



PREP & PAINTING TIPS©

Preparation: Your form is primed white. Wash the surface while looking it over carefully to see if there are any holes to fill or defects in the surface that must be fixed before proceeding. **If small holes are found:** fill with a bondo-type product sold in a tube and available at auto supply stores. Smooth with spatula and let set before sanding. For your health and safety, **always wear vinyl or rubber gloves and dust masks or respirators when prepping critters.** Work in a well-ventilated space. CLEAN UP THE DUST WITH DAMP MOPS, DON'T SWEEP. If you find any areas where the primer appears to be flaking off, stop and call the **Hotline** for suggestions. To assure a strong bond when painting the form, we also recommend that you rough up the surface primer a bit or gesso the form before beginning.

Paint and Varnish: We recommend acrylics by Golden, Windsor-Newton, Daler-Rowney, Pebeo, Lascaux, Liquitex and other professional-grade paint. You can also use the oil paints of your choice; please paint in thin layers when using oils, letting each layer dry thoroughly between applications. Latex wall or house paints are not recommended. Craft-quality paints such as Delta Ceramcoat Acrylics are not formulated to withstand outdoor conditions and will peel quickly, do not use them. Avoid paints that do not have a high colorfast rating -- you don't want your design to disappear in the sunlight! **Protect your artwork** before the form leaves your studio by varnishing with a coat of **Lascaux UV-1 gloss varnish (over acrylic paint only)**. If it is not available at your local art supply store, it can be ordered from Dick Blick Art Supply (www.dickblick.com). While there are other products out there, **Lascaux is the best.** Order one 250 ml bottle for a small form, 2 bottles for a medium sized form and 3 bottles for a large form. One coat of Lascaux, diluted 3 parts varnish to 1 part water, will protect your work until it is clear-coated. If you are planning to **decoupage or apply mosaics** to your form, please call or email for additional information.

Clear-Coat: The art project should arrange for a final finish with an auto-body clear coat, which will create a hard-shell high-gloss finish with a UV-protection component. Our auto-body shop uses Sherwin Williams' automotive urethane 7000, cured at no more than 140 degrees for no longer than 40 minutes. It is recommended that you do not clear-coat over mosaic or mirrored surfaces.

Additions and Extensions: Remember that anything you add to the creature will be vulnerable. Vandals (and the weather) will try to remove add-ons, so think "permanence" when planning and executing your design. There are professionals in your community who can help you do this, such as auto-body shops and other professionals who work with fiberglass. If you wish to sculpt forms onto your fiberglass form, use epoxy putty. You may want to start with your local art supply or hardware store. If they are unable to provide the product you are looking for, however, you may find it on the internet at www.magicsculp.com and/or www.restorersupplies.com for epoxy putty and product tech support. To glue stuff onto your creature, use liquid nails or jewelers cement, epoxy adhesives or Bond 527 multi-purpose cement. We do NOT recommend that you add hats, bags and other items made of fabric. They will deteriorate outside. **REMEMBER THAT BUYERS WILL NOT BE HAPPY WITH FAULTY ARTWORK SO THINK PERMANENCE!!!**

Note: These tips have been compiled from the experiences reported to Cowpainters by public art project artists across the country and are provided for the information of our clients' artists. Please regard all of these tips as suggestions on how to proceed. The entire process depends upon an artist's knowledge of materials and proper application. If in doubt -- EXPERIMENT. We are happy to share this information with our clients, but Cowpainters cannot assume, and expressly declines, any warranty or liability for the finished artwork.

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS FOR DECORATING THE FORMS



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“Bondo Body Putty”: Comes in a tube, for filling small holes and making small repairs; and Bondo fiberglass body repair kit for making larger repairs. (Can be purchased at PepBoys, NAPA or other auto supply stores.)

“Paints”: All professional-grade artist acrylic or oil paints will do the job. For ease of application, good color stability, and national availability in art stores, we recommend Liquitex Soft Body (medium-viscosity) Acrylics. The high-viscosity paints are too “gluey” to move around with ease. You will need 59 ml (2 oz) tubes or jars, in the colors of your choice. (Two 7 oz. tubes should cover a medium sized form in one color.) Go to www.cowpainters.com, click on the Projects & Partners tab, then PARTNER LINKS in red and then **Dick Blick**. Once on **Dick Blick's** website, click on Paints, Acrylics, Liquitex Heavy Body paints, Soft Body paints. Drying time for acrylics is 20 minutes to the touch; oil paints take much longer. You should allow the paint to cure completely before the form is sealed with the clear coat. Typically curing time for acrylics is 7 days, with oils the curing time can be much longer.

