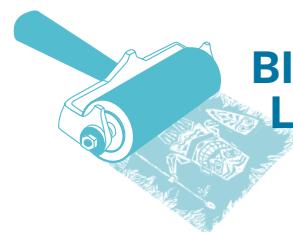


# Craft:

transforming traditional crafts

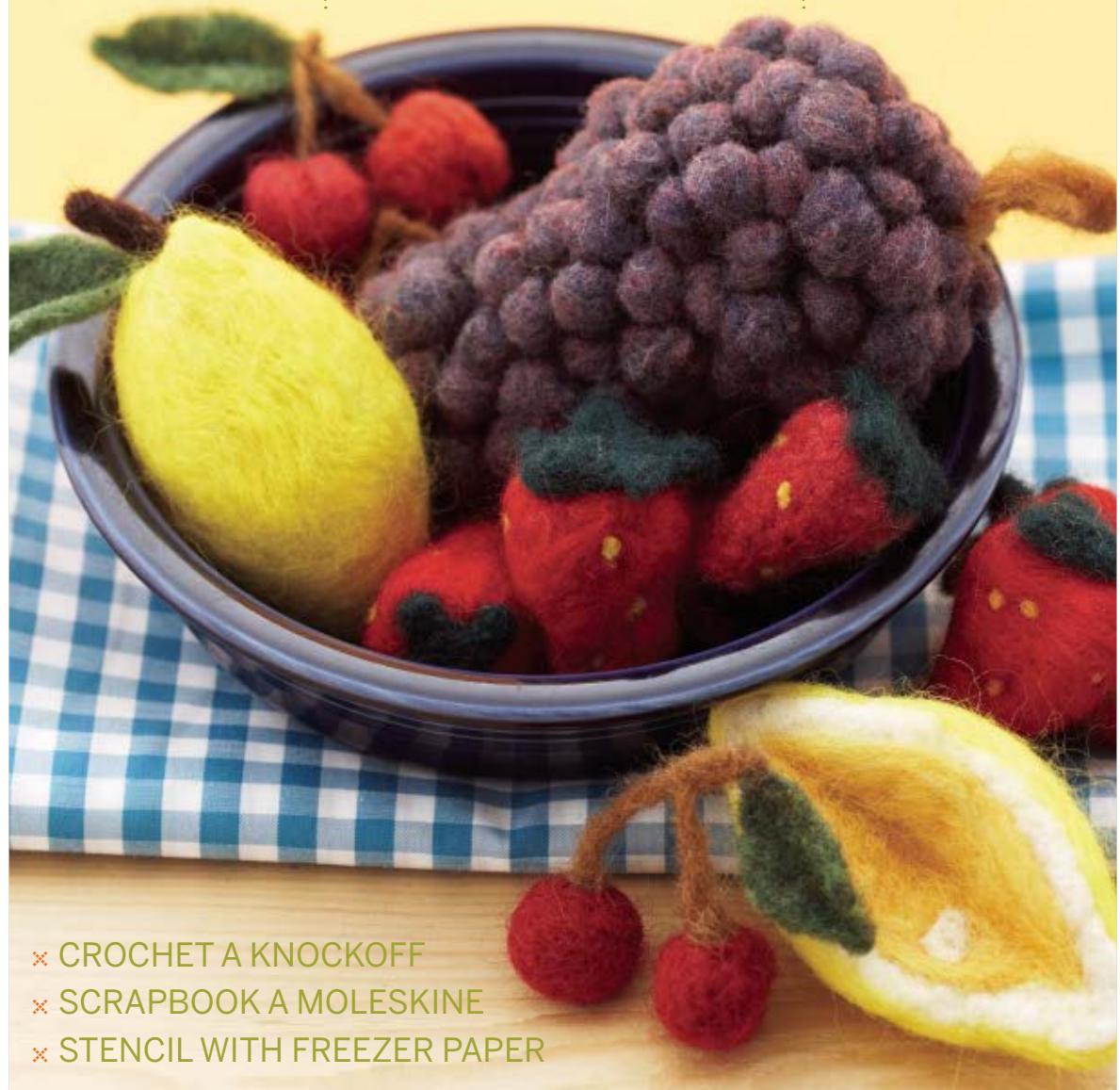


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WOOL INTO  
FOOD

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THINGS  
YOU CAN  
MAKE

HAND-STITCH  
A HAWAIIAN  
QUIILT



- ✗ CROCHET A KNOCKOFF
- ✗ SCRAPBOOK A MOLESKINE
- ✗ STENCIL WITH FREEZER PAPER





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JEALOUS  
OF  
ALL  
THE  
WORK MY BRAIN  
DOES

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Volume 02

transforming traditional crafts™

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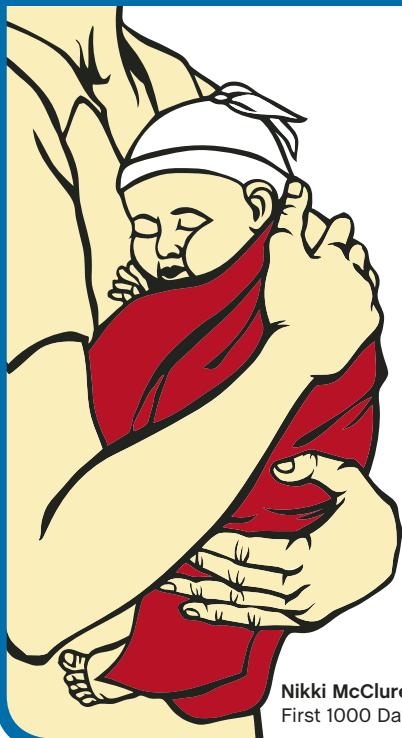
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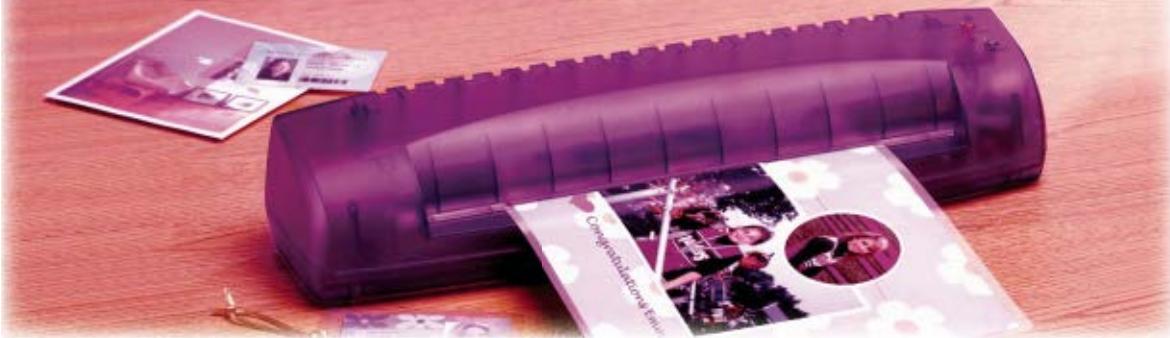
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## ON THE COVER

Our felted fruit as well as the felted veggies in our DIY project (page 119) are mere examples of the vast possibilities felting offers. We show basic needle felting techniques with loads of inspiration so you can sculpt anything imaginable. Cover photography by Thayer Allyson Gowdy. Felted by Brookelynn Morris. Styled by Sam Murphy and Karen Schaupeter.





Carla Sinclair  
Welcome

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# Copy This

From process to product, copying is imperative to crafts.

**L**ast summer, when it reached 119 degrees in my neck of the San Fernando Valley, I guzzled bottle after bottle of icy kombucha tea. The tart, sparkly, slightly sweet brew was the only drink I found refreshing. Although the fermented tea is fairly new to store shelves, people have been making it themselves for thousands of years, and it has a reputation for being a powerful detoxifier as well as providing other health benefits. According to Wikipedia, the chef at Google prepares batches of kombucha and serves up 100 glasses a day at the corporate cafeterias.

The ingredients of kombucha tea include black or green tea, sugar (to ferment it), water, and a kombucha "mushroom," as many kombucha aficionados, including myself, improperly call it. (It's actually a symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast.)

As a former kombucha brewer, I've always been intrigued with the mushroom. Its texture reminds me of octopus sushi — slick, tough, and rubbery. Its alien appearance is flat, floppy, disk-like, and almost translucent, with a fishy-gray tint.

But the most fascinating feature of the mushroom is the fact that, during the fermenting process, the mushroom clones itself so that you end up with twin 'shrooms, one lying on top of the other, both of which you can use to make new batches of tea.

When Arwen O'Reilly wrote a kombucha tea how-to (*page 101*), it got me thinking about the cloning aspect of making the tea, and then how replication is a part of crafting on many different levels.

On the ground level, one aspect of many crafts is duplicating a particular technique hundreds, even thousands, of times to complete a project.

Crocheting, embroidery, knitting, spinning wool, and beading are some examples of crafts that turn us into robotic machines, copying the same purl, chain, or whipstitch millions of times until the project is complete. Thank goodness stitching and beading

are pleasantly addictive.

One level up from the process level is the product level. A quality that differentiates a CRAFT project from a MAKE (our sister tech publication) project is that it's not uncommon for a beader to make 20 copies of the same earrings, or a knitter to make dozens of the same stuffed owl. This compulsive desire to create and repeat leads crafters to become business-minded — or at least generous around gift-giving holidays.

On the highest level, the instructions for creating craft-based projects are copied — online, in sewing bees, at stitch-and-bitches, and in publications. When this happens, many people are creating copies of the same thing at once.

Still more ways that craft and copies are interlaced include:

- Crafting to replicate what you see. For instance, the Counterfeit Crochet Project (*page 54*) playfully — yet seriously! — encourages crocheters to copy coveted designer bags with their needles, yarn, and imagination. And Jonathan Danforth (*page 30*) uses his modified camera to copy positive images of what he sees onto silver-plated metal.
- Crafting templates to duplicate a design. Sewing patterns fall into this category (*read about pattern-maker Lisa Howdin on page 52*) as well as rubber stamps (*page 21*) and linoleum block printing (*page 134*).

This Creative Clones issue has plenty of projects we hope you'll want to copy. But more importantly, we hope you find projects that serve as a kombucha-like host for you to create something original, something others will want to replicate. ☺

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A believer in learning a little of everything, **Tricia Mills Gray** (*Crafty Masterpiece*) has mastered the concept of "jack of all trades, master of none." Having grown up in an artsy family, she does a little acting, dancing, singing, piano, and of course, crafting. She cherishes her husband Scott, her dogs, cat, and her beloved 1986 lip-synching trophy from Singing Wheels Skateland. A computer science graduate from the University of Illinois, she does a little of everything for the O'Reilly School of Technology at [oreillylearning.com](http://oreillylearning.com).



**Shannon Okey** (*Big Wheel Keep on Turning*) writes books, is a city coordinator for indie craft show Bazaar Bizarre, owns aneZka handmade and its publishing spin-off aneZka media, and teaches coast to coast. She wrote, co-authored, or edited four books in the summer of 2006 and vows never to do that again. An avowed sweater knitter, she started NaKniSweMo as an excuse to cast on a new project without finishing the one she started on book tour with CrochetMe's Kim Werker. Her musings can be found at [knitgrrl.com](http://knitgrrl.com).

**Gareth Branwyn** (*Craft Franchising, Journal-Art Memoirs, and Eraser Stamps*) has built things (and taken them apart) since he was 4 years old and used his Handy Andy Tool Set to take apart the family toaster ... while it was still plugged in! Since then, he's learned to respect electricity, but not warranties (unplug it, then destroy it). He likes all types of paper-craft: journaling, mail art, collage, stamping, xerography. His experiences in the small press, zine, and mail art worlds are the subject of his book *Jamming the Media*. He also wrote the *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Building Robots*, and runs the tech blog [streettech.com](http://streettech.com).



**Wendy Tremayne** (*Re: Fitted*) currently lives in Truth or Consequences, N.M., where she is renovating a hot spring and RV park into a 100% recycled off-grid bed & breakfast and venue called Khankah 8. Wendy is an event producer, conceptual artist, yoga teacher, and community developer. One of her projects, Swap-O-Rama-Rama, is an egalitarian community clothing swap and series of DIY workshops designed to offer people an alternative to consumerism. In one year, Swap-O-Rama-Rama has reached over 30 cities around the world. Find out more at [gaiatreehouse.com](http://gaiatreehouse.com) and [swaporamarama.org](http://swaporamarama.org).



Originally from Connecticut, **Thayer Allyson Gowdy** (*Crocheted Retro Purse, Wooly Bullies*, and *Cover* photography) understands preppy. Living in California, she understands sunshine. Thayer has 1 husband, 2 cats, 1 snowboard, 23 potted plants, and 7 pairs of flip-flops. She loves flying, chocolate, mangos, and snowshoeing on holiday. Her parents are both chefs, and her brothers like to work on their trucks. Thayer is based in San Francisco — the light is better than L.A. and the grass is greener. Check her out at [thayerphoto.com](http://thayerphoto.com).



**Kristina Pinto** (*Weekend Boho Sandals*) started needlepointing at 16 during a blizzard that snowed her in for 5 days. She lives in Massachusetts with her husband and 2-year-old son, the former who knits and the latter who enjoys making a mess as his primary craft. When not stitching, she's making paper crafts, running marathons, and teaching statistics and research methods at Merrimack College. Her favorite tool is a Japanese tikobare. Kristina's thoughts and crafts can be found at [themarathonmama.blogspot.com](http://themarathonmama.blogspot.com).



Jean Railla  
Modern Crafting

» Jean Railla is the author of the new domesticity manifesto *Get Crafty: Hip Home Ec* (Broadway Books). Obsessed with the craft of cooking, she is researching a book on underground food cultures.

# The Punk of Craft

**I** like to think of traditional crafting as the Led Zeppelin of the art world: accomplished, talented, but boringly staid. Modern crafters, on the other hand, are like The Ramones, the 1970s punk band who distilled years of rock history down to three exuberant chords. Clocking in at a mere two minutes, their energy-packed songs did more for this teenager's soul than the entire canon of classic rock put together. The Ramones made music that was not only fun ("Hey! Ho! Let's go!") but also whimsical, noisy, and not at all polished — a breakneck combo of words and riffs. Most importantly, their music was so simple, yet so addictive, it said loudly: "You can do it!"

This ethic of Do It Yourself is the baseline of modern crafting. If the point of the American Dream is a two-car garage and saving up to buy the Pottery Barn couch, chair, and dining room table, all arranged to match the catalog, then modern crafting is its twisted daydream. It's about picking out an old couch at the Salvation Army and re-covering it yourself with fabric — be it kitschy cowboys or sophisticated beige.

This ethic, this DIY approach, makes crafting so appealing to hipsters (for lack of a better word). There is something decidedly anti-authority in dumpster diving or knitting in an era where cheap goods can be acquired easily, and corporate culture and rampant consumerism are on the rise. In the age of hypermaterialism, Paris Hilton, and thousand-dollar "It" bags, perhaps making stuff is the ultimate form of rebellion.

Crafting is politics with a little "p." So while crafters aren't necessarily protesting with placards outside the United Nations or running for office (or any other acts of Politics), crafting can be viewed as a form of resistance against the disastrous reality that is contemporary America.

And, although there have been those who bemoan modern crafting as a return to 1950s conformity, it

is difficult to take their criticism seriously. With the quintessential third-wave feminist magazine *Bust* including craft tutorials, and crafters like Jenny Hart doing embroidered portraits of The White Stripes, modern crafting is hardly being embraced by the religious right or part of some sort of backlash.

In the long run, the most powerful aspect of modern crafting is that it turns the very premise of our results-oriented culture on its head. In crafting, what counts more than what you make is how you make it, or rather that you choose to make it at all.

Or to put it another way, maybe it's not about how

In the age of hypermaterialism, Paris Hilton, and thousand-dollar "It" bags, perhaps making stuff is the ultimate form of rebellion.

perfect your popcorn stitch is or that your table setting is in shades of matching beige with hand-appliquéd napkins and a hundred-dollar bouquet in its center. There is no hand-wringing about making everything from scratch in a June Cleaver-style hissy-fit of perfection.

Maybe it's just the fact that, like its punk predecessors, modern crafting encourages you to exist in the world of the tactile, to embrace an activity other than making money — and to rock the house. ☒

# ► Letters

**M**y husband already told me not to even think of drilling holes in his skateboards; I have two of my own. LOL!

I love those slouchy boots. I already have roving from my spinning stash so now I'll pick up some heels cheap that need to be "booted" and a ton of double-pointed needles! That's probably the only downer on those boots. All the DPNs. I'll probably either borrow from other knitters or give away to other knitters once I've made a few pairs.

—sistert (*via email*)

**Check out our *Modded Circular Needles Quick Craft* on page 141 for an alternative to all those DPNs.**

**"Thank you so much for finally making a magazine worthy of crafters."**

**I**'ve been a crafter for decades, and am always looking for new magazines. I saw your premiere issue in our local Borders store, picked it up, and had to have my husband verify that it was in fact made here in the United States. I thought at first when I saw it, that it was a U.K. magazine with its size and all. I LOVE IT. I can't wait to look through it and get my subscription so I don't miss any issues. Thank you so much for finally making a magazine worthy of crafters.

—Penni Walker

**I**'m a little disappointed in your first issue of CRAFT. When I saw Jess Hutchison's robots on the cover, I got all excited, thinking there would be a pattern for them inside. Nope. Maybe I'm just too used to typical knitting/crochet magazines, in which if something is on the cover you always get a pattern for it inside. But it was disappointing.

—Miranda Prince

**We're sorry if the cover of CRAFT 01 was misleading in any way. We chose the cover to spotlight our feature on "creepy cute" dolls and the people who make them (which includes stitcher Jess Hutchison). We also asked Hutchison if she would supply the pattern for the robot doll to complement the article, but she wanted to move in a different direction, away from patterns. She was firm on her decision not to have her pattern published, and we respected her wishes as a crafter. In the end, we decided to keep the cover, since it does go well with our stitched doll feature story. In addition, we included a pattern for one of Beth Doherty's robot dolls, another crafter featured in our cover story.**

**Again, we apologize for any frustration this may have caused. Most of the time our covers will have a corresponding project in the magazine, but there may be exceptions from time to time when we want to feature the work of a crafter we're profiling.**

**I**'ve been following your site prior to the release of CRAFT and am so excited to now actually have a copy of what I've been anticipating for so long! It's a great magazine — you guys did a wonderful job! I have a question though. I live in the D.C. area, and have a few friends I craft with regularly. Unfortunately, it seems like all the cool crafty-related things are in California. Maybe we're just really out of the loop, but we feel like we've looked into all the possible places we could find a greater crafting community. You guys have things like the Craft Gym over there, there's nothing like that here! Or Felt Club. Our Craft Mafia is still in its very basic fledgling stage.

Anyway, we're wondering if you might be able to incorporate some way of networking crafters via your site or maybe an event list/calendar in the magazine? The crafting scene is sad enough over here that some of us are seriously considering moving to your half of the nation! Thanks for any help and an awesome magazine!

—Gwen Mak

**Thanks for your message! Your suggestions are good ones, and we're thinking along those lines also. Right now we have an online events calendar ([craftzine.com/events/](http://craftzine.com/events/)) and recently added forums ([forums.craftzine.com](http://forums.craftzine.com)) to our site.**



**Wendy Tremayne**  
**Re: Fitted**

» Wendy Tremayne is an event producer, conceptual artist, and yoga teacher. Her latest project, Swap-O-Rama-Rama, is a community clothing swap and series of DIY workshops that she created as an alternative to consumerism. Wendy lives in Truth or Consequences, N.M. Visit her at [gaiatreehouse.com](http://gaiatreehouse.com) and [swaporamarama.org](http://swaporamarama.org).

# Tough Textile à la Trash Bag

Influenced at an early age by a mom who recycled everything and questioned consumer culture even before it was fashionable, Kate Sweater grew up making and receiving homemade holiday gifts and reusing just about everything. She considers herself lucky that she never had a lot of money or free time. These seeming shortcomings led her to the particular discovery that every problem to solve is an opportunity to create. Kate is a maker — she engineers something, looks for patterns, and blends things together, making it more interesting.

When I happened upon Kate, she was making a rugged new textile out of recycled plastic garbage bags. This project was a departure from the media she usually works in: wedding cakes, wigs, and chandeliers (she is fascinated by things that are fancy). But her eye for detail, pattern, and the ornate is also evident in her transformation of the garbage bag.

As the first, important step of the process, she selects bags with interesting patterns and colors, which she brings together to form unusual designs. The newly formed designs are reminiscent of the well-known logos and icons that once adorned the garbage bags, now reconfigured and transformed into ornamentation of simple color and shape.

Once melted under the heat of a household iron, these once-familiar images morph into something free from commercial meaning. For the maker, they produce a palette for the creation of new patterns. Kate's credo is that making new things is OK, so long as they're designed to last. Her tough textile is best used to make rugged and durable items such as wallets, bags, and shoes. ✎



**Kate Sweater, hard at work masterminding her next crafty project at home.**

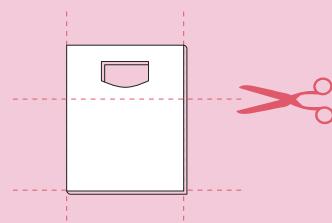
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## MATERIALS

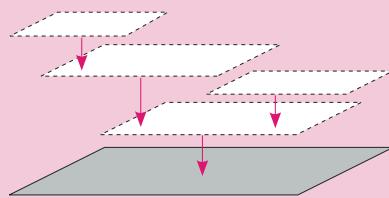
- » PLASTIC BAGS
- » FREEZER PAPER
- » IRON
- » SCISSORS



**1.** From your collection of plastic bags, pick out interesting patterns, colors, or images.

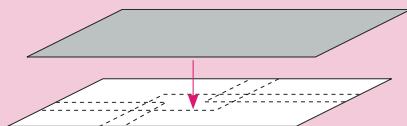


**2.** Cut the bags along the seam line. This keeps air bubbles and wrinkles from forming.



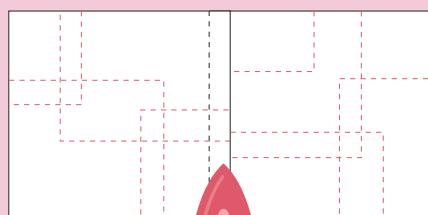
**3.** Put down 1 layer of freezer paper the size of the sheet you would like to make.

**4.** Cover the freezer paper with 2 to 3 layers of plastic bags. Place the recycled bags in patterns using the colors and images as highlights.



**5.** Adjust the plastic bags so that the edges overlap by 1 or 2 inches. This creates a large, sturdy sheet of material.

**6.** Cover your plastic bags with another layer of freezer paper, non-waxy side facing out.



**7.** With an iron on the "Cotton" setting, press down hard on the freezer paper to flatten and fuse the bags to each other. Be sure to open a window nearby because the plastic bags can melt if ironed too long, creating fumes that you don't want to inhale.

**8.** Once you've made your sheet of new textile, add it to another sheet and expand it to any size by simply ironing the edges of 2 sheets together.

# HANDMADE





## Fiend or Faux

You feel a prickling on the back of your neck, the uneasy feeling of something ... staring. You turn, expecting to look into the face of some ghastly nightmare apparition. You start to scream, except this creature is wearing a bow tie, a nurse's hat, and a red bandit mask over big eyes surrounded by outrageously long lashes. It's also mounted on a wooden plaque that announces its name in vaudevillian lettering, *La Volpe!*

Created by L.A. artist **Liz McGrath**, this creepy critter is from her series of "faux taxidermy." Starting with a taxidermy form (or a homemade armature), she covers it with Magic Sculpt or resin epoxy to flesh out the form and create features. She uses Sculpey for some of the smaller details she meticulously sculpts by hand. She then adds glass taxidermy eyes and paints the skin details, often using glazes of luminous sepulchral tones.

The piece is finished with whiskers, spidery eye-lashes, and a handmade costume and mounting plaque, usually a stitched-together mix of Beatrix Potter and Edward Gorey — decayed Victorian

opulence combined with a hearty dose of punk rock and circus sideshow iconography.

Interested in, but not feeling good about real taxidermy herself, McGrath's current "taxidermy" is entirely fake (no real fur). She clarifies, "I don't think differently of anyone who collects real taxidermy, but I'm personally not into an animal being killed to be a trophy."

While she originally used fur coats and leather jackets bought from thrift stores, she now uses homespun techniques of making fake fur look more realistic with the use of tar, airbrushing, and hairspray. All the better to have all of the weird with none of the guilt.

McGrath shows her enormously popular work regularly at Billy Shire Fine Arts in Los Angeles and recently released a book of her work called *Everything That Creeps*.

—Kirsten Anderson

»**Liz McGrath:** [elizabethmcgrath.com](http://elizabethmcgrath.com)



## Fabric on the Brain

Not the world's most succinctly named art collection, the **Museum of Scientifically Accurate Fabric Brain Art** does, however, fill a unique gap in the art world. The online museum exhibits textile artwork inspired by neuroscience research, dissection, and neuro-economics.

Featuring fabric renderings of PET and MRI scans, or three-dimensional models of the brain itself, the works pinpoint the accidental beauty of scientific imagery. With crafts ranging from quilting to appliqué, embroidery, beadwork, knitting, and crocheting, the artists use fabric, yarn, metallic threads, wire, zippers, and beads. One quilt even features magnetic core memory (a precursor to modern computer chips).

Founded by Marjorie Taylor and Karen Norberg, and curated by Bill Harbaugh (Taylor's husband), the museum is a bizarrely gorgeous collection of textile art. Taylor, a psychology professor and quilter, started out by quilting images from neuroscientists in her department. (Each square in *Marjorie Taylor #2* shows the brain during a different activity.)

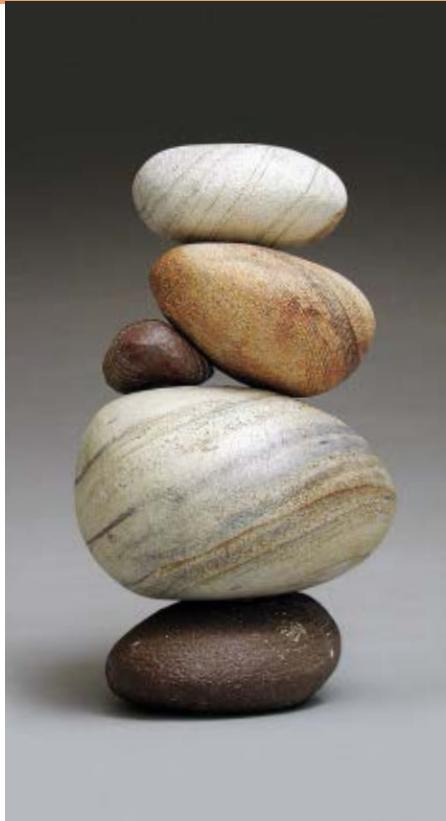
Norberg, a physician doing research in economics,

then knit an anatomically correct brain. (If you didn't know that the brain was just that, you'd want to wear it.) As the museum gained attention in the blogosphere, Harbaugh started receiving submissions (some of which, to put it politely, were anatomically correct but had nothing to do with brains). He did decide to include artist Patricia Jauch's shadowy explorations of single neuron recordings, which are astonishingly stark and lovely.

The museum continues to grow in renown (it was featured in *Science* magazine), but remains an online entity for now. Norberg's knitted brain can be seen at the Boston Museum of Science, and one of Taylor's quilts is at the Lewis Center for Neuroscience Imaging. The rest are on display at home and in Harbaugh's office. Still, "it's been a lot of fun," Harbaugh says. "You see where the hits are coming from, and they're major neuroscience institutions."

—Arwen O'Reilly

» **Brain Art Museum:** [neuroscienceart.com](http://neuroscienceart.com)



## A Stone's Throw

If emulation is the sincerest form of flattery, Mother Nature must blush at **Gerry Arrington**'s deceptively sublime forms. What is often mistaken for nothing more than skillfully stacked rocks is actually clay painstakingly sculpted to recreate the subtleties of the real thing.

Arrington's signature style was conceived many moons ago when he spent eight weeks of an idyllic summer fly-fishing the Big Wood River in central Idaho. Each day, he found himself drawn to the understated nuances of the river stones, frequently taking home a souvenir or two. Having worked with clay for some time, his thoughts were consumed by these stones when he returned to the drawing board. He started throwing replicas of them on the potter's wheel, and thus the evolution began.

A variety of stoneware bodies unite to compose the stones themselves. Slips, stains, and oxides are meticulously added to create the delicate rings that make the pieces dead ringers for river rocks. Arrington is particularly drawn to this organic and unassuming beauty (described as *wabi-sabi*), as well as to *trompe l'oeil* (trick-of-the-eye) ceramics, forcing the viewer to re-examine that which is taken for granted.

*l'oeil* (trick-of-the-eye) ceramics, forcing the viewer to re-examine that which is taken for granted.

What appears to be a family of stones randomly arranged with a precariously perched stick of driftwood atop is actually a teapot, the ceramic wood replica being the handle (pictured above right). A grouping of rocks, carefully stacked and balanced, reveals itself to be an ingenious container, the top two rocks forming the lid. A pair of round comfortable stones prove to be salt and pepper shakers. And Arrington's custom fountains reunite the element of water full circle with the stones.

Perhaps the most intriguing part of Arrington's process is how he, in essence, reverse-engineers nature's processes. Stones tumble down a river, colliding with other stones, smoothed and polished as time goes on. Stone chips that break off these rocks decompose over time to make clay. What takes nature a couple of million years takes Arrington a couple of weeks, and the results are nothing short of stunning.

—Goli Mohammadi

✿ **Arrington Design:** [arringtondesign.com](http://arringtondesign.com)



## Blow Guns

If Buck Rogers and Barbarella visited Earth in 2006, they'd buy their weaponry at Joe Blow Glassworks in Vancouver, British Columbia. Along with Jetsons-esque goblets and lamps, **Jeff Burnette** blows molten glass into beautiful, bulbous Raygunz that fire invisible beams of science fiction nostalgia.

"I was really inspired by the B movies I watched as a kid," says Burnette, who has a collection of nearly 300 vintage toy rayguns.

