

Continuing with Colour

In the last newsletter we started exploring the use of colour in woodturning, looking at waxes and creams, stains and dyes. This month we continue with paints and inks.

There is a huge range of different types of inks and paints available. They come in a wide range of colours, effects and opacity including iridescent, interference and metallic. They can be thick enough to texture or thin and transparent. Inks are perhaps not so useful to woodturners as they tend to be more transparent and the use of stains would probably be more satisfactory. Inks are not always lightfast but some such as Indian ink, are useful for small detail applied by pen or small brush.

Paint however is another matter.

There are many types of paint but probably the most versatile are the acrylics. Water soluble but water resistant once dry, they can be easily obtained in tubes, pots and aerosols. They can vary hugely in consistency and concentration of pigment and lightfastness. This will be reflected in the price. They are usually opaque but not always.

Paint can be applied in many ways including brushing, sponging, dabbing and spraying and dipping.

In most cases work would be finished and sealed first. Lynn Chambers'

German soldiers (see right) were hand painted with Humbrol model enamels. Lynn painted the large areas first then masked them off for adding the detail and straight lines.

As you know, I enjoy decorating work with fine detailed images using artists brushes. Many of you would not consider this but there are other options for adding colour including marbling and spraying.



Turned box with painted sycamore insert on the lid

Marbling involves floating drops of paint on water thickened with carrageen or methocell, a chemical substitue. The paint is stirred a little to effect the marbling pattern then prepared work dipped into it to transfer the pattern. I have only done a little

marbling so rather than buying the carrageen, I found a recipe using cornflour to thicken the water

which was successful. Different colours disperse and float at different rates and may even sink. This can be controlled by using a flow release product.



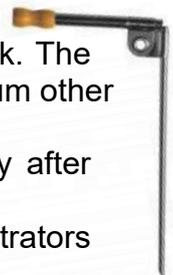
Bowl with marbled rim

Aerosols of acrylic car paint offer an easy way for spraying work. The whole piece may be sprayed which can give the effect of a medium other than wood.

Part of the work may be masked off or overspray turned away after painting.

Particularly effective on platter rims, we have had many demonstrators showing us how.

Several demonstrators in the past have used paint diffusers. These are simple devices. The bottom of the vertical tube is immersed in paint and by blowing through the horizontal part whilst keeping the hinge at right angles, the paint is sprayed out of the other end. This brings us on to the use of airbrushes which employ similar principles.



Diffuser

Gaining in popularity, I know some members have airbrushes. Running on compressed air supplied by a range of compressors including purpose made table top models or an aerosol can, there are two types of airbrush, single action and double action. The single action sprays paint as soon as the trigger is pressed. With the double action, air is released when the cap is pressed and when pulled back at the same time, the paint is released. Both types can be siphon fed or gravity fed. Gravity feed models have a little cup on top for the paint whilst siphon feed ones have a jar screwed on underneath. The latter are better for spraying larger areas as they hold more paint but I find the gravity fed ones easier to handle and less wasteful for small amounts of paint. Products used in airbrushes need to be the right consistency. Airbrush paints are available but thicker paints can be thinned. Using water to thin them reduces the concentration of pigment so it is best to use a specific airbrush medium. I use a range of products from Golden paints. They are expensive but a little goes a long way and they are lightfast. Golden has an extremely informative website www.goldenpaints.com with details of products, airbrush use, thinning ratios and spraying including air pressures etc. and remedying problems.



Colour graduation achieved easily with an airbrush



Air brushed design using stencils and transparent colours allowing underlying colours to show through.

Air brushes are very versatile and can be used for general spraying but also for very detailed fine art by adjusting the position of the brush and also using different size nozzles. They can be used freehand or combined with masking products such as Frisket film or suitable tapes or with stencils.

Masking and the use of stencils applies to any form of spraying as do the following tips.

Spraying needs to be done with care. Overspraying will produce runs. It is always better to spray several thin coats rather than one heavy coat. Spraying is best started off the work and finished off the work to avoid concentration of paint at the edges. As with any product, proper preparation of the wood is also crucial. Although paint will cover grain and natural colour it will accentuate flaws and scratches by reflecting light differently.

It is vital to clean your airbrush thoroughly after use and proprietary products are available. However, I was recommended to use diluted Mr Muscle window cleaner which is much more economical.

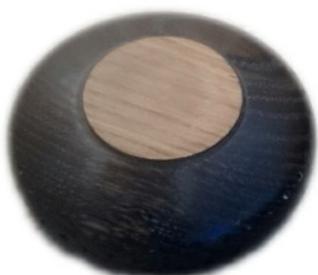
Dragon's nest piece with hand painted dragon and airbrushed flames.



There are many other ways of using colour and many novelty colour products. Exploring some of these in demonstrations for the club have been Jason Smith, Mick Hanbury and Ben Dick. See newsletters October 2016, December 2019, November 2018 and March 2019

Some of our members are also using colour on their work very successfully.

Mike Pollard has had a go at staining with the iron and vinegar recipe first demonstrated by Andy Coates described in last month's newsletter. He added texture to an oak bowl with Saburtooth burrs prior to applying several coats of the solution. The work was then sealed and waxed. See below.



A tip from Mike, if you use a screw top jar for your mixture, do not screw the lid on tightly as the chemical reaction will make it difficult to remove.



An earlier piece of work by Tim Cornwall demonstrates very effective use of colour. Tim turned a sycamore platter finishing the back then facing up the front and sanding and sealing it with an acrylic sealer. He then sprayed it with an ebonising lacquer. The area to receive colour and the edge of the bowl section was then defined with a vee groove using a skew chisel. Tim then turned the centre bowl section and sealed it.

Next, in Tim's words "Now for the fun part".

Tim used a selection of Jo Sonja iridescent paint. He mixed a little of each with Jo Sonja flow medium. The paint needs to be the right consistency to be moved about by blowing on it. Tim used a paintbrush to dab the colours around the rim. Although the pattern was random, Tim was careful to keep individual colours separate. He then spread the paint by blowing on it with

an empty air brush. I imagine you could do this by blowing through a straw. After leaving to dry for twenty four hours, the platter was finished with wax. For more information on this technique see

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_tMdQ3p5dqs

For Jo Sonja products see <https://www.josonjas-ukshop.co.uk>

On the piece shown right, Tim has used Hampshire sheen water based Intrinsic colours which he finds more subtle than the Jo Sonja colours. See <https://www.hampshiresheen.com>

He dabbed the colours on and whilst still wet overlaid with the white which comes with the set. With the lathe spinning, he rubbed the surface with paper towel. Initially it may seem a mess but after drying, sealing and finishing with acrylic products, this was the result.



Members' Work



Textured goblet by Peter Hawes.



Work by Gareth Garner, above a bowl and below a natural edge pot.



Matching tealight holders by Lynn Chambers.

Chairman	Maggie Wright
Vice Chairman and	
Competition Secretary	Peter Castle
Secretary	Anne Smith
Treasurer	John Turner
Events organiser	Greg Collett
Librarian	David Spice
Newsletter editor	Sandra Day
A-V co-ordinator	Brian Rowson

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Next month's newsletter will be concentrating on members' photographs and contributions. Thank you to all those who have already sent pictures. If you have not done so, please let me know what you have been turning during these unprecedented times of lockdown. It is a good way to keep in touch while we are unable to hold meetings.

Have any members taken up the spinning top challenge which was extended to woodturners everywhere? Do let us know.