

Just Add Water



May 6 – July 16, 2023
at Peninsula School of Art

Water-based media have been around for centuries, and new ones are still being developed. Whether it is for the fast drying time, the ease of clean-up, the level of transparency, their ability to be intermixed, or health and environmental concerns, more and more painters are turning to water-based media such as watercolor, ink, acrylic, flashe, gouache, and casein. Each of these mediums has its own unique properties that the artists in *Just Add Water* use to full advantage.



The finely ground pigment particles of watercolor will naturally spread out when added to water. It is a phenomenon that either fascinates or frustrates children when they first dip their used paintbrush into a clean container of wash water, only to see all of the water change color with just one swirl.

The same thing happens on paper. If an artist wets an area of the paper by first painting it with only water or a thin wash of color, when more concentrated paint is added it will bleed, fading to nothing or mixing with adjacent colors within the wet area. Caitlin Leline Hatch uses this technique to get the soft focus and smooth transitions in her portraits of people and animals, while painting up to dry areas when she wants sharper edges and details.



In *Old Man of The Woods*, you can see the difference in the green background to the right of the figure. Near the crisp edge of the cap's brim, the green comes to an abrupt stop at dry paper, while softly fading into wet paper to the right. In contrast, the green toward the bottom formed a crackling edge when the brush was swept over a dry area of the textured paper.

I use a wet-into-wet technique that allows the water and pigments to move freely while still allowing me to steer the painting toward an established vision. This tension between spontaneity and control brings a special vitality to my process and to the paintings themselves. It allows me let go and have faith in the process while at the same time capture the important details that tell the story. —Caitlin Leline Hatch

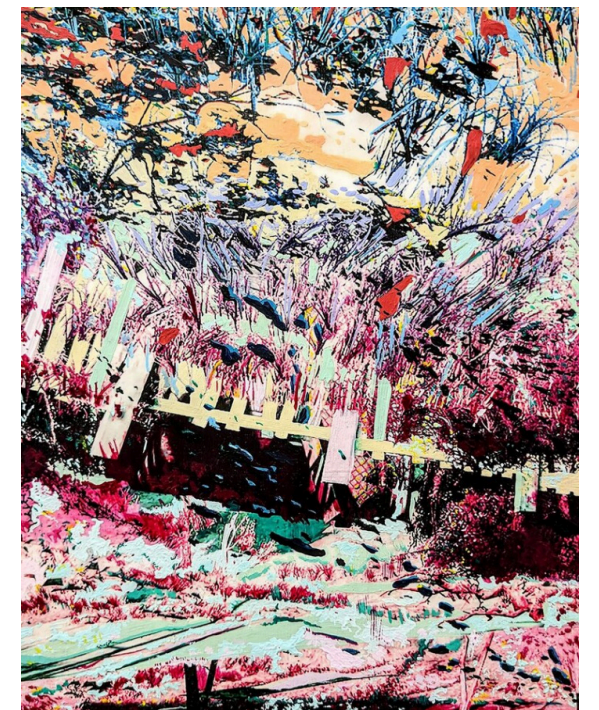


Stella Ebner makes use of the paint's transparency and ability to be rehydrated when making her watercolor monotypes. Beginning with a drawing, Stella places it beneath a sheet of clear plastic that has been either lightly sanded or coated with a thin layer of gum arabic. She can then use the drawing as a guide when she paints on the plastic with watercolor. Once dry, she can run the plastic through the press with a damp sheet of paper on top. The moisture in the paper will rehydrate the watercolor, allowing it to transfer from the plastic. Stella can then repeat this process, building depth with layers of transparent color.

She can also change things when painting each version. The drawing and three versions of *Small Buttons* are pictured here. The flower pattern in the middle version is much lighter than in the version on the right.