The process begins in Burnette's 2100°F furnace that keeps 200 pounds of molten glass at the consistency of honey. Burnette dips his steel blowpipe into the furnace and gathers a glob of glass on the end of a tube. He then rolls the hot glass over powdered pigment, or *frit*, colored crushed glass. Burnette then puts his lungs to work. ("Always blow," he says, "don't suck!") Once the shape of a gun is formed, he adds decorative bits of colored glass, a handle, and a trigger. Markings are hand-tooled directly onto the glass. Next stop is the annealing oven where the temperature is lowered slowly over ten hours to prevent the glass from cracking. After the piece has

cooled, the sharp edge where it had been attached to the blowpipe is ground down for a stainless steel tip to be bonded on later. Larger guns are constructed from blown components attached with scavenged auto parts.

"I grew up south of Detroit, and my brother was into hot rods, so that rubbed off on me," Burnette says.

To create the Raygunz' otherworldly opaque glow, he sends the glass pieces to a scientific glass blower who employs very different techniques. Silver nitrate, ammonia, and distilled water are poured into the open end of the Raygun. When the liquid is poured out, the silver is left as an interior mirror-like coating.

The pistol-size guns sell at galleries for around \$600 while the larger creations, up to two feet long, can run several thousand dollars. After all, molten glass doesn't come cheap. Burnette's average monthly gas bill is \$1,800.

"Everybody likes to play with fire," he says. "I'm just doing it on a bigger scale."

—David Pescovitz

» **Joe Blow Glassworks:** [joeblowglassworks.com](http://joeblowglassworks.com)



## Power Flower

Art car? More like art crane. Burning Man attendees last year greeted the return of an 80-foot *Flower* and a new *Venus Flytrap* with awe, laughter, even tears.

The freewheeling flora — a dream of mechanical designer **Patrick Shearn** — are really JGL 800AJ boom lifts fitted with fantasy costumes that hide and soften their true nature. They are the work of artist and lighting designer **Josh Flemming**, plus more than 30 people from Los Angeles art space Abundant Sugar and artist collective the Do LaB.

In development, the crew often built and rebuilt by trial and error to tailor their high aesthetic expectations to the vehicles' mechanical needs. "We would move the lift and it would crush some of the parts; then it was back to the drawing board," explain Josh and brother Jesse, co-founders of the Do LaB.

The lifts have plenty of crunch points to cope with. Taking advantage of the 800AJ's articulated boom, the head of the *Flower* rotates and tilts anthropomorphically and its 24-foot array of LED-lit petals opens and closes. To accommodate the telescoping arm, elastic fabric stretches over fitted plywood discs

and bungee cords to pull slightly inward, giving the stem organic-looking curves between its nubby joints.

At the base, a 20-foot square platform, complete with roots, leaves, and smaller flowers, supports a sound system and crucially protects the adoring public from the chassis, wheels, and 17 tons of moving, pinching machinery. For Shearn, who served as a mechanical designer and puppeteer for the movie *Jurassic Park*, this was the most difficult task. "You're talking about all this weight rotating, and if [the deck] did crash for some reason into the wheels or into the chassis below, it would have been pretty catastrophic. A lot of broken wood and potentially people getting hurt."

A team effort from beginning to end, the crew dedicated five people communicating on radios to steer each art crane safely, a commitment that paid off. "I think we devoured a bicycle or two in our journeys," says Shearn, "but that's about it."

—Eric Smillie

» **The Flower:** [tribes.tribe.net/theflower](http://tribes.tribe.net/theflower)



**Ulla-Maria Mutanen**  
**Linkages**

» Ulla-Maria is the developer of Thinglink ([thinglink.org](http://thinglink.org)), author of the HobbyPrincess blog ([hobbyprincess.com](http://hobbyprincess.com)), and researcher of design and innovation work at the University of Helsinki. [ulla@aula.cc](mailto:ulla@aula.cc)

# My Logo, Not No Logo

**I**n a WNYC radio show that aired in September 2002, *No Logo* author Naomi Klein and *The Economist's* Asia business correspondent Sameena Ahmad debated corporations, people, and power under the headline "Pro Logo vs. No Logo." The debate was actually more about the nature and role of multinational corporations than it was about logos. Klein argued against the discriminating effects multinational businesses have on society. Ahmad's counterargument was that companies create jobs and wealth. The debate ends up drifting into an unintelligent boxing match between good and evil.

Although things have changed since 2002, the debate about branding and globalization really hasn't moved on from the dead end where Klein and Ahmad left it. Now I think that there is reason to argue that the grounds of this debate might be changing, too. It seems that instead of *No Logo*, a powerful new force in this field is emerging: what I call the "My Logo" movement.

I learned about the power of brands growing up as a teenager, not in New York, but in eastern Finland, less than two hours' drive from the Russian border. In our 1980s world, big foreign brands such as Levi's and Lacoste were hip, and their logos worked as status symbols. One of my trendiest craftworks at that time was a denim jacket personalized with logos of fashionable brands that I had secretly detached from my mother's clothes. My coolness was measured by those logos on my jacket.

Today, instead of fawning over brands, the teenage girls and guys featured on the street fashion site [hel-looks.com](http://hel-looks.com) generally think buying a garment that has a unique (hi)story is awesome. They say they prefer secondhand or small design brands because expensive mass-manufactured clothes are totally

uncool. The image of the anti-brand consumer reaches its peak in Cayce Pollard, the witty cool-hunter in William Gibson's novel *Pattern Recognition*. Her allergy to "pollutant" logos like Tommy Hilfiger's is so powerful she gets physically ill in their presence.

For many of us, wearing something unique is a form of self-expression — partly by rejecting ready-made mainstream designs offered by global fashion brands, but also, more interestingly, by inventing completely new designs of our own. We discuss trends and techniques in online communities like [supernaturale.com](http://supernaturale.com) and in magazines like CRAFT, post photos of our designs on blogs and Flickr, and sell our handcrafted products on eBay and Etsy. Services like [threadless.com](http://threadless.com), the online T-shirt auction, represent an alternative to the centralized creativity of ready-made brands. Threadless sells to the idea that the T-shirt is a medium and my logo is my message.

Many of the people who have started to make their own designs want to label their creations with their own symbols. The symbol can be their initials, a nickname, or any other sign that they want to adopt as their own brand. The symbol can be repeated and varied in their work to the extent that it becomes their logo — like the skull on Garth Johnson's Extreme Craft ([extremecraft.com](http://extremecraft.com)). I wouldn't be surprised if, in the future, having your own label becomes as common as it is now to have your own blog.

Most designers, crafters, teens, and even graffiti artists would probably agree with the arguments that Klein puts forth in her book. Still, instead of *No Logo*, they are signing up for *My Logo*. ☒

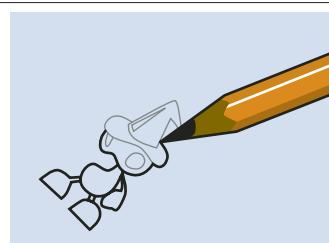
**Rubber stamps are wonderful** and can be used in all sorts of craft projects, but they can also be expensive, and you're limited to whatever images are available. No worries. You can easily make your own stamps with materials you probably already have around the house.

**You will need:** Art gum eraser (one for each stamp you make); transfer paper, carbon paper, or pencil graphite; X-Acto knife (with new blade); pencil and pen; stamp pad



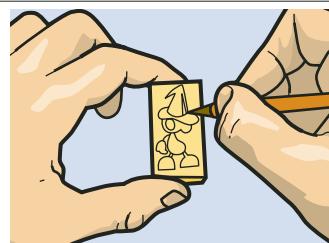
## 1. Create the image.

Draw an image, making it iconic and bold. Size it to fit the eraser. When you're pleased with the design, make a mirror image of it. To do this, tape the image against a window during daylight (or use a light table if handy) and trace it on the other side of the paper.



## 2. Transfer the image.

Transfer the image onto the eraser using a transfer medium (if you are using graphite, rub inverse before tracing). Tape the image (and transfer medium, if used) to the sides of the eraser to hold firmly in place. Once the image is transferred, go over it with ink to make it sharper.



## 3. Carve the stamp.

Carefully cut away the eraser from around the image. Work on small sections at a time. Try to keep the depth of cuts about the same. Inspect the stamp to make sure all excess material has been removed. If you become impatient, take a break. Don't rush!

**TIP:** Crosshatch or mark all areas to carve away so that you don't get confused and cut something you weren't supposed to.

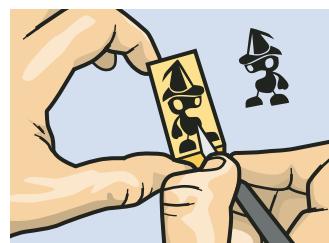


## 4. Test and tweak.

When you're finished carving, test the stamp. Shallowly carved areas may mess up the impression, or the image may not look right. You may want to add details or make changes.

Once perfected, stamp the new image onto self-adhesive label paper and affix to the top of the eraser to show the stamp's image and to properly orient and align the image when stamping.

That's it! Now you have a little replicable piece of art you can use to decorate greeting cards, letters, postcards, wrapping paper ... you name it.



# OUR FAVORITE TRINKETS & TREASURES

**1****2****3**

## **1. Doggone Dolls**

» Paper dolls are the best. Paper dogs are even better! The hard part is deciding whether to frame them or cut them out and play with them when no one's watching.

[eggpress.com/shop.html](http://eggpress.com/shop.html)

## **2. Sock Monkey Dress**

» The Sock Monkey just got better. Why have one when you can have an entire dress of them?

[sockmonkeys.com](http://sockmonkeys.com)

## **3. Don't Forget to Write**

» The lovely ladies of PodPost have a set of merit badges for bookmaking, zinemaking, and letter-writing, not to mention a Mail Art Bento Box, which has all sorts of supplies and goodies for spicing up your letters.

[podpost.com/shop.html](http://podpost.com/shop.html)



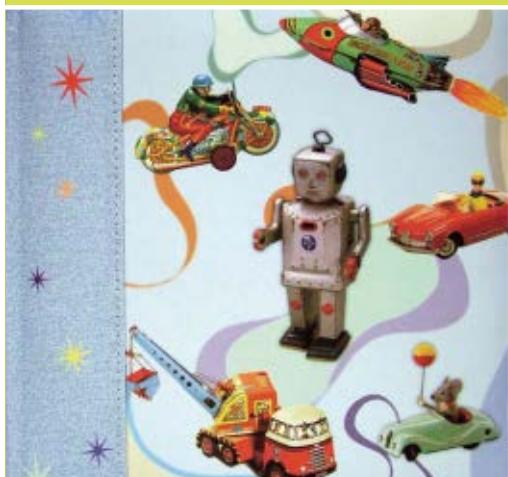
4

#### 4. Coffee Cuffs

» "Why waste another useless cardboard sleeve when you can rock these reusable cuffs?" Go on with your recycle self, Crafty Bitch.

[craftybitch.com/pages/  
accessories.html](http://craftybitch.com/pages/accessories.html)

5



6

#### 6. Vintage Art Framed on Fabric

» Soft to the touch yet incredibly resilient, these frames and albums feature custom giclée-printed fabric, hand-sewn in 24 scrumptious retro styles, from Hawaii and Paris to fairies, cowboys (and horsey girls), and spaceships.

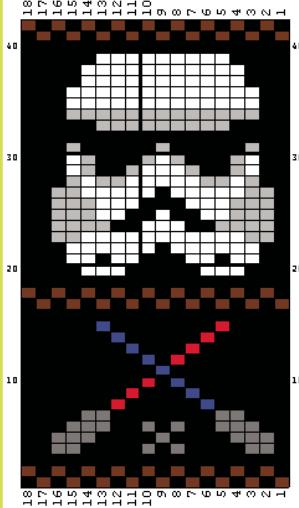
[dolcemia.com](http://dolcemia.com)

**7**

## 7. Embrace Your Waste

» Tiffany Tomato takes recycling to a whole new whimsical level with her F Clock (uses the function keys off an old PC keyboard) and Fruit Loop earrings and bracelets (her Good Mornin' line), to name a few.

[tiffanytomato.com](http://tiffanytomato.com)

**8\*****9**

## 9. Star Wars Fair Isle Pattern

» If Fair Isle sweaters have always seemed a little too cute, try making your own with these awesome patterns by Sarah Bradbury.

[craftzine.com/go/starwarsfairisle](http://craftzine.com/go/starwarsfairisle)

10



### 10. Mad Hatter

» You want amazing felt hats? Jean Hicks will give you amazing felt hats. Her hand-blocked felt hats and sculptures range between subtle and outrageous. These just make hat wearing cool again.

[www.jeanhicks.com/](http://www.jeanhicks.com/)  
[Erratica/Erratica.html](http://Erratica/Erratica.html)



11



### 11. Love + One

» We love these adorable hand-embroidered onesies and toddler shirts. Fanciful, graphic, and clean design decorates men's ties and dog clothes, too!

[loveplusone.net/pages/robot.html](http://loveplusone.net/pages/robot.html)

12



### 12. Traffic School

» Taking another page from the creative recycling handbook, Boris Bally has had a long career of turning traffic signs into fabulously stylish items such as coasters, brooches, chairs, platters, bowls, and even flatware.

[borisbally.com](http://borisbally.com)

# EGGCENTRIC ART

BY SUSAN BRACKNEY

Paul “Eggman” Wirhun saves the world with his mad egg-batik skills.

**P**ut any stock in an ancient Ukrainian myth, and technically, Paul Wirhun is saving the world, one egg at a time.

According to the Ukrainian-American artist, it was once believed that our fate depended solely on the crafting of pysanky (pronounced PISS-ahn-kih) — those decorative and highly symbolic batiked eggs for which the Ukraine is so well known. As the story goes, an evil monster lives chained to a cliff, and because this monster is pacified seemingly only by pysanky, he sends his servants out annually to count the number of eggs decorated in the villages and surrounding countryside.

“If there are a lot made, then his chains are kept tight and love abounds everywhere, but if only a few are made, his chains are loosened and evil flows. And if the practice should ever cease, he will be released from his chains, and the world will be devoured,” Wirhun explains.

At the craft since he was 10, Wirhun originally learned the egg batik basics from his mother. By age 30, he began implementing his own etching, dyeing, and brushing techniques to create elaborate world maps, eerie skulls, erotic scenes, and more on eggs of every size and shape. Although Wirhun has strayed from tradition, his pysanky are designed to serve as talismans just as their ancient counterparts were.

## That Old-Time Religion

Often referred to as Ukrainian Easter eggs, pysanky were around long before Christ showed up. Pysanky comes from the word “pysaty,” which means “to

write.” Its practitioners have been “writing” designs with beeswax on eggs and subsequently resist-dyeing them in myriad bold colors for at least the last 3,000 years. “What you’re dealing with is a neolithic, agrarian cultural mindset that is using an object out of its world for power,” Wirhun says.

To harness the power inherent in them, only fertile eggs were used, and their contents were left intact. “The phenomenon of the decoration is a belief, first of all, that the egg has power in itself. With the decoration of an egg, you are basically ascribing the intention for how you will use the power which is inherently already in the egg,” he adds.

For instance, eggs decorated with reindeer signified wishes for good health and prosperity. Those depicting chickens signified wishes for female fertility. Wirhun continues, “You are supposed to give [eggs designed with] ladders to old people for their ascent into heaven. Spirals just represent eternity.”

Can so much power really be ascribed to the everyday egg? Yes, Wirhun says, even now: “The egg still holds its symbolic power for people even in our postmodern culture. It’s one of the few symbols from civilization thousands of years ago that still retains its value.”

As if to prove his point, Wirhun developed *The Skull Project*, an art ritual designed to commemorate all of those killed in Iraq in 2003. Using his own scratching and bleach painting techniques, Wirhun and a multi-

**As well as saving the world, Wirhun holds the world in his hands — this time in the form of batiked ostrich egg.**



DISCIPLINE  
*Remembering what you know*





tude of volunteers transformed intact eggs into macabre skulls, which were then piled in the cemetery yard of St. Mark's Church in the Bowery in New York.

"The interesting irony was that I took the symbol of life and fused it with the symbol of death. The paradox created a certain kind of emotional tension that made *The Skull Project* a potent piece of public art," he says. Wirhun hopes to resurrect *The Skull Project* on a national scale next fall.

### Buddhas, Demons, and Saints

Further breaking with tradition, the rest of Wirhun's work is much less ephemeral. Because some of his pieces fetch as much as \$1,000 each, his clients expect them to last. As such, Wirhun uses blown-out eggs and finishes them with several coats of lacquer. From bold, batiked depictions of Mary, the Buddha, and assorted saints to his scratched and gilded "shooting cock" talismans, his methods and subject matter range widely.

To make such variety possible, Wirhun uses eggs from chickens, ducks, geese, emu, rhea, and ostriches. "Every different type of egg has a different texture, and, even within the same type of egg, no two eggs are alike," he notes. In the case of an ornately etched image of the crucifixion of Christ — a delicate design in pale greens and gold — Wirhun's hands never touch dye. "That is an emu shell. All the colors that you see, aside from the gold that I applied to it afterward, are the tones of the shell itself. I created the image through wax-etching the

shell in a vinegar bath, and the deeper you go into an emu shell, the lighter the tone gets," he says.

On the other end of the design spectrum you'll even find erotic pysanky. Inspired by classic Greek pottery, Wirhun creates striking scenes of male potency by reversing the traditional dyeing process: "You're supposed to go from lightest to darkest color in the traditional dyeing pattern, and with this, I was kind of mixing it up. The erotica that I've done is all batiking, but it's batiking of a different type."

Lately compelled by Tibetan influences, Wirhun's been experimenting with yet another design style. "I'm doing new skulls that have these crazy eyes that go in different directions. They kind of look like they're laughing, and they also have these arched eyebrows, so they look clownish, and they are very expressive." Wirhun is gushing now, happy to carry an ancient tradition into modernity. And, he admits, it's a good thing, too: "Isn't this brilliant? Here we are, spreading this information so that the world is saved!" ☀

» Try creating your own pysanky by following the DIY article on page 103.

Susan M. Brackney is an avid crafter and the author of *The Lost Soul Companion* as well as the sequel, *The Not-So-Lost Soul Companion* ([lostandsoul.companion.com](http://lostandsoul.companion.com)).



# POSITIVELY DAGUERREIAN

BY PETER SHERIDAN

Photographer Jonathan Danforth reclaims a lost art form.

★ We've all experienced that postmodern sense of unease that accompanies the purchase of a new computer, digital music player, or any new technology, inwardly knowing that in mere days it will be obsolete, while our credit card bill will live on for years afterward. As an amateur photographer, Jonathan Danforth grew weary of repeatedly upgrading his cameras with new models boasting ever-higher pixel counts, greater magnification, and more powerful memory chips.

"I chased the technology for a while, but finally got sick of it," admits Danforth, an audiovisual engineer. "I decided to see if I could do more with less."

Then, in 2003, when he and his wife, Jill, were on their honeymoon in London, he became mesmerized by an exhibition of early daguerreotypes. He decided to create his own, so he took a course from one of America's few practicing daguerreotype photographers.

So began Danforth's quest to reclaim the antiquated art of the daguerreotype — the original commercial photograph, first patented by French chemist Louis Daguerre in 1839.

"There's no such thing as a daguerreotype store, so I had to get lots of special equipment, and adapt, modify, or hack a lot of existing equipment," says Danforth, 26.

It took six months to accumulate all the paraphernalia and chemicals, before he even began to shoot. And in a caffeinated society where instant gratification is too slow, producing daguerreotypes requires preternatural patience.

"Each image can take hours to capture, and you can pretty much screw it up anywhere down the line," says Danforth, who lives in Durham, N.C. "It's

important to have a mirror finish to the plate. The slightest scratch or blemish will show up on the image. The good thing is that if you screw up, you can just wipe the plate clean, polish it up, and start again."

Danforth is one of only an estimated 100 photographers worldwide creating daguerreotypes today. "It's an art with craft at its heart," he says. "You have to craft your equipment, craft your silver photographic plates, craft the image, and craft the case that preserves the fragile photograph."

And because the daguerreotype does not use a negative, but instead creates an image directly on the plate, it's the ultimate creative replica.

"I like it because, in an age of mass production, the image is one of a kind," says Danforth. "Every daguerreotype is the definition of unique. It's a long and complex process, but at its end you have a beautiful and gem-like image, attractive and alluring in ways other photographs can never be."

Danforth creates his images in a modified 8x10 camera on a silver-plated copper sheet that has been chemically transformed over iodine crystals in a dark room, making it light-sensitive. The image is developed in sunlight through a red filter, fixed in sodium thiosulfate solution (aka 'hypo'), and gilded using gold chloride solution and a blowtorch.

And that's the easy part.

A daguerreotype shines with light reflected from its mirror-polished surface, through a fine powder of silver detail, but the delicate image can be destroyed by the slightest touch. It must be protected, placed behind glass, and preserved inside a

★ **Opposite: Antique technology captures a computer image, and the ageless tranquility of rocking chairs.**

Photography by Jonathan Danforth





CRAFTER

craftzine.com/02/danforth



★ **The exquisite detail of a daguerreotype allows Danforth to capture the elemental solidity of an unusually shaped gourd (above), sealed beneath glass inside one of his handcrafted brass frames, nestled in red velvet and black lambskin, like a well-thumbed leather-bound Victorian keepsake. Whether portraying a chopping board of kiwi fruit or a North Carolina cityscape (opposite), Danforth's daguerreotypes feel like instant historic artifacts. His signature, carved in the back of every copper photographic plate, marks each unique image.**

sealed box, so Danforth also handcrafts these for each image.

"I lay down a brass mat and glass on top of the plate so that it is secured and protected from air and chemicals. The silver will tarnish if exposed to air, so the seal on the case is important. Then, to protect the glass, I design a gorgeous case covered in soft, supple, luxurious calfskin leather that feels like an antique book."

Danforth explains that daguerreotypes are simultaneously the most fragile and most stable form of photography. "If the image isn't touched, it can last for thousands of years after regular photographs, negatives, and digital memory chips have crumbled away."

Danforth's craftsmanship makes even the freshest images resonate with history.

"Daguerreotypes are often Lilliputian wonders, with details so intricate they can best be appreciated with a jeweler's loupe," says Mark Johnson, president of the Daguerreian Society. "The closer one looks, the more amazing they are."

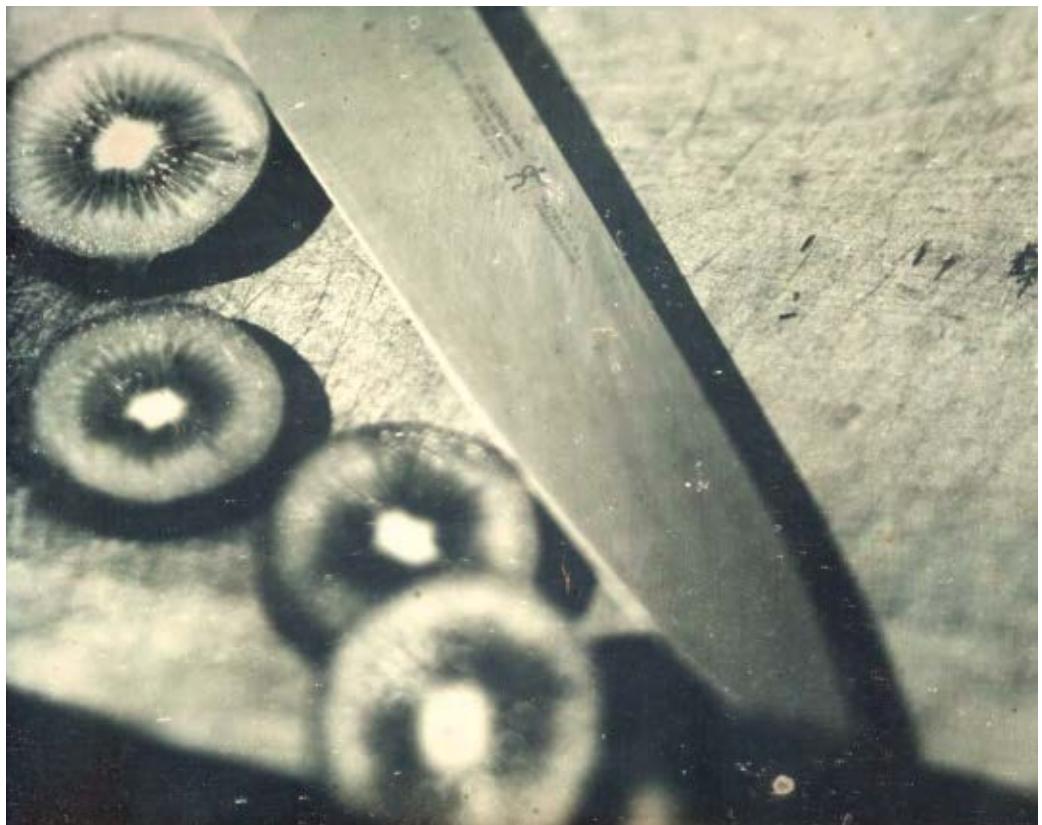
Danforth agrees: "I think it is the most perfect photographic medium. There's no enlargement or negative, nor any transition of the image. The image is transposed directly onto the plate. At a molecular level, it becomes part of the silver. If handled correctly, that image will last forever."

In recent months, Danforth's daguerreotypes have been capturing images of modern technology, in a series he calls *The Human Interface*. "I have pictured my iPod and my Xbox," he explains. "They take on a new look, a new feel, under the gaze of a daguerreotype. I can't imagine what an anthropologist would make of it if he picked those images — in their hand-crafted wooden cases — out of the dust 10,000 years from now." ✕

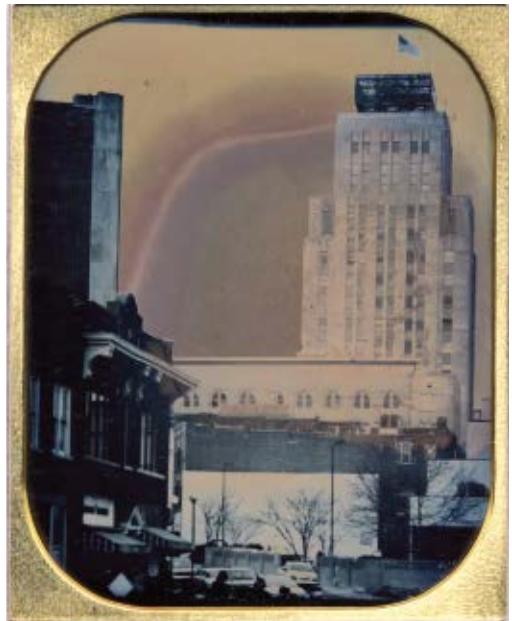
Daguerreotypes by Danforth: [shinyphotos.com](http://shinyphotos.com)

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British expatriate Peter Sheridan has worked for the past 20 years in Los Angeles as a foreign correspondent, covering the West Coast for media in the United Kingdom.



In a caffeinated society where instant gratification is too slow, producing daguerreotypes requires preternatural patience.



# DOLL OBSESSED

BY MARIAN BANTJES

The magnificence of Marina Bychkova's work lies in her dedication to detail.

**S**he has pale, almost translucent skin and perfect little hands that are adorned with rings and silver bracelets studded with garnets. More silver and garnet jewelry, in the form of a headdress, surrounds her face and delicate features. She looks almost sad, enveloped in her finery. A jeweled diaphanous veil falls about her shoulders; a red velvet top is open almost to the waist. She sits, in a costume glittering with beaded ornament, in a small room in Vancouver, British Columbia. She is about 15 inches high when she stands.

Marina Bychkova is the creator of the doll, *Imperial Concubine*, and doll-making is her passion. She recently graduated from the four-year art program at Emily Carr Institute in Vancouver, but grew up in Siberia. While equal parts of art theory and culture shock may have led her in directions she would not otherwise have realized, Russia's historic opulence and rich folklore emerge in her figures and are reinterpreted with a slightly darker and more feminist perspective than we are used to seeing. Of her time at Emily Carr, Bychkova says, "Art school played a significant role in my intellectual and conceptual development, though I resented its approach to art education, and didn't realize its impact on my creative growth at the time."

Bychkova's work risks being dismissed as merely pretty. But the dolls are also sexual (and are anatomically correct in fine detail). "I want to challenge the popular notions of what a doll should be. I despise the social taboos regarding the human

body and sexuality, and want to contribute to their breakdown," she says. For this reason, in the craft world Bychkova's work is sometimes declaimed as gratuitously shocking.

The dolls, usually 12 to 15 inches high, typically take 200 to 500 hours of work. Bychkova starts by sculpting each body part (they are fully articulated in 13 parts) from polymer clay, and after it hardens she details and smooths each piece. From there she makes molds to cast in porcelain, and then fine-finishes the head, torso, each limb, and each tiny hand before firing them. Finally, she hand-paints each doll with colors that, when fired, will be completely permanent.

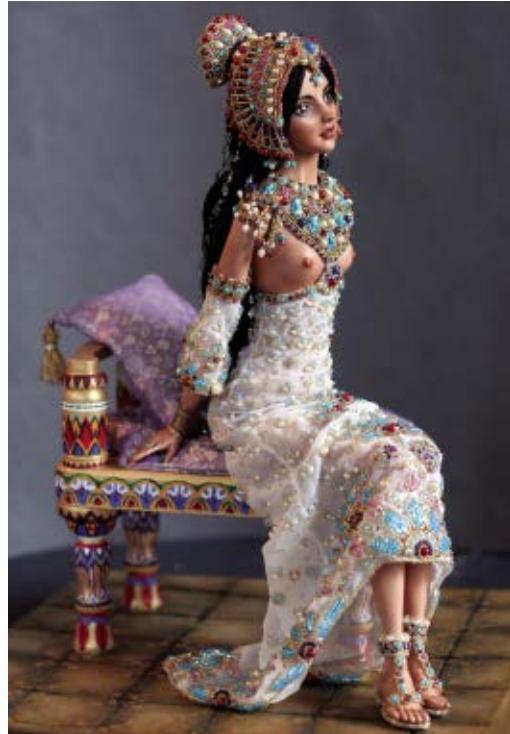
In her tiny, well-organized studio, Bychkova has boxes of body parts in various stages, drawers full of molds, a little rack of fired color tests, and perhaps a head on the workbench, being transformed from white porcelain into a tiny human, lips painted with delicate lines, and eyes glistening with moisture. Silks and velvets are shaped and sewn, then beaded in an orgy of ornament, bedecked with tiny details of fabric, trim, and handmade jewelry.

