

IN THIS ISSUE *Strathmore Aquarius II Watercolor Paper • Featured Product • Online Workshop Series • Questions From Our Artists*

Strathmore® Aquarius II® Watercolor Paper: Versatile for Any Binding Project. By Roz Stendahl.

As an artist who enjoys creating hand bound journals, I'm constantly on the look out for papers that will stand up to the mixed media techniques I employ and also be suitable for binding into books. I work with watercolor, gouache, acrylics, and collage in all my journals.



A collection of handbound journals. Rear row, right and center, are sewn-on-the-spine journals. The other journals are casebound journals. All are made in a variety of sizes that I enjoy working in with a nod to portability. ©2010 Roz Stendahl

Strathmore® Aquarius II® watercolor paper is one of my “go to” papers. This 80-pound cold press paper is light enough to easily be used in casebound structures (where signatures are bound together before a bookcover, or case, is added) without adding excessive bulk. Yet with sewn-on-the-spine structures (where each signature is sewn to the spine of a book instead of the other signatures), this paper is sturdy and not wimpy. In a casebound book it's important that the paper maintains

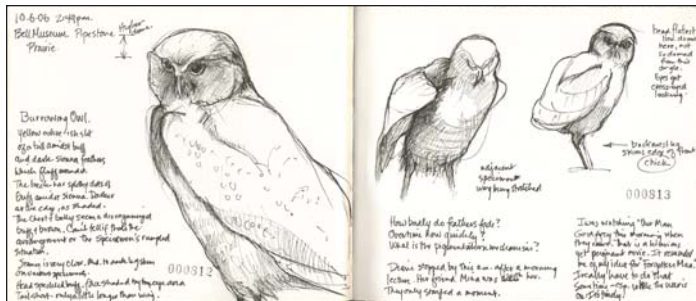


I frequently pre-paint my journal pages with acrylic paints, before going out to sketch. These studies of snow geese at the Bell Museum of Natural History in Minneapolis, MN were created in a 7.5 x 6.5 inch journal made with Strathmore Aquarius II. These pages were pre-painted with a raw sienna acrylic paint. The sketches were made with pen and watercolor. ©2007 Roz Stendahl

a glue seam between signatures. The sizing on some papers makes it difficult to hold this seal. On soft papers the seams come apart because the surface is too delicate. Strathmore Aquarius II holds these stress points, maintaining the integrity of the binding.

The non-buckling nature of Strathmore Aquarius II is another benefit to the bookbinder. Unlike most watercolor papers, Strathmore Aquarius II doesn't pucker when a wash of wet media is added. The paper contains synthetic fibers that minimize buckling when first wet and allows the paper to dry flat with no residual rippling. Generally I prefer to work on hot press papers because I do a lot of pen work and writing. The cold press texture of Strathmore Aquarius II, however is not intrusive. It speaks to my need for a little bit of texture. It accommodates even detailed pen work on its surface.

At the same time the cold press texture of the sheet allows for increased variety in strokes and washes that watercolorists enjoy in their work.



Strathmore Aquarius II stands up to a variety of pens, like these owl studies at the Bell Museum. The cold press texture of the paper allows for an interesting varied line from this fiber-tipped pen. ©2006 Roz Stendahl



Landscape artist Diane Wesman finds that the characteristics of Strathmore Aquarius II make it the perfect paper for field studies and quick watercolor paintings. Handmade journal, approx. 4 x 3 inches. ©2009 Diane Wesman

My fellow artist Diane Wesman is also a fan of Strathmore® Aquarius II®. As a landscape artist, Diane uses small journals made with Strathmore Aquarius II for field work. Small, pocket-sized books are easily carried into the field making quick plein air field sketches possible. Diane routinely travels with no more than a pen for sketching and a small watercolor or gouache paint box and her journal. After assessing her field studies Diane returns with her heavier pastel gear on a later date. She finds that Strathmore Aquarius II allows for quick, direct washes and reworking if desired.

