

Great Barrier Reef

by Michelle Roberts ©

Materials Required:

Matisse Background Colours

- ◆ Turquoise
- ◆ Ritz Blue

Matisse Mediums

- ◆ Faux Finish and Marbling Gel
- ◆ Water Based Antiquing Medium

Matisse Flow Formula Paints -

- ◆ Payne's Grey
- ◆ Southern Ocean Blue
- ◆ Cobalt Turquoise
- ◆ Pthalo Blue
- ◆ Pthalo Green
- ◆ Aqua
- ◆ Titanium White
- ◆ Diox Purple
- ◆ Magenta
- ◆ Cadmium Yellow

Brushes -

- ◆ 1" Flat brush (basecoating)
- ◆ No 10/0 Liner
- ◆ No 3 Round
- ◆ ¼" angle shader (or larger)
- ◆ #6 Filbert
- ◆ #8 Smooshing (Smudge Tint)
- ◆ ¼" Stippler
- ◆ 1/8" Stippler

Equipment -

- ◆ White Saral Paper
- ◆ 600 grit Wet and Dry Sandpaper
- ◆ Stylus
- ◆ Kneadable Eraser
- ◆ Hair Dryer
- ◆ 2 cheap sponges (round)
- ◆ 2 milk lids or similar – for mediums
- ◆ Final Varnish, Gloss Finish (Matisse MM14)

Preparation

1) Using the 1" short flat brush, basecoat the wooden inside piece with 2-3 coats of Turquoise basecoat, sanding after each coat except the final one with 600 or 800 grit Wet and Dry sandpaper.

hint: If the board is 'furry' I recommend basecoating first with a coat of Transparent Gesso. Especially if there are routed edges.

hint: To find out if you've sanded enough, gently rub your hand over your piece to feel how smooth it is,

hint: Do not put your paint on too thickly; it will crack as it dries and you will have to sand it back. If your paint is thick (in the tub), add some Acrylic Painting Medium to it first and stir it in well.

hint: Always basecoat your piece at least twice. The first coat will seal the piece, the second will get a better, and smoother, coverage

hint: Don't sand before basecoating, unless there's little burrs on the routed edge. The craftwood will become furry if you do.

2) On a paper plate or other disposable item, squirt out generous amounts of Pthalo Blue, Southern Ocean Blue, Pthalo Green, Aqua and Titanium White separately.

3) In a small dish put out some Faux Finish and Marbling gel (FFMG).

4) Sponge the entire surface with FFMG.

hint: If you are doing a multiple surface, try to work as much as you can together, to make the pattern continuous.

hint: Don't be stingy with the gel. You don't want it to dry out before you get to use it.

5) Pinching your second sponge, dip it into the FFMG and then pick up Pthalo Blue and sponge into the areas as shown on the pattern. Do the same with the other colours.

6) Once you have all the colours on your piece, use your 'clean' sponge to gently soften the edges of the colours until they are blended on the piece. If you need to, you can pick up extra colour and work it into the piece if it needs it. You should end up with a 'glow' from the right hand side.

hint: When blending these, start from the bottom of the piece and work your way

up to the lighter area, carrying a bit of the blues and greens over the aqua and white.

hint: Make sure you pounce over the areas dividing each colour

hint: Once you have it blended enough, pat the sponge down the lighter area, and carry a little of this light colour down the piece in a slight swirl at the bottom of the triangle (tornado shaped)

7) Dry thoroughly.

8) Using the Saral Paper, transfer the pattern onto the board.

Painting

Dolphins

1) Using the ¼" angle brush, block in the dolphins using Titanium White: Pthalo Blue: Payne's Grey (3: ½ :2)

2) Dry

3) Using the smooshing brush, pick up a little Payne's Grey lightened slightly with the original mix and buff it into the shaded areas of the dolphin – refer to pattern/picture for the areas you need to shade.

4) Wipe the paint off the brush, and pick up a little Titanium White with the original mix and buff in highlights on the dolphins.

5) Wipe paint off brush and pick up straight Titanium White to add extra highlights if needed.

6) Dry well

7) If you have strayed anywhere when painting the dolphins, cut back using Payne's Grey. This is done by painting Payne's Grey as a float behind the dolphin, but you come over the area that needs to be smaller.

8) Add hit and miss liner work to the bottom of the dolphins using Payne's Grey.

9) Add hit and miss outlines to the top of the dolphins, if required, using the original mix.

10) Using Payne's Grey, and the liner brush, add eyes and mouth. The mouth can be further emphasised with a touch of the original mix.

11) Add a small sparkle to the eyes with a dot of Titanium White.

12) If you need to, strengthen / sharpen shadows on dolphins by floating dark mix (Payne's Grey and original colour) using the ¼" angle shader.