On her [enchanteddoll.com](http://enchanteddoll.com) site, it is typical to find descriptions such as: "A five-piece removable costume is bead-embroidered with over 30,000 glass seed beads and weighs almost a pound. Other materials used are: 476 Austrian crystals,

**★ The Snow Maiden (opposite), Bychkova's first porcelain doll, is adorned with over 30,000 beads.**







76 rhinestones, 1,045 metal beads, mohair wig."

Our initial reaction, of course, is to wonder, "How does she do it?" In an age of prefab everything, the quickest route, and simple how-to instructions, we are unused to the concept of hundreds of hours of labor and research to obtain the perfect realization of our imagination. What makes Bychkova's work unique is the level of skill she brings to each piece.

While art school opened Bychkova's eyes to the possibilities of art forms and taught her to think conceptually, she had to pursue other avenues of knowledge to gain her skills in actually making what she could envision. She spent a year away from ECI to study porcelain pottery, and over time has evolved her own methods and tricks to perfecting her craft. What it takes, more than anything, is dedication, and as she noted, when you spend that much time exploring technique, you discover your own secrets.

"My choice of materials is rather compulsive because permanence of my dolls is of paramount importance to me. As an artist I naturally want my creations to outlive me — that is why I am attracted to and use only the most stable materials I can find. Porcelain, for one, is as close to eternal as it gets. It's even used in space. Precious metals and stones, glass beads and crystals are objects that will not self-destruct with age. Absolute quality is what I'm after." Beauty preserved forever — how fairy-tale is that?

★ **Lotus** (opposite) hides misshapen feet in her beaded shoes, representing the unfair social standards of beauty. **Imperial Concubine** (left) was created in 200 hours. **Nitocris** (right) is a tribute to the first queen of Egypt.

"Most of my research is conducted through art books, fairy tales, and Google. Aesthetical appearance of dolls resembles fairy tale illustration more than it does authentic historic costumes, and that's the idea, but I certainly refer to historical fashion and facts for project development."

Bychkova is drawn to strong female figures in fable and history. Some of her dolls to date include: *The Last Night of Nitocris*, the first queen of Egypt; *Safia, The Favourite Wife*; *The Snow Maiden*, daughter of Father Winter in a Russian folk tale; and her *Snow White* with prince, which takes a different look at the traditional tale by touching on the concept of necrophilia. So although a pursuit of the beautiful is at the forefront of her interest, she has curiosities about the darker side of dolls and their relation to desire, control, death, and eternity. As her interests and themes emerge, it is hard to say how her work will evolve in the future, but at the age of 24, Bychkova knows that this is what she wants to do — what she was meant to do. ✕

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Marian Bantjes is a graphic artist and writer living and working from an island off the west coast of Canada.

FEATURE



FEATURE



# Gangsta WRAP

BY KIRSTEN ANDERSON

**When no one is looking, Knitta, Please! tags cities with cozies and scarves.**

Walking through city streets at night, you expect to see certain things. Old newspapers blowing around, steaming manhole covers, a cold world of cement and metal. Imagine then, turning a corner and seeing a lamp-post swathed in an adorable fuzzy sweater. Or a car antenna topped with a jaunty knit cozy. Or a metal door handle sporting a multicolored scarf. It can mean only one thing — that the hardcore crew of knitting gangstas known as Knitta Please! has just bombed your city with its exotic and fluffy brand of graffiti!

Usually working anonymously and sporting “gang” monikers such as PolyCotN, AKrylik, Purl Nekklas 14k, SonOfaStitch, LoopDogg, MascuKnitty, The Knotorious N.I.T., P-Knitty, GrannySQ, and Knidiot, the group mixes the sweet charm of what it does (knitting cozies for door knobs, for instance) with a smartass, tongue-in-cheek version of the bravado and edge of tagging. Rather than spread paste-ups or paint in the middle of the night, members of the crew slip out and stealthily sweater an entire neighborhood, hitting businesses and private property alike.

As appealing as these midnight raids to drop some serious cute on a sleeping city are, the idea that Knitta is actually creating street art is not unfounded. Knitta shares several traits with urban art and graffiti; both are often furtively done and created without thought to monetary recompense. Art writers could have a field day with the concept of introducing the “feminine touch” or “homemaker’s work” to the urban jungle, where the group leaves small tags with its knitted works,

claiming its turf as any street tagger would with spray paint. These tags, however, do not inspire frustrated cleanings by building superintendents and business owners; instead, they are greeted with charmed amusement and curiosity about who the perpetrators are.

The group, which originated in Houston, has rapidly gained fame since it began in 2005, much to its surprise. Starting with a write-up in the *Houston Press*, interest in Knitta, Please! spread like wildfire, and within months the crew was written up in numerous blogs and magazines, invited to national art exhibitions, and even mentioned on *Saturday Night Live*.

Deciding from the start to work anonymously, the Knitta crew generally operates under a veil of secrecy. “Several of us are moms, or have quiet lives, and we thought if we were running around tagging stuff, it might be best to keep it on the lowdown,” explains Knitta cofounder Magda Sayeg, aka PolyCotN.

Sayeg, however, surprised by the exuberant reception from the public and media, realized that the group was on to a good thing, and savvily embraced the media and requests for installations by the Knitta Crew. In the process, she dropped her anonymous persona to better deal with both curators and reporters. The rest of the crew, for the most part, still keeps underground.

The whole Knitta phenomenon started when Sayeg asked her friend Carol Cunningham (who later became AKrylik) to knit a door-handle cozy for her office. Noticing people’s double-take reaction, they started to create cozies and sweaters for trees, car antennas, scooter handle grips, and bike

*Noticing people's double-take reaction, they started to create cozies and sweaters for trees, car antennas, scooter handle grips, and bike racks.*

racks. Emboldened by the reception these pieces received, they continued to operate in stealth mode and quickly formed a crew — ranging in age from 21 to 72 — to knit pieces for their exploits. The group is mostly female but boasts one knit-savvy guy. As its website states, "Knitta is a group of more than 10 ladies of all ages, races, nationalities, religions, sexual orientation ... and gender."

The actual pieces or "tags" might be remnants from unfinished knitting projects, or made especially for an intended target. They're quickly wrapped around an object, secured with zip ties, and tagged with a small card displaying the group's name and URL ([knittaplease.com](http://knittaplease.com)), which was created with as much humor as the knitted tags themselves.

As more members joined the Knitta mix (currently holding steady at ten members), they were able to hit other cities, including New York, Paris, and Seattle. The most adventurous coup was wrapping one of the bricks in the Great Wall of China. At the same time, the rise of the crafting scene meant more curators were looking to explore the idea of craft as art, and many called on Knitta to create installations. Most recently, Sayeg headed up to Seattle with GrannySQ to create a large-scale exhibition for Seattle's prestigious Bumbershoot Festival, including wrapping ten trees in fuzzy sweaters outside the visual arts exhibition hall.

Despite Knitta's increasing success, and its opportunities to do increasingly grandiose and high-profile projects, Sayeg steadfastly keeps it real. She says, "While I love doing bigger projects, and I'd like to see this move into the gallery arena, I will always want to keep doing street projects."

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Kirsten Anderson lives in Seattle, where she runs Roq La Rue Gallery ([roqlarue.com](http://roqlarue.com)). She spends her free time researching art, life science, and high weirdness.





FEATURE





# *A Painting* FIT FOR A POCKET

BY PETER SHERIDAN

Poketo's mobile gallery of wallets makes fine art affordable.

Gustav Klimt's portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer sold for \$135 million in June, setting — at least for a few brief moments — a new world record for a painting.

You don't need quite as much in your wallet to own a piece of fine art, however. In fact, it doesn't even matter if your wallet is empty, as long as it is a work of art in itself.

More than 70 artists from around the world have produced designs for Poketo, the rapidly growing artists' collaborative that literally puts affordable fine art in your pocket.

Launched in 2003 by artist Ted Vadakan and graphic designer Angie Myung, Poketo has produced more than 100 limited-edition wallet designs. It has since expanded into fine art T-shirts and messenger bags; this year it's launching ceramic housewares.

"We started this as a complement to a gallery show we were presenting," says Vadakan, 32, in Los Angeles. "We had seven artists and invited them each to design a wallet — something that people could buy if they couldn't afford the art on the walls. The wallets became a mobile gallery space for artists, taking their art out and about every day."

The show got a great response, as did the wallets. "So we decided to do a second collection of those," he says. "We've used artists from across America, and from Paris to Tokyo. A wallet is universal."

Art and commerce can be uncomfortable bedfellows, as any starving artist will tell you, but Poketo piques artists' interest by combining the two elements in a challenging new canvas: a wraparound image with an interior divided by billfolds and transparent credit card holders.

"We just give the artists the basic layout of the wallet and let them do the rest," says Vadakan. "We

make them all by hand. We print the image in four-color on high-quality paper, laminate it, and then use an industrial sewing machine to stitch the wallet made of durable vinyl."

Some of Poketo's wallet artists are graphic novelists, whose characters leap off the page and into new adventures in their designs. All create original art for the project, which now generates four collections a year, each featuring seven new artists and wallets in editions of up to 200.

"Poketo merges arts and crafts — but it's not your mother's crafts," says Myung, also 32, who can hardly imagine Poketo's wallets at the same crafts fair as macramé potholders and driftwood incense burners. "There's nothing Martha Stewart about this."

Vadakan agrees: "We're merging arts and crafts in a hip, urban way that is the new subculture in the crafts world these days. The line between arts and crafts has blurred, and that's where Poketo sits. Our artists are working in the world of galleries and crafts, producing utilitarian art for a different world."

You can find Poketo wallets in art galleries and high-fashion boutiques, design stores, and museum shops. The craft of bringing art to the masses also appeals to the egalitarian world of rock 'n' roll, where special Poketo wallets have been commissioned by bands including Weezer, The Postal Service, and The Shins.

Poketo wallets cost only \$20 — a savings of \$134,999,980 over a Klimt original — and unlike the Austrian symbolist's costly canvas, each comes with an artist biography and an artist-designed badge.

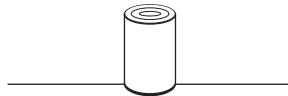
If Klimt had thought of that, just imagine what his paintings might be worth.

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British expatriate Peter Sheridan has worked for the past 20 years in Los Angeles as a foreign correspondent, covering the West Coast for newspapers and magazines in the U.K.



Poketo wallets always feature original artwork. These are from the Poketo Tokyo series. Artists' work shown here (clockwise from top left): Adapter, Nakao Teppei, Taku Anekawa, Akinori Shimodaira, and Aya Kondo.



# Canstructing a World WITHOUT HUNGER

BY BRUCE STEWART

**Unique charity event  
raises canned food to a new level.**

**I**t's a caring crafter's dream competition — to create a spectacular giant sculpture entirely out of cans of food, then do a good deed when the cans are given away to people in need. That's what Canstruction is all about.

From majestic cityscapes to giant machines and imposing animals, the sculptures display a sense of whimsy, and in many cases brilliant feats of structural engineering. At first glance it seems impossible that the *Can-Cobra*'s hooded head of cans can support itself, but many of the immense sculptures seem to defy gravity. How can the *Two-Faced Grecian Vase* or the hot air balloon possibly stand up?

The ambitious Canstruction project, in its 14th year, combines the spirit of a design/build competition with a unique way to help feed hungry people. Put on by the Society for Design and the American Institute of Architects, Canstruction pits teams of architects, engineers, and students against each other in a nationwide competition.

All of the food used in the sculptures, plus cans collected as the price of admission, is donated to local hunger relief organizations. "The medium becomes the message," points out Cheri Melillo, president and executive director of the Canstruction Foundation. "The food in the structures is immediately transformed into meals to help those in need."

Hundreds of competing teams show their stuff by designing and building the giant can sculptures in a single day. At each local exhibition, prizes are awarded in categories such as Best Meal, Best Use of Labels, Structural Ingenuity, and Jurors' Favorite, and six teams are selected for the final competition.

By participating in Canstruction contests, students are introduced to mentors in the design and construction industries, and to practical skills, too. You can't pull off one of these giant sculptures without using healthy doses of mathematics, geometry, structural engineering, design, and construction techniques.

Melillo says the Canstruction project was created as a charity of the design and construction industries, to give something back to the local communities that support them. She came up with the idea in 1993, and put on the first Canstruction contest that year in New York City. The effort has grown steadily since — in 2006 there were events in 80 cities, and the NYC competition was the biggest ever, with 42 architectural and engineering firms competing. One of the hardest parts for Melillo was arranging for trucking 150,000 cans to the competition site in just two days.

The amount of food generated by Canstruction is sizable — 2 million pounds in 2006 alone — but that's not the only way this artistic effort aids the cause of hunger. "The sculptures raise everyone's consciousness regarding problems of hunger that exist in supposedly the richest nation on Earth," notes Melillo. "As much as Canstruction delivers food for the hungry, it also generates food for thought."

► Canstruction exhibits are seen in malls, museums, design centers, and public spaces throughout the United States. For locations see [canstruction.org](http://canstruction.org).

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Bruce Stewart is a freelance writer and editor covering topics ranging from telecommunications and open source to solar coffee roasters and Lego harpsichords.



Photography by Kevin Wick (mermaids to roosters, cobras to flowers); Mike Torrey (rooster and kitchen)

*From mermaids to roosters, cobras to flowers, the Canstruction sculptures provide a visual feast for the eyes.  
Clockwise from top left: CHICK-Can of the Sea, Wake Up!, Lotus Blossom, and Soup Kitchen.*

## QUICK CRAFT

# Woven Trash Gift Wrap

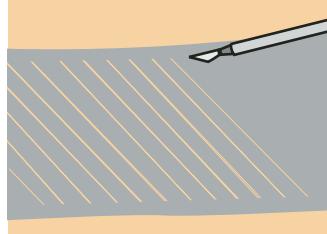
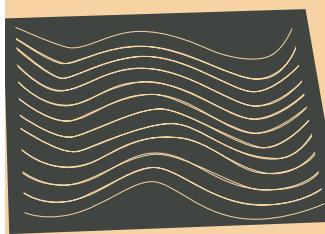
If your green conscience can't bear to toss out wrapping paper that's been used only once (or twice), weave it into a snazzy pattern to cover a new gift. Or further emphasize the "reuse" part of "reduce, reuse, recycle" by weaving direct mail, bills, maps, receipts, or any other random scraps into gift wrap.

**You will need:** Construction paper, pieces of scrap paper, tape, scissors, hobby knife, paper cutter or other cutting tool



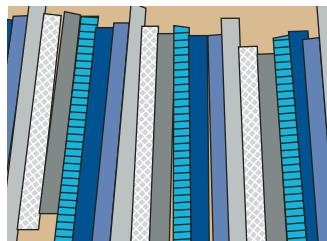
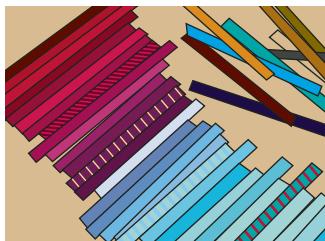
## 1. Cut the pattern.

Prepare the framework for the weave with a single sheet of paper large enough to wrap the gift. I like construction paper, but feel free to substitute with whatever is available. Over a sheet of cardboard (or a table that can handle scratches), gently carve a series of adjacent S-curve patterns over the whole sheet. Leave about a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " margin around the border of the paper.



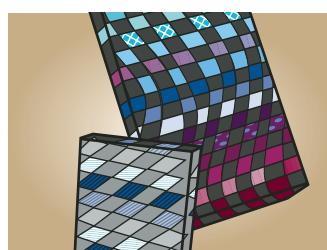
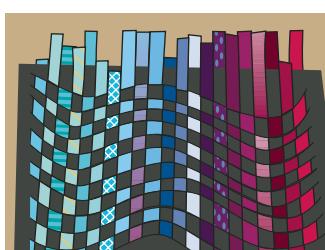
## 2. Cut strips of paper.

Dig through the paper stash for swatches. Cut them into straight,  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-wide strips. It's important for the sides to stay parallel, so use a paper cutter if possible. Arrange the strips into an order for assembly. I like repeating patterns or changes in gradation.



## 3. Weave and wrap.

Weave the strips through the large sheet. If the strips are too short, or for more variation, strategically hide the breaks behind the large sheet. Work laterally, making sure to place each strip right up against the preceding one. Run a piece of tape across the strips on the back of the sheet to hold them in place. Trim any excess length off the strips, then wrap the gift.



**Zack Stern** ([zackstern.com](http://zackstern.com)) is a San Francisco-based writer and video producer. He's contributed articles to MAKE, in addition to many computer and technology magazines.

Illustrations by Dustin Hostetler



# CREATIVE CLONES

FRANCHISES,  
PATTERNS,  
COPIES, &  
COUNTERFEITS

- 48** The Mafia and  
The Church get crafty.
- 52** Patterns for the people.
- 54** Conscientious  
counterfeiting.
- 58** DIY designer  
(crochet) handbags.



# ATTACK OF THE CRAFT CLUB CLONES!



The Craft Mafia and the Church of Craft spread DIY ethos and the good word.

BY GARETH BRANWYN

**W**hat do you get when punk rock DIY meets Martha Stewart at a quilting bee? Well, you might get something like the Craft Mafia and the Church of Craft, two fast-growing orgs dedicated to spreading the good word on crafting.

The Austin-based Craft Mafia ([craftmafia.com](http://craftmafia.com)) began in 2003, originally out of an alliance of three women who owned craft-related businesses. "We banded together to pool money to take out print ads we couldn't afford individually," says ACM cofounder Jenny Hart. "We'd get together to write off drinks and talk shop, lay out our goals, and get inspired and informed by each other. It started to grow, so we decided to make it an official group based on the same principles of pooling resources, cross-promotion, and working together."

One might think that the mafioso name and playful posturing of the group could offend some, but Jenny says on the contrary. "In fact, people loved it so much, we were overwhelmed with requests from other crafters to use the name to start similar groups in their areas." Today there are 41 Craft Mafia "famiglias" in cities across the United States and Canada.

And while each group has its own flavor, they're all united by a desire to promote the DIY ethos and the spirit of small business entrepreneurship, and

to provide members with mutual support, inspiration, and information. Oh, and to have tons of fun. If the success of the Austin Mafia is any indication, there is certainly success in numbers. ACM member Vicky Howell's knitting show, *Knitty Gritty*, was such a hit on the DIY Network in 2005 that it is now joined by three new shows hosted by ACM members: *Stylelicious*, *Craft Lab*, and *Uncommon Threads*.

You might think that the Church of Craft ([churchofcraft.org](http://churchofcraft.org)) is another club name where your tongue belongs firmly in your cheek when you say it. Not so, says Church cofounder Rev. Trismegista Taylor. She's an ordained interfaith minister who firmly believes in the redemptive powers of making stuff.

"I'd been hearing the call to ministry for a few years. It began with a performance piece I did in which I played The Reverend Miss Myrtle Motivation. I'd preach about the power of creation and how we need to make something every day. I got such an amazing response, I realized there was a need to inspire and motivate people to create things."

When a friend connected her with Callie Janoff, who felt a similar call, the Church of Craft was

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*Today there are 41 Craft Mafia 'famiglias' across the United States and Canada, and 11 Church of Craft congregations around the world.*



born. Other crafters from around the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and Sweden have similarly been moved by the DIY spirit. There are currently 11 churches with as many as 2,500 participants. The good reverend blanches at the notion that the Church of Craft is a "club" or a "franchise." To her, a club implies membership requirements and a franchise is a commercial venture. In true ministerial fashion, she assures us that each church operates in the way that the spirit moves it and they are open to all. "No one is ever turned away."

In this Web 2.0 world, where social networking and online collaboration are all the rage, it's not

too surprising that face-to-face clubs are popular. And Rev. Taylor thinks she knows why there's such a current interest in crafting groups. "I think the depression we're in has inspired it. Folks are broke, and, especially in San Francisco, the dot-com boom happened and the majority of people in their 20s were suddenly out of work. Lots of time and no money always brings us back to making things." Amen to that, sister.

Gareth Branwyn is a regular contributor to CRAFT and MAKE and writes widely about do-it-yourself technologies. He also runs the personal tech website Street Tech ([streettech.com](http://streettech.com)).



## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO CRAFT

**The following is an excerpt from a sermon given by Church of Craft cofounder Callie Janoff. Read the rest at [churchofcraft.org](http://churchofcraft.org).**

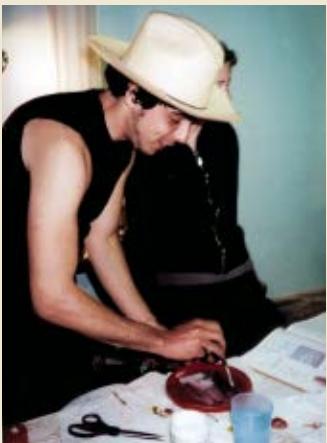
Making things isn't easy. Our lives conspire to keep us from acts of creation. We are very well-bred consumers; that is to say we have learned well how to consume our food, culture, knowledge, power.... We eat our lives and that makes us who we are. Consumption is passive, and we seek the path of least resistance. When we consume our identity, we are filled with self-doubt: what if someone finds out that we are not as cool as our shoes might lead one to believe? Our consumption plagues our quiet lives, filling it with broadcast noise and boxes of macaroni and cheese. But when we make something, we are filled with satisfaction — the kind you feel to your core. Consider the presents you give: the one you bought (I hope this will match her living room furniture) vs. the one you made (I hope she can tell by the way that I have made this how I feel about her). Which kind of gift would you rather give? We are not suggesting we should all move to Vermont and subsistence farm. Rather, we can all find moments of creation in our lives, and fill our hearts, minds, and bodies with the courage to see love and make love ... And that is what the Church of Craft is for, to help us remember how to find moments of creation in our lives. We come together, and we make things, and we affirm the craft we see in each other. Then we go home inspired, confident, peaceful, and we live our lives with all the happiness and love we can.

## THE COSA NOSTRA OF CRAFTS ON HOW TO JOIN LA FAMIGLIA

If you'd like to start your own Craft Mafia, you're encouraged to do so (if one doesn't already exist in your town). The Craft Mafia has a page of guidelines at [craftmafia.com](http://craftmafia.com). Here's their summary. If you're interested, check out the full "Start Your Own" page:

1. Let us know you'd like to form a Craft Mafia; you have 30 days to get crackin'!
2. Start with a minimum of 3 members representing 3 different businesses.
3. Designate your city or town — not an entire region or state.
4. Create a website with your own logo. Use mytowncraftmafia.com (or.net or .org) for the url.
5. Link back to both [CraftMafia.com](http://CraftMafia.com) and [AustinCraftMafia.com](http://AustinCraftMafia.com) and join the Craft Mafia webring.
6. Link to each member's website on your Craft Mafia website.
7. Tell people where you got the bright idea in any press you do!
8. Consider including "Member craftmafia.com" in any print ads (optional).
9. Once you're approved as an official Craft Mafia, you are free to use your Craft Mafia name online and in print!

Thank you for asking, and fuhgedaboudit!



*Austin Craft Mafia (below) and Church of Craft (above) with members Jol Perez (left) creating a Christmas cookie tin, Rev. Tristy Taylor (middle) digging into her magic suitcase o' craft, and Jason Gonzales (right) showing off the left foot he made for the Edible Corpse dinner.*

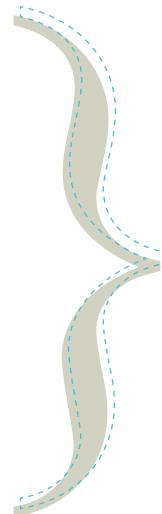
*DIY or die: The San Francisco Craft Mafia's pin makes a great button.*



Photograph of Craft Mafia by Cory Ryan; of Church of Craft members by Tristy Taylor; and of Tristy Taylor by Church of Craft Congregate



# A PERFECT FIT



Lisa Howdin of Fitz Patterns makes sewing indie fashions just a download away.

BY NATALIE ZEE DRIEU

“**O**nline, downloadable patterns for top chicks!” is just one of the fun taglines Lisa Howdin announces on her indie sewing pattern site, Fitz Patterns ([fitzpatterns.com](http://fitzpatterns.com)). Howdin, a designer living in Canberra, Australia, grew tired of the boring pattern books in her local fabric stores and decided to merge her love of creating fashion and sewing, with her web expertise.

“As a fabric hoarder, I also really like the idea of being able to look at what I already have while selecting a pattern,” explains Howdin. “I’m unfortunately completely lacking in patience, so I love the idea of being able to ‘download now’ and start sewing ASAP.”

Fitzpatterns.com was born in 2004 and now boasts more than 25 cool indie-style patterns, including one hoodie pattern for men.

“Originally I was going to offer custom-fit sewing patterns, so I thought [the name] Fitz was kind of a cute play on that,” says Howdin. “I still might do that, but I found there were a lot of people that just wanted something quick to whizz up for Friday night.”

Her hip styles range the fashion gamut from the girly Camille Ballet Top and Mimi Puffy Sleeve Blouse to the laid-back and casual Deanne Knickerbockers and Debbie Mini-Dress. All of her patterns are fresh styles that Howdin designs and

names after her friends. Most of the patterns are only a few dollars apiece (Australian currency), and Howdin offers eight free patterns, some of which have also been featured in the CRAFT Pattern Podcasts ([craftzine.com/podcast](http://craftzine.com/podcast)).

One of Howdin’s favorites is the Tonia Cape, a great-looking winter wrap with her own decidedly modern take. “I liked the skinny jean thing but couldn’t think of something warm to wear with them that didn’t look a bit underdressed or too young for me,” explains Howdin. “A cape seemed like a nice elegant solution. I hope they stick around as a fashion thing.”

To create her sewing patterns, Howdin starts with a sketch to figure out the best or simplest way to make a top, pant, or dress. She then drafts up a pattern either by hand or using various patternmaking software. (Howdin recommends the book *Metric Pattern Cutting* by Winifred Aldrich for newbies interested in patternmaking.)

Next, she prints the pattern, fixes mistakes, and makes up a sample; the process can loop repeatedly here until the pattern is perfect. When she’s fully satisfied, Howdin posts the finished pattern in PDF format to her Fitz Patterns site.

“I quite often go back and use a pattern, following the instructions to see that they are as clear as they



Left: Lisa Howdin wears the *Mimi Blouse*. Right: Ally wears the *Tonia Cape* (top), and a finished cape made by a UK crafter (bottom). The *Tonia Cape* is a great addition for your wardrobe as a perfect cold-weather coverup. Suggested fabrics are “woven wools, tweeds, and gabardines — something nice and chunky.” It could also be lined with a mid-weight satin. Just print out the PDF of the pattern; it’s automatically tiled for letter-sized paper.

We have featured six *Fitz Patterns* in our CRAFT Pattern Podcasts, including the *Tonia Cape* (pictured at top). You can download the free patterns at [craftzine.com/go/fitzpattern](http://craftzine.com/go/fitzpattern).

Photograph at left by Matteo Montebello; photographs at right by Lisa Howdin

can be,” says Howdin. “People also email me with suggestions and problems — I send them a free pattern for doing so. I’m constantly incorporating people’s feedback.”

If that’s not enough, Howdin is currently working on a master’s degree in internet communication while working her day job as the web editor for the CSIRO, Australia’s Science and Industrial Research Organization. As busy as she is, she hasn’t stopped working on *Fitz Patterns*. So what’s next?

“I’d like to keep improving the patterns and instructions. I want to add plus sizes, more men’s patterns, and I’d like to develop a searchable database so someone can say, ‘I’ve got 175cm of 150cm-wide fabric — show me what I can make!’” 

Natalie Zee Drieu is associate editor of CRAFT and writes for the CRAFT blog at [craftzine.com](http://craftzine.com).

# THE COUNTERFEIT CROCHET PROJECT

BY GARTH JOHNSON

Crafting has become a force to be reckoned with. Crafters around the world have created a market for their own brand of fashion-forward, handcrafted goods through Etsy and independent craft fairs. In addition to the prerequisite skull-and-crossbones iPod cozies and felted brooches, there are untold numbers of crafters obsessed with the world of high fashion. The full spectrum of the fashion world is reflected in hand-crafted clothing and accessories — from minimalist treatments with clean lines to an all-out sensory overload of rickrack and pom-poms.

A love of shopping and consumption coupled with an awareness of sweatshop economics permeates the craft world at the moment, and lines between craft and couture have been blurred beyond recognition. San Francisco-based artist Stephanie Syjuco exploits this blurry line with her own art and craft. Syjuco is incredibly prolific, with dozens of museum and gallery shows under her belt, as well as designing and running her own clothing line ([anti-factory.com](http://anti-factory.com)), and teaching art at Stanford University and the California College of the Arts.



Stephanie Syjuco challenges crochet buffs to bootleg designer handbags.

As an only child of Filipino immigrants, Syjuco grew up using craft as an outlet for her imagination, creating new looks and identities for her dolls. As she started to explore the art world as an adult, craft became a natural medium for the exploration of her own multicultural identity.

Craft is the thread that connects all of Syjuco's work, which is impeccably made from humble materials, ranging from fabric and thread to foam core and wood-patterned contact paper. Bootlegging and black market economies are also a recurring theme. Most of the people who manufacture luxury items in sweatshops cannot afford the objects they produce — instead, underground economies trafficking in ersatz luxury goods flourish in their own shadowy netherworld.

The Counterfeit Crochet Project is a natural outgrowth of these obsessions, combining a love of fashion, collaboration, craft, and, of course ...

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*Stephanie Syjuco flaunts her fabulous faux Chanel on the streets of San Francisco.*



bootlegging. The rules that have been laid out for the project are simple:

- 1) Choose a designer label couture handbag, preferably one that you covet.
- 2) Using your own skill level, approximate that handbag in crochet.
- 3) Do your best to replicate the size, scale, decoration, and function of the bag (including pockets, closures, and embellishments).
- 4) Photograph the completed bag and send it to Stephanie. Additionally, the completed bag itself may be sent to Stephanie to be included in an eventual exhibition.

