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PROJECTS



GLASS SUNCATCHER



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March / April 2017



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Time travel and other myths exposed

On your marks, get set ... Countdown to Christmas 2017 has begun - only 300 or so more sleeps and even less shopping days. Ho ho oh no. 2016 went by in a blur and I blame it all on the malls for messing with our internal clocks. As they pack away the plastic reindeer with one hand, they are dusting off cupids with the other hand. Pause, then it's cupids out, bunnies in. When the bunnies get binned, the shop dressers take one month leave and then they get started on the Santas again. And I look around, blink and yes, it's Christmas yet again with Boney M parappapumpummming in the background. Reality check: it's only the 15 of September, but oh dear there are just not enough days left to do all the Christmas shopping. And another thing: I am totally convinced that those little santa chocolates wrapped up in santa-like foil are unsold Easter eggs that have been recycled. If you don't agree then tell me this: what do they do with the unsold Easter eggs the day after Easter? No the Easter bunnies do NOT get to eat them. That is just another alternate truth fed to you by

the capitalistic propaganda machine.

Perhaps at this point I should apologize to new readers who may be wondering what on earth I am on about. Surely page 1 of a magazine is where the editor tells readers how great the magazine is, how many awards the editorial team has won and how lucky the reader is that they chose THIS magazine from all the others on the shelf in the shop. Quite true, that is what I should be doing. However... Craftwise does tend to break the mould in a number of ways. To start with, most of the content is generated by talented people who spend many hours each month creating projects for you. They do this without expecting to be paid. They know they are good at what they do, in fact they are the best crafters and artists in South Africa. Given time, most creative people can put together a pretty project. It however takes special people to produce credible projects every month, year after year. "Writers block" or "a creative drought" simply does not exist for them. Our contributor team members (the Craftwise Elves) don't expect accolades - they simply



fix their eyes on their deadlines and get on with the job. Talented, dedicated people.

When it comes to this column, long time readers will know that I tend to relax and let loose a rant or two. You may even encounter a warped theory, alternate view or even a few lines of poetry. Not your typical ed's column and read by generally untypical people. After all, creative people have untidy desks and untidy minds.

Hope you enjoy this issue!

Owen and the Craftwise Elves



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I firmly believe that before attempting to paint such a beautiful flower, one should read up on it and make a study of the actual natural colours so that one can paint it as realistically as possible. I have tried my best to paint this as an artist's copy and not as a botanical painting.

Royel Flemming-Swart '17

the Protea Cynaroides

REQUIREMENTS

by Ronel Flemming Swart

- Rectangular canvas or solid board
- Brushes and pallet knives
- Speciality Americana products:
 - Thickening medium
 - Multipurpose sealer
 - Decor chalky white paint
 - Decor matt varnish
- Americana acrylic paints: Lamp black, black plum, white buttermilk, **limeade light green**, poodleskirt pink, razzle berry burgundy wine, royal fuchsia, true ochre, burnt umber, festive green, foliage green, deep midnight blue, Paynes grey, Prussian blue, alizarin crimson.

INSTRUCTIONS

I used an old dark brown frame which I sanded slightly and then coated with the chalky white paint. I then sealed it with matt varnish.

Seal the flat canvas with multipurpose sealer or gel.

Sketch in the flower onto the white canvas. Give the background two coats of lamp black.



Outline the petals very careful with antique maroon thinned with water. This is your base to work from. Be very accurate and neat.



Paint the centre with black plum as a maroon base. Use the fineliner to add the fine centre cone with buttermilk, black plum and white.



Paint in the petals at the back with shades of pink. I used cranberry for shading and limeade for highlighting.



Start painting in the front petals. Remember that this is not a soft petal flower. Use again all shades of pink and

shade with black plum. Add light with white, using your pallet knife.



Here I changed my background by adding more blue tones. I used my very large pallet knife, building up layers of texture in different shades of deep midnight blue, Paynes grey and Prussian blue. Keep the area around the petals very dark. Build up colour until you are happy with the effect. (Only use the flat side of your pallet knife, not the edge to achieve this effect.)



Foliage: I enjoyed painting the leaves! Basecoat first with a neutral green - avocado. Then do the lighter areas, using light green for light. Shade again with Paynes grey.




Paint in the veins on the leaves with your very light limeade green.

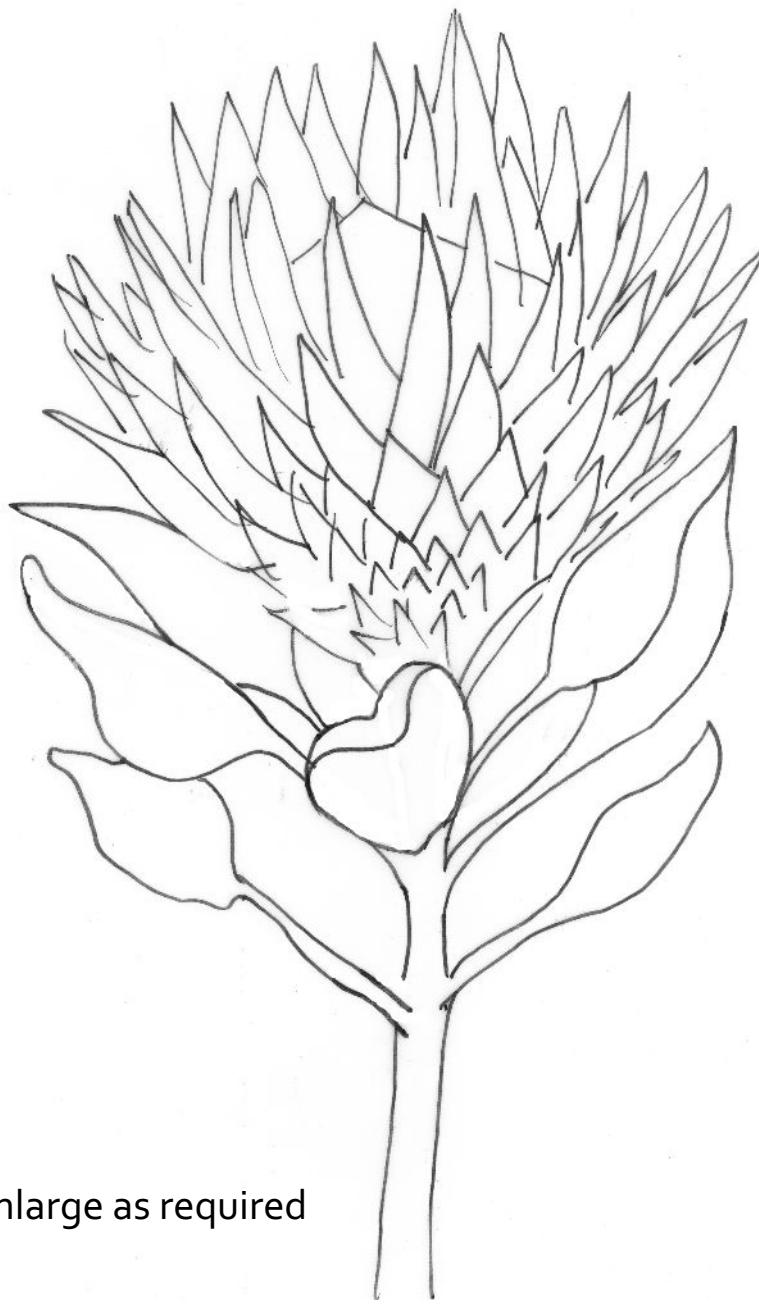
Outline the leaves with alizaron crimson.



Stem: Basecoat with neutral brown and burnt umber. Highlight with ochre and shade with black plum.



I then shaded my protea with alizarin crimson and washed the petals with a watery wash to get to a rich pink. I wanted a more deeper pink and the colour wash achieved the effect I that wanted. 



Enlarge as required



ronelsart@gmail.com

FUNKY, FUN SUNCATCHER

by Jacqui Holmes
of Classy Glass Art Studio

A little bit of this & a little bit of that & I came up with this idea for a sun catcher with a bit of a difference. I cannot say it is totally original as it is definitely inspired by some other ideas that I saw.

I combined a few, tweaked a bit and decided this was the one. It also gave me a great opportunity to use my gem stone as the center of the piece. I bought a few of them at a show and have been waiting for the right project to include this green one in. So here goes.....

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jacqui@classyglass.co.za

Website: www.classyglass.co.za

Follow us on Facebook: "Classy Glass Art Studio"
AND ALSO ON INSTAGRAM: @classyglassartstudio
Photography: Cindy Barnes

REQUIREMENTS

Tools:

- Glass cutter
- Grozier pliers
- Glass grinder
- Cutting Board – Ceiling board offcuts are great as they are not too hard.
- Prestik
- Soft Cloth (to dry your project off)
- Safety Glasses if you do not wear specs
- Sharpie Pen to draw the pattern onto your glass
- Paint brushes or flux brushes to paint flux onto your project
- 100W Soldering Iron – either with an internal thermostat or with a soldering iron controller.
- Soldering irons reach approx. 370 deg C, and uncontrolled, your glass may crack from the heat.
- Lathekin (to flatten and remove creases

from the copper foil once it is applied).

- Newspapers for easier cleaning up as you go along.
- A Solution of Sunlight Liquid & Bicarb of Soda diluted in water to clean your project.
- Methylated spirits to wipe on all your soldered parts. This will remove excess oily residue left by the flux that hasn't washed off completely.
- Latex gloves for applying patina if you have sensitive skin. Some people get slightly itchy fingers if they get patina on their hands.
- Furniture polish to polish your project once it is completed.

Materials:

- Glass – I used Wissmach streaky glass with greens, white, browns & Crystal Ice

clear glass

- Slice of gem stone bought at a market/show. If you cannot find a gemstone like this, you can also use those glass gems that are readily available from most mosaic outlets. You could also cut a piece of glass this size and shape and use that as the center of your project. No rules about this... do what makes you happy.
- Decorative leather thread. (also in green) to hang up your sun catcher.
- Copper foil (1/4 inch – Black back)
- Flux
- Solder (60/40)
- Black Patina
- 2 x jump rings to solder to the top for the leather to go through.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut one of your templates out. Secure the pattern pieces to the glass with prestik and draw around them with your sharpie. Remember to place the pattern pieces upside down on the wrong side of the glass.



2. Score your glass with your cutter. Use your running pliers and/or grozier pliers to break the glass where you have scored.



3. You now need to grind each of your pieces. Take your template to the grinder. Grind each piece and place them back onto the template making sure they fit properly.



Typically you should just be able to see the black pattern line around the edge of the pieces of glass. I use map pins to keep each piece in place once I am happy with it, while I go on and grind the other pieces. It prevents pieces shifting about which makes life easier for you when grinding.

4. Once you have finished grinding, you can foil each of your pieces with ¼ inch foil. It is important that the pieces are all clean and thoroughly dry. So clean and dry them off with a soft cloth before you begin to foil.

It's much easier to work upside down. You need to get the glass in the centre of the

foil. Hold the sticky side facing up and place the glass onto it. Press flat with your thumb then fold down over the sides of the glass.

Work in small sections to ensure the foil fits tightly once you are done. Try not to go all the way around your glass piece and then only flatten the foil, as it will be too loose. Iron out the creases and crinkles in your foil with your lathekin.



5. Place your pieces back onto the template. Now you can solder them together. Paint flux on the joins, then spot solder along each join.

Spot soldering: Just melt little blobs along the joins.



Melt the blobs of solder into your joins to create a seam, joining the pieces together. You will also need to solder your jump rings in place. Decide where you want them so that your project will hang up properly

once you are done. Place them where you would like them, flux, drop a blob of solder where the ring meets the glass so that the ring is attached. Do the same the other side. Try to work quickly as the jump rings get very hot. If you fiddle too much you will start soldering the rings off again.



6. Tin all the edges so that all the copper foil becomes silver.

Tinning: Paint flux on all the copper foil and melt solder along the foil. When you are done all the copper foil will be silver (covered in solder). (Edges and sides).

7. Once you have finished soldering all your seams and tinning, wash your project off with a sponge and your soapy solution and dry thoroughly. Take a soft cloth and methylated spirits and wipe down the project to remove any excess oiliness not washed away with your soapy solution.

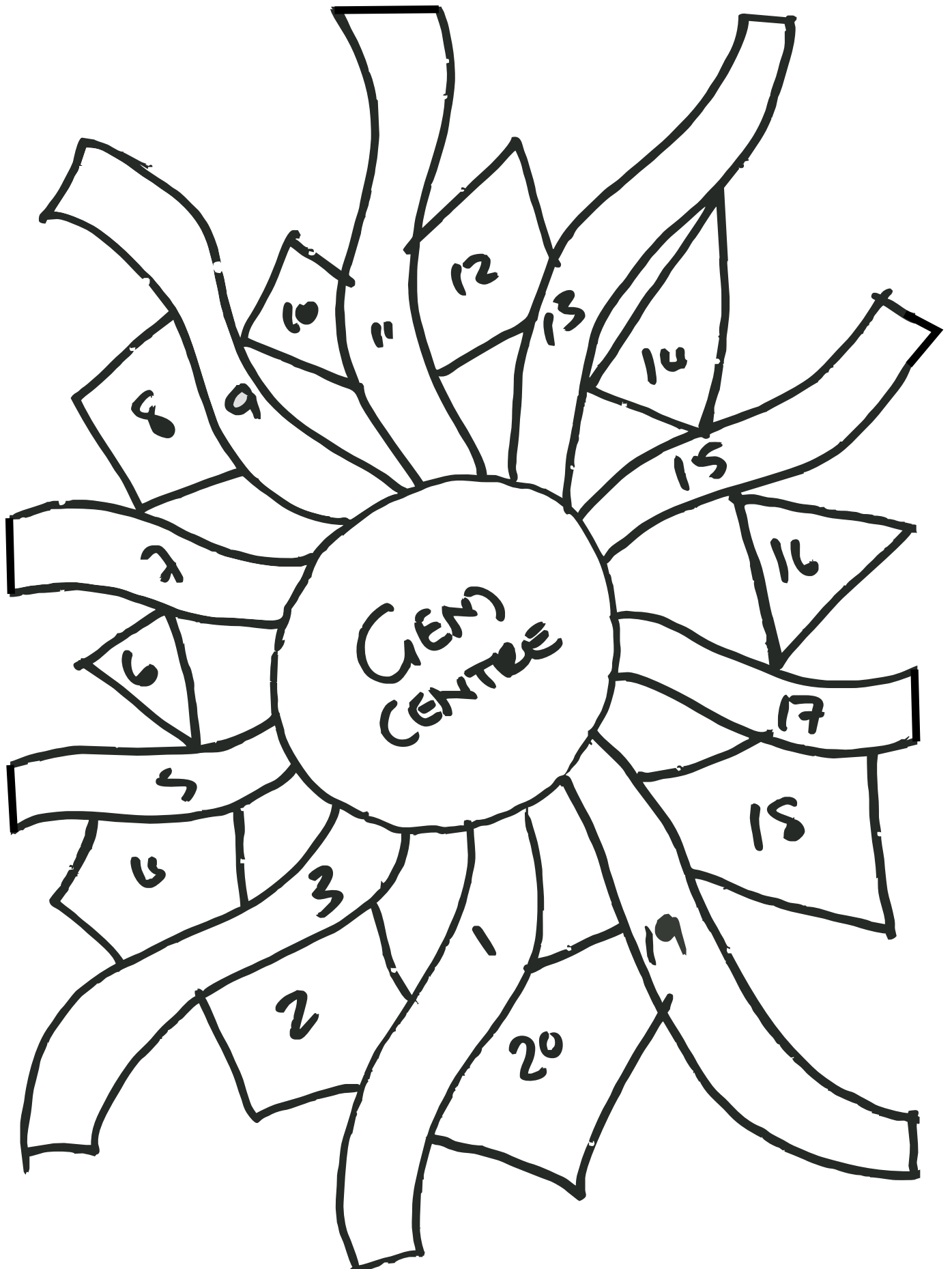
8. I used Black Patina for this project. Put on some latex gloves if your skin is sensitive to the patina. Use an old cloth to dip into the patina and rub it all over the silver parts of your project. If there are small corners and nooks to get patina into, then use a small paint brush to patina these places.



9. Leave for a minute or 2, rinse off again and dry thoroughly. I normally wait until the following day and polish my project off with a furniture spray polish and soft cloth.

