

Wall Painting

Contents

- Wall Painting** **3**
- Message** **4**
- Stenciling Design** **5**
 - QR Codes 5
 - Materials 5
 - Application 6
- WheatPasting** **7**
 - Cycle Pasting 8
- Hobo Code** **9**
 - Using New Hobo Code 9
- Culture Hacking** **11**
 - STOP Signs 11

Wall Painting

In many locales, you must show ID proving you are over 18 to purchase spray paint. Laws requiring this were passed as an attempt to control both graffiti and the practice of huffing. Most bucket paints and rollers are easy to get by anyone.

Traditional spray tagging, while considered by some to be an art form, is often difficult to read and is mostly ignored by the public at large so it may not be the best choice for political messages.

Make a stencil so you can leave a clear readable message, cardboard or vinyl runner both work well for a stencil and roll up easily for transportation, but be aware that it is evidence if you get caught. A team of three: painter, stencil holder, and lookout are best. Wear gloves and a long smock or disposable long sleeve apron so you can ditch them and your gear and be clean if you have to run.

Stenciling, while useful for making props in the theatre or painting walls in less than legal ways, is a simple, easy, and user-friendly way of doing a lot of things that you probably always wanted to! Paint your own clothing, use it as a new art medium, send a message on the barren walls of the cement prison we call civilization, decorate your room, alter advertisements for the better, or just simply make things pretty: you can do a lot with stencils!

Message

It's very important to put serious consideration into the messages you write. They should appeal to your target audience and they must not provide a means to identify you directly.

Furthermore, you must consider that your message may be misinterpreted. Imagine getting media attention, and then having them declare you a dangerous and threatening group, citing your "Fuck The Pigs" graffiti as evidence? If you're working well they wouldn't have much else to look at, after all.

Stenciling Design

Stenciling is quite simply making a mask which is painted over to print out a message, a picture, in graphical form. Of course this is all very simple but to make it effective and sharp some care needs to be taken.

Your pictures/words etc, will be in the space you cut out, here some trouble is caused when you have empty space inside letters or shapes. Since to get a continuous area of paint onto your surface, the inside is hard to support. With many designs, a few small supporting 'arms' placed well can work effectively to hold up your stencil material on the inside. If you're really concerned about this, then when you are finished stencilling touch it up carefully with a bit more of your paint into a solid area. Good design should avoid having these areas as far as possible.

Thin areas of mask also can have problems, with the paint 'bleeding' through underneath if you aren't careful; try and use thick areas as far as possible.

It is a good idea to draw/print out a copy of your design on paper first, then lay it out on top of your mask material and use a pin to prick the vital points, then recreating. Or cut through both with a knife at the same time, this should also work with thicker materials, leaving a score mark to cut along. This should work much better than freehand cutting.

QR Codes

A great high tech way to leave a data message is to stencil out QR codes to paint onto walls or sidewalks, cops and store owners might assume it is something left by the city or the phone company, but younger and tech savvy folk will be quick to scan. Most people read the QR code with their phone camera and a special app but you can also use your computer webcam or even snap a photo and read the image on computer at home later.

https://secure.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/wiki/QR_Code

You can leave a website address, email address, pirate radio channel, wifi key, text, or GPS coordinate; whatever you like. You can download free QR code generators or find websites that generate a QR code and up size the output image for your printer, make two if you are making a stencil. White glue the printout onto cardboard or other good backing and let dry. Use an razor knife or scissors to cut out all of the black spots, put plastic over the uncut printout so you can glue string to hold the stencil together where there is too much black cut out, use the bottom printout to help align the blocks. Use dark paint against a light background. Here you can see a QR code that directs to <http://stealthiswiki.org> you can print a large version of this to spread this website.

Just beware that this method almost exclusively gets smartphone users, a habit that can be detrimental in certain actions.

Materials

All you really need is some cardstock and an exacto knife. Hell, a sheet of cardboard and a box cutter will do, but only if you're tight on time and don't care much for aesthetics.

The most recommended and, unless proven otherwise, best overall thing to have in your arsenal of supplies is a handy-dandy (no, not notebook, though that might be good for preliminary sketches!): X-acto knife. You'll want plenty of replacement blades. For the best results, blade size/shape 11 is the one you'll want to use.