13) If you want, you can paint a very light wash of Pthalo Blue, or Southern Ocean Blue over

each of the dolphins. Be careful! These colours are strong, so you only need a little bit!

14) We will return to these dolphins at the end to add the water sparkle.

Plate Coral

1) Using the #6 Filbert, loosely block in the coral with Southern Ocean Blue.

2) Using a dirty brush, pick up Pthalo Blue on one side, and paint in under each plate (roughly – not too neat)

3) Dry.

4) Using the filbert, load with Southern Ocean Blue and wiggle the tip into Titanium White.

5) Start from the outside edge of each plate, wiggle the brush down on the piece so it fans out then lift up towards the shadows of the plate. Make sure the areas of lighter colour do not meet.

hint: Adding a curve to your stroke – see pattern for direction – will give you more of a shelf look. Try to make the stroke a comma stroke with a sharper hook at the beginning (like a slightly off figure 7).

6) Reload and keep working over the whole plate coral. Keep the brush loading irregular to give texture to the coral.

hint: Be careful NOT to make these strokes too even. Do this by painting over the previous stroke as you move along, and /or coming back a little later and adding the highlight stroke between each stroke and just up a little bit higher than the original starting point.

7) You can add more Titanium White to the brush and add extra highlights if needed. Add some highlights to the top of the coral piece.

Seaweed

1) Using the filbert brush, load one side with Southern Ocean Blue and the other with Cadmium Yellow Medium.

2) Starting at the top paint the seaweed by starting with a tip, pushing the brush out and pulling down at the same time. Lift the brush and as you are lifting (keep pulling down) flip it over to give the idea of twisting seaweed.

hint: There is a knack to this stroke – practice it before starting on your piece.

hint: When practicing, start the brush on the chisel (so the bristles are straight up

and down). Pull it down a little, so that you get a small line. Tip the brush over to one side so the yellow goes towards the outside and keep pulling down. Lift the brush to its original position (still pulling down) and then tip the brush over to the other side so that the yellow is to the other side, and continue pulling down. This should give you a thin- thick-thin-thick line. Then try and add a bit of a wave into it to make the seaweed float.

- 3) Do some of the front seaweed using Pthalo Green and Cad Yellow as well
- 4) Use the liner brush to strengthen some of the yellow areas if it needs it.
- 5) Dry.

Coral on floor

- 1) Using the 1/4" stipple brush, loaded with Cobalt Turquoise (base of brush) and Cad Yellow Medium (top of brush) stipple in small hill of coral to the right.
- 2) Using the same brush, pick up Pthalo blue and a touch of Cad Yellow and stipple in under plate coral and move slightly up the design to give the impression of a sea floor.
- 3) With 1/8" stipple brush, use Ritz Blue (top of brush) and Diox Purple (base of brush) stipple in purple coral.
- 4) Load brush with Ritz blue and Titanium White (top of brush) and stipple in highlights.
- 5) Pick up a little Magenta with the white in parts.
- 6) Pink Coral – Use ¼" stipple brush, roughly stipple in pink coral with Magenta and Titanium White (tip of brush). Make sure there is separate areas of the coral by not blending down the white, but rather dabbing it in randomly.

Green Turtle

- 1) Using the filbert brush, block in the turtle using a mixture of Southern Ocean Blue and Payne's Grey.
- 2) Paint small background fish the with the same mixture, using the liner brush

Blue Starfish

- 1) Using the liner brush, paint in using Cobalt Turquoise.
- 2) With a dirty brush, pick up a little Titanium White and add highlights.

Sunlight and reflections

- 1) Brush Water based Antiquing medium over the right hand corner, covering the heads of the dolphins.
- 2) With the filbert brush, pick up some Aqua, and pull down lightly from the right corner, towards the dolphins.

hint: This is to be the sunlight coming through the surface of the water – so it needs to come from the top, and towards the heads of the dolphins.

- 3) With the liner brush, pick up some watery titanium white and add reflections to dolphin's heads. If too strong, pat lightly with your finger. These are basically wobbly 'Y's connected up.

Finishing Off

- 1) Stand back and look at your piece. Add any extra highlights/shading required.
- 2) Varnish, using a Gloss Varnish. I recommend the Final Varnish, Gloss Finish (Matisse MM14), applied with multiple layers to achieve a high gloss.



Copyright 2002 Michelle Roberts
Matisse Consultant

This design is for your personal use only. While I don't mind you reproducing or enlarging it for personal use, it may not be reproduced for sale or to lend to another person. You may paint this design for yourself, as gifts and donations, and for sale at local markets, but you may not mass reproduce it for profit.

I hope you enjoy painting this as much as I did.