I often find somewhere in my garden to hang projects like this. It really looks amazing especially in the sun when the light catches the glass. Enjoy or give to a friend to enjoy.

CW



by Manda Theart



Easter Blessing Basket

Let's celebrate this Easter by making a basket full of blessings.
This is fairly simple so that the kids can join in. Enjoy!

REQUIREMENTS

- Polymer clay, white, black, and pastels. Add white to get pastels and cream to tone down.
- Basket.
- Sculpey Bake and bond, or woodglue.
- Brush.
- Fairy dust.
- Tools and blade. (Make your own by baking handles on Stanley blade and different size needles.)
- Tile to work and bake on.
- Oven.

INSTRUCTIONS

Eggs:

Roll balls in different colours. Put a little pressure on one side whilst rolling to form eggs.



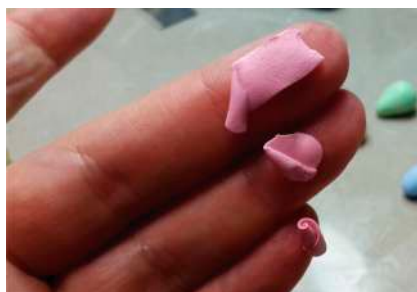
Add a little Bond and bake or woodglue in the bottom of the basket. Press some clay into the basket to save making too many eggs.

Roll ribbon clay into a string, wrap around some eggs. Make gift ribbon and add to a few eggs.



Roses:

Roll Pink clay into a thick string, slice into thin pedals. Place a flat piece of clay on your finger and roll downward then turn up to form rose centre.



Add petals one at a time around the stem, slightly higher to have room to curl. One leaf should overlap the other.

Make leaves by cutting a square piece of green clay. Draw line with needle from

corner to corner. Draw vein lines in each corner, cut into 4 parts and add three leaves on each rose.



Daisy

Roll Purple and Yellow clay into strings. Cut 8 equal parts per flower. Roll between your index finger and thumb to form pedals.

Start with 4 petals placing them into a cross, fill in the gaps leaving a small opening in the middle. Indent with thick needle. Lift off tile with your blade at an angle. Place green ball inside.



Make roses and daisies in different sizes, cut off just under the leaves and place on a few eggs.

Fill the basket with plain eggs first, then add the eggs with flowers and bows.

Bunny

Roll head ball the same as egg. Draw line with your needle on the side of bunny's face, close at the end (nose) and draw a line down the mouth part.

Roll two strings of white clay in a "petal" form and flatten. Roll two similar pink strings, flatten and place on ears to form the inside of the ears. Roll two arms, slightly tapered at the ends.

Place your thick needle on the end of the ear, wrap around the needle. Press the

needle with clay in the bunny's head and roll needle out. Close the hole with the needle on the outside of the ears.



Make two eye sockets with the thick needle. Roll two black eyes, pick up with thin needle at the bottom and gently place in eye socket, you don't want a blind bunny.

Finish with a string pink nose. The amount of bunnies you need will depend on the size of your basket.

First place bunnies' arms and then the heads. Make sure there are no gaps behind the bunnies when you place them.

Add some Bake and Bond or woodglue to the side and bottom of your basket. Add roses and lilies. Press some extra eggs on the bottom.

Sign:

Roll a piece of white clay. I suggest you first finish the writing before cutting to size. This way you will be able to fit the words.



Roll a piece of black clay into a thin string and "write" your message with the help of the thin needle. Cut to size. Add a rose and place on the basket with Bake and Bond or wood glue.

Brush some fairy dust on the eggs and flowers. (Any powder residue can be added to clay **before** baking.) CW

Bake at 130 degrees Celsius for at least an hour. Let it cool completely before handling. The glue and basket will be safe in the oven. The temperature is too low to set anything alight.

*May you all have a blessed Easter,
till next time .
Lots of love Manda xxx*



snippets & notices



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Market Dates:

**25, Mar 11 & 25,
Apr 15 & 29, May 1 & 13,
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Sept 30, Oct 14, Oct 28**

CALLING ALL CRAFTERS: 4 th Art & Craft Ramble in Wakkerstroom

June 16 – 19th 2017 (9 - 4pm Friday & Saturday, and 9 -1pm Sunday)

Cost for the 3 day event for a 2 m x 2 m space will be R170.

Space for teachers doing arts or crafts, flower arranging or cake decorating will be R370 + any extras required.

Cocktail party at R50 pp on the Friday evening; and an Auction/Prize giving in aid of 'Reach for a Dream' on Saturday evening.

And once again the Art Ramble has been organized alongside the Mountain walk/run which takes place on the Saturday morning; bringing other visitors into the village.

Wakkerstroom is a small village in Mpumalanga with many Pretoria holiday homes but also draws day-visitors from Ermelo, Bethel, Secunda, Standerton, Vrede, Amersfoort, Volksrust, Paul Pietersburg, Newcastle, Utrecht, Piet Retief, Memel, Vryheid. There are a lot of people that will be looking to do something over the chilly winter months. The long weekend is also chosen so that more visitors will attend.

Get on board early to benefit from the media, Facebook and web exposure!

Contact Mark & Karen on 083 452 3363 / 076 721 8256



Balcony Gardening

March

Pink Polka Dot Plant

by Life is a Garden

Balcony gardening combines the best of both worlds! The vivid colours of shade-loving outdoor plants add brilliant bright colour to patios, balconies and atriums. Apartments, townhouses and smaller homes may often not include a traditional garden – but almost all homes have a sunny windowsill, balcony or alcove.

Balcony gardening takes many shapes and forms. Your personal taste will dictate whether you opt for functional edibles (ie. herbs and veggies) or brightly coloured flowering plants.

If you are new to balcony gardening, it's a good idea to start small. Observe the light conditions you have to work with – most balconies have either morning or afternoon sun but there are often areas that have full sun or full shade. Choose plants accordingly.

Hypoestes phyllostachya (more commonly known as the "polka dot plant") is a versatile, small balcony plant well suited to ½ sun positions. Polka dot plants are colourful, delicate indoor plants, grown for their decorative foliage. The polka dot plant is an ideal 'filler' plant and is particularly useful in mixed plantings. The soft, intricate blotched markings on the small leaves come

in 3 different colour shades of red, pink or white. Mixed planting refers to planting a selection of different plants in one container ie. a windowsill, feature planter or large bowl. Typically the plant mix combines flowering (seasonal) plants and perennial foliage plants to ensure a consistently full effect. Polka dot plants offer a long-lasting foliage option that also includes colour.

Polka dot plants thrive in bright light conditions. More direct sunlight will produce brighter colour foliage and if the light is too low, the leaves become mostly green and start stretching. One of the many benefits of balcony (and container) plants is that you can move the container around to find the best position.

The more sun, the more water is required. Polka dot plants have thin leaves and it's important not to let the plant dry out as the

leaves will wilt and ultimately the leaf tips will curl. Keep the soil moist at all times and be particularly attentive when on sunny windowsills. Reduce watering during the winter months and fertilise monthly with a liquid fertiliser to promote and enhance continued growth.

When growing conditions are favourable, small purple flowers will be produced on the upper leaves. It would be wise to pinch off these flowers to encourage foliar growth; regular pruning of over shoot growth will also help keep the plant compact and full, and will bring out the coloration on the leaves.



For more information on bringing Life to your Garden, visit our website: www.lifeisagarden.co.za or join the conversation on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/lifeisagardensa



This is my type of living - out in the country where life is simple, everybody knows everyone else and they care for each other. One of these days I will paint my huge Valley Painting. I have already sketched it, now just to find the courage to start it. Watch this space ..

a Special Country Landscape

REQUIREMENTS

by Ronel Flemming Swart

- Square canvas 20 x 20 cm
- Brushes and pallet knives
- Speciality Americana products:
 - All Purpose Gel/sealer
 - Fluorescent Hot Shots red
- Americana acrylic paints:
True blue, titanium white, dioxazine purple, country blue, ultra deep blue, limeade, black plum, buttermilk, dove grey, Payne's grey, cinnamon drop red, golden straw, bluegrass green, foliage green, Indian turquoise, antique teal, russet.

INSTRUCTIONS

First sketch in the painting with a brush - just outlines here and there to guide you. Start with the sky. Shape the clouds with a very large flat brush by 'pushing' up the white for the shape of the clouds.

Moving down to ground level, begin at the back of the painting with the mountains. Paint them lighter in the far back for distance with diox purple and buttermilk. Closer mountains are darker, ultra deep blue mixed with Paynes grey and buttermilk. Green valleys, olive green and highlight with limeade.

Paint the road with a mixture of black plum and buttermilk.

Sketch in the houses now. Paint in the trees behind the buildings with a very dark base, midnight blue. Highlight with blue, grass green, stipple white on for light.



Paint your buildings next. I used buttermilk and white for the light sides and Paynes grey and white for the shadows. You can also mix a beautiful shadow colour with brown and blue, add some white. I painted the book store first with a darker grey then highlighted with dove grey and touches of russet for the roof. Here I used Indian turquoise to outline. Paint the windows in darker with Paynes grey then shade the white curtains in with a shader.

Sketch in the truck. First base with yellow as an undercoat for red. Paint over the yellow now with cinnamon drop red. Highlight with hot shots fluorescent red paint. (This is the only paint that highlights red.) Remember to paint in all the wonderful magazines on the back of the truck ...

Plant the garden. Just use your imagination. Anything will do. Make it bright and beautiful. Sunflowers and bright blue will look very nice too.

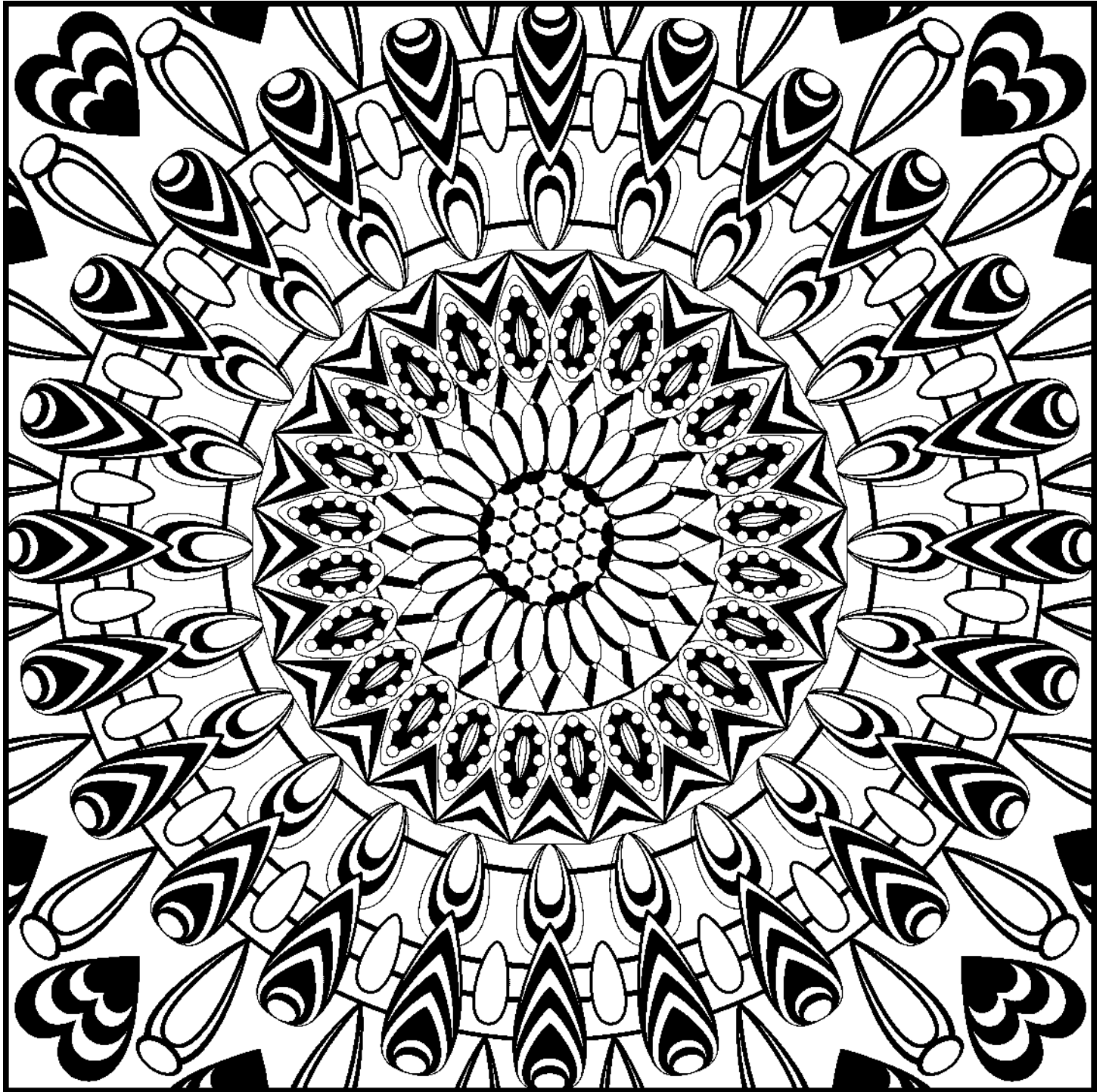


Lastly, Do not forget the windmill. Use a round object to guide you. Divide up with the pencil. Sketch in the arms. You will only see 3 legs. Use the fine-liner and water thinned black paint. Paint in the base of the windmill. Outline with white touches here and there. Let there be enough water for our little village....

