

Luminous Black Glue Prints

These textured, surreal scenes are the result of a very sticky situation

In 1924, French poet André Breton published the "Manifesto of Surrealism," launching a movement in art and literature that sought to liberate thought, language, and art from the oppressive boundaries of rationalism. Some artists, such as Salvador Dali and René Magritte, created hyper-realistic paintings that explored dreamscapes and subconscious thoughts. Some Surrealists were deeply interested in spontaneous artmaking created largely by chance and uncontrolled processes. They borrowed the term "Automatism" from physiology, describing physical functions that are not consciously controlled, such as breathing or dreaming.

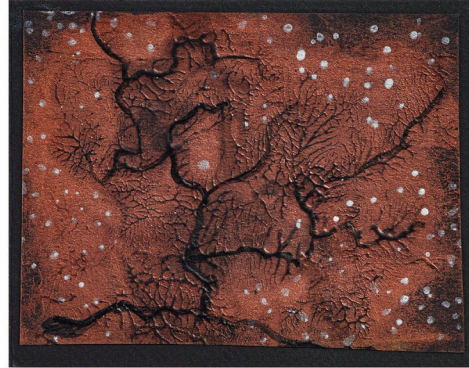
Techniques used by artists to achieve a level of automatism in drawing and painting included collage, scraping, dripping, soaking, rubbing, and a transfer technique known as "decalcomania." Surrealist Max Ernst was one of the first to experiment with decalcomania by transferring paint or ink from one surface to another by placing, pressing, and lifting. Sometimes the resulting abstract image would be intriguing enough and left as is; other times an artist would embellish the transfer and develop it into something more recognizable.

This Automatism technique uses black paper and black glue to create a random texture that resembles spindly tree branches, feathery foliage, or frost patterns. Enhanced with metallic liquid watercolor paints, these prints create moody, luminous landscapes or subtly textured abstracts that glow from within.

GRADES 3-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed

Preparation

1. Cut paper in half to an 11" x 7" size. Need one half sheet per student.
2. If desired, fill empty marker bottles with metallic liquid watercolors as an alternative to paintbrushes.



Materials (required)

Blick Essentials Black Glue, 4 oz (23978-2024); share one between two students

Strathmore 400 Series Black Mixed Media Pad, 15 sheets, 11" x 14" (13874-2025); one pad

Creativity Street Craft Sticks, bag of 150 (60401-1500); one stick per student

Blick Liquid Watercolor, 8 oz, assorted metallic colors, including: Metallic Gold (00369-9015), Metallic Silver (00369-9335), Metallic Pearl (00369-1095), and Metallic Copper (00369-9505); share a minimum of two colors across class

Blick Liquid Watercolor, 8 oz Black (00369-2025); share one across class

Langnickel Big Kids' Choice Lil' Grippers Brush Sets, Round Size 8, set of 12 synthetic (06082-1289); share two sets across class

Materials (optional):

Handy Art Empty Marker Bottles, pkg of 12 (03324-1012)

Darice Glitter, 1.5 oz Extra Fine, assorted colors (62156-)

Colour Shaper Kids Paint Set, set of 5 (04935-0601)

Blick All-Purpose Newsprint, 500-Sheet Ream, 18" x 24" (10204-1003)



Process

1. Cover work area with a piece of newsprint or paper towel to catch any drips.
2. Fold paper in half and squeeze glue generously on one side. Blick Essentials Black Glue has the perfect tack and consistency for producing the textures and branch-like imagery that appears in the project examples. Other glues, including Blick Essentials White Glue, may not produce the same results.
3. Move glue around on the same side of the paper using a craft stick or shaper tool. The goal is not to smooth the glue, but to create high and low areas, ridges, and valleys for a variety of textures.
4. Fold dry side of paper back over the glue side and press down. Open and view texture. If desired, move glue around with the craft stick and repeat the process.
5. Allow to dry fully before moving on to the next step. Depending on the thickness of the glue, a few hours may be needed for drying time. When dry, the paper may be cut at the fold to make two separate images or left intact as mirrored patterns.
6. Dampen a paper towel and have it close at hand. Using a brush or paint dauber filled with metallic liquid watercolor, apply paint to the entire surface of the glue print. Multiple colors may be used.
7. Sweep the dampened paper towel over the surface of the print. The paint will lift away from the dried glue areas, creating a contrast between the black glue and the paper area.
8. If desired, use black watercolor paint to create silhouetted details in the print such as tree trunks, hills, a foreground, etc.

Options

- For added rigidity and for a finished display, adhere the print to a piece of black matboard, leaving a border around the artwork.
- For extra sparkle, sprinkle iridescent glitter over glue while it is still wet.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

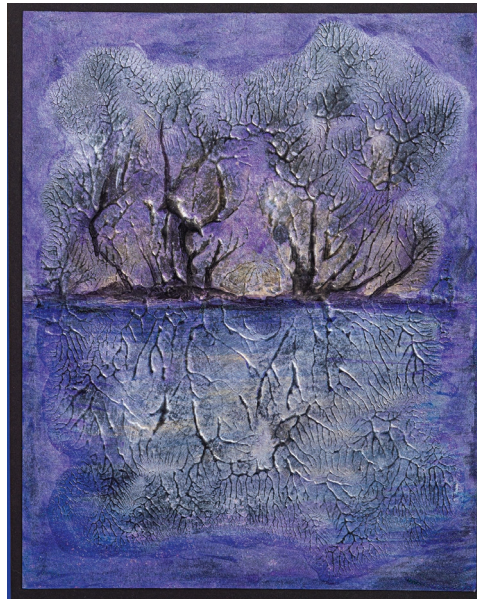
Creating

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Responding

Anchor Standard 8: Perceive and analyze artistic work.



Step 1: Squeeze black glue generously onto one half of a folded piece of black paper. Sculpt the glue to form high and low areas.



Step 2: Fold paper, press, and create a print.



Step 3: Apply metallic watercolor over the dry glue. Wipe from raised patterns with a dampened paper towel.