

By Bettie Johnson

Many artists feel that stippling shades of either warm or cool grays at varied pressures is the secret to illustrating realistic-looking stone textures.

Louisiana artist Pat Reynolds feels that the more colors he uses, the more realistic his granite will look. He will stipple in as many as 20 shades of gray for one rock. He also mixes both warm and cool grays for a more natural look.

When he is rendering a stone texture, Reynolds mixes both transparent and opaque ComArt paints to get a variety of custom colors. For a more grainy effect, he will use opaque paints. He creates varying stipple patterns by changing the settings on his compressor. (The lower the pressure setting, the larger the dot pattern.)

To add form, Reynolds makes the rocks lighter on top and darker on the bottom. Then to make rocks stand out more, he contrasts them against a dark background.

Florida artist Craig Tracy also uses the stipple effect to create a stone texture. He begins by laying down a base of gray, then stipples ComArt warm and cool grays. Tracy removes the tip from his Iwata HB-SB and varies the pressure to get the stipple effect. He will vary the pressure from 35 down to 3 psi.

For an interesting variation, Tracy may add purple or orange. When he adds the white stipple, he uses the paint at full thickness for the maximum grainy effect.

Cass Fuller, a T-shirt artist from Texas, gets a stipple effect by spraying the textile paint from his Paasche VL off the side of a wooden clothespin. "I blow it off at an angle, and it produces large splatters of paint—a heavy stipple effect," says Fuller. He uses gray, black, purple, and white Aqua Flow paint when rendering granite on apparel.

Jerry LoFaro paints stones working from dark to light using opaque acrylics. He shapes the patterns of the stone free-hand with a Paasche AB. "I keep them pretty loose, using some brushwork,"



Ruth - by
Tony Novak
is 1 of a series of
4 posters originally
done in 1989 as a teach-
ing aid for Sunday School
students. A splatter technique
was used and some highlights
were scratched in using an X-
Acto knife. Acrylics on illustra-
tion board; 14 by 22 inches.

HOW
TO
RENDER

STONE



▲ Using a matboard mask and an airbrush, Michael Whelan silhouetted the stone figures in the 1988 painting titled *"Sentinels"* in a dark tone composed of Phthalo Blue and Raw Umber. Upon this base color he spattered a light color of gesso and cadmium yellow using a low air pressure (about 15 psi). He then used a paintbrush to pick out the lights which define the pitted curves and bumps of the stone texture, going lighter and lighter as he worked toward the highlights. He finished up by going to the shadow areas and strengthening the dark accents with deeper tones. Acrylic on canvas; 26 by 36 inches.



◀ Jerry LoFaro painted this for the cover of a book titled *"Love and Magic,"* a book written by a real life witch in Salem, Massachusetts, 1991. The stones were shaped with black and white acrylic using a paint brush then textured by scratching with an X-acto knife and coarse sandpaper. The surface was then dissolved with denatured alcohol on a sponge to create another texture. Next, thin washes of color were applied using both a paintbrush and an airbrush. The highlights were done with a paintbrush and the shadows were deepened with an airbrush. Acrylic on Frisk CS-10 Board, 28 by 36 inches.



Hawaiian artist Jeff Wilke recently completed a marbleizing effect on several outdoor memorial markers. He began by sponging a darker shade over the existing white base coat, leaving voids to suggest texture.



Using a darker shade of gray, the primary veins in the marble are air-brushed freehand over the sponge-stipple effect.



Some finer veining is added in reddish-brown for a more natural appearance. The finished effect is clear-coated to help withstand the elements.



These outdoor memorial markers at the U.S.S. Eowfin Submarine Museum were done in remembrance of the men who died while serving on the U.S.S. Eowfin.

says the New York City artist. He allows a lot of voids to show through the surface color to enhance the random texturing.

LoFaro uses a novel method to get the texture of the stone: He dips a children's rubber stamp into the acrylic paint and then stamps the patterns all over the rock formations. On an ad for Poland Springs water, LoFaro used a rubber stamp depicting Walt Disney's Goofy character, overlapping the rubber stamp many times to get a heavily textured pattern with no discernible stamp pattern. He develops the rock formations further with an airbrush and a paintbrush, completing the piece by stippling with the airbrush and then scratching the surface with a razor knife.

When Mark Fredrickson does a rocky foreground, he completes the painting, then masks it with frisket. "I keep aware of where the stones are to be. I do the environment first and add the stones last," says the Arizona artist.

Fredrickson draws in the stone pattern on the frisket, then uses a stencil knife to cut out the pattern. He sprays the area with some ComArt cleaner mixed in a squirt bottle and dabs off the paint with a sponge, leaving a mottled design. Fredrickson sprays the shadows with an airbrush and stipples a fine grain over the rocky surface. He pulls out the highlights with an electric eraser and a knife blade. He completes the stones by adding cracks and fissures with a paintbrush. Whether the rocks are painted in a warm or cool shade depends on the lighting of the piece.

"I try to avoid masking out natural formations. It's hard to deal with a big white spot in the middle," says Fredrickson. "I don't like to plan for natural formations—I prefer random surfaces."

Jean Probert has a variety of techniques for rendering stone. The Missouri illustrator uses a sponge dipped in acrylics for the basic texture, then stipples over that. She may finish the piece by removing some paint with an eraser for highlights. "I leave the tooth or scrubby effect," says Probert.

To render the shadows, Probert may spray them in the underpainting, then stipple over them. She reinforces the shadows with a hand-held acetate mask for a softer edge.

"I mix a lot of techniques: brush, sponge, smooth and stippled airbrush," says Probert. "If you can pick out a particular technique in the finished work, the texture won't be as convincing."

Occasionally the artist will use another technique. She will cut an irregular, jagged design in an art gum eraser,



▲ **California Rock**, by George Mead, a mural measuring 12 by 24 feet is painted with oils on stretched canvas. Originally painted for an outdoor art show, it is now used as a backdrop for various stage events.

dip it in acrylic paint, and apply it repeatedly to the rocky area. Probert discovered this technique when she had to render a paw print in a hurry and discovered the crumbly amber eraser made a good stamp. She also uses a white eraser to make stamps to provide a different effect.

For a large-scale stone effect, artist Bill Jonas uses a latex base. "I use an acrylic latex to block in the large areas of color. Then I use artist's acrylics through the airbrush for the mottling effect on the stone."

For the stippling effect, Jonas uses a popsicle stick with the airbrush. "Put the tip of the airbrush on the stick near the end and begin spraying, a puddle of paint will build up and then be blown off by the air pressure. This will create an even stipple over a large area. The farther the tip of the airbrush is from the end of the stick, the larger the puddle buildup and the larger the stipple effect." **AIR**

► **Stone Head**, 1990; 12 by 24 inches; acrylics on illustration board; Craig Tracy created the stone effect by stippling different shades of gray over the light gray base. White highlights were added under the larger dark spots for a pitted appearance.

