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issue #14

AIRBRUSH

THE MAGAZINE

Aug./ Sept. 2021

FEATURED
ARTISTS:

Marcus Eisenhuth"
Big Bang"

ARTICLES BY:



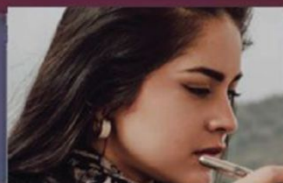
JEFF SIMONS



DON JOHNSON



KATE COOK



Laura Romero

TECH TIPS
DRU BLAIR
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GALLERY



INTERVIEW AIRBRUSH
HALL OF FAME ARTIST

MICKEY HARRIS



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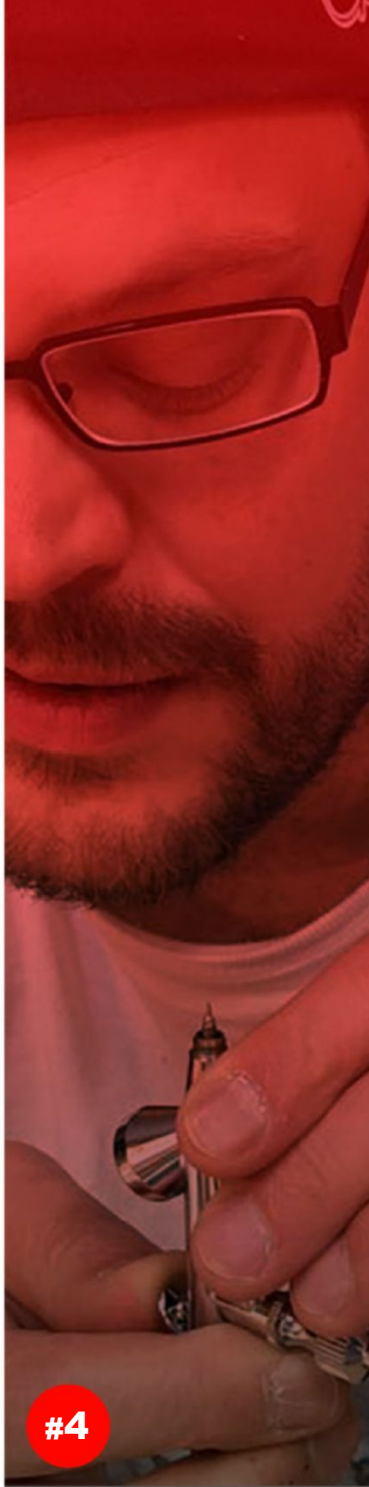
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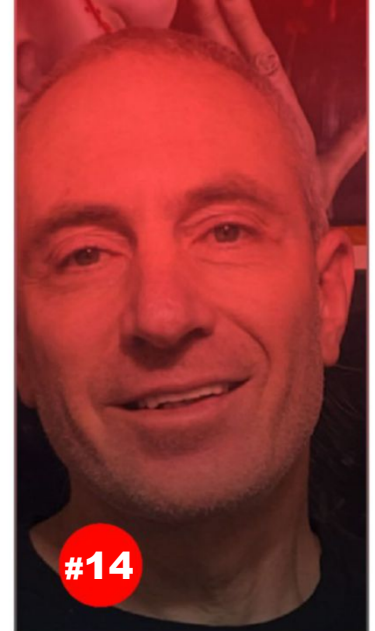
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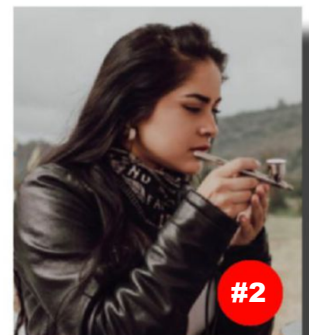
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ARTIST PROFILE



Laura Lozano Romero

Limitless Versatility

Laura Lozano Romero is a young Colombian airbrush artist from the city of Medellín, focused on the continuous exploration of styles and nuances. She mixes forceful realism and very illustrative lines. Laura is passionate about high contrast textures and colors, which generate incredible fresh tones.

Her impeccable work and her incredible versatility have allowed her to develop in different fields. Such as customizing motorcycles and helmets for Royal Enfield, Harley Davidson, K Bikes, the Custom build Show.

In the fashion world, her customized pieces for clothing are sold in shops like Chevignon, Agaval Store, Lemon Tree Store, Pedrojas, etc.

She is also the official illustrator of the bottles of Tequila Mexicano "Alacrán" since 2015. Always with a fresh proposal, she seeks to encourage each person's style. She is showing that being unique is something positive.

Today, she dedicates most of her time to muralism, in restaurants, hotels and decorating exclusive places in Medellín, Colombia. Laura has left her mark with large-format illustrations created with her airbrush. Most of her mural paint sessions are live events, where guests can see part of the creative process. This has allowed them to connect directly with the work and Laura her guests.

To learn more about Laura Lozano's artistic work, you can access:

www.instagram.com/lauralozano



READERS GALLERY



BRUCE HUTKOSKI



MARCUS EISENHUTH



MARGRET HOWARD



STEVE WISNIESKI



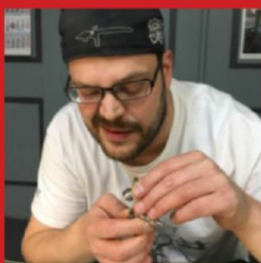
DIDIER ENGEL



JOE LARRY MASON



PAUL BUTVILA



The Big Bang by Step by Step Aluminium Dibond 70x95 cm
Createx Wicked and Illustration paints
Iwata Custom Micron's and Eclipse Airbrushes

I printed a black and white image to transfer my draft to the surface.

I cut a stencil of the main subject to protect it from overspray while I painted the background. The next step was to make some holes around my stencil and used FBS KTUG gold tape to place my stencil on the surface. From now on, all work is freehand. I am working loose and with a more significant distance to the surface to create a blurry background.



1-2 I mixed a Purple from red-violet and cobalt blue to start the blurry background. On colorful paintings like this, I work with up to 10 Airbrushes. This saves a lot of time, makes the whole process

much faster, and you do not have to switch the paint all the time. So it is much easier to go back and forward. And as you will see I always jump around in my paintings.



3-4 Next color was a mix of burnt sienna and yellow, magenta and orange. At this point, I decided to add the first fluorescent tone.

Back and forward to create depth and blur.



