ANTIFUSANT TECHNIQUES

TECHNIQUE COMPATIBILITY	
WITH HEATFIX DYES	**WITH STEAMFIX DYES**
A. YES, V.G.	YES, EXC.
B. YES, V.G.	YES, EXC.

Antifusant is simply a coat of thickening solution which is applied to fabric and dried prior to being overpainted with dye. The purpose of antifusant is to control the spreading of liquid dye when it's painted on fabric and therefore make sharp detailed dye paintings possible. Painting on fabric coated with antifusant is like painting on paper.

MAKING ANTIFUSANT

For protein fibre fabric to be overpainted with STEAMFIX DYES, the antifusant recipe for 1 litre is:
Make a slurry with 30g of GUAR GUM plus 30g of methylated spirits. Thoroughly mix this slurry into 940g of water. Leave the mixture to fully thicken for at least half an hour.

For cellulose fibre fabric and all fibre types to be overpainted with HEATFIX DYES, the antifusant recipe for 1 litre is:
Make a slurry with 27.5g of DYE THICKENER plus30g of methylated spirits. Thoroughly mix this slurry into 942.5g of water. Leave the mixture to fully thicken for at least half an hour.

APPLYING ANTIFUSANT

1. Lay the ironed fabric face down on a flat hard surface like glass, perspex or formica which itself is sitting on top of the blowheater table explained in TECH. INFO. SH. 3. The fabric should be in all over contact with the surface beneath.

2. Apply the antifusant to the back of the fabric with a large stiff bristled paint brush, a roller or a squeegee. The hard surface beneath will permit sufficient downward pressure to allow the fabric to be evenly and fully impregnated with a coat of antifusant. Heat from a blowheater aimed up at the hard flat surface will adhere the fabric to the upperside of the surface, during drying.

3. When the antifusant is bone dry carefully peel the fabric off the hard surface. This method reliably produces very flat even antifusant sized fabric. It can now be put on a stretcher frame ready for painting. (Stretcher frames explained in TECH. INFO. SH. 4).

When overpainting dry antifusant coated fabric with liquid dye, I always prefer to do it while the fabric is being warmed from beneath, because the main objective is to produce sharp undiffused outlines and so quick drying further sharpens the painting. This work is best done on the blowheater table. Colours

should be bone dry before being overpainted. This maximises sharp definition. The blowheater will speed up these drying times so painting won't be longwinded and boring.

ANTIFUSANT PAINTING TECHNIQUES

A. **Block printing. stamping and stencilling** with slightly thickened dye yields very sharp images on antifusant coated fabric.

- For the stamp try: sponges, rope coils, crushed rag, tree bark, crushed leather, shaped potatoes, (sliced sections of cauliflower, broccoli and cabbage), lino cuts, rubber stamps etc.

- For the stamp pad: use about 6 layers of fine cotton on a flat plate. The cotton is saturated with thickened dye but not flooded because a pond of dye will clog the fine detail of the stamp when it's pushed into the cotton pad during dye loading.

- The dye: should be thickened by pouring 2-3% DYE THICKENER into the vortex produced by vigorously stirring the dye. Leave this mixture 6 hours to fully thicken before utilisation.

- Before stamping or stencilling etc. the antifusant coated fabric, I prefer to have previously painted or sprayed a pastel or light coloured background onto the fabric. After this background is bone dry remove the fabric from the stretcher frame and tape the fabric by its edges to a flat hard surface that will provide an even allover support for stamping or stencilling upon.

- The actual stamping or stencilling is best done aided by the blowheater for rapid drying of the prints. This can best be done on the blowheater table. A blowheater can also be suspended above the print aimed down on to it for further drying efficiency. As previously mentioned, quick drying = sharp detail.

- Proceed with fixation and rinsing as usual when painting is complete.

Notes

- When printing cotton it is more efficient to put the 5% COTTONFIX or 3.5% soda ash into the antifusant rather than into the thickened dye. This will allow the thickened 'C' or 'PC'dye's lifespan to remain unshortened by alkali inclusion. Also the thickened dye can then be used to print fibres other than cotton in future. So it is good policy to load the antifusant with the required alkali and keep the dye as it is supplied.

- Nowadays many excellent readymade stencils are available for crafts and home decoration or they can be made from folded cut outs. Spray the back of the stencil with repositionable adhesive (e.g. "Scotch Super 77") to hold it flat down on the fabric during colouring. The thickened dye colouring can be applied, by sponge, stiff brush or spray, to the stencil openings.

B. **Dye run technique** on antifused fabric

- As in A above, I prefer to begin by painting a pastel or light coloured background on the antifusant coated fabric.

- When the background is bone dry, spot or paint a molten wax design on top of the background. Normally I avoid wax as a resist because to remove it properly from the fabric usually requires solvent however when wax is applied on top of antifusant it can be flaked off easily after it's done its resist job, before fixation.

- With an eye dropper drop about a dozen drops of dye on top of the antifused waxed fabric. Quickly lift the frame and tip it side to side and back and forth to induce the dye droplets to make rivulet runs on the fabric. Dry the resultant run pattern bone dry on the blowheater then add more droplets, perhaps of a different colour, and quickly induce them to run back and forth. Dry this bone dry etc. etc. until a pleasing pattern is built up. It is not so important to dry the painting bone dry after each colour unless you want the rivulets of dye to cross without diffusion.

- Alternatives to doing this run pattern over the antifusant and waxed coated fabric are:

  - splatter, flick or spray the dye on
  - sponge, rag or narrow roller the dye on etc.

- When the painting is complete, proceed by flaking the wax off then fixing and rinsing as usual.

Notes

- The blowheater cannot be too hot or the wax will melt and run, but perhaps this would add to the pattern.

- Embossed rollers that give a patterned imprint would be more interesting than plain ones to apply the dye with.