CW



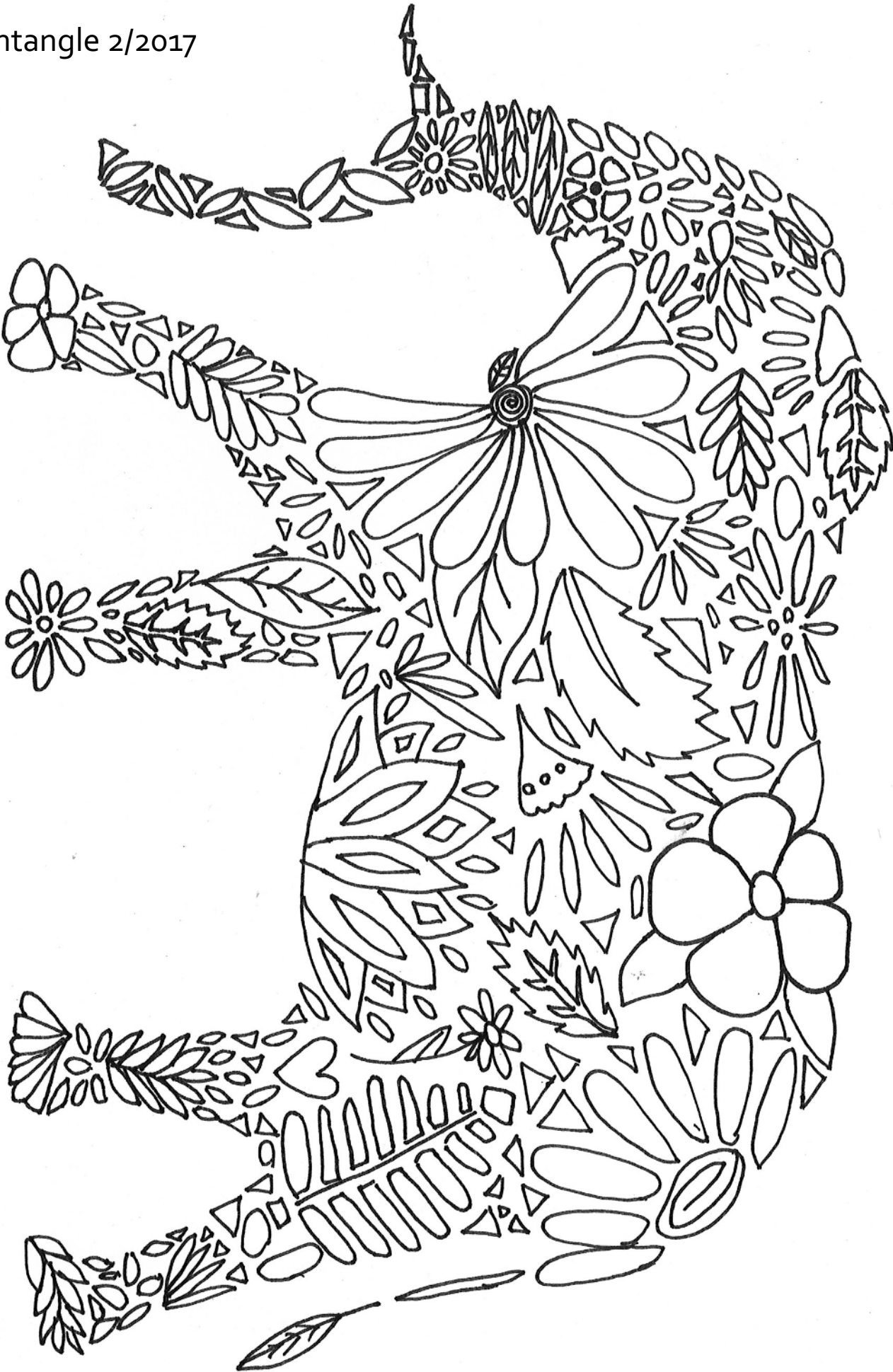
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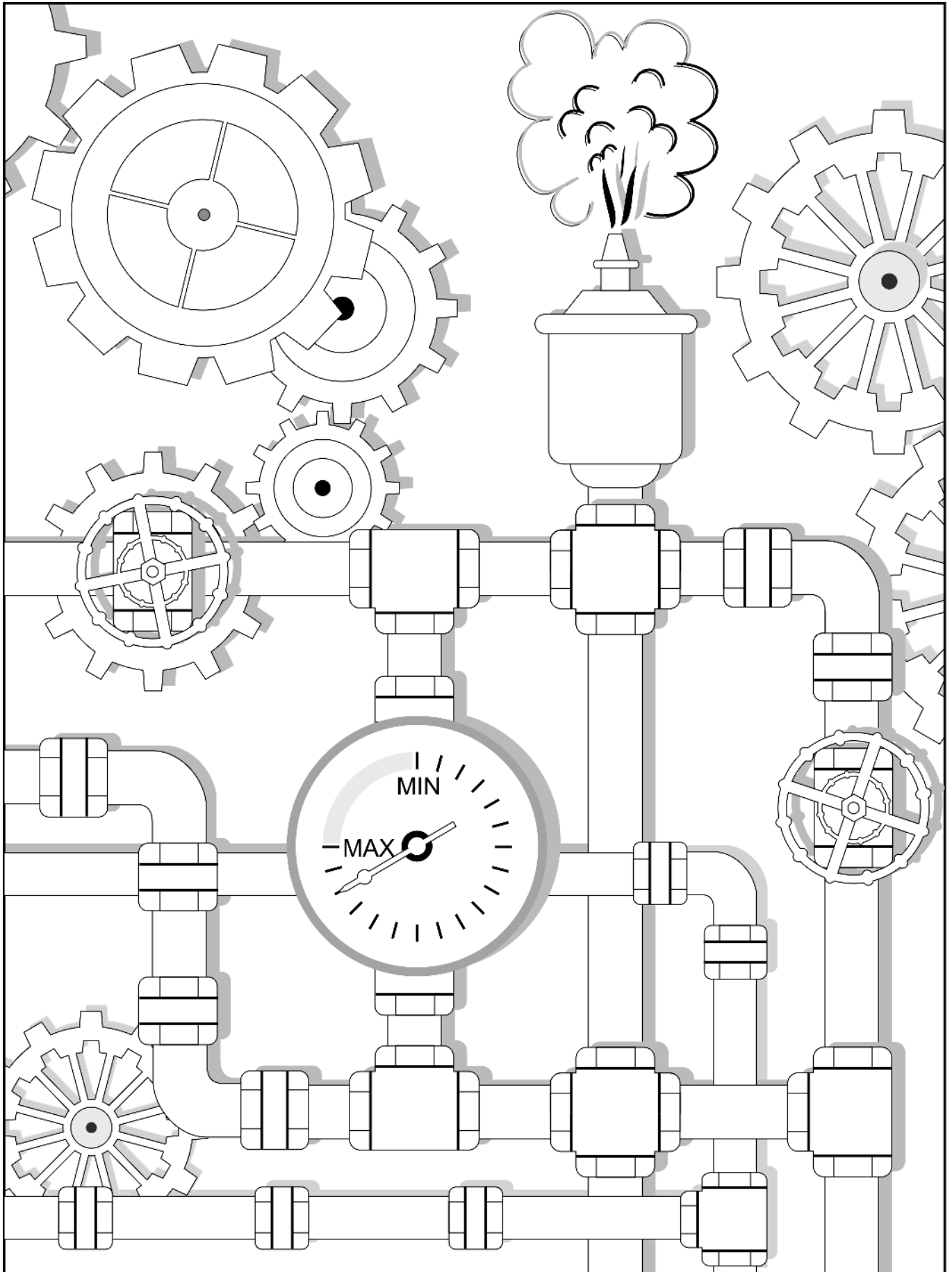


Get out your crayons and hit the pause button as you take time out to just chill and de-stress. There is no right or wrong way to colour in these drawings we have made for you. Pick up a crayon and let the rhythmic patterns reach down into your souls as you transform each negative space on the page into a colourful and pleasing whole. It's your choice whether you first copy the page or simply colour it in right here in the magazine.

When you have finished a page, you can take a photo or scan and email it to colour@craftwise.co.za
We will look at everyone's pages and put together a nice book hamper for the one that we like most.







WORDSEARCH

114

GUIDELINES:

1. Find and circle the hidden keywords - they could be spelled across, down, diagonally or even backwards.
2. Complete the entry form and send a scan, copy or photo of this page to us - please don't destroy your magazine by tearing the page out!

A	K	I	I	O	F	I	K	F	U	L	A	X	D	P
W	H	T	L	O	H	A	L	D	N	F	L	O	Y	Z
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KEYWORDS

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KANURI
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The winners of Wordsearch 112 & 113 will be announced in our next issue!

Pewter inspiration

by Sandy Griffiths

The art of pewter crafting has been around longer than you'd expect. The earliest recorded pewter work known to historians dates back to bronze age Egypt. The uses and designs have changed a lot since then, and so has the medium itself (mostly for the better) but the fascination with shaping soft metal into beautiful designs is making a comeback among crafters and artists looking to get back to the elemental side of creativity. There are endless ways one can use pewter to turn ordinary items into creative showpieces. Here are a few of my favorite works to get your ideas flowing!

Visit my Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/sandygriffithsstudio for more inspiration

1. Pewter and resin pendant, set in a bottle top.
2. Pewter dragon on painted pencil box.
3. Collection of stones with pewter embellishments.
4. Mermaid soap dish. Pewter design on found Perlemoen shell.



MY DOLL'S HOUSE JOURNEY

Room #2: The Lounge



Hi there. Today we are going to build the lounge. As explained in part 1, the boards were precut to my measurements. I then cut fabric to size and glued it to the walls, keeping the pieces separate which makes them easier to handle.

Building a dolls house is on-going as you will keep finding things to add to your rooms. The fun part, depending on how you want to furnish it, is making or finding a specific item.

Thank you for sharing this journey - I hope you enjoy the project as much as I am!

INSTRUCTIONS

by Colleen Amos



The lounge walls I covered with a fine print fabric. Smear glue on walls and paste down the fabric, making sure there are no air bubbles.



Cut strips of cotton or nylon lace to go around the edges of the ceiling. Use a circular or square piece for the centre. Give the ceiling board a thick coat of white acrylic paint and while still wet, smooth the lace down. When this is dry, apply another coat over the whole ceiling. This is also a good time to make a hole in the centre for the chandelier.



For the "wooden" floor, I used strips of different coloured wood trim - the type normally used to finish off the edge of shelves. Smear wood glue over the floor area and paste the lengths of wood strips down, edge to edge.



I made the chandelier out of beads, an ornamental button and a short length of gold chain.

The wall clock was made from ornamental metal corners and a cheap watch fitting.

The pictures on the walls were from an old frame that I had years ago. I painted black acrylic around the edges to define them. The other picture is a photo from a magazine pasted on black 3 mm thick cardboard.

CW





Healthy Herb Celery

by Life is a Garden

(Apium graveolens)

Is it a herb or a vegetable? Whichever way you view it, celery has been grown for its nutritional and medicinal properties for at least 3000 years. All you need is a row of plants, or some in containers, to have a constant supply of crunchy green stems for salads, juicing or adding to stir-fries, slow cooked stews and soups.

Growing

The secret of good celery is to produce 'soft' stems, which are more edible, with a milder taste and crunchier, yet juicy texture. If celery stems are tough and thin it could be the variety but is more likely to be the result of insufficient water, lack of food or too much sun.

Celery grows best in morning sun, in moist, fertile soil that has been well composted. It can also be grown in containers in well-enriched potting soil. Water regularly and mulch; the soil should not dry out, especially in containers. Fertilise twice a month (or weekly at half strength) with a nitrogen rich liquid feed.

Seed sowing tips

Sow seed into trays and cover until plants germinate, within 10 to 20 days. When seedlings show three true leaves, transplant into individual pots or directly into beds. This severs the tap root which encourages the development of a better root system. Set plants out a little deeper

than they were in the seedling tray, but don't cover the growing point.

Companion planting

Grow celery with other edible plants that have the same water, light and nutrition requirements, such as cabbage, beans, leeks, lettuce, spring onions, spinach and tomatoes. Celery improves the health and flavour of cabbages, in particular, and repels white cabbage butterfly.

Harvesting celery

The easiest way to eat celery is to harvest the outer stems when you feel they are thick enough to eat. Alternatively, harvest the whole plant when it is mature by forking it out of the ground.

Chunky tomato, celery and bean soup

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil, plus 1 tablespoon extra to drizzle

1 large onion, finely chopped
2 celery stalks, finely chopped
1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary leaves
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 x 400g cans cannellini beans, rinsed, drained
2 cups (500ml) Chicken Stock or Vegetable Stock
5 tomatoes (750g total), chopped
2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
4 wholegrain bread rolls, to serve

Heat oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add onion, celery, rosemary and garlic and stir for 5 minutes until vegetables soften. Add beans, stock and tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper, bring to the boil over high heat, then reduce heat to low, cover and gently simmer for 15 minutes or until thickened. Stir in parsley, then spoon soup into bowls. Drizzle with extra oil and serve with bread rolls.

CW



A pine cone bird feeder hanging from a string against a blurred green background. The feeder is a large, irregular, light-brown mass of seeds and suet, shaped like a pine cone. It is suspended by a thin, light-colored string that runs vertically through the center of the feeder. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting a garden or forest setting.

DIY in the garden

PINE CONE bird feeder

by Life is a Garden

One of the most decorative, natural and tasty bird feeders can be created from a pine cone filled with nutritious seeds and suet, to create a perfect feast for many different birds.

There are a few different variations of suet. We used a recipe that includes animal fat, to provide a good energy source for different types of feeder birds.

REQUIREMENTS

- Pine cones that have fully opened
- Approximately 1 cup beef/mutton fat or a cup of cooking fat, from your local grocer (you can also get beef or mutton fat at your local butcher or supermarket)
- 1 cup crunchy peanut butter
- 1 cup Oats
- 1 cup wild bird seed – different mixes will be readily available at your favourite GCA garden centre

- You can also add dried fruit and nuts as an extra food source, if you didn't use crunchy peanut butter
- A saucepan
- A mixing bowl
- Latex gloves
- A spoon
- String



INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1

To create your pine cone feeder, take a length of string and tie it onto the large end of the pine cone, making sure you leave about half a metre in length to tie your feeder onto a tree later on.

Step 2

Take the fat and cut it into smaller pieces, so it melts easier. Then melt it in a saucepan over a slow heat until it is almost all liquid and you have about a cup full.

Step 3

In a separate bowl, mix together the peanut butter, oats and wild bird mix and make a well in the centre.

Step 4

Once melted, carefully pour the melted fat into the seed mixture and stir, combining the mixture well.


Step 5

Whilst it is still warm, put your gloves on, take your pine cone and slather the mixture all over it, making sure you get it right into all the little gaps – you can use a teaspoon to help. If the mixture is still a little sticky, you can take your stuffed pine cone and roll it in some of the extra birdseed to give it a crunchy coating.

Step 6

Once the mixture has cooled, it will harden and you can take your pinecone out to the garden and hang it from a tree.

Make sure you hang it from a branch that you will be able to see from inside the house so you can see all your visitors! As soon as the birds have discovered this tasty treat, you will have a continuous flow

of birds begging you to make more and you will be amazed at the range of birds that you can attract to your garden! 



For more information on bringing Life to your Garden, visit our website: www.lifeisagarden.co.za or join the conversation on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/lifeisagardensa



Celebrate your - OCD - and enjoy a salad!

by Sue Human

So when your domestic places her hands on her hips, looks at you in astonishment and exclaims; "But that is not how we do things in this house" (and you know she is not talking about the huge Lego Town construction exploding on the floor) you have to admit that you might just be OCD in some areas, and that it may be rubbing off.

What she is talking about, is the undersides of our new retro kitchen cupboard that has not been painted. The very same one that we paid people to sand and paint, along with the other two new kitchen additions that we also left with them to sand and paint which I will now sand, repaint and varnish myself. BECAUSE? "that is not how we do things in this house".

When you are OCD, what you really don't need in your life are people that cut straight through life and wisely see the wood from the trees, and repeatedly tug on your OCD soul strings. Like a week before Christmas day when the festive season was successfully kicking butt on all my compulsions, I holly jolly put on my best elfish smile and asked my wise

husband whether we really do need to varnish all our new polyurethane painted cupboards. His annoying response was; "No, we don't." But he wasn't finished yet, and his next response after the pause, gave my OCD a devilish new vocabulary which I am not proud of. He said; "but if we don't, then in a year's time we will be sanding and painting again."

Aaaargghhh. Seriously!

And I have a string of friends who repeatedly make me feel like maybe I need new friends. And here enters the salad. One day when I was feeling like a culinary treat and very vocally expressing it, I happened to be out to lunch with my friend Karen. I couldn't make up my mind between a salad and a plate of chips, I mean Duh. Karen



quietly uttered; "Well chips are lovely, but (that big annoying BUT) all those earthy lettuce leaves, juicy tomatoes, creamy feta, crunchy green pepper, sweet mini corn a potato well, in terms of taste and satisfaction, is really just one dimensional." Aaaargghh. Seriously! Needless to say, I don't think I have ever ordered chips or made it my preferred side order since that nonchalantly expressed pearl of nutritiously healthy words of wisdom.

But why does everybody see this OCD thing as an extremely negative condition. Let us turn our power to good use. Or, at least relax in our OCD-ness. As long as we are not hurting anyone or causing any harm to our loved ones, living creatures or the environment there have to be some plus sides – there goes my glass half full mentality.

I mean as crafters, OCD is a wonderful condition to have. Anything worth crafting is worth over-crafting, obsessing over, completely over-the-top-ping, with extra chocolate sprinkles and cherries. Thank goodness I wasn't given the perfect house OCD, everything in its place OCD along with my crafting OCD. It is so nice to go to other peoples houses where there is calm. My husband has always said that people who never do anything or say anything are always safe because they can't be criticized – I know right, I told you he is wise. So our house is full of projects because we make things – and the things we make we obsess over. (See page 32 for my mossy fairy

house). The completion of the whole Fairy Village was spurred on by a simple small fairy garden kit and ended up as this massive obsessive Fairy Village with working lights – obsessive right?

A new friend of mine innocently asked over the Christmas period why I was going to so much trouble. She pointed out that the shops have perfectly great festive décor and crackers. I told her that a few years ago I was talking to a 22 year old who was in a pilates class with me. She told me that she was not sure exactly what all the plans were for Christmas day but that she loves Christmas and her mom always makes it magical. She said that she doesn't even know how she manages it or where she gets the ideas and the time, but every year it is just perfect and special.