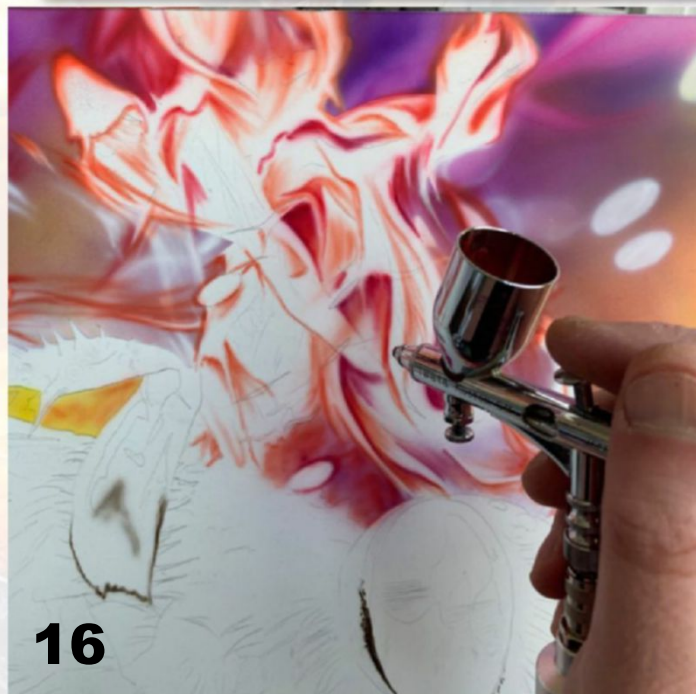


5-7 Now its time to start the first lines of the fire. I am using the illustration fire red (coming soon from Createx). I use Wicked opaque white to do some corrections or bring back some areas I did not like. Here I also add the movement of the background and some flying sparks. Back to the fire on the legs I add yellow to fill the open space and come in with some illustration blood red. I decided to remove the stencil because I always get bored working with stencils.



8-11 At this point, the real fun begins for me. I start to work out the darkest areas in the fire and the wasp by using Illustration Bordeaux (coming soon) and a Black sepia. The fire on the leg gets more shape. I'm using Createx opaque Yellow and Orange and tint

them with transparent paints (fire red, orange, and yellow). I come back with white to work out the highlights. For the flying sparks, I spray White and go over with fluorescent orange.

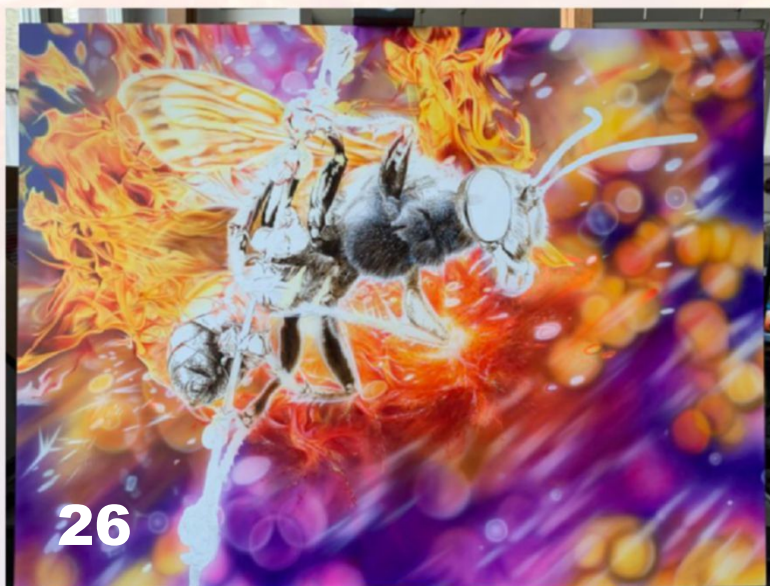


13-20 - I continued the fire with Bordeaux, Fire Red and Orange in the darkest areas. Then coming back with some white in the the highlight areas. I am working from dark to light at this point by following my line drawing.



22-23 I will now go back to the wasp using Black Sepia on the first layer of fur, the waist, back, and also on the legs. Again I'm coming

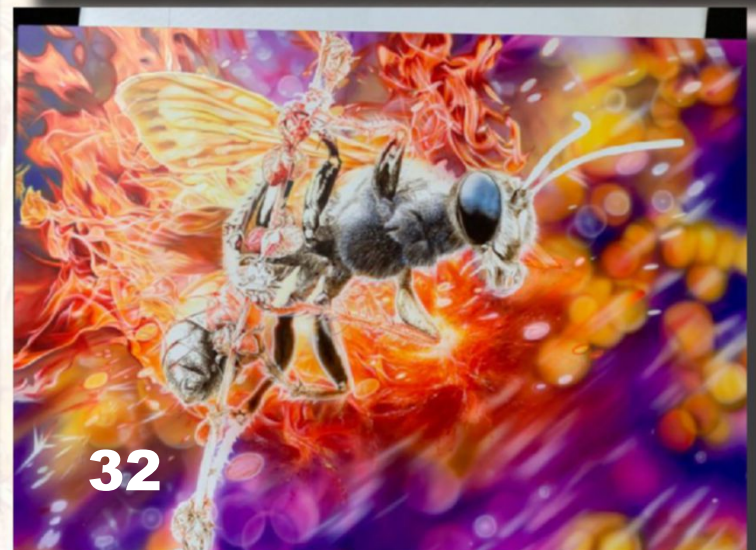
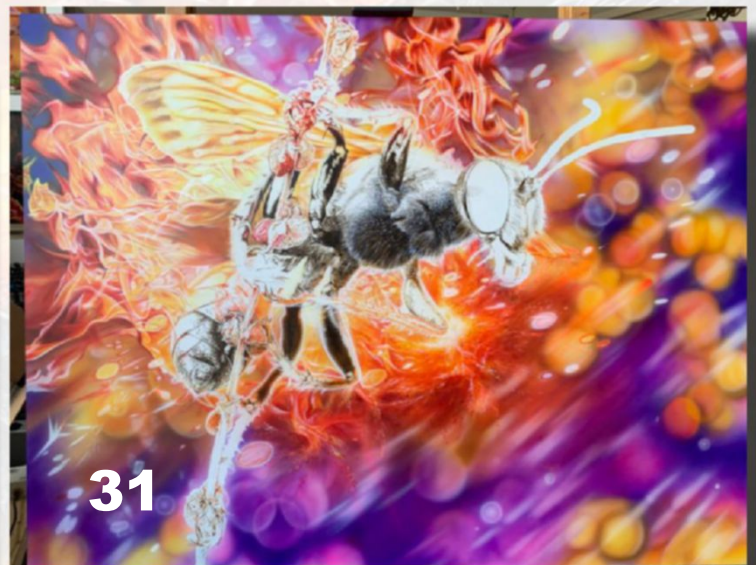
in with white and paint some texture by adding some dots and white hairs. For the head area and the eye, I used just Sepia.

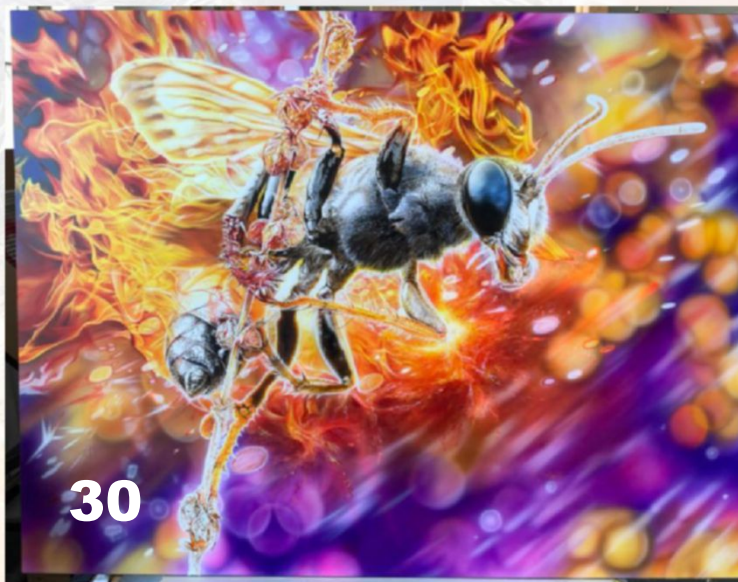




24-29 So as not to lose the contrast, I decided to jump back to the wings and fire again. I added some Ochre to work out the shapes on the wing, used Burnt Sienna to sketch out the wing a bit more. I used white again for some reflections and highlights on the wings.

