
Painting on fabric

Gillian Travis

www.gilliantravis.co.uk

gilliantravis@gmail.com



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Size 8" x 10"

Here is the photograph I used as inspiration, it was taken in the market in Barcelona, Spain

Introduction

I have been asked many times, how I make my small painted journal quilts and stitched sketchbooks so, just for now, I have decided to share my tips and give everyone a chance to try painting and make a small wall hanging / journal quilt

I hope that if you enjoy painting on fabric, if you want to see more of my quilts have a look at my website, have a look at my blog, follow me on instagram or send me a facebook request.



Some of my equipment

Lets start with the equipment required

Fabric - I use heavy calico that I buy from Whaleys in Bradford UK. I think it is called muslin in USA. Do not wash it - it is very difficult to remove the creases and I find it easier to paint on to with the starch still in the fabric

Wadding or batting - I use a firm, thin, dense wadding or felt (wool or acrylic)

Thread - I use Aurifil 50wt in black or dark grey,

Paint - Liquitex artists acrylic paint are, I think, the best but any good quality acrylic paint can be used. I use the following colours Red, Magenta, Golden Yellow, Lemon Yellow, Turquoise, Ultramarine Blue, Black and White

Crayons - Derwent Inktense crayons and / or blocks

Ink - Acrylic ink

Pens - Posca Paint pens are really easy to use

Frixion Pen (black) - available at most stationers

Paintbrushes Royal and Langnickel flat paintbrushes in various sizes

White mixing palette or white paper plate

Water pot



These paintbrushes are not expensive and can easily be purchased online

Start by familiarising yourself with use of the paintbrushes, paint and fabric

Mix the following colours

Lemon yellow and turquoise

Golden yellow and ultramarine blue

Look at the different colours of green that you can achieve

Try the same with the following colours

Magenta and Turquoise

Red and Ultramarine

Look at the different colours of purple that can be mixed

Experiment using the different sized paintbrushes

Make a record of the colours and try out all the intense pencils. The colours shown on the crayons are not always the same when used on the fabric



TOP TIPS

Use a white mixing palette so that you can see the mixed colours

Change the water in your water pot regularly

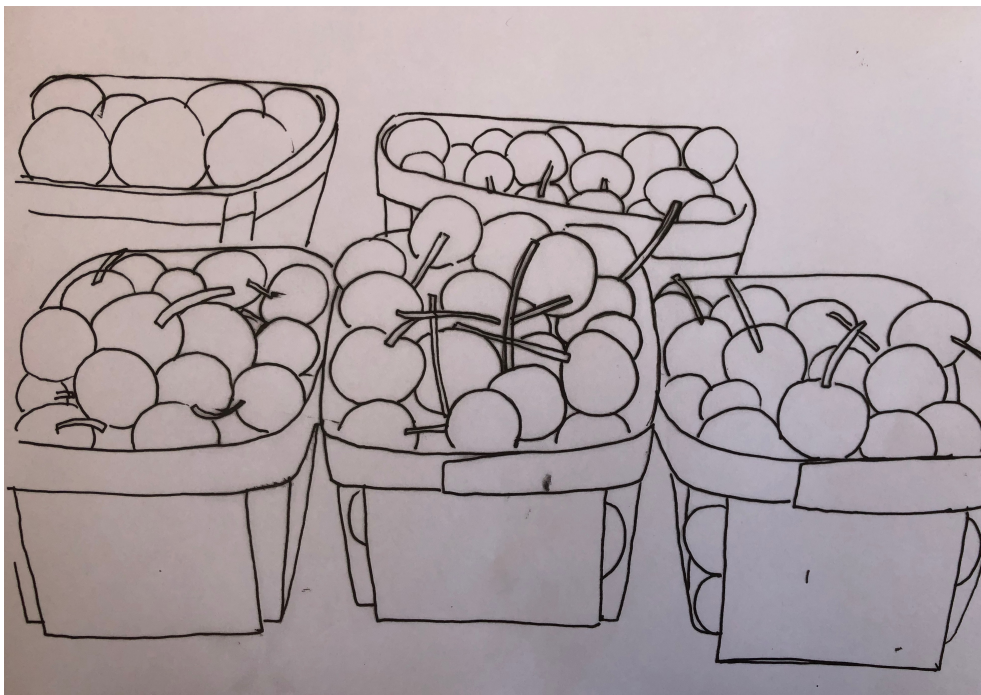
Do not leave your paint brushes in the water pot as it will spoil the bristles

