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Oil Painting Paper

A convenient alternative to canvases and boards.

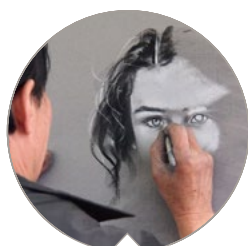
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2018 Online Workshops

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Questions from our Website

Varnish vs. Fixative

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MAIN FEATURE

Art Inspired by the Great Outdoors

By Angela Staehling

Nature plays a large part of the inspiration behind my artwork. While I paint many themes and create in a variety of styles, I find that a majority of my artwork centers around natural elements, from lush landscapes to unique plants and wildlife.

One of my recent collections is inspired by the National Parks. I use Strathmore's 500 Series Mixed Media Art Journals as a way to capture and hold all of my illustrations together. I am more than halfway through illustrating the Parks series, but have also included other scenic landmarks as part of a broader outdoor destination theme.

What I love most about my work is that I paint what inspires me. While most of the work I create is for the pure love of design, the National Parks collection holds a special place in my heart. I created this line as a way to use my voice as an artist to inspire others to preserve our natural landscapes and wildlife.

MY PROCESS

Step 1: I usually begin each design with a pencil sketch on loose leaf paper. I try to capture some of the main features at each location including the terrain, wildlife, and native plants. While many of the locations have an abundance of beautiful natural resources, I frequently paint the items that inspire me most. I also enjoy creating unique outlines that frame each illustration. Creating these varied edges adds further



"In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks." - John Muir

visual interest, especially when the renderings are grouped together.

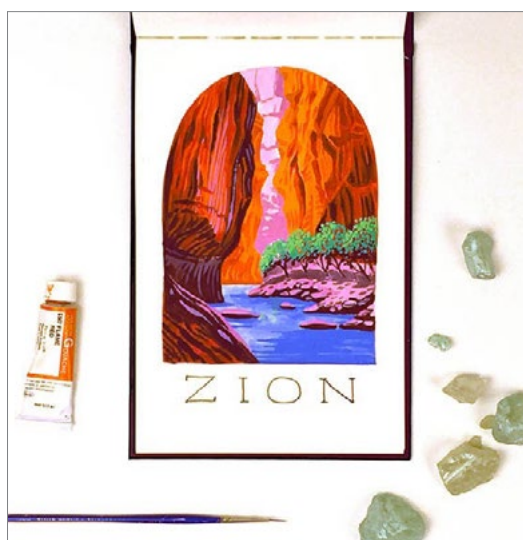
Step 2: Next, I start building the composition by placing items in the foreground, middleground, and background. Because I've chosen to paint this collection in a more flat style (reminiscent of vintage silk-screened posters), I purposefully try to add depth back into the painting by creating dimensional space. Most areas of color are painted flat with no shading. To draw your eye around the painting, I place elements of interest at various points throughout the landscape.

continued



Step 3: After I've finalized my sketch on loose leaf paper, I replicate that design into my Strathmore 500 Series Mixed Media Art Journal. I make sure to sketch very lightly so that my pencil lines won't show through the final painting. Occasionally, my pencil sketches will show through and I accept those imperfections as part of the design process. Most times, a kneaded eraser works well to lift up any of the darker graphite lines before I paint.

Step 5: It's easiest for me to dive into the areas that I feel most inspired to paint. Due to the overall flat quality of the painting, I don't feel compelled to approach my work as a traditional landscape artist. Typically, backgrounds are painted first, while middle grounds and foregrounds are applied sequentially on top. I gravitate towards working on sections of the painting that come quickly for me to visualize. The beauty of using Strathmore's 500 Series Mixed



"Occasionally, my pencil sketches will show through and I accept those imperfections as part of the design process."

Step 4: Next, I choose the color palette of the painting. This is my favorite phase of the painting process. I select a few tubes or bottles of paint and line them up next to each other. Placing them side by side gives me an overall idea of how the colors will complement or work against one another. Once I've chosen the overall color scheme, I begin painting. Occasionally, I will mix the colors together on my palette to create the perfect hue. But to keep the aesthetic of each painting, I mostly paint in blocks of flat color using gouache and sometimes acrylic craft paints.