With the Burnt Sienna, I also create more depth in the fire. After this step, I go back to the fire red and work out more of the shapes of the fire. When I am happy with this color, I take the white and bring back the highlights in the fire.

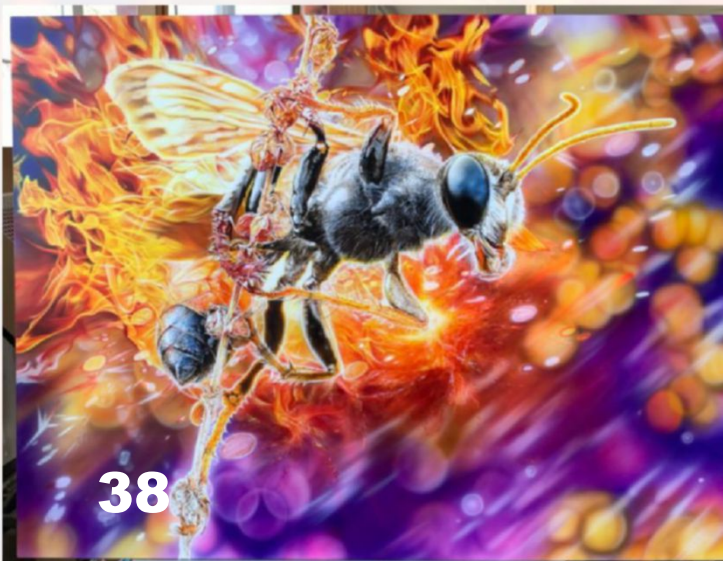




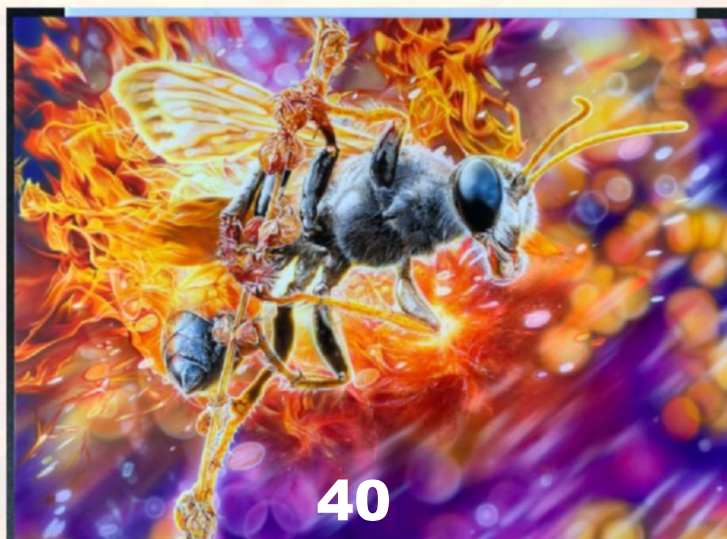
30-35 Now, it's time to get into more detailed work. So I will start with the stalk and the blossoms. The colors I am using here are Bordeaux, Fire Red, and Sepia for the first steps. Then, with Fire Red and Orange, I continue the legs and also the blossoms. In my opinion, there is too much white space in the head, so go back to Black Sepia and work out the eye. I am working very close to the surface and spray thin lines to create the facets. Then I fade in some cobalt Blue and also a very transparent Cerulean Blue. Finally, I start to do the head and feelers with Burnt Umber, Orange, and Illustration Yellow. The Illustration Yellow I mixed with transparent base and tinted all the fire, the light part of the legs, and a bit in the wing. After that, I bring back just a few highlights in the fire and the wings. Also, the shine all around the body, feelers, and legs I did with white. As the next color, I use Paynes Gray. The body and the legs need more realism and details, so I sprayed some grey in the light areas. Finally, for the transitions from dark to light, I used some Bordeaux.



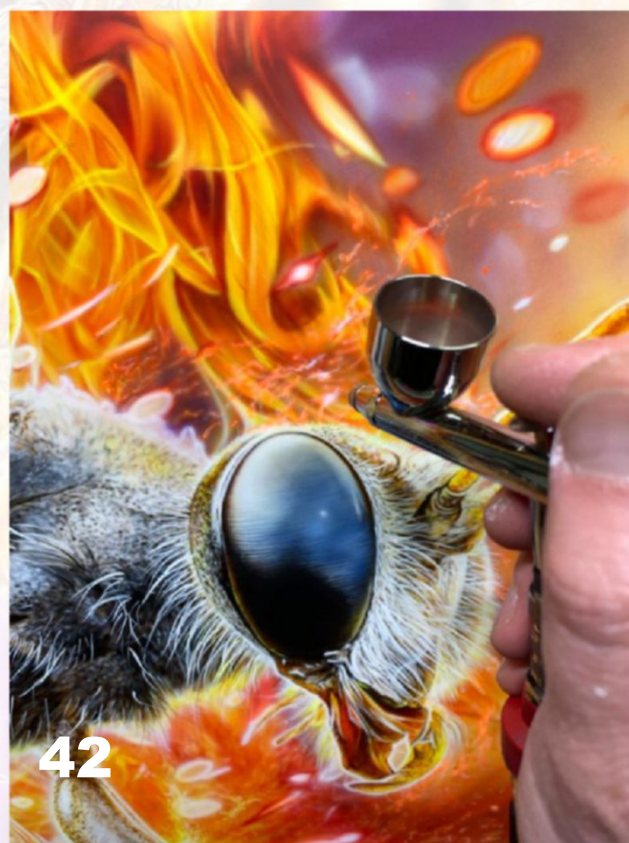
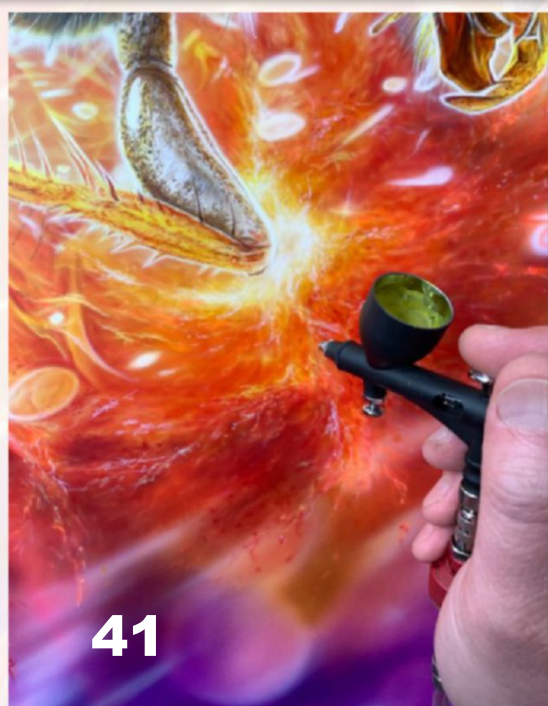
36-37 For the next step, I am using a brush. I have to say the brush is not my best friend because I have very shaky hands. But I wanted some long, very thin, and straight white lines, so I used an NR 10 liner brush.



