

**Advance Preparation for Workshop
Scottsdale Artists' School 2026**

**Basics of Mixed Media
With Andrew Denman**

Dear Students,

Please read this document carefully.

Basics of Mixed Media is a fairly new curriculum that I created in response to popular demand after I first began selling mixed media work in 2020. During the Covid 19 Pandemic, when galleries were shuttered and artists like myself wondered where our next paycheck (and indeed meal) might come from, I started doing small, quick, mixed-media studies of birds and animals and selling them through Facebook. These quickly became known as my “Quarantine QuickStudies,” and I sold some 170 of them during the worst of the Covid days. Not only did the income from these studies keep me afloat, but I found it a great joy to sit down and, for the first time in years, create art without first doing pre-studies and engaging in an elaborate process. Instead, I worked very directly and experimentally.

In this class, I will teach you my specific approach to mixed media, which begins with a graphite drawing, followed by an abstract watercolor wash, followed by painting in details with acrylic, and finally adding finishing touches with colored pencil. We will be working on Crescent Premium Watercolor Board, which I will provide for you.

Because mixed media work invites experimentation, much of the materials list below is only suggested, at least when it comes to the specifics. Please read it carefully, however, and make sure that what you bring will be *more or less equivalent to what I will have on hand* (eg: a mix of wet and dry media options). **If something is especially important, and ESSENTIAL, it is HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW.** **For those who consider themselves beginners, it may be more advantageous to have the exact materials I will have so that you can follow along more closely with exercises.** More experienced artists are welcome to be more flexible.

Supply List

Surface: Crescent Premium Watercolor Board (Provided. This is what your materials fee is paying for). You will each get four- 7.5 x 10” panels and one larger 10 x 15.”

Pencils: Regular, good-old-fashioned #2 Pencil. Hard graphite pencils (recommend 4H, and 6H) Hard pencils are very important for burnishing our drawing so it does not smudge during the watercolor wash stage. Erasers, whatever kind you prefer. I love a Tombo Mono Zero eraser for details and a Magic Rub for larger areas.

Watercolor: Make sure you have some kind of watercolor or acrylic ink, and enough of a range of colors to be able to mix any color you want. A watercolor or similar wet-media bleed is a very important early step in the process I will teach you. Any brand or type you prefer is fine. I will primarily be using Daler-Rowney Aquafine Watercolor Inks. (misprinted previously as acrylic inks)

I will be using most of the available Daler-Rowney palette: Cadmium Red Hue, Cadmium Yellow Deep Hue, Lemon Yellow, Leaf Green, Caerulean Hue, Pthalo Blue, Ultramarine Blue Dark, Cobalt Blue, Quinacridone Magenta, Ultramarine Pink, Portrait Pink, Raw Sienna, Burnt Umber, Lamp Black.

Acrylic or Oil: Any good quality acrylic or oil paint for painting the bulk of your animal subject in more detail. I recommend acrylic because of its quick drying time (which will allow us to advance more quickly to the next step). However, I do not want to discourage anyone who is committed to oil paints.

I will be using Liquitex High Viscosity Acrylic Paints in the following colors: Naphthol Crimson, Cadmium Free Yellow Light, Cadmium Free Yellow Deep, Bronze Yellow, Burnt Sienna, Hooker Green Deep Hue Permanent (**Please note, Liquitex makes a number of very similar looking hooker greens. The correct one must have DEEP in the name**) Phthalocyanine Green (blue shade), Cobalt Blue, Prussian Blue, Dioxazine Purple, Titanium White. Whether you use all or some of these colors will depend entirely on your choice of subjects.

Color Dry Media: I will be using Prismacolor Colored Pencils in a wide range of colors. Bring whatever you are comfortable with, including other dry media you may enjoy such as pastels, pens, etc....

Palette Knives: In a variety of sizes for mixing colors.

Palette Paper: Use whatever size you're comfortable with. I prefer a smallish palette in the 9x12” range. You may use a reusable palette if you prefer.

Brushes: Bring a range of sizes, from large flats for watercolor washes, to smaller rounds, flats, filberts, (or whatever your preference) for detail. For acrylics, synthetic are best. I favor brushes that are soft and pliant, yet springy. Whatever you use is fine. My favorite brush is a #1 Liner, and it is an essential tool for me to achieve the level of detail I like. For those wanting to follow along more closely, I would recommend having one of these on hand.

Miscellaneous: A hairdryer (to speed up drying) is helpful when using acrylic, a container for water, and paper towels.

REFERENCE MATERIAL- This one is very important! Please bring at least five photo references of subjects you would like to paint. It can be anything you want, but I recommend simple and self-contained single subjects. I will be painting at least one bird and at least one small mammal for my demonstration pieces. Our four smaller paintings will be 7.5 x 10" (vertical or horizontal, your choice). We will also be doing one larger piece, at 15 x 10", so size one extra reference appropriately. When you have decided on your references, please print them out in black and white on regular printer paper, and reduce the size to fit appropriately on the study boards. Don't allow the subject fill up the whole board; leave space around it. I have included a few photos of my own work below to give you an idea of how much of the board the actual animal (or other) subject should take up. Because this is a mixed media class, NOT a drawing class, we will be transferring directly from these copies for the sake of efficiency so we can get to the mixed media work sooner rather than later in the course. As such, having these ready to go is essential.



Course Outline
(subject to change)

Day One:

Graphite Drawing
Watercolor Wash

Day Two:

Details in Acrylic (or Oil)

Day Three:

Continue Detail Work
Work Back in with Dry Media (colored pencils or whatever else)

Day Four:

Focus on larger piece and finishing details.

Feel free to drop me an e-mail me if you have questions regarding this materials list:
info@andrewdenman.com