



Atelier Interactive Fast and Slow Painting Techniques

INTERACTIVE'S ADVANTAGES OVER OTHER ACRYLICS AND OILS

- Oil painters have unlimited blending time but cannot control the built in longer drying time to suit themselves.
- Acrylic painters choose acrylics for their speed of drying, but they cannot control the short drying time built into old style acrylics, thus making it difficult to blend and finish what they are doing before the paint dries.
- Atelier Interactive is very versatile as it can be used for any of the customary fast drying techniques that acrylic artists use or the drying time can be controlled, allowing artists to extend wet blending whenever they need to. The ability to delay drying only happens if the artist chooses to add water or medium as the paint dries.

HOW TO DO THE "OLD" FAST DRYING TECHNIQUES - THE TECHNIQUES ACRYLIC ARTISTS HAVE DEVELOPED SINCE THE 1960'S

Atelier Interactive, like other acrylics, dries when its water content evaporates or gets absorbed into the surface being painted on. Therefore if you proceed as you normally would, nothing unexpected will happen and the particular part of your painting process you are carrying out will dry at a "normal" fast rate.

There is one exception that you need to be aware of. When Atelier Interactive is touch dry it can be over painted, but it goes through a curing stage during which the paint layer is "tender" until curing is completed some time later. So be careful when doing sgraffito, the technique that some artists use where they apply a second layer of paint and then scratch back vigorously to reveal some of the colour beneath, which can dislodge a layer of uncured Atelier Interactive.

You have 2 options:

1. Proceed gently and you should be able to do what you set out to do, or
2. When you have planned a sgraffito layer to be next, you can toughen up the under layer quickly by mixing Binder with the paint as you apply it. You can also apply it as a top layer, let it dry, and this will allow you to scratch savagely!

In climatic conditions, where humidity is above 80% or the temperature is below 14°C (that's 53°F), the drying and curing time of Atelier Interactive is extended. To control this you need direct sunlight or a warm dry place to speed the process.

There is a list of conventional mediums that can be used in normal fast painting processes such as Binder Medium, Impasto Gel and Modelling Compound. There is one medium specially designed to form a skin rapidly when doing thin multiple layering techniques, the Fast Medium & Fixer. When you incorporate any of these mediums for "fast" techniques, you will not be able to reopen touch dry paint with water to blend or match colours.

Note: Impasto Gel and Modelling Compound are often applied so thickly for textural effects that they will take quite a long time to dry.

Refer to the [Atelier Guide to Grounds & Mediums](#) for more information on these products.

HOW TO DO THE NEW SLOW TECHNIQUES - SLOW DRYING WITH EXTENDED WET-IN-WET BLENDING.

As the paint is drying it reaches a tacky stage like oil paints rather than forming a skin like standard acrylics.

You can identify this tacky stage easily because your brush will begin to drag, and if you touch the painting with your fingertips your fingers will grab onto the painted surface.

How to keep going Wet in Wet

You need moisture to replace what is evaporating and the paint will come back to life.

This can be done with a water atomizer or a damp brush. Stand back a bit and spray so that the larger droplets fall short and only an even fine mist hits the painting. Check with your fingertips and when they slide over the surface, you have enough moisture to go on.

Using Liquid Slow Medium, Clear Painting Medium or Thick Slow Medium will contribute wetness and reduce the need to spray as often. Choose the appropriate medium according to consistency as it relates to your painting style, and use the spray as well if you want to.

- Slow Medium - Liquid consistency, stays wet longest and “builds up”
- Clear Painting Medium – Liquid consistency with no “build up” effect
- Thick Slow Medium - Impasto consistency with no “build up” effect

Refer to the Atelier [Atelier Guide to Grounds & Mediums](#) for more information on these products.

Oil paints are blendable all day, whether you want them to be or not. With Atelier Interactive you use wet blending when you want it and stop when you are ready. You can keep going all day if you want to, but most acrylic artists prefer to complete a stage of their painting and then stop. Over painting is sometimes desired rather than continuing to paint wet in wet, and with Atelier Interactive you are in control and can decide what to do next. With Atelier Interactive you don't have to blend all day, only when it suits you.

OVERPAINTING AND ADJUSTING FOR COLOUR SHIFT

There is a lot of overpainting done by acrylic artists, so painting wet over dry is just as important as wet in wet blending. The major problem when overpainting is that the newly applied paint will dry very slightly darker, and when you overpaint your eye cannot help matching the wet paint with the dry paint on the painting although you know that the wet paint will dry darker. Some artists deliberately paint lighter at this stage and use a dark wash to achieve tonal balance after the paint has dried.