38-39 To get more power and glow, I sprayed the CYMK Yellow over any space where there is Yellow. Also, the feelers and the legs.



40 In this stage, I was thrilled that the new Wicked opaques arrived. So I overworked the whole painting and also some areas in the Background with these paints. Significantly the new opaque white helped a lot to give everything more glow and much more pop! The white brilliance around, highlights, the flying sparks, and the fire on the legs get more detail. In the Background, I decided to bring in some more magic by adding some Hot Rod sparkles, Sparklescent, and pearl colors. (sadly, it doesn't show up in the pictures). A few more fluorescent for Background and bubbles, and the Background is done.





41-44 Just the fire spots in the back need to be finished. I worked the same way as the rest of the fire Bordeaux, Fire Red, Orange, and Yellow. In my paintings, I always paint them lighter than I want it. When the painting looks like finished, I went back in start to give the final contrast and details. So I used the Black Sepia to create more texture, hair, and contrast in Body, legs, and eye. After this,

I used the brush again and painted a few more sharp hair. I try to get as much detail as possible and work much slower than at the beginning of this painting. I do this as long until I'm happy with it. Also, some Illustration Blood Red in the fire and for the glow around it. Some Burnt Umber for the legs, wing, stalk, and blossoms.



45 For the last step, I mixed some Candy20 Deep Purple and Sunset Magenta with 4050 gloss clear and gave the body and the eye

some reflection shine from the background. Finally, at least some very Transparent Yellow in the eye and the painting is finished.

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Green Fire on a Mid-tone base by Jeff Simon

I'm Jeff Simon, an airbrush artist, pinstriper, and JT Airbrush Art and Design. My shop is located in Long Island, New York, and I've been airbrushing for fifteen years. I custom paint mainly goalie masks and helmets and motorcycles, vehicles, and the occasional bicycle frame. You can see more of my work on my website: jtairbrush.com, [facebook.com/jeff.simon.5268](https://www.facebook.com/jeff.simon.5268), and [instagram.com/jtairbrushartanddesign](https://www.instagram.com/jtairbrushartanddesign).

Airbrushing realistic fire is one of the most popular effects in the custom painting industry. It continues to be in high demand, thanks to the originator of True Fire, Mike Lavallo. For this particular job, the customer had a purple bicycle that he wanted green fire airbrushed. He also asked me to include some shamrocks within the fire. Realistic fire on a mid-tone base color presents some problems because the candy-colors will create a nasty, unappealing halo on the purple base color around the green fire if the same technique is used on a black base color. On black, the candy virtually disappears so that you can blend it out without any issues. On a mid-tone base color, this is not the case. Special care and techniques must be used in this case. The trick is to first lay down an opaque color to define your fire and then keep all subsequent color layers, especially the candies, within that opaque color. For this project I used Iwata airbrushes and spray guns, Createx paints, Tamco clear coat and various fire stencils.



Step 1

I'm not a bicycle mechanic and required that the customer supply the frame completely stripped of all attached parts and hardware. I cleaned the frame with Tamco HR398 wax and grease remover, then scuffed it with a gray Scotchbrite pad until all the shine was completely gone. I then masked off a few areas that needed to be shielded from paint and clear coat.



Step 2

I then premixed my colors using the new Createx Wicked opaques as well as the Candy 2/0. I have to say that the new Createx Wicked opaques made this job much easier since they cover exceptionally well. My Opaque Green is a mixture of Phthalo Green and Limelight Green to create an opaque Emerald Green color. The yellow is the opaque Hansa Yellow. The Candy 2/0 used is Emerald Green and Poison Green. The candy is mixed

four to one with the 4050 UVLS Gloss Clear (1 part candy to 4 parts clear) and 10% 4011 reducers. The new Wicked opaques don't need the 4050 UVLS clear, as they are already acrylic urethane, but I add about 10% for increased durability and flow. I then added about 25%-30% 4011 reducers to the opaques to improve flow through the airbrush.



Step 3

I loaded up my Iwata Eclipse HP-CS airbrush with the opaque Emerald Green color and proceeded to airbrush my underlying flame shapes. Usually, on a Black base, I would make my first layer very diffuse and blend it into Black, but you can't do that on a mid-tone base color. I keep the Emerald Green well defined and even use a fire stencil here and there to define some edges. So the moral of this story is that you need to start defining your fire and flame licks right from the start, as this method has much fewer steps than the traditional fire on a Black base.



Step 4

I airbrushed some Emerald Green Candy 2/0 in the areas where the shamrocks will darken and intensify it a bit; then, I applied a vinyl shamrock stencil I cut on my plotter using Avery paint mask. Now it's time to define the flames further using the opaque Hansa Yellow and a combination of freehand airbrushing and stencils to form the flame shapes. Do not overuse the stencils. Overuse of stencils will make your fire look like swiss cheese, so be very selective where you use them. Also, spray the Hansa Yellow around the shamrocks to brighten the area around them and define the shape for removing the vinyl paint mask stencils. The important thing for this step is to keep the Yellow paint within the Green airbrushed in step 3. None of the subsequent layers can extend beyond the initial Emerald Green color, especially the candy. This is how you prevent a nasty halo from forming around the fire.



Step 5

Now I airbrush the candy 2/0 Emerald Green over the Yellow and underlying opaque Green. Don't just spray the candy-like you're using a spray gun. Be vigilant where you're spraying, making sure not to go outside that first Emerald Green color layer. I airbrush more Candy 2/0 Emerald Green where I think the fire should be darker and less where the fire needs to be brighter.



Step 6

Now I go back with the opaque Hansa Yellow and create tighter flame shapes within the flames created in step 3. I am again making sure not to go beyond the initial opaque Emerald Green color. Use a combination of freehand airbrushing and stencils. Did I say don't overuse the stencils? At this point, I removed the vinyl shamrock stencils and airbrushed some yellow highlights on them to give some dimension. Using the candy 2/0 Poison Green, I airbrush over all the fire and, once again, being careful to keep the candy from going beyond that first opaque Emerald Green layer. As done previously, spray the Poison Green more where the flames need to be darker and less where brighter. Now I go back with the Emerald Green candy and selectively darken areas I want to push back. Tip: if you darken areas next to your brightest highlights, it will make them appear even more brilliant.

Step 7

Take the Hansa Yellow and add some Opaque White until it's a light Lemon-yellow color. Using a fire stencil, I selectively airbrush this color on the brightest highlights. Don't overdue this step as less is more here. I then go back over these highlights with Poison Green candy to tint them Green.



