

MARY'S BIRD HOUSE STUDY

Pen and Ink with Rouged Oils

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This design was created from a photo I took at an antique store in our town! I put the photo of the bird house in my projector and traced the pattern from it. I hope you enjoy working from the line drawing and embellishments I added. Please email or call me if you have questions!

MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR THIS PROJECT

- Desired surface to work on [feel free to enlarge or reduce the design to fit any size surface desired].
- Simplified version of pattern traced onto tracing paper [unless you are using a projector- in that case, reduce the pattern to fit on a 4" x 6" index card for use in the projector.]
- Black Graphite Paper [if needed]
- Pencil or Pen for tracing and transferring [if needed]
- Magic Rub Eraser and clicker retractable eraser
- Masking Tape
- Rapidograph Pen [size 2xO] and Black Daler Rowney FW Acrylic Artists Ink
- Liberty Matte Spray
- Suggested Oil Colors and Gel Transparentizer
- Windex [for ink mistakes on wood or canvas]
- Paper Towels / a good quantity of cotton swabs
- Suggested Brushes and Palette Knife
- Waxy Palette Paper

SUGGESTED MARTIN F/ WEBER OIL COLORS

- Payne's Grey
- Burnt Umber
- Alizarin Crimson Permanent
- Cad Yellow Medium

SUGGESTED BRUSHES

- Scharff Series 100 Classic Bright sizes 4, 6, 8,14,20 and 32
- A Scharff Liner Brush Series 455, size 1
- A Scharff Scumbler Set Series 240 Touch-it

In the following segment you will notice the similarity for preparing the various surface choices and steps for the inking and painting process as outlined in previous packets. I apologize for the repetition, but they all relate to each other.

PREPARING THE SURFACE FOR INKING AND PAINTING

If using canvas, no prep is needed. Just unwrap the canvas, transfer choice of surfaces] if needed, and wipe surface a damp rag. Whitewash wood for the best results, because natural wood darkens as it ages and that will pull your design down. Use a rag wet with water and wrung out a bit. Put some of your favorite bottled white acrylic paint on the rag and proceed to “stain” your wood piece with the white acrylic. Let dry well, then seal with 2-3 good coats of the Liberty Matte Spray as listed above. After spraying the surface, buff with a fine sanding pad to smooth a bit, dust off with a damp rag again, then apply a light mist of spray to give the surface tooth. This will prevent the pen and ink from beading up on the surface of the wood! After allowing time for the spray to cure and not feel tacky, transfer pattern on with graphite and you're ready to ink in.

ALTERNATIVES

[A general reminder- the more porous the surface is, the more sealer you must use to provide mobility and correctability of paint.]

STRETCHED CANVAS OR LOOSE CANVAS MOUNTED ONTO A BOARD SURFACE, TO BE MATTED AND FRAMED LATER

No sealer is necessary before inking. Just transfer traced pattern onto canvas, ink in design, erase graphite lines or smudges with an eraser; then apply at least 2-3 generous coats of the Matte Spray.

A PREVIOUSLY SEALED OR VARNISHED PIECE [MAYBE A TRUNK LID OR DOOR TO A CABINET!]

Remove any dirt or waxy build-up on surface with mild detergent and water, dry thoroughly. Transfer pattern on, ink in, remove transfer smudges, and then apply a light mist of Matte spray to protect inking. After completing the painting process, duplicate the finish that was on the surface prior to inking.

SLATE

Wash slate if necessary, let dry. Use your favorite bottled acrylic paint [like Delta Ceramcoat] and a sponge roller to basecoat the surface of the slate 2 times for the best coverage. A really great helpful hint is to not work any water into the paint or roller so you do not end up with air bubbles. After the basecoats have dried, apply one really generous coat of the Liberty Matte Spray to seal the surface, then apply one light misty spray from at least 12 inches away to add tooth to the surface. After the spray has dried, feel the surface with the palm of your hand and if it still feels really slick you did not spray high up and away from the surface enough. You want the toothy surface so your pen does not slip around and the ink will not bead up. Make sure to allow for at least 12 hours curing time so you do not clog your pen.

TIN

Wash if the tin is older and treat for rust if needed. I prefer to basecoat with a sponge roller and bottled acrylic in whatever light shade you prefer. After the basecoat has dried, apply one generous spray of the Liberty Matte Spray, then after that has dried, you can add the dry-spray that I mentioned in the slate prep

instructions above. Just make sure you let everything cure for at least 12 hours so you do not clog the tech pen.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE INKING PROCESS

- Transfer only the basic pattern lines onto the surface. Keep lines light and delicate so they can be easily removed with an art gum eraser.
- Use the Technical Pen to ink in as much detail as desired. Keep referring to the photo included in the packet for help in determining how much of this you want to apply. The really neat thing about using a tech pen on a perfectly and completely sealed surface, is the ability to do correction work! On wood, canvas, or non-paper surface, simply dip a cotton swab into a small amount of Windex or any cleaner containing ammonia, wring out a bit, then gently wipe over the boo-boo. It totally disappears! Let the area dry before going back to ink over. If working on any kind of a paper surface, the only option you have is to let the mistake dry and either try to turn it into an asset, or scratch over it lightly with a razor or exacto knife to lift it off the paper. Be careful, though!
- Feel free to add more ink detailing than is included in the pattern. You can always try a few additions, and then remove them if you don't like them! Ink in the border outline; then go over lines a few times to intensify if desired.
- After completing the inking process, make sure everything has dried. Lightly remove the graphite lines and smudges with the Magic Rub eraser.
- Dust off any crumbs from the eraser. Go outside and apply several coats of the Liberty Matte Spray.
- After the sealer spray has dried, Buff over the surface with a scrap of tracing paper to smooth. Now you are ready to add color!