Dilute the paint using plenty of water so that it is not too thick,

FABRIC

I use heavy calico so that when I paint onto the fabric the paint does not run. A well washed old cotton sheet will allow the fabric to bleed and you will have little control.

Experiment with mixing the paint to the correct consistency so that it doesn't run and doesn't look too thick



This pattern / drawing traced from my photograph is a good one to start as you can practice mixing the colours and the shading

Trace the lines on to the fabric by using a light box / pad or taping it to the window.

You can see I did some editing and removed one of the cartons of cherries in the background

Use a black Frixion pen to trace the lines. Make clear lines as these will be your stitching lines. It is not a sketch, more a line drawing

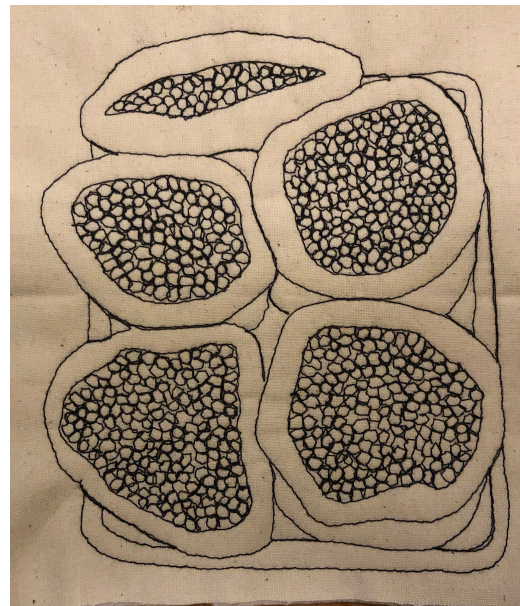
MACHINE STITCHING

Cut a piece of wadding or felt the same size as your fabric and spray baste it to the back of the fabric with the tracing on it . Do not iron as you will remove your friction lines

I work with just 2 layers at this stage - this avoids the need to keep the back neat and I will add the third layer later

Set your machine to free machine stitching and using a black or dark grey thread in the top and bottom of your machine, stitch all the Frixion lines. Try to stitch one continuous line even if this means you have to go over some of the lines twice.

Here are a couple of images of my latest Indian sketchbook before adding paint





PAINTING

Either print a copy of the source photograph or have one on your computer or phone so that you can keep referring to check you have mixed almost the correct colours

I usually try to start somewhere in the middle, but it doesn't really matter. The stitching lines will help to give a bit of a resist between areas but I generally try to paint an area, then go on to paint a different area to allow the first area to dry so that the colours do not run. If they do dab the fabric with a piece of kitchen roll before it dries.

Look carefully at the colours of the photograph. Look at the black and white photo of the same image.

Look at the shadows. Look where the light is shining on the fruit and making it very light and almost white.

Paint it all and wait for it to dry.

Next use the ink-tense crayons to add more colour

Experiment first using a scrap of the fabric as shown on the examples on the previous page. You can see how the colours become more vibrant when you add the water. Always use water to dissolve the crayons as the pigment in the crayons will be removed easily

Crayon more intensely to give stronger colours. the colours generally become lighter when the fabric dries.

Acrylic ink is also useful to add highlights



Use white acrylic colour or Posca paint pens to add white highlights

The more you experiment the more confident you will become



Here is a photo of a small journal quilt I made

You could use one of your own photographs of a market scene and follow the steps discussed above



Here is Cheryl's
almost finished small
quilt
and a large
wallhanging I made
showing a market in
Guatemala