“India Ink”: We don't recommend the use of pens or markers on the fiberglass forms because they tend to run when sealed. Another problem with markers is that even the inks marked lightfast tend to fade quickly in the direct sunlight.

“Golden Polymer Medium – Gloss”: 250 ml or 500 ml bottle for decoupage. Use full strength, immersing paper in medium, applying it to the form, and removing all air bubbles with your hands. Remove excess medium with almost-dry sponge. Let it dry for several days before varnishing. Make color copies on a laser printer or copy machine of any pictures or images from magazines that you wish to decoupage. The inks are more permanent and the paper will hold up better than photographic or magazine paper. Order from **Dick Blick**.

“Lascaux UV-1 Gloss Varnish”: For a protective coating on your artwork before clearcoat at auto-body shop. You will need a 250 ml. bottle for small or mid-sized forms and 500 ml bottle for large forms. Order from **Dick Blick** or **Jerry's Artarama** (check under PARTNER LINKS on Cowpainters website, Projects & Partners tab) as soon as you get your assignment, because it can't be found in most stores and most art catalog houses run out and have to back-order it. **THERE IS NO GOOD SUBSTITUTE FOR THIS PRODUCT.** To use, dilute 3 or 4 parts varnish to 1 part water (you want it to be light) and filter through gauze. Use nylon brush, and have a large jar of water handy, to immerse your brush in if you have to pause when varnishing. It sets up quickly, so if you pause, don't begin again until the varnish is dry (15 minutes or so). It goes on slightly cloudy, but dries crystal clear. Immediately remove air-bubbles if they form by touching lightly with brush. Takes about 1 hour to dry.

“MagicSculp Epoxy Putty”: Primarily used for altering the surface or adding sculptural elements to the form. This product comes in two tubs and you mix equal parts together to activate the product. An artist who works with MagicSculp often suggested using a little more hardener than resin to ensure that the mixture will harden completely. Complete directions for usage will be found on these websites, along with ordering information: www.magicsculp.com and www.restorersupplies.com, as well as sculpt.com. The product will adhere to the fiberglass form if you rough up the surface and drill a few small holes, so you can push the MagicSculp into the holes for a better bond. It is non-toxic, allows a couple of hours of working time before it sets up, and after dry (12 hours) can be sanded, if necessary, and painted with



ease. The shelf life of MagicSculp is two years; it is best not to use this product after 2 years. MagicSculp is polymer-based and will fade in UV light. It is necessary to prime, paint, and Lascaux epoxy putty to prevent color fading.

“Mosaic tile or mirrors”: You will be applying mosaics over a primed surface, so follow the directions from your tile outlet. Treat the form as though it was a bathroom wall (example: use thin-set adhesive and sanded mortar) using whatever the tile store recommends. These forms should be sealed with mosaic sealer, not auto body clear coat.

We do not recommend using broken pottery because some of the colors will not be colorfast and may fade outdoors. It is also difficult to be certain that the mortar completely covers any broken edges, so that people will not get scratched or cut by them.

“Glues, Adhesives”: Of course you will want non-aqueous glues such as jewelers cement, Liquid Nails, Gorilla Glue, Loctite indoor/outdoor adhesive sealant or epoxy cements. Do not use Elmer’s glue or other water-soluble glues. Remember that people will try to peel off anything that you glue onto a form. You can also use MagicSculp epoxy putty as glue if you rough up the form and the item to be glued, and drill into each side so that the epoxy putty can form a true bond.

“Fabrics”: If you are going to apply a fabric such as cotton to the form, as a decoupage, you can use the Golden Polymer Medium as described above. There is an alternative product called Paverpol, which is available online. It is very similar to a Polymer Medium, but with more staying power. You may also use MagicSculp’s more viscous cousin, MagicSmooth. MagicSmooth is a two part epoxy resin medium that can be applied to heavier organic fibers/materials. There is also a fabric hardener often available through autobody supply stores. If you are going to harden fabric with this and apply it to the form, you should know it is an extremely toxic material that will need to be worked with outdoors, away from children and pets, and you will need to wear a respirator, rubber gloves and eye protection. We do not recommend this and would not do it ourselves. Please note that fabric fibers and dyes are not meant to withstand weather conditions. Textile dyes will fade! You will need to prime and paint any textile surface!

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