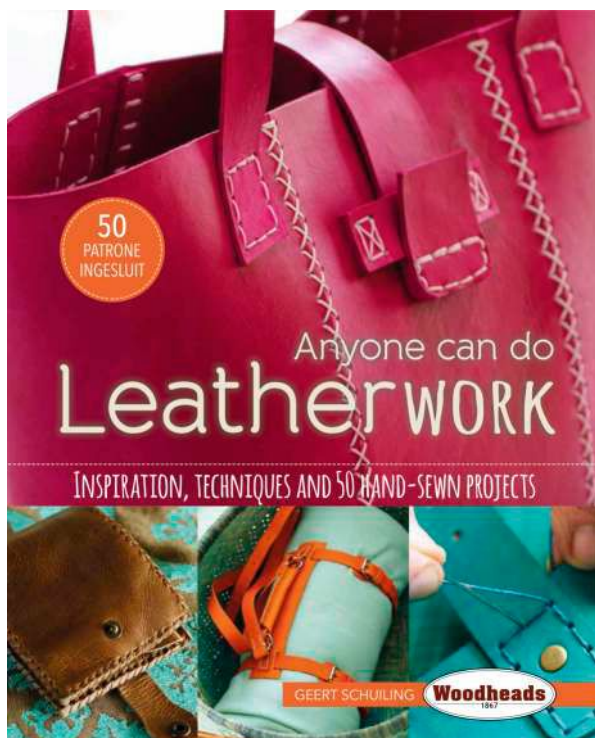
So there you have it, obsess and OCD all you want you lovely crafters. Create memories. Create magical times and magical memories of all the creating times that precede the actual magical events. After all, if Thomas Edison didn't obsess over his work, we would not have electric light. Bless all the single minded tireless OCD people that make our lives easier and safer. And bless all the ocd crafters that help to fill our lives with magic, embellishments, wonder and beautiful things.

APOLOGIES: *okay, so I do realize that I am making light of a rather serious and at times debilitating condition. I apologize if I have offended anyone, this was not my intent. My crafting definitely fits within the layman's definition of OCD.* CW

SUE



Books & things!



Anyone can do Leatherwork

Inspiration, techniques and 50 hand-sewn projects

Author: Geert Schulling

ISBN: 9781928201977

Softcover: 160 pages

Publisher: Metz Press

Leatherwork is enjoying a resurgence in the craft world. This book is an invaluable guide to this popular and age-old craft. Anyone can learn to make attractive leather articles with a professional look by mastering a handful of basic techniques. Using any of the many kinds of available leather, some leatherwork tools and the designs in this book you can produce beautiful and functional handcrafted accessories, gifts and items for your home.

The 50 original projects, both timeless and practical, are lavishly illustrated

with step-by-step photos and styled shots of completed articles, with detailed instructions to ensure that you cannot go wrong. The book covers: selection of materials and tools; key techniques such as dyeing, cutting, punching, bevelling; stitches used for the projects; inserting zips; finishing of pockets and straps; more than 50 templates for projects, with variations; projects ranging from earrings, simple bracelets, wallets and desk accessories to a wood carrier, an overnight bag, a back pack and a pouffe.

Beginners can start small with a simple key fob, then build up to belts, a wallet and bags, while experienced leatherworkers will find inspiration in the contemporary and unusual designs.



When two hands and ten fingers are not enough to hold everything in place, reach for some **Clover Wonder Clips**! Ideal for papercrafts, sewing, quilting and more. Use them to hold layers of paper together while glue is drying, or in place of pins to hold hems for sewing. The flat backs of the clips allow them to slide along a sewing machine foot plate without hooking. On the lower jaw there are $\frac{3}{16}$ ", $\frac{1}{4}$ " and $\frac{1}{2}$ " lines to aid in sewing accurate seams.

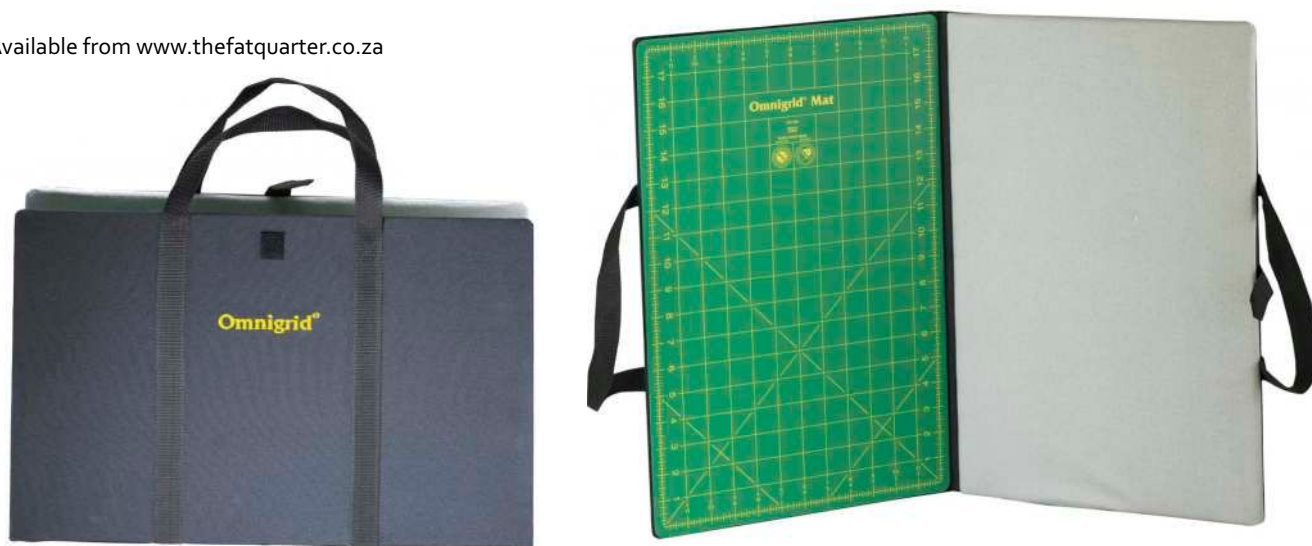
The clips come in two sizes: standard size - 50 per box and mini - 20 per packet. The mini has narrower jaws for tight spots.

Available from www.thefatquarter.co.za



Anyone who regularly attends quilting or sewing classes will know that working space at these venues tends to be cramped! Finding space to put your ironing board, cutting board and everything else can be quite frustrating. Enter the latest **Omnigrid** product "**The Foldaway**"! This portable cutting and ironing station is just fabulous. Measuring just 30 x 45 cm when closed, the two boards hinge open to give you a cutting mat on the one side and a non-stick pressing board on the other. Two sturdy carrying straps make it easy to take with you. Any quilter's dream.

Available from www.thefatquarter.co.za



There are many different snap-blade cutters out there to choose from. Little ones, big ones, cheapies, stainless steel ones and more.

In our studio the **Olfa MT-1** has however, found a special place. This mid-size cutter is just small enough to use for accurate cutting jobs and just big enough to open boxes and cut thick cardboard. The blade locks in place automatically and the blade thickness, blade slide and overall construction give it a feeling of solidness and safety, which is often lacking in cheap snap-blade cutters. Retailing in stores for just under R100, it makes a very practical gift.

Available from Olfa stockists around the country and also from www.thefatquarter.co.za



Sticking little bits of fabric down to complete an appliqué artwork using lightweight fabrics requires a quality iron-on adhesive that will do its job without gumming up the whole project or creating a stiff hard finish. Enter **Heat n Bond Lite** - the ideal iron-on adhesive film that is set with an iron in just 6 seconds. Quilt artists all over the world love and recommend this product. Packed in 43 cm x 1.1 m. Now available in South Africa too!

Available from www.thefatquarter.co.za

Mossy FAIRY HOUSE

by Sue Human

I have been planning and making a fairy village for my daughter now for over a year. A dear friend gave her a fairy garden kit for Christmas and we got busy with this house to go inside it. Then we decided - hey! Now seems as good a time as any to complete the fairy village too.

So you can decide to go mossy fairy house to put in a small fairy garden or go over the top obsessively excess and create a fairy village. The house is a really easy project to do with a child and so magical.

We did not focus on perfection, we wanted to have fun crafting together. We didn't put any toy fairies in there because obviously we built ours for the real fairies to reside in. "If we build it, they will come" blind belief and hope.

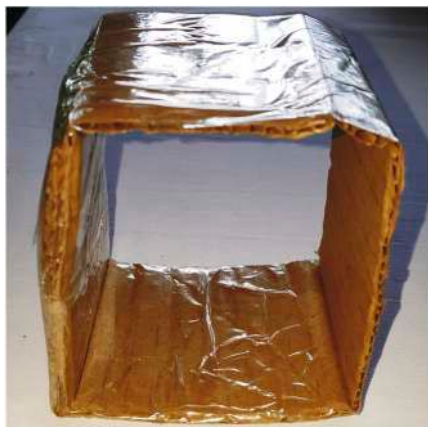


REQUIREMENTS

- Box cardboard
- Clear packaging tape
- Ice cream sticks
- Paint
- Piece of picket fence
- Fairy door (I purchased mine from my local craft store, but I have also made many with polymer clay, super easy)
- Green moss
- Coconut shells or shells from Island sorbet (most Spars stock them)
- Dried lavender
- Wood glue
- Contact glue

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Use box cardboard to shape a basic four sided box – you decide on the size. Use clear packaging tape to secure the shape.



2. Use ice cream sticks to reinforce the top, bottom and outsides of the box, gluing with contact adhesive and securing with clear packaging tape.



3. Trace and cut a backing piece of cardboard and glue in place with contact glue. Use clear packaging tape to make it extra secure.



4. Make a top story the same way you made the bottom, only make it a little smaller than the bottom so that we can attach a sun deck. Use contact glue to adhere it to the bottom and secure again with clear packaging tape.



5. Reinforce the sides and top and bottom with ice cream sticks.



6. Trace the front of the house and cut it out.

7. Place your fairy door sort of in the middle and trace its outline. Before you cut out the gap, you want to leave a strip in place as in the picture so that you can

attach the door with a quick and easy cardboard hinge.



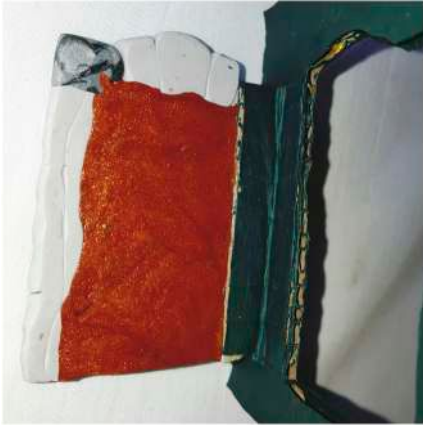
8. Measure and cut a piece of cardboard to use as the hinge, as in the picture, and adhere to the front of the house with contact glue.



9. Paint the house, the door and the picket fence (which will become the sun deck) inside and out and leave to dry.



10. Adhere the other side of the hinge to the door with contact adhesive.




11. Use wood glue to adhere the moss all over the outside walls and around the door.



12. To make the roof, cover the shells with wood glue and coat with dried lavender.



13. Adhere the shells and the sunroof with contact adhesive.

Place in your fairy garden and enjoy. 





Easter Parade

Here are a whole range of quick Easter projects to decorate you own Easter party.



Sweetie Bottles

Paint the lids with Universal Undercoat. Cure for 24 hours then coat them with Americana Chalky Finish: innocence pink, nostalgia lilac and escape blue. Seal with ultra matte varnish.

Easter Parade Truck

I found this wooden truck at a hobby shop and painted it with Americana for a background decor item and to assist with the delivery of the sweets!



Ceramic Bunnies

Will we ever forget our drybrushing days?
I basecoated the bunnies with Windsor Blue. I then drybrushed them using Dove Grey and White and then highlighted gently with Carousel Pink.

Fill the bottles and also the truck with all the pink and white Easter sweets you can find!

Wooden Houses

YOU NEED:

3 wooden cut-outs, Americana paints- I used all the colours on my Easter palette.

Basecoat the houses with a wood sealer.

Sketch in your roof dimensions, windows and doors.
I used Black Plum and Buttermilk mix for to basecoat the houses to give dusty pink effect. For the green roof, use Antique Teal mix with White.

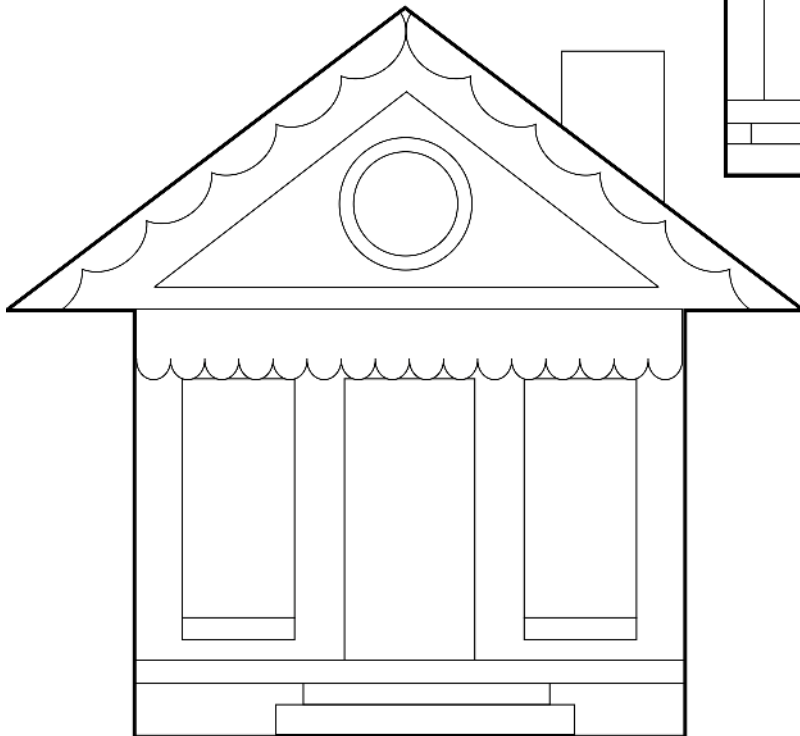
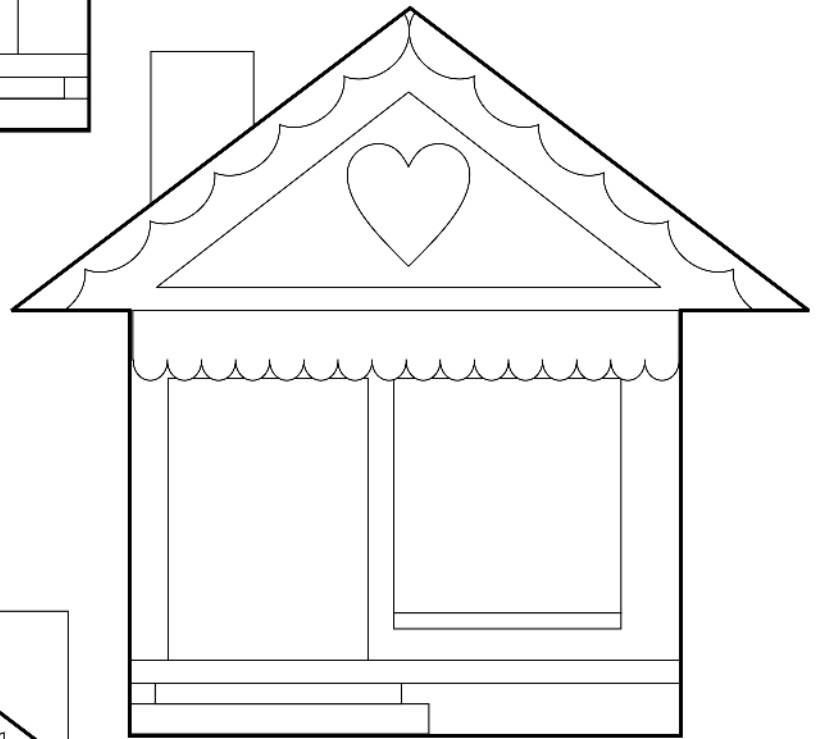
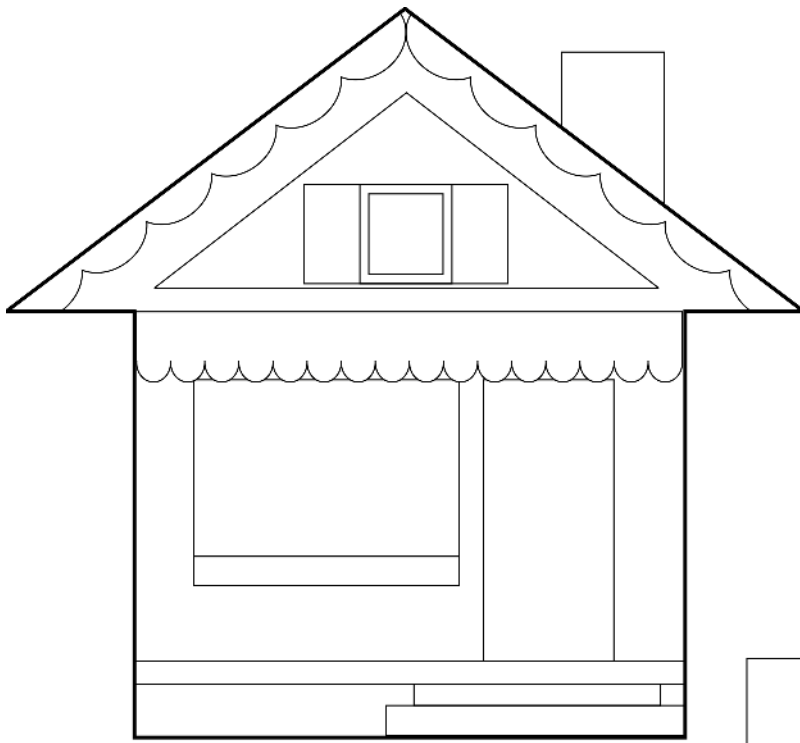
To shape the roof tiles, use your shader, double loaded in the roof colour and white or yellow for the red roof.

