



Gwasher-colour

How to use watercolour and gouache

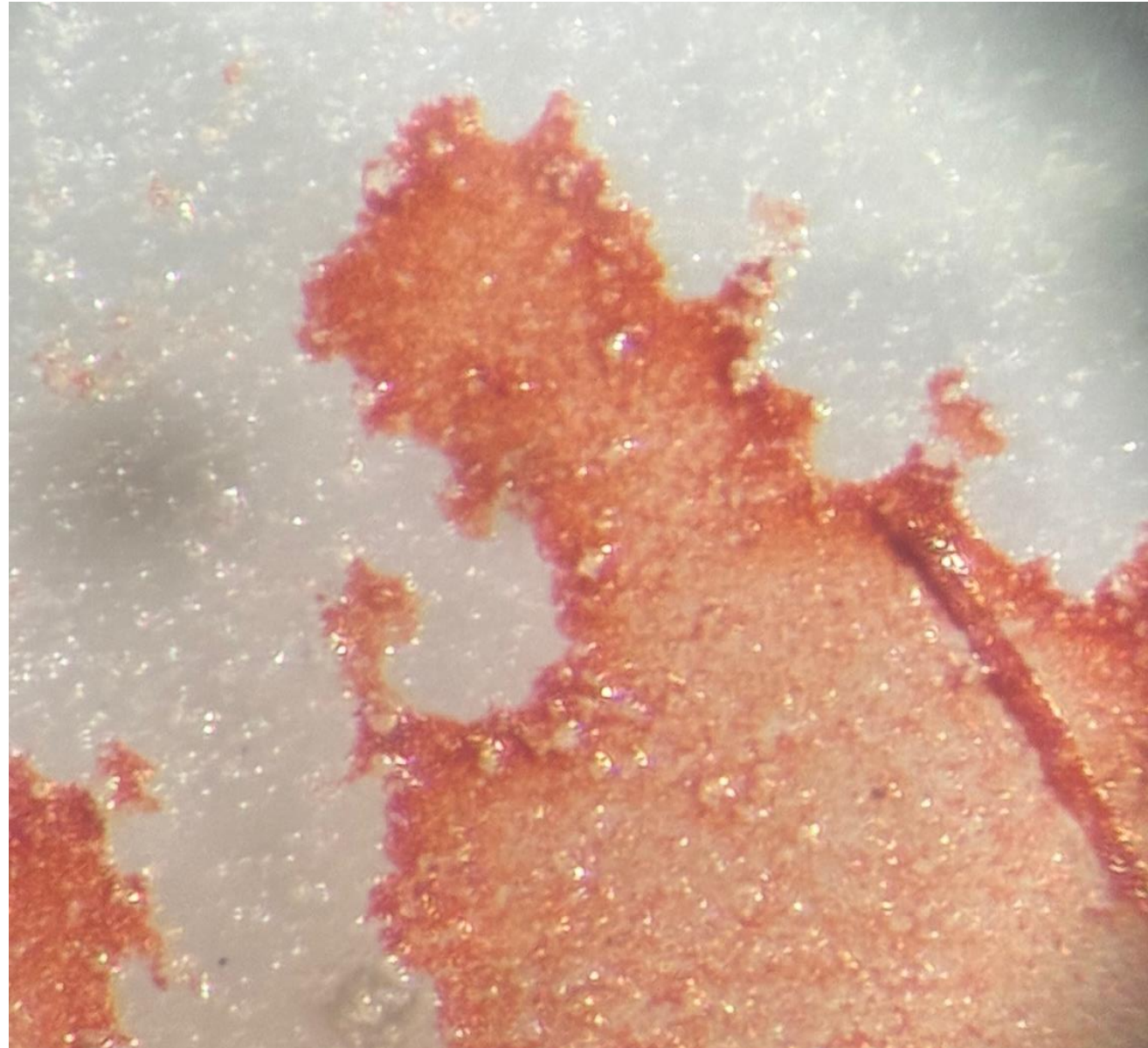
Watercolour?

Binders: Gum Arabic, honey

Humectants: Ox gall, honey, glycerine

Extremely finely ground pigment, often moreso than other art-materials

Usually used from dried pans



Gouache?

Binders: Gum Arabic

Humectants: no (usually)

Less finely ground pigment

Usually used fresh from tube

Multiple 'types' – designer, artist, poster-colour*

*Some might argue poster-colour is its own thing, they are *very very* similar.



