



Painting on Plastic Tips & Tricks

[adding tools to your art arsenal]

by **Darlene Olivia McElroy** | darleneoliviamcelroy.com

A quick little FREE step by step tutorial on working with paint on plastic.
Expand your creativity by learning new tips and techniques.



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[adding tools to your art arsenal]

My work table is cover with a plastic tarp that I use as another art tool. I use it as a palette, I clean my stamps on it, my excess paint goes on it and I use it to make deconstructed stencils. I use it as much as I use my paint brushes or any other tool in my art arsenal. As an alternative to my plastic tarp, I also use cheap sandwich bags or polypropylene cutting boards.

Paint Skins with Packing Tape

When doing this technique, I fold over the end edge of the packing tape to make it easier to find the edge when it is time to lift the tape off the surface. You will want to burnish the tape to the paint well first. I use these paint strips to add color to my painting or to finish the edges of a cradled panel. Normally I gesso the edges first although in this sample I applied soft gel directly to the edge. Burnish the tape paint side down and let dry. When dry, remove the tape. The paint will remain on your art.



Sample showing my plastic work area with paint.



The tape used for these two techniques.



Packing tape with folded edge laid out on plastic.



1 Burnish tape to the paint then peel off.



For finished edges apply soft gel to the side of a panel.



Tape is applied to soft gel, burnished & left to dry.



Peel tape off when dry for your finished edge.



Tape cut to make ribbons for hearts.

Paint Skins with Regular Tape

Depending on how you work, you can apply the tape before there is paint on the surface or after. The tape makes it easy to remove the paint as one big skin. If the paint is too thin or the tape applied after the paint is on the surface, I add a coat of polymer medium making sure to seal the tape. When the paint is removed, the side that was sitting on the plastic may be tacky. If it is, flip it over and let cure for about an hour. The skin is easy to cut, sew and shape.



Tape applied to two edges of paint.



Using the tape to peel skin from the plastic.



At this point you can cut the skin into shapes

Die Cut Skins

I love using the skins to create die cut collage elements. I have used both the Tim Holtz Sizzex and the Silhouette Cameo to cut out my shapes. I glue them onto my paintings with soft gel gloss. The beauty is that it is just paint!



Sample of die cut shapes.



Sample of the die cut skins glued down to painting.

Deconstructed Stencils

Using a cheap sandwich bag, you can either stencil paint or soft gel onto it. When the paint or gel has dried the shapes can be removed and applied to your art with soft gel. The soft gel dries clear but while wet you can sprinkle on glitter, micro beads, powdered mica and so much more. I like alphabet stencils to make my own words or shaped stencils that I can deconstruct to make my own design by rearranging the elements.



Stencil taped to sandwich bag.



3 Soft gel applied through stencil. Removed stencil.



While wet, sprinkle glitter on gel & let dry.



Brush off excess glitter & peel the shape off plastic.



Use several colors for abstracted butterflies.



Sample of abstracted butterflies applied to art.



Diamond shaped deconstructed stencil used here.



Deconstructed stenciled shapes with micro beads.



Deconstructed stenciled letters.



Freehand cut paint skins.



Deconstructed stenciled circles randomly placed.

Darlene Olivia McElroy

Darlene is a working artist, educator and art book author who has a touch of mad scientist in her. She loves exploring art surfaces techniques and sharing them with other artists around the world.

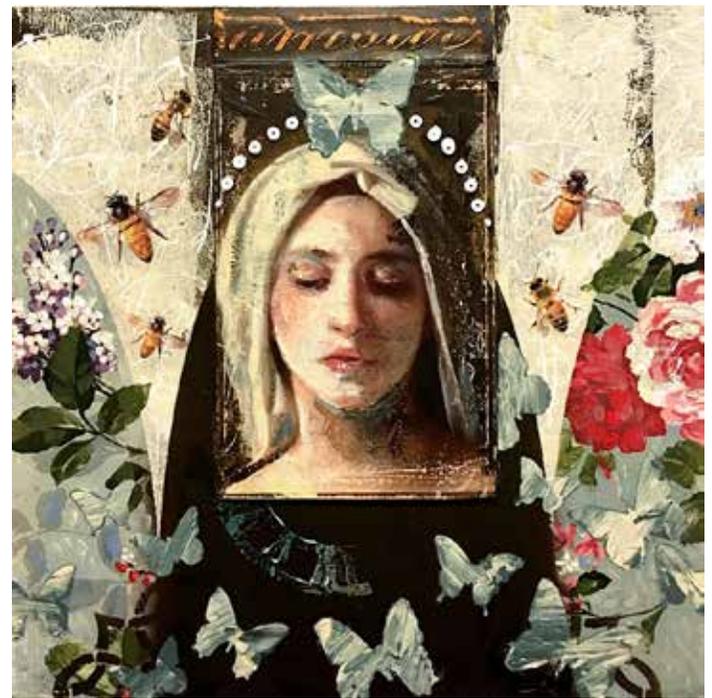
She a storyteller by birth and could never resist the power of paint to give vision to the tales floating in her imagination and asking to be told. Her richly layered work is about time, personal myths and the links that join the individual to the continuum of past, present, and future.

Darlene's art work is represented in galleries in the U.S. and Mexico. When she is not in her studio in Santa Fe, NM, surrounded by three dogs, you will find her teaching classes and workshops and writing art technique books for Northlight.

To see Darlene's art or sign up for her monthly newsletter full of studio news, tips & techniques, visit her web site: darleneoliviamcelroy.com.



White Dreams, 12" x 12" mixed media on panel



Spring Awakening, 12" x 12" mixed media on panel