

The Artist Thinkup™ Workbook Project 6 Surrealist Techniques

Remember to view the videos before you start working, and jot notes down as you watch. Then do the project. Check in with your tribe in Facebook and Slack!

Of all the techniques I use in the studio, I think I rely on these Surrealist techniques the most. The nature of chance is a big factor in my work. There's something about the unknown texture of a *decalcomania* print that intrigues me. I never know exactly what the surface will look like when I pull up the plastic and that makes for a very exciting way of working.

Many books have been written on this group of artists. I've added a page of information on the techniques we are using inside this project but a simple Google search will bring up a wealth of information, as well.

“Art is a magic which makes the hours melt away and even days
dissolve into seconds” Leonora Carrington

Surrealist Techniques Overview

Aleatory: relating to or denoting music or other forms of art involving elements of random choice (sometimes using statistical or computer techniques) during their composition, production, or performance.

Decalcomania is a process of spreading thick paint upon a canvas then—while it is still wet—covering it with further material such as paper, cling wrap or aluminium foil. This covering is then removed (again before the paint dries), and the resultant paint pattern becomes the basis of the finished painting. The technique was much employed by artists such as Max Ernst.

Éclaboussure is a process in Surrealist painting where oil paints or watercolours are laid down and water or turpentine is splattered, then soaked up to reveal random splatters or dots where the media was removed. This technique gives the appearance of space and atmosphere. It was used in paintings by Remedios Varo.

“They thought I was a Surrealist, but I wasn't.

I never painted dreams. I painted my own reality.”

Frída Kahlo

Surrealist Techniques Overview (continued)

Frottage is a method of creation in which one takes a pencil or other drawing tool and makes a "rubbing" over a textured surface. The drawing can either be left as it is or used as the basis for further refinement.

Parsemage is a surrealist and automatic method in the visual arts invented by Ithell Colquhoun in which dust from charcoal or colored chalk is scattered on the surface of water and then skimmed off by passing a stiff paper or cardboard just under the water's surface.

Collograph is a printmaking term. It is a process in which materials such as pastes, string, cardboard, etc., are applied to a rigid substrate such as a piece of matboard, plexiglas, wood or a metal plate. The resulting textured plate is then inked and printed.

"I believe in the future resolution of these two states, dream and reality, which are seemingly so contradictory, into a kind of absolute reality, a surreality, if one may so speak." —

André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*

Surrealist Techniques

Frottage and Decalcomania

(You can also visit the supplies page on my website here: [Supplies](#))

Golden Products:

Dialryde Yellow Medium Fluid

Quinacridone Magenta Fluid

Phthalo Blue G/S Fluid

Titanium White

Polymer Medium Gloss

Acrylic Glazing Liquid (if you are in a warm climate to slow drying time)

Other:

BFK Paper 250 g/m White ½ sheet

Brushes medium to large size.

Foam plates

Piece of corrugated cardboard

Watercolor paper or other heavy paper to make stencil.

Cling wrap (like Saran wrap) or HDPE (high density polyethylene) from home improvement store.

Hard plastic putty knife 3-4" wide



See notes under each video for application tips.

“There are things that are not sayable. That’s why we have art.

Leonora Carrington

Surrealist Techniques

Aleatory and Parsemage

(You can also visit the supplies page on my website here: [Supplies](#))

Golden Products:

Quinacridone Magenta Fluid

Carbon Black Fluid

Polymer Medium Gloss

Clear Tar Gel

Quinacridone Magenta High Flow

Turquoise Phthalo High Flow

Iridescent Copper High Flow

Hansa Yellow Medium High Flow

Other:

Canvas panel, stiff paper (cover stock)

Pennies or other objects such as metal washers,
nails, rocks.

Gloves

Palette knife

Foam plate or palette

Brushes

Water container

Plastic table cover

See notes under each video for application tips.



“To be a surrealist means barring from your mind all remembrance of what you have seen, and being always on the lookout for what has never been.” Rene

Magritte

Surrealist Techniques

Parsemage and Printmaking

(You can also visit the supplies page on my website here: [Supplies](#))

Golden Products:

Polymer Medium Gloss

Clear Tar Gel

Quinacridone Magenta High Flow

Turquoise Phthalo High Flow

Iridescent Copper High Flow

Hansa Yellow Medium High Flow



Other:

BFK paper white 22" x 30" 250 g/m torn to

7-1/2" x 7" (you will get 9 pieces from each full sheet of BFK)

See the tearing diagram on the Reference section.

Large (i.e. 18" x 20") piece of cardboard for printmaking surface
or large canvas panel.

Pencil and ruler

Sharpie marker

Speedball baren, Japanese teacher baren or homemade burnisher.

See Reference section for instructions on making a homemade burnisher.

See notes under each video for application tips.

*"Give me two hours a day of activity, and I'll take the other twenty-two
in dreams." Salvador Dali*

Resources

A brief list of Surrealist artists you should know:

Andre Breton

Salvador Dali

Max Ernst

Meret Oppenheim

Leonor Fini

Henri Cartier-Bresson

Leonora Carrington

Dorothea Tanning

Frida Kahlo

List of organic (modern) and inorganic (mineral) pigments [here](#).

