

Beginning Gouache Painting for Illustration

Portland Community College Cascade Campus | 705 N. Killingsworth St. Portland, OR
97217 | 971-722-6111

- CRN: **45759**
- Summer 2025
- Prerequisites: None
- Thursdays Sep 23–Nov 25 6:00-8:50 PM
- In Person - Cascade Campus - MAHB 109

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

- Instructor Name: Willow D'Arcy Harmer (She/They)
- Email: willow.harmer@pcc.edu
- Phone: 503-901-0878
- Office Location: None
- Office Hours: None
- Instructor Webpage: <https://www.pcc.edu/staff/willow-harmer/>
- Class Page: <https://www.pcc.edu/schedule/fall/cra/9fa625o/?crn=45759>

Note: Please email me for all non-urgent matters. If something urgent arises, feel free to send a text message. Kindly reserve phone calls for situations where email and texting are not possible.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Gouache (Pronounced "Gwash") is the original illustrator's medium with its own unique and wonderful features! Gouache has enjoyed a resurgence of popularity recently with social media art "challenges" and quality inexpensive introductory paint sets. This class will introduce you to skills and techniques using gouache paint for illustration and fine art. Learn to use transparent and opaque layers, color mixing techniques, brush strokes and color testing. Create a finished art piece using the techniques learned in class.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Learn how to apply gouache so you get the effect you want.
- Learn washes and opaque layering techniques
- Learn illustration and composition techniques
- Learn gradients
- Learn color mixing and glazing

Supplies: See below

Lectures

- Introduction to gouache: history, contemporary use, purposes, differences from other mediums, current trends
- Composition and Theory
- Studio Ghibli
- Landscape Composition

Demos and Exercises

- Learning Paint to Water Ratio, Layering, Flat application, washes, brushstrokes, blending, mixing, and glazing.
- Abstract “play” paintings: exploring gouache techniques without focusing on realism
- Gradient Landscape Guided Demo
- Fruit Guided Demo
- Inked Animal Illustration Guided Demo
- Portrait Guided Demo
- Work on personal projects with individual guidance
- Dorlands Wax, scanning, framing discussion

MATERIALS (Please read this list carefully, and read the notes at the bottom)

- Paint, Brushes and Palette: Choose from Option 1 or 2 below this list.
- Watercolor or Mixed Media paper - 8x10 to 9x12 (I really like the Strathmore Visual Journal Watercolor paper, but any decent 90lb and above water media paper is fine.)
- Pencil, any, mechanical or regular, hb or harder is recommended so you can erase it off your paper.
- Erasers - white and moldable
- Sketchbook - same size as paper. Or printer paper is fine, sketches will be rough.
- 2 water containers - Jars, mugs, yogurt containers, anything works.
- Paper towels or rags
- Tape: Artist's tape or washi tape is best. Painters tape might work but it might tear the paper. I've seen people use electrical tape and cello tape.
- Small palette knife. Plastic is fine.
- Misting spray bottle of water
- Fine white posca pen
- Micron Drawing Pen/s

Option 1 (much less expensive, may show brushstrokes more but is still very good): **NOTE: do NOT transport sideways once the paint is opened! It will leak everywhere!**

- Himi "Jelly Paint" set, at least 24 colors, It comes with a palette and a few basic brushes. (Found online, not available in stores! Buy ahead of time to account for shipping.)
<https://a.co/d/8Dy7Jxw>
- Additional brushes - optional:
 - #1 or #2 Rigger
 - #1 Point Brush
 - #8 or #10 round faux squirrel watercolor brush.
- Flat plastic, paper or glass palette, or white plate, if you want something bigger than the included palette.

(Note: Himi/Miya paints are excellent to work with, but are not considered "professional grade" simply because some colors are not as lightfast. Final work may fade if displayed over long term. However, this can also happen with expensive professional grade gouache.)

Option 2 (build your own, significantly more expensive, may have a better outcome)

- Gouache Paint (*See note) (NOT acryla or acrylic gouache!)
 - Primary Cyan
 - Primary Magenta
 - Primary Yellow
 - Black, any
 - Titanium White
 - Any other colors you like! It is helpful to have purple, green, orange, and brown, but best to go with your gut!

- Acrylic style brushes (inexpensive is fine, gouache is not picky):
 - #8 flat brush
 - #6 Round
 - #8 Filbert
 - #1 or #2 Rigger or Long Round brush
 - #1 Point Brush
- #8 or #10 round faux squirrel watercolor brush.
- Any other brushes you like to use.
- Plastic, glass or paper palette, or a white plate
- Something to store mixed paint or whole palette in, or an airtight palette.

Optional Supplies:

- Hair dryer (I'll bring one for the class)
- Cold wax medium for preservation (you won't need it until later.)
- Masonite or similar board to tape your paper to.

*Note:

Excellent pro but expensive brands: Holbein, Windsor and Newton, Schminke. A little goes a long way. Lightfastness displayed on tube.

Less expensive but decent brands: Rembrandt/Royal Talens, Caran D'Ache, Arteza

Do NOT buy: Reeves, Art Advantage or Artist's Loft. ArrtX might be OK but I personally think if you are going that route, just buy the Himi set.

Acrylic gouache is an entirely different medium that I haven't used. You can get other effects with it, if you want to try it that's OK but I may not have as much advice.

Where to buy: Himi sets are available online, I'm not sure if anyone local has them. Everything else can be purchased at any local art supply store or online. Amazon, Dick Blick and Jerry's Artarama are good online sources.

Local Stores: Michael's, Art Supply Center (Formerly I've Been Framed), Columbia Art and Drafting, Artist and Craftsman Supply, Blick