

Semi-Talented

BY JULIAN "MR. J" BRAET



Jazzin' up the highways with cool letters.

About the author: Mr. J owns Mr. J's Signs and Graphics in Lyndhurst, N.J., and is the creator of Xcaliber striping brushes and preservative. For more methods to the madness, check out Mr. J's three-volume Video Classroom series, Jersey Style Airbrush & Lettering. Youse can send questions about "Joisey Style" lettering to Mr. J at JXCAL@aol.com.

I LOVE TRUCKS. I also love the fact that most of my clients have only one or two vehicles. I know that this doesn't sound like a good way for a business to grow, but I really like the idea of being able to try out new layouts, different lettering and painting techniques.

The lettering on these doors seems like a lot of work, but since it's only a couple of letters it actually went rather quickly. This job was a lot of fun to do and took approximately a day and a half to complete.

This particular job could have also been done using vinyl by priming the vinyl first, then airbrushing the vinyl using lettering enamel followed by a coat of clear. Wait at least six hours, or more, to apply a clear coat.

I recommend that the customer wait at least 48 hours before washing the vehicle (no power washing), and follow up with a coat of *high-quality* wax applied by hand.



This is our project vehicle, a 1998 Peterbilt cab with an oil tank on the back of the chassis. The tank was already lettered, so we only had to concern ourselves with the doors and the hood. I suggested that we add some graphics to complement the truck and the owner agreed. I made some rough sketches to get a feel for the look that the customer wanted. I made an appointment and told him that I would have a layout that he could approve on the day of his appointment.



The customer approved this layout, which for the most part was generated in my computer. Next, I cut out a paint mask for both doors and for truck numbers. The word "Trucking" is drawn out on paper and pounced on later.



The doors and the areas where the numbers will go is now masked off using auto body masking tape and paper (use only the best brands). Mixing up some 1 Shot Ivory lettering enamel, I add a couple of drops of hardener, a drop of "Smoothie" (fish eye eliminator) and a couple of drops of Hi-Temp reducer. To apply the color I use a 1" brown truck lettering flat (a foam roller or foam brush can also be used). Allow this to tack up for about 10-15 minutes before any airbrushing is started.



The first color that is airbrushed is lemon yellow. All the lettering enamels that I will airbrush are reduced at a ratio of 60 percent reducer to 40 percent paint. Do not over-thin; test your spray before you actually begin spraying on the letters. Using my Iwata Eclipse, I airbrush the "B&R" and the truck numbers.



The next color is chrome yellow, sprayed approximately 3/4 of the way up from the bottom of the lettering.



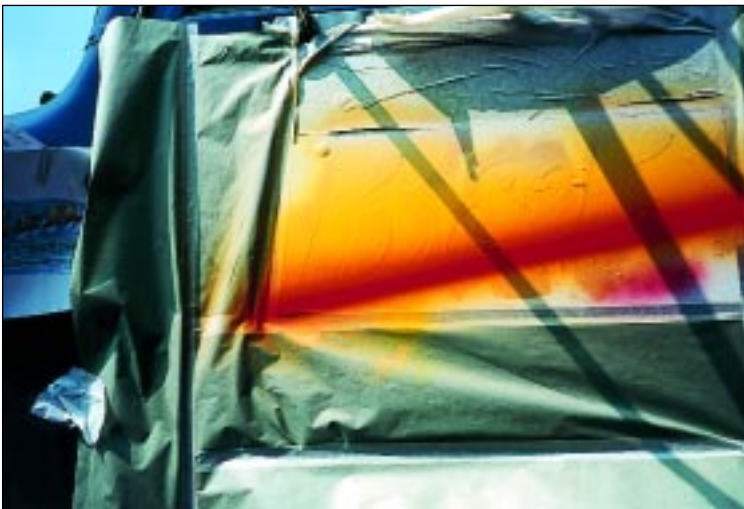
A close-up of the door in progress.



Now I spray medium orange half way up the chrome yellow.



Vermillion is sprayed half way up the medium orange.



To finish the job I airbrush rubine red across the bottom. For now the airbrushing is done.



As soon as I'm done, I immediately begin removing the paint mask. I always apply the paint mask wet, using Rapid Tac to make it easier to remove the mask when the airbrushing is completed. Note: Do not allow the airbrushing to dry completely before you remove the mask. If you do you will run the risk of peeling the airbrush effects right off.

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With the paint mask and the masking paper removed, you get a better look at the airbrush effects. Also note that there is no overspray to clean off.



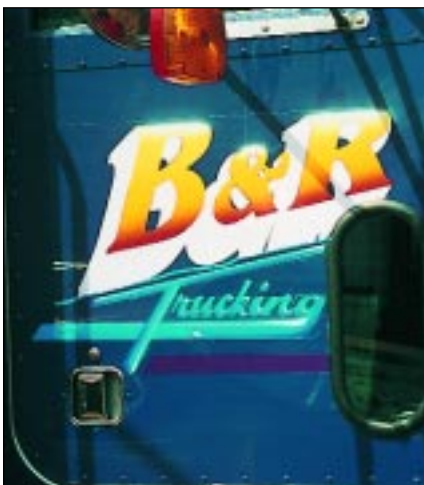
While the doors set up, I begin to layout the graphics and the word "Trucking" on both sides of the truck. I use blue Finline automotive tape to lay out my designs.



A close up using a 1" lettering brush to fill in the graphics. I'm using process blue, with a drop of Smoothie, a couple of drops of hardener and an Art-Kup filled with Hi-Temp reducer.



The word "Trucking" is lettered off of a hand drawn pattern. I airbrush the bottoms of the word with some brilliant blue. The tops have process blue and white mixed together, followed by some pure white highlights to give it a rounded look.



I've added the deep shadow; violet and white mixed and hand painted using a #6 brown lettering quill. You'll notice that I've added dark magenta as a second color to the graphics.



Using violet and a little less white, I start to give the shadow some dimension.



Pure violet is now sprayed on to define the shadow.

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Purple is used here to give the shadow that extra punch. I have kept the purple to a minimum, trying to sculpt the shadow.



The last bit of airbrushing is white. This will highlight the shadow. Note: now is the time to clean out the airbrush! Spray clean Hi-Temp reducers through the airbrush until it runs clean (no paint). Next, run mineral spirits through the gun. Finally, spray some WD-40 through the airbrush and you'll never have to worry about it being stuck again. The next time you need to use the airbrush, just spray mineral spirits through the gun.



Now I outline the "B&R" and add a shadow to the word "Trucking".



A pinline of teal is added to the job.



The last thing I add is a varnish shade to the inside tops of the letters. (To make this shadow, mix some black and 1 Shot Clear together.)



The Peterbilt is complete, with some hand painted pin-striping added.

