

Get in Gear!

Gear stencils are the hub of a mixed media piece centered in the Steampunk movement

(art + history)

The creation of mixed media works of art is an ancient craft, but the term "mixed media" is very young by comparison. Examples of artwork using more than one media dates back to the Byzantine era. Many artists of that time incorporated gold leaf into mosaics and paintings. Later, Leonardo da Vinci was one of the first painters of his time to mix pastels with other drawing media. In fact, most artists did not mix wet and dry media until William Blake began to add watercolor washes to his prints. These artists opened the door for those who followed them by throwing out the rules and allowing experimentation with multiple media to create contrast, detail, and depth.

So what is Steampunk? Steampunk culture combines Victorian-style aesthetics with science fiction. One of the most remarkable branches that has grown from the culture is its influence on visual art. This artistic movement further extended parts of the Steampunk culture into society. Like all talented artists, Steampunk artists combine their own style with that of the elements of Steampunk; gears, springs, brass, steel, etc. Steampunk artists are often the "Do-It-Yourself" (DIY) type. These artists create their own ideas of what is modern. They often create the uncreated.

With a combination of gear stencils, metallic papers and parts, and tacks used on a canvas board, a unique and previously "uncreated" work of art is possible. Mix up media, metals, and gears to create a Steampunk fantasy.

GRADES 5-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Look at the art of the Steampunk movement.

Process

1. Begin with a 12" x 12" canvas panel as the base for a Steampunk-inspired mixed media piece. Paint the background of the panel using a dark color for best contrast. Add texture by spattering or brushing on additional colors. Allow to dry.



Materials (required)

[Blick Canvas Panel](#), Package of 5, 12" x 12" (07008-5112); need 5 packages

[Blickrylic Student Acrylics](#), Pint (00711-); share two pints across class

[Roylco Gear Stencils](#), Set of 15 (22795-1015); share one set across class

[Moore Thumbtacks](#), Package of 75 (57323-1075); share one package across class

[Canson XL Watercolor Pad](#), 30 sheets, 12" x 18" (10173-1006); share one pad across class

[Snippy Scissors](#), pointed (57040-2005); one each

[Aleene's Quick Dry Tacky Glue](#), 4 oz (23884-1104); share four across class

Optional Materials

[Blick Essentials Colored Pencil Sets](#) (22429-)

[Sargent Art Liquid Metal Acrylics](#) (00730-)

[Jacquard Lumier 3D Metallic Paint and Adhesive](#) (00752-)

[Mirror Board](#) (12486-)

[Hygloss Holographic Self-Adhesive Papers](#) (12493-)

[Marvy Uchida Corru-Gator Paper Crimpers](#) (62951-)





Step 1: Fold a 12" x 12" piece of watercolor paper in half and draw one half of the image to be used. Cut out, then cut in half.



Step 2: Draw or paint a realistic representation on one half of the paper.



Step 3: Use the other half of the image as a pattern to cut out metallic papers, old book papers, or metal foils.



Step 4: Trace, cut and attach gears on one side to mechanically mimic the realistic side.

Process, continued

2. Fold a piece of 12" x 12" watercolor paper in half. Draw the outline of half of a beetle, moth, or other symmetrical Steampunk-inspired imagery on one side of the paper. While folded, cut out the image.
3. Cut the image in half down the middle axis. Using any media, draw or paint a realistic portrayal of half of the image being used.
4. Use the other half of the image as a pattern for cutting pieces of metallic papers, foils, or papers painted with metallic paints. If desired, use a paper corrugator tool to add texture to papers or metal sheets.
5. Lay out various gear stencils to decide what gears would fit within spaces of the image. Trace the gears onto metallic paper and cut out. The paper could be Mirror Board, a metal sheet, or papers painted with metallic paints. Even old book papers could be used to give it a vintage feel. NOTE: do not cut out center circle.
6. After finding the center of the panel, glue the drawn side of the image down on the left side of center. Use weight if needed. Now, lay out the cut pieces and gears on the right half of the panel to mirror the left side.



Process, continued

7. Once the placement of the parts is complete, glue down any base papers to the canvas panel. The cut-out gears can be layered and placed so they intermesh as they spin. Use a metal thumbtack pressed firmly into the canvas panel to hold the spinning gear elements in place. If the tack protrudes from the back, apply a dot of hot glue or some tape to the sharp point for safety.
8. Add any final elements by gluing or painting to add details. Metal pieces in the package of assorted charms add thematic details, or use found charms, old keys or other objects.,

Options:

- Use the biggest gear stencils in a large format creation on a 20" x 24" panel.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

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

Connecting

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.