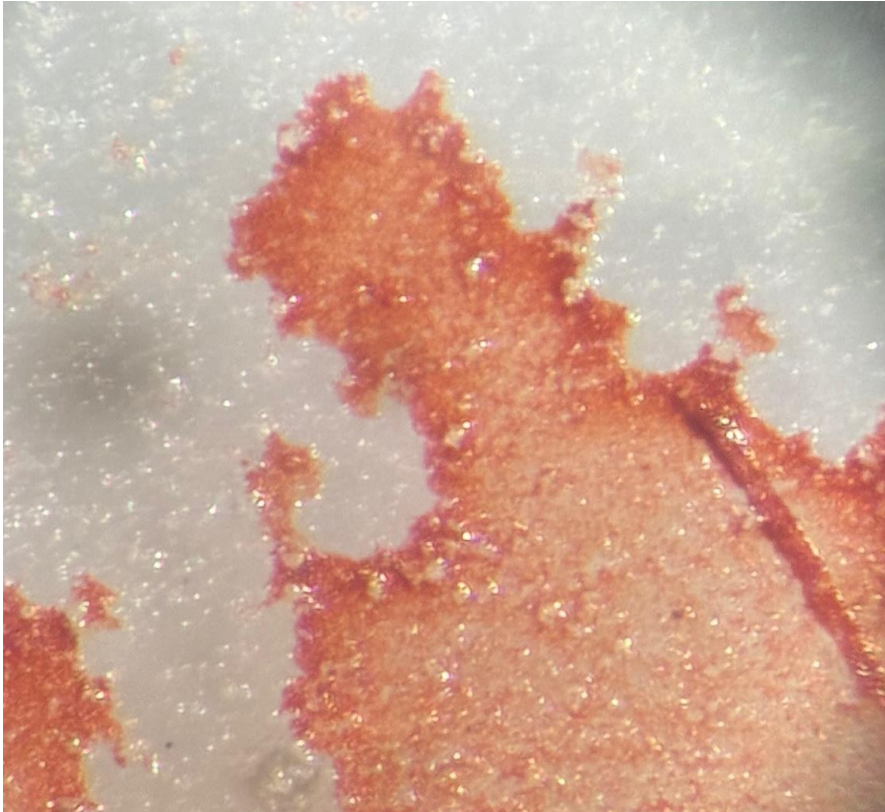
Side by side

Used: Dried

Multiple humectants

Extremely fine pigment

Gum Arabic & honey common binders

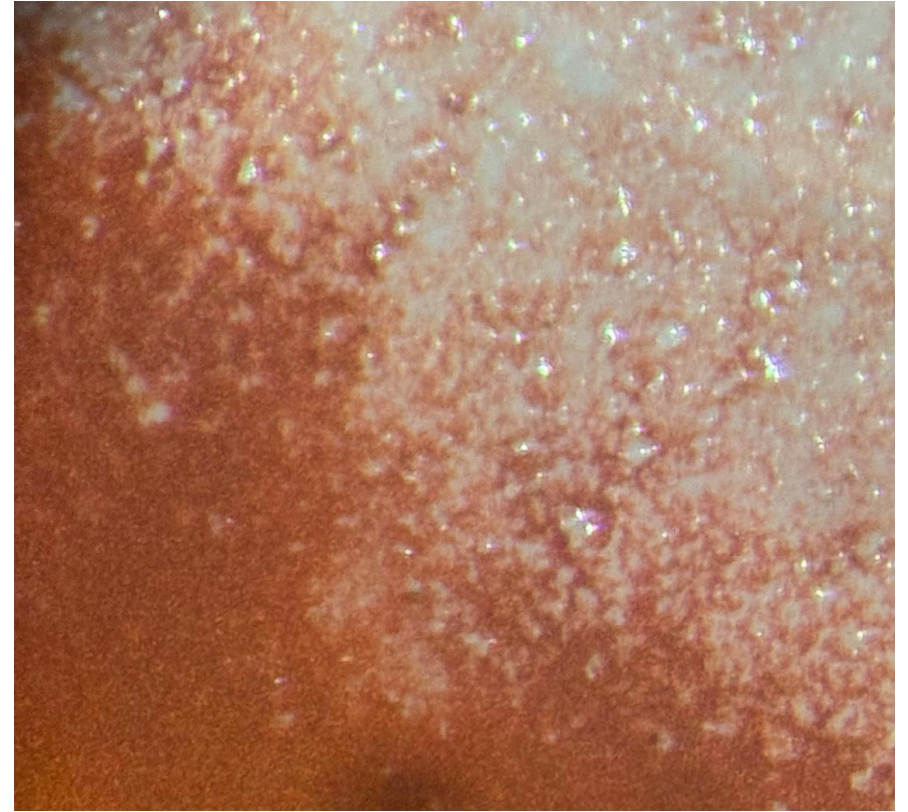


Used: Fresh

Little to no humectants

Extremely high pigment load

Gum Arabic common binder



Types of gouache: Designer/Artist/Acryla

- **Designer** = Vibrant colours, less reactivatable, may be confused with “poster colour”, always super opaque, often fugitive
- **Artist** = Opacity and vibrance vary based on pigment in paint, reactivatable, large pigment particle watercolour
- **Acryla** = not gouache

If you see the A its acrylic, do not be bamboozled!
(a friend of mine was bamboozled :C)



