert's work may be found in many corporate collections, has been hung on sets of popular sitcoms, proudly displayed on the Shenton Valley Shiraz wine label and was featured on all programs, tickets, and posters for the 2012 Kentucky Derby and Oaks.

Robert lives and works in Manakin Sabot, Virginia with his fiancée, Margaret and their daughter, Olivia.

To find out more about Robert Joyner, please visit www.painthog.com



Abstract Cow Portrait, mixed media on paper, 22" x 30"

To learn more about my techniques, join the **Strathmore® 2013 Online Workshops** and take my "Abstract Fine Art Painting with Mixed Media" class. Register for the free workshop today and get immediate access to four video lessons.

Strathmore® 2013 ONLINE WORKSHOP SERIES

Workshop #3: Artful Card-Making Techniques Starts in September!

Our third workshop in 2013 features two different instructors - Jane LaFazio and Joanne Sharpe.

A blank card is much like a blank canvas. Unlimited potential! In the first two weeks of the workshop, Jane will guide you in sketching and watercoloring an original card in a step-by-step, clear, easy method using Strathmore blank cards. She'll also show you how to artfully collage cards, with paper, fabric, glue and with stitching for all kinds of occasions. This workshop will inspire you to create original cards that will be cherished by those who receive them.

Then Joanne Sharpe will share her popular artful lettering techniques and color rich design ideas to make a collection of whimsical cards. Explore a variety of playful hand lettering styles and simple illustrations to showcase greeting card sentiments and messages. Combine assorted mixed media techniques with creative lettering tools to adorn your mini masterpieces.

About the Instructors



Jane LaFazio, a full-time artist since 1998, has cultivated a wide range of skills as a painter, mixed media and quilt artist, art teacher and blogger. She teaches workshops online and at art retreats internationally. Jane's artwork has been featured in *Cloth Paper Scissors* and *Quilting Arts* magazines many times, in Danny Gregory's *An Illustrated Life*, and in numerous books.



Joanne Sharpe is a colorful mixed media artist and enthusiastic teacher with a passion for art journaling, doodling and illustration. Joanne recently launched a workshop DVD called "Artful Lettering" and will also have a book published in 2014 by Interweave Press. She has been featured in *Cloth Paper Scissors*, *Studios*, *Somerset Studio*, *Somerset Art Journaling* and *Somerset Apprentice* magazines.



Original art by Jane LaFazio



Original art by Joanne Sharpe



Strathmore 2013 Online Workshops are FREE!
Register today: www.strathmoreartist.com

Featured Product

Fine Art Rolls

Think Big. Create without limits!

Strathmore's high quality fine art paper is available in an expanded offering of large rolls in a unique selection of colors, textures and weights.

Strathmore's expanded offering of fine art rolls meets the growing demand for large format art surfaces. Available in a full range of papers including newsprint, toned sketch, drawing, charcoal, bristol, mixed media and watercolor.

These specialty grades typically cannot be found in roll format and provide artists with the convenience and flexibility of creating without size or scale limitations. Perfect for either practice of techniques or finished artwork.



To learn more about Fine Art Rolls, visit:
www.strathmoreartist.com



Original artwork by Scott Kiche
Charcoal on 400 Series Drawing Roll
"Sounds of the Unseen," 25" x 46"

Questions From Our Website

If colored art paper is acid free, is it also fade resistant?

No colored, toned or tinted papers are completely fade resistant. All papers will fade to some extent over time, even if they are acid free. Papers fade at different rates depending on the materials used in papermaking and the external environment.

Since most fine art papers are now acid free, the biggest paper factors that influence fade are the presence of lignin, use of optical brighteners and type of colorant.

Wood contains a substance called lignin which is basically tree sap. If lignin is present in paper, it will deteriorate the paper, turning it yellow or brown as it ages.

Optical brighteners (OBAs) are additives that are used in paper manufacturing to increase the perceived “whiteness” or brightness of paper. OBAs break down over time and cause color shifts.

There are two basic types of colorants used in fine art papers – dyes and pigments. Dyes typically have normal lightfastness values and will fade over time more quickly

than pigments. Pigments are significantly more expensive than dyes and are typically used in higher-end archival papers and museum boards. Although papers containing pigments can still fade and are prone to color rub-off, most are considered to have high lightfastness values.

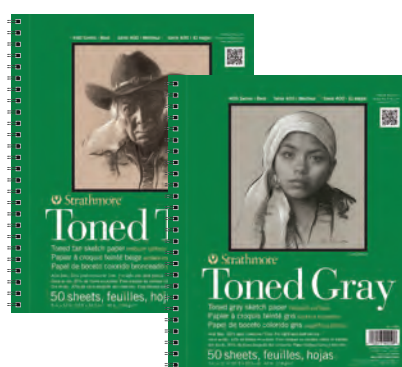
Strathmore® removes lignin from all our wood pulp sheets and we do not add Optical Brightener Additives to our colored papers. This helps stabilize and improve lightfastness of our products.

In terms of environmental influences, storing and displaying pieces out of direct sunlight or strong light can help preserve color as well as framing pieces behind conservation glass.

Strathmore offers colored papers with both dye and pigment-based colorants to meet a range of needs. Our 400 Series Toned Sketch, Strathmore Artagain®, and Pastel papers feature dye-based colorants. Our 500 Series Charcoal paper and Museum Mounting Board feature pigment-based colorants.



400 Series Strathmore Artagain®



400 Series Toned Sketch



400 Series Pastel



500 Series Charcoal