

Ice Mountain

A Hursto Presto Acrylic Spray Paint Project

Jim Hurst



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1) History of Spray Paint Art (Spacepainting):

Resource: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spray_paint_art

This is a unique form of art that is generally performed on the street in large metropolitan cities creating surreal landscapes of planets, comets, pyramids, cities, nature scenes as well as simple one-colored backgrounds or even multi-colored backgrounds where the paint swirls together or fades from one color to the other through a series of differing values (of each color).

One story behind the start of this art form (also known as Aerosolgrafia or Sadotgrafia by its founders) is that it originated in Mexico City in the early 1980s as described in the article "Spray-paint artists have exploded onto the scene - but is it art?" (Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service Article date: December 8, 2003 Author: Robinson, Gaile Copyright COPYRIGHT 1999 Knight-Ridder/Tribune News Service).

Ruben "Sadot" Fernandez first painted (experimentally in public) in front of his studio but soon moved to the streets of La Zona Rosa (1982) and began attracting crowds. Sitting in a lotus position surrounded by aerosol cans he created human figures and faces, and natural landscapes on paper, cardboard, or canvas. He did not use a brush. Sadot wrote poetry, made mosaics, and did art in a number of traditional art media, but became most renowned for his work with aerosol spray paint.



An important aspect of this art form is the music that often accompanies the performance. This inspires the artist and is an integral part of the experience for the spectator. Sadot listened to classical music, rock, and pre-Hispanic Aztec beats while painting. He often shocked those watching with his strong opinions on politics and government, and mystified the crowd with his metaphysical observations of culture and the human condition.

Though Sadot was the first, many followed his lead venturing into the world of Aerosolgrafia. Due to the ready availability of the minimal tools necessary, how quick a work could be produced, and the possibility of making good money at it, others soon tried their hand at this art form.

2) Water Based Liquitex Spray Paint vs Solvent Based Spray Paints

You may have seen a spray paint artist at a local festival or fair dazzling spectators with beautiful paintings of far away planets and galaxies, barren moon-like landscapes and lush jungles. Majestic mountains and trepid waterfalls seem to leap out of their spray cans like magic.

However, the spray paint is a toxic solvent based compound. The artist has to wear protective breathing gear and clothing. Painting indoors is impossible due to the odor, and painting just became seasonal.

Liquitex must have been watching the trend, for they recently launched a new spray paint that is water based, odorless, non toxic, and safe for use indoors. Many of the classic spray paint artists tried using this new safe paint, but found it lacked a lot of the properties of the more tacky solvent based, less expensive paints that they were currently using. These properties were essential to their scratchboard and layer removal techniques, so the Liquitex spray paint was rejected by the spacepainting community.



The other benefits of spray such as texturing, misting, stenciling, and rapid surface coverage was the same, so I used my earlier experience as a painter and merged traditional brush and knife techniques with spray painting methods. The combination of the two techniques results in paintings that have exceptional color and depth... and some spiffy looking planets.

3) Tools

I cannot teach you creativity. That comes from inside and it reflects you as an artist. There is no right or wrong way to be creative. There is only your way. But what I can do is teach you how to use the basic tools and that will help you express yourself. The tools and techniques are many, and it is you who must seek and choose the painting methods and techniques to put your vision on canvas.

The basic workshop kit I created reflects only a small portion of colors, brushes, and palette knives that are available to the artist, and I urge you to explore other tools/colors on the market. You'll find that one brush, or that one knife that will "speak" to you, and suddenly you'll find yourself expressing your creativity without effort.

Paints: We will be using 2 forms of paint. The first is the Liquitex acrylic spray paint that is the backbone of this method. It's mainly used for sky and water coverage, texturing, stenciling, and various special effects. The other is traditional tube or bottled acrylic paint that is used for brush and knife applications.

