

PIGMENTSPLUS Inc.

TIPS&TRICKS

# Aqua-Dispersion

*“Give a man a fish  
and you feed him  
for a day. Teach  
the man to fish  
and you feed him  
for a lifetime.”*

- Chinese proverb

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## Aqua-Dispersions #1 Getting started and helpful tips

**T**hank you for asking for the ‘Tips & Tricks Flyer’. We are making this flyer available because, even though ‘dispersions of pigments’ have been around for decades, artists have not been able to take advantage of them until recently. If you take the time to read this flyer you will understand why artists who add Aqua-Dispersion to their studio, save money and gain tremendous flexibility to their creative process without having to suffer ‘laborious’ mixing and grinding processes. Advanced, intermediate and even beginners will be impressed by its qualities! Let’s get started!

Manufacturers use dispersions all the time. The fact is, if you are buying a combination of tubes or jars containing **watercolor, gouache, tempera, acrylic, textile paint, air-brush paint, water-base wood stains or other artist products that “clean-up with soap and water”**, then you are buying small quantities of dispersions that are mixed into the respected binders for those products. The manufacture determines how much pigment you get and often he adds other pigments or extenders to arrive at a specific item. Those ‘add-in’ materials may craft an interesting color but they may also restrict the artist from using all the characteristics of that pigment. In some cases, the artist may find him self purchasing another tub/jar with the same pigment but formulated into a different item. This type of duplication can be quite costly and can result in wasting-half-tubes of paint drying up on the studio-shelves. Secondly, if you use two or more of the above types of paint, look at the colors you have. You will probably find that you use the same hues of color in each set – another type of duplication.

Artist Paint has been around for centuries and it was never a complicated or mysterious thing, i.e. pigment + a binder = paint. Aqua-Dispersion gives you the pigment, you chose the binder - the particles of pigment are already separated from one another to their finest point, so no pre-mixing or grinding is necessary – simply stir some of the pigment into a portion of binder. **How much of each?** Here is a quick way for you to test proportions, by making a Watercolor. Watercolor is an artist paint that consists of Pigment + Gum Arabic + Water. If I wanted to make a small quantity, say for a short painting session, I would take a plastic soda-bottle-cap and put 2-3(or even 4) drops of gum Arabic into it; I would shake my bottle of dispersion, take the top off and squeeze out ONE drop into the cap (start with small amounts of dispersion because they are extremely concentrated); with the back-end of my brush, I would stir the two until all the pigment was enveloped and distributed in the gum. Then I would fill the cap with water and re-stir. I would remove the excess from the brush, wet my brush and try the paint. If the paint was too intense I would simply add more water, to dilute it. I could also stir in more pigment. That is watercolor, now for some tips!



**PIGMENTS PLUS Aqua-Dispersion** - Are sold in 2oz. plastic bottles with funnel-tops for your convenience. They are high concentrations of top quality pigments suspended in an aqueous solution of water and dispersion agents. They are a **Tool** for artists and not a **Toy!** The pigments are non-toxic but as any professional tool, they should be **kept out of the reach of children!** If you have questions regarding use, contact us, and we will be happy to answer your concerns. All products carry our mailing address/phone# and e-mail address. Thank you.

**Learn to identify the pigments you enjoy using**, with information on the labels of your current paints. Pick up a tube/jar of your favorite paint. Under the color name (i.e. Blue brilliant or Winsor Blue), you should find the colors 'index name/number'. A commonly used blue today is: Phthalocyanine blue, **PB 15**. This is the standard internationally recognized name and index number for that specific pigment. (**Note: where as PB15 denotes the standard index number, there are several shades of the same pigment. Aqua-Dispersion has chosen PB15.3, which is the standard index number for the green-shade of phthalocyanine because this is the exact primary blue for mixing.**) If you choose a tube of light blue that was made with PB15 you also found listed PW6 or PW4 – Titanium dioxide and Zinc oxide, respectively. Many manufactured colors today have white pigment as part of their formula. If the white is there to start with, you can never remove it and take total control of the pigment's characteristics. PB15 is an extremely transparent pigment and wonderful for 'glazes' but if there is white pigment mixed with it, the glaze will be cloudy and less brilliant. This is never the case with Aqua-Dispersions.

### Tip #2

**Watercolor made easy.** Most of our dispersions are in the category referred to as 'organics'. Organic pigments generally have the characteristic of being transparent/semi-transparent; with extremely small particle size. So small in size, that we sometimes say they 'stain' the paper. Any one familiar with PB15, PG 7, PR122 (quinacridone magenta), etc. understands what I mean; they are very strong 'VAT dyes' that are transformed into pigments industrially.

For a transparent technique on paper, we could simply dilute a drop or two of our dispersion with water and use it similarly to watercolor – very often I do this and get great results - but to get the **full** range of Watercolor technique, we need to respect the components of traditional Watercolor.

Traditional Watercolor is: pigment -chosen for the characteristic of being transparent or semi-transparent – enveloped in the binder known as Gum Arabic. But what is often not stated is that the Gum Arabic has an important **second function** in Watercolor. On one hand, the gum binds the pigment to the surface of the paper as the water evaporates. More interesting, though, is the fact that Gum Arabic is a substance that is **re-soluble**; days after it has dried, we can wet it, and lift it and the pigment it contains from the image. This is an important part of the technique and allows the artist to adjust and cultivate his work. (Some artists dilute their Acrylics, thinking they will obtain w/c but it, in no way, allows them this luxury/freedom.)

