

# ARTICULATE

## 'GILDED LEAVES VOCABULARY

**Acrylic:** Acrylic paint is a quick-drying, water-soluble kind of paint that artists often use instead of oil paint or watercolors. The original meaning of acrylic was "containing acryl," from acrolein, the sharp, bitter liquid in onions, rooted in the Latin words acer, "sharp," and olere, "to smell." Definition: A type of paint made with a synthetic resin as the medium (liquid) to bind the pigment (color), rather than natural oils such as linseed used in oil paints. It has the advantage of drying faster than oil paint and being water soluble.

**Acrylic Ink:** FW Artists' Ink is an acrylic-based, pigmented, water-resistant ink (on most surfaces) in a range of 38 colours, all of which have either a 3 or 4 star rating for permanence. Such a high degree of lightfastness over such a range of fully intermixable colours makes them ideal for use by artists in the production of pictures for permanent display. Equally, however, colours can be substantially diluted to achieve the most subtle of tones, very similar in character to watercolour. Such washes will dry to a water-resistant film on virtually all surfaces and successive layers of colour can be laid over. FW Artists' Inks work well through airbrushes and technical pens.

**Composition:** in the visual arts, composition is the placement or arrangement of visual elements or ingredients in a work of art, as distinct from the subject. It can also be thought of as the organization of the elements of art according to the principles of art.

**Elements of Design:** The various visual elements, known as elements of design, formal elements, or elements of art, are the vocabulary with which the visual artist composes. These elements in the overall design usually relate to each other and to the whole art work.

The elements of design are:

- Line — the visual path that enables the eye to move within the piece
- Shape — areas defined by edges within the piece, whether geometric or organic
- Color — hues with their various values and intensities
- Texture — surface qualities which translate into tactile illusions
- Value — Shading used to emphasize form
- Form — 3-D length, width, or depth
- Space — the space taken up by (positive) or in between (negative) objects

**Principles of Art:** The principles of art represent how the artist uses the elements of design to create an effect and to help convey the artist's intent. The principles of art and design are: **balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity/variety.**

**Gesso:** Modern-day gesso, the kind you typically find in the art-supply store is made from acrylic paint and should really be called acrylic gesso. Unless specified anything referred to as "gesso" in this article is referring to acrylic gesso.

Acrylic Gesso's Ingredients & Their Purpose

Acrylic gesso is made of:

- Acrylic Polymer Emulsion (plastic resin suspended in water)
- Titanium Dioxide (White Pigment)
- Calcium Carbonate (Chalk)

The acrylic is really a complex cocktail of chemicals that dry into a plastic film. The titanium dioxide makes the acrylic gesso extremely white and opaque. Finally the calcium carbonate (chalk) is added to make the gesso painting ground have a matte finish, an absorbent surface, and enough tooth (roughness) to pull the paint off the brush.

**Mood:** Mood: In art appreciation, the general atmosphere, or state of mind and feelings, that a work of art generates. For example, the mood of a painting could be disturbing or tranquil, dark or energetic.

**Liquin Original:** A general-purpose semi-gloss medium for painting, Liquin is a reliable favorite among artists of all skill levels. It speeds drying, improves flow and transparency, and reduces brush stroke retention, so you can achieve more with your favorite paints.

**Opaque/Transparent:** If light can not penetrate material then it is opaque. Piece of wood is opaque and most rocks are opaque. Glass, on the other hand, is not. Light shines through it, so it is transparent.

**Support of a Painting:** The basic substructure of painting, such as paper, wood, cloth, etc. is called "support". For acrylic painting, canvas on a stretcher is the most common.

**Wash:** A wash is a term for a visual arts technique resulting in a semi-transparent layer of color. A wash of diluted ink or watercolor paint (usually with water) applied in combination with drawing is called pen and wash, wash drawing, or ink and wash.

## Mona Lisa™ Products

### Metal Leafing

**METAL LEAFING** Throughout history, the art and craft of leafing has been used to create and embellish some of humanity's most revered works of

art. Egyptian relics, Far Eastern Temples, illuminated manuscripts and fine art have been leafed and embellished by artists. And it's easy to see why. The process of leafing can be employed on wood, metal, ivory, leather, paper, glass, porcelain, and fabrics. Leaf can be worked in delicate miniature as well as on architectural structures such as domes and vaults. For any art or application, there is a metal leafing technique.

**THE HISTORY** Gold was first discovered in 4000 B.C. by people living in what is now Eastern Europe. While they used it for crude ornamental purposes it wasn't until a thousand years later that the Sumerians used gold to create a wide variety of sophisticated jewelry. Then in 1200 B.C. the Egyptians discovered that it was possible to beat gold into a fine sheet. It is possible to create a sheet of gold that is thinner than a human hair. It was with this remarkable discovery that the art of metal leafing was born. Examples of leafing or gilding are not particular to one culture or region, but rather have been found throughout the world. At the same time metal leaf was being used to adorn the tombs of Egypt it was also being used on pre-Columbian figures in Central and South America. The benefits of leafing are obvious. Leafing allows the artisan to create an object that has the appearance of solid metal, without going to the expense of casting a solid object in a precious metal.

**THE PROCESS AND THE PRODUCT:** The ancient process of making metal leaf was difficult and time-consuming. Craftsmen would place a small piece of metal into what was called a "goldbeater's skin." This skin was made from the outer membrane of a calf's intestine, which is transparent, elastic and will not rip or tear during the long hours of hammering required to create a piece of leaf. Today of course, the process is made far easier through the use of computerized beating machines. But even with modern equipment, the creation of metal leaf is tricky and very time-consuming. Though the core difficulty remains. Each piece of gold must be flattened, cut and flattened again. To create a final sheet of flattened material this may have to happen hundreds of thousands of times. This is why even today there are only a few manufacturers around the world who can produce high-quality metal leaf.

#### **THE TECHNIQUE:**

[1] Prepare the surface This can include sanding, shaping and carving.

Porous surfaces need an application of a sealer or undercoat

[2] Apply adhesive to the surface

Because metal leaf is so thin, it is important to take care that the adhesive application is smooth with no brush strokes. When brush strokes are present it will show in the finished leaf surface.

[3] Let adhesive dry until tacky

[4] Apply Metal Leaf

[5] Apply a Sealer

#### **TYPES OF METAL LEAF:**

GENUINE GOLD LEAF

FINE SILVER LEAF

COPPER LEAF

COMPOSITION LEAF™

IMITATION SILVER LEAF™  
VARIEGATED LEAF™  
SIMPLE LEAF™  
METAL FLAKES™  
AUTHENTIC METAL POWDER™  
UNDERCOATINGS

Traditionally, undercoatings have been applied for both form and function. Because leafing requires a non-porous surface, undercoating's often act as a sealant. It also provides an additional color enhancement or tint to the applied leaf. Red Oxide was used as the traditional undercoating by master gilders because it brought out the brilliance of the gold leaf, and since leaf is thin, it was often burnished and sanded to let the undercoating show through. This technique is often referred to as Old World gilding

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## Adhesives

Adhesive or sizing, comes in many forms, and all forms share one important property called open time. This is the amount of time that the adhesive stays workable after it has been applied. In most cases, the adhesives used for leafing will allow the artist to apply the adhesive to large areas without having to worry about it drying out before leaf is applied. Traditional adhesives are oil based, but in recent years, the advancement of water-based adhesives has made them very popular.