

Surface Enhancement Techniques

by *Dale Gillaspy*

Acknowledgements

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Gilding and Patina:

Points to Remember:

Wood must be sealed prior to applying size. I use shellac, but paint will also work. Apply size and let dry to a tack.

Genuine gold leaf is not a tarnishable metal and will not patina.

Silver, Copper, and "Dutch Metal" or imitation gold (Zinc and Copper) will patina.

When using chemicals for patina, always wear eye protection, chemical resistant gloves, and work in a well ventilated area.

Japan Paints: Pigments ground in synthetic resin-varnishes. Miscible with turpentine. Widely used for aging, faux finishes, marbleizing and glazing. Used to make stains or glazes for wet-in-wet techniques to create artistic effects.

Japan Paints are available online or at a wide variety of art supply stores.

Gold leaf available at art supply stores or a variety of online suppliers or wood suppliers.

Chemicals available from ArtChemicals.com David J. Marks package is \$100, or type in the individual chemicals in the search box. They run about \$8 each for a 2 oz package.

Potash, Sodium Sulfide, Barium Sulfide, (Cupric Nitrate, Ammonium Chloride), (Combined)

Chemical Effects:

Potash Sulfurated: Will produce Blue on Genuine silver Leaf. When initially applied, the Potash will oxidize the silver leaf to a gold color. After several minutes or longer, it will progress to a reddish color and then it turns blue.

Barium Sulfide: Produces a brownish, purplish color on Copper and an orange shade on Dutch Metal. (Does not fully dissolve.)

Sodium Sulfide: If used lightly and dried quickly with tissue or a paper towel, this patina will create reds on Copper, and a variety of greens, blues, reds & oranges on Dutch Metal. This is the fastest of the patinas and should be used sparingly.

Ammonium Chloride & Cupric Nitrate Solution: Will oxidize Copper and Dutch Metal to a greenish aged bronze color.

Pyrography

Commercial or home made pens. If commercial, consider pens with replaceable/changeable tips. Can make your own. Dichroic wire available online. Electric Leads, electrical cord, (Lamp cord) and ¼" mono phone jack all available at Radio Shack. If making your own brands, wire cannot touch itself or it will create a short circuit. Consider turning an outer handle for pens out of a dense hardwood. Even commercial pens get very hot.

You can also make your own heating unit from a battery charger. See Jason Clark for details.

Music Note Bowl:

Use a parting tool or round point tool to make 5 evenly spaced lines. (Spacing will vary with the project. I usually shoot for about ¼" apart.) Use a wire burner to burn the lines of the staff. After that, I remove the bowl from the lathe and mark out the measure lines. I do this by taking the song I want to use and divide the number of measures by the circumference of the bowl. I then transfer the song to the bowl in pencil. From here, it is just a matter of copying over the pencil marks. Every few measures, stop and use 90% rubbing alcohol. (This is stronger than the usual mixture.) It will take the shadow marks away without raising the grain.

If you are not musically inclined, you can download music off of the internet for free. Just Google the song title you wish to use.

If you don't want to make your own pens, the internet is filled with burners and pens. Not all pens work with all burners, but there are simple adapters available. I got several of my supplies from Treeline, USA and Woodcarver's Supply, but there are a ton of other vendors out there.

Analine Dye

There are powdered and pre-mixed, water based and alcohol based dyes available. I use mostly powdered water-based dyes. I like the powder because you can mix very small amounts, and they don't evaporate if you don't use them quickly. I got most of mine from Rockler and CSUSA, but again, there are a TON of vendors. Start out with a few primary colors. With Red, Blue, and Yellow, you can mix and match and make whatever colors you like.

Use the same mixture for airbrushing or manually applying color. Don't be afraid to sand back and re-apply. This will add to layering. If you get a sharp division line between colors, a little wet-sanding will blend them nicely.

Filling Cracks/Voids:

Pre-mixed solutions available in a variety of colors from suppliers such as CSUSA. Sold under the brand name "Inlace."

Powdered Metal: Brass, Copper, etc. mix with epoxy or press in crack and cover with thin CA glue. Comes out several shades darker than the dry powder.

Genuine crushed stone: i.e, Turquoise: Crush with mortar and pestle and pack into crack. Cover with CA glue. Looks better on dark woods. Hard on tools.

Other additives: Commercial solutions for epoxy. Red glitters, etc. Brass key shavings.

Mixed Media

Use your imagination. Don't be afraid to try something new, and discard if it doesn't work.

Consider: copper wire, clay sculpture, glass, acrylic, sticks, branches, etc.