

your**letters**

Artist's Palette magazine invites correspondence from readers everywhere. We will seek to publish some of the best letters we receive. Email letters to 'The Editor' – excal@lisp.com.au – or you may alternatively mail them to PO Box 93, Hazelbrook NSW 2779.

PAINTING WITH GOD

Dear Editor,

We took advantage of a wet afternoon recently to do some 'Painting with God'. This is a recent discovery of mine, where first one draws something or splashes paint on the canvas (with the help of a stubbie or two), then plucks up the courage to actually place the work outside in the rain.

Then one stands back – getting a bit wet – drinks a few more stubbies, and watches as the rain moves the paint around. This can have a fabulous effect, which is even more enhanced with the greater number of stubbies one consumes.



When satisfied with the new look, the canvas is retrieved. One may have to actually take a stubbie with one while retrieving the canvas.

A repeat may then be done over the top of the first, with new or different colours, and the piece can be placed in the rain once again. There is no limit to

the number of times this procedure may be repeated as long as there are sufficient stubbies. Or, finer detail may be hand-painted inside, without the assistance of the rain ... but a few more stubbies can help enormously.

Tools needed for this task: Canvas or board; paint (or other); rain (not available in a drought); stubbies. Clothing is optional.

Peter Norvill, Murrurundi, NSW

Dear Peter: Thanks for your letter, and the photographs you have supplied. Some of our readers will doubtless be greatly inspired by this adventurous approach to art. – Editor

DEMONSTRATION

Acrylics

The City

Equally at ease with his painting tools or the controls of a light aeroplane, this famous Australian shares some of his creative secrets with the readers of Artist's Palette magazine.

By Peter Norvill



STEP ONE

In recent times, I have used a squirt bottle tinted with a little paint to create a dribble effect. This time I used a very wet paint brush to do the same.

I often have little idea what I want to paint to begin with. If I set out to

paint a deliberate subject, I find I am too controlling and hence I will often make a mess of it.

One day I discovered the 'dribble' method, and suddenly things fell into place. Instead of trying to paint something by intent, I let the dribble method tell me what to paint. It is like

watching the clouds in a moonlit night sky ... our imagination can see or make things of the shapes. I now do this with art, and it works for me.

I started this particular painting (called 'The City') by dribbling three different colours, starting from the top of the board.

MATERIALS

- Canvas – approximately 2 x 1.2 metres.
- Acrylic paints.
- Grey paint undercoat (for the canvas).

STEP TWO

I dribbled some darker colour onto the work, once again allowing it to run wherever.

STEP THREE

Black colour was dribbled over the top. This actually appeared to change some of the underlying colour.

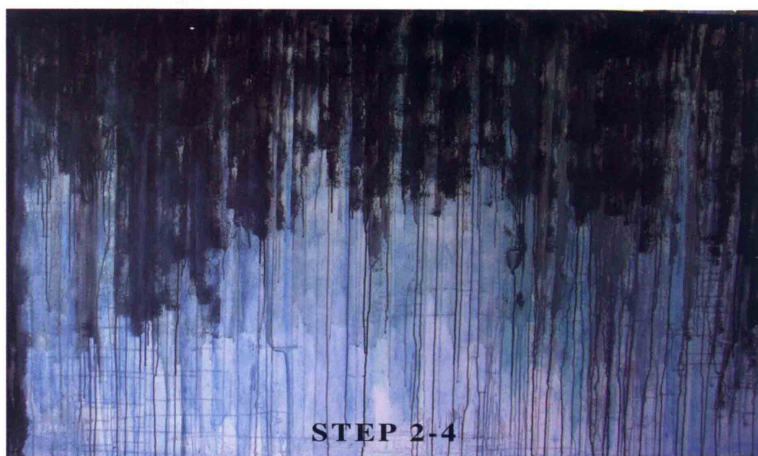
STEP FOUR

Both dark and light blue were dribbled over the top of almost all the canvas. By now I was seeing that the painting would be a city scene.

Interestingly, at this point, if I turned the canvas upside down it was still possible to see a city scene – I have often done this and continued a painting from this new aspect (upside down). I have even been known to turn a canvas on one end or the other and start a whole new ‘dribble’ action, which then trickled at right angles to the original. This can become very complex, but also very exciting.



STEP 1



STEP 2-4



STEP 5



STEP FIVE

Some dashes of pinky red were added at random. Then I elected to paint in bluish white coloured lines, which I planned to be roadways, at the bottom of the work.

STEP SIX

The big brushes were put away, and smaller ones were used to paint finer detail within the original dribble lines. A selection of colours from right across the spectrum was used at random.

FINAL STEP

The very finest brushes were brought into play here (0.5 rigger brush and others).

Some more tiny areas of colour were added.



I love windows and telephone lines. Window frames with lots of colonial bars were placed in the painting. A telephone line was strung right across the work from left to right. I allowed some of the other characteristics left over from the earlier dribbles to be highlighted as people walking the streets, whilst some remained undefined and ghostlike.

Finally, I painted some silhouettes (mostly head and shoulder figures) at the very bottom of the picture.

THE FUTURE JOURNEY

After doing the photo shoot from the beginning of this painting to the completed work, it was suggested that I take a photograph of it looking down at an angle. The resulting photograph, taken from that angle, shows approximately the middle third of the painting.

I was so intrigued with the result – especially the fascinating angles – that I printed a copy.

I then used a white gel pen and sketched some lines to emphasise the plan view.

I had been wondering where my art might go next, in the fascinating journey that we are all part of. I think I now know! ■

MASTER HINTS AND TIPS

- With the 'dribble' method, it is possible to cover the whole canvas with the basic colours in an hour or two. However, the 'devil is in the detail'. It may take me a month or more to complete the finer detail in one of my works.