

THE IMPORTANCE OF PAPER IN WATERCOLOR PAINTING

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Abstract. *This article highlights the importance of paper in watercolor painting, the history of paper's origin, and the methods of depiction on it.*

Keywords: *painting, watercolor, vatman, brush, paper, colors, artistic-aesthetic taste, works of visual art.*

ЗНАЧЕНИЕ БУМАГИ В АКВАРЕЛЬНОЙ ЖИВОПИСИ

Аннотация. *В данной статье освещается значение бумаги в акварельной живописи, история происхождения бумаги и способы изображения на ней.*

Ключевые слова: *живопись, акварель, ватман, карандаш, бумага, художественно-эстетический вкус, произведения изобразительного искусства.*

In ancient times, parchment, treated leather, and thinly crafted ivory were used instead of paper. Miniature works were primarily depicted on these materials. In our era, watercolor painting is mostly done on paper. Among the papers produced today, one of the most convenient papers specially designed for watercolor painting is "Torshon" paper. The surface of Torshon paper consists of rough textures, which ensures even application of watercolor paints. Another feature of Torshon paper is that its reverse side is smooth, making it very suitable for drawing.

Today, most paper is produced by processing wood. In addition to plant fibers, some types of paper contain materials such as gypsum, kaolin, feldspar, chalk, and lead white, and to change the yellow tint of the paper, blue pigments such as ultramarine and Prussian blue are added.

Watercolor painting has always required the best and highest quality paper. The quality of paper can often be determined by the watercolor painting made on it. Among the current types of paper, the most prominent one is "Vatman" paper. This paper is white, and its surface can vary (smooth or rough). Additionally, watercolor paints can be used on papers of different shades, such as yellow. Recently, a new type of paper has emerged, which makes working with watercolor very challenging.

The technique of working in watercolor painting is such a process where the surface of the paper is constantly kept moist during the painting.

During this moistening, high-quality paper does not swell or ripple. Among watercolor papers, the best is the one made from cotton. It absorbs moisture well during the process and dries quickly. Watercolor paper should have a thickness ranging from 170 grams to 850 grams. The surface of the paper should not be smooth; instead, it should be rough, as working on such a textured surface is easier. The watercolor technique itself is a process that reveals the brightness and clarity of light colors on the paper surface.

For young artists working in watercolor for the first time, it is recommended to start with a still life composed of 2 to 5 objects. Since the watercolor technique is one of the more difficult techniques, it is advisable to carefully consider each color in the arrangement (composition) before applying it to the paper. In oil painting, it's possible to correct poorly considered colors by wiping them away, but this is not possible in watercolor. Trying to remove unnecessary colors results in over-wetting the paper, which can damage it and cause it to tear. Without mastering simple compositions first, it is important not to rush into more complex ones. Before tackling any long-term painting, it is advisable for young artists to complete short studies or sketches.

This helps them learn how to correctly place the composition on the paper, understand the relationship between colors, and solve compositional challenges in the depiction.

The main materials for working in watercolor are watercolor paints, watercolor paper (Torshon), and watercolor brushes of various sizes.

The advantage of watercolor paint is that it dries quickly and is easily applied to the paper surface. Unfortunately, young artists who are just beginning to work with watercolor often struggle to use such materials correctly. Watercolor painting is a specific genre of visual art, executed on paper using soft-haired brushes made from kolinsky sable. In watercolor, not only are the colors of the paint used, but the white of the paper is also utilized.

The white color of the paper, visible through the light, thin layers of watercolor paint, seems to illuminate the watercolor tones, making them appear bright and vivid. This gives watercolor paintings a certain lightness, clarity, and uplifting spirit. For this reason, watercolor painting requires precise and well-executed drawing. Otherwise, any accidental touch of the brush to the paper may leave unwanted marks or smudges. In watercolor painting, the importance of drawing is as significant as in other fields of visual art.

One of the main characteristics of watercolor is how difficult it is to correct mistakes made during the process, especially when working on wet paper. Young artists, unaware of the properties of watercolor, often use colors that are too thick in their paintings. As a result, the painting becomes muddy and dull.

In such cases, the painting loses its fundamental qualities of brightness and transparency.

