



Basics Of Suminagashi/Japanese Paper Marbling

“*Suminagashi*” = “spilled ink” or “floating ink” in Japanese

It is an ancient, traditional art form in Japan where masters float ink on the surface of water to create one-of-a kind prints or monotypes.

• **MATERIALS (USED BY MEININGER ART SUPPLY)**

- **Masa** printmaking paper – Economical, Japanese printmaking paper (internally sized but works really well!) Colors are more intense if using paper without any sizing
- **Aitoh Boku-Undo Suminagashi Marbling Kit** (6 colors of ink)
- **MCS Acrylic Box Frame** (as water container) - 8x10 – can also use tubs/pans
- Paper towels or **Cosmos blotter paper** – can use newspaper on top of table with paper towel to blot ink
- Small round, inexpensive watercolor brush or sumi brush – i.e., size 1 or 2 (optional)

• **MESS QUOTIENT = LOW to MEDIUM**

- Possible water spillage
- Possible ink on clothes, hands and work surface – use
- Accumulation of used paper towels, newspaper – to be thrown out

• **PREPARATION**

- Cut paper to size – 5”x7”
- Fill acrylic box half way with clean water
- Tear off sheets of paper towel or newspaper or blotter paper to blot excess water and ink

• **PROCESS**

1. For ease of applying the ink – use “*float paper*” included in the set – 3 is a good number to start with
2. Tear off and submerge in the water – wait for them to float to the top
3. Choose color ink and carefully/gently apply a drop to the top of the float paper – caution: ink flows easily out of the bottle! **NOTE:** Get the tip of the bottle close as possible to the float paper/surface of water
4. Ink will spread naturally out – if too aggressive applying the ink will sink to the bottom
5. Apply other colors if desired to the float paper
6. Create patterns by blowing across the water surface or fanning the surface or using a brush end or similar tool.
7. **OR**, use 2 brushes to gently apply the ink to water surface – traditional application – creates concentric circles of alternating colors.
8. Place paper to be marbled gently on the water surface – can place one end down and lower the paper down carefully. **NOTE:** Paper must be dry. If wet the ink will not adhere.
9. When paper is soaked (a few seconds) lift one edge and peel it off the water surface
10. Place paper face up on paper towel, newspaper or blotter paper
11. Place another sheet of blotting material on top to soak up excess ink and water. **DO NOT RUB THE INK** – it can smear
12. **DONE!**
 - **OR**, once the paper is dry you can add more layers of marbling
 - **NOTE:** Can create a resist by brushing on patterns of water
 - If you lose the float paper, cut up some Yupo, a synthetic paper, works well – it floats!