

Spring Into Mixed Media | April 18-24, 2027

Greenville Arms, Hudson Valley

All skill levels.

Explore botanical and floral forms as a starting point for layered mixed media work, using acrylic paint and paper collage to build rich, expressive surfaces. Working from plant imagery, you can stay representational or begin to stylize and abstract shapes into new, personal motifs. Each day begins with a short slideshow for inspiration, followed by focused exercises to loosen the hand and sharpen observation, and demonstrations showing how paint and collage merge into cohesive compositions.

At the center of the workshop is a simple idea: lean into what you love. By noticing what draws your eye—in nature, in color, and in the work of other artists—you can begin to identify what you want more of in your own work. With ample open studio time to build, revise, and explore, along with optional evening sharing circles, this is a chance to immerse yourself in possibility and come away with a stronger sense of your visual direction and a deeper understanding of your process.

Instructor Bio

Dar James is a full-time mixed media artist, writer, and illustrator of six children's picture books. A lifelong teacher and workshop leader, she trained with Golden Acrylics and is a Silver Brush Educator. Based in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley, she exhibits regionally, leads annual art retreats, and runs an online artists membership focused on deepening color understanding and building a strong foundation in acrylic through experimentation and play. She has been a featured instructor for Drew Steinbrecher's Collage Maker's Summit, Este MacLeod's Colori Flori, and Lifebook by Willowing and Sonheim Productions.

About her work, Dar says: "Color is always my way in. Each mark leads to the next in what I call 'rocks to sand,' a process of building form and meaning through details. My imagery begins in nature but lives in imagination. To be an artist is to live in wonder, and I love helping others find their way there!"

www.darsworld.com

Supplies:

[See my Amazon list.](#)

- One 11x14" OR 12x12" wood panel substrate, whichever size you prefer. Any brand is fine, I will be using 1.5" deep [DaVinci's Pro Birch Wood Panels](#). You can also find a variety of wood painting panels on Amazon and at Michaels.
- Gesso (either white or black, or both if you wish)
- One pad Canson XL Watercolor Paper in 9x12"
- Your **Fluid acrylic** palette (strongly encourage a minimum of primary colors, white and black; bring what you like to use and anything you'd like to experiment with in color studies and exercises!)
- Your **Heavy Body acrylic** palette, same suggestion as above.
- Collage paper that you already have in sheets or scraps **plus BLANK sheets of good paper** to use for making collage paper along the way. I suggest Yasutomo Sketch Pad ("kazo"), Abaca "teabag" Paper, OR "Toddy" brand cold brew filter bags which are AMAZING for using as collage paper, especially their wet strength. See the Amazon List.
- Copy/sketch paper or your art journal to use for notes, exercises and practicing
- A selection of ANY mark making tools you like to use: Pencils, Fineliners, crayons, markers, Sharpies, pastels, Poscas, Pintars calligraphy pens, Dot stylus tools, etc. [You can get ideas from my Amazon List.](#)
- Soft Gel Gloss
- Matte Medium (or Super Matte Medium)

- Scissors
- Palette knife (standard is fine, as well as “special effect” knives if you have them)
- Brushes: A variety including one larger flat/round, several *smaller and medium* paintbrushes in flats and rounds, a smaller angled brush (1/8 and 1/4) and at least one “liner” and “fan.” *Bring any other brushes that you have and like to use—perhaps treat yourself to a special effects brush that you’ve never tried.* I am a Silverbrush Educator and have begun a designated [Amazon List just for Brushes and Applicators.](#)
- Roll of paper towels
- Container(s) for your water
- Palette paper or tray for paints

OPTIONAL:

- **High Flow acrylics or “acrylic inks”** in any colors you like or have
- SoFlat Matte acrylics by GOLDEN are OPTIONAL but I am very fond of them and use them often.
- Calligraphy pen and/or Fineline applicator for drawing with High Flow
- Roll of “Painter’s Tape” if you like the edges of paper to have a clean border.
- ANY gels or pastes you have or enjoy for mixed media work (Tar Gel, Glass Bead Gel, Mica Flake, Coarse Alumina, etc.)
- Headphones if you need to listen to music while you work. I will play music sometimes but will also provide moments of quiet, focused time.