

## Tip #77

### *Painting with Acrylics*

Acrylics are amazingly versatile, as most artists know-they can be used thick or thin, built up with a heavy impasto or thinned to the consistency of watercolor. You can add texturing agents that make them interestingly grainy or give them a raised, linear effect. Use them for large paintings or miniatures, sketches, murals, crafts-you name it. They've earned their place in the art world.

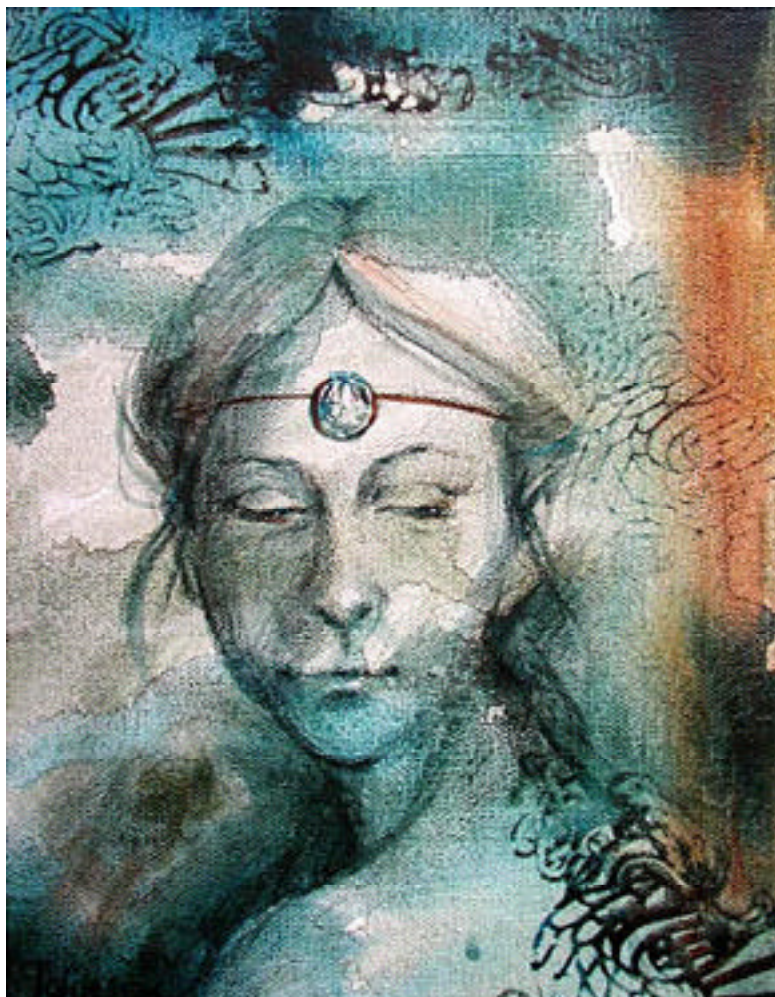
They ARE their own medium though - although they can be made to resemble oils or watercolors, acrylics are *acrylics*, with their own set of properties. For the most part, they dry impervious to water (there are a few new developments that allow acrylics to remain workable for a time, like Atelier's Interactive Acrylics - we'll discuss those in a later tip!)

Acrylics *will* dry on your palette, though-you may want to invest in a Possum Palette, with individual paint pots with lids, or a Masterson's Sta-Wet palette with a spongy layer that remains damp - it has a lid to seal your paints when you're not using it.

#### **77-1, Thin application**

This is a rather washy application of acrylic on canvas; had I been working on paper, it would have been virtually indistinguishable from watercolor. (I used some large Celtic-symbol stamps to add to the image.)

When used in a manner similar to watercolor, they can be layered one glaze over another *ad infinitum* - they don't lift under-layers as long as those layers are thoroughly dry, as watercolor can. (*Note:* Fluid acrylics thin with water to make washes much more readily than tube colors.)



### 77-2, Table for Five

Here, the medium was used much more like oils, with a thick, opaque effect and the option of light-over-dark, which is quite liberating if you're used to painting around or reserving your whites!

Art 77-2

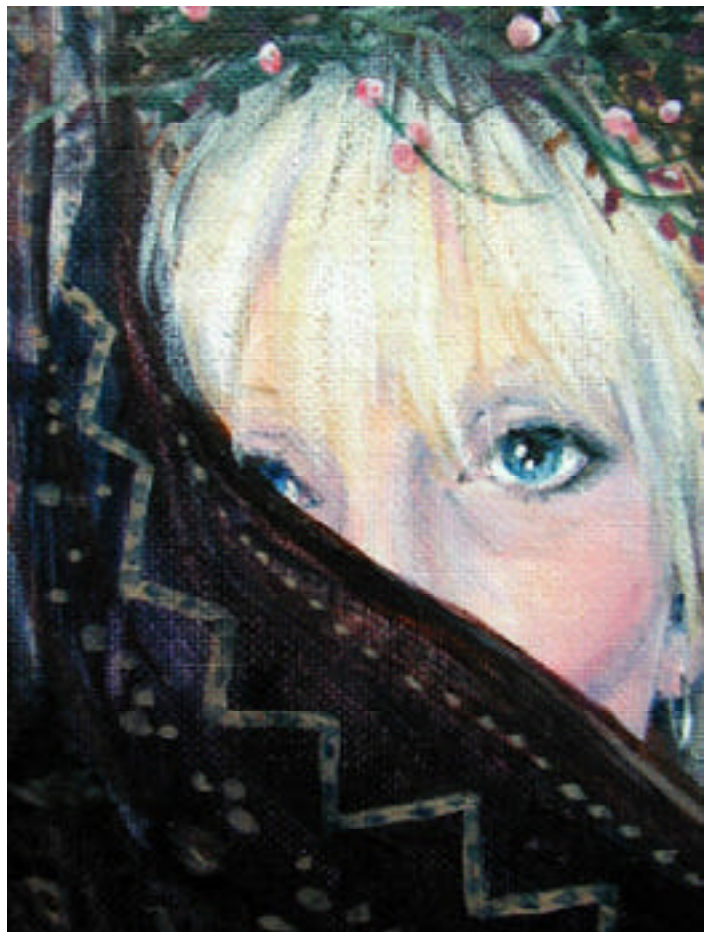


### Art 77-3, Blending smoothly

They're more difficult to blend smoothly when using them thicker, but a drying retarder helps, as does mixing them with regular polymer medium. Working quickly, while the paint is still quite wet, helps a great deal. I've even found that using "Mixing White" allows for smoother transitions, as seen in this detail of a larger work. I used mixing white to ease the transition of color so that her face remains softly rounded.

You can also see in this example how acrylics allow you to paint light over dark-the pattern in her veil and the texture of her pale blonde hair were easy to capture with this medium.

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Art 77-3