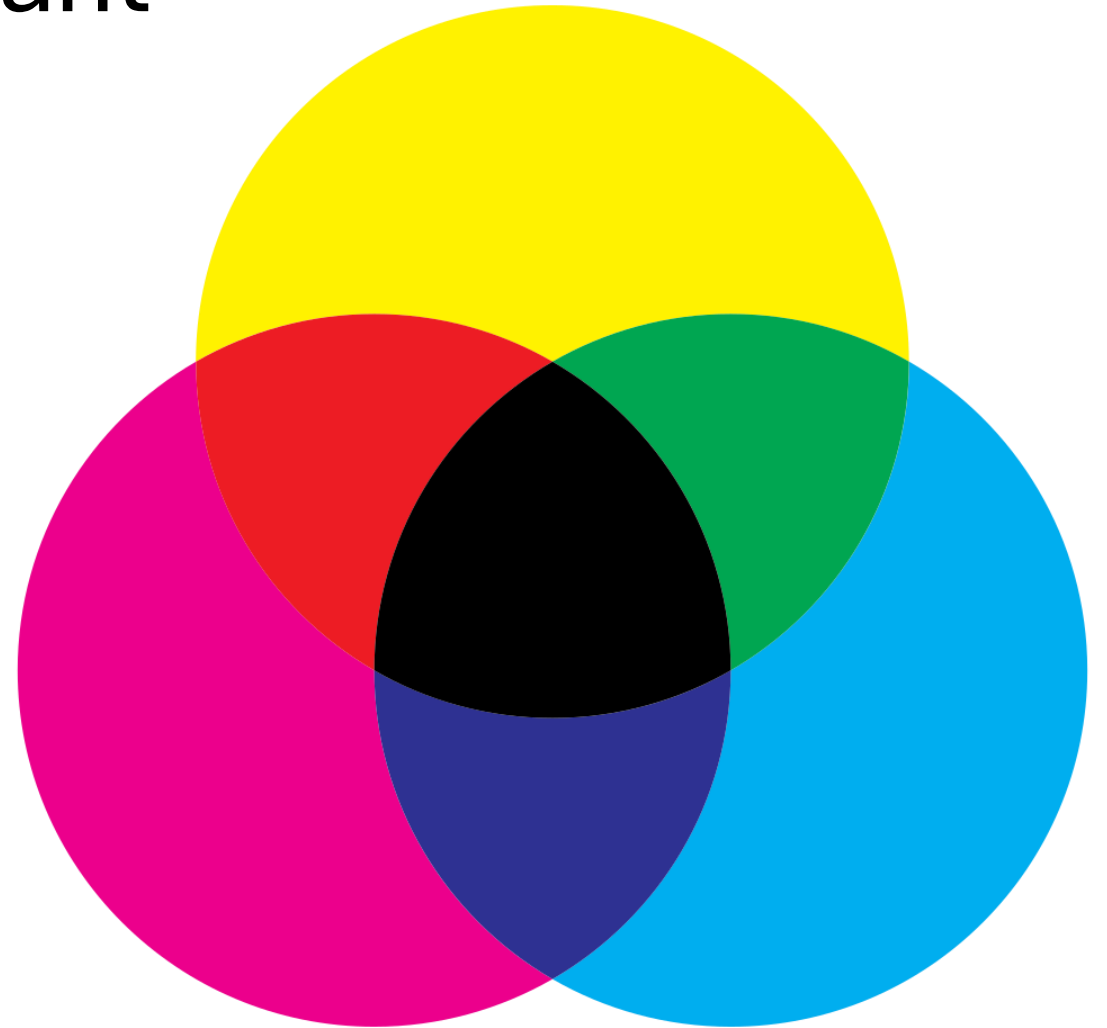
FRESH OR PAN?

- Fresh = painting with acrylic
 - Store your paint in a stay-wet-container
- Pan = Watercolour mentality painting
 - Let the gouache dry out
 - Things may crack and fall out, add honey to avoid this



Pigments you probably want

- PR 122 – Quin magenta
- PR245 – Scarlet/Pyrrol Red
- PR108 – Cad Red
- PG50 – Cobalt turquoise
- PB15 – ‘Primary cyan’
- PB29 - Ultramarine
- PG7 – Phthalo green
- **PY151 – Benzimidazolone yellow**
- **PY35 – Cad Yellow**



Pigments I like but aren't mandatory

The ones I use the **MOST** are **bolded**

- PY1 – ‘Permanent yellow’
- PR209 - Quin Red
- **PR 101 – Iron Oxide** ← or Venetian red, or English red.
- **PY43 – Yellow ochre** ← Good for portrait work
- **PY53 – Nickel yellow** ← Fixes chalked out portions of paintings in (1) brush stroke
- PO71 – Pyrrole orange
- **PV29 – Perylene Violet** ←
- **PBk31 – Perylene Green** ← For creating interesting ‘black’ alternatives
- **PV23 – Diox Purple** ←
- PV49 – Cobalt Violet ← Good for putting life into dead shadow’d regions, PV49 may be hard to find.
- PG19 – Cobalt green

PAPER?

Hot press is
best for
beginners

2.8x zoom

Cold press is
best for people
who want to layer
(a lot)

1.5 x zoom

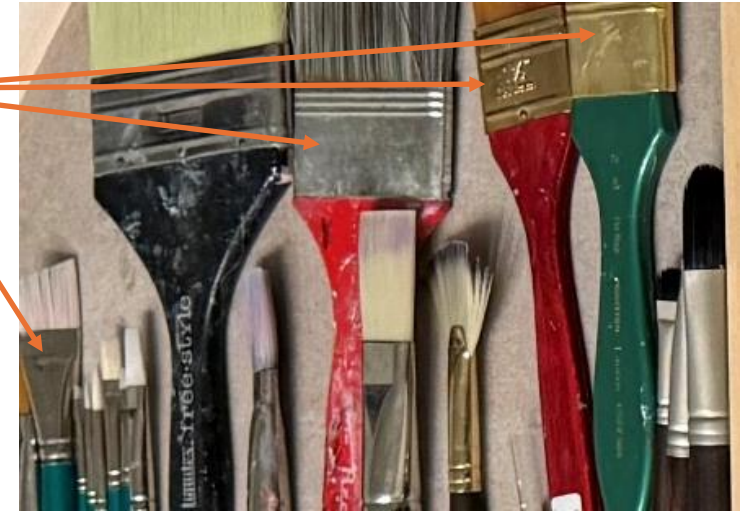
Rough is best
for people who
miss canvas

1.5 x zoom

Brushes general

- Tight ferrule for either medium (prevents dreaded surprise drips)
- Have a tap off rag, keep ferrule dry
- Ideally use one 'line' of brush – consistent absorbency is helpful for learning!

