Inkjet Transfers Using Alcohol

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My thanks to Dorothy Gantenbein for teaching me these techniques!

Supplies:

- Hand Sanitizer such as Purell but any brand will do (some brands work better than others, so experiment to see which you like best)
- Apollo Transparency Film *(not the quick dry or multi-purpose film!!)* or OCE film
- Image(s)
- Paper / media to transfer to (may be any paper from rice paper to watercolor paper... your imagination is the only limit) can even be fabric... but watch out for sizing, you may need to wash the fabric first. My preference is Rice Paper or Hot Press Watercolor paper.
- Foam brush (for hand sanitizer technique)
- Brayer (roller) optional, wooden spoon, tongs, and/or fingers
- Piece of Plexiglas to use under transferred image (at least as big as your largest image)
- For Floated in alcohol technique, you also need:
  - 91% alcohol - e.g., isopropyl alcohol *(not 97%)* (I have heard you can use vodka or Everclear but I have not tried them). We had bad results with 70% so, I would avoid using it too.
  - Bin or pan to fill with alcohol (e.g., Pyrex cake pan (don't re-use for cakes!)) (At least as big as or bigger than the largest image you wish to work with). Avoid trays with big gaps in the bottom (e.g., typical photo trays) since they will use a lot more alcohol.

Prepare Images:

- Select image(s) to be transferred
- Edit as desired in Photoshop until you are happy with your results
- Flip your image horizontally so it will appear correctly when you make your transfer (using the Top Menu: Image - Image Rotation - Flip Canvas Horizontal) - *this is especially important if there are any words in your image or they will appear backwards*
- Using an Inkjet printer, print image on the Apollo or OCE film:
  - Be sure to load paper into the printer with the rough side toward the print heads (so the ink will stick to the transparency) – what side is up varies by the printer you use
  - Print your image. I use the Glossy paper profiles (no actual profiles are available for the Apollo or OCE) so I use Pro 3800 PGPP (Premium Glossy Photo Paper on my 3800 printer) but you
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should experiment to see which profiles work best for you. The key is to lay down the proper amount of ink (not too much and not too little).

Hand Sanitizer Technique:

Place paper or substrate you will be transferring to on your piece of Plexiglas - top side up

Coat paper with the hand sanitizer using the foam brush (or brayer, if you like that effect)

- You may coat the paper as thinly or thickly as you wish
- Play around with how you paint your edges (where the image will end) and the effect of using different thicknesses of hand sanitizer to see the different results
- I like to "paint" the hand sanitizer in an area that is smaller than my image, that way I get nice jagged edges since my image extends past the coated area
- With thin papers such as rice paper, I like to mush the paper around with the foam brush to get interesting fold, wrinkles...

Flip the image onto the coated paper - image side down

Use the brayer, spoon and/or your fingers to transfer the ink from the film onto your coated paper by gently rubbing the back of the transparency

Slightly peel up a corner of the transparency to check to see if the transfer is working - if not:

Lie back down and continue to work with your fingers, brayer and/or spoon

When the image appears to be completely transferred:

Gently lift the film starting at one corner

If you have resistance, tears... start lifting again from another corner

Floated in Alcohol Technique:

- Prepare your image as with the Hand Sanitizer Method. Note: I prefer to trim the transparency to the edges of the image so I don’t get extra Gum Arabic (the medium used to keep the ink on the transparency) on the edges of my print.

- Fill pan to about 1 - 1 1/2" of pure alcohol (enough to insure that the transparency is covered completely with the alcohol)

- Slip image into the alcohol - image side up

- Rock to insure that your image is fully covered with alcohol (the more you rock - the more crackles will appear in your transferred image - which I really like)

- Leave your image in the alcohol for about 5 minutes or until the image starts to lift off the plastic backing (you can see this around the edges) – Shorter time for smaller images (<8.5 x 11)
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- Gently remove the image from the alcohol using the edge of the transparency
  - Hold the transparency by the edge and let the extra alcohol drain off
    (When you let the alcohol drain by corner - you can get interesting effects on the edges - so I rotate to drain all 4 corners). You may use tongs to do this if you wish though it may be a bit slippery

- Place paper or substrate you will be transferring to on your piece of Plexiglas - top side up

- Lay image face down on your paper, fabric...

- Rub the back of the transparency gently with your brayer, fingers, and/or spoon...

- Again, you can check a corner (gently lift it up) to see if the image is fully transferred - if not - keep rubbing

- If nothing is transferred, you may place the image back in the alcohol for more time

- Optional: You may squish the edges and the image around a bit to get a different effect

Allow to dry completely

Optional Coating: Some folks coat the dried images with a thin coat of Dorland’s wax, but I prefer to leave them as they are.

Have fun!!

Note: there is an inkjet transfer’s list server on Yahoo that may be of interest:

Inkjet_transfers

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/inkjet_transfers/