

DIY: ANCIENT ALCHEMY IN THE CONTEMPORARY STUDIO
SGCI, 2016 Portland, Oregon, FLUX: The Edge of Yesterday and Tomorrow
Demo by Susan Rostow, Inventor of Akua Inks, March 31, 2016 / OCAC

In the early days of printmaking, printmakers made their own ink with lamp black and boiled linseed oil. Ink-making eventually became a commercial process and handmade inks lost their place in the printmaking studio. This demo explores making ink by hand using colors obtained from animals, minerals and plants. These natural pigments may not be as reliable or bright as those manufactured from chemical sources, but they have a beauty and subtlety of their own. This presentation aims to enrich the dialogue between methods, materials and imagery.

NATURAL PIGMENTS COMPARED WITH SELECTED AKUA INKS:



CLAY for YELLOW “Earth pigments” were widely used in the earliest pre-historic paintings. The earth colors vary depending on the amount of iron oxide and minerals that they contain. As the iron oxide decreases, the color shifts to yellow.

Akua Intaglio™ Yellow Ochre contains a synthetic yellow oxide. It is brighter in color and offers greater color saturation than natural yellow oxide. *Tip: Add Akua Intaglio™ Transparent to Akua Intaglio™ Yellow Ochre to reduce the pigment intensity and produce a similar color as the natural source.*



MALACHITE FOR GREEN Used by the Egyptians, Malachite is the oldest of the green pigments. Malachite occurs in many parts of the world and is associated with copper ore deposits. The powdered pigment is produced by crushing and grinding the stone. Coarsely ground particles produce a dark green and finely ground particles produce a pale green.

Akua Intaglio™ Oxide Green offers stronger opacity coverage and a higher tinting strength than Malachite. *Tip: Add Akua Intaglio™ Transparent to Akua Intaglio™ Oxide Green to reduce the pigment intensity and produce a similar color match to Malachite.*



COCHINEAL

Akua Alternatives to Cochineal



COCHINEAL for RED

Cochineal is an insect from which the natural color carmine is derived. Cochineal insects can be found on the white sticky mounds on the Prickly Pear Cactus. The red color is produced by grinding the dried Cochineal insects. A wide range of reds from warm oranges to cool violets are produced depending upon the source, particle size, and binder. The dye has been used for centuries for coloring fabrics. Today, cochineal is commonly used as a colorant in food and in lipstick.

Akua Intaglio™ Cadmium Red (hue) mixed with Akua Liquid Pigment™ Quinacridone Violet creates a red violet color. Akua Inks offer better reliability, consistency, intensity and luminosity than cochineal. *TIP: Experiment with a range of Akua™ color mixtures including Scarlet Red, Crimson Red, Quinacridone Violet, and Quinacridone Red to achieve a variety of reds reflective of cochineal's variations.*



BLACK WALNUT

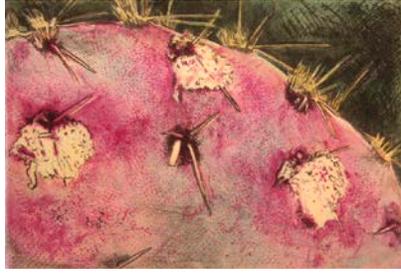
Akua Alternatives to Black Walnut



BLACK WALNUT for BROWN DYE Black walnuts can be found on the ground below Black Walnut trees (*Juglans Nigra*) in the late summer to fall. The husks of the black walnuts are used to make a deep brown liquid dye.

Akua Liquid Pigment™ Raw Umber is close to a match for black walnut dye. It is made from a natural pigment rather than a dye. Pigments are generally more reliable than dyes.

DEMO PRINT



“COCHINEAL UP-CLOSE,” Drypoint monograph,
Printed with Akua Intaglio inks, Akua Liquid Pigments and Natural Pigments on Arnhem paper..



“DACTYLOPIUS COCUS”, mixed media artist book with “COCHINEAL UP-CLOSE,” Drypoint monoprints.

AKUA / SPEEDBALL PRODUCTS used in this demo

- Akua Liquid Pigment™ Blending Medium (*wetting agent for grinding with muller*)
- Akua Liquid Pigment™ Extender (*binder and preservative for black walnut dye*)
- Akua Intaglio™ Transparent Base (*binder for creating intaglio or relief ink with natural pigments and black walnut dye and to increase the transparency of Akua Intaglio Inks*).
- Akua Intaglio™ Yellow Ochre
- Akua Intaglio™ Oxide Green
- Akua Intaglio™ Cadmium Red (hue)
- Akua Liquid Pigment™ Quinacridone Violet
- Akua Intaglio™ Carbon Black
- Akua™ Printmaking Plates (*for drypoint and monotype*).
- Akua™ Wiping Fabric
- Speedball® Soft Rubber Brayers
- Arnhem 1618™ Printmaking Paper

Making Intaglio and Relief Ink with Natural Pigments

1. Crush and grind large pigment particles into a powder using a mortar and pestle.
2. Continue to grind to a finer powder with a glass muller on a ground glass surface. Add a few drops of Akua™ Blending Medium to smooth into a paste while grinding.
3. Mix the mulled pigment with an ink knife into Akua Intaglio™ Transparent Base to create intaglio and relief ink.

Making Printmaking Ink with Natural Dye

1. Simmer the black walnuts in the husk in a pot on the stove for several hours. Simmer longer if you would like to get a darker shade.
2. Sift out the solids through a strainer.
3. Save dark liquid and dispose the solids.
4. Mix the dark liquid with Akua Liquid Pigment™ Extender to use as a liquid ink or mix with Akua Intaglio™ Transparent Base to create an intaglio or relief ink.

Please visit www.SusanRostow.com to view samples of her work.

For further information on pigments: <http://www.akuainks.com/understanding-pigments>. Akua™ products are available through most printmaking suppliers