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Artex Manufacturing Company

Tips for Painting an Exterior Mural using Acrylic Paint

The mural location:

The enemies of a mural are sunlight and moisture. North and East facing murals will last longer than West or South facing murals. Murals should not be painted on retaining walls that have earth behind them as moisture can seep through and may lift the paint or leave mineral deposits. Avoid locations watered by sprinklers or run off from roof as it may result in mineral deposits or stains.

Proper surface preparation:

Proper surface preparation before you begin painting is the most important factor to ensure a long lasting mural, painting or decorative finish. The surface must be clean and free from any loose or flaking paint. To prepare a previously painted surface, sand or wire brush as needed. Wash with a solution of trisodium phosphate (available at paint stores), rinse and allow to dry. If the wall has shiny paint on it or has been painted with an oil-based paint, be sure to sand thoroughly before priming. Cement, masonry or wood should be primed with one or two coats of acrylic gesso (such as Nova Color Gesso #200) or with a high quality water-based primer. Do not prime with an oil-based paint or oil-based primer unless the manufacturer specifies that it is suitable for use with water-based paints.

The paint must be formulated for exterior use:

Paint intended for exterior use is formulated differently than easel artists', craft or interior paint.

The acrylic resin in the paint formula is a major factor making the paint suitable for use outdoors. The type of acrylic resin used in paint formulation varies depending of the intended use of the paint. Some fine artists' paint may use a good quality resin but this resin may not be suitable outdoors. These paints may be too soft, weak or water sensitive for use outdoors. Nova Color Artists' Acrylic Paint is made with a tough 100% acrylic resin durable for outdoor use.

In addition to the **type of resin** used in the paint, the **amount or percentage of resin** used in the paint formula is important. As a rule, less expensive paints such as low cost house paints or craft paints have only the minimum amount of resin required to make them serviceable. House paint or craft paint is often made with a less expensive and less durable latex or vinyl-latex resin. House paints are designed to last 5-10 years before recoating. With age these paints may become thin, tend to wash off or appear chalky.

If you wish to economize by using house paint, use the best quality paint containing 100% acrylic resin.

To minimize color fading due to sunlight you must be alert to the **lightfastness rating** of the pigment used in the paint. Some pigments fade more readily than others. The American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) determines the Lightfastness rating of pigments. Check your jars or color chart for the lightfastness rating of the colors you plan to use. Lightfastness I is the best rating. Lightfastness III should not be used in direct sunlight.

Within the Lightfastness I rating some colors are more lightfast than others.

The most lightfast colors for exterior conditions are:

#100 Burnt Sienna	#117 Raw Umber	Oxide
#101 Burnt Umber	#117D Raw Umber Dark	#174 Neutral Gray 5
#104 Chromium Oxide Green	#118 Titanium White	#175 Transparent Yellow Iron Oxide
#105 Cobalt Blue	#119 Venetian Red (red oxide)	Oxide
#108 Iron Oxide (Mars) Black	#121 Yellow Ochre	#176 Indanthrone Blue
#109 Carbon Black	#128 Raw Sienna	#177 Phthalo Green Yellow Shade
#110 Organic Pyrrole Orange	#133 Bismuth Yellow	#178 Arylide Yellow (PY 914)
#115 Phthalo Blue	#134 Raw Titanium Matte	#183 Bone/Ivory Black
#115D Phthalo Blue Deep	#141 Mars Violet	#187 Pyrrole Red
#116 Phthalo Green	#149 Transparent Red Iron	

Pigment and lightfastness information is usually not indicated on house paints or craft paints.

Colors can fade or react to conditions other than sunlight. New stucco or plaster should be thoroughly cured before painting. Some Lightfastness 1 rated colors, such as cadmium colors, can fade in damp or acid rain conditions. Some Lightfastness 1 colors are less lightfast when made into a thin glaze or mixed with white.

A clear topcoat designed for exterior use such as Nova Color #216 Exterior Varnish or Nova Color #206 Gloss Medium & Varnish will help protect against dampness as well as add an extra layer of protection against wear and tear.

All materials used in the mural should be researched before they are used. Materials designed for the construction industry or craft use may not be suitable.

Ideally, painting should be done in a temperature range of 65-85 degrees F. Avoid painting in misty or rainy weather. Painting should not be done late in the day if the night may be misty or freezing before the paint dries.

Adding too much water to the paint can affect the adhesion and shorten the life of your mural. In general, do not add more than 10% water to Nova Color or 5% to house paint

About Nova Color Artists' Acrylic Paint

We have been making Nova Color Artists Acrylic Paint since the 1960's. We use a tough, durable, 100% acrylic resin suitable for use outdoors. No additives are needed to make it suitable for exterior use. All paints are labeled with the lightfastness rating.

Nova Color is sold factory direct to the muralist and is available in pints, quarts, gallons and 5-gallon pails. Nova Color is shipped to the USA and Canada.