Ferrule



Simply Simons are budget friendly but the ferrule is *terrible* for random drips



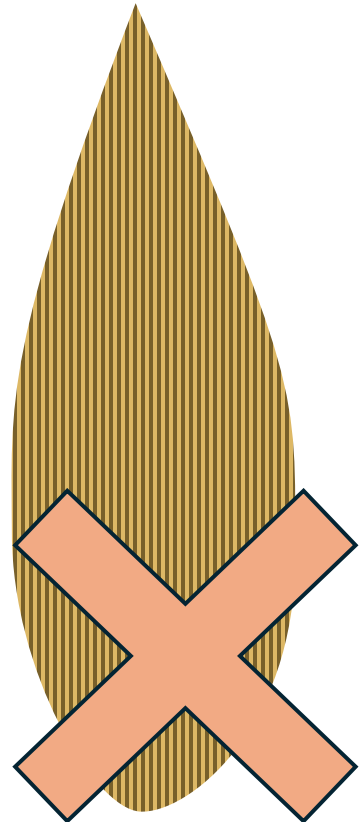
I like Velvet touch & Ruby Satin by Silver



Ruby satin -> Starting painting (Stiff)
Velvet touch -> Finishing the painting (Soft)

Brushes- gouache

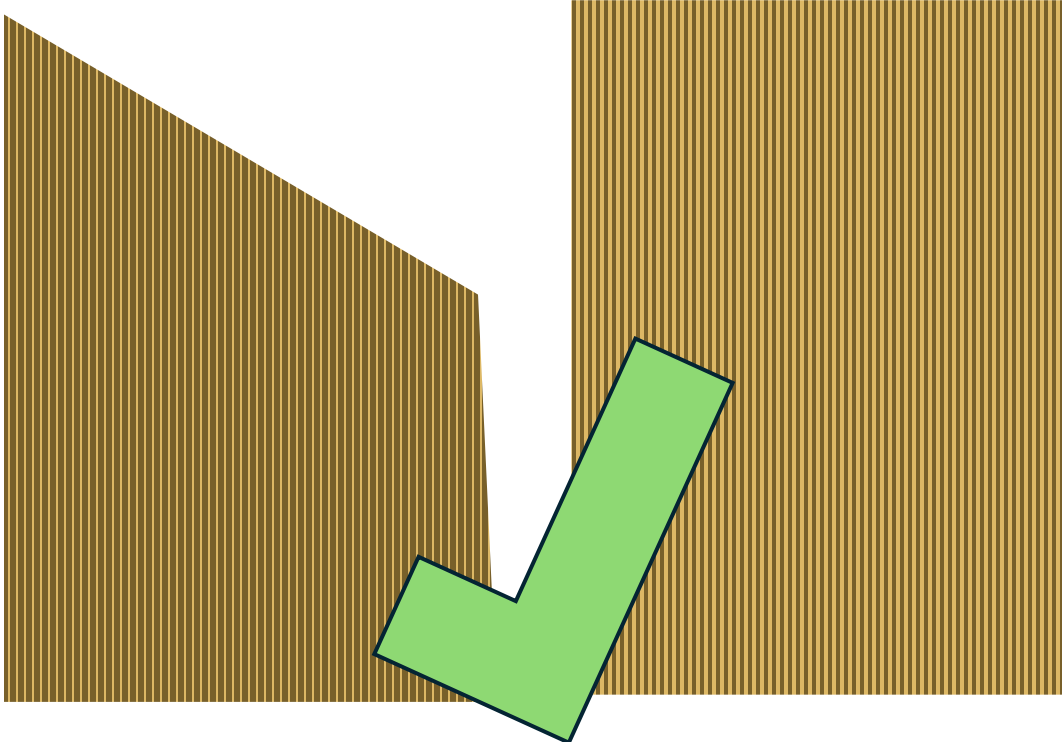
Round brushes can hold too much water for easy water control with gouache, use sparingly or with frequent dry off