This project was designed mainly to demonstrate shading



of lace curtains: First sketch in the outline of the curtains using a white pencil. Load your shader with water, tip in white paint, then follow the markings. These houses are tiny, so you have to work very carefully, but enjoy! Once finished, paint the hearts red then mix gold powder with gel, paint on here and here to look like Gold Leaf and your houses are alive with tiny hearts of their own.

Happy Easter to all of you!



Magic Touch Bunny Ornaments



by PNA

REQUIREMENTS

- Polystyrene bunny
- Heritage Chalk Paint – colour of your choice
- Heritage Antique Crackle Top Coat
- Heritage Antique Crackle Base Coat
- Soft Paint Brush
- Heritage Magic Touch – colour of your choice
- Turpentine



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Paint the polystyrene bunny with 2 coats of Heritage Chalk Paint – leave it to dry.



2. Apply one layer of Heritage Antique Crackle Base Coat over the entire bunny, leave it to dry and apply another layer – do this in alternative directions.

Leave it to dry completely.



3. Apply a layer of Heritage Antique Crackle Top Coat, be careful not to go over and over the same spot, as this will prevent the cracks forming.

Leave it to dry for 24 hours so that the cracks can appear.



4. Rub Heritage Magic Touch into the cracks, using a soft cloth.



5. Leave it for ± 1 hours and wipe the excess Magic Touch off, with a soft cloth dipped into turpentine.



Decorated Glass Bottles

Spray the bottle tops with spray paint and leave them to dry. Paint small polystyrene bunnies with craft paint, when dry, glue them onto the lids. Fill the empty bottles with yummy goodies and tie a pretty ribbon around the lid.

CW



Colour your World...

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Foot & Hand Bling

Level: Beginner

by Henrietta Nel of Beads Direct.

Materials:

- 65 x Flower Connectors
- 65 x 4mm Rolo Chain Links
- Lobster Clasps
- 2 x 10cm Chain

Instructions – Foot Bling:

Add 10cm Chain to the first Connector. Add a Chain Link to the opposite side. Add a Connector, a Chain Link, Connector, a Chain Link, Connector, a Chain Link and a Connector. Add two Connectors to the last Connector added. Add four Connectors to the two Connectors added in the previous round. Add two connectors to the left and two to the right. Repeat this step until you have six rows of two Connectors. Add 1 Connector and a piece of Chain to the one side and a Lobster on the other side.



Instructions – Hand Bling:

Add 10cm Chain to the first Connector. Add a Chain Link to the opposite side. Add a Connector, a Chain Link, Connector and a Chain Link. Add one Connector to the left and two to the right with a Link in the centre. Add four connectors. Add five Connectors. Add six Connectors. Add 1 Connector to the left and one to the right. Repeat this step until you have three Connectors on either side. Add a piece of Chain to the one side and a Lobster on the other side.



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Bostik Fine 'n Wide School Glue Dull tip applicator. Clear drying. ACID FREE.		X	X	X	😊
Bostik Art & Craft Sprayable Adhesive Easy to use. Repositionable. ACID FREE.		😊	😊	😊	😊
Bostik Prestik Famous. Fabulous. Can't live without it. And it's re-usable. ACID FREE.		😊	😊	😊	😊
Bostik Super Contact Instant. Permanent. Super. Strong.		😊	😊	😊	😊
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Lonely Polar Bear Baby blanket

A special blanket for a special baby boy. A knitted top with a simple crochet edge is lined with polar fleece to be extra warm for cold wintery days. The polar bear is hand appliqued.

by Dana Biddle

REQUIREMENTS

- 8 x 50 ColourSpun Pure Cotton DK in colour of your choice
- 2 bobbins ColourSpun #8 Embroidery thread in same colour as your yarn
- 1 bobbin ColourSpun #8 Embroidery thread in a darker shade for polar bear
- 1 bobbin ColourSpun #5 Embroidery thread in darker shade for eyes
- Polar fleece fabric – lining 68cm x 98cm (There is a lot of this fabric in the shops at the moment, with “sheep skin” on one side and a colour on the other. Choose a colour to complement your yarn. If you can’t get this kind, any plain colour polar fleece to match your yarn will do and use a piece of velvety fabric in a different colour for the nose.)
- Polar fleece fabric – bear 30cm x 75 cm
- 4 mm Knitting needles
- 4mm Crochet hook
- Embroidery needle

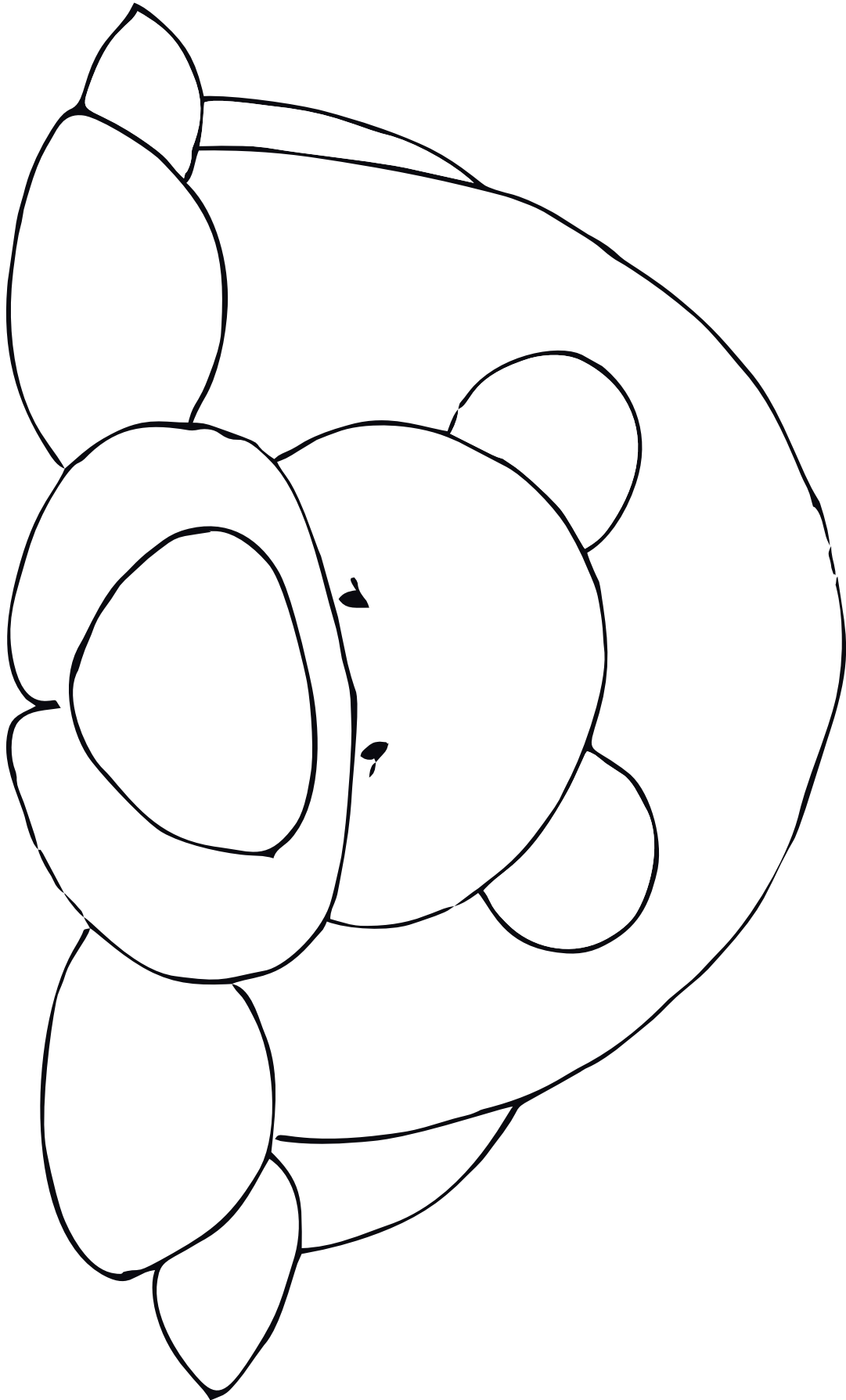
Abbreviations

Ch = chain

dc = double crochet

tr = treble crochet





INSTRUCTIONS

Note: for edge stitches of each row – Knit the 1st stitch through the back of the loop and slip the last stitch purl wise. This gives you a chain edge that is perfect for picking up stitches.

1. Blanket

Start with a crochet chain – 68cm long
Pick up and knit a stitch into the back of each stitch.

Work in stocking stitch for 98 cm.

Cast off, do not cut the yarn.

2. Crochet Edge

Start with 3 tr in the 1st ch from the corner; skip 1 ch; (1 dc in next ch; skip 1 ch; 3 tr in next ch; skip 1 ch) to next corner. End with 3 tr in last chain at the corner

Repeat from * to * for next 3 sides.

(depending on the number of chain sts on your work, you may need to skip an extra ch or 2 on each side in order to end with 3tr in the last chain).

Join to close the round and end off.

Block the blanket, pinning it to the correct size.

3. Lining

Stitch the lining to the back of your blanket along the knitted edge using the matching embroidery thread and blanket stitch.

4. Polar Bear

Photo copy the pattern from the pattern sheet and increase it to 200%

Cut the paper pattern out and place it on the coloured side (wrong side) of the fabric (excluding the nose).

Draw around each piece and cut out.

Turn the fabric over and place the nose on the fleece side of the fabric, draw around it and cut out.

5. Using the photo and line drawing for placement and using the #5 embroidery

thread, colonial knots and straight stitches, embroider the eyes onto the head.



Pin the ears in place with the edges under the top head. Pin the bottom head in place over the top head. Pin the nose onto the bottom head.

Pin the legs in place on each side under the body, then the back paws to each leg and the front paws to the bottom of the body. Finally pin the head in place.



6. Use the #8 embroidery thread and blanket stitch to attach all the pieces of the bear to each other.



7. Now pin the bear to the blanket and attach with blanket stitch, making sure your stitches catch the back of the lining.

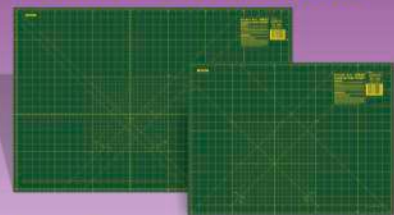
Enjoy!

CW

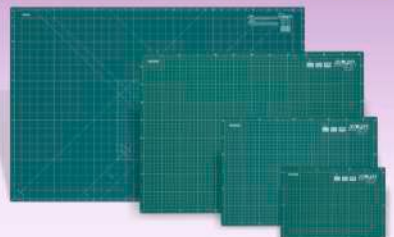
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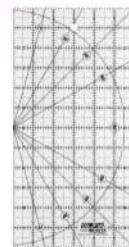
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INSTRUCTIONS

Materials:

- 1 x real waxed cord
- 125 x wooden beads
- 1 x toggle clasp
- 1 x 1.75 crochet hook

Instructions:

Bracelet:

Thread 20 wooden beads onto the waxed cord. Make a secure looped knot to the one end of the cord, with the crochet hook, crochet a chain stitch through the one side of the toggle clasp. Use the end tail and make a double knot through the chain stitch. Add a drop of glue and cut the tail off. Push 1 bead snugly against the crochet hook and crochet 4 x chain stitches. Repeat 4 times. Crochet a chain stitch through the 2nd part of the toggle clasp, slip stitch through the last chain stitch before the clasp and crochet a further 2 chain stitches. Push 1 bead snugly against the crochet hook and crochet 4 x chain stitches. Repeat till you have all 5 beads on this side. Slip stitch into the first chain stitch of side one. Make a secure double knot, add a drop of glue and cut the tail off.

Necklace:

Thread 43 wooden beads onto the waxed cord. Make a secure looped knot to the one end of the cord, with the crochet hook, crochet a chain stitch. Hook the tail through the first stitch, make a double knot, add a drop of glue and cut the tail off. Push 1 bead snugly against the crochet hook and crochet 5 x chain stitches. Repeat till you have one bead left. Add the last bead, crochet 1 chain stitch. Make a secure double knot, add a drop of glue and cut the tail off.

Belt:

Thread 70 wooden beads onto the waxed cord. Make a secure looped knot to the one end of the cord, with the crochet hook, crochet a chain stitch. Hook the tail through the first stitch, make a double knot, add a drop of glue and cut the tail off. Push 1 bead snugly against the crochet hook and crochet 5 x chain stitches. Repeat till you have one bead left. Add the last bead, crochet 1 chain stitch. Make a secure double knot, add a drop of glue and cut the tail off.

Suede Wrap Choker

Level: beginner

Materials:

- 1 x 28 cm suede cord
- 2 x fold over cord ends
- 2 x 40 cm suede cord
- 10 cm chain
- 1 x lobster clasp
- 1 x 10 mm spacer
- 4 x 4 mm spacers
- 2 x jump rings

Instructions:

Use 1 x 40 cm piece and the 28cm piece of suede cord. Put the one end on top of the other, add some glue to the ends and add a fold over cord end. Pinch the fold over cord end closed; add a ring and clasp. Repeat on the opposite side; add the 10cm chain to the ring. Add the 10mm spacer and slide half way up the leather. Add 2 x 4mm spacers to both ends; add some glue and cut the tails off.



by Denelda van de Westhuizen

REQUIREMENTS

- Enamel Bowl
- Mandala Stencil
- French Collection Craft Paint
Embué
Le Blanc
- Masking tape
- Decoupage sheet
- Deco Podge
- Nylon Brushes
- Stencil Brushes
- Metal Primer
- Scissors
- Prestik
- Gloss Varnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Clean the Enamel bowl with Vinegar and water. Make sure it is completely dry. Apply two coats of metal primer. Allow each coat to dry before applying the next.

Paint the inside of the bowl and the outside.



2. Paint the inside of the bowl with French Collection Embué. Start in the middle and work to the edges.

Blend in French collection Le Blanc while the Embué is still wet to create a marble type effect.

Allow to dry. Do the same with the outside of the bowl.



3. Use the masking tape and position the stencil in the middle of the bowl. Stencil with the Le Blanc paint and stencil brush.



Remember to wipe the excess paint off of your brush before you start stencilling.



4. Stencil the same design around the edge of the bowl using the same method as in the previous step.

5. Cut out the images you would like to use from the Decoupage Sheet. Apply a generous layer of Deco Podge on the bowl (only area where the image will go). Lay the image on the wet Podge.

With the paint brush, start from the middle of the image and paint the image onto the bowl. Wipe the excess Podge away with a wet wipe.



6. Do so with all the images for the inside of the bowl.



Apply three to four layers of podge on the whole inside of the bowl and allow to dry.



7. On the outside of the bowl – position the paper cut outs with prestik to make sure the designs fits all around the bowl.



8. Using the same method as in previous steps, Podge the images in place. Allow the podge to dry.


9. Now stencil a design in between the same images around the bowl.



Apply three to four layers of podge on the outside of the bowl and allow to dry.

10. Lastly varnish the bowl with a heat resistant gloss varnish. Allow each coat of varnish to dry completely before you apply the next and always work in a well ventilated area.

11. Remember: this bowl is not for everyday use.

This is an ornament and can only be used as a fruit bowl and can only be hand washed with luke warm soapy water. 