*The crafters involved in the project have to dig deep into their respective skills to replicate the subtle beauty of the handbags in such a primitive medium.*

In exchange, participants receive credit toward handmade Anti-Factory garments and full credit as collaborators in the project. Eventually, snapshots taken by the participants will be blown up to poster size and displayed with participating bags. Also, crafters who offer their work for sale will complete the full cycle of manufacturing, distribution, publicity, and retail.

As an educator and proponent of DIY, Syjuco includes a forum on her website to share her patterns, tricks, and encouragement. Source material is freely offered in the form of suggested bags, patterns, and tips. The project was an instant hit within the craft world, with over a dozen collaborators stepping up to the plate. Syjuco carefully cultivates an air of the illicit around the project: bars are placed over the eyes of collaborators when they are shown posing with their bags.

Counterfeit goods make up a multi-billion-dollar black market economy involving sweatshops, organized crime, and theft of intellectual property. The Counterfeit Crochet Project addresses all of

these issues, from the “outsourcing” of the bags to an alternative labor source (the collaborators), to the creation of an economic model to sell them. At the same time, Syjuco brings issues like sampling and remixing to the table, offering icons of modern fashion to a craft world that is already hell-bent on replicating designer looks on the cheap.

The completed handbags are wonders of ingenuity. Any way you slice it, crochet is a less refined medium than, say, knitting. The crafters involved in the project have to dig deep into their respective skills to replicate the subtle beauty of the handbags in such a primitive medium. The love and care that went into the bags are evident, along with the initial fetishistic attraction to the source material. This handmade quality was paramount for Syjuco at the inception of the project. It was important that the collaborators’ own styles and skill levels shine through.

How does a fine artist like Syjuco reconcile her love of craft with her place in an art world obsessed with concepts like “high” and “low” art? The Counterfeit Crochet Project began as one of the many “small projects” on her website — conceptual thoughts that percolated until they were realized, seeing her creative impulses through in between “serious” projects. Syjuco is so adept at turning these small works into well-rounded conceptual art that many have morphed into fully formed large-scale projects.

The Counterfeit Crochet Project is a milestone in Syjuco’s art because it adroitly spans all of her interests. The project is a perfect bridge between the worlds of craft, fashion, and art. The wonderfully accessible handbags lure the viewer in, with instantly recognizable attributes of well-known fashion designers. Upon closer inspection, they reveal the intricacies of the project as well as the detail and attention put into them by their makers.

What’s next for Syjuco? In addition to a full slate of museum and gallery shows and creating clothing for Anti-Factory, she wants to keep adding to her arsenal of old-world craft skills. By learning to weave baskets, upholster furniture, and spin wool, Syjuco hopes to become a physical repository of craft knowledge. When craft is outlawed ... only outlaws will craft.

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Garth Johnson is a designer, educator, and rogue crafter who lives in Atlanta, Ga. His website, [extremecraft.com](http://extremecraft.com), is a compendium of craft masquerading as art, art masquerading as craft, and craft extending its middle finger.



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SELECTIONS FROM  
THE COUNTERFEIT  
CROCHET PROJECT

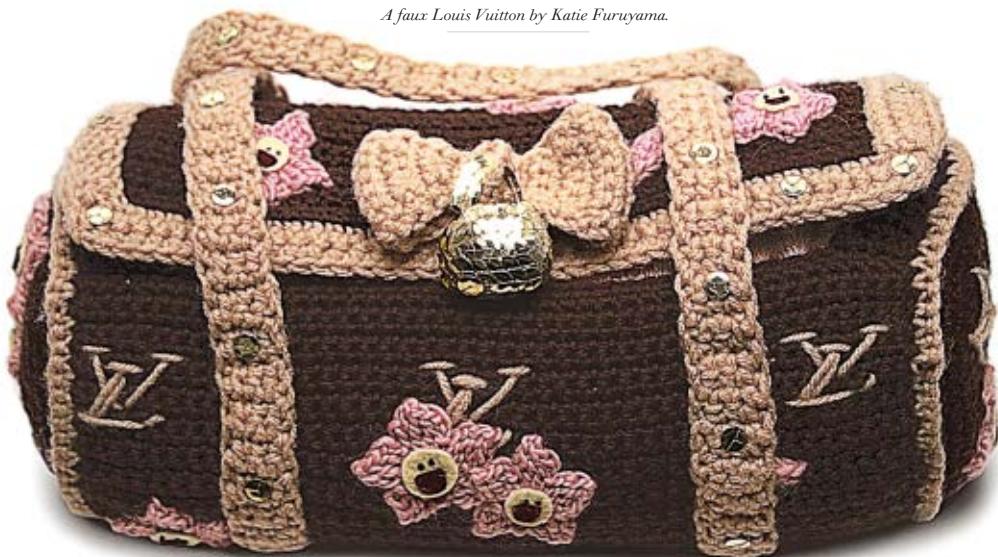
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*A faux Dior by Diana Schreiber.*



*A faux Dolce & Gabbana by Nicole Stowe.*



*A faux Louis Vuitton by Katie Furuyama.*

# ANATOMY OF A COUNTERFEIT

BY STEPHANIE SYJUCO

I don't have a formal pattern for this particular handbag, but wanted to share tips on how I made it. So far, I've been "freeforming" it on every counterfeit handbag I've made, trying to be inventive on how to interpret the textures and parts. I'm hoping that folks try out their own techniques and ideas in making their bags, but it's also useful to know what others have done, to get your creative juices flowing.

The following instructions assume a basic knowledge of crochet, and a healthy sense of experimentation on the maker's part. I found it helpful to rummage through a few crochet books to choose from basic stitch patterns, and got inspiration from a few vintage 70s ones as well. There are great online tutorials on how to crochet that will help you

build up shapes in no time at all.

The body of the bag is made of worsted-weight brown and mustard acrylic yarn that I bought at my local drugstore (1 skein each is more than enough). I really like the chunky look, and it's faster to work with a thicker yarn. Also, I make no bones about this being a "fancy" purse made out of nice or expensive yarn — for me it's all about both "debasement" the original and using common materials to interpret the couture.

The purse has a front flap (where the logo is) that buttons down. Four little gold "grommets" (hand crocheted) are at the top corners, and a long handle is run through them to make an adjustable long single strap or 2 shorter double straps, depending on how you like to wear it.



## START »

### **1. MAKE THE BODY.**

1. The main body is made in 4 separate pieces:
  - a) The front is a rectangle measuring about 11" wide and 6" long.
  - b) The sides/bottom are one long piece measuring about 1" wide and 23" long, or the length that it takes to wrap around the sides and bottom of the front.
  - c) The back/flap consists of a square measuring 11" wide and 11" long.
  - d) The logo panel is a smaller square measuring 6" wide and 6" long. This will eventually have the logo appliquéd to it, and is whipstitched to the back/flap.

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The front, sides/bottom, and back/flap are joined using a slipstitch crochet, which makes it look kind of like raised piping. You could technically crochet the body of the bag "in the round" as one piece, but I liked the more structured look of having separate pieces joined together.

This faux "quilted" effect is just one way to achieve a grid pattern. It's very textured and based on a vintage crochet bedspread I picked up from a thrift store a few years ago.

The squarish piece with the logo on it is made using a simple single crochet (sc) and then a double crochet (dc) border on the sides and bottom. I wanted something simple so that the logo would stand out better (see photo below).



## 2. CROCHET AND APPLIQUÉ THE LOGO.

The logo is super easy, but took a few tries to get it right. The trick is getting the C's the right length so that when you appliquéd them together it leaves the telltale gap between the curves, the letters aren't too chunky, and it's legible.

**To make the logo:** Chain a length that corresponds to the inside length of your final C, then add an extra 2 chains.

Turn and double crochet (dc) into each chain about a third of the way to the end, and dc twice into a single chain. Continue along, and about two-thirds of the way to the end, dc twice again into a single chain. Finish the length with a single dc in each chain. You'll notice the extra dc's help create the curve of the C.

I used thread instead of yarn to appliquéd the logo because I didn't want too much of a topstitched look. Make sure to intertwine the C's, as opposed to just laying one on top of the other. Remember, it's all about being a good counterfeiter!



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### **3. CROCHET THE “GROMMETS.”**

**3.** The grommets are made using a much finer gold string. Each has about a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " open circle inside. I used a very tiny hook and chained 10 stitches, joined them, and did a single crochet (sc) inside the circle until it felt right.

I made 4 of them and stitched 2 sets (one in the front, one in the back) at each corner. The quilted pattern of the body uses triple crochet stitches (tc), so there's an openness to it, and I could find a “hole” easily.



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### **4. MAKE THE STRAP.**

**4.** Using a technique from my 70s crochet book on how to make a belt tie for a caftan (awesome!), I figured out how to make a relatively supple, solid, not too thick, and not too skinny strap. The strap is first worked in brown yarn, and then embroidered with a single mustard thread at the end.

**To make the strap:** Chain using 2 brown yarns at the same time (for double thickness), making it the final length of the strap. Mine is 40" total. The strap is adjustable, and can be worn as shorter double straps or a longer single strap, depending on how you adjust them through the grommets.

Guide one end of your chain through one set of grommets on one side, and then through the second set of grommets (you'll have to figure out this sequence so that it works like it does in the picture on page 58).

Join together the chain ends in some manner so they are permanently looped through the bag.

Slip stitch through each single chain, still using 2 yarns at once, going around the loop until you come back to your start. This makes the strap thicker and less flimsy to hold.

Use a yarn needle to thread a long length of mustard yarn. I had to embroider the yarn around the strap twice to achieve the effect I wanted.

Voilà! That's pretty much it! I added buttons at the end, but didn't necessarily need them. I want to put in a brown lining with perhaps a zipper to really finish it off and make it functional. The laciness of the “quilted” pattern means there are lots of holes for small things to fall out of (goodbye lipstick!), which isn't so great. Hence, a lining is needed.

I wear this purse out into the world and it never fails to either confuse or amaze people, depending on how they feel about counterfeiting, or their idea of the “proper” place of craft. I have dreams of an army of crocheters putting busy hands toward crafting their hearts' desires, and both laughing at and paying homage to the “high-end” fashion world! Viva la révolution!

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## **FINISH X**

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Stephanie Syjuco is a San Francisco visual artist whose work deals with black markets, counterfeiting, and cultural copies. She runs the recycled clothing line Anti-Factory ([anti-factory.com](http://anti-factory.com)) and teaches at the California College of the Arts. [stephaniesyjuco.com](http://stephaniesyjuco.com)

# Craft: PROJECTS

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Needlepoint  
Sandals



What do you get when you recycle patterns and a pair of jeans? The mod crochet shoulder bag project shown here. Our other stitch projects include casual-chic needlepoint sandals, and a traditional Hawaiian quilt. For something a bit more high tech, build a miniature set of drawers with printed circuit boards, or use your computer to recreate a full-size fabric version of your favorite masterpiece to hang on your wall.

# CROCHETED RETRO PURSE

By Beth Doherty

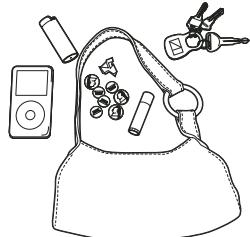


Photograph by Thayer Allyson Gowdy

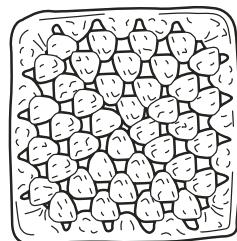
## RECYCLE PATTERNS AND A PAIR OF JEANS TO CROCHET A RETRO SHOULDER BAG.

» “Reduce, reuse, and recycle” have replaced “reading, ’riting, and ’rithmetic” as the three Rs foremost in people’s minds. It was in this spirit that I created the following pattern for a handsome shoulder bag composed of repeated motifs in randomly changing colors.

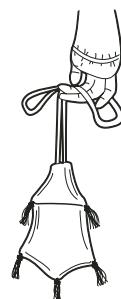
The lining is made from old jeans, and you can sew the change pocket in for a cellphone or ID pouch. The handle is a clothesline that’s been densely crocheted around — an environmentally friendly and economical choice, not to mention that it matches the bag perfectly. But more exciting than its use of recycled materials is the bag’s combination of recycled design from the 1940s and 1970s.



» The popular Flickr group “what’s in your bag?” boasts thousands of photos documenting the contents of handbags. [flickr.com/groups/whats\\_in\\_your\\_bag](http://flickr.com/groups/whats_in_your_bag)



» In 1955, Coco Chanel introduced her now-signature quilted bag, the first handbag with shoulder straps. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/chanel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/chanel)



» Fashionable ladies of the 19th century carried small handbags called *ridicules* (or *reticule*), which means ridiculous in French. French men thought handbags were a ridiculous joke, seeing women literally carry their pockets in their hands. [craftzine.com/go/reticules](http://craftzine.com/go/reticules)

Beth Doherty has a B.A. in fine arts from Columbia College in Chicago, where she still resides with her husband and cats. See more of her work at [gourmetamigurumi.com](http://gourmetamigurumi.com).

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED



**[A]** Cascade 220 or similar worsted-weight wool yarn

**[B]** E/4mm crochet hook  
or size needed to obtain gauge

**[C]** 60" length of clothes-line or other rope for handle

**[D]** Old blue jeans for lining

**[E]** Seam binding to match blue jeans

**[F]** Thread to match fabric of blue jeans

**[G]** Sewing machine or sewing needle

**[H]** Large snap

**[I]** Tapestry needle

**Clothespins and pencil**  
(not shown)

### Stitch Abbreviations

Repeat instructions between asterisks as many times as directed (\*)

Stitch (st)  
 Slit stitch (slst)  
 Single crochet (sc)  
 Decrease (sc2tog)  
 Cluster (dc3tog or dc4tog)  
 Treble crochet (tr)  
 Half double crochet (hdc)  
 Chain (ch)  
 Skip (sk)  
 Times (x)  
 Make ring (mr)  
 Round (rnd)  
 Right side (RS)  
 Wrong side (WS)

### Thread Colors Used:

7803 Fuchsia  
 8903 Leaf Green  
 8910 Light Green  
 9477 Light Pink  
 8906 Light Blue  
 8393 Navy

## 20TH CENTURY REMIX

I think we are too quick to discard fashion as being “last season,” which makes us spend way too much on clothes and accessories! The bag’s shape was inspired by a clutch, a crochet pattern originally published by The Spool Cotton Company in 1945.

The motif was based on those in the “Patch-Quilt Bedspread” from *Decorating with Crochet* by Anne Halliday, published by Houghton Mifflin Company in 1975. Both design elements, 30 years apart from each other, come together 30 years further down the line to make a fresh, new bag.



Photography by Beth Doherty

START

## ► CROCHET A DENIM-LINED SHOULDER BAG

**Time:** 8-10 Hours **Complexity:** Crochet: Medium / Sewing: Easy

### 1. GAUGE IT

The finished motif measures 3.5" when steam blocked lightly (see how to block at the end of motif instructions). Note that this is a firm gauge — you don't want your bag to sag. If you want to use this motif for a scarf or something else where softness is important, try a hook that is a few sizes larger than the one you used to get the gauge on the bag.

### 2. CROCHET THE MOTIF

Change colors randomly for each motif, but always use Navy for the last round. Instructions are given for one way of using colors as an example of which rounds the colors are changed after.

**2a.** Starting in the center with Leaf Green, make a ring.

**Rnd 1:** ch 1, 7 sc in ring, slst to top of first sc to join (8 st, ch at beginning of rnd always counts as a st).

Draw the working yarn through the ring and put this loop on your hook. Make a ring by crossing the working end (the ball end) over the tail end, leaving about 6". Single crochet into the ring and over the tail. When you are finished with Rnd 1, pull on the tail to close the ring.

**Rnd 2:** ch 3, dc3tog in same space as slst, ch 3, (dc4tog in next sc, ch 3) 7x, slst to top of dc3tog to join (8 clusters and 8 ch 3 spaces). Fasten off Leaf Green.



**2b.** Switch to Fuchsia.

**Rnd 3:** Pull up a loop in any ch 3 space, ch 1, 4 sc in the same ch 3 space, sk next cluster, (5 sc in next ch 3 space, sk next cluster) 7x (40 sc).

Fasten off Fuchsia. Join to first st of rnd as shown.

**2c.** Switch to Light Blue.

**Rnd 4:** Pull up a loop in the center sc of any 5 sc group, ch 1, 2 sc in same sc, (sc in next sc, sc2tog, sc in next sc, 3 sc in next sc) 7x, sc in next sc, sc2tog, sc in next sc (48 sc).

First, fasten off your yarn leaving about an 8" tail, and thread it onto a tapestry needle. With the RS facing, go under both loops of the first stitch of the rnd.

Pull the needle through to the WS and then insert it into the middle of the last stitch of the rnd. Weave in the end on the WS. Fasten off Light Blue. Join to first st of rnd as shown.

**2d.** Switch to Light Pink.

**Rnd 5:** Pull up a loop in any sc2tog, ch 1, sc in next st, \* sc2tog, hdc in next st, dc in next st (tr, ch 3, tr) in next st, dc in next st, hdc in next st, sc2tog, sc in next 3 st, rep from \* 3 x, sc2tog, hdc in next st, dc in next st, (tr, ch 3, tr) in next st, dc in next st, hdc in next st, sc2tog, sc in next st, (44 st and four, ch 3 corners). Fasten off Light Pink. Join to first st of rnd.

**2e.** Switch to Light Green.

**Rnd 6:** Pull up a loop in any center sc in which there are 3 sc in a row, ch 1, sc in next 5 st, \* (2 sc, hdc, 2 sc) in corner ch 3 space, sc in next 11 st, rep from \* 3 x, (2 sc, hdc, 2 sc) in corner ch 3 space, sc in next 5 st (64 st). Fasten off Light Green. Join to first st of rnd.

**2f.** Switch to Navy.

**Rnd 7:** Pull up a loop in any center sc in which there are 5 sc in a row, ch 1, sc in next 7 st, \* (2 sc, hdc, 2 sc) in next st, sc in next 15 st, rep from \* 3 x, (2 sc, hdc, 2 sc) in next st, sc in next 7 st (72 st).

**2g.** Make 16 more motifs, for a total of 17, changing the colors randomly as desired.

## 3. BLOCK AND JOIN YOUR MOTIFS

**3a.** After your motifs are made, you will want to block them, or rather, you will wish that you did not have to block them, but blocking makes joining the motifs much easier, and because you used 100% wool yarn, the process is fairly quick and painless.

At right (above) is an unblocked motif. It looks kind of ill-tempered, which you will be if you try to join the motifs without blocking them first.

To block a motif, simply pin it to size (you really only need to pin the corners), in this case 3.5", spritz it with a bit of water, or set your iron on steam, and iron it on the "wool" setting.

**3b.** After all of the motifs are blocked, lay them out and join them together into a single piece that is folded in half to form the front and back of the bag. In other words, you will be joining all of the motifs together at this time — none are being saved for the front or the back.

**3c.** There are many methods of joining motifs together. Some people like to sew them, some people like to sc them. My preferred method is to slst them together on the WS.

At right (bottom), 2 motifs are being joined. The right sides are together and the wrong sides are facing out. I like to slst through just the 2 outside loops. This gives me a nice edge on the front of the motifs. Again, there are many methods of joining motifs. This is my favorite because it does not show from the front and I do not have to cut lengths of yarn for sewing them together.

When 2 motifs have been slst together, do not break your yarn, and keep going to the next 2 motifs.



## 4. LINE THE BAG

Since this bag is made out of motifs that have holes in them, it's nice to give it a lining. Even nicer is a stiff denim lining from recycled blue jeans.

**TIP:** If you want, you can also cut the change pocket out of the jeans and sew it into the lining. It would be the perfect size for an ID or small cellphone.



**4a.** You'll need a big piece of material to line this bag. The easiest way to get a this is to use the leg of a pair of jeans. Cut the leg and open it at the top stitched seam. Then lay the center of your crocheted piece across the remaining seam of the jeans leg as shown.

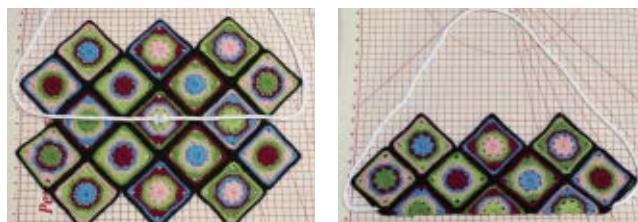
**4b.** Place the bag on top of the cut jean material and, using a pencil, trace around the outside of the bag. Cut out around this line. There is no need to leave an additional seam allowance.

**4c.** Fold the cut piece in half at the factory seam with the RS together. Sew the 2 shorter edges with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Pin the seam binding around the top of edge and sew it in place.

## 5. ASSEMBLE THE BAG

**5a.** Sew the 2 ends of your 60" length of rope together. I used the zigzag stitch on my sewing machine. Lay the loop of rope inside your bag. Fold the bag in half with the rope inside the bag, as shown.

**NOTE:** The WS is up.



**5b.** With RS facing and Navy yarn, pull up a loop at the fold and sc through both thicknesses of the bag and around the rope. You are at once attaching the handle and crocheting the sides closed. I found it necessary to put at least 2 sc in each st. To do this, set the rope on top of the motifs, sc into the motifs and over the rope. When one side of the bag is closed, sc around the clothesline alone.



I found that the clothesline was making the sc want to twist. I went with this instead if fighting it. I gave the crochet some extra twists as well as scrunching up the crochet very tightly. This gave the handle a nice body. I also found clothespins useful for keeping the rope in place and keeping track of when I was done with the handle and when I had to start crocheting the other side closed.



**5c.** When the handle is completely and tightly covered, sc through both thicknesses of the bag and around the rope like you did on the first side. You may also want to sc around the top of the bag.

**5d.** Insert the lining into the assembled bag and whipstitch it into place.

**5e.** Sew the snap onto center points.



## 6. MAKE TASSELS (OPTIONAL)

**6a.** Cut a 5" tall piece of cardboard. Place a 12" length of yarn across the top of the cardboard, then wind the Navy yarn 30x lengthwise around the cardboard and yarn. Tie the 12" strands tightly together around the top. This is what you'll use later to attach the tassel to the bag. Cut the yarn at the bottom.



**6b.** Wrap an additional piece of yarn a few times tightly around the tassel about 1" below the top, securing the ends with a knot. Trim the ends of the tassel. Repeat to make the second tassel.

**6c.** Sew one tassel on either side of the bag where the rope comes out of the fold.

And we're done! Now go and wear your retro-remix bag proudly.

The yarn to make this bag was kindly provided by Nana's Knitting Shop, 5144 West 95th St., Oak Lawn, Ill. 60453, (708) 229-0061.  
[nanasknitlingshop.com](http://nanasknitlingshop.com)

# CRAFTY MASTERPIECE

By TRICIA MILLS GRAY

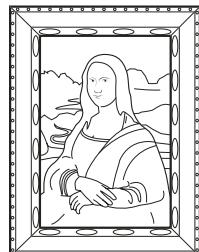


## RECREATE YOUR FAVORITE PAINTING AS A FABRIC COLLAGE.

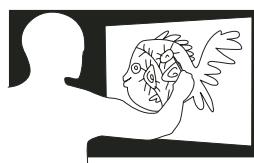
When it comes to decorating, I picture exactly what I want, then refuse to settle for less. Take my living room. After a year of finding the perfect furniture, I wanted to craft one last piece to complete my vision. I was inspired by a gorgeous print I saw in a restaurant — a colorful, cubist painting of musicians by Emanuel Vardi.

I saw on TV how to stretch fabric on a canvas as an alternative to framed art. Could I pay homage to the Vardi piece and recreate it as a fabric collage? With the help of my laptop and a digital projector, I did just that.

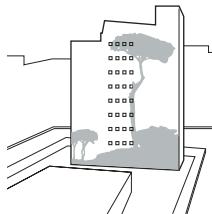
**NOTE:** Make sure to seek permission when recreating someone else's art — it's not only the law, but you'd expect the same in return.



» Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* is one of the most famous paintings in the world, yet is still shrouded by mystery. No one knows to this day who the real Mona Lisa was or whether she even existed. [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org)



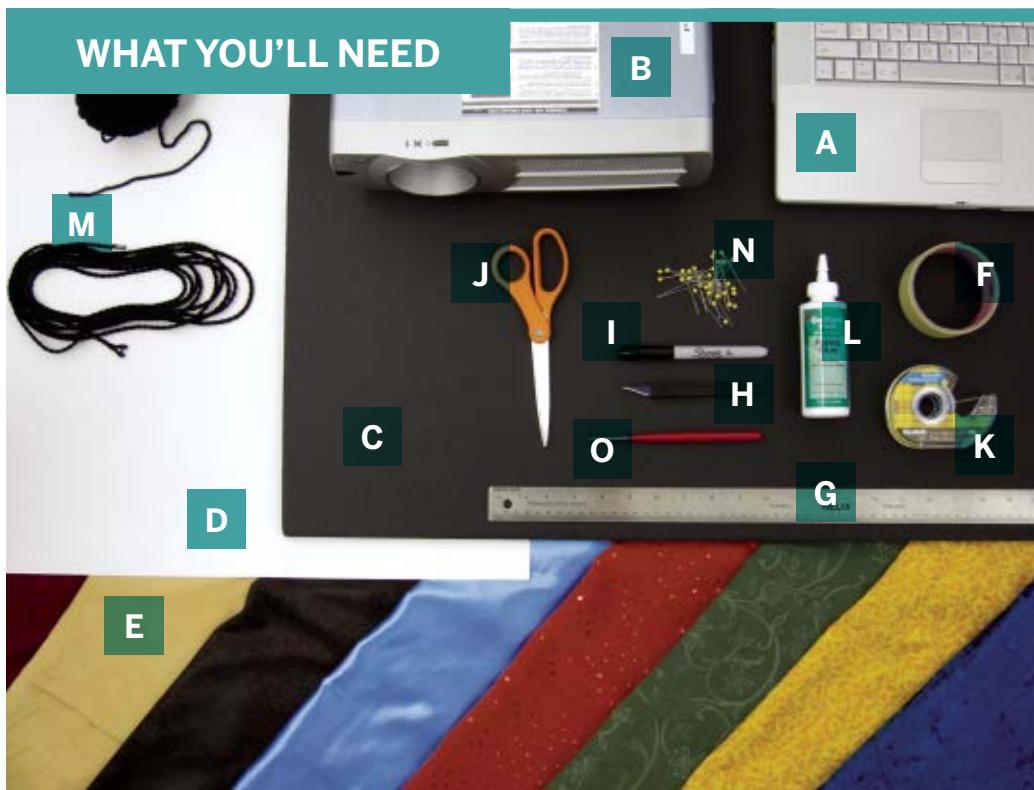
» In the 1956 documentary *The Mystery of Picasso*, Pablo Picasso uses a transparent canvas to show how he creates his artworks with simple geometric shapes, line drawings, and color. [moviehabit.com/reviews/mys\\_bd03.shtml](http://moviehabit.com/reviews/mys_bd03.shtml)



» In 1994, *City Wall Projection*, by Ian de Gruchy, showed projected art on a side of a large building on Swanston Street in Melbourne, Australia. [artprojection.com.au](http://artprojection.com.au)

Trish Gray wears many hats for the O'Reilly School of Technology ([oreillylearning.com](http://oreillylearning.com)). She spends her limited spare time with her husband and three-animal zoo in Sebastopol, Calif., crafting for her house, and playing piano for a mostly canine audience.

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED



**[A] Digital image of your desired painting** For best results, pick a piece that has large swaths of solid color, such as a cubist or modern painting. In other words, pointillism might not be the best choice.

**[B] Digital projector** like those used in office presentations. Just make sure it will work with your computer.

**[C] Piece of foamboard** cut to the size of your desired result. This can be found at a craft store like Michaels.

**[D] Thin posterboard** also large enough for your desired result. If you can't find large enough pieces, you can tape them together to make the desired size. More posterboard can be layered for a 3D effect, if desired.

**[E] Different colors and textures of fabric** to replicate the different paint colors. I recommended using fabric that is thin enough to fold easily, without being too sheer. I found mine at JoAnn Fabric and Craft.

**[F] Masking or duct tape** for taping posterboard

**[G] Ruler or measuring tape**

**[H] X-Acto knife** for cutting foamboard

**[I] Black Sharpie** for tracing

**[J] Scissors** for cutting posterboard and fabric

**[K] Double-stick cellophane tape**

**[L] Fabric/craft glue**

**[M] Yarn or other border fabrics** for outlining shapes and details

**[N] Stick pins** for holding pieces in place

**[O] Very small paintbrush** for gluing yarn to pieces

**Frame** to fit the piece once finished, without glass (not pictured)



Special thanks to world-renowned violist and artist Emanuel Vardi ([vardiart.com](http://vardiart.com)) as well as Reflection Fine Art ([reflectionfineart.com](http://reflectionfineart.com)) for generously granting permission to print this piece.

**START**

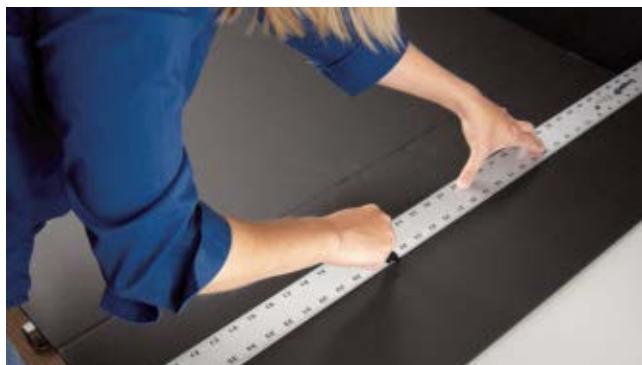
## ► **MAKE YOUR FABRIC ART MASTERPIECE**

**Time: A Week Complexity: Easy**

### **1. CREATE YOUR CANVAS**

**1a.** Your collage can be as big or small as you want. However, make sure that the aspect ratio remains constant so your picture looks right. For instance, the digital image of my Vardi painting was 507 pixels wide by 337 pixels high, making the aspect ratio  $507/337 =$  approximately 1.5. Since I wanted my "painting" to be 45" wide to fit on my wall, my canvas needed to be 45" wide by 30" high, to keep the aspect ratio the same ( $45/30 = 1.5$ ).