Brushes: The many types, shapes, and size of brushes are enough to make your head explode. A general rule is to use the largest brush needed to complete a particular stroke or effect. In this method, brushes are used in a similar way as taught by Bill Alexander and Bob Ross's Wet-On-Wet oil painting method, with the exception of the large 2" brush which is replaced by using the Liquitex spray paint (unless doing large murals). Brushes are mainly used to create landscape/planetscape tree foliage and bushes, and for detailing objects that have been stenciled. As we are using acrylic, it is important to always clean your brush with water immediately after use as acrylic dries quickly.



Palette Knives: There are several different sizes and shapes of palette knives. The basic kit includes the "Scotty" knife favored by Alexander and Ross and is used in the same fashion. Palette knives are used to create anything with texture such as mountains, rocks, tree bark, water lines, etc.



Stencils/Masks: A stencil is a shape that is cut out of a flat piece of poster board. The sheet is placed on the canvas and sprayed onto with paint which yields the painted shape. A mask is different, in which it is used to cover and protect the area being painted. Think of the stencil as the hole in the poster board, while the mask is the piece that is cut out. Round bowls and lids are used as a mask to create your planets and moons.

Paint Nozzles/Caps: This is the tip on the spray can. Liquitex has 3 interchangeable sizes, but we will mainly be using the standard medium size for workshops. As acrylic paint dries quickly, there is a problem with the caps getting clogged unless proper care is taken. You can use the standard way of clearing the cap by turning your can upside-down and spraying propellant through it, but the cost of the Liquitex spray is high and we don't want to waste it. Instead, use aerosol spray glass cleaner found at walmart by removing the tip from your paint can and placing it on the glass cleaner can and spraying glass cleaner through it. Never let a can sit for a period of time without cleaning the Nozzle.



Supports: The support is just the surface that the painting is done on, such as a canvas, board, etc. Traditional solvent based spray paint artists typically use the thin poster board as a support, but it is not suitable for the water-based acrylic Liquitex spray. Workshops will generally use canvas board as a support to paint on.

Table: Traditional painters use an easel to hold their canvas in place while painting. With this spray painting method, we use a standard table with the canvas laying flat on its back.

Glossy Magazine Paper Sheets: Sheets of paper torn out of magazines are used for creating texture. Glossy is best.

4) Basic Workshop Kit:

You do not need to purchase art materials to attend a spray paint art workshop by Jim Hurst. They are provided for use at no additional charge. But if you plan to purchase your supplies to continue painting at home, here are some tips to save you a few bucks.

Michaels Art Retail Stores are the sole distributor of Liquitex acrylic spray paint. The cost is prohibitive though at \$12 per can, but you can save a lot of money by purchasing your supplies online. Here are the basic supplies that I use in workshops that can be ordered through the online art supply distributor Dick Blick with prices as of this writing. Be sure to verify the pricing as they may change:

Dick Blick

www.dickblick.com

Liquitex Acrylic Spray Paint

Carbon Black \$7.19 0337
Transparent Black \$7.19 0260
Titanium White \$7.19 0432
Transparent White \$7.19 0430
Phthalo Blue (Green Shade) \$7.19 0316
Quinacridone Crimson \$7.19 0110
Phthalo Green (Blue Shade) \$7.19 0317
Yellow Medium Azo \$7.19 0412
Brilliant Blue \$7.19 0570
Brilliant Purple \$7.19 0590

Liquitex Spray Paint Nozzle Pack (Caps) \$4.05 04705-1006
Large Painting "Scotty" Palette Knife \$1.30 03105-0020

Blick Matte Acrylic Paint

Black 2 oz Bottle \$1.99 00727-2023
White 2 oz Bottle \$1.99 00727-102
Note: Substitute tube acrylic if desired.

