

# Unique Glass Colors

Margot Clark and Dr. Saulius Jankauskas present



## Intro to Fired Glass Color and Fusing Techniques

This lesson is designed to introduce you into the fascinating world of fired glass. We will be Marbling with Metallics, learning to “Control Your Bubbles,” applying solid color and capping it with a second piece of glass with a MUD Floral design, applying color that will create bubbles and cap it with a MUD Leaf Motif, sift dry color and cap it with a MUD Rosebud design and apply color that will create two different looks. All these pieces will be fired in a glass kiln and complete firing instructions will be included. All the pieces are two inch squares which make great sample pieces for larger projects, or to create a necklace, or mosaic them together to form a collage or.....whatever you can think of when you see your own finished pieces.

### Unique Glass Colors Products:

#### NT Color Line

- 1956 Dark Blue
- 11020 Violet
- 1995 Apple Green

1997 Leaf Green  
11012 Gold Dust  
11013 Copper Glow  
11016 Vanilla

### **Artisan Color Line**

600 Azure  
603 Royal Blue  
604 Teal Green  
605 Sienna  
613 Plum

### **Original Color Line**

950 Clear

### **Medium**

**White MUD Kit** contains the following;

Stainless Steel Writing Tip  
Pastry Bag Coupler  
Disposable plastic applicator bag  
Rubber bands  
Storage Container with Sponge  
Basic Instructions for MUD

### **Brushes**

Margot's Miracle Brush for creating MUD flowers (included in MUD Kit)  
Margot's 10/0 script liner for adding all color

### **Surfaces**

10 - 2" square pieces of clear glass, cleaned well (no rubbing alcohol as it leaves an oily residue) float glass is used for all our samples  
Assorted small pieces of compatible glass for accents

### **Misc. Supplies**

A piece of **white paper** as it is easier to see what you are doing as you are applying color.  
10 Empty 1 oz jars with lids for storing mixed colors  
Water container  
Paper towels  
Small piece of screen or a sifting tool

Mix all your colors EXCEPT Leaf Green, Apple Green and Violet (we will be using these colors in their dry powder form) with Medium using a 1:1 ratio. You are looking for the consistency of melted ice cream. Set aside.

**Caution: Your imagination is going to be going at full speed as you work so be prepared for brain overload!**



**Marbling with Metallics** – This project uses only one piece of glass. Colors used – Vanilla, Copper Glow and Gold Dust.

Place individual, random sized drops of Vanilla off the end of the 10/0 script liner brush and cover about half the surface of the glass. Now drop in Copper Glow and Gold Dust in the remaining areas. Wipe your brush, form a nice, sharp tip and drag the tip back and forth horizontally working from the top edge of the glass to the bottom. DO NOT play in it! Whatever pattern you create will fire that exact same way. Set aside to dry.



**Control Your Bubbles** – Two pieces of glass used on this tile because the product we are using UGC Artisan Colors and they need to be used in-between layers of glass for the bubbles to form. We are going to control where the bubbles go by creating lines of color that do not touch one another. Colors used are Royal Blue, Azure and Teal Green applied in solid lines.

You can see by the photo that the different colors create different sized bubbles when fired. To do this one simply start in the middle of one of the pieces of glass with Teal Green and create three lines that do not touch. Work off to the right with Azure following whatever lines you created with the Teal Green. Same on the left, then go to Royal Blue. Fill in any spaces left with Azure.



**Control Your Bubbles and Create Texture** – Same application directions as the last piece but adding in Sienna and Plum Artisan Colors. This time you choose where you want color and what design you want on the glass. The difference on this piece is that we are going to cap the glass with a few smaller pieces. The result will show that under the added pieces of glass you will have bubbles. On the areas that are not capped you will see that you will have a darker color and texture from the same product. That is because the Artisan Line was developed to create bubbles between layers of glass. Added bonus is the great texture you can achieve by using it on top of the glass. When bottom layer is dry, place the smaller pieces on top in a pattern that pleases you.



**MUD Leaf and Artisan Color** – Two pieces of glass. Artisan Royal Blue on the bottom and MUD leaf design on the top piece.

This time we want random bubbles instead of controlled bubbles. Wet the surface of the glass with water. Apply Royal Blue in a streaky manner to the whole surface of the glass so that some areas have heavier color and others have a much thinner application. This will create the look in the photo. This NEVER comes out the same way twice so just “go with the flow” and have fun applying the color!

Create a MUD leaf on the top piece of glass using the Three Dot Fillers shown in the next photo. Set both pieces aside to dry.

**Three Dot Filler/Leaf/Snowflake/Daisy Petal** design elements (how’s that for a descriptive name!) are used for a ton of different things so they are a really good thing to practice. We will use them in this lesson as fillers and to create the leaf. They are created by making three dots with the one in the middle being higher than the other two. Flatten the MMB against the “palette” (the lid of your storage container) in the medium/water mix until it is totally flat and you can

see “corners” on each side of the brush end. You will be using just the very corner of the brush, holding it vertical, to touch the top of the center dot and exert just a small amount of pressure as you pull down forming the tail. Repeat for the other two and pull their tails into the first one. If you are doing flowers you would be pulling towards the center, if doing leaves you would be pulling towards/into the main stem. Remember not to exert much pressure on the brush as you want that tail to be thin, thin, thin!

For the leaf, create the three dots at the outer tip of each leaf segment. Then go back and add two dots out to the side and pull in towards the stem. Repeat for each leaf segment until you have a pleasing leaf!