**1b.** Once you've calculated your dimensions, measure them out on the foamboard and posterboard with a ruler, then cut them to size using the X-Acto knife. If the posterboard is not big enough, use the masking tape to tape 2 or 3 pieces together. I wanted to create 3 layers — the background, the yellow halo background, and the musicians themselves — so I repeated the posterboard sizing 3 times. The decision to use layers is up to you.



### **2. TRACE THE PAINTING**

**2a.** Using masking or duct tape, tape your posterboard "canvas" to a wall. Then connect your computer to the projector, and project your digital image onto the posterboard. You will need to adjust the distance of the projector to ensure that your image fits perfectly onto the posterboard. In addition, be sure the projector is not tilted, or the image will be distorted.



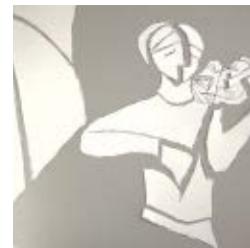
**2b.** Using a Sharpie, trace the projected painting image onto the posterboard. Your tracing marks will be used as a guide for cutting out shapes, and later for yarn placement in details such as the violin and cello on my Vardi piece.



**2c.** Because I used 3 layers, I traced only the background on the first posterboard piece, then the halo backgrounds on the second piece, and finally, the musicians themselves on the third. Use your own stylistic judgment in places that seem ambiguous. For example, on the background layer, I connected lines that were covered up by the musicians, and I left out some of the lines that were not necessary on the cello. After all, this is *your* rendition.

## 3. CUT OUT YOUR PATTERNS

Using scissors, cut along your trace lines to create patterns for your fabric. Because you'll be using each pattern piece for a different fabric, take care not to create pieces too small for the fabric to wrap around. For smaller details, such as those on the musicians' eyes, leave them intact for yarn detailing later.



## 4. PAINT YOUR PATTERNS WITH FABRIC

For each cutout pattern, choose your desired color/texture of fabric, place it upside-down on your work surface, then place the pattern face down on the fabric, using double-stick tape to keep it in place. Trace a border on the fabric approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$ " inch beyond the pattern on all sides and cut out the fabric piece.



**NOTE:** To prevent confusion, you may want to make a note of which color fabric you'll use on the back of each piece.

## 5. ASSEMBLE THE PUZZLE

**5a.** Place the fabric-covered pattern pieces on the foamboard canvas to assemble your painting. Because the fabrics have different thicknesses, there may be small gaps or slight overlapping when you put the pieces back together. Don't worry! The small flaws will be covered when you border the pieces with yarn, etc. Just be sure that the outside edges of the painting pieces are in line with the foamboard as much as possible.

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**5b.** When you're satisfied with how your pieces fit together, use the fabric/craft glue to attach the pieces to the foamboard. Once glued down, place something heavy on each piece to keep it flat as the glue dries. If there are layers to your picture, be sure the bottom layer is completely dry before gluing the next layer on. Let the whole thing dry for at least 24 hours before continuing.



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## 6. SECURE YOUR BORDERS

**6a.** For the borders of your fabric pieces, use the small paintbrush to paint a tiny line of fabric glue around the edges of your patterns. Then, carefully place the yarn or other border along the glue line to secure it in place. I used regular black yarn for the musicians and instruments, and a fancier black cable border for the background pieces.

**NOTE:** You can buy cable, lace, and other fabric borders by the yard at any fabric store.

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**6b.** For the details, first examine the piece for any black marker lines that can be seen through the fabric. If you can see them, then use those lines as a guide to paint your fabric glue. If you can't, you may need to project the digital image on your piece again to trace the details onto the fabric before you paint the glue line. Then place the yarn along the glue design, using the stick pins to help with placement as necessary. Once the glue has dried just enough for the yarn to stay in place, take out the stick pins and, if needed, place a heavy object on the designs to keep them flat as they dry.

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## 7. FRAME YOUR MASTERPIECE

**7a.** A beautiful frame not only adds a stylish and professional touch to your fabric painting, it also keeps the foamboard from warping and provides an easy way to hang your piece. If you can find the correct size frame, simply mount the piece as you would any picture.

If this is not possible, as in my case, take it to a framing shop to have it custom framed. Price depends on size and type of frame. I had mine framed at Michaels for about \$80.

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**7b.** Now it's time to enjoy your results. Not only have you recreated your favorite painting into your own masterpiece, but you've also been able to customize the size, colors, and texture to fit perfectly — in both your home and your budget. And it was fun.



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## FINISH X

# HAWAIIAN QUILT

By Cissy Serrao



## STITCH A TROPICAL HEIRLOOM TO LAST FOR GENERATIONS.

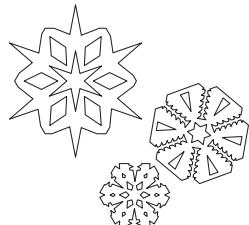
► A Hawaiian quilt is one of Hawaii's cherished heirlooms, passed down through generations of families to tell the story of the quilter, the designer, and the receiver. Traditional designs include papayas, breadfruit, ti leaves, and taro roots, but can be anything that illustrates a love for nature, traditions, legends, or events.

I recommend that you explain your intentions to the person you're making the quilt for, because we believe that if the receiver experiences the quilting process with you, they know that the quilt was designed with love, created with love, and given with love.

**The beautiful quilt pictured here was quilted and appliquéd by Doris Shibuya and designed by John Serrao. Design: The Royal Symbols of the First King of Unified Hawaii.**



» Tom Selleck wore lots of flowered Hawaiian shirts during his stint on *Magnum, P.I.* in the 80s.  
[tomselleck.tv-website.com](http://tomselleck.tv-website.com)



» The symmetrical pattern of a Hawaiian quilt is cut out in much the same way as paper snowflakes, but with cloth.  
[papersnowflakes.com/patterns.htm](http://papersnowflakes.com/patterns.htm)



» The tiny stitches in Hawaiian quilts are just like the ripples and waves of the ocean.  
[kathyskorner.net/hawaiian.htm](http://kathyskorner.net/hawaiian.htm)

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED



**[A]** 6 yards (for queen size) or 9 yards (king size) of fabric each for the design, design backing, and quilt backing

**[B]** 6 yards/9 yards of sewing or pattern paper (smaller pieces can be taped together). Tissue paper and newspaper can also be used.

**[C]** 6 yards/9 yards of batting for quilting

**[D]** Paper scissors

**[E]** Fabric scissors

**[F]** Small scissors

**[G]** Basting thread

**[H]** Thread to match design fabric

**[I]** Quilting thread to match background fabric

**[J]** Between quilting needles various sizes

**[K]** Sharp applique needles various sizes

**[L]** 14" quilting hoop

**[M]** Thimble (leather thimble is recommended for beginners)

**[N]** Bias to match quilt backing or top (you may need to make your own)

I remember during family gatherings and celebrations how my mother would carefully remove all of the quilts from the closet and place them gently on the beds in each bedroom. She would softly touch and sometimes hug the quilts as if they possessed some kind of magical power and spirit.

One day I asked her why she always displayed the quilts during these gatherings, and she told me that all of the quilts we owned were made by someone special, both

family members and friends. She said during the family gatherings the quilts are displayed so that when people look at the quilt they not only admire the quilt, but they always remember the person who made it, making that person a part of the celebration.

She taught me that pictures are not the only form of remembrance — so are the quilts. One day when I'm long gone from this world and my quilt is displayed in the home, I too will be remembered.

**START**

## ► CREATE AN AUTHENTIC HAWAIIAN QUILT

**Time:** 9-12 Months **Complexity:** Medium

### 1. CREATE YOUR DESIGN

- 1a.** Join and tape together your paper to the exact size of the quilt.

**NOTE:** The design can be a favorite flower, fruit, tradition, or even an event that you would like to record on a Hawaiian quilt.

- 1b.** Fold the joined paper to its  $\frac{1}{8}$  fold (fold it in half 3 times), then draw your design on the folded paper.

- 1c.** Once you're completely satisfied, cut out the completed design and set your "template" aside. You'll be using this pattern in a short while to cut out your fabric.



**NOTE:** Don't design to the complete outside edge of the paper — leave at least 4" between the design and the edge of the paper for binding, and at least 5 rows of echo quilting.

### 2. SEW THE SEAMS

Because the quilt is larger than the 45" width material, you must join the fabric using  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seams before cutting out your design. You'll need to do this 3 times, once for the design fabric, once for the design backing, and once for the quilt backing.

For those making the queen-size quilt, cut 6 yards of fabric in half and join the 2 panels side by side. This will give you a 90"×90" square fabric. And for those wishing to make a king-size quilt, you'll need 9 yards of fabric cut into 3 panels 108" long. Cut 1 panel down the center and it will give you two 22" wide panels. Then simply join one 22" panel in the middle of the two 45" panels. This will make a 112"×112" square fabric to make a king-size quilt.



Now iron open the seams.

## 3. PIN THE DESIGN

**3a.** After the material is joined, fold it to its symmetrical  $\frac{1}{8}$  fold (as you did to the paper). Make sure to fold with the seam out and the correct side of the fabric in.

**3b.** Place your folded paper template on top of the folded fabric and pin it down. Some quilters like to pin the paper just inside the solid lines following the pattern. This makes cutting the design easier.



## 4. CUT THE DESIGN

After pinning the pattern to the folded material, it's time to cut out the design. You'll be cutting through all 8 layers of material, so use sharp scissors and remember to cut out all of the solid lines.



**NOTE:** Some quilters like to place their material on a large piece of cardboard, so instead of moving their bodies they can easily move the cardboard into position for cutting.

## 5. LAY OUT THE DESIGN

**5a.** After the design has been completely cut out, remove all the pins — you are now ready to open your design on its backing fabric.

**5b.** Open the pattern from its eighth design to its quarter design. Place the quarter design in the center of the backing fabric. Start laying out the quilt from its center to its outside branches.



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**5c.** After the quarter design has been set, begin to open the fabric to its half design.

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**5d.** From the half design, open the pattern completely and begin to pin. Remember to pin the center of the design first, then work to the outside edge of the design, carefully pinning and laying the fabric flat. Pin with the sharp point of the pin facing out.



**NOTE:** Be sure to lay out your fabric seam on seam. The seam on your design should match the seam on your backing fabric.



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## 6. BASTE THE DESIGN

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**6a.** After the design is completely laid out and pinned, carefully baste it  $\frac{1}{4}$ " in from the outside edge of the design. This will help you with tucking and sewing during the appliquéd stage. Start from the center and work out.

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**6b.** Once the design is basted onto its backing fabric, remove all the pins.



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## 7. APPLIQUÉ THE DESIGN

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**7a.** With your needle, tuck about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " of the raw edge of your design under the basting line. Place your first stitch between your top and bottom fabric, between the folded raw edges, and hide your knot. Your thread should now be on the folded edge of your top fabric.

---

**7b.** Slowly, using small stitches, sew the bottom piece of fabric to the top piece. Never letting go of your needle, place the point of your needle on the bottom fabric right next to the folded raw edge, push your needle through the bottom fabric, and bring your needle back up through the bottom fabric and on the folded edge of the top fabric, about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the last stitch. Push your needle and thread through. You should have a straight stitch on top of your appliquéd design and a slanted stitch on the back.

**NOTE:** You'll tuck 4"-6" of your design at a time — stitch, tuck, etc. until the design is completely stitched.



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**7c.** Continue this process until the design is completely appliquéd to the backing fabric with intricate stitches. Once complete, remove the basting stitches.

## 8. JOIN THE BATTING

Sometimes the batting is too small for a large quilt. If this is the case you must join the batting together. Panel the batting the same way you paneled your fabric. Join the batting by using a whipstitch, sewing the panels together side by side, not on top of each other.



## 9. PREPARE TO QUILT

**9a.** Center your designed top fabric on the batting and back material. Baste all 3 layers together.

**9b.** Starting from the center, grid out and then baste the outside edge. Each grid should be about 1-2 hand spans apart. Now you're ready to quilt.

## 10. QUILT YOUR QUILT

**10a.** Place one hand under the quilting hoop and use your index or center finger to make a hill where you will be quilting. This bottom hand and finger is used to stop the needle from coming too far out the back of the quilt. Your top hand and fingers will do the actual quilting stitch.

Place a thimble on the index finger of your top hand. Hold the needle using your thumb and middle finger with the thimble finger on top of the needle. You only need 3 fingers to quilt. Place your wrist on the top of the hoop and position your fingers to make your quilting stitch.

**NOTE:** Hawaiian quilts are always made with a hoop or quilting stand. When using a hoop, remember to check the back and smooth out the fabric — this is done to prevent puckering on the back of the quilt.

**10b.** Place the needle in front of the last stitch, then slowly push the needle through all 3 layers of fabric and batting. As soon as the needle touches the bottom finger, release your top fingers from the needle, except for the thimble finger. Rock the needle with the thimble finger away from you until the needle is almost horizontal, then slowly push the needle back up through the top of the quilt. Use your top hand thumb to help make the stitch smaller by placing your thumb in front of the needle as it comes through the bottom fabric.

**NOTE:** Always quilt the center of your quilt first. And remember, place, rock thumb, push, and never drop the hill of your bottom finger.



**10c.** After the center of your quilt is complete, start quilting its branches. You can now work from the center out.

**10d.** Once you've quilted the branches, quilt in the ditch. To do this, quilt outside the design on the background fabric very close to the design. Use the same color thread you used to quilt the design.

**10e.** Now that you've quilted your design and stitched in the ditch, you can begin to echo quilt the outside edge. Follow the design of the pattern to its outside edge by using your fingers as a guideline. The spacing between the lines of the echo quilting should be no smaller than the width of your baby finger, and no larger than the width of your index finger, or about  $\frac{1}{2}$ ". You have a choice to use the same color thread as the design to give the quilt a shadow-like effect, or switch to the same color thread as your backing fabric.

**NOTE:** When quilting your design, you may want to use a definitive quilting style by making the design look like the actual flower, or use the traditional echo design by just following the pattern in a wave-like ripple.



*Quilting* has been an integral part of Cissy's family since her maternal great-grandmother took it up over a century ago. Her father, John Serrao (pattern designer for the family business), sees significance in every part of the quilt. For instance, the center of the quilt is the *piko* (navel), the source of all love and compassion.

**NOTE:** Remember the back of the quilt should look just as beautiful as the front of the quilt. No knots. All knots are hidden between the batting.

## 11. BIND YOUR QUILT

After the quilt is complete, don't forget to bind your quilt. Rounded, squared, or mitered — the decision is yours. After the edging of your quilt is complete, you still have one last step to finish your Hawaiian quilt in the tradition of Hawaii. You must now sleep with the quilt for one night to bind your love and spirit into the quilt.

**FINISH X**



# CIRCUIT BOARD MINI CABINET

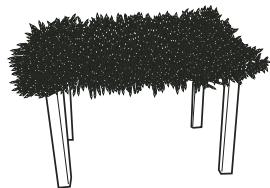
By Andrew Argyle



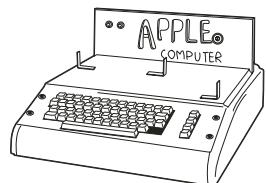
## RECYCLE OLD PCBs TO MAKE A CASE FOR STASHABLES.

► In our consumer society, most materials are discarded once they become old or obsolete. Many of these rejects have a hidden beauty that can be brought back to life in a new form; discarded or never-used printed circuit boards (PCBs) fall into this category.

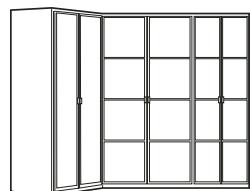
A consequence of the high-tech bubble bust of a few years ago is that millions of PCBs were never used and are now resting in warehouses, waiting for a new lease on life. This project shows how to make a 2-drawer case and “veeर” it with recycled PCBs. The PCBs’ coppery traces look like metallic petroglyphs, and the case looks great in any modern living room or office. Depending on the size, the case can hold precious papers, jewelry, stationery, pens and pencils, or CDs.



» German artist Kerstin Schultz makes furniture art out of pencils, like this pencil table.  
[craftzine.com/go/pencil](http://craftzine.com/go/pencil)

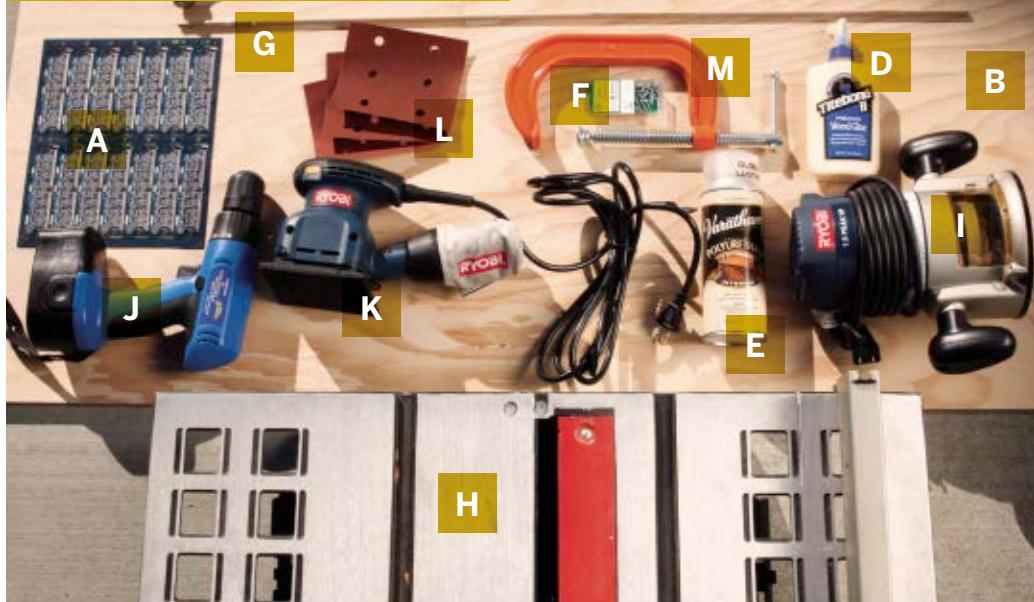


» On April Fool's Day in 1976, Apple Computer debuted the Apple I, the first single-circuit-board computer.  
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple\\_I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple_I)



» Researchers in Zurich are developing a computer chip that could be inserted into furniture pieces, to make DIY furniture building easier. Turns out there are only 8 sturdy ways (out of 44) to build an IKEA wardrobe.  
[craftzine.com/go/ikea](http://craftzine.com/go/ikea)

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED



[A] Printed circuit boards

[B] 2'x4', 11.5mm-thick Baltic birch plywood  
(it is not  $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick)

[C] Small pieces of maple or other hard wood for knobs and strips

[D] Wood glue

[E] Spray-on polyurethane

[F] Small wood screws ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " or less) or epoxy glue

[G] Small length of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " dowel

[H] 10" table saw or water-cooled diamond saw  
(used in cutting tile)

[I] Router to make lap joints

[J] Drill

[K] Sander

[L] Various grits of sandpaper

[M] Clamps

Hammer and other tools



Photograph at top by Sam Murphy, at bottom by Martin Broomfield

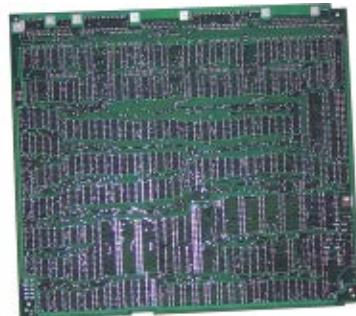
START

## ► MAKE A HIGH-TECH TABLETOP SET OF DRAWERS

**Time:** 3 Days **Complexity:** Medium

### 1. PLAN AND DESIGN YOUR CASE

**1a.** Choose your circuit boards. At first glance all the boards look alike, but the trick is to imagine them without their green coating (the solder mask). The best-looking boards will be ones that have the most copper showing. In order to get an idea of what a stripped board will look like, lightly sand off the green protective layer and look at all the boards. The board chosen for this project is shown at right.



**NOTE:** Boards that do not have parts embedded in them are easier to work with and can be cut on a regular table saw. The larger boards are easier to use and require less preparation.

**1b.** The size of the boards will determine the size of the cabinet. Measure the board to get the dimensions; in this example, the chosen size is 11"×12½".

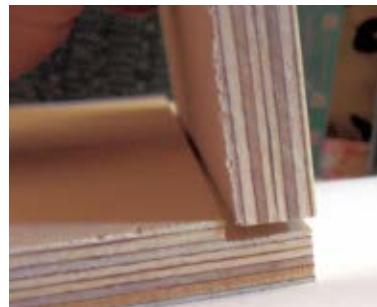
**1c.** Decide on the number of drawers for your cabinet, depending on your needs and taste. In this example, the sizes of the boards are a good fit for a case with 2 drawers.

**1d.** Choose the material that you'll use to build your cabinet. It can be made of just about any type of wood, from solid wood to MDF (medium density fiberboard). The example shown is made of Baltic birch plywood; this is solid and easy-to-use plywood where the layers are thin and have no voids (meaning it is easy to mill and has a nice flat surface). Plywood is a great material to use because it will also make the case heavy and thus more sturdy and durable.

### 2. BUILD THE CASE

**2a.** With your saw, cut your wood into 6 pieces — 2 side walls, top, bottom, back, and a separator piece to divide it into 2 slots for drawers. Again, the size of the pieces should be the same size as your chosen PCBs.

**2b.** Join the pieces together in a consistent and sturdy manner. I recommend using lap joints (shown here), which allow for a larger gluing area and also provide support for the boards at the joints. If the pieces are only pinned and glued together (a butt joint), the structure will be weak, and the joints will have a tendency to separate over time as humidity rises and falls. The case will be veneered with PCB material; therefore the joints do not have to be decorative, just strong. To make a lap joint, place a bit in the router and adjust the height of the bit so that it clears the wood out slightly.



## 3. SAND AND STAIN THE CASE

PCBs are full of holes and irregular shapes, so it's important that the eye not be drawn to the faults in the boards. To avoid this, stain the outside of the case in black.

Any black stain will do, but the suggested stain is black Chinese or Japanese calligraphy ink. This ink is made primarily with carbon and will not fade over time. It can be purchased as ink or in convenient sticks that are ground into fine slurry; both will work.

**\* TIP:** To make stain "blacker than black," finely pound calligraphy sticks into pea-size pieces and sit them in water for 6 months in an airtight glass container. The mixture becomes a gel you can dilute to form any level of black. The ink is water-based and won't sink into wood with any glue in it. For a consistent finish, lightly sand the wood, then apply the stain. Remember: Stain permanently discolors anything it touches.



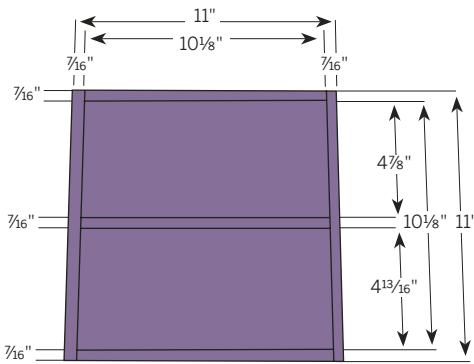
## 4. BUILD THE DRAWERS

Cut 5 pieces of your wood for each drawer — 2 sides, a bottom, back, and front (shown at right).

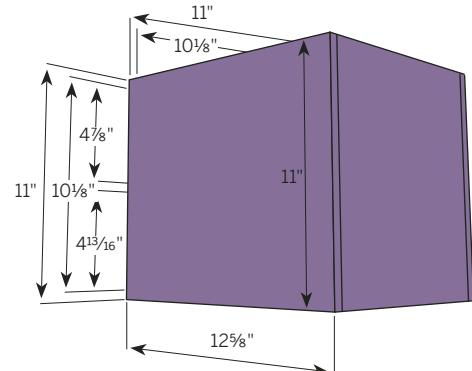
The drawers have to be made to fit in the slots, but not too tightly or loosely. If the fit is too tight, the drawers will stick when the wood expands because of humidity. If it is too loose, the drawers will wobble and bind. To have a perfect fit, cut them as described in Figures A and B on the next page.

In theory the math works great, but in practice, I take a ruler and measure. The rule of thumb is  $\frac{1}{4}$ " must be subtracted from the side to allow for " clearance on each side. I measure the distance from the inside back of the box to the front of the box and subtract  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". It's easier than doing the math, and the actual sizes sometimes vary greatly from the ideal.





**Fig. A:** The exact size of the front of the drawer would be  $10\frac{1}{8}'' \times 4\frac{1}{8}''$ , so a good size for this is  $10\frac{1}{8}'' - \frac{1}{4}'' = 9\frac{7}{8}''$ . This leaves  $\frac{1}{8}''$  on each side of the drawer. The height depends on the purpose of the drawer, but should be at least 2" or 3". So the drawer front is  $9\frac{7}{8}'' \times 2\frac{1}{2}''$ .



**Fig. B:** The length for the drawer is  $12\frac{5}{8}'' - \frac{7}{16}'' - \frac{1}{8}''$  – fudge factor (length of case – thickness of back – thickness of PCB – fudge factor). The length therefore is  $12\frac{5}{8}'' - \frac{9}{16}'' = 12\frac{1}{16}''$ .

## 5. FRAME THE CIRCUIT BOARDS

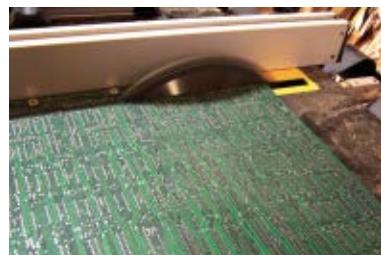
The face of the cabinet still has exposed plywood that needs to be covered with contrasting wood in order to frame the printed circuit boards. To increase strength and durability, choose a light but hard wood; maple is a good choice. Cut the wood into strips to fit the exposed plywood, then use wood glue to adhere the strips to the plywood as shown at right.



## 6. CUT THE PCB FOR CASE TOP AND SIDES

Cut your PCBs on a regular table saw just like you would with wood. Make 5 pieces that are sized to cover the top, front, and 3 sides.

**TIP:** Safety first! Take extra care when cutting or sanding printed circuit boards; always wear safety glasses and a particle mask.



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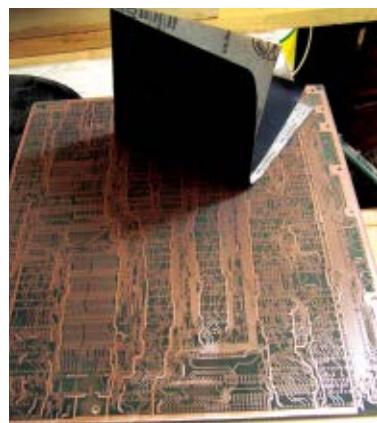
**WARNING:** Wear safety glasses and a mask when cutting PCBs because, unlike wood, PCBs pose several dangerous challenges. Because of the thinness of most boards, they are prone to binding when cut on a table saw, and chunks of the board's material can be flung at your face. PCBs are also made of potentially hazardous material, while copper dust and fiberglass also pose a hazard. Older boards may contain lead (a poisonous metal).

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## 7. SAND AND POLISH THE PCB

The copper tracings on printed circuit boards are what make them appealing. Just like sanding wood in progression from coarsest to finest will bring out the best grain, sanding PCBs is also a multi-step process. Some boards have a tenacious covering that is challenging to remove, while others have a coating that comes off easily. The copper is not very thick, resulting in the loss of some copper every time you polish. A heavy hand with power tools will destroy or eliminate the prettiest traces, so use a light touch when sanding and polishing.

**7a.** Remove the boards' covering, beginning with the coarsest sandpaper (60).



**7b.** Continue sanding and gradually increase the grit to 150 if you are aiming for a satin or rough finish.

**7c.** For a mirror finish, continue sanding with ever-increasing grit (400, then 1,000); these should be done by hand.

**7d.** Apply a clear, protective coating (spray-on polyurethane). It is important that the boards be cleaned of all the dust and grime accumulated on the surface before spraying.

**7e.** Dry the PCBs in a warm and well-ventilated area.

**✿ TIP:** Remember that copper tarnishes quickly — protect the board as soon as you are finished sanding it.

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## 8. FIT THE PCB TO SIDES OF THE CASE

Use screws or glue to attach the PCB boards to the cabinet. If you are using screws, use small wood ones to attach the polished PCBs to the sides of the cabinet. Typically, the boards will have holes of various sizes built into them. Place the screws in these holes to tightly bind the board to the cabinet.



If you decide to glue the boards to the cabinet, apply glue to the boards first. The best type of glue for this project is epoxy-based. Screws can also be used as tiny clamps to hold the boards until the glue has set.

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## 9. MAKE KNOBS FOR THE DRAWERS

Drawer pulls enhance the beauty and functionality of your cabinet. In this example, the drawer pulls were made of the same maple used for the wood strips.

Cut the maple into sticks, then shape them by sanding them with a stationary sander, and then by hand. Do not try to make the pulls too perfect; the idea is to contrast the glittery, busy precision of the PCBs with the handmade elegance of the drawer pulls. Drill a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hole in the venter of each drawer pull, about halfway in.



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## 10. FIT THE DRAWER FACES AND THE KNOBS

**10a.** Carefully measure the opening of the cabinet where the drawers fit in. Cut 2 faces from the PCBs, and then carefully drill a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hole in the center of each of the PCB faces. Fit a PCB face with clamps to one of the drawer faces and drill a hole; repeat with the other PCB face, then glue the PCB faces to the drawer faces.

**10b.** Use a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " dowel to fit the knob into the drawer. You will need to add a bit of glue on the dowel and in the hole before fitting. Place the drawers in the case.

 **TIP:** To make the drawer easier to pull out, place the drawer pull slightly lower than the center of the face.



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## 11. ADMIRE YOUR HANDIWORK

The devices of modernity are powered by the humble PCB. The beauty and elegance of the PCB, otherwise forgotten and discarded, has been revealed and used in a practical way. Now it's time to fill your cabinet with stuff!



