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Arizona Gourds

October updates from the desert southwest...

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Welcome to the October issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

I was happy to visit and teach gourd classes in Boise, Idaho last week! It's a beautiful area and definitely cooler and greener than Arizona. Thank you so much to all of the great students, and especially to our hostess, Sue Kostka.



You have to love the name of Sue's road...



Idaho classes were held just outside of Boise in a lovely agricultural area that was filled with peach, plum, apple, and cherry orchards and grape vineyards. We had a great view of the panorama including a bit of the Snake River. Our classroom area was spacious and we had a great time!

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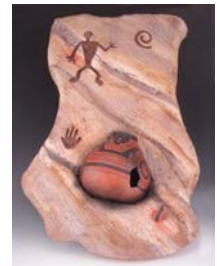


Update: Gourd Classes

I will be teaching 4 days of classes at the **Texas Gourd Festival**, October 13-16. Classes and registration information are posted on the [Texas Gourd Society page](#). *This will probably be my last trip to this area - so hope to see you there.

I will be teaching at the Wuertz Festival next February. This year, classes will not be posted until Dec. 1st. Sign up for the class updates list to received a reminder notice for signups.

Want to plan ahead? Next April 13th -16th, I will be teaching at the annual art retreat at the [After Midnight Art Ranch](#) in Sonoita, Arizona. I will also be participating in [Baskets and Gourds - Containers of our Culture IV](#) - in Visalia, California. Opening Reception April 20, classes April 21st and 22nd.



*Join the class updates list to receive advance notice of upcoming classes. Get the news first and have the best chance for popular classes!



[Join The Class updates List](#)

***Notice: I will be not be shipping from September 21st - 26th. All orders placed during these times will be held and shipped out just as soon as possible. Orders will be filled in the order in which they were received. This is a one person business, and I appreciate your patience while the shop is closed.**

What's new on the [Arizona Gourds website?](#)



New! "Ocean" glass bead mix. A special, one time purchase, limited to stock on hand. On the [Glass Supplies page](#).

NEW! Genuine Mate gourds from Argentina. The gourds have a metal rim and include a metal bombilla (straw) for drinking yerba mate tea. The gourds are natural color so you can add your own artwork. Read more about yerba mate gourds and order your own gourd cup set on the [Yerba Mate page](#).

Specials: Bone Spears and Arrowheads are on sale on the [Bone Beads and Embellishments page](#), along with a limited stock of **Tagua nut slices** for woodburning or as accents.

1/4" wide masking tape is back in stock on the [Kits, Displays and Supplies page](#).

New - Carbide Mushroom Cleaners now have a longer 10" shaft! [Tools Page](#)

Color Theory and Color Mixing - by Lynne East-Itkin

Last month, Lynne East- Itkin of Tucson presented this topic to our local "Old Pueblo Gourd Patch" group. She has generously allowed us to share it. (I have edited Lynne's information to add some tips that I've found helpful.) If you search the internet, there are pages and pages of reference material on this subject, so if you wish to explore further, you should have no problem finding a wealth of information.

Color has three components; hue, value and chroma. **Hue** is the actual color of something, **Value** is the color's lightness/darkness as compared to black and white, and **Chroma** is the saturation or intensity of the color, or how brilliant or subdued the color looks. Paints are made from pigments, binders, additives and mediums, and/or solvents such as water, or petroleum distillates. Dyes and stains are also comprised of pigments and solvents. In both cases, some type of liquid component acts as a vehicle to carry the coloring component.

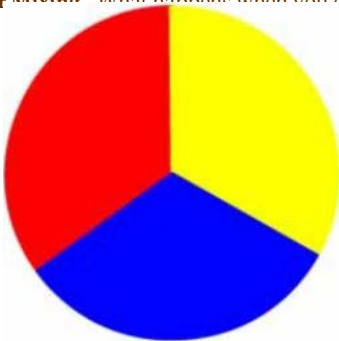
Pigments: The particles in paint that create the hue.

Organic Pigments: Originally, these pigments came from plant materials, but in the early 1900's, synthetic pigments were developed. Most organic pigments offer high quality stauration/intensity (chroma), high tinting strength and exceptional transparency.

Inorganic Pigments: These pigments are derived from natural minerals or ores. Most inorganic pigments have a lower saturation/intensity, low tinting strength but excellent opacity.

