

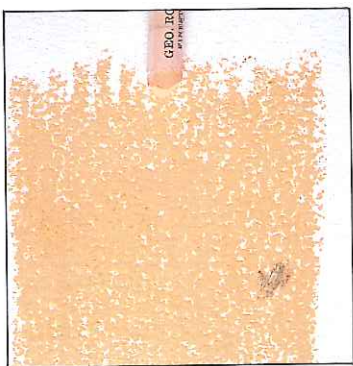
MIXED MEDIA

One of the most exciting aspects of painting in the twentieth century is that artists are free to break as many artistic conventions as they like. By mixing techniques and combining different media in the same painting, it is possible to broaden the range and expressiveness of your work beyond anything you thought possible.

Take pastel, for instance: the greatest pastellist of them all, Edgar Degas (1834-1917) was certainly no purist in the use of this medium. He often combined pastels with distemper paint (made by mixing powdered pigment with animal glue), or drew in pastel over a base of oil paint thinned with turpentine. Millet (1814-75), in a study for his oil painting, *Harvesters Resting*, combined pastel, oil, watercolor, and black crayon.

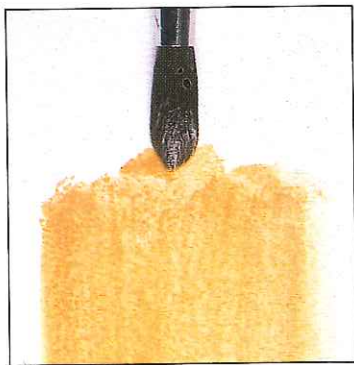
Of course, there is enormous satisfaction to be gained from arriving at a particular texture or effect within the limitations of one particular medium. But equally, combining different media can be exciting, surprising, and instructive. The different "personalities" of each medium often complement one another — and sometimes they clash. Only by experimentation will you discover which combination best expresses what you are trying to convey in your painting. In so doing, you will broaden your visual language, develop your confidence in handling paint — and may even discover hidden qualities in a medium which you had hitherto avoided.

Below are a number of suggestions for mixed media combinations. Having tried a few of these ideas, you may feel encouraged to develop others of your own.



Pastel with watercolor wash

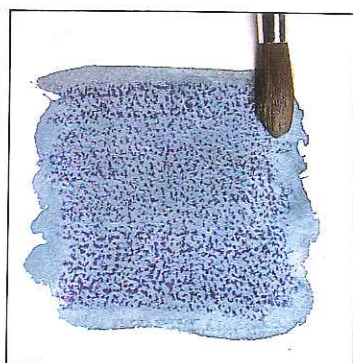
1 The vibrancy of soft pastel colors can be used to enhance the delicate transparency of watercolor washes. Here the artist creates a design with a soft orange pastel.



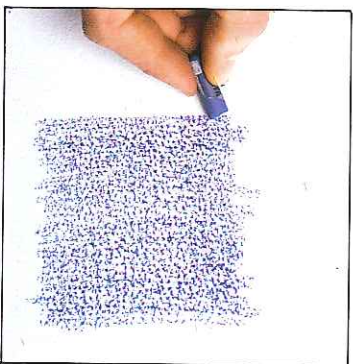
2 Using a soft watercolor brush, he washes over the pastel with a light toned wash to spread the pastel color. Any surplus moisture is removed with blotting paper.



3 While the wash is still damp, the artist adds further details with the point of the pastel stick. When the wash dries, more pastel marks and watercolor washes can be added.

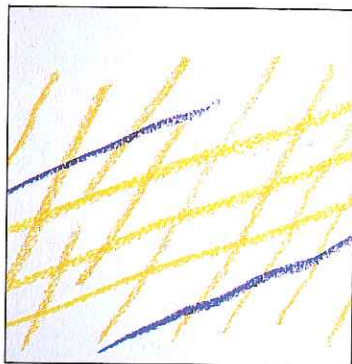


2 A wash of Payne's gray watercolor is applied over the oil pastel. The oil repels the watercolor, which settles into the indents of the paper's texture, which were untouched by the crayon. The wash dries with a granular texture which is effective for depicting stone, rocks, and sand.



Oil pastel with watercolor wash

1 Oil pastels produce a slightly different effect because they are more resistant to water than soft pastels are. Here the artist rubs blue oil pastel over rough-textured watercolor paper. The pastel catches the raised tooth of the paper and creates a mottled pattern.



Acrylic and oil crayon

1 The artist begins by drawing a bold design on the canvas with oil crayons. Apply the crayon quite thickly.



2 Acrylic paint, diluted with plenty of water to a thin, wash-like consistency, is brushed lightly over the crayoned area with a large, soft brush.