### Tip #3

**Lovers of Gouache** can take advantage of dispersions most easily by remembering that Watercolor & Gouache are but brother & sister: both are pigment in Gum Arabic. They differ in that one functions by transparency and the other is a technique of **opaque** strokes and layers of paint. Most of today's gouache is a combination of the same organic pigments found in watercolor, with the addition of a white pigment to make it opaque. Not all the white pigments manufactured today have the 'tinting strength' of Titanium dioxide (PW6). Manufacturers combine pigments like Blanc-fixe & Alumina hydrate with the principle pigment they wish to produce, when the color needs to be at its deepest 'Hue'. When medium tones are produced, they include a portion of China-white, which is only another name for Zinc white (PW4). And often, Titanium dioxide is introduced when the colors fall in the mid/light range because it is the most opaque white used today. The drawback to TiO2 is that along with its high tinting strength, it also lowers the 'chroma' (the degree of saturation or intensity of a color).

Once these white pigments are in your paint, they can not be removed. So our **Tip** is to try making your gouache with all of the different whites that are available. Although Blanc-fix and Alumina hydrate are hard to find in ordinary art supply stores; but you can get them at **KAMA PIGMENTS** ! They are very inexpensive, easy to mix into a paste/dispersion with water and are safe to work with (both are transparent in oil and are used as extenders in manufactured oil paints; but that is another set of tips).

**A second tip for gouache lovers:** Gouache sits-up on top of the paper; it is a thicker type of paint and therefore has more gum binder to hold all the pigment in place. Gum Arabic, with time, gets very hard and on a flexible support, i.e. paper, the gum can crack. This can be minimized by adding a drop or two of 'glycerin' to your gouache, as a 'plasticizer' –

that is what manufacturers do also! Easy to find at your local pharmacy (4oz bottle is approx. \$3 and will last for years); into ½ - 1oz of gouache you need 1-2 or 3 drops. Play with it; you will see how it performs and you will master the making of gouache.



### Tip #4 (One of the most inexpensive and durable paints of all time MADE SIMPLE!)

**Always wanted to try Egg-Tempera but the books made it seem like you would be tortured with its preparation?** Welcome then, to your dream of trying one of the oldest and most sensual of painter's mediums. Forget about all the hard work! Try this for simple: take an egg-yolk (You can separate the skin first or just toss it into the bottle, like I do; if it gets in your way later, simply take it out then; it is not going to harm or ruin your paint). Put the yolk into a small bottle, add about 2oz. water, close the bottle and shake. Pour a little portion into a cap or whatever you use as a palette and add a drop or two of dispersion; stir them together and start painting! That is it! No Mystery! And you can dilute that mixture with two or more ounces of water. Lots of fun, but remember that egg dries very quickly and you need to rinse your brush frequently, to keep it from getting clogged with the medium

### Tip #5

**Acrylic and dispersion is a book in itself!** Mainly because acrylics are offered with an entire collection of 'mediums', that are used to extend and/or transform the paint itself. An extremely complicated and expensive medium of paint, yet it is very popular. The most important **Tip** that comes to mind is: Understand what the medium you use looks like when it dries, without pigment in it! Acrylic polymer emulsions, as they are called, look to be 'milky-white' in bottles and jars. Gloss, matt and gel mediums all look white and opaque but when they are left to dry – without any pigment added – they dry completely transparent. If you take a drop of your PB15 and put it into a ½ oz of the afore mentioned, it will appear to be a medium/deep blue; but as it dries it will get darker and darker because the milky-white is disappearing and it is like looking through glass at that intensely dark blue pigment. You can first add some white dispersion, several drops, stirring it in completely; then add a small-drop of color to obtain the hue of color you are searching.

Another option is "Light Modeling Paste". This medium resembles the gel-medium (except the texture is less creamy); but it dries completely opaque. It is, in fact, gel-medium loaded with Alumina Hydrate; a white pigment with virtually no tinting strength. Try this: Take 1oz of Light Modeling Paste into a cup and add **one-drop** of **PB15.3** Aqua-dispersion. Stir them together and you will arrive at a brilliant blue that will remain that color when it dries without the addition of any white pigments. It will, at the same time, make you completely aware that you will be able to make a lot of paint at a fraction of the normal price.

### Tip #6 Final tip for the day goes to oil painters who would like to utilize Aqua-Dispersions.

**That is correct. Oil painters can really profit from, as well!** If you want to make a time tested, durable paint that dries quickly without dryers, varnish or turpentine, here is a **Tip**. Use your dispersion to make an **Egg-Oil Emulsion**. Used for centuries and found to be a most sensual and durable artist paint, emulsions are a breeze to put together. A starter recipe would employ an egg-yolk with dispersion stirred in and some of your tube oil paint (or your own hand-made oil paint). Simply mix the two components together and you have egg-oil medium. It is, in a sense, a colored mayonnaise that dries; think about it! We have lots of tips about egg so watch for more Tips & Tricks Flyers.