Tinting Strength: The ability of a color to change the character of another color. Weaker tinting colors create light pastel mixtures, while stronger tinting colors create darker mixtures.

Color Mixing - What happens when you only have Primary Colors and how they create the



colors that can't be made by mixing other colors. Red, Blue and Yellow are primary colors.

Right: **Secondary Color Wheel** - The secondary colors are made by mixing two primary colors together. The secondary color you get depends on the proportions of the primary colors you've used. Yellow and red will always make orange - but using more yellow will create a softer orange while using more red will create a strong, reddish orange color.



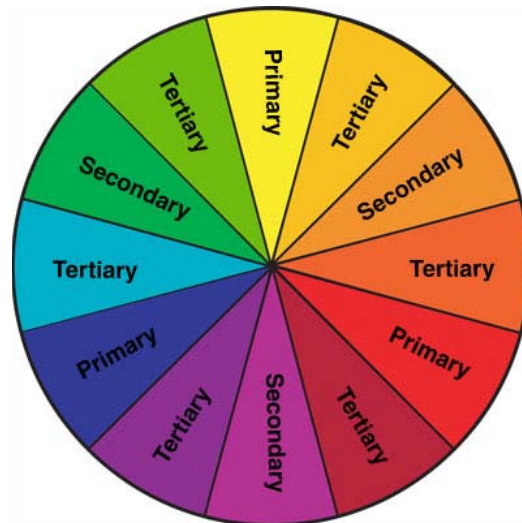
**Warm vs. Cool colors - in general, reds and yellows are considered to be warm colors, while blues are considered cool colors.*

Color mixing allows you to make a variety of colors using a minimum amount of paint colors. If you use a lot of one color, you are better off just buying a bottle or tube of that color - but if you only need a little bit now and then it is more economical to mix your own small batches. Some colors are difficult to mix and

still obtain the same intensity as the premixed color, some experimenting will help you decide which colors just can't be created easily.



Tertiary colors are made by mixing a primary color with a secondary color. This is the traditional 12 color color wheel, but the color combinations are virtually endless.



Color mixing theory is all well and good; but how about some practical information for mixing colors?

Color Mixing Tips:

- 1) Add dark colors to light. Use just a little bit at a time to achieve the color value you want.
- 2) Add opaque colors to transparent - they have a greater strength of influence and you'll waste less paint.
- 3) Mix brown by mixing a primary color with its complimentary color. *A complimentary color is the color directly opposite on the color wheel. For example, add orange to blue, or purple to yellow, or green to red.* Each will result in a slightly different brown. To harmonize the perfect brown with the rest of your work, make them from the same palette you are already using.
- 4) Mix interesting grays by adding a bit of an earthy color such as raw umber and/or deep blue. Add a bit to white to get the color you want. Using black and white only to make gray will usually give you a cooler, harder gray.
- 4) Don't overmix. If you add too many colors you will get a very muddy color.
- 5) Don't always use white to lighten and black to darken colors - adding white often reduces the intensity of color and makes the new color more pastel and less vibrant. For example, to lighten red, add a tiny bit of orange or yellow instead. Adding black makes a color murky and muddy looking. Try adding a tiny bit of burnt umber and ultramarine blue.

*Bottled paints that you buy in a craft store have more "fillers" and will give you different results than artists quality paints. Artist paints are stronger, purer, pigments that will mix truer. That doesn't mean that you can't mix craft paints, it just means that you may not get exactly the results you are looking for.

Opacity: Some paints are transparent, while others are more opaque. Certain colors such as reds and yellows tend to be more transparent than earthy colors. Rather than painting on multiple layers of the same color to increase opacity, paint a base layer of white before applying the transparent color. This will dramatically brighten the final color.

Ways to Mix Colors:

- 1) Mix on a palette. This is the simplest method. You can mix the exact color you want before applying it to the surface.
- 2) Mix on the surface. Start by mixing on the palette, but don't mix thoroughly. Brush on the incompletely mixed color and allow it to mix on the surface. This method also works well for painting with a sponge. Pick up new colors in the sponge without washing the sponge in between colors. Blot on the paint and allow it to mix on the painted surface.
- 3) Layering. Apply one color, then add additional colors over top. This works best with transparent colors and thin coats. The layer applied first will show through the second layer and create a variety of colors. It looks nice when you build up several layers of color.