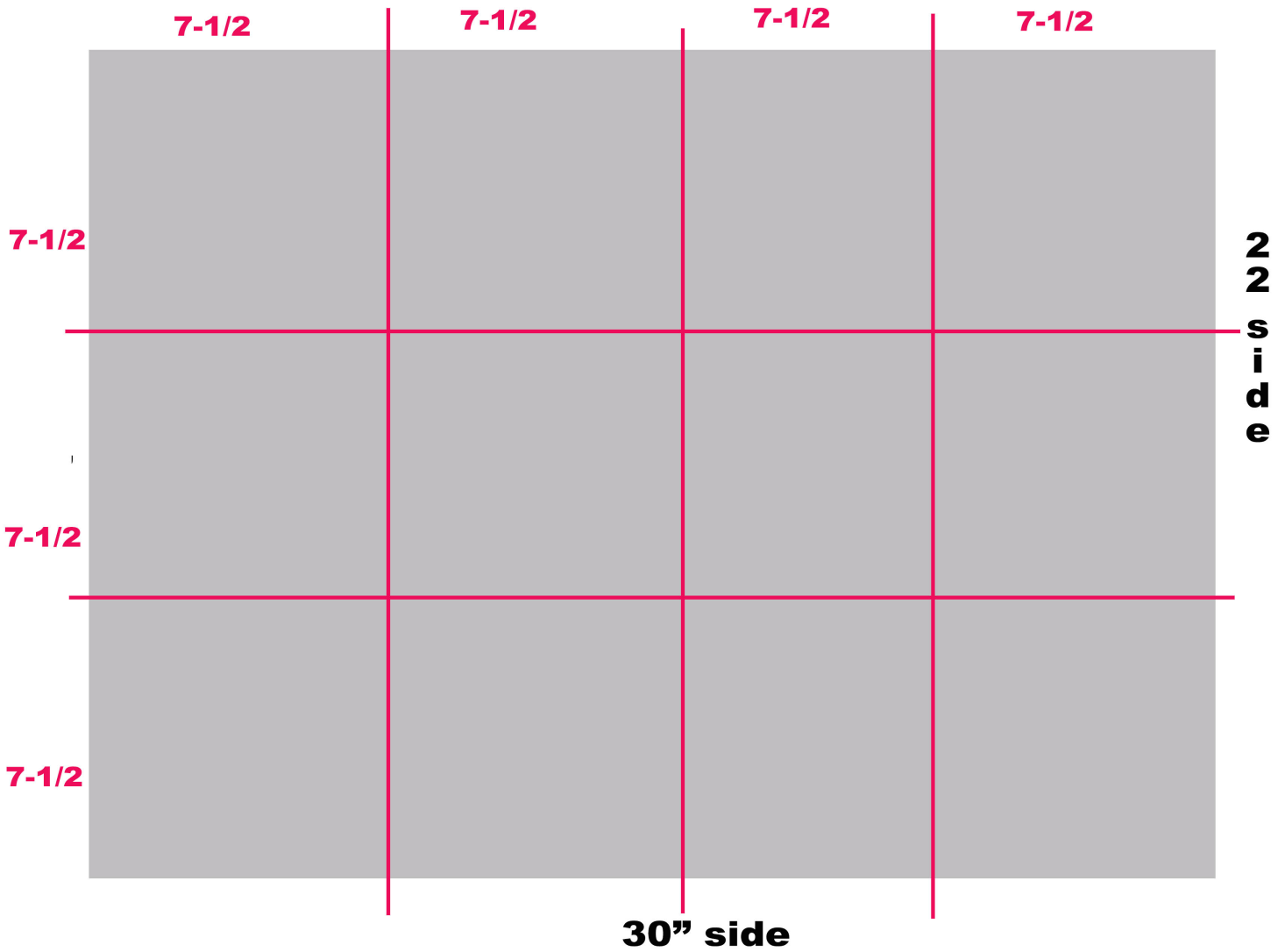
Bright Green High Flow has been discontinued. Follow this recipe to recreate Bright Green: 10 parts Hansa Yellow Light and 1 part Phthalo Blue G/S.

Collagraph plates: can be made from many materials. Try glueing cardboard, string, and other items to the matboard. After you create a plate with cardboard and other materials, seal it with a layer of Soft Gel Gloss or Polymer Medium. You can also use many of the Golden Gels and Mediums for textural affects. Some of my favorites; Heavy Gel Matte, Micaceous Iron Oxide, Glass Beads, Fine Pumice.

“Every notion is born along with its form. I make reality of ideas as they come into my head.” Meret Oppenheim

Surrealist Techniques

Tearing diagram for BFK paper 22" x 30" to make 9 pieces. Use with a collagraph plate that is 5" x 5" square.



Surrealist Techniques

Notes:



“Paintings, like dreams, have a life of their own and I have always painted very much the way I dream.” Leonor Finí

Surrealist Techniques

Notes:



“Paintings, like dreams, have a life of their own and I have always