Adjusting for colour shift the Atelier Interactive way

When using Atelier Interactive wet the dry painting thoroughly and carefully wipe down the excess water with a cloth. The painting will return to its wet values so that when you continue with more wet paint, it will match perfectly. You may need to note that both the damp painting and the new paint will darken slightly as they dry, so if you want more tonal contrast you should add some Titanium White to the light areas before the paint dries. (The tone drop occurs while the paint is still in the tacky stage).

When overpainting with traditional acrylics it is difficult to integrate the edges where the newly applied paint meets the dry paint in the previous layer. When using Atelier Interactive and your painting is damp, you can use Liquid Slow Medium, Clear Painting Medium or even your brush to completely soften and fuse the edges where you need to do so, making overpainting as easy as it is with oils.

SURFACE BLENDING

When you are blending oil paint and you have a thick application of wet paint on the canvas and you want to blend into it, the likelihood of producing mud is high, because you are mixing into the whole layer of wet paint. When you are using Atelier Interactive, if you wait until the thick paint tacks up, you will find that it

doesn't skin over and you can moisten the surface enough to blend what you want to, without disturbing the whole layer of paint. **“Surface blending” is a special new attribute that not even oil painters have access to.**

GLAZING AND LAYERING – SLOW OR FAST

Atelier Interactive presents some unique opportunities and challenges for artists when glazing or layering. There are two ways to glaze and layer with Atelier Interactive - fast or slow – and this is a personal choice that people must make for themselves.

Fast Glazing and Layering

Involves quickly applying one layer over another, as you would do with traditional acrylics. Atelier Interactive does not form a tough skin when it dries, so it is possible to accidentally disturb a dry but uncured layer of paint. To avoid unwanted results try the following:

- Use a soft brush and gentle strokes to apply the paint.
- If it is humid, Atelier Interactive will cure slowly so use a hair dryer (or heater) to speed up the process. Once the layer is cured it will not re-wet.
- Fast Medium/Fixer can be used to toughen Atelier Interactive paint layers, either mix it directly with the paint or apply unpigmented over the top of a layer you want to protect.

Slow Glazing and Layering

The slow drying and curing time of Atelier Interactive means you have much more time to adjust each layer, and paint can be lifted out with a paint rag or easily blended back in with a soft brush. The layer can be kept workable with the water sprayer or a damp brush for an entire painting session. Unlocking Formula can be used to reactivate a layer the next day and for longer in humid conditions. For this technique, mix Atelier Interactive with water or Clear Painting Medium. For even longer working time (especially in hot dry conditions) mix with one of the Slow Painting Mediums and use the water sprayer to keep the layer moist. This is a preferred method of working because the layers “fuse” better. The slow drying time of each layer means that you can work on more than one painting at a time if the slow drying holds you up.

SUMMARY

When you do a painting you are carrying out a process, or more likely a sequence of processes - let's review how these work.

- When you want fast drying, you simply work as usual or you may even mix Fast Medium & Fixer to accelerate the drying speed, especially if you like applying many thin layers in fast succession.
- When you want slow drying, you use the water spray, Thick Slow Medium, Liquid Slow Medium or Clear Painting Medium.
- If you dislike spraying you can use a damp brush or more Clear Painting Medium.
- The following mediums can be used to extend the drying time and reduce the need to use a water sprayer: Clear Painting Medium, Slow Medium or Thick Slow Medium.
- When you over paint, you dampen the painting first and use the mediums as described above.
- Any stage of the painting can be kept wet while you are working on it.
- The painting can be dried out quickly in direct sunlight or near a heat source.
- Painting wet over dry can be integrated smoothly.
- Too much wet in wet blending can produce muddy colours as with oil painting and it is your decision when to stop and continue by overpainting.
- At no time should you feel that you need to hurry to finish something while the paint is still wet – in fact you can make changes and adjustments to a dry painting by using Unlocking Formula to re-wet parts of your painting if you need to.

- It is easy to integrate overpainting so that it does not look “added on to”, therefore you can stop whenever you like without fear of spoiling your painting.

MEDIUMS

Mediums enhance and exaggerate the basic paint, so that if you know how you want to paint - thick or thin, fast or slow - it is easy to choose suitable mediums. It is possible you may only need to use a water spray so proceed gradually and experiment when you feel like it. Mediums are not compulsory and the water spray alone can keep the paint wet.

If you use this information sheet for reference as you paint you will feel comfortable about adding slow techniques to your existing fast ones. Your style will develop because Atelier Interactive is a superb paint and with a little practice, you will be able to master its use for slow as well as fast techniques.

For more information on Atelier Mediums refer to the [Atelier Guide to Grounds & Mediums](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO

- [Atelier Interactive Basic Users Guide - Info Sheet 101](#)
- [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