Quick Tips for Using Acrylic Paints

- *Acrylic paints dry fast. Keep brushes in water or rinse immediately so paint won't dry in the bristles.
- *All acrylic products are compatible.
- *Acrylic medium makes a great glue/decoupage for adhering papers for collage.
- *Some acrylic paints darken as they dry

Some acrylic paints darken as they dry.

- *You can clean acrylic paint off of your hands with soap and water.
- *You can clean dried acrylic paintings with denatured alcohol.
- *Acrylic paint sticks to itself, so don't let uncured painted surfaces touch each other.
- *As you paint, keep a misting bottle of water nearby to help keep paint on your palette moist.
- *If you find your acrylic paint is too thick, thin it with either water or acrylic medium.
- *Reusable glass and high-density plastic make good palettes because acrylic paint doesn't cling to them, which makes cleanup easy. Or, use disposable paper plates for no-cleanup painting.



[Color Mixing Recipes](#)



[Color Mixing Bible](#)

Here is a wonderful video that clearly explains the color wheel and how to mix colors properly.

This is an innovative method of color mixing. It's intended for tube colors, but the principles are the same for bottled paint.

Member

Reader's Mailbag:

Bonnie...I have enclosed some of my latest work; I have been doing this less than a year but we have a small farm and it competes for my time. Your book has been a great source of inspiration and information; I will bring it to the Texas class for you to sign if you don't mind..

Roy Cavaretta, TX



Great interview with Kentucky artist, Jennifer Zingg.

Reader's Mailbag:

Hi Bonnie. I have taken pictures of the filigree gourd I began in your class (Taylorsville, KY, 6 AUG) and of the bear fetish from your book (done on an apple gourd, 3 sides :). I can't begin to tell you how much I enjoyed you & your husband. Your patience and love of teaching made that class & you endearing to me. You are such an inspiration. My best to you & yours, *Nona Boughman, KY*





Coming Soon.... Got a Suggestion?

Do you have a technique, product or project you'd like to see addressed in a future issue of the newsletter? I'm always looking for great ideas to pass along to our readers! If you have ideas, please send your suggestions to: bonnie@arizonagourds.com.

Did you know..... that people that "Like" Arizona Gourds on Facebook get special offers, up to the minute news about new products and classes, and other gourdng updates? Please consider joining us on Facebook for the latest news and specials. I always post newsletter notices, new items, sales, and other gourd related info onto the Arizona Gourds page routinely. (Just a note - I don't add gourd friends on my personal page, I save that for family and non-gourdng friends.)

Like [Bonnie Gibson, Elaine Linton](#) and 1,529 others like this. · Admin Page · Insights



The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) continues to grow! We have over 2080 members, with gourd enthusiasts from all over the world! Membership is free and easy. The site also has state groups, event listings, a Q&A forum and a chat feature if you need a quick answer to a gourdng question! [Check out our two great new GAE T-Shirt designs !](#)

GAE Member Spotlight

Alex Fu of Shanghai, China is a member of the Gourd Art Enthusiasts site. He has posted a link to his [gourd blog](#). Most of the text is in Chinese characters, but there are some interesting photos! Some of the gourds have been etched through the skin, and others are molded while they grow. Have fun exploring his blog.



Tip of the Month: Using a Micro Torch



Small butane torches are handy for use on gourds (and you can even flame your creme brulee with it!)



Small butane torches are handy for use on gourds (and you can even name your ceramic brace with it.)

These torches use canned butane fuel, the same kind that is used to fill cigarette lighters. You'll find butane in hardware stores, discount stores and even in some dollar type stores. To fill, make sure the torch is in the closed position so fuel won't escape out of the nozzle. Invert the torch and look for the filling port in the bottom, it's a small metal tube. Invert the butane can so that the metal tip fits over the filling port snugly. Press down on the butane can to release the fuel into the torch. You will usually hear a hissing or filling noise.