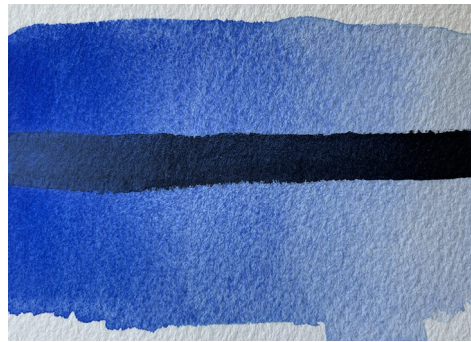


The characteristics of acrylic paint can be modified with the addition of a wide variety of available mediums. What remains constant is that when it dries, the acrylic polymer particles fuse together into a hexagonal structure, trapping the pigment in place. The result is a paint film that is stable, flexible, and water-resistant. Lydia Dildilian experiments with acrylic paint, pushing the boundaries of what can be done with that acrylic paint film. For *White Picket Fence*, she treated an inkjet print of a digital collage with a series of acrylic glaze coats. These enabled her to lift the ink for an acrylic skin transfer that served as the first layer of her painting. In *Jungle Block*, the paint became an object. Lydia painted vines with thick acrylic on a smooth surface like glass. Once the paint dried, she peeled off the vines and attached them to a wood panel, letting them hang freely off it.



Tom Owen takes advantage of flashe's viscosity, opacity, permanence, and matte finish to make brightly colored, geometric shapes in his painting *Topsy Turvy*. Flashe is a smooth-bodied paint—thin enough to somewhat self-level without being runny. It is a viscosity that works well with the squeegees Tom uses to pull the paint across the substrate, ensuring a completely smooth surface. Because flashe becomes waterproof when it quickly dries, Tom can tape off areas of the painting to add new, hard-edged shapes over top without lifting paint from previous layers, muddying colors. The paint is also opaque enough to completely cover the previous color. Its velvety matte finish prevents glare, keeping the colors the same when viewed from any angle.

WATER MEDIA



Watercolor

Watercolor is a transparent paint made from pigment particles suspended in water with gum arabic as a binder. Watercolors dry lighter than when first applied, and can appear granulated when using a textured paper. Dried watercolor paint can be re-wetted and (mostly) lifted from the surface, although some colors stain more than others.



Ink

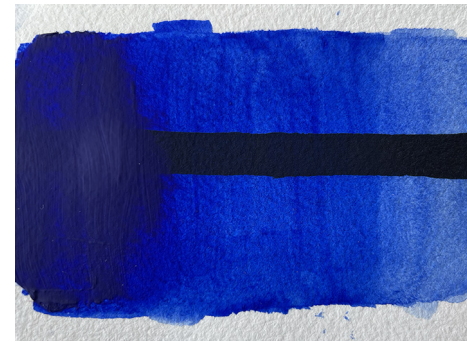
Ink is different from watercolor in that it often uses dyes instead of pigments. When pigments are used they are ground much finer. It usually cannot be re-wetted, and sometimes binders like shellac or acrylic are used to make it more waterproof when dry.



Gouache

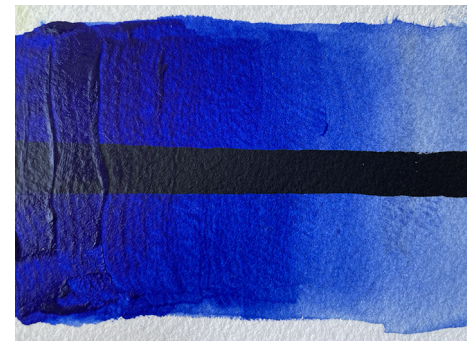
Gouache is made from pigments bound in water-soluble gum, like watercolor, but with the addition of a white pigment in order to make it opaque. Larger pigment particles and larger percentages of binder are used than with watercolor, and various amounts of inert pigments such as chalk are added to enhance the opacity. Gouache forms a thicker layer of paint on the paper surface and does not allow the paper to show through. It dries matte and can be re-wetted. Values change slightly as they dry, with dark tones drying lighter and light tones drying darker.

Acrylic gouache is a relatively new variation of the paint. Its highly concentrated pigment is similar to traditional gouache, but it is mixed with an acrylic-based binder instead of gum arabic and is water-resistant once dry. Acrylic gouache differs from acrylic paint because it contains additives to ensure a matte finish.



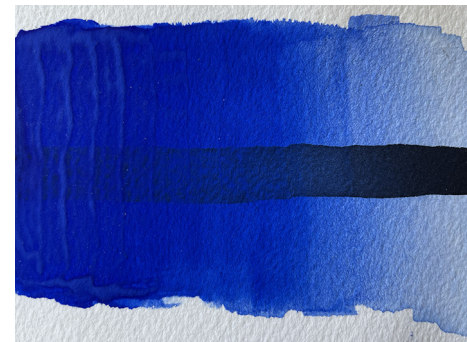
Flashe

Flashe is similar to acrylic gouache but uses polyvinyl acetate as a binder. The finer, softer resin is a fatter emulsion that allows a perfectly flat and smooth surface with no brush marks. Flash has a high pigment load, so the colors stay strong even when highly diluted. The colors stay the same as it dries to a matte finish that remains elastic, waterproof, and lightfast. It adheres well to all surfaces, even without a primer, and maintains its color and texture across those surfaces.



