

Shake Rag Alley Center for the Arts

Textured Mixed Media

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Materials and Supplies:

Painting surfaces such as boards of canvasses should be chosen on how you plan on manipulating the media you are working with and durability to resist warpage and deterioration. For example, a traditionally stretched canvas will allow you to manipulate the surface and readily avoid warping whereas thin plywood or other sheet stock will warp when the media dries. Thin sheet stock should be reinforced with a ridged stretcher. The advantage of a hard surface such as wood is the allowance to fix object and manipulate the surface and/or shape before the media is added. For this workshop a few different options will be provided for you.

Media can vary depending on your preference and outcome. Acrylics dry fast and are excellent for applying glazes and layers. Decide your color pallet and with the addition of various acrylic mediums or even Mog Podge you can achieve many types of results. Oils can be used but take a long time to dry. All other mediums are fair game, and experimentation is as always encouraged. There is also an ever increasing selection of textural product on the market such as modeling paste and matte medium and the like. I prefer to mix my own to customize it to my needs. Here is my basic formula of what will be provided and we will be using:

- 1 part acrylic modeling paste
- 1 part ready mix drywall compound

Add ins such as fine sawdust and other light fillers may be added to create texture. Paint also can be added to achieve a solid and opaque color. I prefer to add colors after the medium has been applied and given time to dry.

Papers can also be added to the work surface. Anything from old sheet music, maps and other images can easily be added to create a collage effect. Handmade paper and thin translucent Japanese papers can also be added to great effect. Thin papers with a strong fibrous grain can be used to laminate lighter object to the surface.

Found objects should be dried and/or preserved when dealing with plant and animal matter. Heavy objects need to be either mechanically fastened to the work surface or well laminated to the surface. Glue alone will usually not suffice, and even light nonporous items such as beads and buttons will typically free themselves with time if not secured. Keep in mind that gravity will be working against you. In many cases the way you attach your objects to the

surface can enhance the appearance and add to the overall visual interest.

Brushes will ultimately be chosen on what media you work in and how you work. My experience has taught me to purchase a middle of the road quality brush because of my work habits and needs. For acrylics I recommend stiff synthetic flat brushes for durability and flexibility. A small #0 Filbert brush is great also for details and Filbert brushes in general are great for blending. I like to have a good variety of sizes on hand depending on the task, typically from a 1/4" to a 3/4" in width with a #0 thrown in for detailing. Here is a good guide on brushes: <https://www.arttutor.com/blog/201808/guide-acrylic-painting-brushes>.

Pallet knives and putty knives are essential if you will be laying out a thick medium on your surface. Here is where I get cheap, buy a few thin flexible metal putty knives at the hardware store. Best to have a few sizes in your collection.

Choosing Acrylic Paints and Mediums

Try to avoid soft body paint and the cheaper craft paints in bottles. The high-quality acrylic paint typically isn't a big factor either. A middle of the road tube will suffice especially when you are working with washes and glazing. As for colors, that depends on what type of color pallet you prefer. Until you zero in on that I would recommend buying smaller quantities (2 oz. tubes) as to not getting stuck with a large tube of something you never use. It is nice to have a set of primary colors including a white and a black and work out from there. If you prefer earth tones work with umbers and siennas with an ocher and Hooker's green thrown in for good measure. Buying a preselected set can often work also.

As for acrylic mediums and varnishes, it all depends on the surface you desire. The range can cover a lot. Matte to gloss and everything in between. Crackle and textures are also an option. Mediums will be used in making glazing and for surface coating. If you prefer a drier look go with matte and gloss if you prefer shiny and wet looking. Again, I would recommend buying a few types in small bottles. In a pinch Mod Podge will also work.