Do use synthetics

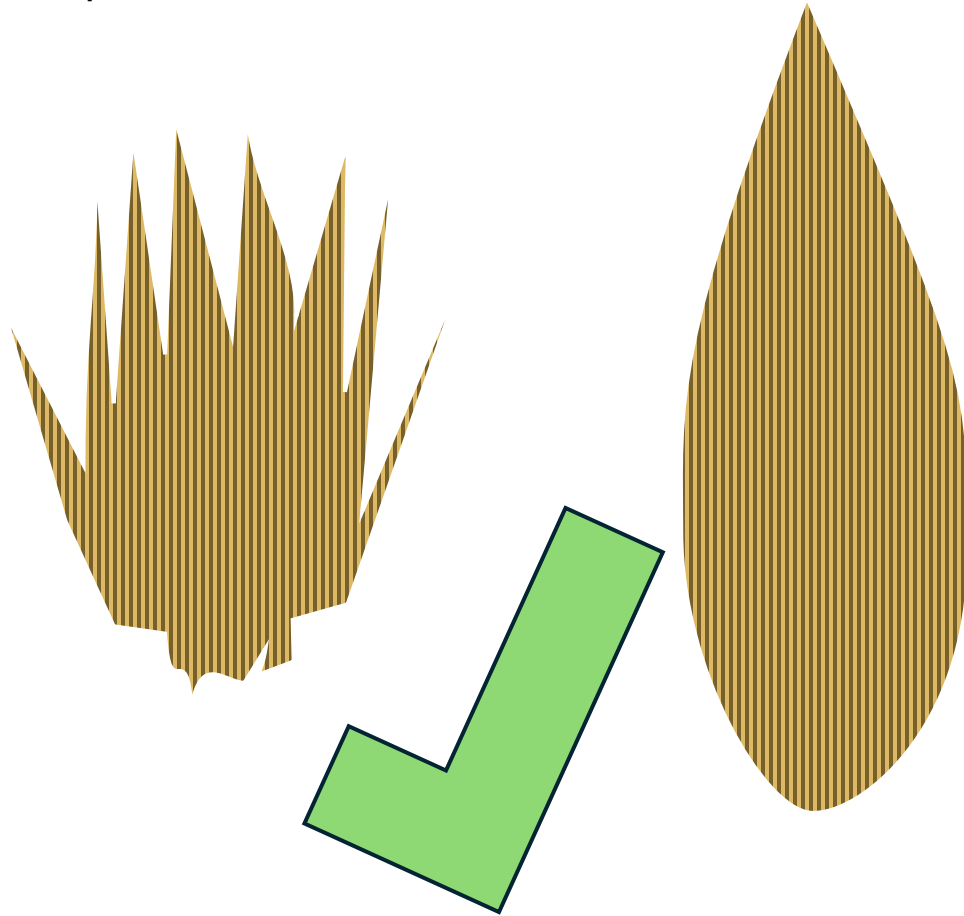


Do not use natural hair, holds too much water



Brushes - watercolour

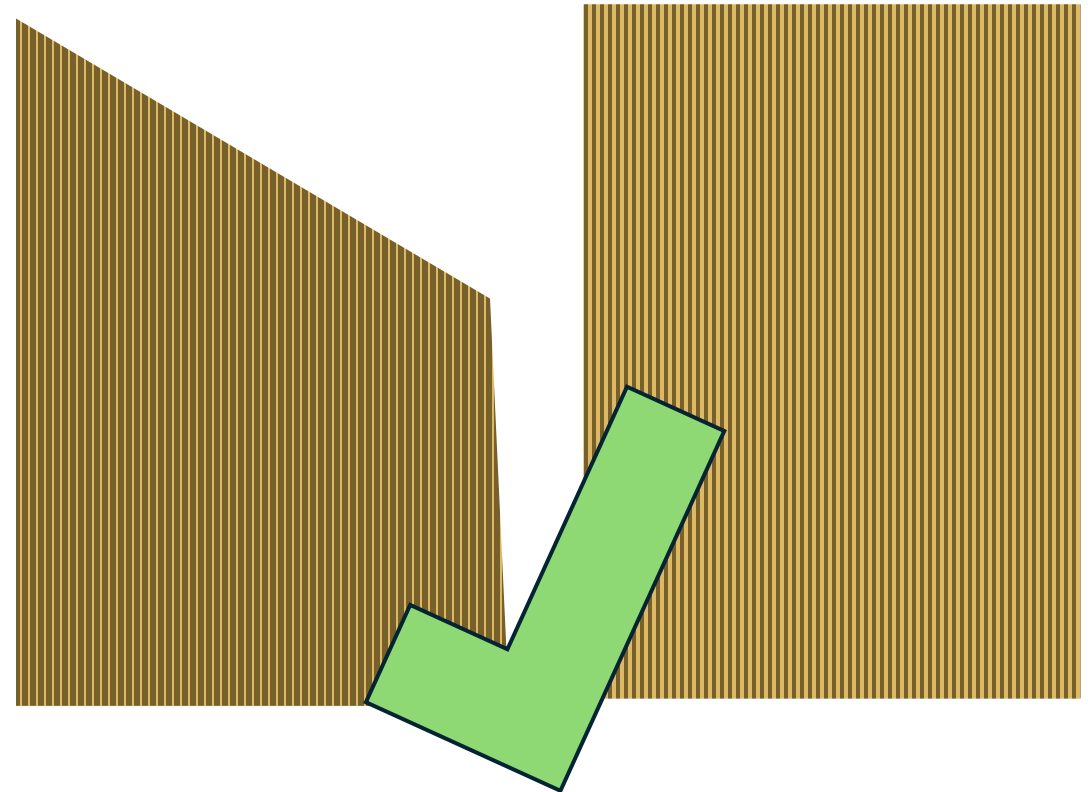
Use whatever shape you want, good brush/ water pickup control matters most



