

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR INTERACTIVE USERS.

INTRODUCTION

Chroma designed Atelier Interactive as a paint for artists which would be more responsive to the aesthetic aims and paint manipulation effects that they require.

DRYING TIMES FOR ATELIER INTERACTIVE

Conventional acrylic paint has always dried very quickly, with no transition stage between wet and dry so that most painting is wet paint applied over dry. Interactive however, does not form a skin during the drying process so there is a 'window of opportunity' at the transition stage between wet and dry. Interactive dries in exactly the same way as conventional acrylics, but the paint thickens as it dries and you will notice a tightening effect as the brush comes into contact with the paint surface.

This is the signal to use a water sprayer to restore the moisture balance. As long as you continue to do this, the surface will stay workable. Water spraying intervals will vary according to air temperature and humidity.

USING THE WATER SPRAY



With Interactive and a sprayer you can control the painting process to work slowly or fast as you choose.

When you have got used to spraying you will start to notice subtle consistency differences between wet and almost dry paint which can be exploited in a way similar to oil painting. Having control over paint consistency will allow you to develop new techniques.

These new techniques become easier as your timing skills develop. It doesn't just have to be wet-in-wet painting. Interactive painting can be wet paint over partly drying paint. Paint can be overlaid but also blended into the under-colour. Simply paint over the thickening paint then spray lightly and blend in where desired.

This is only a mechanical process, but you have to learn *when to spray* and *how much*.

- Brush drag as you apply paint is an indicator that moisture is needed.
- The easiest method is to touch the painting with your fingertips to judge stickiness, then spray, and stop spraying when your fingertips glide on the surface.

An alternative to spraying is to use a soft wet brush.

Surfaces to paint on:

A well sealed surface prevents water loss by absorption into the substrate. We suggest 2 coats of Atelier Gesso to make sure of this. All the normal acrylic substrates can be painted on.

Watercolour paper is very absorbent so that paint applied to it tacks up instantly unless diluted. Use your water spray to moisten the paper and the paint will remain wet and workable.

Painting Properties:

Interactive goes through a curing stage when it is "tender" and can't be treated as harshly as some people treat acrylics. You can go on painting but be gentle as you would with an oil painting in the same state.

After a few days the painting will have the "normal" acrylic toughness, flexibility and water resistance.

Note: Uncured paintings are very water absorbent. If you want to over paint use your spray generously, then wipe the surface with a rag before you start to paint.

Varnishing

There are removable solvent based varnishes to give you the surface appearance you want. See www.chromaonline.com for more information.

GLAZING SAFEGUARDS

The long time it allows to adjust glazes and lift out some of the glaze makes Atelier Interactive and Slow Medium a very useful glazing mixture, but if you want to apply several layers, or you are worried that part of the under painting may lift out with the glaze, it can be a wise precaution to use a layer of Fast Medium/Fixer between paint layers.

For scratch back techniques it is also useful to toughen the under paint with a layer of Fast Medium/Fixer or Binder Medium added to the paint to be scraped.

Atelier Interactive surfaces are a little more delicate than the conventional acrylics we are all used to.

Fast Medium/Fixer mixed in the paint may be used to seal delicate surfaces and will provide a tough under painting layer when needed.

tone control

CONTROLLING DARKENING IN TONE VALUE OF COLOURS CONTAINING WHITE OR MIXTURES WITH WHITE.

This is caused by a reduction in the reflectivity of titanium pigment particles in all waterbased paints as the water evaporates, reducing the volume or thickness of a paint layer.

The following information applies to both Atelier Interactive acrylics and to Absolute Matte.

The *lighter* the colour tint; i.e. the *more titanium* there is in the mixture, the more noticeable the tone change will be, but it can be controlled as follows:-

- Adding water or medium *exaggerates* the change; always judge colour mixes by dabbing *undiluted* paint to the canvas, then add water if needed and *disregard* the colour you see while it is wet.
- As the paint begins to dry and goes into the tacky stage, if the tone drops it can be seen and more white can be added before the paint dries.
- If the *colour* is not what you wanted, it is always more *white* which is needed to correct the tone.
- With practice colours can be matched *perfectly* wet-to-dry, so that for example, wet adjustments can be made to smooth areas such as skies in landscapes which blend seamlessly when they dry.
- When there is brush gesture or texture which can't be repeated it is best to paint slightly higher in tone in the first place, then darken later with a wash if needed.

Both Interactive and Absolute Matte are easier to control tonally than traditional acrylics.

Brushes:

A stiff brush is needed to 'massage' more white into nearly dry paint to make tonal corrections.

Watercolour Paper:

Light colours created by washes where the paper itself provides the light factor (not white) always have a vivid quality that will tend to diminish if they get covered over by more paint. When solid colour is used, lots of Titanium White is needed in the lights to maintain light contrast.

