

## **Syllabus: Finishing the Digital Print**

### **Introduction**

After years of struggle, I'm finally happy with my digital prints. I was always a perfectionist in the darkroom, and I bring the same high standards to digital printing. In this workshop, I'll share with you what I've learned by trial and error about coating digital prints. You will learn how to produce digital prints that you can proudly place next to your silver gelatin prints.

Coating digital prints is not unlike varnishing a painting; prints that are coated will exhibit greater depth and better dmax than uncoated prints, and also will no longer be susceptible to scuffing and abrasions. Color digital prints also benefit, gaining greater color saturation and durability.

My background is in painting and design. I studied at RIT and the Cleveland Institute of Art. At both schools I worked with wet media such as inks and paints, which also involved working with gel media to regulate translucency. This gave me the requisite background to experiment with digital print coating in order to overcome my frustration with the flatness, flaking, and lack of depth in my digital prints.

There are many ways to coat digital prints and I'll describe them all to you, as well as how I arrived at my favorite formula that produces digital prints that are superior to any papers currently on market.

### **What You Have To Bring**

Bring 2-3 digital prints to coat. The paper size should be 8.5x11", and the image size should be no larger than 7.125x9.25", as centered as possible on the paper. (it is important to have workspace on all sides of the image...so prints that are edge to edge will not work!) You will be coating your own prints during this workshop, and since you'll improve with practice I don't guarantee that you'll get good results the first few times.

I recommend using Epson Enhanced Matte paper, because it's inexpensive and you'll be practicing on these prints. Feel free to bring prints on other fiber-based papers, though you might want to stick with the cheaper ones. Companies like Hawk Mountain Papers and Moab Paper Company sell

sample packets of different papers. (Some companies even let you specify which papers you want in your sample pack.) Note that **resin-coated papers won't coat at all**. And highly textured papers don't turn out well.

If you want to order papers, here are two sites:

<http://www.hawkmtartpapers.com>

<http://www.moabpaper.com>

### **Course Outline**

- Examples of prints (mine...lots of them, on different papers)
  - Coated vs uncoated
  - Different paper characteristics
  - QTR, Piezography, inksets, etc.
  - Flubs
  
- Demonstration
  - Setup and materials
  - Step-by-step process
  - Caveats
  
- Hands-on coating workshop
  - Dry runs
  - Real prints (I can do the first one of your images if you'd like.)