Next, you'll need to choose your second-most important medium: the stencil material itself. The cheapest way to go is cardstock, which you can get in packs of 250 8.5"x11" sheets for smaller projects. While bigger sheets mean more room to cut, smaller sheets provide portability, easier organization, and somewhat discreet methods of application, all things you'll want to consider. Other mediums include: acetate (overhead projection sheets and beyond), mylar, cardboard, paper (unrecommended), plastic (coroplast election signs!), donut boxes, paper bags... The absolute best method is precision-cut steel or aluminum sheet. It is the easiest to clean, transport, and maintain, our method is an easy process requiring a paint mask with the design scratched into it, a saltwater basin, and electricity. see Means of Production#Precision cutting. Rigid templates are generally much better as they are easier to secure etc.

Finally, you'll need to select your method of putting up the stencil. There are lots of things to consider with this, as well. Some options include: chalk and spray-adhesive, paint and paintbrush/paintroller, spraypaint, dirt, windowetching solution.

Application

If you are applying stencils in public places, think carefully about placement; will you be easily seen placing it? Will it be seen easily by people? Materials to bring with you when placing; The mask Gloves A cloth Masking tape

The application is pretty simple, put on your gloves and tape up your mask on the place where it'll be, then start painting! Try to get even coating, and don't spill over the cardboard too much painting the surrounding area. Leave it for a minute or two if you can to let any drips fall down/onto the template, then take it off your surface, wipe it clean/dry with the cloth, remove the template, and get out!

Of course, we have known some that get so good at this, they get "discovered" by the CorpArt world, taking them out of the revolution. They go on to make a steady paycheck throwing out artwork for commercials, shirts, and other propaganda. But, many more get caught and end up paying huge fines or doing community service. Be careful!

WheatPasting

Wheatpasting is an effective way to stick up posters in a way that is difficult to remove by hand, quick, and inexpensive. Again collect your poster holder, lookout, and glue painter although you could get away doing this as a one person job. Of course vampire hours are best since there will be few pedestrians to witness and call in your activities. Print your poster or flyer like we show in Starting a Printing Workshop, attempting to find the most water resistant print style possible since this will be outdoors. Butcher paper is usually the strongest and cheapest media. On a nice dry week with little rain in the forecast, move out to do your deed. Summer nights are best. Cement and metal walls and poles are best for adhesion. Plastic and wood walls don't stick too well. Bridge supports on highways are great, so think about combining four or more posters for a big well seen billboard here.

You will first need to make your paste:

- Take one cup white flour.
- Add the flour to two cups of water (add rock salt if deep in winter to slow freezing).
- Bring to a boil (boiling can be skipped in a pinch but makes weaker glue).
- Reduce to a simmer for half hour (converts the starch to better glue).
- Stir and break up lumps while you simmer.

- Let cool and place in your bucket.
- Refrigerate for up to a week or just use the paste right away. Otherwise, it really starts to stink!!

(In a pinch you can use potato flake, corn starch, watered wood glue, sour milk, and many other ingredients instead of wheat to make your paste)

Now let's paste!

- Liberally paint your paste on to the surface with a soft broom, big sponge, wide paintbrush, roller, or mop.
- Apply your poster.
- Smooth past over either the edges or if possible the whole poster to both secure the edges, seal the ink, and remove bubbles.
- Once stuck down well a few razor slashes will make removal more difficult when dry.
- Move along in a random direction down streets and alleys while posting to prevent leaving a trail for the cops to follow.

Experience will teach you if making a paste seal over the whole front of the poster will cause excessive ink running. Sealing the whole poster preserves it for much longer so you might adjust your ink to match the paste.

Cycle Pasting

For cyclists the best paster setup we have seen is a hand made oversized pannier on the back filled with posters and the bucket and brush in a handlebar basket. The paste has a chance of spilling when the lid is off but a plastic shopping bag conceals and protects it from the eyes of the cops and catches the spillage. You will have to learn how to balance the handlebars, grab a poster, paste up the wall, and stick it up without making a huge mess, but once you get it down you will be unstoppable!

Hobo Code

This is an 19th and early 20th century form of wall painting updated for our modern needs and can be done in any sort of paint or medium of drawing ranging from chalk to charcoal to paint to spraypaint to scratches in the dirt or tree bark. It is a system of simple characters and pictures that each mean something pertaining to the immediate surroundings/building(s), like a Caduceus symbol means a doctor or someone of medical knowledge lives within, or an upside down triangle means that people are burned out on bums. These symbols may be used one at a time or in sequence to form a sort of sentence. The best time to leave these symbols is when you move on so others can benefit from your discoveries. Use chalk or charcoal for temporary discoveries so the rain and wind will wash it away, paint or scratch marking is good for long term discoveries. The side of the curb, the bottom corner of a building, or lower side of large rocks or sign posts are good places to leave the marks.