Use synthetics



Use natural hair, holds much water



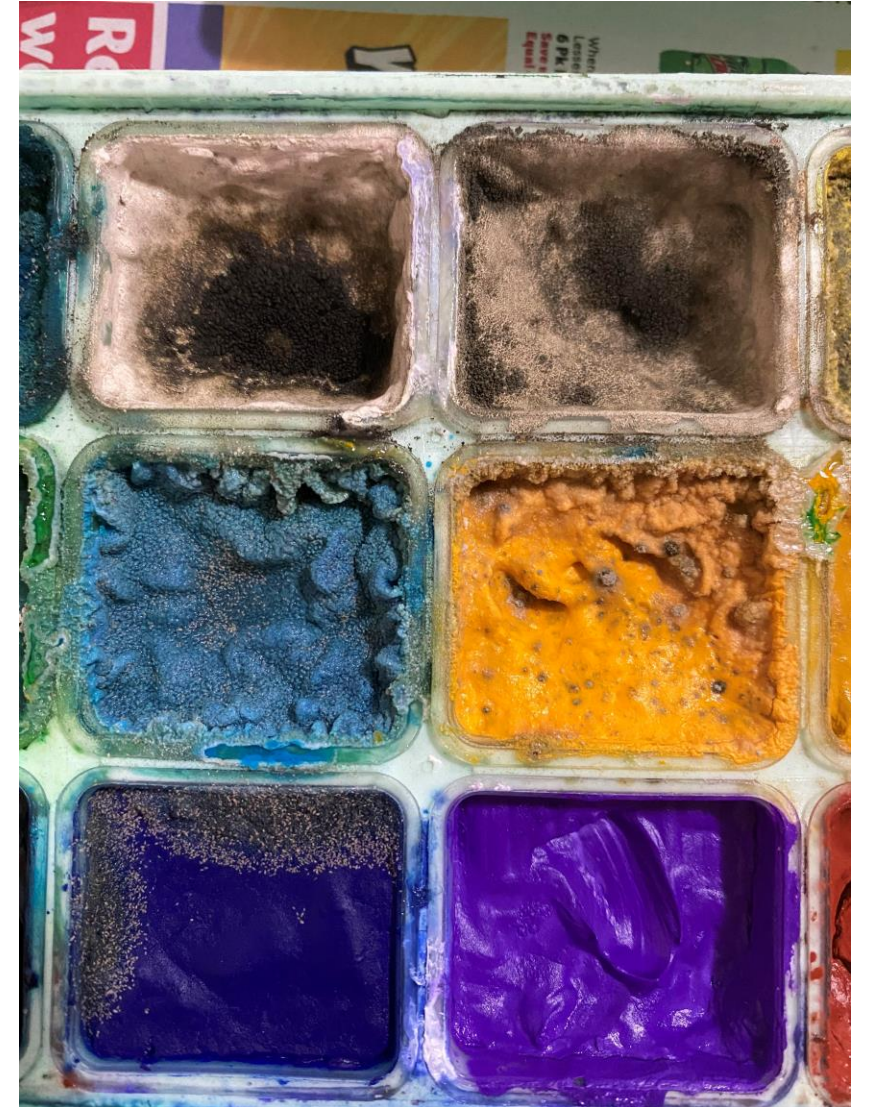
WATER?!

Do not use tap water for rewetting/maintaining moisture in your pans!

Increases risk of mold!



Tap water is okay when you are actively painting, just not for keeping paints hydrated!



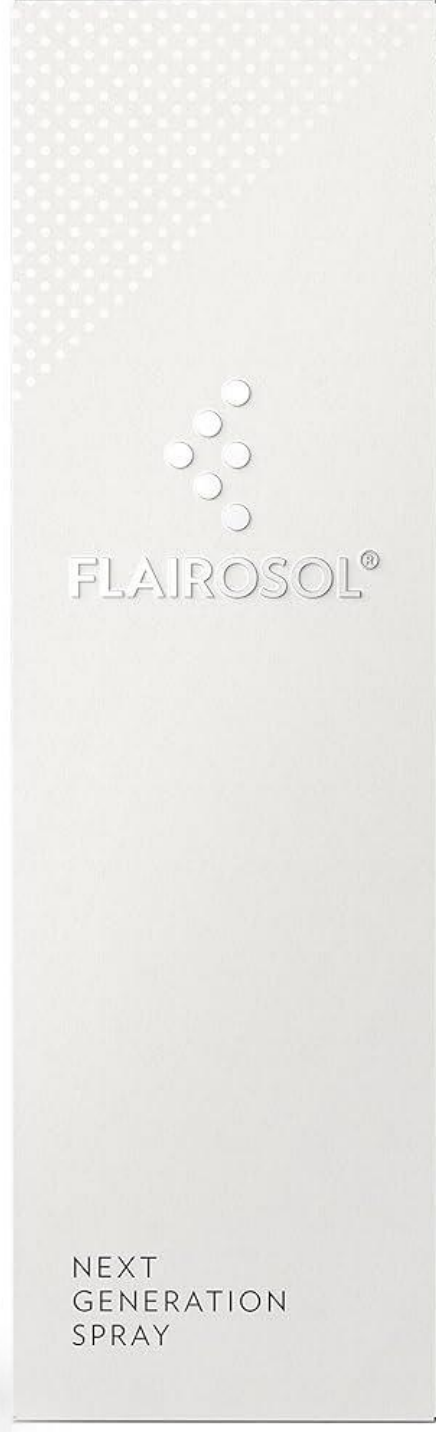
WATER?!

Use distilled or RO

Use fine mister to
wholesale rewet pans



- 5 months and no mold
- Let the pans dry out at least once a month



HYBRID APPROACH (what I do)

- Use fresh permanent and fresh zinc white
- Colours can be panned
- Add honey or ox gall to organic pigments (cadmiums, cobalts, umbers)
- Colours can be watercolour, or gouache



Procedure - Gouache

- Overpaint your background (eg, paint it into your shape, watercolour washing your best friend)
- Think in layers/puzzles
- Use thicker paint (less water) as you get closer to the end of your painting
- Light to dark helps, not mandatory



Procedure - Gouache

- Think in layers/puzzles
- LANDMARK YOUR DARKS



Procedure - Gouache

- Think in layers/puzzles



Procedure - Gouache

- Use thicker paint (less water) as you get closer to the end of your painting



Procedure - Gouache

- Build up pigment quickly with fresh paint, more gradually with pan paint
- Some people prefer working light to dark
- Too much white in lower layers will cause a chalky finish



