Pearl at Home

This art project is designed for family fun, for suggested ages of 10 and up to be completed at home with easily-accessible art materials.

MISTY MOUNTAINS

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MATERIALS

- **Substrate:** Canvas board or canvas paper
- **Pencil and eraser**
- **Paint palette** (can use a foam or plastic plate)
- **Acrylic paint:**
  - Titanium White, Payne’s Gray (or Mars Black), Burnt Umber
- **Brushes:**
  - Assorted sizes including a fan brush, a stippling brush, and a 1-inch chisel brush
- **Optional:**
  - Sponges: one smooth and one rougher (more like a sea sponge)
  - Black color pencil

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Chinese brush painting is an ancient art that features simple brushstrokes and techniques, similar to those used in calligraphy. Traditionally, these paintings were created with brushes dipped in black ink or colored pigments. In this project, we’ll take inspiration from Chinese landscape brush paintings but use materials that you may already have at home – acrylic paint, brushes, and sponges.

DIRECTIONS

1. Find a few examples of Chinese brush painting that you’d like to emulate.
2 Draw a few simple lines on your canvas to outline your major forms, such as mountains. Erase any dark lines.

3 Add a double thumb-sized puddle of Titanium White to your palette, as well as thumb-sized puddles of both Payne’s Gray and Burnt Umber.

Mix those colors to get 2-3 grays for your sky. Use a large soft brush to blend them into a misty cloud background, which will include the spaces around your mountains. Keep the grays handy as you work.

Allow some dark areas to be a bit more brown than gray.

4 Stir Payne’s Gray and Burnt Umber together, but do not try for a homogenous color.

Use a 1-inch chisel brush to outline and blend the mountain farthest away into the misty fog at its base. The stippling brush, fan brush, and sponges help with this process.

You can make it a bit lighter, but that was not always done in traditional Chinese brush paintings.

TIP: At any time, you may need to let that area dry before adding layers of paint.
Do the same process for any middle ground mountains, adding some wisps of mist over the mountain.

As you work, readjust the mist.

Try to make the foreground mountain a bit more sharply outlined and rugged than the others.

Readjust your misty separations between each mountain layer.
7 Adjust your dark mountains if you need to and use a sharply pointed round brush to create a tiny waterfall on the furthest mountainside.

Use a stippling brush to add more dimension and interest to your mist.

8 Start your trees by drawing in JUST the trunks and largest branches. Use a small pointy round brush to paint those areas. Use JUST the tip to make a FEW smaller branches.

Use the fan brush with paint ONLY on the very tips of the bristles to create the mung pine needles. Remember they are far away, so super fine detail is not needed.

(See our example on the next page)
Once the trees and background are completely dry, use the black color pencil to add a FEW fine branches and a FEW tufts of needles on the trees.