

Artist Gail Smith

Encaustic-painting with wax

Encaustic painting is an ancient technique, dating back to the Greeks, who used wax to caulk ship hulls. The word encaustic originates from the Greek word enkaustikos which means to burn in. It is a process of applying hot wax colors to a surface for the creation of images and decorations, etc. There are a number of application techniques. Roman Egyptian used these techniques in their wax portraits.

Encaustic art has regained popularity since the 1990s with people using electric irons, hotplates and heated stylus on different surfaces including card, paper and even pottery. The iron makes producing a variety of artistic patterns easier. The medium is not limited to just simple designs; it can be used to create complex paintings, just as in other media such as oil and acrylic. Although technically difficult to master, attractions of this medium for contemporary artists are its dimensional quality and luminous color.