Media Art Journals is that they are extremely durable and can withstand multiple layers of paint. I don't always get my blocks of color right and will have to layer up areas of color to achieve the desired result. Strathmore's paper is very forgiving and can withstand multiple layers of paint, even layers of watered-down washes.

Step 6: When the painting is complete, I handwrite the destination's title underneath the image using a Prismacolor® Ebony Pencil. I believe my bachelor's degree in graphic design has inevitably infused typeface styling and handlettering into much of my artwork over the years. I have gotten quite comfortable freehanding text and enjoy writing in new typefaces.

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Step 7: The last step in creating one of my National Parks images is scanning the painting as a hi-resolution file. I have an Epson Expression 11000XL scanner that I use for most of my artwork. I import the file into Photoshop and clean up any errors or make necessary color corrections. Again, having worked in graphic design has been a tremendous help in using the computer to finalize my illustrations and make them readily available for my licensors to use.

The exciting news about this destination series is that the artwork will be made into home decor and giftable products. The collection includes items such as pillows, coffee mugs, tea towels, hats, puzzles, and ornaments and will be sold in gift stores across the country beginning spring of 2019. Mini-framed canvases will be introduced this spring in various retailers as well as my [online shop!](#)

I post all of the destinations as I create them on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) and enjoy sharing videos of me sketching and painting in the “stories” area of my feed.

TIPS ON ART LICENSING

Many friends and artists have asked how I’ve been able to create and sell products to retailers across the country. While I do not manufacture any of the products I design, it is through art licensing that has made this exciting career in visual arts possible. Art licensing is the process of collecting royalty payments for collaborating with manufacturers to allow your artwork to be featured on their products. Manufacturers like to work with artists to create unique and exclusive designs for their product offerings. Art licensing is a common practice in the home decor industry that unfortunately is often overlooked in art and design colleges across the country. In fact, I hadn’t learned about this career until I had spent years out of college working as a graphic designer in the advertising industry.



“Art licensing is a common practice in the home decor industry that unfortunately is often overlooked in art and design colleges across the country.”



It has been such a joy watching this collection grow, and I am very excited to work on new designs for future products.

The upside to art licensing is that there are multiple ways to work with manufacturers to create your product lines. You can either hire

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an art agent or represent yourself. If you do not like to manage business operations such as handling contracts and working directly with manufacturers, you can choose to work with an art agent to represent you. An art agent will take a percentage of your profits as they are hired to set up and manage your contracts, organize your painting schedule, advertise on your behalf, and handle any communications with your manufacturers

agent or agency is to search online and look for the types of artists they represent that best complement your style. As with building any partnership, it is best to do your homework beforehand and understand all of the agreements in your contract when you sign on with an agent. You and your agent are both in the business for creating artwork that sells, so it makes most sense that you both want to feel rewarded in your partnership.



or licensors. There are many types of art agents and agencies that represent all types of artists. The best way to find an art

The other way to approach art licensing is to represent yourself. However, this method is recommended for artists who enjoy wearing multiple hats and are willing to spend a lot more time handling the business side of their operations. I began representing myself about four years ago and have spent many hours managing the business side of art licensing. While I do enjoy the direct communication with my clients, oftentimes I miss the simplicity of having an art agent. Prior to representing myself as an artist, I worked with an art agency for 17 years. There are many pros and cons to working with both an art agent and representing yourself. The best way to approach this decision is to familiarize yourself with the workflow and lifestyle that comes with each career path.

I am tremendously excited to see the National Parks Destinations line come to life! I have been so pleased working on Strathmore's Mixed Media papers and will continue to use them for future collections to come. In fact, I work on Strathmore's papers for all of my other home decor projects, including their 400 Series Watercolor and 400 Series Mixed Media pads. If you haven't done so already, I highly recommend introducing yourself and experimenting with some of Strathmore's durable products - you never know what kind of art collection might come pouring out of your soul! Happy creating!

continued

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Angela is an illustrator, surface designer and author who works on designs for clients like Chronicle Books, Target, Macy's, Smithsonian Store, Pier 1 Imports and Kohl's. She designs her own collections of dinnerware, stationery, textiles, and other home decor product lines.

