

3 July 2017

Explain and compare the two major divisions of drawing materials or media.

Almost any medium can be used in drawing. Two major divisions in drawing mediums are dry mediums and fluid mediums. Both types of mediums are highly varied and can be personalized by the artist.

One dry medium that especially caught my interest is metalpoint, or silverpoint, a term which can be used interchangeably with metalpoint. Silverpoint was used from the middle ages into the early 1500s, until the discovery of graphite. It was widely known as silver point because silver was a popular metal to use. Today, few artists train in the art of metalpoint, probably because the metals can be very expensive. In this case alloys do exist and can be used with differing results. Today they make almost like typical mechanical pencils that support so called leads of differing metals, up to gold, although, like I mentioned, this can quickly get very expensive. It requires a surface to be prepared with a coating ground, like a base layer. It is a difficult medium to work with, because it is not easily erased. So the artist cannot easily correct mistakes. Other dry mediums include charcoal, which is possibly one of the oldest mediums, going back to prehistorical times; graphite like we have today in pencils; colored pencils; chalk, pastel, and crayons. Interestingly, a crayon can be any drawing material in stick form, so charcoal, chalk, and pastels are crayons, as are the wax crayons like the famous Crayola crayons.

Fluid mediums are primarily ink with a pen, brush and ink, or anything and ink. It can be fingertip and ink. Ink also has a history thousands of years old. Some of the oldest ink types are India and China ink, a type of ink still very popular today in the world of calligraphy.

Both dry and fluid mediums are used by artists, often mixed in a single work of art. For example, Michelangelo's Madonna and Child (c. 1495) was drawn in pencil and red chalk on paper. [<http://www.wga.hu/art/m/michelan/4drawing/07/05virgin.jpg>]. This is known as mixed media, and it's very popular to use.

Dry Mediums: Metalpoint, late middle ages to early 1500s, until the discovery of graphite.
Pencil. Colored pencil. Charcoal. Chalk, pastel, and crayon.

Fluid Mediums: Pen and ink. Brush and ink.