Therefore, young artists must carefully consider the relationships between colors during the painting process and set a clear goal for themselves.

For example: Let's take the depiction of an apple in a simple still life. Here, we paint the apple's color on white paper using diluted watercolor paint. As a result, we feel how the color of the apple changes in relation to the clean paper. If we add colors to the background of the still life, on an unpainted part of the paper, we can observe the interaction of the colors. At this point, we continue the watercolor painting process based on our first experiment. The more layers of watercolor we apply to the paper, the faster the colors lose their clarity. Enriching the vibrant colors and refining certain tones in the painting using the glazing (layering) technique can make a third color appear more transparent by working one color over another. However, it's important to note that any glazing reduces the brightness of the colors. Therefore, we must remember to carry out the glazing process with great care.

Not all types of paper and watercolor paints can be used for watercolor painting. Among watercolor brushes, the best ones for painting are those made from squirrel hair and those larger than size 16. For fine detailing work, it's advisable to use one or two small, fine brushes made from kolinsky sable. Watercolor painting requires covering a large surface area with colors. It is best to use half of a full Torshon sheet, that is, two-thirds of it. Otherwise, it is difficult to fully grasp the nature and potential of watercolor. Before starting a watercolor painting, the preparatory drawing is also of great importance. If the drawing for watercolor is poor and dirty, and if it has been frequently erased with an eraser, the watercolor paint won't adhere well to the surface of the paper, resulting in a messy and stained image.

Before undertaking a long-term watercolor painting, it is advisable to first complete several short studies. Through these studies, the young artist sets several goals for themselves.

First of all, they begin to master the relationship of colors, color harmony, the volume of objects, and the process of detailing. In such cases, only certain whole elements are worked on, such as a specific part of the hand, a section of nature, or part of several objects. During the first study exercises, it is better to gradually mix the colors. These studies should start with light colors and slowly progress to darker tones.

In the process of working with watercolor, attention must be paid to the volume of the object being depicted, its light and shadow sides, the brightest highlight (specular reflection), and the relationship between the colors. When painting landscapes, we engage with nature directly, experiencing and observing changes in nature, such as the rapid shifts in color.

Now, as always, we continue to learn how to paint by starting with a still life. Through it, we study the warm and cool colors in the still life, the lightest and darkest tones, the brightest spot (highlight), shadows, half-shadows, and cast shadows. To paint such a still life, we begin by making short studies (*études*) of small versions of the still life. First, the number of objects in the still life should range from two to five. If possible, the still life should be positioned in a well-lit part of the room, preferably near a window. Now, we proceed with the main task: completing short studies. The primary task is to start by positioning the objects on the paper. Then, we identify the lightest and darkest tones in the still life and, after moistening the paper, we continue with the study.

As we apply the colors to the paper, we leave the brightest part (highlight) of the objects in the still life unpainted. Since there are no white paints in watercolor, the white color of the paper itself replaces white in the painting. After applying the general tones of the objects and fabrics in the still life, we continue to work on the warm and cool colors, carefully rendering the lights, shadows, half-shadows, and cast shadows using vibrant and clear paints. Once the colors dry a little, we begin to work on the foreground and background. This requires analyzing the objects in the composition and revealing their exact shape and character through the applied colors. The detailing of the painting reflects the deep knowledge and professional skill of the artist. The primary techniques in detailing involve using brushstrokes, shading, retouching, and lines, which are achieved with brushes, hatching tools, and other drawing instruments.

In watercolor painting, the technique of detailing is primarily done using Kolinsky sable brushes for the most delicate and essential parts of the object. The direction of brushstrokes and hatching is very important in this process. By correctly orienting the brushstrokes and hatching, one can achieve great success in vividly depicting the colors of the objects in the painting.

When we talk about the works of Uzbek watercolor artists, we can see how significant the techniques of hatching and detailing are in their watercolor paintings. In these works, we can sense how the darkest, linear hatches placed by the watercolor brush are vividly and clearly depicted through soft, half-tone brushstrokes.

During this process, along with the detailing of the foreground objects, we distance the objects in the second and third planes by using glazing (*lessirovka*) techniques. This concludes our short study (*étude*). From this, it becomes clear that every new painting sets unexpected and constantly evolving challenges for the young artist.

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