Try House Number

REQUIREMENTS

by John Strijdom for Trunell crafts

- Hardboard
- Mesh in the size of your project
- Paper in the same size
- Plastic also in the same size
- Masking tape, Pencil
- Variety of ceramic tiles, white for the background, blue for the number and brown for the border

- Grout, Wood glue, Flexible tile adhesive
- Tile nipper-to nip tile in pieces and to shape pieces
- Tile cutter-to cut (score) tile into strips on cutting board
- Cutting board with wooden strip in the size you would cut your border
- Tile breaker-break tiles as they are cut in strips with tile cutter
- Rubber kidney for grouting

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Use the masking tape to tape the paper onto the hardboard. Use a pencil to do a rough drawing of your design on the paper.



2. Tape the plastic wrap on the paper.

3. Now tape the mesh on the plastic and you're ready to start with your mosaic project.

4. Cut the brown tiles in strips and then in smaller strips (the actual size is personal choice) and use it to mosaic the border of the mesh. At this stage you can use either the tile adhesive or wood glue.



5. Break the blue tiles in pieces and mosaic the number



6. Cut the green tiles for the ivy leaves and glue to mesh as pattern indicates. We tried to cut the tiles in such a way that the grout lines represent the veins of the leaves. Continue till done.



7. Break the white tiles and mosaic the background leaving small spaces for your grouting. Try to cut in such a manner as to fit the tiles like puzzle pieces. Allow to dry.



8. Peel the mosaic on mesh from the plastic and leave to dry upside down.

9. Use a pencil and mark on the wall where you will glue the mosaic. Use a metal

scraper to add flexible tile adhesive to the wall to the thickness of about 1 mm.

If you don't want to install the number permanently you can glue it to a metal plate or fibre cement board for outside use.

10. With some help, glue the mosaic project to the wall pressing down on it to make sure it sticks everywhere securely. Allow to dry. If your mural is very large you can cut it into smaller pieces and glue it to the wall piece by piece

11. Mix the grout as per manufacturer's instructions until you get the consistency of mayonnaise.

Tip: Ceramic tiles are porous so the grout needs to be quite runny. If it is too thick it will be difficult to fill the gaps in between the tiles.

Work the grout over the tiles with a rubber kidney or your hand, making sure the grout fills all the spaces. Use a rubber squeegee or kidney to remove the excess grout from the surface of the mosaic before completing the grouting.

As this mosaic was done as a gift for someone we did not grout it as the client would do that after installed. Please note to never grout a project on mesh before trying to install it.

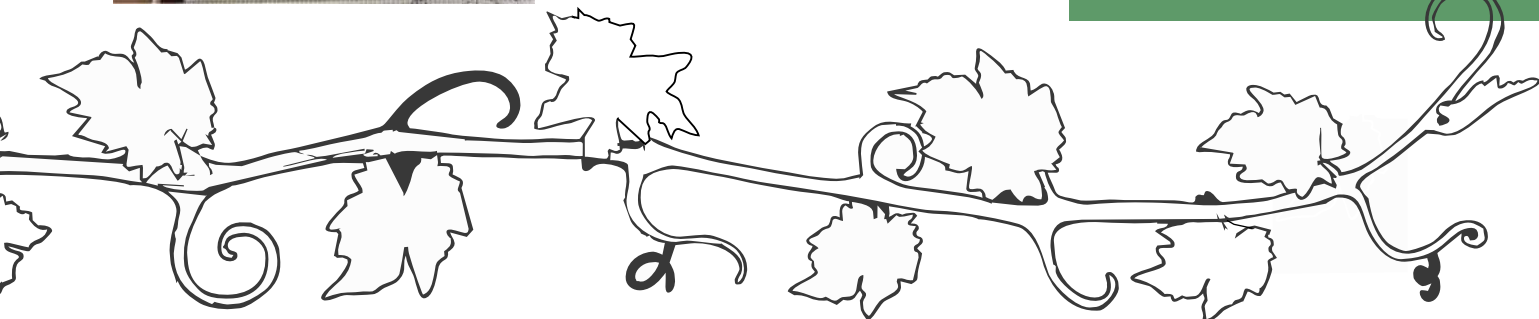
12. Clean the rest of the grout using paper towels or a sponge and polish to a shine.

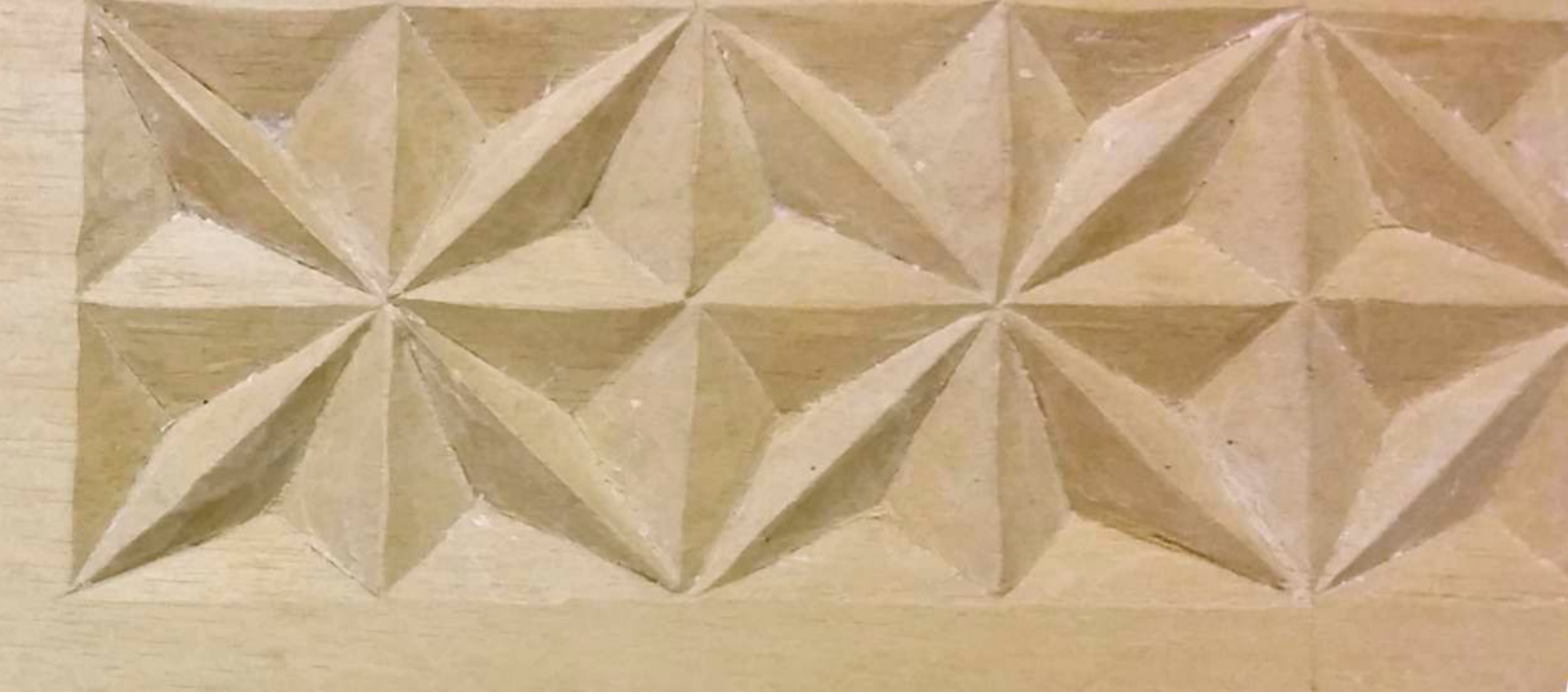
13. Stand back and enjoy your creativity along with everyone else who will see it!

For more info, or to purchase mosaic products, contact Trunell Crafts:

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WOOD CARVING TECHNIQUE: **Chip Carving**

Wood carving is one of those perennial crafts that appeals to a wide range of people. There is something intensely satisfying about taking a flat piece of wood and turning it into a beautiful 3D artwork or functional item.

Here we look at chip carving, a basic decoration method that is ideal for beginners. The technique is believed to have first been used in China, spreading through Europe and into Switzerland as a result of wars and invasions. It became a decoration technique very popular in European churches, eventually becoming a popular form of folk art, where it was used on utensils and even toys.

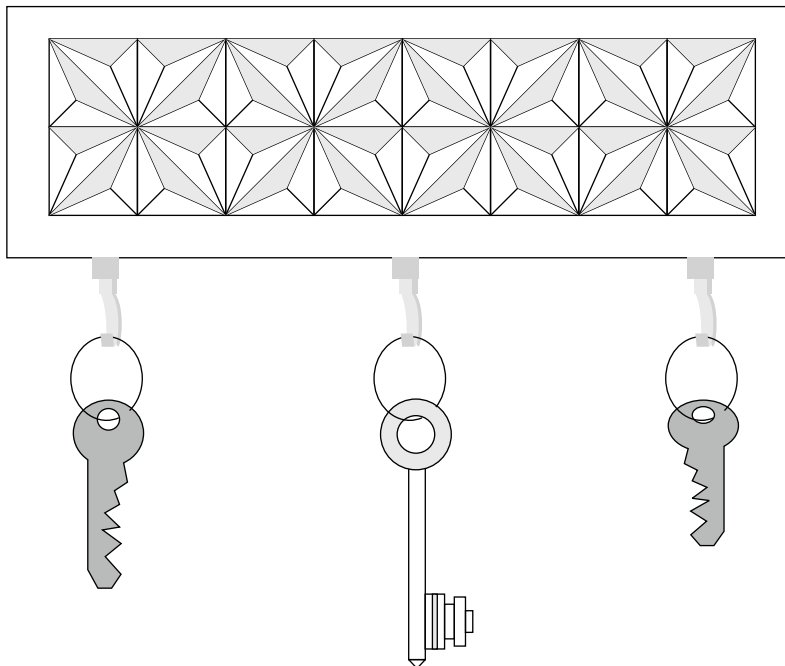
The technique involves making precise cuts into the wood to remove small chips (usually triangular in shape) in a single piece, as opposed to other forms of carving where wood is carved away bit by bit. Chip carving designs are made up of a combination of cuts in repeating patterns. Mathematics and geometry tend to play a strong role in the designs.

REQUIREMENTS

by Colleen Amos

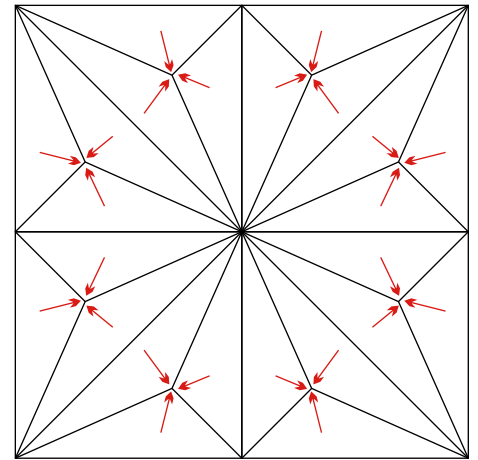
- Jelatong wood cut to size (and edged if required)
*Jelatong is a softer, fine-grained wood without knots.
It does not splinter easily, making it perfect for carving.*
- Carbon paper or transfer paper
- Pencil
- Skew chisel
- Ruler
- Straight chisel
- Cup hooks
- Cobra polish

Suggested Project: Keyholder



TEMPLATE

Enlarge/reduce and repeat as required

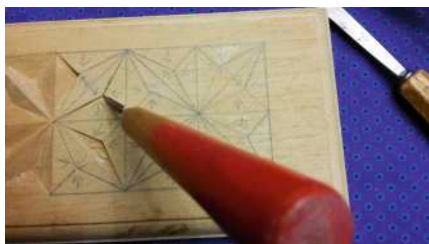


INSTRUCTIONS

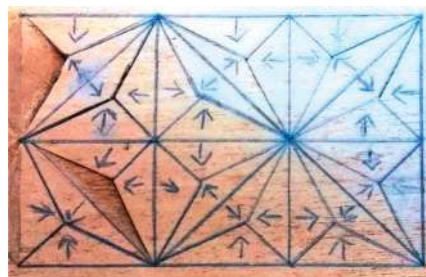
Plan your project on a piece of paper first to determine exact size of wood required and also how many pattern repeats you need.

Enlarge or reduce the template as required. Then very accurately transfer the template design onto the wood, repeating it as necessary.


First cut all the lines of your pattern using the skew chisel. This provides the boundaries for the carving.



Now proceed to gently remove the chips one by one, using a straight chisel. The arrows on the template and images indicate the direction of the angled downward cuts which are made to a depth of ± 8 mm.



Once you have finished, oil or polish wood, screw in hooks along the bottom edge and attached wall hangers on the back.

When carving, remember to take your time and enjoy the challenge! 

TIP: If you prefer a more traditional way of carving then use a short, sturdy, very sharp, pointed knife instead of chisels.

INSPIRATION

Here are a few more chip carving ideas for you to plan your own next project!



Follow your passion

Follow your passion and give yourself the best gift this year and start your own profitable embroidery business.

Met Karin Montgomery, a grandmother who used to enjoy making clothing and wedding dresses on a small scale. Karin has found a new niche industry to create a business for herself after her husband bought her a Melco, state-of-the-art industrial embroidering machine, allowing her to create so much more than just the dresses she used to make on her domestic sewing machine.

Today she creates headgear and gifts, custom designs her own lace work, formal dresses and personalised items for a variety of clientele ranging from schools to bed and breakfast establishments, events companies and community groups.

"I have been working with Bernina machines for years," said Karin, who describes the relationship she has developed with Tas Khan of Bernina on Musgrave as, "much like a great friendship which has grown over the past 20 years." Karin says when she and her husband were shown the Melco machine they were surprised by how simple and efficient it was. "I was delighted when Noël, my husband, decided to buy me one so I could start up my own business. I was already doing so much work on my other machine it helped tremendously to have industrial capacity."

"The beauty of such a business," says Noël, "is how anyone can start small and build it up over the years". While he is the first to admit embroidery isn't something just anyone can do, he says he has been fascinated by the capabilities of the machine which has broad appeal beyond just dress-making and decor and extends into branding and what he describes as "more manly" pursuits of customising clothing. Noël and Karin are both passionate about this common endeavour, their eyes tell stories of late nights discussing plans and ideas for new products and designs. "I am so enjoying being able to work alongside my beautiful wife and look forward to being able to do it even more when I retire in a few years' time!" he says.

Karin's business venture has already seen some great success as her client base has been boosted through word-of-mouth referrals. Since starting her studies in fashion years ago, she has worked and made a living making personalised items, and now she says there is



just so much more that she can do. Her particular love is making lace, which she designs and makes in any colour she needs for trims on clothing, soft furnishings, ornate headgear or decorative items for place settings.

Tas Khan, owner of Bernina on Musgrave says the machine is a versatile solution to many design challenges which help her clients keep up-to-date with trends. These include requests for 3D looks on caps which the machine is engineered to cope with, using a cap driver purpose-built for the task. An advantage of the system is that it allows for growth as it is a modular system ready for single or multi-head configurations which allow clients to add machines as their business grows.

Tas is proud of the fact that many satisfied Melco embroidery customers and business owners nationwide have invested in the Melco embroidery machines. "The design is pure elegance, the performance is raw power and the result is pure profit!" Customers receive training and support throughout the whole process.

BERNINA has a policy of always using the best brands to complement their domestic and other machines. "In the case of Melco, BERNINA decided it was the best they could choose and purchased it, making Melco part of the BERNINA International Organisation," she explained. American made, it is undoubtedly the top performer in its class.



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have a fabulous

Fabergé Easter



The original series of the famous jewelled eggs was created by Peter Carl Fabergé and his company between 1885 and 2017. Most famous of these were the ones made for the wives and mothers of Tsars Alexander III and Nicholas II as Easter gifts. I had the honour to view the collection while it was on show at the Metropolitan Art Museum in New York many years ago.

REQUIREMENTS

by Ronel Flemming Swart

- Polystyrene eggs (find at hobby shops)
- Various embellishments also from hobby shops
- Craft glue
- Americana acrylic paint:
 - wisteria
 - orchid
 - soft lilac
 - pink chiffon
- dove grey
- white
- Americana speciality products:
 - Glamour Dust
 - Crystal Twinkles
 - Weathered Wood for crackle effect
 - Silver Metallics
 - Turquoise Sparkle



ronelsart@gmail.com

INSTRUCTIONS

I used a variety of brush strokes on some of the polystyrene eggs, employing all the different strokes we have learned so far. You can use your imagination to decorate the rest of them. Crackle effects in different colours provide a good contrast to the heavily-decorated "Fabergé" eggs.

