
How to Brush Paint on Fabric with Anna Joyce

Chapter 1 - Overview

Introduction

(light music) - Hi I'm Anna Joyce, I'm a Portland based artist, designer, printmaker, and author of Stamp Stencil Paint. I'm going to show you how to hand paint yardage on silk, quilters cotton, and canvas. I'm going to show you how you can achieve different results using wet fabric, dry fabric, and a variety of brushes. And to finish off the fabric I'll show you how to heat set it so you can use it for a variety of projects. I love hand painting on fabric because it's a great way to start designing your own textiles by hand and it's a very fun and forgiving process that you can do on an afternoon and see immediate results. (upbeat music)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- For this project, we're gonna be using yards of silk, cotton, cotton canvas, and then I also have some swatches here for testing your materials. They're cut about eight by eight inches. Some tape for wrangling your fabric. We've got a mister here with some water if you wanna do a wet application of your paint. A painter's palette with wells large enough to accommodate your largest brush. I also have a two inch wide brush with firm bristles, a softer bristle brush that's about an inch and a half wide, and a number 12 round brush. I'm using Jacquard Dye-Na-Flow, which is a free-flowing paint that behaves like a dye. I've got a jar of water, a rag, an iron and ironing surface, a transparent ruler so you can see the marks that you're making on your fabric, an apron for keeping your clothes clean, and also a large piece of canvas for covering your work surface. I like to use cotton canvas when I'm working. It's a perfect surface to absorb paint while you're painting yardage, it also keeps your table clean, and it's something that you can reuse again and again, so you're not throwing things away at the end of your project.

Chapter 3 - Prepping Workspace and Painting Fabric

Painting on canvas

- To start today, I'm going to be using some cyan-colored Dye-Na-Flow paint from Jacquard. It's important to shake it really well before you pour it into your paint tray. I have a paint tray here that's wide enough to accommodate my brush. I just put a little bit of paint in there, and I can always pour out more if I need it. I'm going to be using a soft bristle brush, and I have some swatches here that are cut eight by eight inches, so I can test out my brush strokes, see how the paint looks on the canvas. It's really important to test your materials before you start painting on yardage, because you spent a lot of money on your fabric, probably, and it's nice to get to know how the paint's going to behave once you put it on your brush and you actually begin, so I'm going to try a couple of different brush strokes and see what feels good. I'm just going to dip the tip of my brush, and wipe off any excess paint, and begin to test my color. Going to start with some stripes. I'll go back for a little bit more paint, and maybe try a line pattern. Try experimenting with your brush, because every brush is going to have a different hand feel, the bristles will act differently, and you can get different effects depending on how hard you press or how lightly you move your brush across the canvas. It's one of the reasons I really love using test swatches, so you can really get a feel for what you're doing and try out your pattern before you start working on your yardage. Try dropping the brush

down and lifting it up quickly. I love working with stripes because they're universally appealing, they work with almost any decor or wardrobe choices, and they're really easy to get started with. So I'm going to keep doing some stripes over here, and I feel like I've got a good sense of how my paint is going to react. And this brush is giving really, really nice even stripes all the way across the canvas. Now that I've worked on my swatches and I feel confident about how I want to paint my canvas, I'm going to lay it out flat on my work surface that's been prepared with the drop cloth, so it'll keep my table free from any stains, and I'm also wearing an apron to keep my clothing from getting stained as well, because this is a permanent ink and it is based for fabric. So I've got my fabric here, I've ironed it flat so there are no wrinkles. If there are wrinkles in the fabric, it will pick up bits of the paint and make it darker there. It can be a nice effect, but you generally want your fabric to be as wrinkle-free as possible. So I'm just going to start now, and I'm just going to do a nice horizontal stripe across the yardage. There's a ruler here if you'd like to use one to kind of get a feeling for where you want your first stripe, you can line up the ruler, make sure that everything's good, and I'm just going to move from the left-hand side over to the right, picking up more paint as I need it. You'll see that it gets lighter and lighter as the paint moves off my brush. When you drop the paint back down onto your stripe, you'll see that it will become darker every time that you put your brush back down. It's a really, really lovely watercolor effect, and you can use it to create patterns as you like. This paint can dry up to two shades lighter as the water evaporates, so you will want to have your test swatches dry before you, you know, decide on a final shade. I'm going to move my ruler down and just continue painting stripes all the way across my canvas. I'm leaving approximately one inch of space, and you can be as precise or as imprecise as you'd like with this, I personally think that when the lines have a little bit of wiggle to them that they give it a little bit more interest. I'm going to add a little bit more right here, kind of alternating where I drop the brush down to create even more pattern. It takes a little bit of time to get the pattern all over the canvas, but it's a really kind of relaxing process. So I'm just using my ruler now as a guide to kind of help my hand make a straight line. If you are going to paint with your brush butting right up against the ruler, you want to make sure that you wipe the ruler down before you drag it across the surface of your canvas so that it doesn't leave marks. I'm just picking up more paint as necessary. I'm actually going to start this line right here about four inches in from the edge to give the stripes a little bit of variation. And then... Move back that way. And it's gotten a little bit light right here, so I'm going to add a little bit more ink. And I'm just going to continue across all of the yardage of the canvas with these stripes. Cotton canvas has a lot of sizing in it, which is a material that repels water, so the ink is going to sit up on top of the surface instead of soaking in and spreading out like you're going to see in the cotton and the silk. So now that I've painted quite a few stripes on here, I'm going to move my canvas so I can continue painting down the length of it. I have about two yards, and it's kind of a lot, so I like to work on a table. It's much more comfortable if you can work standing or a table than it would be to be on the floor, and you'll get better results when you're more comfortable, not being on your knees, so I've got this table. I'm going to lift it up like this, making sure that I don't have lots of wet paint that's going to roll or drip, and just slowly move it, letting the edge hang off the table. Smooth it out again. I'm just going to continue painting stripes along the length of my canvas. When you're done painting your canvas, you need to set it aside and allow it to dry completely before you heat set it to make it permanent. I already have one that I've painted, and it's dry and ready to go. I've got my iron set to the cotton setting without steam, and I'm ironing right now on the table that I painted on because this is a work table, and it is fine to iron on. You may want to use an ironing board or some sort of heat-resistant surface and not iron directly onto your dining room table or