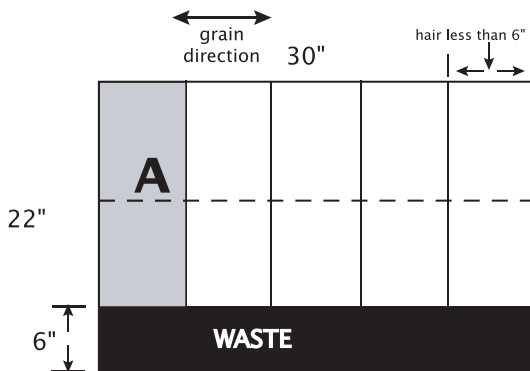
Consider Strathmore Aquarius II for your next binding project. Make a portrait, landscape, or even square book to



Landscape artist Diane Wesman captures a quick sketch of the winding road in this journal. Handmade journal, approx. 3 x 4 inches. Plein air sketch using pen and watercolors. ©2009 Diane Wesman

suit your working preferences. Two diagrams on the next page provide ideas on how to cut or tear down a full sheet of this paper to make a portrait or a landscape journal. In each diagram the letter “A” designates one piece that will be folded as part of a signature. I gather four of these together for a nicely sized and non-bulky signature of 16 pages. Five of these pieces folded as indicated will create a 20-page signature which is also workable because the paper is not bulky.

It is important to keep the grain direction with the fold of your signature. Play with different page heights by dividing the 30-inch length into different sizes. When working out the width of your page, remember that you need double that width measurement because it will be folded, e.g., if you want a 10-inch page width you can only get one piece from every 22-inch strip because 10 times two is 20 inches. (You’ll have two inches of waste.)



22 x 30 inch
Strathmore Aquarius II
Diagram for Small Landscape Book
(8 x 6 inches approx. page size)

About the Author



Roz Stendahl is a graphic designer, illustrator, and book binder who teaches bookbinding and journaling at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts.

Roz has prepared a short online workshop as part of the Strathmore® Visual Journal Online Workshop Series. Her workshop will begin in

May 2011. Registration for this free class is now open.

Contact Roz Stendahl via email at:

rozjournalrat@gmail.com

website: rozworks.com

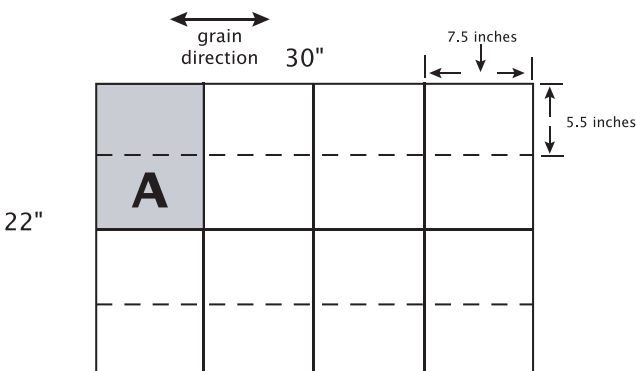
blog: rozwoundup.typepad.com

You may reach Diane Wesman at:

dkwesman@comcast.net

You can view Diane's pastel and oil landscapes at her blog:

dianewesman.blogspot.com



22 x 30 inch
Strathmore Aquarius II
Diagram for Small Book
(5.5 x 7.5 inches approx. page size)

Speaking of waste, don't toss that 6-inch strip of paper at the bottom of the first diagram (labeled waste)! That strip runs with the grain and can be folded into 3-inch wide pages of whatever height you decide would be fun. That's how Diane and I end up with some handy little books that are perfect for field work, with paper on which we enjoy working!

