

# Tips and Techniques for Applying Z-Gel

*It is recommended that the first time you use Z-Gel that you test it on each type of art format. It is best and most widely used with printed offset reproductions, (fine art posters & prints).*

## OFFSET PRINTS AND POSTERS:

Mount to matboard or illustration board first. Apply Z-Gel directly to the art surface with brush or roller. No pre-treatment is typically required. Occasionally a pink cast will appear on some offset prints. It is usually not noticed in the image area of the artwork, but in the overspread of the white margin. This bleeding is not typically a problem and should not be of concern.

## PHOTOGRAPHS:

Photographs should be treated first by applying a laminate overcoat or by spraying the surface of the photograph with a fixative. We strongly recommend that you do a test on a smaller photograph to achieve best results.

## GICLEES:

*Giclees should always be tested first!* If water soluble inks have been used in the printing process, bleeding may occur. Many artists have enhanced their limited reproduction artwork by adding to selected areas of their works to create a better visual value.

## MOUNTING:

Mount artwork to hard substrate, preferably matboard or illustration board. If larger than 8" x 10", it is recommended to remount to foamcore for a more rigid product. If larger pieces are **not** remounted to a second substrate, an inward bow or warp will occur. If desired, mounting to 3/16" gatorboard can be used as a one step process. Once your artwork has been mounted, apply Z-Gel directly to the artwork as directed.

## DRY TIME:

Z-Gel is a water soluble product and is flexible in nature. In normal atmospheric conditions, (65-80 degrees) set time is five minutes, and typically dry to the touch occurs in 25-35 minutes. Once Z-Gel has dried clear, you may apply a second coat, or highlight additional areas within the image itself.

## FITTING INTO FRAME:

It is recommended to allow at least two hours prior to fitting the artwork into the frame. This is to allow full cure time after gelling the art, and prevent the art from sticking to the rabbet of the frame when removed at a later date.

## BRUSH STROKES:

Brush strokes can be applied with a foam or camel hair brush. We suggest the 1" foam brush because of the different techniques it allows with a single tool. The broad surface area allows for quick spreading of gel, and the sharp edge can detail out the gel process. Try not to disturb an area already gelled that has set longer than five minutes. **S-STROKES** is a swoop of the brush in the same direction consistently across the entire art image, recommended for tightly detailed imagery. **MIXED UP STROKES** are a combination using the roller by first applying a layer of gel and then using a 1" foam brush with added gel to highlight areas. **OUTLINING TECHNIQUE** is used to mimic the brush stroke of the art image. Mix the gel from thick to thin to create an artistic look.



## ROLLER METHOD:

Apply the gel to the roller, start at the top of the art and pull the roller towards you in a downward, slow and deliberate motion to spread the gel in a feathered, uneven texture. Avoid pushing the roller back and forth or quick motions. This will cause air bubbles.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER:

Avoid applying gel in high, sharp peaks, or dabbing the brush in an up and down motion. Make sure you cover the entire surface of your artwork. Use a **dry brush** (do not water brush before using, as it will trap foam into the surface). Test your methods before charging a fee for your gel services, and use at your own risk. **HAVE FUN!**