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Step 8

The fire is done now and ready for clear coat. First, I wipe down the fire with mineral spirits using a lint-free paper towel. Mineral spirits is an excellent degreaser for water-based paints as it will not wipe off your artwork and stays wet long enough to wipe on, then wipe off with a separate clean, dry rag. Next, I give it a final cleaning with Tamco HR398 wax and grease remover, which is also very gentle and works great on water-based paint. I then load up my Iwata LPH400 with Tamco HC-2104 clear coat and spray three coats. I let it cure for at least twelve hours and then color sand and polish the clear.

Step 8

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9



Mechanic's Creeper Pinstripe Illustration in Alpha 6 Enamels

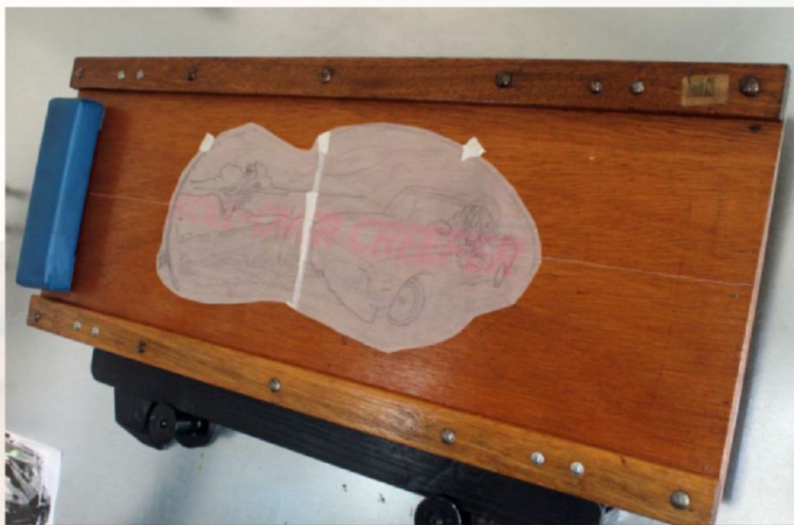
By Kate Cook

Asphalt Canvas Custom Art LLC



Step 1

For this piece of art, I'll be painting a vintage wood mechanic's creeper that I've lightly sanded and painted with an oil-based brush-on clear coat from Alpha 6 Corporation. Therefore, it's essential to clean the surface you'll be painting with a degreaser thoroughly. Depending on the surface you choose to paint, you may use denatured alcohol, wax and grease remover, or just a simple window cleaner and a paper towel to clean the area you will be painting. Before you wipe the entire surface, choose an inconspicuous area to test the cleaner of your choice to be sure it doesn't affect the canvas surface in any way. Prepping the surface for painting by cleaning it is essential for proper adhesion of the artwork's paint and longevity.



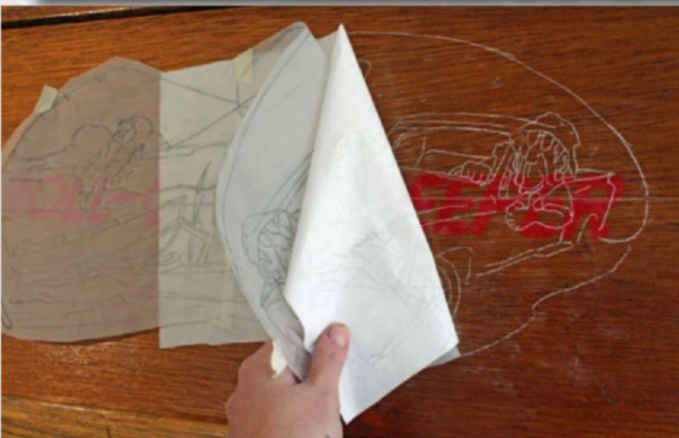
Step 2

I'll be using Strathmore tracing paper for this step, but you may use any paper to create your initial drawing. Measure the space you want to paint and draw your design to size on a separate piece of paper with a pencil. If you draw something and need it to be enlarged before transferring it to the surface for paint, take it to a local print shop and have them enlarge and print the design on drafting paper. For this project, my customer wanted to illustrate his truck and its original owner, who used to push his fishing boat into the lake using the front bumper hitch he welded on for towing ease in his old age. My initial sketches are drawn on transparent tracing paper to help me align the final line drawing onto my "canvas" when it comes time to transfer the design over for paint.



Step 3:

I then tape the final line drawing to the clean, dry surface I've prepped for paint. I usually use slightly less tacky tape such as old masking tape or painter's tape, not to damage the painting surface or leave a sticky residue. You will want to tape the drawing in the exact location of where you want the design. Remember, we are transferring the design with chalk, which means if you accidentally place the design off-center or feel like you need it to be a different size, it is easy to fix. Once you've traced over everything, you can take off your drawing and transfer paper, wipe off the chalk with a soft towel with water, and start over.



Step 4

To transfer the paper drawing to another surface, we will be using Saral paper. This paper can be used to transfer a pencil drawing on paper onto any metal, glass, plastic, wood, or canvas surface. Saral comes in an array of different colored chalk options for versatility. For the mechanic's creeper, I am using white chalk Saral paper. For my fishing illustration, I slide a section of the Saral paper under the taped-down drawing and start to trace over my design with a pencil. Everywhere I press down on my pencil will transfer the lines in chalk onto the wooden creeper. For smaller designs, you can cut out your drawing and the Saral paper to match, tape the cut-outs together and then tape them down to your surface and begin tracing. A helpful tip while tracing your drawing, especially for large or detailed designs, is to use a different colored pencil to trace the design so that you can see where you've traced and where you haven't.



Step 5

Slowly remove your taped drawing from the surface to reveal a perfectly transferred line drawing in colored chalk on your painting surface! If you take off the Saral paper and your sketch and realize you forgot to trace a shape or a line, you can reference your sketch and draw in the line lightly with a Stabilo pencil. I used to draw entire designs with these wax pencils on all kinds of surfaces but found they can leave ghost lines that are hard to get rid of!



Step 6

For steps 6-8, I'll be using Alpha 6 Corporation enamels, Alpha 6 high-temp reducer, generic paint thinner, and a magazine paper pallet. Tidwell's Broken Pinky and Monster Stix brush sets by Mack Brush Co. are my favorite illustrative designs like this old man fisherman. I quickly paint in the large areas with the Broken Pinky Scrubby brush and thinned down enamel colors for this piece. My goal is to cover the illustration with color, not worrying about any small details or shading at this time. Do not be afraid to paint over the chalk lines. The enamel paint will hide them without any issue. Conversely, if you still have visible chalk lines at the end of the painting, wait for the work to dry completely (I wait 24 hours to be safe) before wiping over the painted design with a water-dampened soft towel.



Step 7

After the first layer of paint is dry, I choose an imaginary light source to determine the locations of my highlights and shadows and paint accordingly. To shade a paint color, I mix a contrasting color into the paint on my magazine pallet. For example, if I want a dark red color, instead of adding black to my pigment, I add green, which is red. You'll have to have some basic knowledge of the color wheel to shade colors in this way successfully. For highlights, you can add white to any color to get a lighter color. Because enamel is known to dry pretty quickly, mixing colors and shading shapes can be tricky. You don't want the shading to look clumpy. To avoid this, work in tiny areas and add paint thinner and a reducer to your magazine pallet color before applying paint to the final surface.



