

Tip #99

Still MORE found art supplies!



I've just spent the last year bringing my 20+ year-old North Light book, *Watercolor Tricks & Techniques*, into the 21st Century – new techniques, new materials, new tools, and new demos! And of course many of those were what I like to think of as “found art supplies.”

You'll find new ways to use string, rubber bands, coffee, rubbing alcohol, waxed paper in your paintings – and ways to *avoid* letting those “tricks” get TOO tricky! I love finding new ways to use household items in my art, so here are a few that didn't actually end up in the book.

Art 99-1, book cover, *Watercolor Tricks and Techniques*



For the whole deal, you can find it on Amazon, <http://astore.amazon.com/httpcathyjohi-20/detail/160061308X>, or right here on my webpage catalog, <http://www.cathyjohnson.info/books.html>, if you'd like an autographed copy.

Art 99-2, discount store finds!

Be sure to check out the travel department of your local discount store for “found” art supplies...a plastic toothbrush holder can work to protect your short travel brushes, a soap holder can corral small tools like sponges, erasers, sharpeners, and so forth. A tiny plastic sprayer works great as a water container—especially if you can find a second one just enough larger to cut off to form a cup. (A dab of “Sticky-tac” or other product meant to hang posters without making holes in your wall can hold the cup steady, without tipping over.)

Wet down your paper with the sprayer, use it to spread the paint in an interestingly spontaneous way, make a new texture by spraying a rich, just damp wash with fine droplets and then blotting.



Art 99-3, Second Childhood



My current favorite travel palette is a recycled metal Prang box – remember how well made those were, with nice rolled edges and a generous white mixing area? (What’s with some of the new plastic boxes with clear mixing areas?!) You may even have one, back in a drawer – or you can still pick these up at secondhand stores or antiques shops, and usually on eBay for next to nothing. Just search “Prang watercolors” or “metal watercolor box” and you’re likely to find what you need for a lot less than most commercial watercolor boxes.

I popped out the old paints and stuck empty full pans (I know, that sounds weird) in place with a bit of rubber cement, then filled them with artist-quality paints. If you want more colors and don’t mind the smaller working area, use half pans, instead. You’d have 26 colors and STILL have room for a skinny brush!

Of course if you wanted, you could just use the 8 pans that come with Prangs—and some artists I know use the paints themselves, for travel work or sketching, where permanence isn’t a big issue.

A friend uses a Prang box to carry her paintbrushes in the field...works great!

And of course some of the inexpensive kids’ brushes work great for travel brushes ... you can get a whole SET for under \$6.

You can find some of my favorite art supplies in my [“Cathy Johnson’s Books and More”](#) store on Amazon.

Please drop by my artists blog, <http://katequicksilvr.livejournal.com/>, my fine arts gallery blog, located at <http://cathyjohnsonart.blogspot.com/>, where I often offer mini-demos, my CafePress store, located at http://www.cafepress.com/cathy_johnson, where you can find instructional CDs for artists, or drop by for a visit on Facebook, <http://www.facebook.com/cathy.johnson1!>

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