Recommended books on binding:

Book Binding for Book Artists, Keith Smith

Hand Bookbinding, Aldren Watson

Books, Boxes, and Portfolios, Franz Zeier

For more bookbinding suggestions go to my blog:

rozwoundup.typepad.com

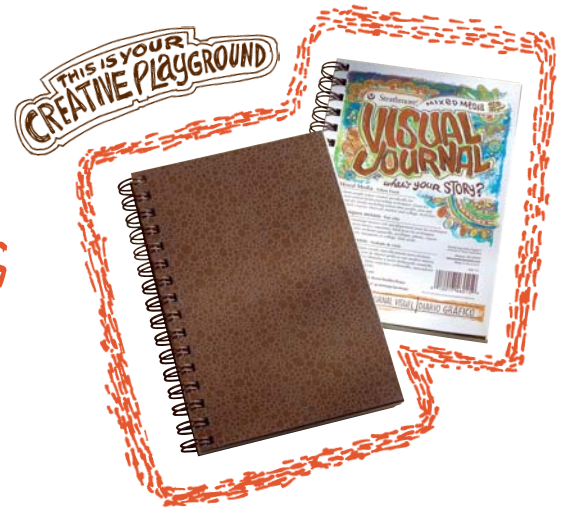


©2005 Roz Stendahl

Featured Product



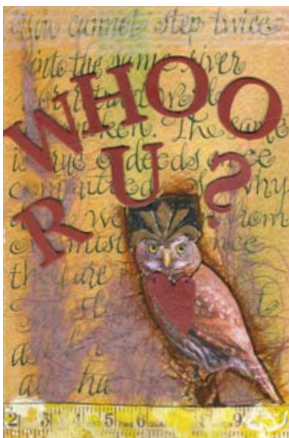
HIGH-PERFORMING
PAPERS
HEAVY-DUTY
FEATURES



Pam Carriker



Tara Ross



Connie Newbanks



Eric Scott

Freedom of Expression.

New Strathmore® Visual Journals deliver **high-performing papers** and **heavy-duty features** engineered to meet the intense demands of your creative process. The removable cover sheet reveals a subtle, hand-illustrated cover design. The wire binding allows the journal to lie flat and open up 360 degrees.

Journals are available in three sizes, in **Drawing, Mixed Media, Smooth** and **Vellum Bristol**, and two weights of **Watercolor**. So feel free to reflect, explore, create and mix it up any way you please.

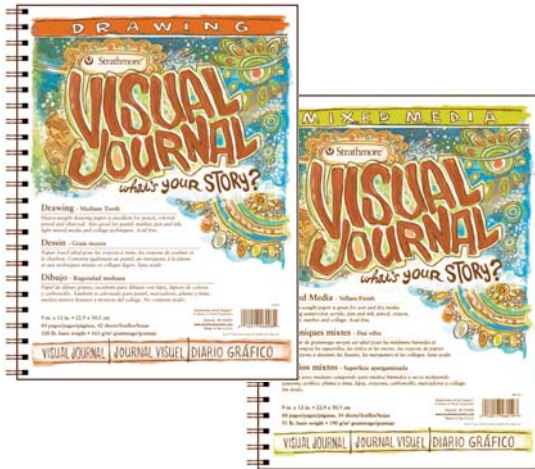
What is Visual Journaling?

Well, it's whatever you imagine it to be. It's an inviting canvas. An open and comfortable place where pens meet paintbrushes, colored pencils meet glued photos, markers meet magazine clippings, and found objects find a home.

Visual journaling is where your creative process can flourish. It's a no-pressure playground where imperfection is perfectly amazing. **Join in the pursuit to live more creatively...**

Learn about each Visual Journal on the following page.

Above: Sample Visual Journal pages.



Strathmore®
VISUAL JOURNAL
HIGH-PERFORMING
PAPERS
Heavy-Duty
Features

Drawing 100 lb (163 g/m²)

Heavy-weight drawing paper is excellent for pencil, colored pencil and charcoal. Also good for pastel, marker, pen and ink, light mixed media and collage techniques. Acid free.

