

# Painting with Hot Wax 3:



## Digital Photography meets Encaustic Painting

By Kristin Murphy Heynen

### Historical and Contemporary Uses of Encaustic Painting:

#### Ancient process

- Greek War Ships (800bc)  
Painted Hulls for decorative and practical purposes
- "Fayum" Portraits (Greco/Roman/Egyptian) (100bc-200ad)

#### Contemporary Re-emergence

- Diego Rivera (1920's)
- Jasper Johns (1954)
- Lynda Benglis (b.1941)
- Rachel Friedberg (1970)
- Nancy Graves (1978)
- *Contemporary Uses of Wax and Encaustic*, Palo Alto Cultural Center (1992)
  - Maya Lin
- *Waxing Poetic: Encaustic Art in America*, Montclair Art Museum (1999)

#### Artists who inspire encaustic painting and photography:

- Elena De La Ville: *Torsos* [www.edelaville.com](http://www.edelaville.com)
- Michael J. Marshall <http://mmars.myweb.uga.edu/index.html>
- Wayne Montecalvo [www.waynemontecalvo.com](http://www.waynemontecalvo.com)
- Marybeth Rothman [www.marybethrothman.com](http://www.marybethrothman.com)
- Catharine Nash *Authentic Visual Voices: Contemporary paper and Encaustic (video)*  
<http://www.authenticvisualvoices.com/>

#### Supplies:

##### Basics

- Beeswax and Damar Crystals
- Encaustic Starter Kit from R & F Paints
- Muffin Tin for pigmented wax
- Recycled tuna cans
- Small loaf pan for clear wax
- Electric hotplate
- Heat gun
- Natural Fiber, goat hair brushes (sewn not glued)
- Oil Paint
- Hard and Porous Surface (wood, masonite, bisque fired clay, paper adhered to wood surface with archival glue)
- Metal Scraping tools such as ceramic loop tools, pin tools...
- Surface thermometer

## High End

- Encaustic Medium
- Encaustic Palette (If ordering from R & F ask if they have any damaged palettes for a discount)
- Encaustic Medium colored wax

## Concepts that inspire student artists:

- Obsessions
- Illustration of a quote
- Inclusion of a line of text or quote
- Memories
- Found photographs
- Portraiture

## Safety:

- The medium of Encaustic must be used in a well ventilated space
  - Fan
  - Open window to create a draft
- Wax must not be heated over 200 degrees
  - Avoid burns while working with wax and heated surfaces
  - Wax should not be smoking at any point
- Wear Medical Gloves
  - Wax is difficult to wash off your hands
  - Protects hands from heat and minor burns
- Tape down extension cords and power strips

## Resources:

- The Art of Encaustic Painting: Contemporary Expression in the Ancient Medium of Pigmented Wax
  - Joanne Mattera
- Encaustic with a Textile Sensibility (instructional video available)
  - Daniella Woolf
- Embracing Encaustic learning to paint with beeswax
  - Linda and William Womack
- Encaustic Works 2012; A biennial exhibition in print
  - Published by R&F
- Swept Away: Translucence, Transparence, Transcendence in Contemporary Encaustic
  - Cape Cod Museum of Art, published in conjunction with the exhibition *Swept Away*
- Catharine Nash *Authentic Visual Voices: Contemporary paper and Encaustic* (video interviews and interactive ebook) <http://www.authenticvisualvoices.com/>

- Oil Paint Sticks/Bars
- Canola or Vegetable Oil to use with oil sticks
- R&F Products <http://www.rfpaints.com/>
- Encaustikos <http://encausticpaints.com/>

## Methods:

- **Silent demonstrations in the art classroom**
- **Project 365 app**
- Fusing
- Building up Texture
- Incising Lines
- Revealing previous layers
- Photo-Transfers
- Photo-Grounds
- Floating Photographs
- Collage
- Sculptural Wax Molds

## Clean-Up:

- Cover table surfaces with paper or canvas for easy clean up
- Once brushes and tins are dedicated to encaustic painting, they are ruined for other media
- Clean-Up is simple, wipe palettes while surfaces are hot and just let everything cool

## Helpful Sites and E.Resources:

- MisaFineArt [www.milisagalazzi.com](http://www.milisagalazzi.com)
- Facebook Groups
  - Encaustic Group (This is a closed group however, you can request access)
  - Encaustic Photography
- Eighth International Encaustic Conference Provincetown, MA June 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>  
<http://encausticconference.blogspot.com/>
- [www.rfpaints.com](http://www.rfpaints.com)
  - Workshops, supplies and materials
- Kristin Murphy Heynen  
[kristinheyne@wheelerschool.org](mailto:kristinheyne@wheelerschool.org)