Acrylic

Acrylic paint is a fast-drying paint made that uses acrylic polymer as its binder. Depending on how much the paint is diluted with water or modified with acrylic gels, mediums, or pastes, the finished acrylic painting can resemble a watercolor, a gouache, or an oil painting or have its own unique characteristics not attainable with other media. Acrylics dry darker, usually with a flexible, water-resistant finish.



Casein

Casein (kay'seen) is an opaque paint that uses milk protein as a binder. It has the wash capabilities of watercolor, the smooth opacity of tempera and gouache, and the richer textures of oils and acrylics. Casein dries with a color shift to a velvety, matte finish that can be buffed to a satin sheen. Dry casein can be easily corrected by rubbing or scrubbing an area with a damp cloth, paintbrush, or eraser. Over time, it cures and becomes resistant to moisture, so diluted ammonia must be used. Casein is brittle when dry, so it should only be painted on rigid surfaces.

Colorants

Dyes and pigments are the main forms of colorant. The key difference between them is that dyes are soluble while pigments are insoluble and suspended in a medium or binder. This is due to the difference in particle size. Imagine the comparison of salt in water (dye) or rocks in water (pigment).

Another difference is bonding properties; where a dye might chemically attach itself to a substrate

on a molecular level, becoming part of the material, pigments require the binder or carrier to act as a glue of sorts that is painted on to the substrate and surrounds the pigment, keeping it in place.

They also differ in lightfastness. Most pigments have the ability to resist fading, whereas sunlight (UV rays) can break electronic bonding of a dye molecule and destroy its color.

THE ARTISTS

AMY CHAN's work can be found in the collections of the Rhode Island School of Design Museum, The Spencer Museum of Art, and Capital One. She has received grants from the Pollock Krasner Foundation and the Virginia Commission for the Arts. Amy lives in Richmond and teaches at the University of Virginia. AmyChan.org

LYDIA DILDILIAN has received multiple exhibition awards and institutional grants, and her work is published in notable publications like *New American Painters*, *Studio Break*, and *Juxtapoz Magazine*. Lydia is an Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay where she manages the painting department, teaches, and runs the UWGB, Marinette campus fine art gallery. LydiaDildilian.com

STELLA EBNER has held residencies at MI-LAB in Japan, Tamarind Institute, the Lower East Side Printshop, and Kala Art Institute. Her work is in the collections of the Cleveland Museum of Art, Minnesota Museum of American Art, and Library of Congress Print Collection, among others. Stella is currently an Associate Professor and Chair of the Printmaking Department at Purchase College – SUNY. StellaEbner.com

MIRIAM HITCHCOCK is a painter and experimental filmmaker based in Santa Cruz, California. Having received an MFA in Painting from Yale University, she is now a seasoned studio instructor of painting, drawing, and design. Her career includes teaching at Brown University, R.I.S.D., Stanford University, U.C. Santa Cruz, and the American University in Rome, Italy. MiriamHitchcock.com

CAITLIN LELINE HATCH has been dedicated to watercolor for over 20 years. Her award-winning work has been featured in publications including *The Art of Watercolor*, *Watercolor Artist*, and *PleinAir Magazine*. A native of Door County, Caitlin's childhood on a horse farm imprinted her with a specific sensitivity toward animals and rural landscapes that inspire her to this day. LelineArtStudio.com

MICHELLE MULDROW spent her formative years living on Air Force bases throughout America. This nomadic experience laid the foundation for a fascination with the American landscape. Using the medium of painting, she examines her surrounding landscape to question, discover, and explore the majestic, the mundane, the industrial, the nostalgic, ruin, the beautiful, and the sublime. MMuldrow.com

TOM OWEN's work has been exhibited for over twenty years in cities including New York, Miami, Santa Fe, Cincinnati, and the San Francisco Bay Area. His work is in both private and corporate collections, and has been featured in several publications. While primarily self-taught, Tom holds a B.S. in English literature and a M.A. in psychology, both of which inform his art making. TomOwenFineArt.com