Lights:

Interactive Tinting White can also be used at the end of the painting session in light glazes to increase contrast.

White Gesso:

Can be used to introduce a basic white painting ground, into a painting which is losing contrast. It dries quickly and can be glazed for brilliant effects. If you use a layering technique you can weave it back into your painting.



OVERPAINTING & TONAL CHANGE

If you overpaint while your painting is in its 'tender' stage, i.e. no longer workable wet-in-wet, but too newly done to be cured (say next day) you will notice a phenomenon called 'blanching'. Blanching involves mainly light values with a lot of titanium and when moistened, these areas will lift in tone noticeable by up to ½ a value (on the 10 tone scale), while the mid tones and darks will just look damp or wet.

You can take advantage of this temporary situation: if you want to make corrections you can match your wet paint to the damp paint on the paints, or if you want to proceed with more tonal lift you can estimate how much extra titanium you will need so that the light areas dry back to what you really wanted.

Blanching is useful because it is easier to make over painting merge and tie in with what is there, but as the painting cures the blanching diminishes and then stops happening (in maybe a week), so you need to keep going day-to-day.

Note: if you only spray lightly you will get a spatter effect where you have juxtaposed areas of wet and dry painting. It is better to wet the surface and swab off excess water before starting to overpaint.

PAINTING MEDIUMS

These mediums have been developed as part of the Interactive process.



Slow Medium

is the most useful medium for extending drying time. Very useful when painting large works because it gives an artist time to work without the paint drying too fast. It also allows thinly applied paint to remain workable. Even paint which feels dry to the touch can be reactivated with water for reblending techniques. Especially recommended for anyone who has trouble getting used to using the water spray.



Clear Painting Medium

is the thickest in viscosity and can be used to prevent runs in diluted paint applied vertically on an easel. It is used with the paint to dilute the viscosity and blend colours. This medium allows paint to spread over a surface for more blendable gradations of colour and fast glazing techniques.



Fast Medium/Fixer

Mix with paint for fast layering techniques. Also useful when you want to reinforce a tender layer in preparation for scratch back and scraping techniques.



Unlocking Formula

Allows artists to re-open a paint layer even after being touch-dry. Once the paint is re-opened, new paint can be blended back in, existing paint edges can be feathered or whole sections can be removed with a rag. Can also be used to further extend wet blending time.



Binder Medium

can be used to toughen paint to return Interactive back to a more conventional acrylic. Mix with paint to dilute colour without losing intensity.



Retarder

Retarder can be used as a 10% addition to your water spray in extremely dry conditions. It may be added to other Atelier mediums to increase working times. Use no more than 10%.

INTERACTIVE AT A GLANCE

YOU ARE IN CONTROL. YOUR PAINTING CAN BE KEPT WORKABLE FOR AS LONG AS YOU LIKE, EVEN IN ADVERSE CONDITIONS.

- Water evaporates from Interactive just as it does from "regular" acrylics but your painting will not skin over and dry suddenly.
- To keep it workable use an atomizer spray to keep the paint moist.
- Touch your painting from time to time. When the paint feels sticky this is your indication to spray lightly till your fingers glide on the surface.
- Climatic conditions have an effect. Humid still air = slowest evaporation. Warm dry air = fast evaporation. Air drafts increase evaporation. Fast evaporation = more frequent spraying.
- In warm dry climates, or painting outdoors, Atelier Slow Medium keeps the paint workable longer between sprayings and allows you to re-blend the paint when it appears to be dry.
- Overpainting. Touch dry but uncured paintings are very moisture absorbent. Spray till your fingers glide before starting to overpaint.
- Fast technique. Withhold the water spray and use Atelier Fast Medium/Fixer for faster drying.
- To dry and cure a painting faster, store it in a warm dry place for 2-3 days.

TECHNICAL ADVICE

Interactive has been designed to make wet-in-wet techniques possible and thereby double your technique possibilities, because we want you to be able to retain all your old traditional techniques as well. If you have feedback please contact us at marketing@chromaonline.com.

YOUR INTERACTIVE 'WINDOW'

Your painting will improve when you use Interactive because conventional acrylics only have a small 'window' of opportunity where an artist has time to blend.

With Interactive this 'window' is broader but also variable depending on humidity levels. The 'window' time will be shorter if the weather is dry, but you can keep the paint workable by using a water sprayer.

It is very satisfying to use a paint which can be controlled. Gaining mastery of the processes will increase with experience and use, and you can now choose between slow or fast processes.

www.chromaonline.com/interactive

We have a dedicated website to keep you up to date. Technical advice is available. We invite your questions and comments.

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