



Glass Painting

Knowledge of glass painting can add a new dimension to your glasswork. It provides you with the ability to add lines, do printing, create texture, do shading, and add some color in selected areas. These demonstrations are provided to expose you to some of the basics in this fascinating world of GLASS PAINTING.

Although you'll want to learn much more about this field, watching the demonstrations will show you what glass paint is, and how it is mixed and applied. The following information will provide you with a brief review of these items.

Glass paints are made up of a vitreous material that fuses to the base glass when the painted pieces are fired to proper temperatures in a kiln. Glass paints contain lead so when using them observe normal safety precautions.

As the name indicates, TRACING is done over a cartoon of a specific design. This type of painting is used for lines, details, and printing. The primary paint used is #DE401 Tracing Black, but there are also other colors that are available.

TRACING paints are commonly mixed with gum Arabic and water. The gum Arabic acts as a binder, and the water acts as the vehicle for a proper consistency. The amount of gum used can be very important and it takes a little practice to determine the proper amount for a particular use. After these items are mixed as shown here, the paint is then applied with a tracing brush using a "bridge" to support your hand over the glass. Once the glass has been traced it is fired to 1200° F.

MATTING paints are the same as those used for tracing, but the application techniques are very different. The mixing is the same, although the amount of gum Arabic that is added can vary. With a wide matting brush, the matting paint is applied much thinner over a broad area, while still wet, this application is blended smooth with a special badger brush. The most common color used for matting is #DE402 Bistre Brown, but there are other brown tones, red tones, and grey/greens.

The purpose of the MATTING is to modulate the light coming through the glass, not to block it entirely. Therefore, when dry, some areas are usually removed with highlighting brushes. These stiff bristled brushes are used to stipple, stroke, or blend one area into another to create shading or texture. The amount to be removed depends on the design. When completed, this should be fired to approximately 1200° F. Subsequent layers of matting may be needed to achieve the proper shading effects.

Glass Painting

SILVER STAINS are paints that create a chemical reaction within the glass when applied and fired to approximately 1080° F. The result is a very transparent yellow/orange color on clear glass. This medium is particularly useful and satisfying and not at all difficult to use.

ENAMELS fire at a temperature of approximately 1100° F. They are not meant as a substitute for colored glass, but used selectively can be very effective. They are used extensively for silk screening on glass.

For further information please refer to the following:

Elskus, Albinus – “The Art of Painting on Glass” – Scribners

Maddy Dorothy L. – “Silver Staining” – Stained Glass Magazine – Fall, 1984

Millard, Richard & Isenberg, Anita and Seymour – “Stained Glass Painting” - Chilton