Gouache specific technical tips:

- If you want colour dense paint...
 - Dry your brush off **before** going into the pan – pay attention to moisture levels in your pan as you work. Don't create a swamp (you'll get streaky paint!)
 - If you are working on final layers, consider drying your brush **before AND after**
- If you want to blend colour...
 - Make sure you have enough colour on the page
 - Make mixture of the blending region, apply with a fairly dry brush

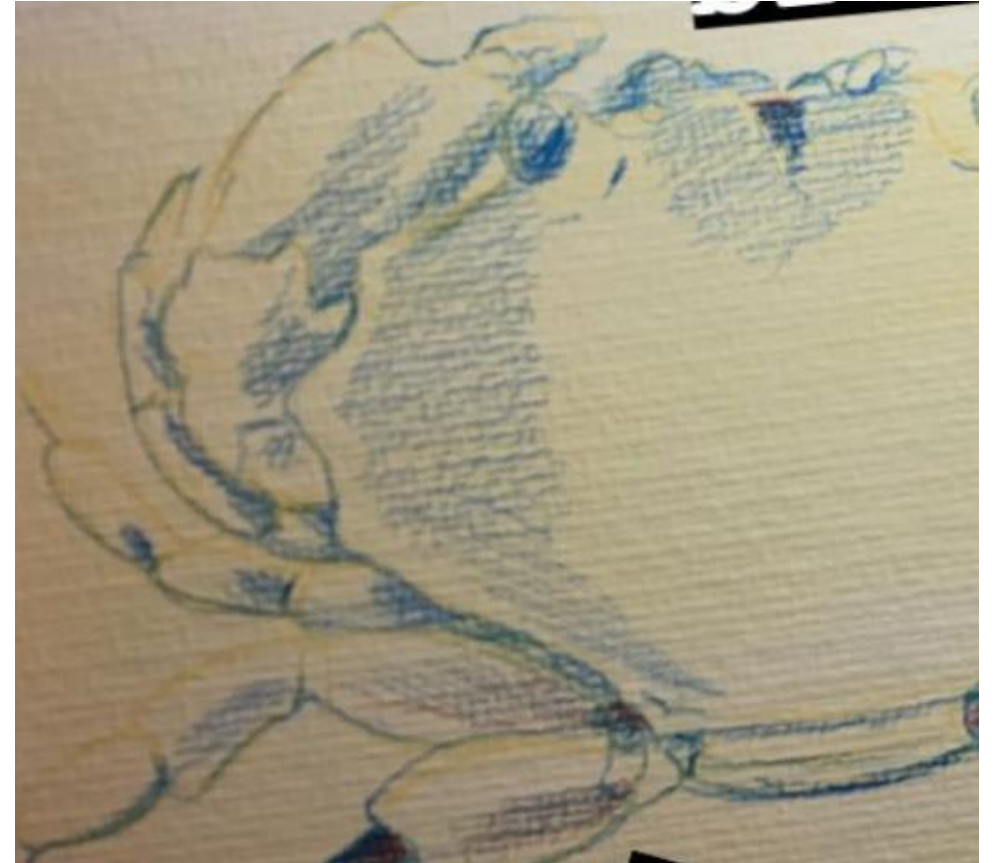
Gouache success is found in two ways

- Patience (let the layers dry)
- Construction-focused painting (no faffing)



Procedure - Watercolour

- Overpaint your background – or use masking fluid if your focal subject is lighter than the background
- Do your sketch in watercolour pencil if possible



Faint evidence of yellow wash background

Procedure - Watercolour

- Think about where you need the 'page' to be light/visible
- Working light to dark is better practice
- I work dark to light because I am a gouache goblin

Test how your colour spread is, different colours have different spread.



Procedure - Watercolour

- Wash in your structure as an underpainting, if you want.
- Shadows either happen now or later, rarely 'in the middle'



Procedure - Watercolour

- Wash, again, now red, notice some areas are left blue-white
- Build the background up a bit more