**FINISH X**

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# WEEKEND BOHO SANDALS

By Kristina Pinto

## NEEDLEPOINT YOUR OWN RETRO-CHIC FOOTWARE.

► These simple yet eye-catching sandals represent the marriage of uptown chic with downtown style. Called “weekend” sandals, they can be stitched one weekend, dropped at the cobbler on Monday, and worn the following weekend to the farmer’s market or on a dinner date. Stitched in bamboo, silk, and metallic, the shoes are comfortable, classy, and versatile.

Once you’ve stitched the straps you can try making your own sandals or take them to a shoemaker. Most needlepoint shops can also connect you with someone who finishes needlepoint into shoes. Cobblers tend to cost less than upscale needlepoint boutiques, and collaborating with artisans is fun.

Photograph by Meiko Arquillos. Illustrations by Tim Lillis.

Kristina Pinto is a psychology instructor, fiber artist, runner, and mother. She has been stitching for 12 years and continues to develop her needlework through the Master Craftsman program at the Embroiderer’s Guild of America. Her fiber projects can be viewed at [flickr.com/photos/threadgatherer/sets/433121](https://flickr.com/photos/threadgatherer/sets/433121).



» NFL football player Rosey Grier penned the now retro classic craft book, *Rosey Grier's Needlepoint for Men* back in 1973. [craftzine.com/go/rosey](http://craftzine.com/go/rosey)

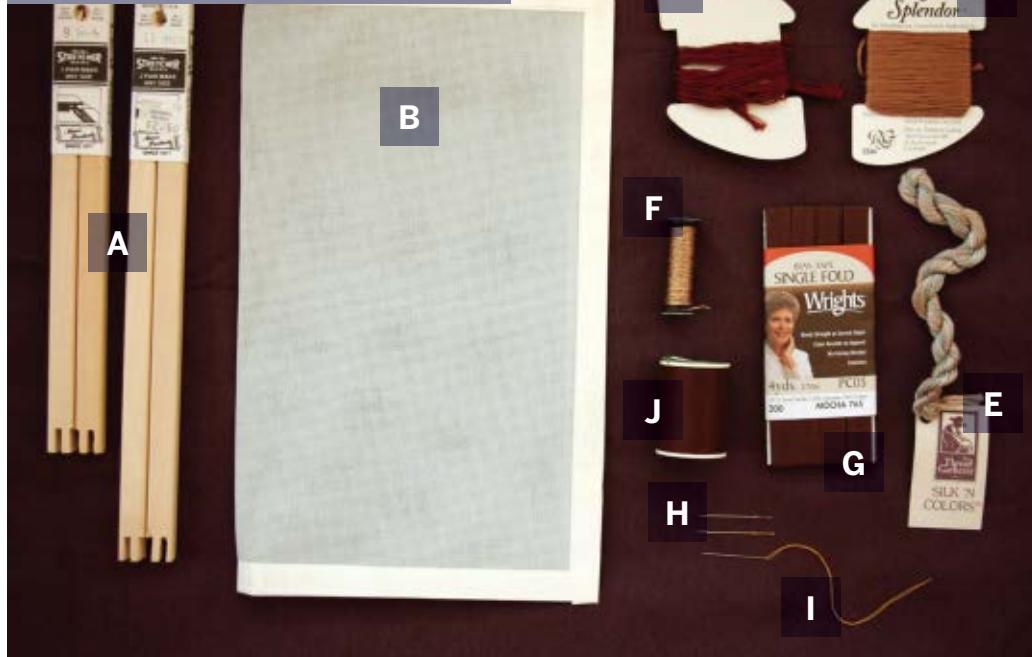


» The bohemian subculture was alive and well in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury in the 1960s and 70s. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haight-Ashbury](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haight-Ashbury)



» Sandals were among the first types of footwear worn in many early civilizations, including Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. [podiatry.curtin.edu.au/sandal.html](https://podiatry.curtin.edu.au/sandal.html)

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED



[A] 2 pair of 9"×11" stretcher bars

[B] Piece of 9"×11" congress cloth

[C] Card of Mandarin Floss M822 brown bamboo by RG

[D] Card of Splendor S979 green silk by RG

[E] Skein of Silken Ribbons blue 006 silk by Thread Gatherer

[F] Spool of Kreinik 027 orange metallic 027 #12 tapestry braid 10 meters

[G] Brown basting/bias tape, at least 1.5" in width for backing

[H] Tapestry needles size 22 or 24

[I] Sewing needles

[J] Brown thread

Sewing machine (optional)

### THREAD COLORS

█ = Dark Bark bamboo [G]

█ = Cedar silk [D]

█ = Orange metallic [F]

█ = Stormy Skies silk [E]

If you're interested in the exact threads used for this project, go to the following links.

Mandarin Floss Dark Bark bamboo: [craftzine.com/go/bark](http://craftzine.com/go/bark)

Splendor Cedar silk: [craftzine.com/go/cedar](http://craftzine.com/go/cedar)

Kreinik Orange metallic: [craftzine.com/go/orange](http://craftzine.com/go/orange)

Silken Ribbons Stormy Skies silk: [craftzine.com/go/stormy](http://craftzine.com/go/stormy)

**START**

## ► STITCH SOLEFUL SHOES FOR ALL OCCASIONS

**Time: A Week Complexity: Medium**

### 1. DETERMINE THE STRAP LENGTH

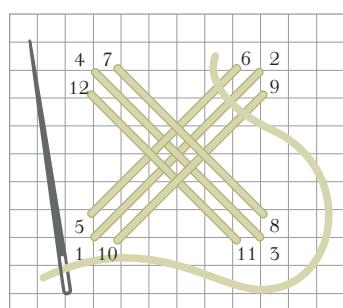
Measure the arch of your foot (the width of your foot about 2" down from your baby toe) to determine the length of each strap. Add about 1.5" onto this length so that there will be plenty of excess for your cobbler to attach the strap securely to the footbed of the shoe. Then, measure the length required for a strap across your big toe, adding another inch onto the length. It might help to use a piece of string to gauge the strap lengths, measuring each string after you've determined and cut the right length. Remember to add on the extra 1.5" for the arch straps and the extra 1" for the toe straps — you want your sandals to fit after you've taken the time to stitch them!

### 2. FRAME THE CLOTH

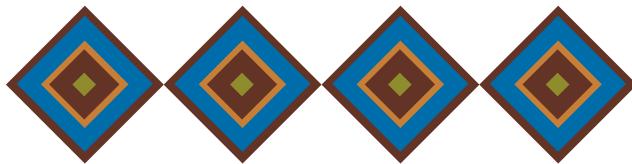
Frame up your congress cloth on the stretcher bars, using thumbtacks to hold the canvas in place. No need to draw the straps on the cloth first — just keep stitching until you reach the desired length. But plan out your placement of all 4 straps on the canvas, so you'll be sure to have space to stitch all of them. You will work left to right for all straps.

### 3. CALCULATE THE STITCHES

The straps for these sandals use a 4-color Norwich stitch that's laid over 16 canvas threads to create a single line of squares for each strap. If the length of your measurements does not correspond exactly to a series of complete squares for each strap, do not attempt to stitch partial squares of compensation stitches — it won't work. Instead, use tent stitches down each end of the strap to compensate (see diagram at step 8). It's likely these tent stitches will wind up buried under the footbed once the sandals are made. Be sure to calculate so there is the same number of vertical rows of tent stitches along each end.



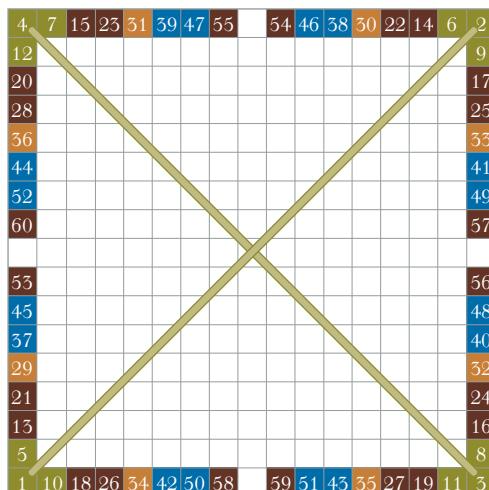
When you're done, you'll have something resembling this illustration of an arch strap; note the squares created with the Norwich stitch.



## 4. STITCH SQUARES ON LONG STRAP

For each square on the long straps, begin with the middle by creating a large cross stitch, then go around the square with diagonal stitches once, using 3-ply of the Splendor silk. Follow the chart to the right, which shows a 4-color Norwich stitch laid over 16 canvas threads. While only the first 2 stitches are displayed, it's easier to grasp the placement and order of the stitches without all of the lines depicted to represent them — just follow the numbers.

All of the stitches that come up through the canvas are odd numbers, and all of the down stitches are even. For instance, start by bringing your needle up through the canvas at 1, then down at 2, up again at 3, down at 4, and so on. The colors of the numbers correspond to the colors of the fibers in the displayed sandals.



## 5. CHANGE THREAD COLORS

After you sink your needle at 12, change color from the green to the brown thread. Then before bringing your needle up through hole 29, change color to the orange metallic. You only do a few stitches in this fiber before changing color to the blue silk to come up through hole 37. Finally, change your color (one last time) back to brown. Slide the last stitch (59-60) under stitch 57-58 to complete the woven look.

By laying the squares over 16 canvas threads, you'll leave an empty hole in the center of each side of each square, but these aren't discernible if you use 3-ply of the fibers to stitch, which will amply cover the canvas. Naturally, you should feel free to substitute colors you choose or to rearrange the order of the colors I used.

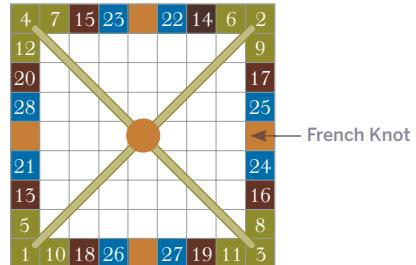
**NOTE:** Each Norwich square shares a vertical row of canvas holes from the square before it. In other words, once you've completed the first square, you will bring your needle back up through hole 3 to start the next square. This goes for the toe straps as well. Don't forget to change your fiber color back to green, since you'll end each square with brown (for the arch straps).

**TIP:** Make sure to bring your needle up through the fabric on the odd numbers, and down on the even numbers.

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## 6. STITCH THE TOE STRAPS

The toe straps also use a Norwich stitch, but only over 8 canvas threads. Follow the chart to the right. This time, colors are ordered by green, brown, and blue. Change colors as indicated in the chart. Once you've stitched all squares for each strap, place a French knot, with the orange braid between each square, in the empty hole. Do not place one on the ends of the straps. Doing so would aggravate your second toe and your cobbler.

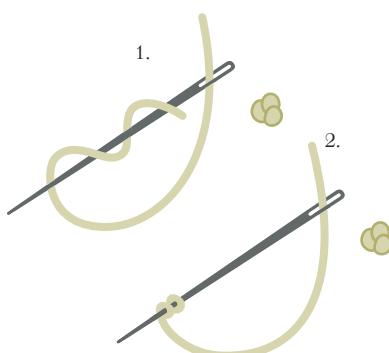


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## 7. MAKE A FRENCH KNOT

To create a French knot, bring your needle up through the empty hole between 2 Norwich squares. Hold the thread with your thumb and wrap your orange braid around the needle 3 times. Then, holding the thread that's wrapped around the needle so it doesn't slide off, gently insert your needle back down through the same hole, taking care to keep holding the braid wrapped around the needle until the cord is pulled taut through the canvas hole. This will create a knot on top of the canvas (see illustration at right).

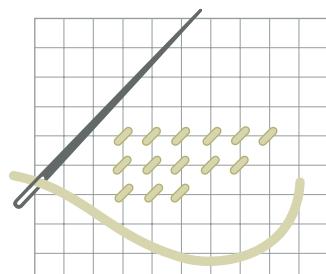
As with the arch straps, if you find the length of your toe strap does not correspond to an even number of Norwich squares, use an equal number of rows of compensating tent stitches (see diagram for tent stitch below) on either end of the strap to achieve the desired length for the strap.



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## 8. ADD A BORDER ROW OF TENT STITCHES

Once you have the 4 bands stitched, stitch one more row of tent stitches along the top and bottom lengths of each strap with the bamboo thread to conceal the bare canvas. Refer to the tent stitch illustration at right for how to do this easy stitch.



## 9. ATTACH BACKING OF BASTING TAPE

You need to attach a cloth backing to the straps so that the raw canvas edge won't aggravate your foot, and to make them look professional — handmade, not homemade, as my mom says. Basting (or bias) tape, which is available in any sewing store, works very well and is inexpensive. You might also use an ultrasuede, which is softer. Match the color of your backing fabric to the color of your extra row of tent stitches; I chose brown. Also, be sure to use a quality thread that is doubled over in your needle for sewing on the backing — you don't want your thread to snap. I recommend Gutermann.

**9a.** Cut out each strap from the congress cloth, leaving no more than  $\frac{1}{4}$ " of raw canvas around the perimeter. To sew the backing on the strap, you will use a technique called blind finishing, or invisible stitch, also used for hemming an item of clothing. This process will probably take longer than the needlepoint phase, and it's somewhat tedious. A needlepoint shop will do it for you for a fee, but you can do it yourself, too. You will be sewing the backing along both long edges of each strap. You can use a sewing machine for one of the edges on each strap, but the second edge will require hand-sewing.

**9b.** After you cut out your straps, cut out the proper length and width of bias tape. The length is determined by the length of your particular straps, of course. The width of the backing should be 2.5cm wide for the toe straps and 3cm wide for the arch straps. After cutting out the 4 strips, iron each piece of bias tape flat. Then fold in each tape 6mm along its length and iron that flap down. At this point you only need to do this once per strap (not along both edges).



**HAND-SEWING THE EDGES:** If you choose not to machine stitch the straps' edges to the backing and opt to do it by hand, line up the folded edge of your bias tape with the row of tent stitches along one edge of a strap. The flap on the bias tape should lie against the raw canvas edge of your needlepoint, and its crease should align with the edge of your Norwich squares.

Bring your needle with the double-thickness of brown sewing thread up at the corner of the crease and make a small stitch along the crease, no more than 4mm per stitch, sinking the needle back into the crease of the bias tape. Then come back up, this time in the hole shared by a tent stitch and a Norwich square. Make another small, 4mm stitch along that edge, sinking back into a hole shared by a tent stitch and a Norwich square. Your next stitch will be placed in the crease of the bias tape again. Continue this way along the length of the strap, and repeat for all straps. This process can be long but it's worth it to have a finished strap with a clean edge.

**9c.** Once you've finished blind stitching (so called because the stitches are hidden) one strap edge, fold in another 6mm flap on the remaining edge of the tape, ironing it down flat to make a crease. Stitch along that edge in the same fashion as you did for the first edge of the strap, aligning the tent stitch edge with the crease of the bias tape. Make small stitches down the length of the strap, alternating with small stitches down the crease of the bias tape. Large stitches, you will notice, make the fabric bunch and look shoddy.

Repeat this process of invisible stitches along the remaining edge of all of the straps. For further instruction and illustration of blind stitching, see *The Needlepoint Book* by Jo Ippolito Christensen.



Details of the finished arch strap (left) and toe strap (above).

## 10. GO FROM STRAPS TO SANDALS

If you're handy and resourceful, you can add soles and put the sandals together yourself.

There are several tutorials and resources available online, everything from making Roman sandals ([craftzine.com/go/roman](http://craftzine.com/go/roman)) to making soles from recycled tires ([hollowtop.com/sandals.htm](http://hollowtop.com/sandals.htm)). A great resource is *MakeYourOwnShoes* by Mary Wales Loomis.

I also recommend collaborating with artisans and increasing the longevity of your creation by having a cobbler or a needlepoint shop assemble the sandals.



## FINISH X



Susie Bright

Susie's Home Ec

» Susie Bright is an amateur dressmaker and a professional writer. She blogs at [susiebright.com](http://susiebright.com).

# The Bleeding Edge

**T**here is no more important tool in a sewing basket than a fine pair of shears. You can find thread anywhere, or settle for a ball of twine. You can hand-sew the rest of your life without a machine. But you *cannot* cut cloth or slash to a perfect point with a butter knife or your greasy thumbs.

One perfect pair of scissors is not enough, either — you need a brood. (No left-handed person need be abandoned, either — it's a well-deserved speciality.) Cost is beside the point when it comes to shears. Sell plasma if you need to. Start thinking like an "Assassin to the Cloth." If you can't cut out a design to your satisfaction, your sewing career is screwed. Big, little, serrated, rotary, pinking — even the Swiss Army should be part of your repertoire.

I'm not kidding about the last item. The two most important family firms in Switzerland, in my estimation, are Bernina and Wenger, and this past year they made a 111th Anniversary Jubilee tool, which they call a "Lady's Knife." Ha! It's a complete sewing kit in a pocketknife format, with 17 different tools including a special rotary knife, awl, and hem-measure. This sucker will never get past airport security, and yet, obviously every passenger should be carrying one. The tools it employs could get you out of any and all scrapes imaginable.

Next, you must cultivate a sharpener. Like a lover. This is the person who keeps your shears braced for a lifetime. See him often. Dedicate your life to him. Are there "lady" sharpeners who live in rolling caravans with their tools? I'd love to meet one.

What's an effective scissor test? Try this: Take four layers of cloth, and make a cut. It should be clean, and slash straight through to the very tips of the blades. Think surgical. It should fit comfortably and light enough in your hand that you could cut out Cinderella's ball gown without getting a cramp. It should cut leather easily. And a lock-nut assembly for easy readjustment of tension is essential.

If diamond-sharp shears are a girl's best friend, the Harry Winston of a dressmaker's dreams is the Gingher line of blades, shears, and nippers ([gingher.com](http://gingher.com)).

I wear their 8" Tailor's Points around my neck — the "points" mean that even the very tips of the blades will slice a perfect cut. Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about Gingher is that they offer a lifetime guarantee, and they will recondition your blades to perfect condition for the rest of their lives, if you mail them with a mere \$7.50 fee to their "tuners" in Greensboro, N.C.

I've interviewed sewing teachers and purchasers from the finest fashion schools in the country, and every one of them seemed to have a precious trove of decades-old Ginghers that they send in, every few years, for regular "tuning."

Whether you're a "lady," or a foul-mouthed bricoleur, you'll crave a pair of shears that make you sing while you slice. The pangs of global capitalism may be nipping at the heels of good craftsmanship elsewhere, but with a little hunting, there's a gleaming pair of nippers with your name on it. ✕



CLONE IT

# Kombucha Madness

*Brew your tea with fermented zing.*

BY ARWEN O'REILLY

**K**ombucha is on its way to being the new “it” drink. This fermented tea is so popular that several brands are available at upscale grocery stores, and its Wikipedia entry has tripled in length since I first checked. I’ve heard the tea’s culture — which looks like a rubbery pancake — called a “mother,” “mushroom,” “starter,” and most accurately, a “scoby” (symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeasts).

Whatever it is, kombucha is entering a renaissance after millennia of use in China and centuries in Eastern Europe, from whence all good fermented things come. Its loyal following claims health benefits of all ilk, citing vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and probiotic microorganisms present in the tea. I just like it because it tastes good (like a sweet-sour sparkling apple cider).



## Materials

- » Wide-mouthed glass jar
- » Kombucha culture
- » Black or green tea bags (5 to 7)
- » Water (3 quarts to 1 gallon)
- » Sugar (1 cup, brown or white)
- » Clean paper napkin or tea towel
- » Rubber band or string
- » Funnel
- » Old soda bottles, cleaned



### 1. Get kombucha starter culture.

You can buy kombucha culture on the web, but it's probably easier to get it from a friend or someone in your neighborhood (try [craigslist.org](http://craigslist.org) or bulletin boards at your local health food store). I even saw some for sale at a flea market in Russia (see above). The starter replicates itself in each batch, so one is enough for your lifetime. Soon you'll have a culture for everyone you know!

### 2. Make regular tea and sweeten.

Make 3 quarts to 1 gallon of tea (if you have loose tea you can make a tea bag out of a piece of an old sheet and some string) and let cool to room temperature. Remove tea bags and add sugar. Don't worry if it seems too sweet — the culture feeds on sugar and caffeine, so the final drink will not be as sweet as the original.

### 3. Add kombucha culture.

If your culture came with some liquid, add the starter liquid to the tea. Pour the sweet tea into your jar and add the culture. If it floats on top, it will grow another layer, which can be peeled off and used for another batch when the kombucha is ready. If it settles to the bottom, that's fine — a new culture will form on top

of the tea. The starter will grow to the diameter of your jar, so make sure the mouth is wide enough to remove it easily when you are done.

### 4. Ferment and bottle.

Cover your jar with a clean towel and seal around the rim with a rubber band. Store in a spot out of direct sunlight for 7-14 days. The longer you leave your tea, the more sour it will become. Start tasting it after 5 or 6 days, and decant into clean plastic or glass soda bottles when you like the taste.

### 5. Give it some fizz.

To give it some bubble, tightly cap bottles and store in a warm place for another day or so until the plastic bottle hardens from pressure. Be aware that as the kombucha continues to ferment, the pressure inside the bottle is growing and can cause it to explode if left too long (this is more of a concern with glass bottles). If you're worried, leave the cap a little loose, but this will prevent the tea from fizzing properly.

### 6. Drink and make more.

Always set aside 10% of the liquid to help start future batches. Then you can start all over again! If you want a steady flow of "the tea of immortality," then it probably makes sense to stagger your batches. Most experts warn against drinking too much of the stuff; it is a detoxifier, so you don't want to stress out your body.

*NOTE: As with all foods, be careful when preparing and storing kombucha. While I personally have never heard of anyone getting sick, it is theoretically possible, so make sure everything is clean while preparing; if you see mold, toss the entire batch, including the starter, just to be on the safe side (it happened to me once, and only once, probably due to lack of air circulation or a bad starter). But don't let this warning scare you: even my mom drinks my kombucha, and Google's chef whips up huge batches to serve in its cafeterias.*

#### Online resources:

- [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kombucha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kombucha)
- [www.kombu.de](http://www.kombu.de)
- [craftzine.com/go/kombucha](http://craftzine.com/go/kombucha)



# Pagan Eggcraft

*Attract good health, happiness, and love with these do-it-yourself talismans.* BY SUSAN BRACKNEY

**T**here's magic in your fridge — or at least the makings of it. There, behind the OJ, there's a carton of Grade A power objects. (Alright, so at the moment they're just eggs, but with your help they could be so much more!)

Turns out, what we've come to know as "Ukrainian Easter eggs" actually had their start as a kind of pagan witchcraft. For thousands of years, Ukrainians have used colorful dyes and carefully applied beeswax to transform the humble hen fruit into talismans thought to attract good health, wealth, happiness, fertility, and even love. And to think you were just going to make omelets.



## + EMBELLISH IT: EGG CRAFT



Fig. A: Although we're heating a traditional kistka, quill-type calligraphy pens with B6 or C5 nibs also work.

Fig. B: When dipping the kistka into wax, do not overfill — the kistka may drip too much wax at once. Fig. C and

Fig. D: For multi-colored eggs, it will take rounds of waxing and dying. If you don't have traditional pysanky dyes, fabric dye or food coloring work. If the egg won't be eaten, puncture with a needle and drain before starting.

## Materials

- » Egg, hard-boiled or blown empty, room-temperature
- » Kistkas (egg writing tools — come in various tip sizes) or wax pen
- » Beeswax
- » Dyes
- » Vinegar
- » Lacquer
- » Bowl for dyeing eggs (not shown)



### 1. Get a feel for writing with beeswax by practicing on newsprint.

To do this, heat your kistka or wax pen over a lit candle, then dip the scoop into the heated beeswax. A pen nib may also work, but you'll have to re-dip more often.

### 2. Draw your initial beeswax lines.

With its high melting point, beeswax solidifies almost as soon as it's drawn and won't smear. That means the beeswax-covered portions of your egg

will resist applied dyes, resulting in a batiked effect.

For best results, use vinegar to remove impurities on the shell, and since oil on your hands can become a resistant to dye, wash them well too.

### 3. Begin dyeing the egg.

Dye with lightest colors first, dipping the egg until the color pleases you. Allow the egg to dry completely before adding subsequent coats of wax and progressively darker colors.

### 4. Clean and seal.

After your finished egg has dried, put it in a 250°F oven, or simply hold near (but not directly over) a candle flame, to melt the wax. Once melting starts, remove and wipe the egg with a tissue. Seal your ephemeral art object with a coat of lacquer for a shiny finish.

#### Resources:

- [paulwirhun.com](http://paulwirhun.com) (see Crafter profile on page 26)
- [theskullproject.com](http://theskullproject.com)
- [ukrainiangiftshop.com](http://ukrainiangiftshop.com)

Susan M. Brackney is an avid crafter and the author of *The Lost Soul Companion* and its sequel, *The Not-So-Lost Soul Companion*.



## Freeze Frame

*Make a stencil out of freezer paper to customize T-shirts and beyond.* BY LEAH KRAMER

If you were a teenager in the 90s like I was, you'll remember being a sentient being in a world without the Galactic Information Superhighweb, or internet as we now know it. Before this age of enlightenment, we suffered many great hardships. I vividly recall cobbling together my own T-shirts proclaiming my favorite bands, using a masking-tape-and-fabric-paint technique with all too shoddy results. Today it takes 5 minutes to Google a world of crafty people who share amazing techniques, allowing you to create just about any T-shirt image you'd like.

My favorite is freezer paper stenciling, which allows you to iron your design onto the T, securing the stencil in place and ensuring that paint won't easily seep under it.

### Materials

- » Printout of black and white image
- » Freezer paper
- » Self-healing cutting mat
- » X-Acto knife
- » Blank T-shirt or other fabric item
- » Iron
- » Fabric paint or silk-screening ink for fabric
- » Sponge paintbrush



### 1. Print out the image.

Print out a black and white image without too many tiny details in it. You can easily make a black and white image out of a photograph using any graphics program. Basically, you want to have the software convert the photo to be just 2 colors: black and white.

To do this with Photoshop, load up the image and

click the menu option **Image > Mode > Indexed Color**, then set the dialog box settings like so, and click **OK**:

Palette: Local (Adaptive)

Colors: 2

Forced: Black and White

Transparency: Unchecked

Dither: None

To do this in Microsoft Paint, save the image as a Monochrome Bitmap. Just about every graphics program should have a way to do this; it's just a matter of poking around in the menus a bit to find it.

### 2. Cut the freezer paper.

Cut a piece of freezer paper the same size as your printout. Place the freezer paper onto your cutting mat, waxy side down. Then place the printout face up on top of the freezer paper. Use a couple of pieces of tape to secure the printout to the freezer paper.

### 3. Cut out the black space.

Using the printout as your guide, use the X-Acto to cut out all the black space in the image, cutting through both the printout and the freezer paper at the same time. Try to leave the pieces of paper intact even though you are slicing sections into them. If there are a few areas of the printed image that are just too detailed to cut out precisely, you can fudge it and use your judgment to cut the area out in a more simple way.

### 4. Iron the paper onto the shirt.

Throw out the printout when you're done with the cutting. Now you have a piece of freezer paper with all of the segments of your image sliced into it. Lay

## Successfully Turn Photos into Stencils

### Increase the contrast.

High contrast works best. Ideally your photo should be high-contrast to begin with. This means lots of very light areas and lots of very dark areas. If not, you can use your graphics program to bump the contrast way up. In Photoshop, choose the menu **Image > Adjustments > Brightness/Contrast** and then move the Contrast slider to the right.

### Clear the clutter.

Try using the "lasso tool" to cut out the background of the photo so that the main object in it is the only thing in the photo.





A



B



C



D

Fig. A: Cutting out the bicycle seat and frame is easy enough, but we've decided to simplify the tires by ignoring the spokes. Fig. B: When ironing your freezer paper to your shirt, make sure to keep the iron at a low setting.

Fig. C: When applying paint over your stencil, be sure not to goop too much on at once, or you may end up with a messy shirt. Fig. D: Make sure the paint is properly dried before carefully peeling off the freezer paper.

this onto your T-shirt waxy side down and iron it down lightly. The freezer paper will adhere to the T-shirt.

## 5. Peel off the black sections and iron again.

Carefully peel out the sliced-up segments that correspond to the black part of the image. Then give the remaining freezer paper another once-over with the iron to make sure it is nicely adhered to the fabric.

## 6. Dab on the paint.

Using a sponge brush (some are made for stenciling), dab fabric paint all over the stencil, making sure to apply a nice opaque coat. Dabbing the paint with a sponge brush works better than a bristle paintbrush, which can cause paint to seep under the stencil.

## 7. Wait for the paint to dry, and then peel off the stencil.

The instructions for the fabric paint may indicate that you need to "heat set" it with an iron. If so, follow those instructions.

Now you've got a technique for a custom-stenciled shirt, spiffed up with whatever your heart desires.

### Resources:

Stencil Revolution: A community of die-hard stencilers who share their work, their techniques, and their image files.

[stencilrevolution.com](http://stencilrevolution.com)

Stenciling forum on Craftster:  
[craftster.org/forum/index.php?board=139.0](http://craftster.org/forum/index.php?board=139.0)

### What Is Freezer Paper?

Freezer paper is white opaque paper that is waxy on only one side, as opposed to wax paper (never use wax paper for this project!), which is waxed on both sides. You can find freezer paper in supermarkets next to the aluminum foil and plastic wrap.

Leah Kramer thinks she's inhaled too much glue over the years because she's inordinately attracted to crafts that are clever, ironic, irreverent, and offbeat. She's the founder of [craftster.org](http://craftster.org) and author of *The Craftster Guide to Nifty, Thrifty, and Kitschy Crafts*.



WEAR IT

# Repurposed House Slippers

*Transform comatose denims into these super fabulous house slips.* BY JANAINA VAUGHN

Repurposed is Grandma's house shoe redefined. Tired of looking at that heap of lifeless jeans plotting a coup on your closet floor? Then transform those comatose denims into these super fabulous house slips and regain control of your closet. Join the recyclution.

These instructions offer three women's sizes: S (5-6), M (7-8), and L (9-10). Yardage caters to size L, so making a size S will leave you with scraps. Follow instructions closely and read directions completely before diving into them. It isn't as important to follow the grain of the fabric as it is to make sure you cut out your pieces accurately. The slightest differences in finished dimensions may cause your slippers to be either too small or too big.