3 The oil crayon resists the watery paint and the design shows up clearly through the colored wash.

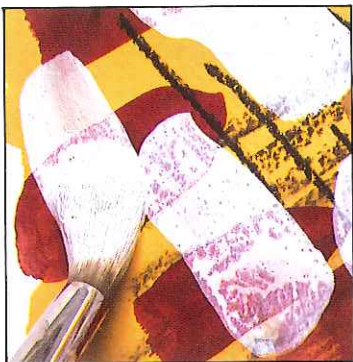


Gouache and charcoal

1 The artist first applies a thick layer of yellow gouache. When this is completely dry he draws a design onto it with charcoal. Note that if the paint is still wet, the charcoal will not take.



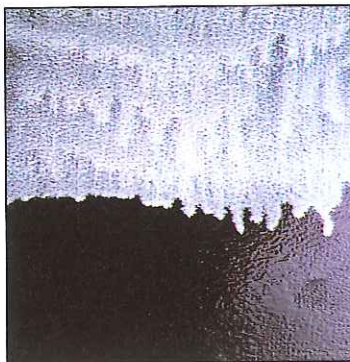
2 Using a No. 4 bristle brush, the artist works into the charcoal drawing with further gouache colors. Interesting variations of tone are achieved by allowing the charcoal to dissolve into the color in places.



3 When the paint dries, the process can be repeated, adding further charcoal marks and color washes.

Acrylic and gouache

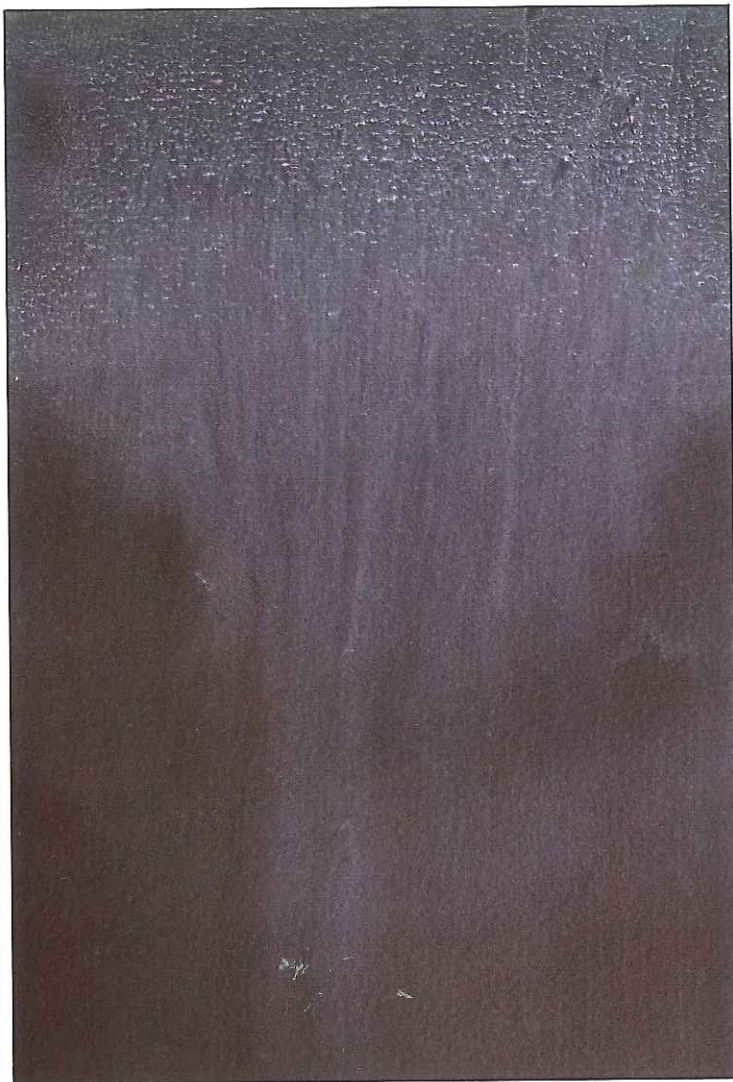
Acrylic and gouache paints work well together because of their versatility. Acrylic can be used for transparent washes or heavy impasto; it dries quickly and won't lift off, so that further washes of transparent color can be applied, producing effects of great depth. Gouache, too, can be used thickly or diluted with water to create semi-transparent washes. Here the artist combines the covering power of acrylic with the smooth-flowing, translucent quality of gouache to create an intriguing effect that could be used for painting a stormy sky or a night scene.



1 Working on a sheet of 200lb Cold Pressed watercolor paper, the artist applies a flat wash of acrylic in a dark color and allows it to dry. The surface is then re-wetted with water, and the upper edge of the board is tilted up at a slight angle. The artist then floats a dilute wash of white gouache across the top of the paper and allows it to flow down gently. Because the acrylic underlayer has dried insoluble, it does not lift off and muddies any succeeding washes.



2 When the first wash of gouache begins to run out, another is applied, again across the top of the paper. As this wash travels downward, it merges with the first wash. The painting is then allowed to dry.



3 The dark wash of acrylic glows through the translucent wash of white gouache. The finished result is very subtle, and evocative of a rainy sky.