Grumbacher Academy Hog Bristle Brushes

Fan Size 4 \$2.54 06858-1004
Flat Size 4 \$2.75 06846-1004
Filbert Size 8 \$3.86 06845-1008
Round Size 2 \$2.16 06859-1002

Dynasty Faux Squirrel Rigger (Script Liner) Series 1827

Rigger Size 4 \$3.25 09043-1004

Walmart (or other local supply store)

Canvas Panels / Stretched Canvas
Stoners aerosol glass cleaner
Misc. plastic bowls
X-acto Knife
Foam Brushes
Poster board
Paper towels
Disposable plates

5) Creating Planets in the Sky

The paint that is sprayed onto a surface comes out of the can smoothly (usually). To give it texture, such as to make it look rugged and rocky, a crinkled sheet of paper is spread out over the still wet paint and patted or dragged across. This is used to create rocky texture effects when creating planets and moons.



When beginning a painting using this method, and if there are planets/moons in the sky, the textures are created first by spraying various different colors onto the canvas, and then a crinkled sheet of paper is patted/dragged across the still wet paint. When the textures and colors are satisfactory, a shadow area is sprayed in an arch at the far side of the texture with black. The texture is then allowed to dry.

Once dry, a mask is placed over the shadowed texture to protect it from further spray. The mask in this instance is usually a round bowl, but an alternate shaped mask that had been cut out of poster board can be used (glossy side up). With the planet protected by the mask, the space/sky area around it can be sprayed.

6) Space Is Not Just Black

To the naked eye space can seem totally black. But it is best to add a bit of color to draw in the eye to add interest. The area around the masked planet is usually sprayed with black first. Then a few spurts of color are sprayed over the black to indicate far away galaxies.

There are different ways to add stars. Some spacepainters spray white onto their fingertips and 'flick' the paint onto the canvas. Others spray white onto a brush and drag their thumb over the bristles which causes the paint to splatter across the canvas.

Once the stars are added, the moment of truth arrives when the mask is removed to reveal the planet. It is always visually striking and a crowd pleaser when the new planet makes its grand appearance.



7) Comets And Other Things That Go Zoom

After the stars are painted and the planet is exposed, you can call it done. Or, you can give your spacepainting even more interest by painting objects zooming across such as comets and spaceships. Comets are created by folding a small rectangular piece of posterboard in half and shooting a small burst of white spray paint into the folded crevice. Spaceships can be stenciled on and detailed, or just hand painted.



8) Silhouettes



Silhouettes are an effective way to add great interest to your paintings. They are simple to do, yet they are mysterious in their own way and it causes the viewer to speculate to fill in their own details.

If you have a good eye and know how to draw, you can easily hand paint silhouettes with flat black over your painting with a brush. This is especially true when painting blackened trees against a sunset type background.

If your silhouette is of a particular shape or object, perhaps creating a stencil may be better. Draw the stencil the size you want on a piece of poster board and cut it out with an X-Acto knife. Then lay the stencil over your painted background and spray black over it. Be careful of underspray and/or overspray.

9) Planetscapes

Traditional spray paint artists use layer removal and scratchboard techniques to create their mountains, trees, cities, etc. when they are using Rustolium, Krylon, or other solvent-based spray paints. We, however, are using the safer Liquitex water-based acrylic spray paint and the Liquitex behaves differently making it difficult to use the same methods. So instead of removing paint layers, we will be adding paint layers as done with traditional acrylic and oil painting methods.

You may have seen the late Bill Alexander or Bob Ross paint those majestic mountains and happy trees on TV. We will be doing a similar method, except we are using the faster drying, low odor tubed or bottled water-



based acrylic paint instead of the Wet-On-Wet oil paint that they use.

A
Hursto Presto
Liquitex Spray Painting Project
by Jim Hurst.