Photograph by Meiko Arquillos



## Materials

### » Old jeans (1 or 2 pairs)

It doesn't matter if they differ in shade. What size jeans you'll be using for this project and your shoe size determine the number of jeans needed. For example, I used 1½ pairs of jeans (size 6) for a size medium slipper. I also only used the legs of the jeans. You'll be left with some saucy Daisy Dukes. You could slip those on with your new-old repurposed slippers, go outside, get your morning newspaper, and see what happens.

### » ¼ yard scrap fabric

for inner lining of sole and for button cover

### » ¼ yard lightweight interfacing

This helps create a more durable and stable sole.

### » High-loft batting

### » Heavy duty sewing machine needle

### » Sewing needle

### » Chopstick

for gently shaping the sole

### » Spool of contrasting thread

### » Old buttons (2) to be covered

### » ½"×½" Velcro (2 pieces)

I used the adhesive kind.

## 1. Adjust the pattern.

The pattern (online at [craftzine.com/02/wear\\_slippers](http://craftzine.com/02/wear_slippers)) simply needs to be enlarged on a copy machine to the dimensions provided.

## 2. Deconstruct the jeans.

To deconstruct jeans, simply begin at the inside of the ankle opening and cut to the crotch. There you cut across to the outer seam and cut down to the outer ankle. Do this on all 4 sides of the jeans. When finished, you will have flat pieces of fabric that will be much easier to deal with.

## 3. Cut out denim soles.

Lay out and pin the sole pattern on your jeans, and cut out 2 pieces for the left foot. Flip the sole pat-

tern over and lay out and pin again on your jeans, cutting out 2 pieces for the right foot.

## 4. Cut out sole lining.

Using the sole pattern, lay out and pin on your scrap fabric for sole lining. Cut out 1 piece for the left foot. Flip sole pattern over, lay out, and pin again. Cut out 1 piece for the right foot. Remember to save remnants for button covers.

## 5. Cut out sole batting.

Using the sole pattern, lay out, pin high-loft batting, and cut 2 pieces. One is for the right foot and the other for left. You do not have to flip the pattern because the batting itself can be flipped over to use for either foot.

## 6. Cut out sole interfacing.

Using the sole pattern, lay out and pin lightweight interfacing. As with the batting, you do not have to flip the pattern over; simply cut 4 pieces.

## 7. Cut out uppers.

With the remaining jean material, fold a piece in half that will accommodate the upper pattern. Lay out, pin upper pattern, and cut. Repeat 3 more times. You will have 4 pieces when finished.

## 8. Cut out straps.

Using 2 pieces of jean material, lay out, pin strap pattern, and cut out 2 pieces.

## 9. Make the soles.

Now it is time to make sandwiches. This is a nice little trick for clean, quick soles, inside and out.

**a.** Take 2 of your lightweight interfacing pieces and place one for the left foot and one for the right (Figure A, next page).

**b.** Then take your high-loft batting pieces, placing one on top of the left foot (where you have already placed your lightweight interfacing) and the other on top of your right foot. You will continue building on top of each, creating a sandwich effect (Figure A).

**c.** Take the remaining 2 pieces of lightweight interfacing and place on top of left and right sandwiches (Figure A).

**d.** Place your scrap fabric soles *right side face up* on each left and right sandwich.

**e.** Take 2 jean soles *right side face down* on each

**A****B**

Fig. A: Make the 5-layer sandwich of sole materials. Fig. B: Use the chopstick to shape the heel and edges, obtaining a smooth edge. Fig. C: Determine the left and right foot by placing the straps in between the layers. Fig. D: Sew a shallow curve toward the top of

the heel. Fig. E: Sew  $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the heel seam on both sides with contrasting thread. Fig. F: With the upper pinned closed, place the heel of the sole onto the heel of the upper. Fig. G: Place the button in the center of the scrap fabric and hand-baste a circle  $\frac{1}{8}$ " larger than the button.

**C****D****E****F****G**

left and right sandwich. Repeat with remaining 2 jean soles.

- f.** Make sure you have replaced your normal sewing machine needle with your heavy-duty needle. Begin at the outer toe corner (about 1" from top-center of the sole) of your sandwich by placing it gently under the foot (standard foot is fine) and sew  $\frac{1}{8}$ " seam along the edge until you reach the outer corner of the toe on the other side. Make sure to go slow when sewing, so you don't end up with any squared corners.
- g.** Repeat with other foot.
- h.** When both are finished, separate the upper sole (scrap material) and outer sole (jeans) by flipping it outside in. When finished flipping, use the chopstick to shape the heel of the sole and the edges to obtain a smooth, finished edge. Repeat with the other sole (Figure B).
- i.** You do not have to finish off the toe edge.

## 10. Sew the straps.

With contrasting thread, lengthen your stitch to the desired length and sew  $\frac{1}{4}$ " along the edges of each strap. Set aside.

## 11. Sew the uppers.

- a.** Place 2 uppers on top of each other. Do the same with the other 2 uppers. With both stacks next to one another, determine the left and right foot by placing the straps in between the layers. See Figure C, which shows the right foot. The flap should rest on the outside of each foot.
- b.** Sew about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the raw edge using your contrasting thread. Remember to sew slowly so you can maintain a smooth, even line. Repeat with other foot.
- c.** Fold the upper, *right sides touching*. Line the heel edges together. Beginning on the bottom part of the heel about 1" from the edge, sew a shallow curve toward the top of the heel. Repeat with other foot (Figure D).
- d.** Iron the seam flat and sew  $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the seam on both sides with contrasting thread. This reinforces the heel and helps keep the shape of the overall slipper. Repeat with other foot (Figure E).

## 12. Put it all together.

- a.** Flip both uppers inside out and fold them in half. Place 2 needles, one toward the front of the upper and one toward the back. This is done to keep

the opening of the upper closed (Figure F). This is an incredibly easy way to connect the sole to the upper.

- b.** With both uppers now pinned closed, place the heel of the sole onto the heel of the upper. Pin the outer corners of the heel. Place a pin at the tip of the slipper (toe). The upper now should naturally fall into place on top of the sole. Repeat with other sole and upper (Figure F).
- c.** Sew about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the finished edge of the sole. Repeat with other sole and upper.
- d.** Flip the slippers right-side out and marvel at your almost-completed house kicks!

## 13. Cover your buttons.

Button covering is a simple and easy way to recycle unwanted or ugly buttons.

- a.** Determine the size of button you would like to use. Place it in the center of a piece of scrap fabric and hand-baste a circle about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " larger than the button (Figure G).
- b.** Pull thread until taut, and until the fabric wraps around the button.
- c.** Sew along the wrong side of the button, first in a circular manner twice, and then making an X once. Knot thread and snip off. Repeat with other button.

## 14. Finish!

Sew a button on the strap flap. Now place one end of the Velcro on a strap, put the slipper on your foot, determine the tension of the strap, then place the other end of Velcro where the strap fits best. Repeat with other foot.

You are now ready to show off your new Repurposed House Slippers. Enjoy!

+ For the pattern, go to  
[craftzine.com/02/wear\\_slippers](http://craftzine.com/02/wear_slippers)



## Earrings of Paper and Tin

*Two pairs of brilliant earrings for the price of (almost) none.* BY KATHY CANO MURILLO

Lack of funds should never be an excuse for skipping out on creating jewelry. Anything with a smooth surface is fair game. Cigarette boxes, mint tins, old suitcases, empty beer bottles, matchbooks — the list is endless.

For example, here are some high-style/low-cost ideas for livening up those earlobes. These two jewelry designs cost pennies to make and can be used to create not only earrings, but pendants, bracelets, and rings as well. The first concept uses the inside of a disposable cookie sheet as a substitute for craft tin, and the other is a crafty recipe for easy watercolor paper earrings. Bend your brain to come up with other ideas — cardstock, cardboard, even paper scraps can all be transformed into wearable art.





## Materials

- » **Disposable cookie sheet** (should be free of grooves in the center)
- » **Nail file or sandpaper**
- » **Ballpoint pen**
- » **Magazine**
- » **Mexican novela comic cover** or comic cover of your choice
- » **Small tinsnips**
- » **White craft glue**
- » **Aleene's Paper Glaze**
- » **Small punch tool**
- » **Fishhook earring wires**
- » **Thin liner brush**
- » **Micro glitter**

## Latin Lover Tin Earrings

1. Reduce the novela comic cover to 25%, and make 2 color copies. Set aside.
2. Take the disposable cookie sheet and cut out the center. Throw the sides away.
3. Cut a shape out of the tin, then use that shape as your template to cut out your earrings from the tin. Mine were 2" x 1" wavy-edged rectangles. File the edges of the cutouts with the nail file.
4. Place the tin on top of the magazine (a harder surface won't work as well) and, pressing firmly, use the pen to draw grooves into the tin. If you have embossing tools, you can also use those to make the designs.
5. Use the punch tool to add a hole at the top of each earring.
6. Use the white craft glue to affix the comic cover image to the center of each earring. Cover with the paper glaze and let it sit until clear.

7. Use the liner brush to outline the image and sprinkle on the micro glitter.
8. Add fishhook earring wires.



## Materials

- » **Cardstock**
- » **Watercolor paper**
- » **Assorted acrylic paints**
- » **Assorted brushes**
- » **Water-based gloss varnish**
- » **Fishhook earring wires**
- » **Scissors**
- » **Super Glue**

## Pay the Electric Bill Watercolor Paper Earrings

1. Cut small shapes from cardstock, like rectangles, circles, and squares. These are your templates.
2. Use the templates to cut out pairs of the shapes from the watercolor paper. For example, cut out 2 squares, 2 rectangles, etc.
3. Using acrylic paints, base-coat watercolor paper shapes and let dry.
4. Combine the shapes on top of each other to make abstract earring pieces. Use Super Glue to affix them to each other.
5. Paint on a coat of varnish and let dry.
6. Poke a hole at the top and add the fishhook.

**Variation:** Use your favorite images on the painted shapes.

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Kathy Cano Murillo is the founder of [craftychica.com](http://craftychica.com) and the author of *Crafty Chica's Art de la Soul: Glittery Ideas to Liven Up Your Life* (Rayo Books).

## FLASH IT



# Corrugated Glow

*Create sunset lighting with a fiberglass tea light lantern.* BY ROSS ORR

A friend of mine recently finished a deck remodel, whose highlight (literally) is a transparent corrugated roof that diffuses sunlight in a delightful way. This inspired me to find some way to continue that glow after sunset, in the form of a lantern illuminated by tea light candles.

There are many colors and styles of corrugated roofing available, and whole 8-foot sheets (Sequentia brand) are \$23 at my local lumberyard — that's enough material for 10 lanterns. The kind my friend used for the deck is fiberglass-reinforced plastic (FRP), which diffracts light with a sparkly halo. After some feverish experimenting with cut-off scraps, I eventually came up with the graceful lantern design shown here.

In the following steps, proceed carefully so you don't crack the plastic, which is somewhat brittle.



Photography by Ross Orr

## Materials

- » **Corrugated plastic sheeting**  
(9½" of 26"-wide, should have 10 wavy ribs)
- » **¾" square pine or hardwood sticks**  
(3' per lantern)
- » **Galvanized all-purpose utility wire**  
(12-gauge, 42" per lantern)
- » **#8 truss-head screws** (¾" long, 6 per lantern)
- » **Light gauge sheet metal**
- » **Clear tape or ¼" heat-shrink tubing**
- » **Tea light candle**
- » **Handsaw**
- » **120-grit fine sandpaper**
- » **Tin snips**
- » **Wire cutter** or pliers with cutting notch
- » **Drill and bits about ¼"**
- » **Phillips screwdriver**
- » **Utility knife**

### 1. Cut the sheet to size.

Mark a 9½" strip from the corrugated sheet, cutting across the ribs. This material is a bit too brittle to cut with a saw, but tin snips work well.

### 2. Cut the uprights.

Cut 3 wooden sticks (uprights) 12" long. Sand their sides and smooth sharp corners with 120-grit sandpaper. Measure 2" from each end and drill crossways holes slightly larger than the wire you are using.

### 3. Cut the wire to length.

Unroll several feet of wire, carefully unbending it before cutting. Cut 2 pieces 21" long. Thread the wires through the holes in one of the wooden uprights until an equal length extends from each side. Bend the wires upward on both sides of the wood to form a "V" of about 60 degrees.

### 4. Connect the uprights.

Thread the wires through the 2 holes of the next wooden upright. Slide the sticks together until

there is 5¾" of wire between them. Make sure this spacing is correct, then twist the second stick and bend the wires going through it to form another "V."

Repeat with the third wooden upright. You should end up with a triangular framework where the free ends of the wire align, overlapping by about 1½". The framework will probably be crooked at first; tweak the wire bends slightly until the frame is symmetrical and stands straight. Leave the free wire ends unattached for now.

### 5. Attach the corrugated plastic.

Roll up the corrugated plastic into a tube, overlapping the first and last ribs. This material is stiff enough that it will try to spring open again, so be careful! You may need an extra pair of hands here, or use packing tape, spring clips, etc., to keep the tube held together in the following step.

Slip the wood/wire framework inside the corrugated plastic tube, with one upright behind the overlap. Make sure that the wood protrudes an equal distance beyond the plastic at each end. Adjust the rib overlap so it is snug and even from top to bottom, and then tightly hold the plastic and wood together.

With a drill bit slightly larger than your screw threads, drill holes 2" from each edge of the plastic. (Don't drill into the wood.) Drive the screws into the wood uprights, but don't tighten them too much — stop when the head just begins to press against the plastic. Check that the other 2 uprights are straight within their ribs, and then finish the remaining holes and screws.

### 6. Join the wire ends.

Now you can join the overlapping wire ends together. Wrapping them in clear tape works fine, but for a more finished look, I used ¼" heat-shrink tubing. (A wonderful craft material sold by electronics suppliers, this shrinks down to half of its original diameter when held over a flame.)

### 7. Make the candle base.

To make a platform for the candle, I cut a triangle from thin-gauge aluminum, although a coffee-can top works, too. Trace the outline of the candle in the center and mark 3 rectangular tabs within this circle. With a sharp utility knife, puncture the metal and cut 3 sides of the tabs, then fold them upward.

## + FLASH IT: TEA LIGHT LANTERN

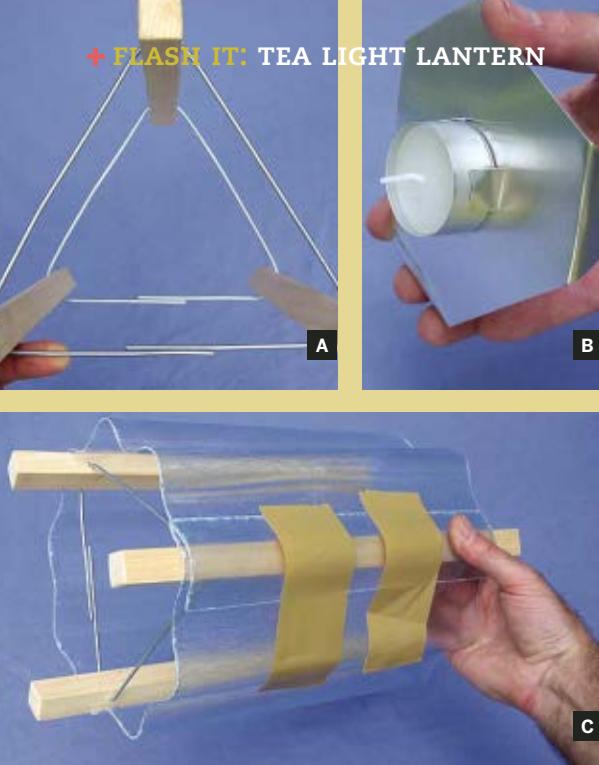


Fig. A: Bend wires to give 5½" lengths between the uprights. Adjust bends until the triangles look straight. Fig. B: Cut and bend tabs on the candle platform for a snug grip on the tea light. Fig. C: Use tape or extra

hands to keep the rolled-up plastic from springing open again. Hold the overlapping ribs together tightly, then drill and screw the first 2 screws. Fig. D: Wrap the flaps of the platform around the struts to finish.

Make sure that the tabs will snugly grasp the sides of a tea light, even when held sideways. Corrugated plastic can catch fire if exposed to direct flame (which smells horrible!), so for safety's sake, don't skip this step.

### 8. Attach the candle base.

Mark the locations of the wires on the underside of the platform. Use a straightedge to start bending each flap downward. Put the platform in place and finish wrapping the folded flaps around the wires to secure them.

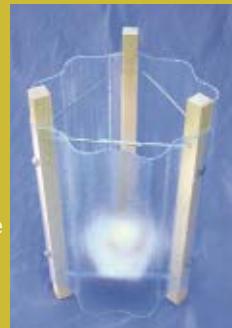
### 9. Enjoy the glow.

Flip the lantern right-side up again, snugly place your candle inside, and enjoy the glow.



**Quick Tip:** Cutting plastic can leave ragged edges, which should be sanded lightly until smooth to the touch.

» When drilling the screw holes, if you don't have extra hands helping you, try holding the ends of the wood uprights between your knees for support as you're drilling through the plastic and driving the screws. Or slip a length of 1x scrap wood (on edge) through the middle of the frame, and prop up its ends to support the work.



Ross Orr plays with fire in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



# Stitch-Action Photography

*Create the look of motion with photos and a computer.*

BY PAURIC O'CALLAGHAN

**I**t's very rewarding to create a picture that conveys more than what a single image can capture. Whether the picture is of baby's first steps or an Olympic gymnast's somersault, the process at work conveys motion in a static image.

Stitching multiple images together is a form of time-lapse photography. In traditional time-lapse the output is a video. But here we'll place each frame on top of the other, allowing viewers to replay the action in their minds. Photo sequencing only works when the object moves across a static background. A dog performing a series of tricks at a show works well; a runner directly approaching the camera does not.

Subjects can be anything from a bird in flight to a snowboarder's jump — all you need is a camera with an Action Sequence mode, a computer, and the patience to experiment.



## + FLASH IT: STITCH PHOTOGRAPHY

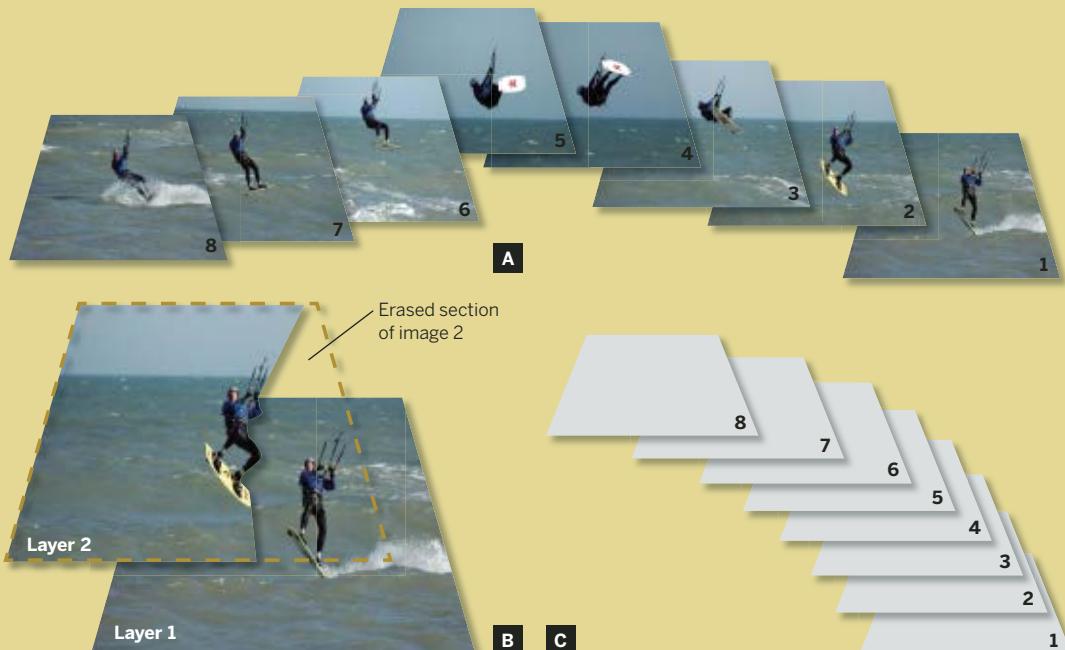


Fig. A: Order and align the images. Fig. B: When cutting away part of the second “step,” I closely followed the outline of the rider, but didn’t need to be exact. You can set your eraser to 50% and blend the 2 images

together. Try it — you’ll see what I mean. Fig. C: When editing, place each photo in the sequence on top of the last photo, in the same way that steps sit on each other in a staircase.

### 1. Set up your canvas, align the images.

First, you need a graphics application that handles multiple layers, and it’s easier if you have a graphics pen. A mouse is OK, but a bit cumbersome.

Create your canvas — the space in which your photos will be laid out — with a height that’s double the image, and a width equaling all images laid end to end.

If you have three pictures, each 800×600 pixels, your canvas will be 2400×1200 pixels. Place your images on the canvas, giving each its own layer. Place image 1 in the first layer, image 2 in the second layer, etc.

If the photographer panned the camera during the sequence, you need to line up the background. I used the horizon for vertical alignment, and spaced the rider evenly for horizontal alignment. The waves were moving, so I had no other point of reference between images.

Start by aligning images 1 and 2, turn other images to “invisible,” and set image 2 to 50% transparent. Then move image 2 around until you are set. Repeat with image 3 at 50% over 2, and so on.

### 2. Edit the images.

Now the real fun begins. This is where having a graphics pen helps. Similar to the alignment step, set image 2 to 50–80% transparent (don’t adjust image 1), and turn all the other images to 100% transparent/invisible/off.

Approach editing as you would a set of stairs. Step 1 sits at the bottom, 2 sits on top of 1, and 3 sits on top of 2. Cut away any part of the second step as long as there is a piece of the first step below it. If you cut too much away, you will see all the way into the basement, aka the background layer.

### 3. Additional tips.

When taking the photograph, capture more background rather than focusing in on the object. Turn off auto features for shutter speed and aperture — all images should have the same brightness and contrast. And be familiar with the computer’s undo feature. Good luck!

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Pauric O’Callaghan ([pauric.net](http://pauric.net)) is a user-interface designer with an interest in conveying complex information through simplified graphics and images.

## NEEDLE IT



# Woolly Bullies

**Sculpt wool into felted fruits and vegetables (or anything imaginable!).** BY BROOKELYNN MORRIS

**A**n unusual act of crafty repurposing, needle felting is the art of sculpting wool with a barbed needle. The specialty needle was adapted for art from its original use in industrial and automotive machinery. Needle-felting machines, which can hold 250,000 needles, are used to manufacture air bags, oil and fuel filters, and non-woven upholstery. In the 1980s, crafters began using the needles manually to make art. As a medium, carded-wool batting can be manipulated into any shape. Infinite varieties and colors of wool are available to make flowers, dinosaurs, cats, dogs, robots, jewelry, or any sculpture. The supplies are inexpensive, and the techniques are simple and fun.

Photograph by Thayer Allyson Gowdy



For specs and tips on each of the fabulous fruits and vegetables shown in this issue, check out [craftzine.com/02/needle\\_felt](http://craftzine.com/02/needle_felt).

## Materials

**Foam** that is flat and slightly firm, to use as a work surface.

**Felting needles** are triangular or star-shaped, covered with fierce barbs, and available in different gauges. You need only one for most projects, yet dedicated felters use multiple gauges and shapes.

**Carded-wool batting** Generally, coarse fibers are more easily felted than silky ones. The movement of the felting needle creates very dense material — 2 handfuls of carded wool can condense into a flower the size of a silver dollar.

### To obtain your supplies:

**1. Scavenge!** Use an old sponge or a scrap of foam as your work surface. A stiff-bristle brush with bristles facing straight up can be used. Find a sheep to shear, then card and dye its wool with plant dyes or Kool-Aid. The needles will most likely be purchased new.

**2. Buy a kit.** Many include everything you need to begin your first project.

**WARNING:** Prevent felting injury! Fingers can be poked and punctured — watch the needle and work slowly.



### 1. Gather wool and begin needling one side.

Gather wool together and hold it between two fingers. Push into the wool batting with the felting needle. If you have multiple gauged needles, begin with the smallest gauge (which is the largest size).

The wool easily condenses beneath the point. Gentle pressure will create all the friction necessary for the fibers to entangle. The needle ought to enter the object at a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to  $\frac{1}{2}$ " depth. It should not be pushed deep into the foam. Push the needle into the wool again and again; not very many strokes are needed to give shapeless batting a new form.

### 2. As it takes shape, needle the reverse and the sides.

To refine your object, gently lift and needle the other side. If fibers become embedded into work surface, pull gently until wool is freed. Rotate spherical objects frequently. Visualize a center and turn the felt every few stabs to create dimension and shape.

### 3. Work the wool to make edges and curves.

The wool follows the directional force of the needle. Alternating the angles at which the needle enters the wool will make edges and curves. Any errors can simply be repaired with more wool and more needling; it is also easy to add new colors in this way. Work the project with needles, hands, and fingers until the desired density has been achieved.

### 4. Attach multiple pieces.

When making an object with multiple pieces, leave the sides that will be bonded together slightly rough. Pierce the parts into each other, being sure that the barbs of the needle entangle the fibers of both pieces. To prevent distortion, use greater pressure but fewer strokes. A large-gauge, star-shaped needle is useful for attaching other colors and parts.

### 5. Embellish.

Once the shape has been created, any kind of detail or color can be applied. These fiber sculptures can easily be sewn with beads, sequins, and embroidery thread.

**Brookelynn Morris** is just like you — she loves to hula-hoop, longboard, and make flower arrangements. Her very fine husband, Nat, uses his photography skills to make all of her projects look very, very good.

Photograph (this page) by Thayer Allyson Gowdy; photography (opposite page) by Nat Wilson-Heckathorn

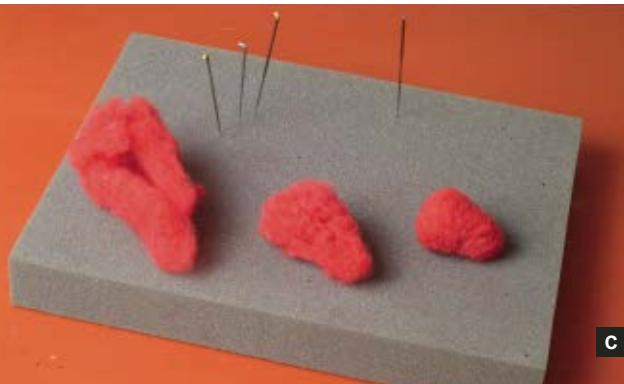
## + NEEDLE IT: FELTED FRUIT



A



B



C



D

Fig. A: This needle is triangular with sharp barbs along its edges. Fig. B: To begin, gather the wool into a mass that suggests the ultimate shape of the sculpture. Fig. C: From fluffy and light to dense and firm, change in the batting

happens quickly. Fig. D: Frequently and gently, pull the fibers to untangle the project from the foam. Fig. E: Pinch and hold the wool to make edges. Twist it in your fingers, and needle along the very edge to give good definition to



E



F



G



H

small details. Fig. F: To make the seeds for this fruit, use the smallest amount of fibers. A little goes a long way. Fig. G: When adding surface colors be sure to use a light touch. A star-shaped needle is the tool of choice.

Fig. H: Pieces can be joined together easily, especially if the edges that meet are left a bit rough. Stab right through the center of both pieces. Voilà!

## NEEDLE IT



# Voodoo Doll Pincushion

***Sharpen your wits (and needles)  
with this creepy pincushion.***

BY CASEY DOUGHERTY

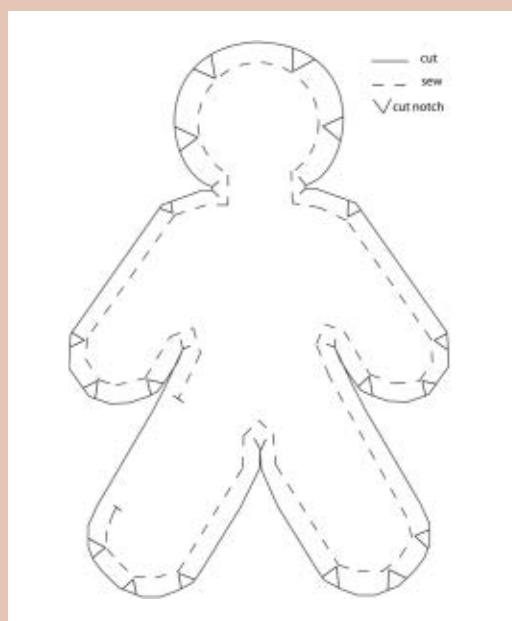
Staple pins can be a dangerous matter, especially to those who share your craft space. While many people have the luxury of a separate craft room, I like to be out where the action is. Fortunately, I haven't yet shared my pin-cidents with others, but I can't deny that there have been some close calls. Tired of the just-old-fashioned tomato and strawberry, I decided to give a voodoo doll pincushion a try. No two alike, the voodoo doll uses up fabric scraps, keeps your pins sharp with steel wool stuffing, and saves your and your loved ones' skin.

Photography by Casey Dougherty





**Use different yarns for a delightfully crazed look, and embroider a heart so you know where to put the pins.**



This is the pattern I used — simple, but perfect for this project. For a PDF, go to [craftzine.com/02/needle\\_voodoo](http://craftzine.com/02/needle_voodoo).

## Materials

- » **Small fabric scraps** for the stuffing
- » **Larger fabric scraps** for the outside of the doll
- » **Fine steel wool** a walnut-sized clump
- » **Needle and thread**
- » **Scissors** as always
- » **Marking utensil**
- » **Yarn, scrap, buttons, etc.** for doll's features and clothing

### 1. Cut out the pattern.

Cut out the body of the doll. You'll need 2 identical pieces — one for the front of the doll and one for the back. The doll pictured was created using a fat gingerbread man shape. You can use the pattern below or make your own.