To make them easier to work with, first insert a toothpick into the bottom of the egg and use oasis florist's foam as a base.

Basecoat all the eggs with White, then paint them in different pastel shades.

Decorate each egg differently with things from your treasure box. I used beads, lace and ribbon. Jewellery fittings, scrapbooking embellishments, habby bits and pieces - all of these can work.

Carefully paint patterns around the eggs using a daisy stroke and a pivot stroke. Add dots selectively using a dot marker.



Instead of displaying your fabulous eggs in a bowl, why not decorate a real egg box and arrange them in that?

Americana acrylics used: taffy cream yellow • marigold • white • soft lilac • ochre and soft black for centres • avocado green for foliage

Use the brush strokes that you have already mastered to paint a pretty yellow Easter flower on heavy cardboard, then glue it to the lid, either on the outside if you are going to close the box, or on the underside of the lid if you want to keep it open as a display.

CW



March in your Garden

by Life is a Garden

What to do in the month of March

It's planting season! Time to get new plants into the ground to establish before winter and also the ideal time to move and replant trees and perennials. Get to your local GCA garden centre for more inspiration, ideas and expert advice. Read below and find out how to PLANTSMART.

Value shopping

Look out for 4-pack or small pot perennials in your local nursery. Not only will they save you money but they'll also fill large areas faster with year-long colour.

Herewith some of the trusted plants you will find this month:

Penstemon – these are the stalwarts of autumn. They are drought resistant and great for quick colour.

***Salvias** – many varieties with aromatic

foliage and tubular flowers that attract birds and insects. Salvias grow in a wide range of growing and soil conditions and cope with dry periods.

***Angelonias** – for a colourful display in flower beds and in pots. They are excellent as cut flowers. Grow angelonias in rich, well drained soils in a warm, sunny or semi-shaded position.

Gazanias – flower all year round in protected gardens. Plant in full sun in soil on the sandy side, with good drainage. Good for coastal gardens and their roots bind the soil so are excellent on slopes.

A large variety of attractive, flowering succulents are also available at your local nursery.

For frost free areas during this period

Planning for autumn planting

Fill your boot with compost, compost & more compost! Apply to each and every planting bed as nutritious mulch. Prepare soil by digging it over to the depth of a large spade, while working in copious amounts of compost and include bonemeal to promote strong root growth.

Start sowing sweet peas

It is sweet pea sowing time – prepare deep trenches for them by digging in compost from your local GCA garden centre and generous dustings of bonemeal or superphosphate (do not use bonemeal if you have dogs). Soak the seeds overnight in tepid water before sowing directly.

Bedding plant of the month: Lobelia

There are very few flowers that can match the true blue of Lobelia, that comes in light to dark blue, as well as white and dark pink. These grow anywhere in full sun or semi

shade and like loose, gritty soil. When nothing else seems to grow, punnets of seedlings can still be planted out, provided the area does not receive heavy frost.



There are also trailing Lobelias, which have a more cascading habit and suitable for hanging baskets, window boxes and for softening edges of raised beds.

Rose care for March

Roses are simply spectacular in autumn! To ensure quality blooms into the winter, continue with regular preventative treatments/spraying for black spot, beetles and bollworm. As the days get shorter, the roses start to go dormant and withdraw food from their leaves. To compensate for this and to provide enough food for new growth and flowers, fertilise with rose food – your local GCA will advise you on the best option. Regular watering is very important if there is insufficient rainfall.

Heirloom veggies

Spice up your food garden with these deliciously different veggie varieties. Heirloom varieties are kept true to type, handed down from generation to generation and produce very healthy plants. Some of the exciting varieties on the market these days include strange-looking and fiery chillies, different coloured cauliflower, carrots and broccoli, striped beetroot, and different varieties of tomatoes and brinjals.



In the herb garden

Start harvesting and preserving herbs for winter, harvesting small quantities at a time. Chop mint, parsley, basil and lemon balm, place in an ice tray, fill with water and freeze. Aromatic herbs, like oregano, marjoram, thyme, sage, bay and rosemary, are better air dried. Continue to feed herbs monthly with a half strength liquid fertiliser and water regularly.

For patio and balcony gardens, visit your local GCA nursery for ready to pick potted up miniature veggies for cooking.

Plant more trees

Autumn is the ideal time to establish young plants before the cold weather set in. Consider deciduous trees with striking autumn foliage. *Quercus-Palustris* is admired and deservedly popular for the rich autumn tints of its foliage and thrives throughout South Africa. It grows 10 – 15m tall and requires a sunny position in the garden. Take care not to plant it too close to walls, paving etc. Stake during the beginning years – especially if your garden tends to be windy. For indigenous Autumn colour consider *Celtis Africana*, *Liquidambar* or *Combretum*.



Pruning

Neaten evergreen shrubs and hedges without cutting back too harshly. Take care not to prune winter or early-spring flowering plants – as you'll miss out on their annual display. March is a good time to prune overgrown conifers and to experiment with conifer topiary. Remember to spray them preventatively against infestations of Italian Cypress aphids.

Inland gardening

(Gauteng, Free State, North West, Mpumalanga and Limpopo)

Plants

Your local GCA nursery will have some beauties to plant now. Look out for these:

***Hibiscus rosa-sinensis longiflora* 'Adonicus Apricot'** - known as the long life hibiscus, *longifloras* is a selection with longer lasting flowers. This shrub with its apricot-coloured flowers can be planted in a sunny to semi-shaded spot and in colder areas protected by planting in a container in a sheltered area.

***Buxus microphylla* 'Faulkner'** is a glossy evergreen that can be shaped very easily into balls, pyramids or low hedges. They are low maintenance and a very tough plant that grows in sun or shade. This buxus is hardy to cold and frost.



Polygala myrtifolia commonly known as the September bush forms a medium-sized shrub or small tree up to 3m tall and perfect for small gardens. The flowers are in shades of purple and mauve at their best in mid-October. A good indigenous plant across winter- and summer-rainfall areas of the country.



Garden tasks

- Fill pots and beds with petunias – they love the drier winter weather.
- Water the lawn every three to four days and strengthen for winter by top dressing with an organic boosted fertiliser. If you prefer an inorganic lawn fertiliser then use

3:2:1 at 45 grams per m².

- Fertilise container plants, hanging baskets and seedlings with liquid plant food.
- Prune all evergreen shrubs, trees and creepers immediately after they finish flowering. This allows buds to quickly set for the following season.
- Prepare your containers now for a stunning spring display! By the end of March the retail nurseries will be filled with winter bulbs and seedlings, so remember to buy bulbs early, before supplies run out.
- When planting a new tree ensure the support is suitable and correctly tied. The support should be at least two-thirds of the planting height and the tree secured to it twice. Leave enough space for the growth spurt in spring so that the tie does not cut into the bark and create a weak spot.
- Remember to follow good water practises - for example, reduce watering as the weather cools.

Coastal gardening

(Western Cape, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal)

Plants

Your local GCA nursery will have some beauties to plant now. Look out for these:

Gardenia augusta hybrids (Cape jasmine) are possibly the best known scented shrubs in local gardens.



These neat evergreen shrubs are seldom without buds or blooms from spring through to autumn. Grow in rich, well-drained soil in sun or semi-shade.

Plumeria rubra (frangipani) grows well in the tropical and sub-tropical areas of the country. They withstand drought and bloom profusely from late spring through summer and into autumn. There are a wide range of different coloured flowers that are beautifully fragrant. They are easy to grow

and require little attention, flourish in almost all soil types, from sand to clay, and they cope with a wide range of pH levels – both acid and alkaline. They grow best in full sun.



Capsicum annuum 'Black Pearl' (ornamental chilli) is a compact, bushy ornamental chilli that will reach a mature height of 40 to 50cm. The young leaves are greenish in colour but turn glossy black as they mature. The small white flowers are followed by very hot fruit that are shiny black at first and then turn bright red. These plants will grow indoors and outdoors in a sunny spot in well-drained, moist soil.

Garden tasks

- Take stock of any evergreen trees that may have grown strongly and will now be shading your garden and trim or thin out.
- Cut back all summer flowering perennials that are looking tired. Pay attention to salvias, daisies, lavender and fuchsias.



- It is a good month to do a thorough feeding. Plants and lawns will respond well to fertilising now with some 2.3.2. Not only will they give you another flush of growth, it will help to strengthen them for the winter to come. Fertilise all your container plants, hanging baskets and seedlings with a liquid plant food.
- Move shrubs or trees in the wrong place on a cool day. First prepare the new planting hole with compost, general fertiliser like

superphosphate or 2:3:2 and bonemeal. Do not attempt the replanting of large trees yourself, it should rather be done by professionals

- Go to autumn plant sales, there are great bargains to buy and most plants will be lush and big after a whole summer season's growth.
- Get your spring bulbs while the selection is good. Do not plant them yet, the soil needs to cool down. Keep the bulbs in a cool, dry and dark place till April and if it's very hot, May before planting.
- Sow more flowering plants directly into well prepared soil for masses of colour in the winter garden.

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Small *sling bag*

by Geert Schuiling

Extract from his book: "Anyone can do Leatherwork" published by Metz Press

You will need:

Vegetable-tanned leather dyed in the colour of your choice
Cutting mat and cutting tools
Water-based dye
Felt and peg brush
2 harness needles
Thread
2 x 15mm (3/5in) D-rings
2 x 15mm (3/5in) roller buckle
6 x 8mm (1/3in) rivets
Hammer and anvil

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Enlarge the templates. Cut out leaving a 1 cm margin, glue onto cardboard. Using a NT cutter and ruler, cut out each template carefully.

2. Using the prepared templates, mark and cut out the leather, then stain the raw edges. Punch all the stitching holes, buckle slots and rivet holes.

3. Prepare the sling by sliding the buckle strap into the buckle until the prong fits through the buckle slot. Fold over the end and secure with a rivet.



4. Slide the tab end of the gusset through the D-ring, fold over and secure with a rivet. Repeat on the other side.



5. Slide the narrow end of the buckle tab through the buckle until the prong fits through the buckle slot.



Fold over the end, place the buckle strap on the grain side of the front panel lining up the rivet holes and attach with a rivet through all three layers. Secure with saddle stitch along the stitching holes.



6. Place the closing strap grain side up on the grain side of the body and saddle stitch in place, starting and ending with an over stitch.



7. Make a folding line with your fingers in the long sides of the gusset (grain side up).




8. Lining up the stitching holes, position the gusset on the body, flesh sides together, and saddle stitch the gusset to the body.

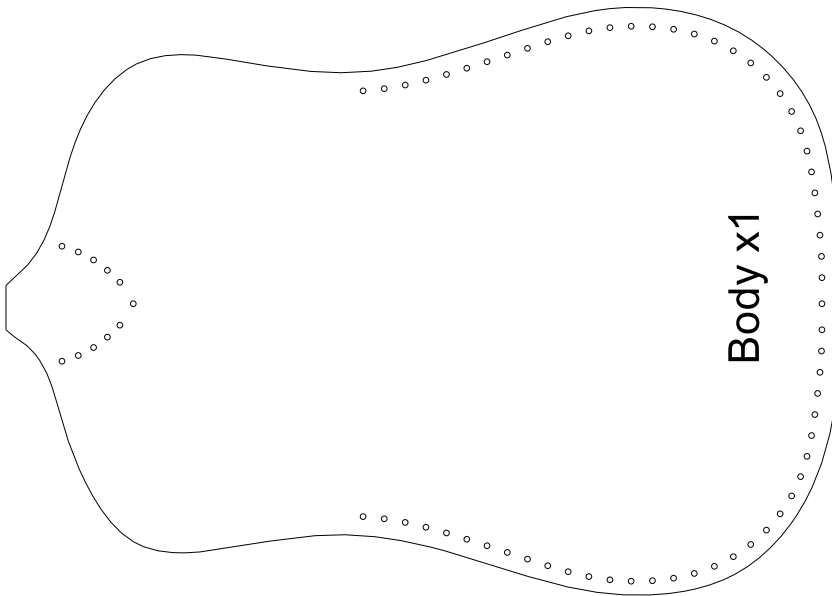
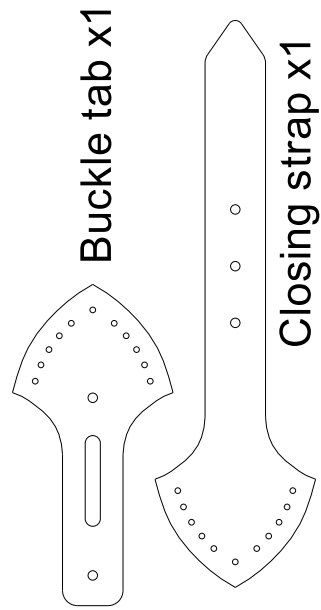
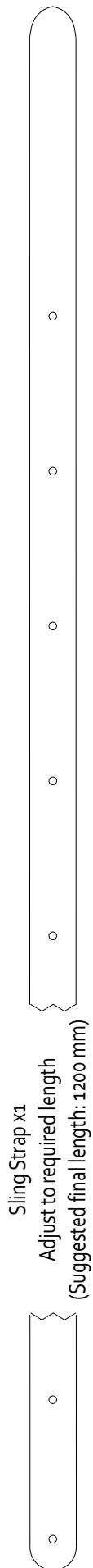


9. Place the front panel on the gusset, flesh sides together. Starting and ending with an over stitch, saddle stitch the gusset to the front.

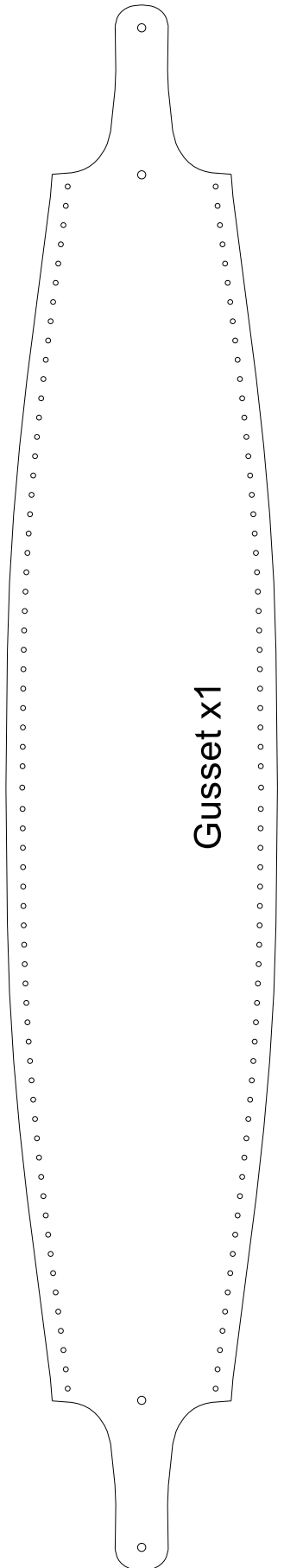
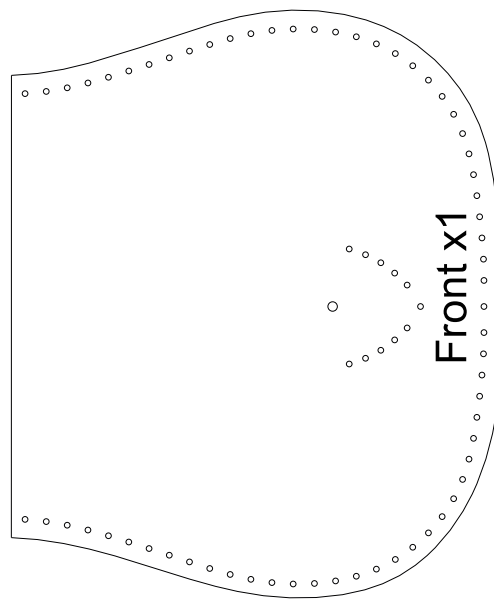


10. Attach the buckle strap and sling strap to the D-rings by folding over the ends and securing with rivets. 





Scale 1:2



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Family



TO ME
home is where
YOU ARE



H O
M E

by Delancé Labuschagne



Family
photo wall

INSTRUCTIONS



Frame

Paint your frame with a coat of Rouge Red, French Collection Craft Paint. Use Fabuleux, French Collection Craft Paint with your graining tool to create your wooden effect on your frame. Place a photo of your children in the frames.