Learning to Apply Solid Color and a Five Petal Flower – Two pieces of glass. On the bottom piece we will be using Dark Blue and the script liner. Puddle, push, pull is the method we will use to apply the color evenly. This means to drop a small “puddle” of color off the end of the brush onto the surface (the brush is only a tool for this!) then use the tip to push and pull the puddle out a bit. Keep repeating until surface is covered. To see if you have even coverage hold the piece up and look at it from underneath. If you can see through the color, the application is too thin.

On the top piece create the Five Petal Flower and tuck in some Three Dot Fillers between the petals. Set aside to dry.

**Basic Five Petal Flower.** In all of the art world this is the most common flower you will see. Every artist I know has used these flowers somewhere along the line even if they were just used as filler flowers. In MUDDING they are great for all over designs and learning their construction is the basis for most all of the other flowers I create, even detailed roses!

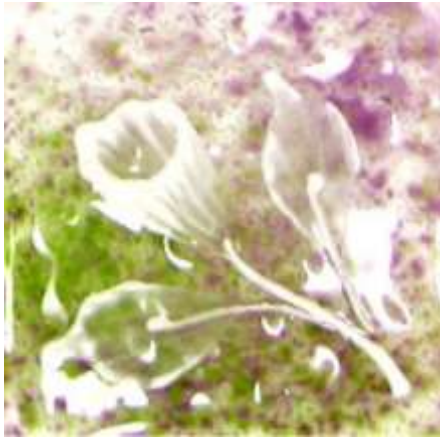


The photo shows the construction of the flower. Note that when you are forming the “Y” shape by turning the flower upside down, it is doing two things for you. It is creating two spaces for your last two petals so the flower shape comes out nicely instead of ending up with too much or too little space for the last petal and it is also not allowing you to create a “pinwheel” look to the flower as sometimes happens when you go around one petal after the other. You also want to be conscious of forming an arc to the top of each petal so they look natural and not like “teeth” unless of course you are creating Bachelor’s Button flowers and then that is fine. So you see – if you make a mistake just change your story!

Also, place a dot on your surface where the center will be – it is where the flower attaches to the stem, the calyx - you can see it in the second step. This is the direction you pull all the MUD to after you “dribble” it – that is the “catch and pull” part – you are *catching* the top edge of the MUD that was squeezed out of the applicator bag and *pulling* it towards the calyx where it attaches to the stem that goes down to the ground! The brush is dampened and flattened on your “palette” and you are just skimming the top of that edge – do not press down hard into the MUD – and then you are “pulling” with the brush still flattened so you keep your highlight and as the pressure lessens your shadow is created. This is also how the vein lines appear at the beginning of the petal and then fading away. Your flower size is determined

by how far out you start the first petal! Leave a bit of space between each petal for two reasons; 1) to make sure it doesn't end up looking like a blob of white on your surface and 2) in case you would like to add the three dot fillers between each petal as I show on the sample photo.

**Note: Create one petal at time! If you make a bunch of "dribbles" around the flower intending to then go back and complete the petal you will find the MUD has begun to set up and you will not be able to "catch and pull."**



**Sifted Color and MUD Rosebud** – Two pieces of glass. On the bottom piece apply a layer of Medium. Using the piece of screen, place a bit of dry powder Violet on the screen and then run your finger across the screen to sift the color onto the wet Medium (the Medium is used here to make the powdered colors stick to the surface of the glass). Heavier at the upper right, letting it fade off to the bottom left.

Dust off screen and repeat for Apple Green and then Leaf Green, allowing colors to come up a bit into the Violet.

Create the rosebud, (one petal of the Five Petal Flower with a second layer added to form the bowl), then the stem and then the leaves on the top piece of glass.

A Jen-Ken Bonnie Glo 15", 110V fiber kiln was used for all these tiles. However, at home both Margot and Dr. SJ use a combination of glass kilns and traditional ceramic kilns. The kiln just has to be able to go up to 1700°F. If firing in a ceramic kiln use the middle shelf as that is where the most accurate heat will be. Top shelf is hotter and the bottom shelf is cooler so you can use that to create different looks to your pieces. UGC products fire in the range of 1425°F to 1550°F on glass but can fire much hotter on other surfaces.

Because all of the glass used in class was double strength float glass and most of these tiles have two pieces of glass we used the following schedule in the Bonnie Glo kilns and have given complete firing directions. If you are using a different type of glass or thinner glass you will have to adjust your firing schedule. This just gives you a starting point.

This is the schedule of segments that we are using for this project:

SEGMENT 1: 750/1525/10

SEGMENT 2: 9999/1000/10.

SEGMENT 3: 300/850/20.

SEGMENT 4: 9999/80/1

The length of time for the firing will be determined on how full of glass the kiln will be loaded. It takes the longest time to cool down and you want to be able to place your hands on the sides of the kiln and it be barely warm or cool is even better!

Any of these designs would make great full sized tiles for home installation. Custom glass tiles are very expensive to purchase and you now have the secret to producing your own custom tiles!

The Artisan pieces, because of their translucent nature would be wonderful anywhere light could be coming through them and are just as easy to create in larger sizes as panels.

The MUD designs can be used on both kiln fired and air dried pieces. Great technique for faux wood carving!

We hope you have enjoyed creating all these fused glass samples and hope you are inspired to add glass to your artistic endeavors.

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