Mixed Media 90 lb (190 g/m²)

Medium-weight paper is great for wet and dry media including watercolor, acrylic, pen and ink, pencil, crayon, charcoal, marker and collage. Acid free.

Bristol – Vellum 100 lb (260 g/m²)

Vellum finish is great for any dry media including pencil, charcoal and pastel. Also good for pen and ink, marker and collage. Acid free.

Bristol – Smooth 100 lb (260 g/m²)

Smooth surface is excellent for traditional and specialty pen and ink techniques, marker and collage. Acid free.

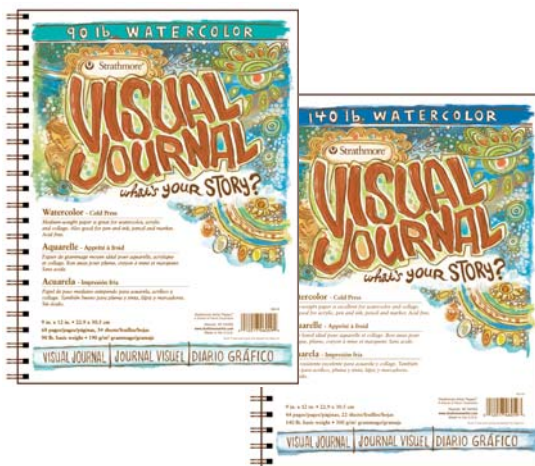
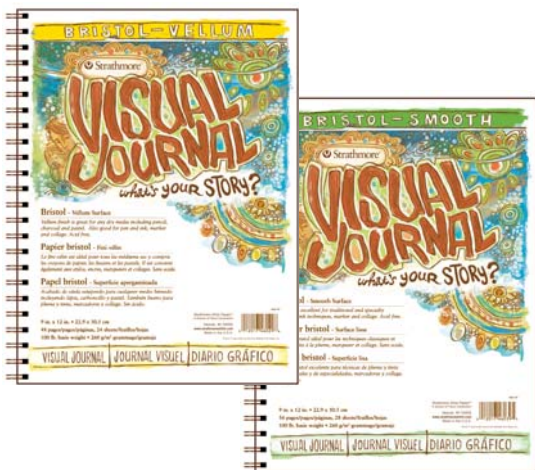
Watercolor 90 lb (190 g/m²)

Medium-weight paper is great for watercolor, acrylic and collage. Also good for pen and ink, pencil and marker. Acid free.

Watercolor 140 lb (300 g/m²)

Heavy-weight paper is excellent for watercolor and collage. Also good for acrylic, pen and ink, pencil and marker. Acid free.

**Visual Journals are available in 3.5" x 5", 5.5" x 8", and 9" x 12".
Learn more at www.strathmoreartist.com.**



Strathmore® Visual Journal ONLINE WORKSHOP SERIES

Learn visual journaling techniques from experienced artists through online videos and downloadable instructions.

Get inspired from other students in our virtual classroom, keep motivated with ideas and tips from your instructor, and discover the creative and emotional benefits of journaling!

About the workshops

Workshop 1. Recycled Journal Pages

Instructor: Pam Carriker
start date: January 1, 2011

Reusing your own artwork in your journal pages helps you get the most out of the time you put into creating art. By using copies of previous journal pages and other art you've created, you will have a great stash of collage fodder right at your fingertips! Reusing your own art allows you to revisit your art in a totally new way and create pages that are uniquely your own. In addition to your recycled art, collage materials can also be found in other recyclables such as, newspapers, magazines, old book pages or other ephemera. Get the most mileage from your art and take it to exciting new places by recycling it in your Art Journal!

Workshop 2. Start Where You Are

Instructor: Linda Blinn
start date: March 1, 2011

In this series of workshops, Strathmore journals meet mixed-media art techniques for a lively juxtaposition of words and images. We will explore the philosophy that a journal should always be a work in progress and discover the advantages of developing pages in layers using mixed-media techniques and materials such as gels, mediums, water media, paints and sprays.