Clock

Paint your coaster with Sarcelle and your clock hands with Fabuleux, French Collection. Position your clock hands on the time the children were born.



The Two's

Stain your wooden '2' with Antique Rust - Antique Oak.

Plus Sign

Using your Tough and Sweet scrapbook sheet, cut out a '+' sign to put in between your '2's'

Canvas

Decoupage your canvas with the wooden texture from the tough and sweet scrapbook sheet. After the decopodge has dried, spray the canvas with a layer of crystal lacquer spray.

Once your canvas is completely dry, transfer the vinyl word family onto the middle of your canvas.

Paint over your entire canvas with Chateau, French Collection. Before your paint is completely dry, remove your vinyl sticker and have your wooden texture show through.



Photo Canvas

Paint your entire canvas with Sarcelle.

Print out a A3 colour photo.

Paint a layer of decoupage.

Place your photo on top of your canvas and brush out any bubbles.

Paint over you photo with another layer of decoupage.



Using 4 small canvasses decoupage the front with your Tough and Sweet scrapbook sheet.

Paint your sides with Chateau French Collection.

Dry brush the top of your canvas to blend in the sides.

When sides are dry, dry brush with Romantisme Rose French Collection to give the sides a more antique look.



Antique rust stain.

Cut out the words you want to use from your wall vinyl sign.

Transfer your vinyl onto your canvas.



Wooden House

Paint your wooden house with a layer of Chateau, French Collection.

Using our small heart stencil, stencil on a heart in the centre of your house using Rouge, French collection.

Using your small mandala stencil, stencil on the roof with Stable, Chalk Paint.

Using the same stencil, stencil more of the same pattern onto the sides and front of the house with Champagne, French Collection for a lace effect.



Fancy Frame

Fast Crack your outside frame using Romantisme Rose, French Collection and Chateau French Collection. Tape of just the edges and paint the border with Stable, Chalk Paint.

Paint the inside of the box with Romantisme Rose, French Collection.

Using your Tough and Sweet scrapbook sheet, paste your texture in back of your frame. Mount any note or photo you want with thick double sided tape.

CW



Love Hanger

Paint your whole hanger with a layer of Stable, Chalk Paint. Paint your small wooden peg with Champagne, French Collection.

Once all dry, paste your wooden pegs on your hanger using craft glue.

Make small card spelling out the word you would like to display.



Shabby Chic Trays

by Ursula of the Clay Club 012 803 0772
place your order on our website at www.theclayclub.co.za.

REQUIREMENTS

- Wooden Trays
- Pack of tiles and ceramic inserts
- Variety of small tiles
- Spatula
- Wood glue
- Grout



INSTRUCTIONS

TO START

- Lay out the large tiles and position them where you want them. Each tray will be unique. These pictures are just guidelines.



- Pack out the inserts and place them around them.



- Take the small tiles and create different effects as shown above.
- Finally lift each one and glue down.



Tip

- Take some masking tape to protect the epoxy coating on the picture tiles. Grout as per instruction.
- If you would like to put a layer of Pratliglo on top of the tray be sure to seal the grout with a sealant before to stop the grout from discolouring.
- Once grouting is done and the tray is clean you can paint the tray with acrylic paint. Also use masking tape so you do not paint the tiles.

GROUTING

Empty most of the bag of grout into a container and slowly add water, stirring all the while till you have the consistency of toothpaste. A good indication of the right consistency is when you stop stirring: if the mixture retains peaks and valleys – add more water. If it immediately settles – add more grout. The right balance is if the grout sluggishly settles.

Now liberally smear the grout over the surface of the tiles, ensuring that you force grout between all the tiles and those on the edge of the mosaic. Take a little grout with your finger and rub between the tiles of the border and the base all around the edge to ensure that you have filled the little gaps.

Using a spatula, remove as much of the excess grout as possible. Sprinkle a little dry grout over the entire mosaic and leave to dry for a few minutes. Using old scrunched up newspaper in a circular motion, remove all the extra grout. If you find a pothole or crater, rub a little grout into the gap until it is filled. TIP: Grout is very fine cement and will dry out your hands if you work without gloves. However, a liberal application of hand lotion kept handy should alleviate any effects.

Leave the project to dry for half an hour and remove any remaining grout with your fingernail or damp cloth.

NOTES:

Should a tile dislodge during grouting, re-apply glue to the tile and return it to its place, gently filling the sides and surrounds with grout to repair the gap. Avoid work in this area until you are sure that the tile has properly stuck and continue cleaning up your project.

CW

Some ideas:



Commeso Fiorentino

Florentine mosaic work

by Cay Momberg

The art of producing mosaics out of hard stones is one that began hundreds of years ago. "It was brought on by the idea of inventing a style of art that would never fade. Stones were seen as the perfect solution. They offer the same pictorial concept as a painting, but don't fade over time like paint does," explains Catia, daughter of Scarpelli Mosaici's founder and master mosaicista Renzo Scarpelli.

I had the privilege to meet one of the 5 still living masters of stone mosaic – Renzo Scarpelli from Scarpelli Mosaici. I spent some time with Renzo in his studio in Florence Italy. I had never seen such craftsmanship and beautiful mosaic art.

- painting with stones

The creations of maestro Renzo Scarpelli are admired all over the world: for over 50 years his name has been a trademark for hundreds of works of outstanding value. His technical experience, his craftsmanship and sensibility, as well as his passion for art, make him a complete artist, able to confer lights and shadows to a cold, unbending material like stone. In the same way, through his own "pittura di pietra" (pictorial art with hard stones) Renzo's son, master-craftsman Leonardo, has been able to give life to an extraordinary combination of art and craftwork, tradition and innovation.





Renzo was born in 1947. He started to work with stones when he just 13 years of age in one of the most ancient Florentine workshops. After many years of apprenticeship and art studies, during the 70's he succeeded in opening his own studio in Florence where he created his first works of Florentine "commesso". His son Leonardo followed his father's footsteps and at the beginning of the 90's he created his first works. Today Renzo and Leonardo work together in their studio creating high quality masterpieces.

The first stage is to collect stones. The artist searches to find raw materials like Chalcedony, Onyx, Gabbro, Verde Arno and Paesina for example. Other semi-precious stones for example Lapis-lazuli, Malachite, Jades are imported from abroad.

It is very important for the artist to be able to choose among a great variety of stones veins and chromatic tonalities when he start his "stone painting".

The raw blocks of stones are cut in 2/3mm slices with diamond disks.

The themes are created by the artist's imagination or real scenes from countryside, still life and portraits. The drawing to be executed is cut into small pieces.

Each piece is then manually cut by using a wood bow and an iron wire with abrasive powder and water that allow a surgical cutting even in the most complex shapes. Then the artist uses a file to perfect the shapes of the pieces and glues them with a mixture of hot bees wax and resin, getting seamless connections.





The whole composition is placed in cut out slate and hand-polished until all marvellous colours of the work are revealed.

The Scarpelli father and son still produce Florentine mosaics according to the ancient techniques handed down from the RENAISSANCE.

The business is very much a family

affair. Renzo's son Leonardo is also a master mosaicista, following in his father's footsteps. Renzo's wife Gabriella designs unique pieces of jewellery from stone and repairs stone objects. And in addition to overseeing business activities, Catia offers visitors guided tours of the workshop and gallery.

This is quite a complex trade, requiring a painter's, a geologist's and a sculptor's skills, as well as much patience and love for art. Also,



you cannot take up this trade unless you know where to find the places of origin of the stones and unless you are ready to merge into nature with a backpack and a chisel and know how to spot rough stone blocks from their outward appearance!

No wonder then that all "commesso fiorentino" artists can be counted on the fingers of one hand and they are all in Florence! Scarpelli Mosaici - I salute you. [CW](#)





The Scarpelli family

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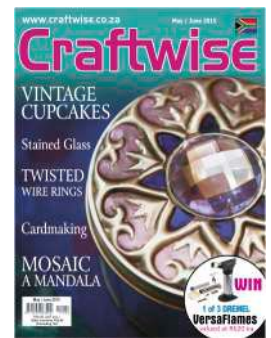
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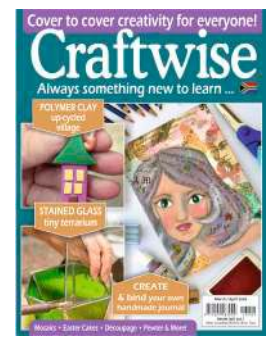
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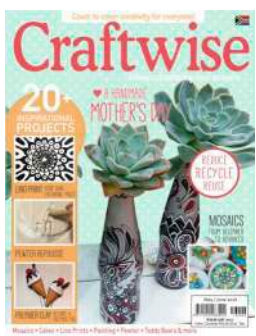
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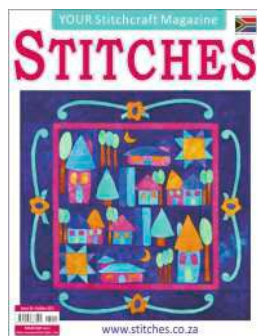
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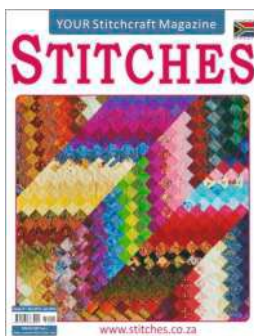
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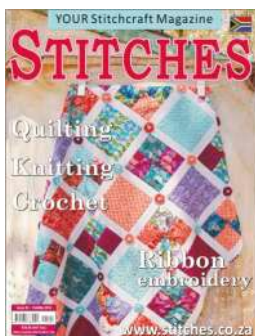
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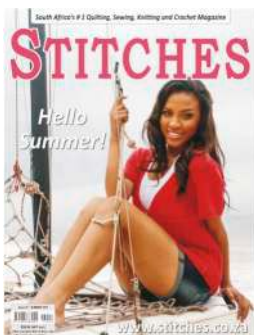
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Trade shows, road shows and no-shows:

The life of a crafts industry entrepreneur

by Melanie Brummer

I have been an entrepreneur in the creative industries since 1993. During that time I have tried many different ways of marketing my business and I would like to share some of the things that I have learned on that journey with you, so that you can decide how best to grow your own business.

I have tried Trade Shows and Road Shows and there have been benefits and drawbacks to both processes.

Trade Shows

I did Hobby-X for more than ten years in one way or another. It is a fantastic event. It is well run by professional staff and the people arrive in droves. The one thing you can be sure of is that there will be traffic. I could return from an event like this with 300-600 new leads if I was smart and on the edge of my stand talking to people all the time.

And it was exhausting. It would punch a four week hole in the rest of my business. All of my energy would be focussed there, so my regular customers would suffer delays. Resources would be tight for the duration of the experience. Costs were

high and I did not break even on any event. Good trade shows cost money. You have to invest in stock so that your stand looks like something and if it does not sell, your cash will be tied up there for the months that follow.

The leads from these events often took a long time to convert into business. My product is niche and fairly complicated to use and there is a long process of reassuring people how to use it before they actually begin to buy it. Hobby-X was a way to reach potential customers and start to teach them about my products. I never made any real money there.

The show is also so frenetic that most of your interactions go something like this "Wow! It's busy! Can I contact you next week and we can speak further?" followed by a hurried exchange of information before they move on. Typically, when "next week" arrived I was so exhausted, it took me some time to follow up on leads.

It was a fantastic source of new leads. It was seldom a place where I made actual sales.

I know that it is different for other niche markets like scrapbooking and beading where the materials are simpler to

use and understand. If you are thinking about doing a trade show like this, you should have a realistic expectation of what you can achieve, depending on how big your market is and how complicated your product is to use.

I once read a business book by Tim Ferris called *The Four Hour Work Week*. This book changed my life. Tim says in the book that if your product has a complicated operating system, you should expect to have a hard time selling it. When I read this I had already invested half a lifetime in the belief that I could make a good living from selling my products. I have pig headedly persevered, and his words ring in my ears every day.

I still hope that one day I might reach enough people for it to have some kind of critical mass. I have taught thousands of people, who might in turn teach thousands more?

Now when I come up with new products, I try to come up with ones that are simpler to make and use before I add them to my product mix.

My other challenge with Hobby-X is that it falls on my birthday. Every year. I celebrated my birthday there for more



than a decade. Life can just be too ironic sometimes? On my fortieth birthday I sat there and looked around at the end of it all and decided...enough. I had to try another way. I wanted my birthday back for myself, so I packed my stock in my little car and hit the road.

Road shows

Over five years I drove around 250 000 km around Southern Africa to teach. I have taught in craft shops, schools, NGO's, skills centres, universities and textile manufacturing businesses in South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland. What an adventure! What incredible skies! What wonderful people!

Not all the people were wonderful. Many people made me promises that did not materialise. "PLEASE come and teach here! I will organise you a group of students!" would turn into "I am sorry. Nobody paid or showed up in the end. But you can sleep here tonight if you want to?" All financial costs were mine to carry with no hope of return. I would be devastated.



Too proud to show that I had no other financial alternative, I would smile and pretend it was all okay, as I could not afford the privacy of the B&B that I would have preferred.

Stops like these were particularly exhausting for me because my hosts would often want to talk shop late into the night. I would hear about their craft projects and plans for skill centres and be asked to give of myself as a teacher until late into the night, in exchange for a dry bed and a place to wash.

If I had the class of students that I was promised when they first urged me to come, I would be self-sufficient and in a position to pay for a comfortable, private environment in exchange for my teaching time where I could rest so that it would be safe to drive the next day. I have driven up to 1 200km in a day on my own and I prefer to rest the night before a long leg like this. On the up-side it was fantastic market research. On the downside, I could not choose when it would happen and when it did I was usually exhausted and cash strapped.

It was a long process of me learning to say "no". It was a process of learning to be far less likeable if I was to survive in business or on the road.

When I learned to insist on payment up front before I left home, the stops became fewer. I could also be sure that the host would extract added value in my personal time and chemicals while I was there. They would add extra students to the class and not pay me for them afterwards. I learned to be very clear about my terms up front before leaving home.

In the beginning of the process I persisted in hope that as people learned and as I gave them maximum value for their money, the whole thing would grow. This did not happen. Instead of workshops getting fuller, the perception shifted and I got "I am too busy this time. I will come to your next one."

I have had to ask myself if perhaps I am not the teacher I had imagined to be? Perhaps I just suck at teaching which is why people did not come back? The process has sent me into so many layers of difficult introspection.

It was not all bad though. I saw beautiful parts of our country that I would not have seen otherwise. While many people let me down, others came to my rescue and I learned who my friends

REALLY are. Mixed in with the financial stress there were always these magical surreal moments of being surrounded by the pure love of people who really care about you. Those friends that I can call and say "My plans all blew up, can I sleep on your couch tonight? I am an hour away." To know that I have friends like that tucked away in all the corners of this country is a very rare gift that few humans experience in a lifetime.

And the students who did show up were a delight. The small intimate workshops were awesome. I spent quality time with people teaching them about my complicated product. I got to know many of them on a more personal level. Many of them still buy dye from me today.

2017 is a big year for me. I am staying at home on my birthday to celebrate it with my friends and family. I am also staying at home this year to create. It is time for me to make beautiful things again and enjoy being rooted.

I have shifted all of my marketing online to try yet another way of doing it. Markets shift and change and if you hope to survive in business, you need to be ready to change your products and your markets when the time comes to sink or swim.

If you are interested in learning more about how I plan to market my craft business online, send me an e-mail with the words "I want to dream map my best future" in the tagline and I will send you a complimentary eBook that shares my strategy for social network marketing... info@dyeandprints.co.za

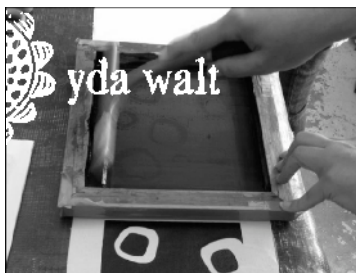
CW

Having been in the crafts industry for a similar length of time to Melanie, I can only agree with her experiences along a tough journey. You have to give way more than in any other "formal" retail industry. More of yourself, your energy, your skills and your time. It can be very rewarding and you meet many, many people along the way but let's be very honest, it can also be very exhausting!

Owen

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[ref: sml75]

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[ref: sml8]

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[ref: sml87]

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[ref: sml103]

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[ref: sml127]

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[ref: sml62]

VIDEOS

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