

Image Transfer

When you eventually happen upon the perfect visual, please remember the following: Image transfer is the result of combining variations of paper, texture, time, and temperature to create an image similar in appearance to a watercolor. All you have to add is that essential ingredient of greatness. Unpredictability.

Here's what you'll need:

Polaroid film • Tray containing 100°F water • Brayer roller • Squeegee • 100% rag hot press watercolor paper • Hard, smooth platform • Hair dryer (optional)

One. *Expose the instant film.* Don't pull it through the rollers yet. Different techniques can be used to expose an image onto Polaroid film. When the exposure is made in the camera, a 20cc Red or 30cc Magenta filter with an increase in exposure of 1/2 stop is recommended. Another method is to shoot onto positive transparency film, then project the image onto Polaroid film. This can be done with a Polaprinter, a Vivitar Instant Slide Printer, a Daylab II Slide Printer, an enlarger equipped with a color head or printing filters (cold light sources are not recommended). A copy stand can also be used to photograph a print. For best results, use Polacolor ER (108, 669, 59, 559, 809) or Polacolor 64 Tungsten. (More information on these films is contained at the back of this guide.)

Two. *Prepare the receptor sheet.* Soak the paper in 100°F water. (See A.) Distilled water is recommended for consistency and to prevent the need to add chemicals to counteract pH. Soak for:
• 1 minute for 80 lb. paper • 2 minutes for 140 lb. paper • 5 minutes for 300 lb. paper. Remove and drain. Place the paper onto the rolling platform and squeegee until all the excess water is removed. (See B.) This will "lamine" the paper to the platform.

Three. *Process the exposed Polaroid film* by pulling it through the rollers. After 10-15 seconds (based on a room temperature of 70°F, add more time if colder), peel away the negative. (See C.) Quickly and carefully place it onto the receptor. If you peel sooner than 10 seconds, the negative may become fogged by light and prevent the image from transferring. For 3x4, 4x5 pack and 8x10 formats, you may want to remove the developer trap with an exacto blade prior to peeling to reduce brown stains on the receptor paper. With a 4x5 sheet, cut off the metal end cap prior to opening the envelope. Don't touch the negative during this time. The heat from your fingertips will create fog marks. Roll the negative with the brayer 4 to 6 times in one direction. (See D.) Use medium pressure; heavy pressure will distort the darker areas, and too little pressure will create tiny white spots.

Four. *Allow to transfer for 2 minutes.* Keep the negative warm to prevent the image from lifting off when you peel back the negative. Different methods are:
• Float the negative/receptor sheet onto the tray of hot water. • Preheat the rolling platform to 100°F. • Run a hair dryer evenly over the back of the negative, continually testing the temperature with your fingertips - it should feel slightly warm to the touch. At the end of the 2 minutes, slowly peel back the negative diagonally from a corner. (See E.)

Five. *Allow to air dry.* Enhance with watercolor paints, pastels, dyes, pencils, and inks if desired. Flatten in a warm dry mount press and spray with a protective lacquer. Protect from UV exposure for stability.

Optional Steps

For more intense colors and blacks

- Prepare your watercolor paper with a mixture of distilled water, unflavored gelatin (such as Knox), and Kodak Photo-flo. • Follow the mixing instructions on the package of gelatin. Use distilled water instead of tap water. Use a concentration of one envelope of gelatin to 2 cups of water. Mix well.
- Add Kodak Photo-flo to this mixture. Use the manufacturers' recommendation for concentration.
- Allow to cool to 100-130°F before use. Place in a tray large enough for your paper. • Treat your watercolor paper in this solution for 1 minute. • Remove the paper, place it down onto flat surface and squeegee until moist and uniform. Do not allow to dry. • Place the negative onto the paper, roll and allow to transfer for 2 minutes. Keep the negative around 100°F during the transfer time.

Hint: The gelatin mixture will thicken as it cools. Keep it warm between treatments of watercolor paper. Add more distilled water as needed to keep the concentration consistent.

For brighter whites and colors

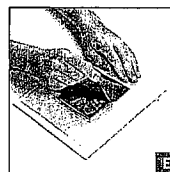
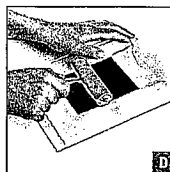
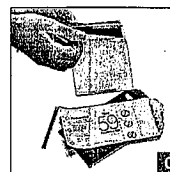
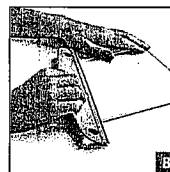
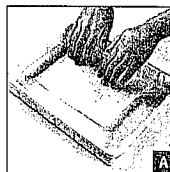
- Immerse the finished transfer in stop bath or a solution of 1 part distilled white vinegar to 4 parts water. Agitate for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Rinse for 2 to 5 minutes. If bubbling occurs, reduce the concentration or time in the acid.