something which would ruin the surface below. So I'm just going to take my iron and move it across the canvas, making sure that every part that I painted is heat set. If you're using a 100% cotton canvas, you can also throw it in the dryer for a full cycle on high to heat set the fabric. Now that my hand-painted yardage is heat set, I'm ready to use it for whatever types of projects lend themselves well to canvas. I love making hand-painted tote bags, these are great for pillows. Canvas is really family-friendly, you can spot-clean it. It's perfect for outside, for patio furniture or upholstery, and really it's got beautiful yardage that's hand-painted that you can use for anything you like.

Painting on cotton

- Another material that I love working with when I'm painting yardage is white quilters cotton. It's inexpensive, easy to find, and takes the paint beautifully. Today I'm going to be doing some painting with a black. I love the way that it looks. It has a really graphic quality that's very modern to me. I like doing stripes with a bristle brush that's got a very firm bristle. It's a very inexpensive brush, but it makes really interesting marks. I'm just gonna dip the very tip of the bristles into the ink, and wipe them off. And put them onto my swatch to test the marks that it's going to make. And I'm applying very light pressure to get this stripe pattern. You'll notice that wherever I put down the brush, the paint is going to bleed slightly and then become finer as I move the brush across the cotton. And I'll just continue this pattern along the swatch to make sure that I like what I see. You can also experiment with having your brush be very, very dry. And see what kind of marks you can make. It almost looks like chalk, which I really enjoy. You can also create patterns with different brushes. This is a number 12 round brush, and it can make a really, really nice variety of patterns. If you put the tip into the ink, you can have really soft stripes, or you can be more painterly and get a little bit more of the ink on your brush and do polka dots, and create all sorts of different marks. And I definitely encourage you to experiment. That's what these test swatches are for. You can even do florals. There's all sorts of endless varieties. This is a very, very versatile brush. Another technique that I really like is to splatter paint. You just let the paint drip off the end of the paint brush. I'm really saturating the bristles with pigment right now, and I'm gonna just lift up my brush and drop it down. And you can create some pretty interesting patterns. The ink is going to spread out into the fiber of the cotton and get larger as it moves into the fiber. So now that I've done my test swatch, I think I'm gonna move forward with painting the entire piece of this cotton yardage with that all-over, abstract stripe using this inexpensive two-inch brush. I actually really like these inexpensive brushes because they have jagged edges that create interesting stripes and a nice pattern along the length of your fabric. So I'm gonna start over here in the top left-hand corner and just move my brush slowly, and I'm applying almost no pressure right now. As you can see when I put my brush down here, and it was filled with pigment, all of the pigment spread out, and it gave kind of a watercolor effect, and then became more and more dry as I moved my brush along the length of the canvas. I wanna even this out a little bit, so I'm gonna pick up a little bit more of the paint on the tip of my bristles, and move it in the center, and just add a little bit more pigment. The tone of the paint will even out as it dries and it will lighten slightly, up to two shades. And I'm actually gonna start my stripe here so that that pooling watercolor effect is going to be evenly distributed, creating an all-over pattern. This time I'm not using the ruler, since it's an all-over pattern, and it's just a very, very loose, freehand way to paint. It's extremely forgiving. You can make drips, and marks, and cover them over if you want to. You could even do this type of stripes on the diagonal. I'm moving across the length of the fabric horizontally, but you could do it diagonally if you wanted to. You just wanna slowly, without using very much pressure, just cover the surface of the fabric with these nice,