Most butane torches have an ignition spark button. Open the fuel valve slightly (just so you can hear the slight hissing of fuel, then press the ignition button to start the flame. The flame is hottest at the tip of the blue flame. If you use structured tooth carbide burs, the torch may be used to flame the bur head and burn away residue that gets imbedded in the cutting surface. Chuck the bur into your power tool - it's too risky to hold the bur in pliers - and you certainly don't want to hold it in your fingers! Flame the bur head until the residue turns into ash, then brush the ash away with a brass cleaning brush. DO NOT attempt to remove the bur from your tool until it has cooled down!!! This method is ONLY for use on carbide burs - flaming a steel bur will cause the bur to lose its temper and it will no longer work properly. **If in doubt, don't use this method. It's recommended only for people that are very comfortable with tools and burs.**

You may also use the pinpoint flame to burn designs on gourds and to add interesting textures and color to cut edges. Remember that you are working with fire, and take all necessary precautions for your safety. Keep a spray bottle of water closeby, and work in an area free from any flammable materials. (Gourd dust is flammable, so work in a clean area.) Practice on a scrap piece of gourd until you feel comfortable with the distance to hold the flame from the gourd surface. Move the flame at a steady pace; holding the flame in one place for too long may burn your gourd far more than you had intended! Ideally, you will char the surface enough to produce a nice color but without burning too deeply.



**Do you have a tip or tutorial we may feature in a future newsletter? Please [contact me](#).*

Featured Gourd of the Month:

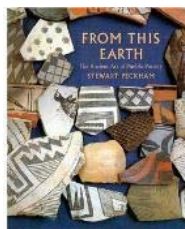
"From the Earth"

This gourd was painted with petroglyph designs, and then pine needle coiling was added with an inset agate slice. This was a good project for a gourd that had a crack on one side. I was able to cut the gourd and eliminate the crack while creating an interesting opening. (This is the same gourd I was spray painting in the last [newsletter!](#))

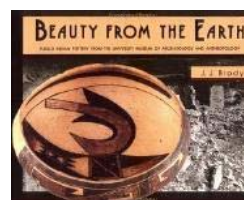


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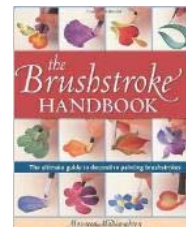
Featured Books of the Month:



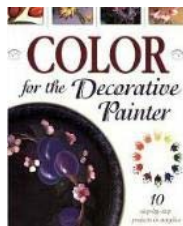
[From This Earth](#)



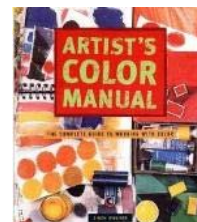
[Beauty From The Earth](#)



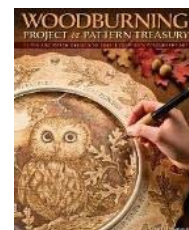
[Brushstroke Handbook](#)



[Color for the Decorative Painter](#)



[Artist's Color Manual](#)



[Woodburning Project and Pattern Treasury](#)

From this Earth and **Beauty from the Earth** are two books that we enjoyed using for reference in my "Rock Art and Gourd Pottery" class. **From this Earth** is out of print, however, you can still buy it used on Amazon for a good price. Great photos and info for those that want to do ancient pueblo pottery designs.

The next three books are devoted to painting techniques and color - if you are intrigued by color mixing, check out these books on Amazon - you'll also be shown related books that will pop up as additional suggestions.

Thanks for checking out the latest news! Feel free to pass the newsletter link along to your friends.
<http://www.arizonagourds.com/October2011.html>

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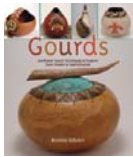
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If your email address changes, just sign up again with your new address - no need to email me the change, as I purge non-working addresses monthly.



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(Click on book cover for ordering information.)

Gourds Southwest Gourd Techniques & Projects from Simple to Sophisticated
 by Bonnie Gibson

The hardcover edition is now OUT OF PRINT!
 I still have some on hand, but supplies are limited. Last chance to get a copy before they are gone!

[Arizona Gourds HOME](#)

The last book, **Woodburning Project and Pattern Treasury: Create Your Own Pyrography Art with 70 Mix and Match Designs** is a brand new book from Fox Chapel (one of the best publishers for wood crafting and pyrography books!) I've had a chance to look inside this book and I'm very impressed with what I see. It has lots of great woodburning information including info on tools, techniques, design and much more.

**Want to see my listing of top gourd books? Here is my ["Listmania" listing on Amazon](#)*



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