

Airbrushing For Fun and Profit

By: Ray Gatica

Houston, TX: Airbrush artist Ray Gatica has been airbrushing for over thirty years. When he started airbrushing back in the seventies in Phoenix, Arizona, back then before computers there was a lot of work and business for artist and airbrush artist. For entrepreneur/artrepreneurs there was a lot of commercial signage, hand painted graphics work to go around and make a fun, decent living.

Back then, Gatica had to learn the airbrush by trial and error. Today after, twenty years of that trial and error I am able to offer airbrush lessons to anyone wanting to learn it. Back then; I don't remember ever seeing any one offering airbrush lessons. He remembers the frustration when he couldn't figure out where to begin troubleshooting to address the problems, inherent with the airbrush. He also had to learn about friskets, appropriate supplies and materials, like frisket material, plastic shields. He didn't know anything about any of that. When buying airbrush, the customers would get a little user guides and manual with instructions, but reading, and doing, are two very different things to Gatica.

He started by painting his own motorcycle, and then he went on to painting friend's bikes, motorcycles along with painting airbrushed graphics on cars and trucks. "The airbrush paid for itself very quickly," says Gatica. He also painted large commercial signs on trucks and small billboards.

Back then, paints were a lot harder to work with. And, because they were either oil-base or very harsh, lacquer paints, they weren't very fun. They weren't as workable as the current urethane paints of today. I don't know when they came into being but I wish I would had them back then in the seventies. They are the ultimate paints for the airbrush." Gatica says.

Along about the same time, he was learning the airbrush; he also started taking art lessons at a local community college, (Glendale College). There he studied life drawing, graphic design and illustration.

In the late seventies, he got the urge to move to Connecticut. There he continued his airbrushing but on a different avenue than what he was used to in Arizona. No longer doing too much of the art and graphics on cars, motorcycles, etc., he started getting business from commercial print shops and photographers - where he would edit and touch-up photos and other print media with photography inks. By that time he had learned about the Paasche AB airbrush and it had become his primary tool for what he did. This was a small, turbine driven airbrush that was designed for small photo touch-up jobs. This machine is designed to use fine viscosity paints like inks and watercolors especially made for photo retouching. "It is an intriguing little machine", says Gatica. Unfortunately, as time went on less and less work came for this, due to the emergence of the computers. Now all this is done with photo editing programs like Photoshop, which has almost rendered the airbrush obsolete.

Mean while, during all the commercial work Gatica always kept painting art with the airbrush and has developed his own style of art. His art and illustrations is contemporary, modern; realism with a hint of impressionism.

Going full circle: Gatica came to Houston Texas in the early nineties. He is still, airbrushing commercially, and for fun. He has started painting on metal again using urethane paints (with the viscosity similar to fine inks and watercolors), which he finds to be the ultimate paints for the airbrushing and creating art. He creates art on metal and still paints on motorcycles, vans and truck. He also provides airbrush lessons for those who need them. You can get more information on this at AirbrushMagic.net. There is a link with lessons information.

He has given airbrush lessons at Micheal's Art and Crafts stores in Houston. Today he offers private airbrush lessons on a one-on-one basis. The lessons encompasses the basics, trouble shooting, and actual painting with the airbrush. See more on this at the following link: <http://www.airbrushmagic.net/airbrush-lessons.htm>.

You can see his art on a couple of his various websites: www.airbrushmagic.net, www.Gaticaart.com. He can be contacted at 281-441-9714 or emailed through any of the above sites.

About The Author:

Airbrush Artist has been airbrushing for over twenty years. During the years he has done airbrush photo-retouching, rendering and illustrations. Today he provide airbrush lessons. You can see our works at <http://www.AirbrushMagic.net>, and <http://www.GaticaArt.com>.

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