stripey brushstrokes. Gives an abstract, painterly effect that's really modern. It could be used for a lot of different types of projects. I love making quilts with my painted fabric. You can do baby blankets. I have a lot of projects in my book, Stamp, Stencil, Paint, that use hand-painted fabric. Go ahead and continue painting the length of your fabric, the white cotton. And definitely, while you're doing this, I encourage you to get a couple of extra yards of fabric and have fun. You can do really great brushstrokes. You could try grid patterns. Look at maybe a photo reference and try drawing or painting a floral. It's really limitless to what you can do, and the white cotton is a very inexpensive way to experiment. And you can also try mixing colors. I was really wanting to go for something graphic and bold, so I chose black and white today, but this pattern would also look beautiful done in a soft tone like aqua, or yellow, pink. You can try doing whatever you like. I've come to the end of the table with my painting. I'm gonna move this fabric. Sometimes when you're painting with a lot of yardage it can be difficult to wrangle your fabrics. I'm gonna gently scoot it up, and I've cleared enough room on my table that I can do this. I'm just doing a little bit of an accordion fold. And don't worry about the fabric being wet. It won't, since we're working with such an abstract design, it won't bleed onto the fabric below in any way that will mess up your pattern. Continue painting the length of your yardage, and when you have completed the pattern, let it dry to the touch, and then we're gonna heat-set it. To heat-set your painted cotton after it's dried, you wanna use an iron without steam on the cotton setting. You can also throw it in the dryer for a full cycle on high, and that will also heat-set it to make it permanent. You can then launder it, wash it, dry clean it, however you would normally handle cotton. I already have a few yards of cotton that has been dried and heat set. And as you can see, it is dried a few shades lighter than it was when it was wet. When the water evaporates out of the paint, it will be up to two shades lighter, having it be this beautiful charcoal color. I really love how this piece is really abstract, but there's an all-over pattern. When you set the brush down, you get these beautiful blotches, and as the brushstrokes and the water evaporate out of everything, it creates an all-over gray. You can see that I actually have spilled a little bit here, but I love these little irregularities. They lend the beautiful mark of the artist's hand, and it's a really, really simple technique that lends extraordinary results to some fabric.

Painting on silk

- The next fabric that we're going to paint is silk. It takes this Jacquard Dye-Na-Flow in a really, really beautiful way but it is the most challenging fabric to work with. Because it's so sheer, it has a tendency to shift around when you're working on it under your brush, so I like to use some tape to keep it in place. This is a Martha Stewart stencil tape. You can use it for a variety of different projects. It's very sticky but you can use it again and again and it won't leave any residue on your fabric. I'm just gonna put a tiny bit up at the corner just enough to keep the fabric in place but not enough to disturb any pattern that I'm going to create. You could also use masking tape or artist's tape or even a fabric tape. I recommend using something that won't leave residue on your fabric. So, you probably want to test the tape on a swatch before you decide to use something on your final project. For silk, you can get some really beautiful effects from the fabric being damp. So, I'm actually going to use this little spritzer. I'm gonna do the other one dry and see which effect I like better. I'm gonna test the Dye-Na-Flow on the swatches and see what effects I get when the silk is wet and also when it's dry. I'm gonna start painting on the wet swatch. You can see that as the brush moves across the wet silk that it's going to spread out and create this beautiful kind of fan effect. It gives a really lovely watercolor effect. Definitely something that you should experiment with. You can try doing all sorts of different marks. Be abstract and really loose when you're playing