There is nothing secret about these marks, just like the cops know better than any stoner where to stash a joint, they will figure out the what and where of these marks again. Use your head when marking something hidden and remember we will still have more time to notice these marks on foot than a piggie in a squad car.

Good stuff for your pack if you plan to take up hobo marking: thick kids sidewalk chalk, a large paint marking pen, and a quality black indelible marker.

Here is a simple code of many of the Hobo Code symbols. Look for them when you're in a bind and you can get by without too much trouble. These are in little use at the time of the printing of this book but we expect you to help fix this. Many of these signs are new for our generation, a good idea is to print and distribute this graphic and key on the back page of your publications for underground users so the new symbols get disseminated. Realize that this is not the 1930's and people are not as generous, but as times get tougher more "normal" people will be displaced or unemployed and sympathy may improve. Interestingly enough while it was not that widely used even in the 1930's the paranoia of that time gave it a solid place in our historical memory.

Using New Hobo Code

^Jimage:Hobobigist3.png

It is a good idea to print and distribute or paste up this sign list in low rent area bathrooms, homeless shelters, and radical hangouts. You should be able to get four to six copies to a sheet of paper. Here are some clarifications beyond what is on the card (you might include these on the back of your handout)

- 3-A top-hat in place of a cat was sometimes used for kind old man
- 8-pirate radio reception here (tower with radiating skull and bones) give broadcast frequency
- 9-fangs (also sometimes shown as stick with four legs)
- 14-eyes and X both mean safe, waves for water
- 17-Rich(top hat and pile of gold)
- 20-Open wireless Internet (give ESSID)

- 21-Closed wireless (give ESSID and key code if cracked)
- 22-International Squatters symbol (ask if there is room for you) and squatter solidarity
- 24-Talk religion then beg (specify Protestant,Catholic,Mormon, etc,substitute star of David if Jewish, crescent if Muslim, etc)
- 26-Panhandling success in exchange for music, magic show, juggle, acting (hat for panhandle, horn for entertainment)
- 33-Undercover cop or informer (roof over cop symbol)
- 34-Barter accepted (music, repairs, food, problem solving, whatever is needed between two parties, make a deal)
- 36-Overloaded with tramps (locals are getting burned out) dot differentiates this from gay symbol
- 37-Dishonest person (may not pay you for work)
- 41-Homeowner is frightened and gives to us so we will leave, be alert for police activity afterward
- 42-Locals are minorities and/or are cool with the cause (won't call cops, likely to help us in need)

Culture Hacking

The other way to use spray paint is to hack signs, billboards, advertisements, etc. If done correctly, it's possible to make a sign that looks no different from the original, except that the message has changed.

A good example: nearby there is a sign that says, "Abortion Kills Babies." Black lettering on a white background. A culture hacker takes two cans of paint, one white, one black. Paint over the "Abortion" part in white, using as many coats needed to cover up the black. Second, use the black paint to write your own word, like "Sex," for the finished product of "Sex Kills Babies." Only a few months after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, one of the most devastating man-made environmental disasters ever to occur at sea which occurred in Alaska in 1989, the Billboard Liberation Front turned HITS HAPPEN – NEW X-100 into SHIT HAPPENS – NEW EXXON.

It is sometimes possible to kill the lights on a billboard if it has a light sensor, just tape a flashlight down on that sensor or sensors and you will have darkness to hide your work. Printing your work on transparency will let you use an overhead projector to trace your stencils or letters against a wall. If you do recon with a camera and actually climb up with tape and measure the letters on the billboard you can often get a very good match.

STOP Signs

Piss off the man by putting a message of rebellion on a symbol of conformity. Get yourself a can of white spray paint and a piece of cardboard. Use a knife or a razor to cut a stencil out the cardboard to say what it is you want to

<http://wiki.stealthiswiki.org/wiki/Wall-Painting> 5/6

"stop". Try to make it the same font as that used on the sign. Some suggestions are: THE THOUGHT POLICE, CENSORSHIP, WAR, THE ARMS RACE, RACISM, BIG BROTHER, GOVERNMENT GREED, THE PIG EMPIRE, or EATING ANIMALS (if you're into animal rights). If you feel like making people laugh, put HAMMERTIME, EATING VEGETABLES, THE INSANITY, DROP AND ROLL, or COLLABORATE AND LISTEN.



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