WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A fluid filtration device comprising:

(a) a holder having an inlet, a filtered fluid outlet, and a residue outlet; and

(b) a composite medium, disposed in the holder, separating the holder into upstream and downstream compartments;

the composite medium including:

(i) a porous interlayer having opposing first and second sides,

(ii) a first fiber containing filter layer located on the first side of the interlayer; and

(iii) a second fiber containing filter layer located on the second side of the interlayer, wherein:

the fibers in the first and second fiber containing filter layers have different fiber diameters, and each fiber containing filter layer has a different pore size classification, where the interlayer has a coarser pore size than either the first or second fiber containing filter layer.

2. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the fibers in the first and second fiber containing filter layers are a polymer material selected from a group consisting of thermoplastic polymers and thermoset polymers.

3. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 2, wherein:

the fibers are nanofibers.

4. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the interlayer comprises a nonwoven fabric.

5. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 4, wherein:

the nonwoven fabric comprises a polymeric nanofiber.

6. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 5, wherein:

the polymeric nanofiber is made from polypropylene.

7. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 3, wherein:

the nanofibers in the first fiber containing filter layer have a fiber diameter from about 10 nm to about 1,000 nm, and the nanofibers in the second fiber containing filter layer have a fiber diameter from about 10 nm to about 1,000 nm.

8. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the first and second fiber containing filter layers comprise electropsun nanofiber mats.

9. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 8, wherein:

the nanofiber is a polymer material selected from a group consisting of thermoplastic polymers and thermoset polymers.

10. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 8, wherein:

the nanofiber is a polymer material selected from the group consisting of thermoplastic polymers, thermoset polymers nylon, polyimide, aliphatic polyamide, aromatic polyamide, polysulfone, cellulose, cellulose acetate, polyether sulfone, polyurethane, poly(urea urethane), polybenzimidazole, polyetherimide, polyacrylonitrile, poly(ethylene terephthalate), polypropylene, polyaniline, poly(ethylene oxide), poly(ethylene naphthalate), poly(butylene terephthalate), styrene butadiene rubber, polystyrene, poly(vinyl chloride), poly(vinyl alcohol), poly(vinyl acetate), poly(vinylidene fluoride), poly(vinyl butylene), and copolymers and combinations thereof.

11. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 8, wherein:

the nanofiber is a polymer material selected from the group consisting of nylon-6, nylon-6,6, nylon 6,6-6,10, nylon-6 copolymers, nylon-6,6 copolymers, nylon 6,6-6,10 copolymers, and mixtures thereof.

12. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the first fiber containing filter layer has a thickness from about 1 μm to about 1,000 μm and the second fiber containing filter layer has a thickness from about 1 μm to about 1,000 μm.

13. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the first and second fiber containing filter layers are selected from a group consisting of gridded filters, curricular filters, discoid filters, pleated filters, depth filters, and combinations thereof.

14. A fluid filtration device as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the mean pore size of the interlayer is approximately 2 to 100 times larger than the mean pore size of the fiber containing first or second filter layers on either side of the interlayer.