Step 8

Once your second coat of paint is dry, hopefully, your illustration is starting to have a 3D look, thanks to your shading! Now you're ready for my favorite part; the black outlining and white highlighting. For this step, I switch up my brushes to The Virus set by Mack Brush Co. With a 444-1 size Virus brush, I outline almost everything in black and add a few bright white highlights. You may want to thin the enamel down with paint thinner and reducer to give your paint an even flow off the bristles of your brush. Again, you can outline as much or as little as you want. However, you will want to be more sparing with where you add in your white highlights. Remember where your imaginary light source is coming from and add highlights accordingly. With my Virus brush, I also add in some freehand pinstriping on either side of the artwork.



Step 9

Finally! The custom painting is complete. Be sure to clean your brushes with paint thinner and then Mineral Spirits. Dip the bristles in some motor oil and work the oil into the bristles up to where they enter into the brush handle. Store your oiled brushes in a covered brush holder. If you have the time, wait to wipe off any remaining visible chalk on your final painting for 24 hours. This ensures that each layer of the paint has had the proper time to cure. Last but not least, you can spray some water on a soft paper towel until it's lightly damp and wipe over the art to remove any excess chalk lines or fingerprints.

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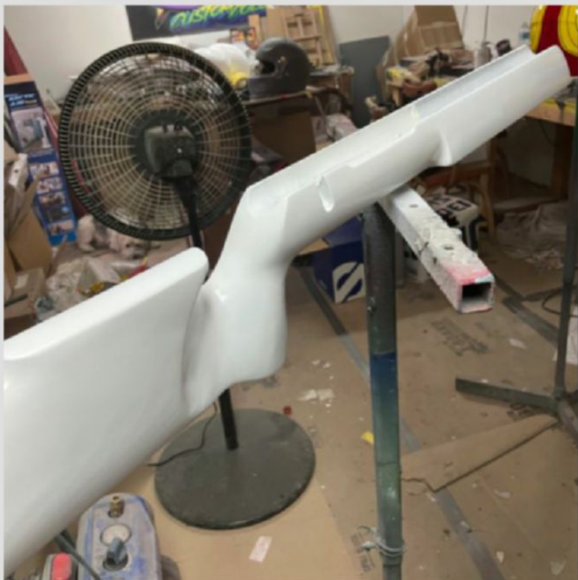


HARDWOOD GUN STOCK AMERICAN FLAG DESIGN

Materials used: Tamco primer, Intensity airbrush colors, and clear coat. SATA 4 G airbrush and SATA mini jet spray gun. You should be able to accomplish this with whatever paint you use or airbrush.



Here is the hardwood gunstock, which the client wanted an American flag theme painted on it. This is the second one I have done for this client with that theme. I will be using Tamco products thru out this project. To start off, I hand sanded it with 180 grit sandpaper.



Tamco 5300 premier reduced by 30% was applied to seal the wood. I over-reduced it, so it soaks into the wood better. I gave it several hours and then applied to heavy coats of the same primer. I allowed it to dry overnight then sanded it with 320 grit sandpaper followed by several coats of base white.



I start with the stock, which will be the blue and stars part of the flag. I cut stars out on my vinyl cutter using an Avery spray mask. After placing the stars, it's time to map out the folds in the flag. Now many might disagree with how I do this, but it works for me. I used over-reduced black to indicate where the folds will be. Shadows should



be a darker color of the surrounding area, in this that is blue. So the shadows created by the fold should be a very dark blue, and we get there watch.



I sprayed the entire stock with base blue over the flag's folds layout and keeping the stars still masked off. Again, be mindful of where the shadow areas and high lighted areas are when applying the blue. Try and use less blue in highlighted areas and more in



the shadow areas of the folds. Pull the masking off the stars, and following the dark area of the folds, apply your shadow color.



Mask off the blue we just did, and it's time to start the red and white stripes. First, I map out the folds in this part of the flag design the same as the blue stars section of the flag. The next step is to mask off



the white to paint the red stripe.



Spray the red much the same as we did the blue paying attention to your shadow and highlighted areas. However, apply less paint to the highlighted areas and more paint over shadow areas, simple stuff. With the red done, reverse the masking now, mask off the red



and apply a bit more white to the white strips. This whole process was done on both sides of the stock as well as the bottom part. Picture t the right above is what it should look like now.



Here is my finished piece; if you have been following along, this should be what yours looks like. At this point, I clear coat it with Tamco High Impact clear, sand it with 600 grit wet sandpaper to level the graphics, and reclear one final time.

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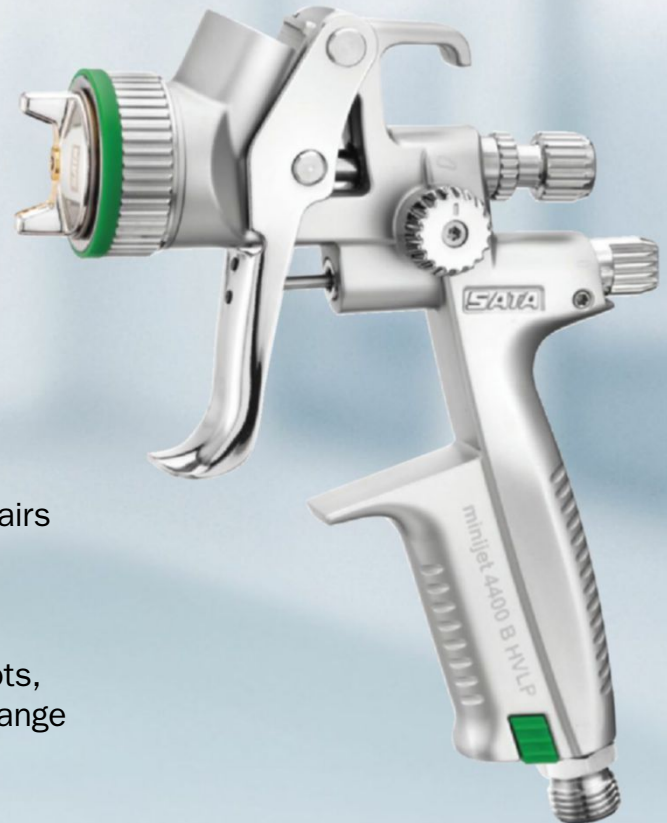
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Spray gun with 0.3 l RPS multi-purpose cup Standard (2x, 0.3 l cup)	–	198168	198176	198184	–	198192
	1114131G	202390	198358	198366	1065136	–
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AIRBRUSH HALL OF FAME

HONORING Those Artists who made this industry what it is today.

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AIRBRUSH THE MAGAZINE

Edit



Airbrush Hall Of Fame

@airbrushartistshallfame · Visual Arts

Airbrush Hall Of Fame

I realized this art form, the industry has no way of honoring those artists who came before us I decided to take action. A way of honoring and recording for history, the great artists who blazed the way for us all. The guys and gals who pretty much-invented lines, dots, dagger strokes, freehand airbrushing. Automotive and motorcycle airbrushing, T-Shirt airbrushing, etc.