THE DIFFERENT APPROACH I USE TO ADD COLOR [AN EXPLANATION]

Rather than "painting in" the color, I prefer to use the term "rouging" or "tinting". The paint is applied in small amounts in an area where the shading or color is the richest or most intense, then different sized Blenders are used to coax the color over the surface, graduating the intensity or value of the color from deeper and richer to a medium value, then on to a lighter, brighter tone, or area appearing to catch a highlight or reflected light. The most important thing to remember is every area that is painted should hold at least 3 values of color to give the appearance of dimension.

SOME RULES AND REGULATIONS [only kidding...they're just helpful hints]

- Brush-mix a bit of gel into the paint as needed. In most cases [if working on a really slick surface], apply the paint dry [right from the tube so to speak], and move the paint around with completely dry brushes. If you are working on a surface that seems to be very porous and the paint appears to drag, use a tiny amount of the Gel Transparentizer I mentioned in the Materials required section. Just incorporate a tiny bit of the gel into the brush before loading with paint. Mix the paint and gel together on the palette before adding the color to the surface, and then proceed to rouge as directed.

- **What about mistakes and paint outside the patterned areas?**
Dry cotton swabs are excellent for lifting color in an area where you have "over-painted". Rub in a circular motion to lift color off the surface, and then go back to using one of the Blenders to soften the outside edges of that area. The clicker eraser can remove paint from around the objects also.
- Another trick I use to "take the pressure off" is to apply the color in stages, and I use the matte spray to "speed-dry" these "glazed" applications of color between coats. In every area that is tinted, I applied at least 2 different color glazes, drying them between applications. This keeps your color clear and vibrant, with less chance of "mudding". Once you get the hang of this, it can become a lot of fun!
- Keep a close eye on the colored photo in the packet for reference. I will tell you the colors I used in an area, but you need the photo to see how far I blended it out.
- Vary the sizes of the brushes for laying the color in, as well as blending the color out.
“Swirl” brushes on paper towel after every few strokes, during the blending process.

LET’S ADD COLOR!

THE BIRD HOUSE

Use your palette knife to mix some Payne's Grey into a small amount of Burnt Umber to create a deep chocolate brown. If you smudge a bit of Burnt Umber onto the palette by itself, it looks like cinnamon. Adding the Payne's Grey to it deepens it to a cooler and darker brown tone.

Use the smallest Scumbler brush to set bits of this color under the eaves of the bird house and all of the areas reflected in the photo to hold the most intensity. If you were “floating” the color with acrylic, you would be setting the darkest part of the float in these areas. Use the #20 Blender to rouge the color so it graduates from dark to medium to light. Follow the photo closely.

The ROOF is straight Payne's Grey. You can clean out the Scumbler in a bit of gel if needed, then work into the Payne's Grey to cancel out the first color mix. Add this to the areas in the roof where it needs to be the darkest when referring to the photo. Soften the color with the #20 Blender.

INTERMISSION

This is a good time to go outside to add as many mists of matte spray as needed to completely dry everything you have added so far. Start with a very light misting of spray added from several inches away; let dry, then add additional sprays with each one getting heavier than the last one. It usually takes about 4 sprays, and the last one should be applied close and generous without creating pools and runs. Let dry completely, then you are ready to add more color!

BACK TO WORK!

THE SHADING UNDER THE BIRD HOUSE

Use the palette knife to mix a bit of Burnt Umber into some Payne's Grey to create black. Check by scraping the paint on the palette and looking at the stain the paint leaves. If you do not see a blue tone, and you do not see a brown tone, but the stain looks like a grey-black tone you have achieved your color mix!

Clean out the small Scumbler and proceed to scuff this color under the bird house. Follow the photo closely for placement and use the largest Blender to rouge the color away and make sure there are no "makeup lines". The paper towel trick is great for softening the edges of the color.

TINTING THE GREENERY AND THE ROSY BACKGROUND

Use the palette knife to mix some Cad Yellow Medium with some Payne's Grey to create a deep pine green tone. Use the largest Scumbler to brush-mix a bit of gel with some of this green mix and stipple bits of this in the areas of greenery. Use the largest Blender to rouge away and again; make sure there are no lines of demarcation at the outermost areas.

Clean out the large Scumbler by swirling on paper towel, then, brush-mix some Payne's Grey into a small amount of Alizarin Crimson Permanent to create a deep plum tone. Keep the amount of paint [with a tiny bit of gel added] really scant so it does not overpower the picture. Buff tiny bits of this plum tone into the background, and rouge away with the large Blender. Step back to evaluate.

THE LAST TOUCHES OF COLOR

While you have the plum color on the large Scumbler, proceed to add buffs of this onto the bird house body as well as the roof. Use the large Blender to really soften this so it looks like reflected color and stays really muted. Finish with the final mistings of matte spray to completely dry your rouging, wash your brushes with soap and water, let them air-dry, and you are finished! Enjoy!

ANY QUESTIONS, FEEL FREE TO WRITE OR CALL

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A SPECIAL NOTE

If you have not attended a seminar with me or one of my certified teachers, and you are a little apprehensive with starting this technique I would like to recommend one of the project DVDs we have created. If you visit our website you can see the selections and each one has a pattern included. Each DVD has complete visual instructions as well as extras like taking care of the tech pen, how to create your designs on alternative surfaces and how to prepare the surface. Lots of extras and detailed demonstrations that you can apply to any of my pattern packets. Over 3 hours of visual guidance that will show you how I use the brushes and also the sequencing for adding color as well as creating the inked textures that bring the designs to life! Call us for answers to your questions.