with your swatches to decide on your final pattern. I'm now gonna move over to the dry silk. As you can see we have a much finer line over here on the dry swatch. Every time I put down my brush and the pigment hits the silk, it will spread out a little bit more and then become finer as the ends of the brush become a little bit more dry. I'm not worrying too much about whether or not my lines are straight. I really love kind of an imperfect line, a little bit wiggly. It doesn't really matter. The silk moves around so much once you're using it that it doesn't matter if the lines are too straight. So, just enjoy yourself and enjoy the act of painting. Once you've had time to play with your swatches and figure out what kind of pattern you want to do, it's time to lay out your yardage. I've got the silk spread out on top of my canvas drop cloth. It's taped up here at both corners to keep everything steady because it's just shifts around so much under your hands. Today, I'm gonna use a ruler to keep my diagonal stripes just a little bit more straight and intact because that silk is so shifty. So, I'm gonna pick up a little bit of pigment with my brush. I like to start my lines a few inches from the corner this time so that I can establish the angle that I want. So, I've got everything here about a 45 degree angle and I'm gonna do diagonal stripes. I'm just gonna run my brush along the edge of this acrylic ruler. In between I'm gonna use a rag. I like to use a cotton rag. You can also use a paper towel. But I find that rags are great. You can always use them again for many projects and the colors and patterns that you get off of them can be really beautiful. I'm just gonna continue painting stripes and leaving about 3/4 to one inch in between each stripe. The more ink you have on your brush, the fatter your line is going to be. I have a little bit of paint here left on my ruler but I lifted it up and put it back down on top of my silk to keep it from dragging pigment along the surface of my fabric. This area of the silk is still left blank. I'm gonna leave it blank right now because this still needs to dry. I've established my angle of my line and I'm just gonna continue with my ruler painting along the edge these nice lines. If you see that you're getting a lot of ink that's kind of shifting off of the edge of your ruler, don't worry about it. I think it lends a beautiful quality. You can definitely tell that it's hand painted. That's the reason that we're painting in the first place. If we wanted a perfect stripe, you can just buy one at the store. Unlike the other patterns that we painted, this one needs to be continued with the ruler. I'm going to go ahead and finish up this blank spot right up here. Instead of moving down the fabric, I'm gonna move up. I've got my ruler. I'm just gonna continue along at the angle that we established with the first line until this area is filled with pattern. Now that I've covered this portion of the yardage with this striped pattern, I'm going to connect the stripes. So, I'm gonna un-tape it, Just put my tape right here to reuse, and then lift up the silk and move it up. If you have a table large enough to let it hang over the edge, that's ideal. If not, you can also certainly work with the fabric folded in an accordion. I'm gonna let mine hang off the edge since I have this nice big table. All right. Want to smooth out any wrinkles. And I'm gonna use my tape and just tape the edges down so that this fabric doesn't shift too much while I'm working. You can see here when I was doing a stripe that some of the ink rolled off the edge of the table. I actually think this is really beautiful and it inspires me for another pattern. I'm gonna bring my ruler over and start to connect the stripes to the edge of the yardage. You're just gonna continue with the ruler placed a little bit further up your stripe right here and just continue painting. Don't worry too much if the lines aren't completely straight. Like I said before, silk has such a beautiful hand and it flows so nicely that if you were to use this for a garment or a scarf, it's probably going to be wrapped anyway and you're not gonna see any of these little inconsistencies. If you want to have your stripe have more of a kind of consistent line, you can also continue your paint brush up the stripe that you already painted and it will look a little bit less like you're patching the stripes together. Once you've covered all of your silk in pattern, let it dry completely and then heat set. I already have a few yards

of silk that I've dried and heat set. For the silk, you want to use an iron. Don't put your silk in the dryer, it may ruin it. It's a very delicate fabric. So, you'll want to use an iron on the silk setting. Make sure that you don't burn the fabric. As you can see with this bit of silk that I painted earlier, it's got a little bit funky. There's moments where you can see that things have dripped, the lines don't quite meet up, there's almost kind of a curve to all of the lines. Instead of getting hung up on that and feeling like it was a mistake or it was imperfect, I really love the inconsistencies. I love being able to see where the brush went down, where there's a little bit of a smudge. It really lends that kind of abstract artistic quality to this fabric. It's incredibly unique. Nobody else is gonna have it. It's one of the reasons I love painting my own patterns. Also, when you've painted the pattern, once it's moving and you've turned it into a scarf or a garment, all those inconsistencies disappear and you're just left with a really gorgeous, all-over continuous pattern. Here are a couple of different variations for what you can do on the canvas. Here's one where I layered the stripes. You can see that where the brush strokes connect, it gets darker, kind of creating almost a gingham or a plaid. Here, I mixed the colors. The magenta and the cyan are coming together to create a purple which is really, really nice. The Jacquard Dye-Na-Flow really works well together. You can mix the colors. You can layer them. You can create your own custom shades. I definitely recommend that you play around with it. It's a really, really fun tool that works on almost any fabric. Here's a quilt that I designed with Susan Beal, who's a Portland, Oregon based designer and quilt artist and author. She pieced this quilt together for me in a log cabin pattern. I painted all of the yardage for this piece with the Jacquard Dye-Na-Flow with the same techniques that I showed you today. Some of them are a floral. I've got, kind of, a very abstract watercolor moment over here in orange, a stripe, and then, kind of just a brush stroke polka dot with mixed colors. The back of the quilt was painted in the same technique that I showed you using that inexpensive dry bristle brush in the black. It creates a really striking modern quilt. I really hope that you'll try painting your own fabric. The possibilities are endless. You can go from having an idea to seeing a finished product in just minutes. I really encourage you to try different brushes, different colors, mixing your colors, mixing patterns, and experimenting with all the different things that the Jacquard Dye-Na-Flow can do on silk, cotton, and canvas. It's really an amazing technique and you'll have a textile that's completely your own.