I donated my time and effort to try and make this happen using a Facebook page "www.

facebook.com/airbrushartistshallfame" to get it started. I hope the airbrush, custom paint community would get on board with this and take it over. But as typical in this industry, BS politics soon reared its ugly head in the form of one artist I thought should be included, threatening to create a considerable amount of drama over this. I don't do drama, so I backed off for a while n the project, but I still believe in its value to this industry.

In future issues of Airbrush The Magazine, I will be publishing interviews with artists

included in the Airbrush Hall of Fame. I start with this issue and Mickey Harris.

If your company would like to help sponsor the Airbrush Hall Of Fame and be recognized as a supporter, sponsor across social media and on the banner on the Facebook page, please give me a call at 1-352-361-3403 or airbrushmag@gmail.com.

Don Johnson, Editor Airbrush The Magazine

INTERVIEW WITH AIRBRUSH HALL OF FAME ARTIST MICKEY HARRIS

The following was taken from an hour and a half phone conversation with Mickey.

What are you working on now?

Three-foot saw blade with an aerial view of the client's farm. Then waiting on parts for a motorcycle, but it keeps getting delayed for shipping reasons. I'm doing good got a show truck last week for SEMA with a Navy theme at the body shop right now.

Are you attending SEMA this year? Do you think it will even take place?

I just talked to a friend there in Los Vegas, and he says Vegas is ready to roll. Everyone is looking for an outlet now after this COVID thing, and Vegas will probably be busier than ever. I go

there to represent SATA, and for me, it's a chance to see all my friends, so I'm excited about going. I use to spend all my time on the road, but these days I try to avoid it as much as possible the only show I do now is SEMA.

What do you want people to know about your history in this business?

When I started, they wore stone t-shirts, had stone wagon wheels. It was so long ago. So I guess that I'm grateful I got to do what I love my entire career. At almost 65 years old, I still get up every day with the same enthusiasm and excitement because I get to paint and make my living at it. I've been very blessed. One thing that age has taught me is how quickly life does pass you by. When you are young, you have nothing



to gauge it to. As you get older, you realize time becomes shorter. You don't put up with fools any longer; you become a grumpy old man. I no longer have time for ignorance; I have no time to waste any longer.

You only want to hang out with people you are happy to be around and learn from, or their company is essential, respecting their knowledge and wisdom. Old friends have become even more important to me, a lot of years go by, and you don't think about it until later years, and you wonder why you haven't stayed in touch more. I'm trying to get my life into a real positive flow. My work is constantly improving because I'm spending the time, and I quit being the teacher after thirty years and have turned myself into a student again. I call myself a grasshopper. Because that is all I want to do is learn and get better and better. All my influences are now are artists who are oil painters because of their understanding of color and mixing colors. There is an artist named Chris Hopkins who is just unbelievable in the artwork he creates. Guys like Tim Fritz and Ed Tillrock, automotive guys who can control a sense of motion, are just crazy talented. My big thing now is color, studying color, how to manipulate color better. For a T-Shirt artist, it is hard because everything is based on speed and light and dark colors. You use light and darkness to create somewhat realism, maybe blast transparent colors over them tint things. Now I'm trying to

slow down, enjoy the ride, doing stuff where I'm constantly learning, and pushing the envelope even more. I want to be more of an artist than a commercial artist, if that makes any sense. That's why I enjoy doing horse and cowboy paintings. I mix a lot of that stuff on canvas between airbrush and paintbrush. I love those kinds of techniques together.

It's been 45 years doing this professionally. People always ask me if I'm going to retire, and I respond, "what would I do to take up painting"? As an artist, the older you get, the better you get as you learn more. You're going to be a student all your life in this profession until the day you die. And as that day approaches at a faster pace you realize your mortality. So you have a tendency to want to know more and more. I mean, people come up to me and say you are a legend. I have been airbrushing since Mose's was a baby. It seems that long.

I see these young guys with extraordinary skills, and I think one thing that accelerates that skill level is when they have so much great work to look at. When we were coming up, there wasn't a lot of high-end airbrush work to look at. We were all experimenting and trying to figure out how this free-hand airbrushing worked. Artists now have seen airbrush artwork so fantastic that they know what kind of level they need to paint. They are young and have the energy to sit there and paint for sixteen hours a day like I used to. Now I'm lucky to get six to eight hours a day in, and I think, man, I've done

something. But I have more work than ever. I'm backed up five to six months with work right now. And I don't advertise other than social media stuff. In reality, only about 1% of those who try making a living as an artist succeed; you have a better chance of playing in the NFL. So I consider myself very blessed to be one of the 1%. It takes a certain determination to be successful at this. When I used to teach, I would see out of a class of 30 people you could tell the one or two people in there that were soaking it up, and you know they had that determination in them, you could sense it in them.

One of the coolest highlights of my career is all the guys who have been quite successful. On would comment on their artwork on Facebook, and they would respond with, "I took a class from you, and you are the guy that got me started." How cool is it that you influenced these people who will carry the torch long past my life. One of the great joys for me. The other is my tie in's with the military as I come from a military family. You look at some of those military vehicle murals I've done. I was probably the first to paint wrap-around murals on cars.

I look at some of the popular graphic stuff now, and some are just amazing. So I look at that stuff, and I've got to tell you I'm not too fond of measure or taping. They will spend four hours taping a bike and thirty minutes painting. It's great you see so many neat techniques being developed and different



looks. Drop shadows and different textures it's all pretty cool. Although with the different paints being used, the creativity is amazing. But my question is, how much money do guys get for doing that stuff. I break everything down to time, and I know what I would charge. Then I find these guys just charging one hundred dollars a day; it's crazy. I like to stay around one thousand dollars a day, sometimes I miss judge but the thing, but that's what I feel it's worth. How are you going to make a living charging so little, you can't? They should have enough belief in their skills to charge what it is worth. I would never do that; I would let them walk in a lot of cases before I charge less than I feel it's worth. When I first started out airbrushing T-Shirts and the season would run out, I'd walked into a bar and tell the owner I do a mural for \$1500.00. A lot of them thought it was way too much. I'd go home, but rent would be due in a week or two, and I end up doing it for \$500. You did what you had to do to get by, but you didn't live your entire career acting like you were doing

that or you are never going to get ahead. I think so many artists destroy their careers by not pursuing the business end of it. I've heard so many guys at SEMA, very talented guys, say they won't do something unless it's the best they can do. I think to myself, well, they are probably starving to death. You're never going to make a living doing that. You have to do what the customer wants and fit what you do into their budget. The first thing I ask is, "well, what's your budget?" OK, I will come up with a design to fit that with the maximum we can do. There are ways of covering space that doesn't take a lot of time, and we can add detail as we need to. People will see a GM car I've done and want that, but that was a \$45,000 paint job. They start choking when they hear that, but then you explain the process of doing a paint job like that. What do you want to spend a couple thousand dollars we can do something we don't have to paint every inch of the car. You talk them into doing something within their budget. OK, design something for me. OK, but you need to choose what budget you need to stay within. I don't want to waste

my time and create something way beyond your budget.

