



Atelier Interactive Basic Users Guide

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU START

During the period 1965 – 2008, artists' acrylics have become very popular and a wide range of techniques has evolved based on the toughness and fast drying nature of the paint, which has no technical restraints such as the "Fat over Lean" rule for oil painting.

An "old style" acrylic, which is the same as it was in 1965, doesn't need explaining. With a genuinely new acrylic, like Atelier Interactive, a bit of explanation helps, because this paint opens whole new horizons that you can successfully explore.

"Old" style acrylic painting may seem easier than oil painting, but it has had two major disadvantages:

1. The paint dries so fast that artists do not have enough time for blending and developing their paintings in the wet state as oil painters do.
2. The colours darken slightly in value when they dry, and the paint dries so quickly that artists always find themselves over painting, which makes matching of colour/tone values impossible when wet paint is applied over dry paint.

Atelier Interactive is the most significant improvement in artists' acrylics since the 1960's because it gives you full control over these two critical factors:

- Drying time
- Colour change from wet to dry.

Simply by using a water sprayer to rehydrate your paint, you will be able to explore "new" wet-in-wet painting techniques when you want. However, Atelier Interactive is carefully balanced so all the "old" painting techniques that everyone uses can still be utilized. It puts artists in control of the painting process.

HOW TO WORK WITH INTERACTIVE

IF YOU WANT TO PAINT WITH TRADITIONAL, FAST, "OLD" TECHNIQUES...

"Old" acrylics dry quickly because as the water evaporates or is absorbed into the substrate, the paint forms a waterproof skin. Artists find themselves painting a new wet layer over what has just dried, layer upon layer.

If you do not want to prolong with open time of Atelier Interactive by using a water spray, your "old" fast drying effects will take place much as usual. If it is humid or applied heavily, Atelier Interactive will dry slowly, so use a hair dryer (or heater) to speed up the drying process.

Additionally, there are mediums that accelerate fast drying when required, and can be exploited for certain effects. These mediums include:

- Binder Medium
- Fast Medium/Fixer
- Impasto Gel
- Modelling Compound
- Matte Medium and Varnish
- Satin Medium and Varnish
- Gloss Medium and Varnish

For more information on using these mediums, please see [Atelier Interactive Fast and Slow Painting Techniques Info sheet 102](#) and [Atelier Guide to Grounds & Mediums](#). When these fast mediums are used, the advantage of reopening layers and colour matching between layers is lost. Atelier Interactive is compatible with conventional acrylics, but these mixtures revert to fast drying mode and are best used for under painting.

IF YOU WANT TO PAINT WITH NEW, "SLOW" TECHNIQUES...

Atelier Interactive has a different drying behaviour:

Stage 1 – Start Up and Wet in Wet Painting

As the water evaporates it does not form a skin. It becomes progressively tackier but remains open and can be kept workable simply by replacing the water that has been lost, usually by spraying with a water spray or a wet brush until it absorbs enough moisture to lose the tacky feel. Wet blending can be prolonged as long as desired, giving you the opportunity to control the painting process and complete an idea wet-in-wet.

When to Spray?

Brush drag and tackiness will be noticeable. To be sure, touch your painting and your fingertips will grip.

When to Stop?

When your fingertips glide on the surface you have enough moisture. Working horizontally can be helpful while learning to control the spray.

Stage 2 – Wet over Dry Painting/Controlling Colour Shift

Atelier Interactive goes through a curing cycle instead of drying suddenly to form a skin of dry paint like traditional acrylics. When it does not receive replacement water, it goes from the tacky stage to a firm stage, which seems to be dry but is still responsive to water: to continue painting, dampen the painting, which will absorb water in the same way as dampened watercolour paper, and it will become very sympathetic to paint on, but most important: The dampened painting will return to its wet values, making it as easy to match values as it is when continuing an oil painting wet over dry. The freshly applied wet paint will match in perfectly with the damp painting you are working on, giving you easy control without tonal changes to worry about. Use your water spray occasionally if you want to keep going.

Stage 3 – Wet-in-Wet Painting the next day

When the water sprayer doesn't reopen Interactive any longer, but you want to soften edges, blend or remove colours, spray the Unlocking Formula on your painting to reactivate it.

There are mediums that can be used to enhance the open time of Atelier Interactive. They include:

- Liquid Slow Medium
- Clear Painting Medium
- Thick Slow Medium
- Unlocking Formula

For more information on using these mediums, please see [Atelier Interactive Fast and Slow Painting Techniques Info sheet 102](#) and [Atelier Guide to Grounds & Mediums](#).

An important difference between "Old" and "New" techniques when using mediums

Fast drying mediums create mixtures that dry quickly, so that fresh paint simply goes over that dry layer and is not affected by what's underneath. Glazing and scumbling are techniques that utilize wet over dry techniques.

The Liquid Slow and the Thick Slow Medium used in "new" wet-in-wet techniques do have an effect on over painting done in the same session, because the mediums create mixtures that remain active when the water spray is used. Artists working this way need to decide whether to use more medium or not. The artist must also decide when to stop, because too much blending can lead to muddy colours, as with oil painting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO

- [Atelier Interactive Fast and Slow Painting Techniques Info sheet 102](#)
- [Plein Air Painting with Atelier Interactive Info Sheet 103](#)
- [Tips For Using Mediums with Atelier Interactive Info Sheet 104](#)
- [Atelier Guide to Grounds & Mediums.](#)
- [Atelier Interactive Q & A Flier](#)
- [Atelier Interactive Combine Old and New Techniques A5 Leaflet](#)
- [Atelier Interactive Colour Chart](#)
- Atelier Interactive Website: www.atelierinteractive.com