

Notes from Max Doerner & Jacques Maroger

MAKING GROUNDS FOR THE CANVASS

It is important for the young artist to get a firm grasp on the whys and wherefore's of traditional artist materials and techniques.

As with all my tutorials, I recommend you take notes and vary each recipe according to your own individual adjustments.

Objective

So far we have covered many of the attributes of grounds. If you want to experiment with the various grounds and recipes I would refer you to Max Doerner's book Materials of the artist and their use in painting.

For this tutorial I am going make the mysterious casein ground.

Key points

1. Casein Ground - Making it from Scratch - Making the Quark
2. Making the Casein Sizing
3. Sizing your Canvas with the Casein - No Calcium Carbonate!
4. Adding Pigment to the Casein for the Ground

Materials needed

1. 1 Gallon of Whole Milk
2. 2 Cups of Vinegar
3. 1/3 Cup of Hydrated Lime
4. 1/3 Cup of Distilled Water
5. Cheese Cloth
6. Colander
7. Disposable Mixing Containers
8. Storage Containers
9. Paint Brush

Tutorial

Procedure - Starting in the morning:

1. Pour 1 gallon of milk into a tall container
2. Heat a large pot of whole milk to 80° (best to use a digital thermometer)
3. Add 2 cups of vinegar, stir a couple times, cover the pot and let it sit, for a few hours.
4. The milk will have set to a custard-like constancy , similar to silken tofu.

5. Run knife in a crosshatch pattern and then begin to gently stir the curds as you heat it again. Heat no higher than 115°!
6. Set colander into your sink, add a couple of layers of cheesecloth to filter your cottage cheese. Rinse to remove the whey. Lift the gathering the sides of the cheesecloth, lifting gently to strain off excess whey.
7. As with the Gesso pour water into mixing container slowly add your lime. This will allow the lime to slake. Let sit for about 10 minutes. Stir to remove any lumps, but there shouldn't be any.
8. Remove cottage cheese from strainer and pour into the hydrated lime mixture and stir.
9. Let sit for 20 minutes, the lime will dissolve the cottage cheese. Stir as needed then strain through funnel stainer
10. Bottle and refrigerate. Make as needed, store no longer than a week.

**** Mark your paint and toxic so no one drinks it! Skull and Cross bones**

Note: Hydrated lime is available at Home Hardware in 6-kg bags for about \$13. Lime is extremely alkaline, so wear gloves, eye protection and a dust mask. If you get it on your skin, rinse with white vinegar. Available at Ace Hardware

The fresher the paint the better for permanent adhesion, a ground must contain a consistency of porosity, absorbency and roughness for proper adhesion. Drying time should be a minimum of two weeks.