To personalize your journal, notice how the addition of fold-outs and embellishments make the pages interactive. Play with design layouts and spreads, and learn how to



Journal page from instructor Roz Stendahl

integrate writing and images while keeping design principals in mind...but not being constrained by them! And, whether you want to cover your journal with painted canvas or art it up with collage, you will see tempting examples to transform your Visual Journal into your very own masterpiece.

Workshop 3. Building Your Visual Journal from the Page Up

Instructor: Roz Stendahl
start date: May 1, 2011

Find your unique visual style while creating mixed media journal pages from the background up. Learn how to execute colorful and textured backgrounds with paints and inks. Work with collage papers and ephemera to explore composition. Master paper handling techniques that expand your page and enhance your journal's flow. Finally take your journal into the real world to hone your on-site sketching and observation skills. The techniques and strategies presented in this workshop will enable you to discover your own authentic journal voice and unleash your creative energy.

Register for free workshops today at:
www.strathmoreartist.com

Questions From Our Artists

Part 2. How to Evaluate Quality Watercolor Papers

From time to time, artists ask us for ways to evaluate the quality of drawing and painting papers. In our Summer 2010 newsletter, we shared techniques to evaluate the quality of drawing surfaces. In this issue, we will share some standard tests to evaluate paper performance using two common watercolor techniques.

There are a number of typical things artists consider when selecting a watercolor paper, such as weight (90 lb., 140 lb. or 300 lb.), finish (cold press, hot press or rough), and fiber type (wood pulp or cotton). But, how does an artist evaluate the actual performance characteristics of watercolor paper? By understanding some basics about the unique properties of watercolor paper and then conducting some simple “tests,” you can compare performance differences of papers.

Balancing Absorption

Watercolor paper needs to maintain a balance between its ability to both absorb and not absorb. The fibers in the paper need to absorb water and pigment but not too quickly and aggressively. Think of what would happen if you painted on paper towel! Also, the fibers need to absorb water and pigment evenly so that you can achieve a nice wash that is not streaked, mottled or blotchy. Like drawing paper, surface strength is important, even more so because water is used and reworking and layering is common among watercolor artists.

The following test can help you evaluate absorbing/non-absorbing properties of watercolor paper. To compare performance between different papers, tests should be conducted together at the same time using the same solution.



Watercolor wash and lift test

Wash Test

1. Create watercolor solution. In a small cup or bowl, add a small amount of black tube watercolor paint. Mix with distilled water to make a solution that is strong enough to create a wash of black color. Add more color if necessary to provide a dark base.
2. Using a 1 inch flat watercolor brush, dip brush into solution until saturated. Remove excess liquid by scraping brush against the container.
3. Holding the brush at an angle, apply a watercolor wash across the paper in even strokes about 4 to 6 inches long, working quickly and evenly until you have a wash

that is about 4 to 6 inches wide by 5 inches tall.
Repeat strokes over the wash area to create a smooth,
even wash.

4. Examine the results. A good watercolor paper will have an even wash with no evidence of water/pigment repelling, no streaks, no spots or blotches.

Wash/Wash Lift Test

1. Using the same watercolor solution and brush, hold the brush at an angle and apply another wash as outlined above.
2. Immediately after creating the wash, rinse the brush in clean water and remove excess water.
3. Then attempt to “lift off” the pigment in the wash area by quickly using back and forth brush strokes. Wipe off brush with paper towel and repeat lift process 2 to 3 times by wetting brush with water and brushing over wash area. Stop if you damage the surface of the paper. The goal is to lift off and blend the wash so that no demarcation or shadow remains in the area.
4. Examine the results. A good watercolor paper will have no demarcation, outline edge or shadow in the lift area. Fair performing paper might have faint demarcation or shadow. If you easily damaged the surface while conducting the test, the surface strength may not be suitable for watercolor.