



## About the ink

I learned to draw at an art school in the sixties using a viscous brown drawing ink. After graduate school I gradually drifted away from drawing per se, working in theater, photography, and eventually computer graphics. Then a few years ago my interests brought me back to drawing, so I went out to try to find some of that brown drawing ink. I looked all over - but couldn't find it. I bought a bottle of every kind of brown ink I could find, and found them all to be watery, and in tones that ranged from blackish brown to pink. The only thick inks were acrylic which were somewhat opaque. And none of them were light fast. So I decided to somehow make my own brown ink. Having mixed chemicals in photography and having made scenic paint in theater (from glue sizing and powdered pigment), the idea didn't daunt me. I did extensive research and eventually found some European ingredients that were suitable for my purpose. After some experimentation for proper proportions, and designing my manufacturing process, I came up with a ink very close to what I remembered that "sixties ink" to be like. Encouraged by many fellow professional artists (who all loved the ink) I decided to go into business. I started ten months ago and I already have thirty wholesale accounts - and growing.

People always ask me, "What is unique about your ink?"

First of all it is entirely water soluble, it has completely naturally derived ingredients, having an almost neutral pH of 7.9. It has a slight viscosity (from a water based natural binder) which makes it hold well in a brush or hand dipped pen. It has an extremely fine brown pigmentation which lets you build a drawing by overlapping layers of washes. In this aspect it is like watercolor, but it comes in a consistent concentrated liquefied form that can be diluted for lighter tones. It is made from a naturally derived (proprietary) substance (not walnuts \*) which is naturally this color (it's not just dried water). And it is light fast.

This ink has a unique rich warm color, and makes distinctive crisp marks on paper. Areas or lines made directly from the bottle produce dense, almost shiny marks. It has a certain "gutsyness" to it. Because it contains no shellac, varnish, or acrylic it allows you to sustain longer drawings by softening up dark overworked areas of the page with clear water, and lifting off the excess pigment with a paper towel. This ink has been approved by a certified toxicologist, and has its own MSDS (Materials Safety Data Sheet).

People also ask me if my ink can be used in fountain pens. It works well, but you should not store the ink in the pen. The binder and the fine pigmentation that give it its unique qualities will clog a fountain pen if let to sit for a time. You should also, after use, dip the pen tip in clear water and wipe it dry.

--Tom Norton

\* Real Walnut ink, used for centuries, is not only very acidic, but it's also not light fast. Furthermore it's a black ink that only turns brown after a hundred years or so.