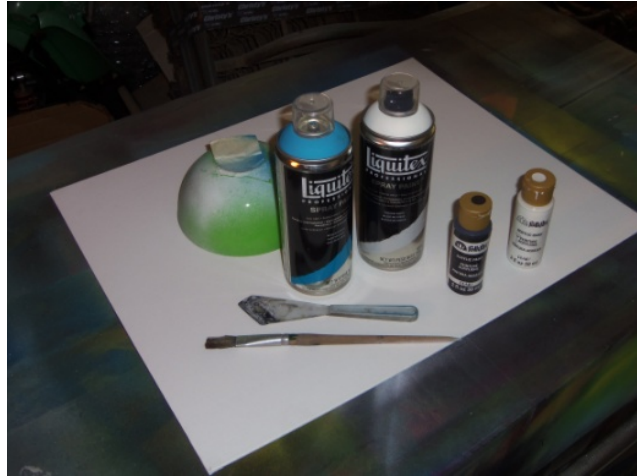


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Materials

- 1 Can Titanium White
- 1 Can Carbon Black
- 1 Can Phthalo* Blue
- 1 Can Brilliant Blue
- 1 Tube Acrylic White
- 1 Tube Acrylic Black
- 1 Palette Knife
- 1 Foam Brush
- 1 Fan Brush
- 1 Script Liner Brush
- 1 16" x 20" Canvas Panel
- 1 Straight Edge

**Note Phthalo Blue refers to Phthalocyanine Blue*



Include magazine sheets with shiny pages for texturing and a medium Bowl for the moon. An old towel and a bowl of water for cleaning.

1

Shake your cans real good and pick where your moon will be. Spray some white in the area.



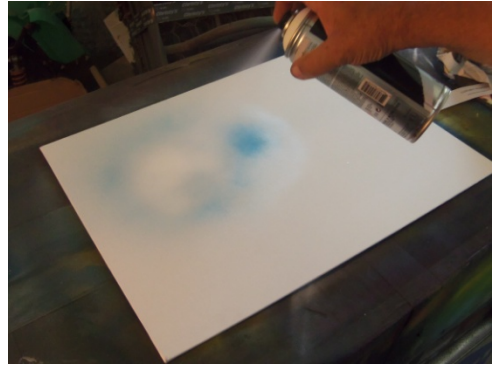
2

Before the white dries, spray some brilliant blue over it.



3

Then quickly spray some white over the blue.



4

Before it dries, crinkle up a magazine page and lightly lay it over the painted area. Press the paper down lightly by sliding your fingertips over the paper and...



5

Lift the edge of the paper and peel it off to reveal your moon texture.



6

Mist the moon texture (optional) by lightly spraying white over it. Careful you don't spray too much here.



7

With Brilliant Blue, spray a curved shadow area of the moon. Let the painting dry.



8

Once dry, lay your bowl over the moon texture and shadow area.



9

Spray entire sky area Brilliant Blue. Lay an extra heavy coat where the mountains are going to be.



10

Before the sky dries, spray a line of Carbon Black to create the mountain edge shape. An alternative would be to just paint it in with a palette knife.



11

Fill in the center of the mountain with Carbon Black.



12

Before it dries, use a foam brush to create the mountain edge and ledges with strokes down and left on left side of mountain facing the light.



13

With the same foam brush, do the same on the right side of the mountain and pulling the brush right and down in the shadow area.



14

Load the edge of a palette knife with Titanium White and paint the edges and ledges on the left side of the mountain. Hold the knife lightly with 2 fingers letting the canvas take what it wants. No smooshing.



15

Go ahead and create the rocky terrain at the horizon. Follow the “lay of the land” as your knife strokes become more horizontal at the mountains base. Let the paint ‘break’ creating land texture as you pull the knife across.



16

Hmmmm. Just realized that the bowl could have been removed a few steps ago before starting on the mountain. Lift the bowl and say...



17

...”Ahhhh!” The moon is a good indicator of which direction the light is coming from when painting the mountains.



18

Continue painting the mountain by creating the shadow area with gray created with mixing black and white acrylic.



19

Load the palette knife with white and paint the right edge of the mountain to make it stand out from the sky.