For black-and-white images

- For black-and-white image transfers, you must project a black-and-white slide onto color film, since black-and-white film does not transfer.

For images on fabric

- Use any natural fiber fabric in lieu of watercolor paper. Moisten and stretch the fabric.



Emulsion Transfer

*So you've got this cool image,
but there's something missing.
Something stopping it from being
great. Maybe it's a different
technique you need? Using emul-
sion transfer, you can transfer
your image into any position and
manipulate it onto any surface
you want. Including a wall in the
MONA.*

Here's what you'll need:

Polaroid film • Tray with 160°F tap water • Tray with room temperature tap water • Vinyl adhesive contact paper • Brayer roller • Squeegee • Tongs • Thermometer capable of reading 160°F • Timer • Hair dryer (optional) • Clear acetate or mylar

One. *Process the exposed Polaroid film* and let it dry for 8 to 24 hours or force-dry with a hair dryer. Different techniques can be used to create the image. The exposure can be made in camera or by shooting onto positive transparency film and projecting the image onto the Polaroid film. This can be done with the Polaprinter, the Vivitar Instant Slide Printer, the Daylab II Slide Printer, an enlarger equipped with a colorhead or printing filters (cold light sources are not recommended). A copy stand can also be used to photograph a print. Cover the back of the print with plastic contact paper to prevent the back coat from dissolving. For best results, use Polacolor ER (108, 669, 59, 559, 809) or Polacolor 64 Tungsten (more information on these films is contained at the back of this guide).

Two. *Heat a tray of tap water to 160°F* and fill another tray with cold tap water. Place a sheet of acetate or Mylar on the bottom of the cold water tray. If you're transferring onto watercolor paper, moisten the paper under room-temperature tap water for several seconds. Place your paper on a water-proof counter top and remove the excess water with a squeegee.

Three. *Immerse the print face up* in the tray of 160°F water for 4 minutes. Agitate the tray to keep the print under the surface of the water. It is not necessary to keep the water heated during this time. Remove the print from the hot water using the tongs and place it in the tray of cold water.

Four. *Lightly push the emulsion from the edges of the print* slightly toward the center. (See A.) Lift the emulsion and slowly peel it away from the paper substrate, keeping the part of the emulsion that is releasing from the substrate under the water. (See B.) Bring the emulsion back and over itself (somewhat like turning down a bed sheet), thus reversing the image. Leave the emulsion floating in the water. (See C.) Discard the paper substrate.

Five. *Grab two corners of the emulsion* and clamp it with your fingers to the acetate on the bottom of the tray. Holding the emulsion, lift the acetate in and out of the water several times to stretch the image and remove the wrinkles. (See D.) Repeat this on all four sides, always holding the top two corners. When stretched, you can dunk the image to purposefully let the water curl and then fold it. When you're satisfied with the image, remove it from the water and place it onto your transfer surface. Make sure the acetate or carrying material is on top. (See E.)

Six. *Carefully remove the acetate.* Use your fingers to push and stretch the image to manipulate it. (See F.) At this time, you can dunk the emulsion/paper in and out of the cold water to further manipulate the image. When finished, roll the image with a soft rubber brayer from the middle outward. (See G.) Start with just the weight of the roller, increasing the pressure only after all the excess water and air bubbles have been removed. You are done when all the folds look pressed down. Hang dry when finished.

Seven. *Flatten the transfer* in a warm dry mount press. If desired, spray with a protective coating. Finish with pastels, watercolor paints, dyes, and pencils if desired. Protect from UV exposure for stability.

For black-and-white images

For black-and-white image transfers, you must project a black and white slide onto color film, since black-and-white film does not transfer.

Tips:

- If there is a jelly-like substance sticking to the back of the emulsion when first removed, stretch the emulsion on the acetate and place it on the counter. Take the side of your little finger and lightly push it off the emulsion and discard.
- If the emulsion is hard to remove from its paper backing, it could be from the hardness of your tap water. Try using bottled water instead.
- If you are combining several images for a photo mosaic, keep track of the time the emulsion is in the cold water, since it will expand while soaking. This is important if you are trying to keep the image size constant.

