

AIRBRUSH

Drawing for the Airbrush Artist

The reference drawing that the airbrush artist works upon is extremely simplistic in the sense that it consists only of line. No shading is required because it will be applied with the airbrush. Normally, the less pencil work done in the development of an airbrush rendering, the better.

The drawing that the artist works on is a well-planned guide that gives him the visual information needed for the development of a painting, as well as where and when frisketing (stenciling) is needed. Several drawings are usually completed before the airbrusher is ready to execute the line contour reference drawing.

To begin, thumbnails are small preliminary sketches in which the artist develops the initial composition. Several small and quick thumbnails are done, and then one is selected.

Next the artist develops a more complete rendering called a "rough" drawing in either black and white or in color. This is an elaboration of the selected thumbnail, where more detail is applied and shading is used to develop a complete drawing of the proposed rendering. If done in black and white, the rough drawing is used as reference for the artist in developing the three-dimensional shapes to be painted. If done in color, it can be used as a guide for the colors to be used in the final airbrush painting.

Then, if necessary, detailed drawings of specific areas of the rough drawing may be executed. These will aid the artist in

working out textures, highlights, etc.

In airbrush technique, the artwork is usually pre-conceived. The artist must know in what order he will paint.

After the preliminary information is determined (composition, textures, light sources, color schemes, etc.), the artist is ready to do the line contour drawing upon which he will paint. This can be developed from the rough drawing. If the rough drawing is the size of the painting, tracing paper is placed over it and, using a fine-point black felt tip marker, the line is traced onto the tracing paper; then it is transferred onto the work surface by using either transfer paper or covering the reverse side of the tracing paper with carbon from a pencil. If the rough drawing is either larger or smaller than the end image, the line contour drawing can be enlarged or reduced on tracing paper with the use of an overhead or handheld projector.

While airbrushing, keep the thumbnail, rough and detail drawings at hand and refer to them for the development of the image. The contour line drawing is simply a guide as to what the shapes are and where they exist in space. In airbrushing you usually work from the background to the foreground, and the line contour drawing tells you which shape is closest to the two-dimensional plane and the order in which the shapes recede into space.

TIPS:—To prevent smudging, make light pencil lines when preparing drawings.

—Refrain from using a fixative on the work surface; it will fill in the pores of the paper, resulting in a different look from where no fixative was applied.