20

Spray the bottom of the mountain a thin coat of Phthalo Blue. As the Phthalo Blue is transparent, the mountain detail will show through.



21

Mist the bottom of the mountain with a thin coat of Titanium White spray.



22

Mix up a dark gray with black and white acrylic. Load a fan brush with this gray and paint in far away tree lines at the base of the mountain. Remember to follow the *lay of the land*. Don't worry about detail here because you will be misting the tree line.



23

Continue adding far away trees at the base of the mountain.



24

Mist the tree line with a thin coat of Titanium White.



25

Load the fan brush with black and tap in a line of trees in front of the base of the mountain.



26

Tap in some larger trees. Note that the bottom of the tree line will become reflections in water so paint a mirror image on the bottom. Don't worry about being exact.



27

Load a script liner with black and paint a few sticks and tree trunks in the upper portion of the tree line. I threw in a few silhouettes of people back there to give it interest.



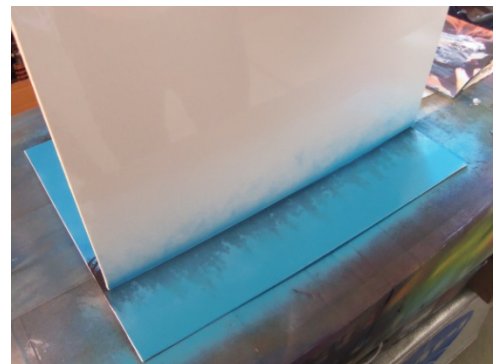
28

Place a straight edge on the center of the tree line. A spare canvas board works great.



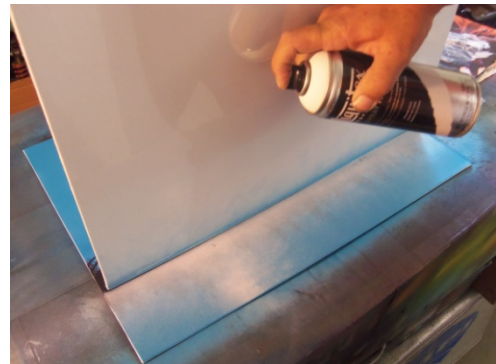
29

Using brilliant blue, spray the water under the tree line. Keep it light at the tree line to let the black show through.



30

Spray a thin coat of white at the water edge and a quick downward burst where the moon will reflect off the water.



31

Lift off the straight edge.



32

Only one thing left to do. Sign it, and enjoy your masterpiece!





April 73

About Jim Hurst



Jim Hurst grew up in the then small town of Merced, California through the '60s and '70s. After a stint in the Army he returned to Merced and attended Merced J.C. for 2 yrs as a Fine Art major. Another 2 yrs followed at Cal. State Stanislaus Turlock in the late '70s before he joined the Navy in 1982.

It was during the Navy when he picked up the brush again and began painting in oils while in San Diego, Ca. Returning home to Merced, CA, and then later to Turlock, CA in 1990, he began to teach wet-on-wet oil painting and performed numerous outdoor painting demonstrations at the weekly Turlock Downtown Street Festival hosted by Artel.

Up for adventure, he packed his bags and headed east to North Carolina where he continued to paint and study technique. He experimented with Grisalle, the underpainting method used by the old masters before turning to writing.

Two novels and two years later, he experimented with creating Machinima movies using computer generated graphics before deciding to return to painting. Looking for something different, he stumbled upon Spray Paint Art, also known as Spacepainting.

The toxic nature and odor of traditional spray paint limited his painting to outdoors only, so he endeavored to find a way to be able to teach workshops indoors. It was shortly after when he discovered a safe, water based, low odor acrylic spray paint created by Liquitex.

Jim now resides in Lumberton, North Carolina with his Wife Jane and two children James and Megan, and is now offering spray paint art workshops.

If interested in attending a workshop, visit his website at www.hurstopresto.jimdo.com or contact him at hurstopresto@gmail.com

Notes