When not illustrating, Angela enjoys spending time in her garden, hanging out with her kids and hiking nearby nature trails. She draws much of her inspiration from the great outdoors and delights in playing with new art mediums and styles.

Angela is an active member of her local art community where she serves as art council member, organizer, and promoter of art events and juror. She has designed and taught art programs to communities in need and brought art projects into schools that lack funding for the arts.

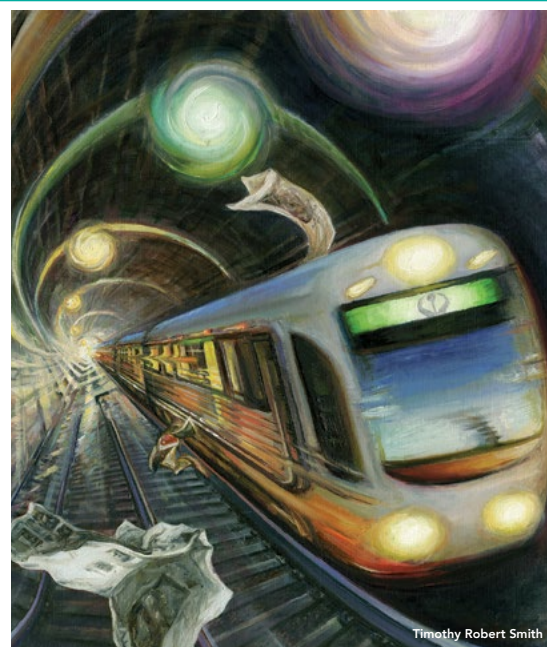
"My happy place is outside, woven between the trees with moss covered stones beneath my feet."



Angela Staehling

OWNER / ILLUSTRATOR
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Introducing 400 Series OIL PAINTING PAPER



New Oil Painting paper from Strathmore provides artists with a convenient alternative to canvases and boards for use with oil paints or oil pastels. No gesso is required to prevent oil saturation, just simply tear out a sheet and start painting! The linen surface mimics canvas while providing texture to help blend and hold layers of paint in place. Intended for the creation of final art pieces. Available in 3 pad sizes and large format sheet stock.

• 215 lb./350 gsm • acid free • no gesso required

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sampler of popular watercolor subjects and break them down into approachable and achievable steps.



Lesson 1: Spring Landscape



Lesson 2: Bubble Gum Still Life



Lesson 3: Practicing Facial Features



Lesson 4: Limited-Palette Portrait

About our Online Workshops

Strathmore's Online Workshops feature free video lessons and downloadable instructions created by experienced artists. Follow along in the online

classroom as instructors guide you through various topics and demonstrate useful tips, techniques, ideas, and inspirations to get you creating and

learning even more about art. Share all the fun on **Instagram**, **Facebook**, and **Twitter** using #StrathmoreWorkshops

Join us for our free workshops today at:
www.strathmoreartiststudio.com

Questions from our Website

Question:

I've finished my art. Should I use a varnish or a fixative on it? Is there a difference between the two?

Answer:

Varnishes and fixatives are two different things.

A spray **fixative** is used to "fix" or seal the drawing material (usually graphite, charcoal, or pastel) so that it does not smear as easily. There are two types of fixatives: workable and permanent. A workable fixative allows you to spray or seal a certain part of a drawing then continue to work on the paper with more mediums. It also allows you to erase through the coating to rework the artwork if needed. A permanent fixative seals the surface as soon as it is applied.

A **varnish** is used to change the sheen of the artwork and protect it from absorbing pollutants from the environment. It often is available in a variety of finishes including gloss, satin and matte.

If you are varnishing a drawing on paper, you will probably need to use a spray varnish. The varnish will absorb into the fibers of the paper and into the various drawing materials. If the drawing materials are dry (i.e. graphic, charcoal, pastel), the drawing will smudge when the varnish is applied with a brush, which is why a spray should be used.

You may need several coats. The spray varnish on paper is not removable, as it sinks into the paper fibers and possibly drawing materials. It is advisable to do a test with a scrap drawing using a spray varnish. This test scrap drawing should be on the same paper and with the same drawing materials



as the artwork you want to varnish. This will give you a good indication of finished results and help you determine whether or not the drawing should be sprayed.