What are your memories of Mike?

Mike was a super-skilled artist; we knew each other for a lot of years. He had a brilliant mind when it came to concepts and how to put them all together. He was terrific regard in that way. He was a sweet man; the older he got, the more thoughtful he got. I'm not sure deep down he knows just how good he was, just naturally. He did beautiful things for people all the time, helping other artists constantly. I never thought he'd go before me. Sometimes it's hard to realize he's not here any longer. But his work is, and he had a tremendous following. Everyone is trying to keep his memory alive, not sure what Mike would think about that. I introduced him to Cliff, Airbrush Action Magazine, in Strigus, and he got in his first issue of that magazine, which was fantastic. He was a master at self-promotion, he wanted to be famous, and he did become famous. I loved him because I understood his character.

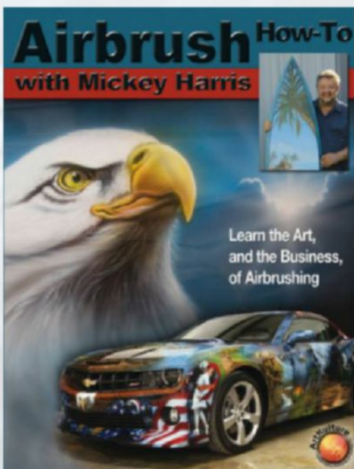


Teaching

In one year, I did 132 seminars teaching airbrushing back in the hay day before 2008. I set all these up thru jobber stores. I had the reps (Iwata) set these and had Createx and Iwata involved. I would go in the stores, teach, and sell the crap out of Iwata spray guns. Then ASET took over, and they wanted me to do it for a flat fee, no way I was making all the money the way it was. Mainly I taught just basic airbrushing skills at these as that was back when guys like Mike were doing all the TV shows. Everyone wanted to know how to custom paint; it was pretty easy to sell a class out. I did year after year some of the places I did five or six times. It mainly was auto body guys, so they understood paint but had no real art skill but wanted to learn to airbrush, custom paint. I showed them simple basic easy stuff like creating effects, shadowing, water drops, etc. I have no desire to teach anymore; I have changed from teacher to student. I never wanted to be famous; I just wanted to teach people to make money custom painting. People I taught say, "wow, Mickey is just a regular guy," and I'm I worked my way up from the bottom. I know what it's like to be struggling. I try to encourage people to keep plugging away, learning.

What do you want people to know?

I'm the luckiest guy in the world to have been able to do what I love these past 45 years. I'm so grateful and fortunate that enough people like my artwork so I continue this incredible journey. I tell them if you can find your passion, what you love, then chase it.





OVERSPRAY SOLUTION

By Dru Blair

www.schoolofrealism.com

Airbrushes produce overspray. Plain and simple. For those who work indoors, overspray is a dangerous lung hazard, and it can linger in the air for hours. We all know that a proper mask offers protection from overspray, but masks are often not worn for a variety of reasons.

Here is a simple way to reduce your exposure to overspray of water-based paints in a small room of your home or studio, and it won't cost you a lot of money.

Filtration

The most common way to clean air is to move it through a filter designed to capture and remove particles. This involves a filter that is designed to remove particles from the air. Common HVAC filters have a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) that rates the overall effectiveness at removing particulate matter from the air. A MERV rating is a numerical value ranging from 1 (lowest efficiency) to 20 (highest efficiency) and tells the consumer how well the filter captures and holds particles and dust of a specified size range. A higher value MERV rating equates to finer filtration, meaning fewer dust particles and other airborne contaminants can pass through the filter. A higher MERV rating seems like it would automatically be better, but it's not. The higher the MERV rating, the smaller the pores are for air to flow through the filter. This can create more resistance in airflow, thus making it inefficient. Remember that we want to move air quickly before we breathe in any contaminants.

Airbrush overspray measures from 2 to 8 microns, usually averaging around 5 microns in diameter. This falls into the category of a MERV 8 filter. For those who want to arrest smaller particles, a higher MERV rating will do the job, but as the numbers become higher, air is moved more slowly, and many of the particles will

linger before passing through the filter. Merv 11 would be the upper limit before efficiency becomes an issue.

Moving Air

We need a method which allows us to pull air through the filter, and an inexpensive way would be a box fan. In this case, I purchased a 20" box fan by Lasko for \$16.88 from Walmart. Its quiet and has 3 speeds.



Next I found a 20 x 20 MERV 11 filter for \$13.88. A MERV 8 would probably be even better because its less restrictive for air movement.



To hold everything together, I used a pair of 36" bungee cords for \$3.66



I strapped it all together, making sure that the filter was placed so that the fan pulled the air through the filter.



Where to place it.

For this system to work the best, you will want to place it as close to your spray source as possible so that the overspray is pulled INTO the fan. Next to your workstation is best, NOT in some remote corner of the room. Allow the fan to run for a while even after you've finished spraying to reduce overspray traveling to other parts of your building.

Bottom line: Not everyone can afford a spray booth, and most of us don't enjoy wearing a respirator all day. This little system provides a solution to both problems with a total cost: \$34.42 (plus tax). Good luck with your artistic endeavors. Spray Safe!



ARTEM RAA

TECH TIP

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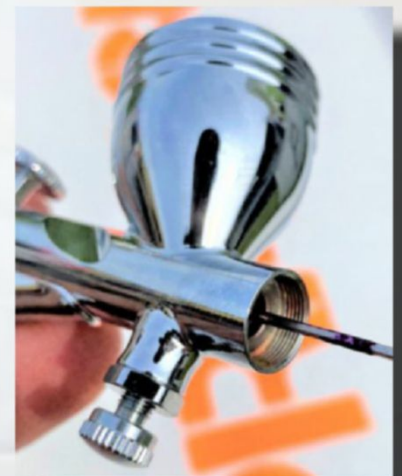
DRY PAINT

Hey there artists!

Starting something new today: writing a tech advice column for The Airbrush Magazine. I'm a terrible salesman since I always try to save my customers' money and today, I'll give some advice on how to save on airbrush parts. In addition, this will address one of the common situations that most airbrush enthusiasts can run into at some point – dry paint in the airbrush. Sometimes it's not even visible, but a ring of dry paint can build up by the needle packing seal. If you feel any resistance pulling the trigger back or pulling the needle out of the airbrush – dry paint is the most common reason. Forcing the needle out in this case will likely damage the needle seal. To prevent this, start by adding some of Createx 4008 restorer to your airbrush paint cup and let it sit for a while. Dry paint will quickly come off.

You can see the solution didn't even change the color. Unfortunately, that might not be enough. The area around the packing seal can be hard to reach and clean. I recommend taking the needle out from the front of the airbrush not to damage the seal. In my case, on GSI Creos PS-771, I can remove the whole head assembly. Depends on the model of your airbrush, you might have to remove the nozzle cap or hold down ring to make the nozzle/tip accessible so it can be removed. Next, loosen the needle locknut and pull the needle out from the front. Clean it well and re-install.

On some models, like Sotar 2020, the needle can't be pulled from the front. However, it can still be pushed forward and accessed from the paint cup section for cleaning.



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