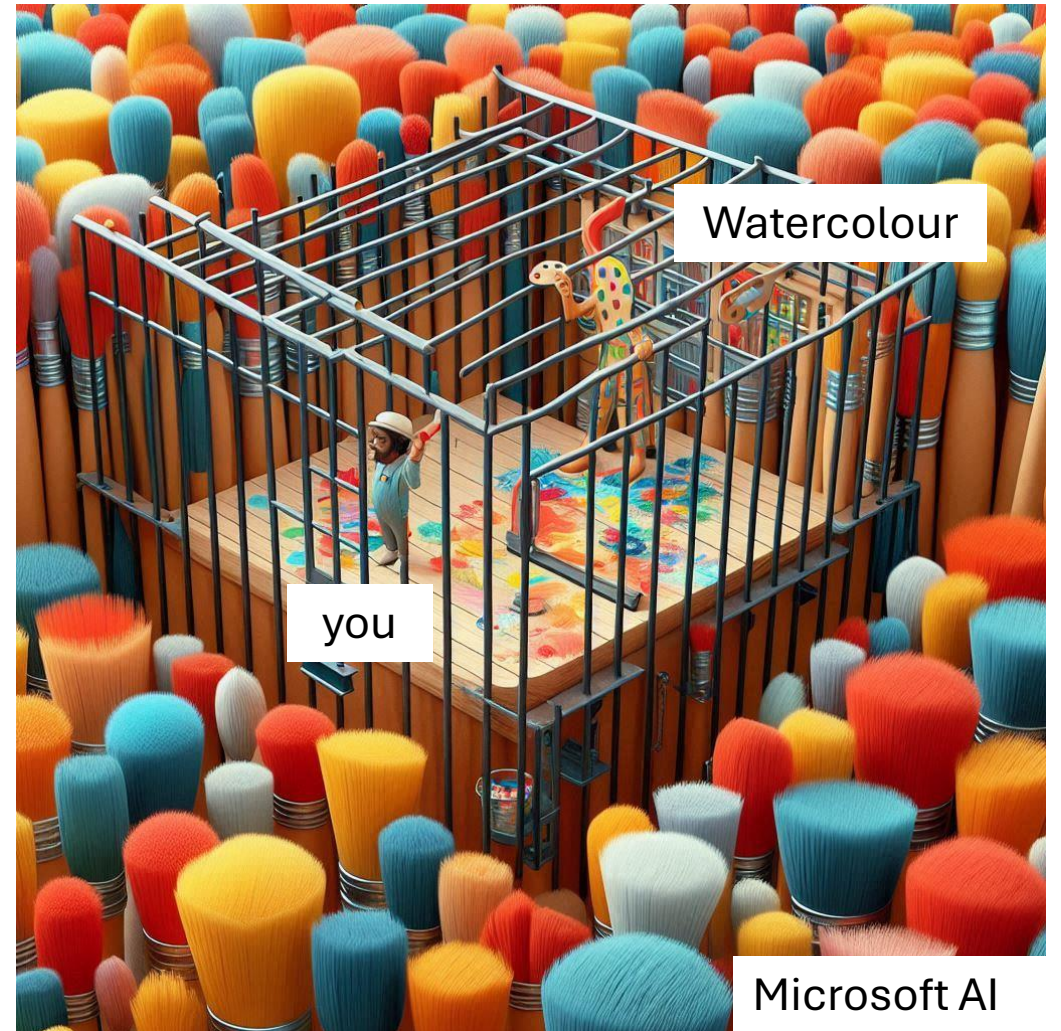
Procedure - Watercolour

- Permanent white gouache over everything
- ***Correct procedure would have been to plan for the spots last step.***



Watercolour success is found two ways

- Planning, testing, and practicing the required brushstrokes before starting your piece
- Accepting watercolour paint is a *collaborator*, not a medium you control.



Dampitude and layering

When is gouache dry enough to layer?

Use soft brushes for layering!

- Is no longer shiny? **Level 1 dry**, good for blending and on page colour mixing if you don't use too much water.
 - Too much water will give you soupy-paint-self-mixing chaos
- Is cool to touch? Not fully dry, **level 2 dry**, using low water paint okay for layering
- Is same temperature as paper? **Fully dry**, slap a new layer on that bad boy, may even get away with water diluted washes.

Dip pens!

Best used on hot press paper, cold press is pushing it, rough is difficult

Mix paint with water in a small container until its milk-consistency



“cheating”

- Mix fluid matte medium w/ gouache to create instant acrylic gouache. This can lead to white-build on paper if used excessively.
- Mix **absorbent ground** with gouache in place of permanent white to create acrylic gouache
 - it stays workable for a while and lets you layer and blend for about 4 hours.
 - Absorbency means future normal gouache layers adhere well
 - Allows watercolour washing
- Use absorbent ground directly on paper to fix BIG mistakes

Technical Contrast slides ahead

- Boring, but helpful.
- Different considerations for watercolour versus gouache

Water and white

Gouache

Mix in permanent white to increase colour density (very sparingly) – use **white** in place of **water**

Mix in water to adjust the thick-thin consistency of the gouache

Mix in zinc white to adjust tone, but not colour density of pigment, retain transparency,

Wet the page ahead of pigment, you may get a weird splotchy background

Put white + other preferred colour overtop of mistakes

Watercolour

Use water to adjust colour density. Mixing in white is a crime, use the white of your paper.

Mix in water to adjust the pigment density of your paint

Do a wash with zinc white or use it to lighten other colours

Wet page ahead of pigment to feel like god for 4 seconds

If you put white over mistakes someone from wetcanvas.com will hunt you down

Colouring stuff

Gouache	Watercolour
Mix colours on the palette, apply to page	Mix colours on palette and apply to page, or do washes
Blend colours on the page by adding more of either colour	Mix colours by washing one colour over the other, either while page is still wet, or after page is dry
Avoid mixing directly on page, mud generation risk if you have layered different colours	Mix directly on the page if you know pigment behavior for your planned mix
Take away mistakes with permanent white	Take away mistakes using an eradicator brush (or with white if you do not fear the zealots)
Wait until previous layers are completely dry before painting over, otherwise you'll disturb pigments below	Do whatever. Wait till lower layers are dry if you want precise marks. Work wet on wet if you want smooth blends

Acrylic versus both

Acrylic	Watercolour/Gouache
Mix with water, or mediums to thin paint	Water only * Mix with acrylic glazing medium for perfectly even granulation
Use slow-dri medium to increase blending time for paint	Blending time infinite for non-staining pigments (gouache) Blending time until paper fully dries (watercolour)
Use reducer to accelerate drying time	Use heat gun to accelerate drying time
Adjust gloss with matte/satin/gloss medium	Adjust gloss using ox gall/honey/etc – you can make things more glossy, less is hard
Work on canvas, wood, glass, skulls, oranges, whatever	Work on paper, or absorbent grounds, or surfaces primed to be compatible