MELISSA SCHULENBERG is an artist/printmaker and the L.M. and G.L. Flint Professor in Fine Arts at St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY. Melissa received her MA in Printmaking from Purdue University, and her MFA in Printmaking from the University of Colorado at Boulder. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, most notably in Australia, Ireland, Japan, and New Zealand. MelissaSchulenburg.com

GEOFFREY TODD SMITH's work is in the collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, The Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, and the Jager Collection in Amsterdam, among others. He has been written about in publications including *The New Criterion*, *Hyperallergic*, *New City*, *The Seen*, *New American Paintings*, *Bad at Sports*, *art ltd*, *Juxtapoz*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Chicago Magazine*. GeoffreyToddSmith.com

SOURCES

Watercolor

Elizabeth E. Barker, "Watercolor Painting in Britain: 1750-1850." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, October 2004, metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bwtr/hd_bwtr.htm

"Watercolor Painting." New World Encyclopedia, newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Watercolor_painting

Ink

"Ink." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, metmuseum.org/about-the-met/collection-areas/drawings-and-prints/materials-and-techniques/drawing/ink

Gouache

"A Brief History of Gouache." *Art Lounge*, February 2, 2021, blog.artlounge.in/blog/2021/1/6/a-brief-history-of-gouache

"Art Term: Gouache." *Tate*, tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/g/gouache

Flashe

Julie Caves, "Flashe Paints: Intense, Flat, Opaque Color." *Jackson's Art Blog*, jacksonsart.com/blog/2020/04/03/flashe-paints-intense-flat-opaque-colour/

Acrylic

Laura Malone, "A History of Acrylic Painting." *ARTmine*, October 14, 2022, art-mine.com/collectors-corner/2022/10/a-history-of-acrylic-painting/

"What is Acrylic Paint?" *Liquitex*, liquitex.com/us/knowledge/what-is-acrylic-paint/

Shira Wolfe, "Agents of Change: Acrylic Paint." *Artland Magazine*, magazine.artland.com/agents-of-change-acrylic-paint/

Casein

Butch Krieger, "Web Exclusive: The Case for Casein." *Artists Network*, artistsnetwork.com/art-mediums/oil-painting/krieger-casein/

"Casein - An Overlooked Medium." *The Artist's Road*, theartistsroad.net/articles/casein-overlooked-medium

"Richeson Casein: Frequently Asked Questions." *Jack Richeson & Co., Inc.*, richesonart.com/products/paints/richesoncasein/richcaseinfaq.html

Colorants

"Colourants: dyes vs pigments" *Winsor & Newton*, winsornewton.com/row/articles/colours/spotlight-on-colourants-dyes-pigments/

IMAGES

Cover

Michelle Muldrow, *Seasonal*, 2011. Casein paint and graphite on kaolin clay panel, 12 x 12 inches.

Inside, clockwise from left

Caitlin Leline Hatch, *Old Man Of The Woods*, 2022. Watercolor on paper, 15 x 22 inches. Courtesy of Edgewood Orchard Galleries.

Stella Ebner, *Small Buttons (Version 3)*, 2022. Watercolor monotype, 40 x 30 inches. Courtesy of Cade Tompkins Projects. Photo by Lori Adams Photography.

Stella Ebner, *Small Buttons*, 2021. Graphite on paper, 40 x 30 inches. Courtesy of Cade Tompkins Projects. Photo by Lori Adams Photography.

Stella Ebner, *Small Buttons (Version 1)*, 2022. Watercolor monotype, 40 x 30 inches. Courtesy of Cade Tompkins Projects. Photos by Lori Adams Photography.

Stella Ebner, *Small Buttons (Version 2)*, 2022. Watercolor monotype, 40 x 30 inches. Courtesy of Cade Tompkins Projects. Photos by Lori Adams Photography.

Lydia Dildilian, *Jungle Block*, 2022. Mixed media painting with acrylic paint, 18 x 3 x 2 inches.

Lydia Dildilian, *White Picket Fence*, 2022. Mixed media painting with acrylic paint, 10 x 8 inches.

Tom Owen, *Topsy Turvey*, 2021. Flashe on cradled panel, 24 x 24 inches.



www.PeninsulaSchoolofArt.org

3900 County Rd. F | Fish Creek | 920.868.3455