### 2. Sew together.

Match the 2 pieces, one on top of the other, with the good/front sides facing each other. Sew  $\frac{1}{4}$ " in from the border, leaving a  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " gap along the outside of one leg for a stuffing hole. Clip out notches around the curves to prevent bunching.

Turn the sewn pieces inside out so that the hems are on the inside and the good sides of the fabric are on the outside. A pencil or crochet hook will encourage a stubborn arm or leg to work its way through.

### 3. Stuff the doll.

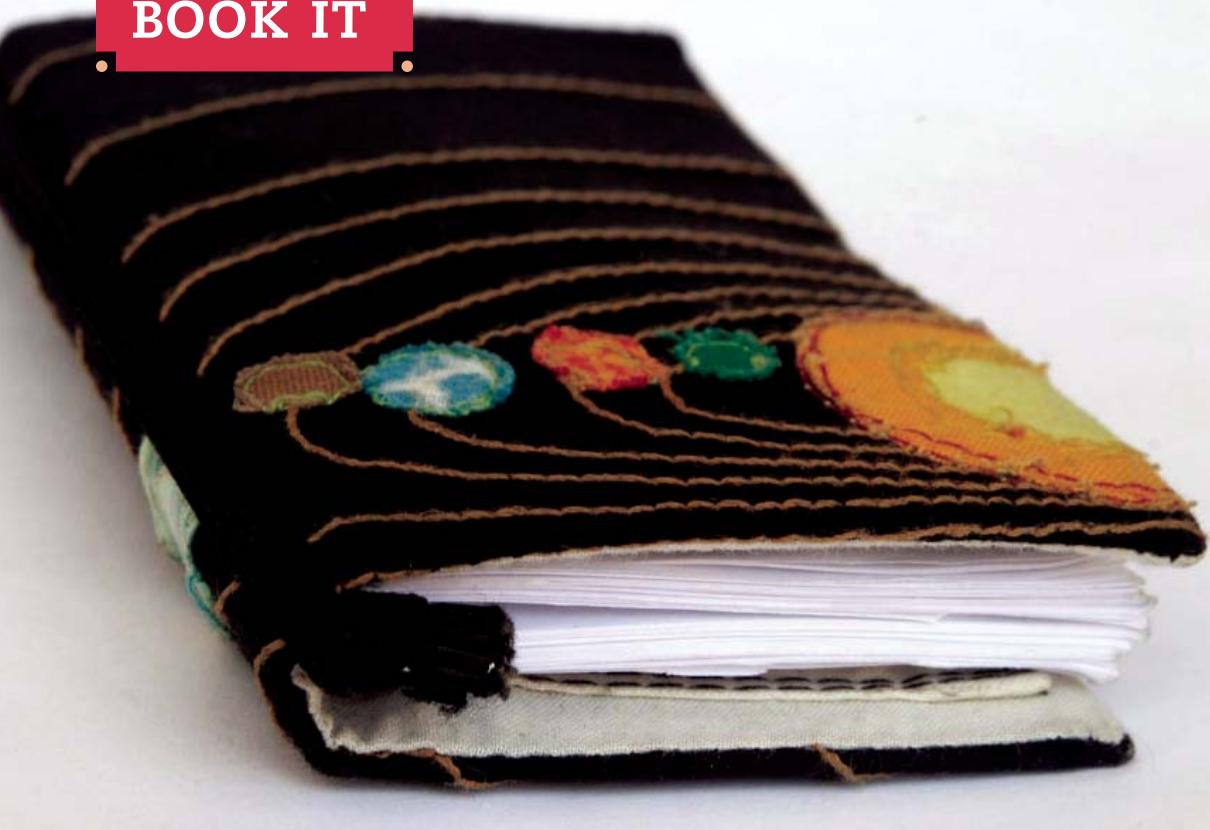
Stuff the head tightly with steel wool. This will become the needle sharpener. Then fill the rest of the body with small fabric scraps. Fill the torso last. Sew the doll shut with nice big sutures. Don't worry about leaving scars on your doll — after all, this is a voodoo doll.

### 4. Finish!

Use thread, buttons, yarn, and fabric scraps to adorn your doll. For hair, run the thread through the fabric with a needle, leaving a tail out on both sides. Lay a piece of yarn perpendicular to the thread, overlapping the area where the thread runs under the fabric. Use the thread tails to tie a knot over the yarn. Trim if desired. Don't let your first-grade botched Barbie haircuts intimidate you — doll haircuts are fun!

Casey Dougherty still isn't sure what she wants to do if she grows up. She divides her train commute between quick and gratifying knitting projects and teaching herself JavaScript.

BOOK IT



# Pocket Book

*Make your own wallet-sized notebook.*

BY CASEY DOUGHERTY

Moleskine notebooks have been popular for some time now, and for good reason: they are small and convenient, and can help even the most scatterbrained people stay organized. Of course, no Moleskine is complete without some personalizing modifications, but why rely on a few stickers to do the job when you can make the whole notebook from scratch?

Consider these instructions as a basic starting point for your own wallet-sized notebook. Potential must-have modifications are endless: a pen loop, a clasped pocket, a page marker ... you get the idea. In addition to numerous personalization possibilities, it's easy to transfer the booklet between covers to accommodate your changing stylistic and functional needs.



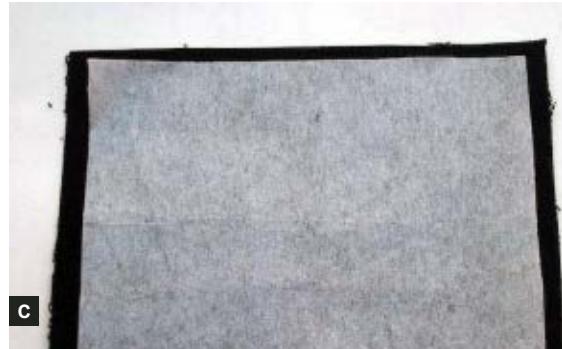
Photography by Casey Dougherty



A



B



C

**Fig. A:** Design possibilities are endless. A piece of vinyl can be used as a window pocket to hold and protect photographs or a collage. **Fig. B:** When scoring the plastic,

avoid cutting completely through by making multiple passes with lighter pressure. **Fig. C:** Center the interfacing, shiny side down, on the back (wrong) side of the fabric.

## Materials

- » **6.75"×5.25"** piece of fabric for book cover exterior
- » **6.75"×5.25"** piece of fabric for book cover interior
- » **5"×2.75"** pieces of fabric (2) for pockets
- » **6.25"×4.75"** pieces of mid-weight fusible interfacing (2)
- » **11" of ¼"** bias tape
- » **11" of ¼"** elastic
- » **6.25"×4.75"** piece of lightweight plastic (like a cheap binder) or cereal box cardboard for added stiffness. Keep in mind that plastic is washable.
- » **About 6 sheets of letter-sized paper** in your choice of color, texture, etc.
- » **Any material for decoration**
- » **Scissors**
- » **Needle and thread or sewing machine**
- » **X-Acto knife (optional)**
- » **Clothes iron**

### 1. Iron on interfacing.

The interfacing attaches to the back (wrong) side of the fabric to stiffen it. This makes it more durable and easier to decorate, while preventing puckering. Center it shiny side down on the back of the exterior fabric piece and the interior fabric piece. Using a press cloth, iron to fuse.

### 2. Prepare the pockets.

Attach the bias tape to one of the long sides on both pocket pieces. To attach the bias tape, insert the pocket fabric's raw edge into the fold of the tape. Sew along the bottom edge of the tape, just under  $\frac{1}{4}$ " in from the finished edge. This will become the top, or opening, of the pocket.

The remaining 3 sides of each pocket are roll hemmed. Use an iron to fold over and press  $\frac{1}{4}$ " of hem. Then, roll the first hem over itself and press again. The raw edge hides in the fold of the fabric.

### 3. Decorate and personalize.

Decorate any of the pieces as you like, leaving a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " perimeter around the interior and exterior pieces for the seams. Also, remember that the pockets will cover the majority of the interior of the book.



D



E

Fig. D: The pockets open toward the spine to securely contain your cards and cash. Fig. E: Fold the raw edges inward, then stitch up the final seam. If needed, use a cool iron to



secure the fold, making sure not to melt the plastic. Fig. F: The elastic strap will hold tight to the receipts and hot-date phone numbers you gather through the day.

#### 4. Attach the pockets.

Center the pockets  $\frac{1}{4}$ " in from the ends and sides of the interior piece. Orient the openings to face toward the middle. This will leave approximately  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " between the pocket's openings in the center/spine of the cover. Attach by sewing around the bottom and sides, making sure to secure the rolled hem.

#### 5. Sew together.

Face the good sides of the interior and exterior pieces together. Orient them identically so that the top of one piece meets the top of the other. Sew a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hem (next to, not into, the interfacing) along one short side and both long sides, leaving one short side open. Turn the sleeve inside out so that the correct sides now face outward. Press the seams.

#### 6. Insert plastic/cardboard.

If you are using plastic, score down the middle, bisecting the 2 long sides. This will create a flexible spine for your book. Make 2 more scores,  $\frac{1}{4}$ " on either side of the first score, to allow for the thickness of the booklet. Cardboard will fold easily for the spine, and should not be scored. Slip the plastic or cardboard into the sleeve.

#### 7. Close the opening.

Fold in a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hem on both sides of the opening and stitch closed.

#### 8. Make the paper block.

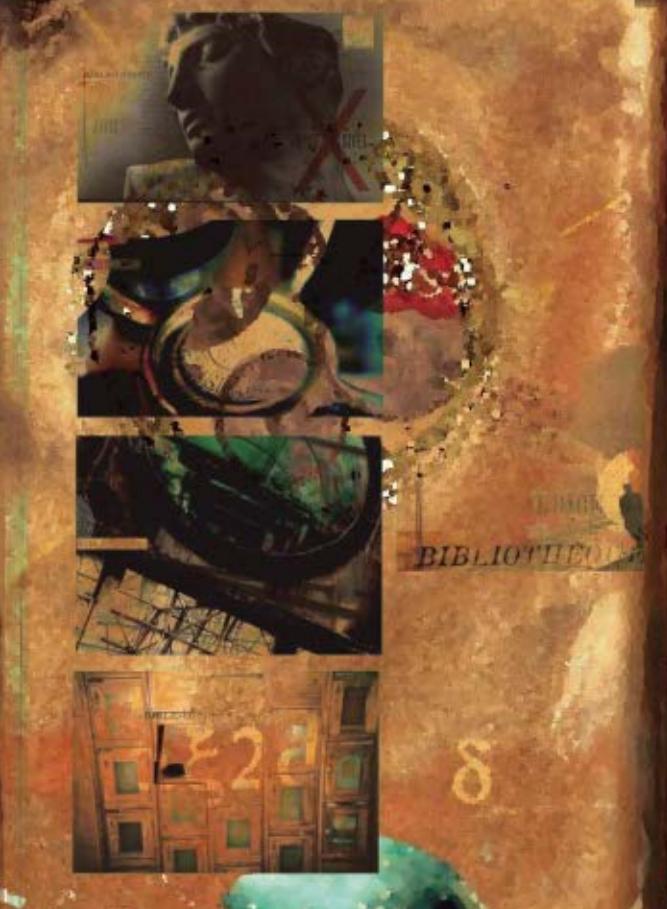
Cut the letter-sized paper into quarters. Fold the quarter sheets in half, matching the short ends together. Stack together and pierce the spine  $\frac{1}{4}$ " down with a needle. Run a needle and thread through the hole and tie together. These pages will hold together nicely, but can easily be torn out if needed.

#### 9. Assemble the book!

Match both ends of the elastic together and tie an overhand knot, creating a closed loop. Use the elastic to attach the booklet to the cover. The booklet can easily be replaced or exchanged, and receipts and other important papers can be slipped through the elastic band for safekeeping.

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**Reluctant to close doors on any one of her interests, Casey Dougherty still isn't sure what she wants to do if she grows up. Currently, she divides her daily train commute between quick and gratifying knitting projects and teaching herself JavaScript. She has no cat named Shoes.**



**BOOK IT**

# Journal-Art Memoirs

## *Make a scrapbook the Moleskine way.*

BY GARETH BRANWYN

**Y**ears ago, I saw a TV interview with the mother of a teen aid worker who'd been killed by bandits in Africa. She was promoting the publication of her son's journals. An accomplished artist, he'd kept stunning scrapbook diaries, each page a dense mélange of writing, drawing, collaging, and ephemera collecting. Polaroids, plane and bus ticket stubs, wine labels, cigarette packs, matchbook covers, and articles and images torn from newspapers and magazines all found their way into his diary. I was enthralled. More recently, I did a Flickr search on "Moleskine," the brand of journal that's all the rage, and discovered dozens of similarly inspiring visual journals and scrapbooks. So I went out and bought a blank Moleskine journal, and have been bulking up its pages with pen, paint, and paper ever since.

Photograph by Paula Catão



## Buy the Book

Obviously, you don't have to use Moleskine journals to do journal-based art and scrapbooking, but there are some nice, standout features about Moleskines.

The Moleskine Sketchbooks (5.2"×8.2", \$20 — or free if you make your own; see page 140) are very well made, with rugged oilcloth covers, stitched binding, and acid-free paper. The pages are thick and sturdy, and accept paint, glue, and gesso very well.

The elastic-band enclosure will keep your journal closed as it bloats from all the multimedia you'll be stuffing into it. It also has an expandable pocket in the back that's handy for storing material you collect between journaling sessions.

## Materials

- » **Typical crafting tools:** Scissors, ruler, X-Acto knife, India ink pens, pencils, glues, brushes, and hole punch
- » **Bleed-proof markers, brush pens**
- » **Rubber stamps and stamp inks**  
Alphabet stamps are particularly useful.
- » **Acrylic paints** These are used for painting journal pages or for adding color highlights/accents to pages.
- » **Art stickers** You can get some cool stick-down alphabets and artwork at craft shops, or make your own.
- » **Stencils** Craft stores sell cheap sets of alphabet stencils in a variety of sizes.
- » **Shipping tags, glassine envelopes, and plastic parts bags**
- » **Dymo Label Maker** The classic punky little labeler, found at [dymo.com](http://dymo.com).
- » **Rub-down letters, alphabet stickers, vinyl letters**, sold at craft stores
- » **Blending chalks**, sold at craft stores; great for atmospheric page backgrounds
- » **Spray fixative**

## Tools (and Materials) of the Trade

The cool thing about visual journaling is that you can use pretty much anything that's relatively flat. While conventional scrapbooking is usually done in albums that allow for 3D objects (buttons, brads, rope, puffy stickers), you'll predominantly want to use flat materials. Even with flat inclusions, by the time you're done, your Moleskine will be pleasingly plump. Many Flickr journalers like to take side-on shots of their Moleskines to show how fat and sassy they are.

Once you start your journal, things you never paid attention to before will leap out at you as fodder for inclusion. The other day, I was thumbing through a book I got at a used bookstore, and a thin manila card fell out of it that had weird-shaped holes on one edge and a giant red "5" stamped on it. Instead of seeing it as trash, my first thought was "cool journal background!"

Besides the paper keepsakes and ephemera of our lives, there are all sorts of tools, supplies, and materials you can use, from acrylic paints to rubber stamps to decorative papers. Most arts and crafts stores have scrapbooking sections. While a lot of this stuff is cutesy in the extreme, there's really cool stuff available, too. Companies like Stampington ([stampington.com](http://stampington.com)) and Making Memories ([makingmemories.com](http://makingmemories.com)) have lines of paints, stamps, stickers, papers, inks, and other materials you'll want to take a look at. Making Memories even sells a line of beautiful tool kits and specialty tools for journaling, scrapbooking, and book altering.

## Using Phonecam Images

In addition to the above, your computer and printer are two very useful and versatile tools. You can print out text, art, images you've taken with your phonecam, photos you've dolled up in Photoshop, etc.

Many of us have phonecams, though given the quality of most, "camera" should probably be in quotes. While low-res, grainy, low-light images may not capture souls for the family photo album, they can make for interesting art photos. Thinking of your phonecam as an art tool will change the way you take pictures. Play around with the settings on the camera and with your composition to create images that are more atmosphere than documentation. Enlarge photos in Photoshop and use them as journal backgrounds. Take a succession of shots and print them small in triptych, or diptych.



**Fig. A:** Matthew Williams. Materials used: Transit tickets, postage stamps, stickers, ink. **Fig. B:** Matthew Williams. Materials: Photo, vellum, Chinese envelopes, and cards.



**Fig. C:** Isabel Letsch. Materials: Vintage Sears catalog images, origami papers, stickers, watercolors. Everything is torn; she did the page on a plane and had no scissors.

To improve phonecam images, try a program called Neat Image ([neatimage.com](http://neatimage.com); Win/Mac). It can be used as either a Photoshop plug-in or a standalone program. It's a noise-reduction program that removes a lot of low-light graininess. If your phonecam images are small and printed on photo paper with a decent printer, Neat Image goes a long way toward removing those quote marks from your "camera." The full version costs \$30, but a free version is available that only saves in JPG, which is fine for this application.

## What to Do With a Blank Page

Cracking open a high-quality blank journal can be intimidating to those of us who aren't professional artists. There's an impulse to not want to put anything on the page that isn't brilliant and perfect. Fight this. Tell yourself the first book will be a scratch journal; you'll throw it away when you're done; nobody else will ever see it — whatever it takes to free your head, heart, and hands to get going. Tremendous inspiration can be found at [flickr.com](http://flickr.com). Search "Moleskine", "art journal", and "scrapbooking". The diversity of approaches to visual journaling is staggering. If it doesn't inspire you, nothing will.

Photography by Matthew Williams (A, B) and Isabel Letsch (C)

## What to Put in a Scrapbook:

- Polaroids
- Photo booth pics
- Travel brochures
- Restaurant menus
- Ticket stubs
- Receipts
- Junk mail
- Maps
- Computer printouts
- Photoshop creations
- Newsprint
- Collage materials
- Regular mail envelopes
- Glassine envelopes
- Rubber stamps
- Postage stamps
- Rub-on lettering
- Stickers
- Wine labels
- Fruit labels
- Other labels (clothing, food, etc.)
- Plant life
- Fortune cookie fortunes
- Cigar bands
- Cigarette packs
- Matchbook covers
- Business cards
- Recipe cards
- Luggage, price, shipping, and other tags
- Bingo and lotto cards
- Wrapping paper
- String / ribbon
- Different kinds and colors of tape (duct, masking, cellophane, etc.)

Gareth Branwyn is a regular contributor to MAKE and CRAFT and writes widely about DIY technologies. He also runs the personal-tech website Street Tech ([streettech.com](http://streettech.com)).

## BOOK IT



# Altered Books

*Turn that old, unwanted book into the work of art you've always wished it was.* BY BRIAN SAWYER

Part bookbinding, part bibliovandalism, part mixed-media collage, and part scrapbooking, the craft of altered books is becoming increasingly popular and recognized as the distinct art form it is.

But what exactly is an altered book? According to the International Society of Altered Book Artists ([alteredbookartists.com](http://alteredbookartists.com)), it's "any book, old or new, that has been recycled by creative means into a work of art. They can be ... rebound, painted, cut, burned, folded, added to, collaged in, gold-leafed, rubber stamped, drilled, or otherwise adorned ..."



Photography by Brian Sawyer

Note the trailing ellipsis: the possibilities are as open as your mind, so no list of embellishments will ever be complete. The techniques presented here are by no means meant to be exhaustive, but these common examples should provide enough tools and inspiration to get you started with altered books.

## Materials

- » A hardcover book
- » Distress Ink
- » Decorative brads
- » Lumiere brand paints in two-tone metallics
- » Printed image on heavy-stock paper
- » Other embellishments that pique your fancy
- » Craft knife
- » Self-healing cutting mat
- » Acid-free glue stick
- » Scissors
- » Stamps
- » Ink pads
- » Sponge brush
- » Hole punch
- » Post-It removable cover-up tape

## Getting Started

First, choose a book to use as your "blank canvas." Hardcover books work better than paperbacks because they have the strength to support the weight of embellishments and to sustain the abuse you'll be inflicting on them.

As tempting and obvious a choice as a children's board book is, using one will require a lot more work. Because glues don't adhere well to the glossy pages, you'll need to sand off the plastic coating from all of the pages and prime them with gesso before getting to work.

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**Opposite page:** An altered book with a time theme, by Karen Provost, altered-books artist and instructor. She taught the techniques described in this article during her half-day workshop at Ink About It ([inkaboutitonline.com](http://inkaboutitonline.com)), a paper-arts specialty store in Westford, Mass.

Before settling on a book, bend back the corners of a few pages. Make sure they don't crack — cracking is a sure sign they won't sustain the altering process.

With these practical concerns in mind, choose a book that interests you, since you'll be living with it for a while. You can choose a book based on its design or aesthetics alone, or according to a contextual theme you intend to work with throughout the book. Of course, if you intend to completely cover or mutilate the book, the content won't make much difference — in this case, you should perhaps choose based on durability alone.

Book in hand, now make room for the embellishments you're going to add. Go through the entire book, removing pages periodically (pulling firmly, right up against the spine) in groups of 2 or 3. You'll need to tear out more as you go, but it's best to get rid of a bunch of pages at the beginning (plus, emotionally, I've found this to be the most difficult part of beginning — once you've ripped out a few pages, altering the rest of the book becomes much easier).

Finally, choose your first spread (altering facing pages as a single unit creates a unified aesthetic) and glue a couple of pages together (more for heavier embellishments) on either side. As you alter the rest of the book, you'll need to do this for every spread you work on, to reinforce the surface and support the weight of the embellishments you add.

## Pocket Page

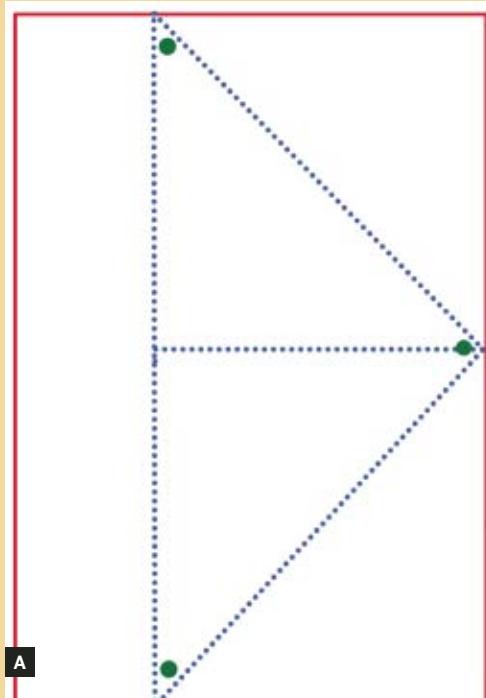
The first alteration we'll make is a simple pocket, formed by folding a page upon itself and fastening it to the page below it with brads. First, glue together 3 consecutive groups of 2 pages each. The 2 outer groups of pages act as the standard altering surface mentioned previously, while the one in the middle is folded into our pocket.

### 1. Fold the page.

Fold the middle page into a point at its fore edge, hiding the folded portion behind the page (as illustrated by the dotted blue line in Figure A on the next page).

### 2. Create openings.

Use a small hole punch to create 3 openings (indicated by green circles) at the corners of the triangle formed by your fold, punching through both the middle page and the page behind it.



**Fig A:** A pocket page. This spread is folded, aged and embellished with distress ink, fixed together with brads, and stuffed with stamped shipping labels.



These basic techniques can be used as building blocks for much more ambitious alterations.

### 3. Join the pages.

Insert decorative brads into the holes and open the clasps behind the back page, joining the pages in a closed pocket.

### 4. Embellish the pocket.

Using a sponge brush to apply Distress Ink on all the pages in the spread quickly creates a nice aged or weathered effect, though the possibilities for further embellishing this pocket are wide open.

After finishing this pocket, I stamped a couple of shipping tags to stuff inside, though you can leave it empty or fill it with whatever you choose. I thought the *Mona Lisa* fit quite well with the Italian art and pop culture posters featured throughout the book.

### Pop-Up Mechanism

With a pop-up mechanism, the act of opening pages can trigger an engaging response for the reader. Find an image that works with your theme. Dover Publications ([doverpublications.com](http://doverpublications.com)) sells books and CDs of royalty-free art from the public domain, which work well for personal projects you intend to display or sell without seeking additional permission for copyrighted images.

### 1. Print the image.

Print the image on hard-stock paper, or print on a standard sheet of copy paper and then glue to a page with a heavier weight.

### 2. Cut the image.

Cut out the image, leaving a clearance of 1" or 2" on the bottom and sides for added support (as marked with a solid red line in Figure B). Cut the upper half of the image (the part that will extend above the top of the book when the pop-up is open) directly on its edge.

### 3. Fold in half.

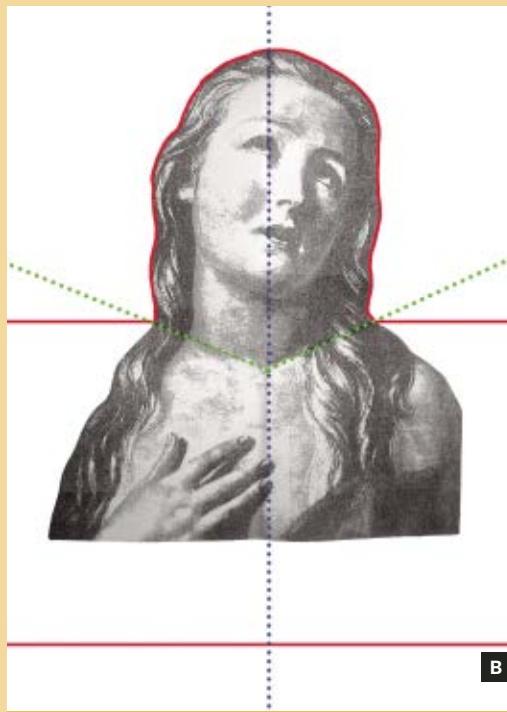
Fold the image in half vertically (the dotted blue line) and keep it folded for the next fold.

### 4. Fold down the top.

Fold the top of the image down (the dotted green line) at a 45-degree angle to the first fold (the dotted blue line). Reinforce the fold by creasing it in the other direction. Then, open the image to see all of it.

### 5. Fold vertically.

Fold the image vertically again (the other direction on



**Fig B:** Pop-up mechanism. One of the things that distinguishes altered books from standard mixed-media collage is the ability to be more dynamic and interactive. This image pops up with the opening of the book.



**Fig C:** Text masking. The text fits the theme: "Your bride awaits you ... whose splendor shall ... nod indulgently up ... lovely as a rose opening in all its freshness to the first rays of a beautiful dewy morning..."

the dotted blue line), creating a crease that opens freely in either direction.

## 6. Glue.

Glue the anchor to the spread, aligning the top of the anchor (the upper horizontal red line) with the top edge of the book, and aligning the center fold of the image with the book's spine.

## 7. Crease and press.

Fold the top of the image down into the crease and close the book, applying pressure. Allow glue to dry.

## 8. Open.

Open your book to see the image pop up. Then, to complete the spread, paint over the empty portion of the anchor or cover it with other embellishments. When finished, the pop-up mechanism should be integrated fairly seamlessly into the rest of the ornamentation on the pages.

## Text Masking

Text masking involves highlighting portions of text while painting over the rest. Most pages have enough words to create a new passage that fits

your theme, regardless of the actual content.

### 1. Cover the text.

Cover the text you want to remain visible with Post-It removable cover-up tape.

### 2. Apply paint.

Use a sponge brush to apply paint to the entire page, completely covering the taped areas, then wait for the paint to dry. This takes about 15 minutes or so.

### 3. Reveal message.

Remove tape to reveal your hidden message. Though I began a little skeptically because of all my book-loving baggage (I knew it would be tough for me to deface a book, even in the name of art), I now think I'm hooked. The more you alter, the more you realize that "finishing" any project requires an incredible level of discipline. I have a feeling most of my books will forever remain "works in progress," which shouldn't be seen as a bad thing.

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Brian Sawyer is an editor for MAKE: Books and lead editor for O'Reilly Media's Hacks series. His "Olde-School Bookbinding" article appeared in MAKE: Volume 05.



# 101: LINOCUTS

By Donna Barger

## Hack up a block of linoleum and ink some lino block prints of your own making.



Linoleum printing is a form of relief printing, one of the easiest and most direct of all the printmaking methods. Linocuts can be simplistic and graphic, or as intricately detailed as you want. It's a subtractive process, meaning you cut away, or subtract, the areas you do not want to print. They can be printed onto almost any type of paper or fabric. You can print on top of painted or silk-screened backgrounds, or you can use watercolor paints or colored pencils to hand-color the print after it has dried. »



#### LOCATION:

Special thanks to Medora Wildenberg for the use of her studio at El Camino Community College in Torrance, Calif.

## GATHER »

When printing with a soft block of linoleum the edges will round a bit, giving a softer look to your image. Softer linoleums also reduce the number of prints you can pull before the block starts to deteriorate. The harder linoleums allow a lot of detail, but they are more difficult to cut. They also hold up to a longer print run. I like to use battleship linoleum because it is firm enough to allow for good detail but soft enough that it won't strain my hand to carve it. You can soften it slightly by using a heating pad underneath it while carving.



**LINOLEUM:** There are several different types of linoleum you can use for linocuts, each with its own characteristics. Linoleum is typically  $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick and comes either unmounted with a canvas backing or mounted onto a block of wood. You can buy it from art supply companies or your local arts and crafts store. The softer varieties are easier to carve but they won't hold as much detail as the harder blocks.

## MATERIALS

- » BATTLESHIP LINOLEUM
- » PENCIL
- » PERMANENT MARKER
- » DRAWING PAPER
- » CARBON PAPER
- » CUTTING HANDLE AND BLADES – SPEEDBALL MAKES A VARIETY OF HANDLES ESPECIALLY FOR LINO CUTTING
- » PRINTMAKING PAPER
- » PLAIN NEWSPRINT
- » ACETATE OR MYLAR (OPTIONAL)
- » X-ACTO KNIFE
- » METAL RULER
- » BAREN OR SPOON
- » BRAYER
- » RELIEF INK
- » L-SHAPED MAT BOARD
- » GLASS OR ACRYLIC PALETTE
- » PAPER TOWELS FOR CLEANUP
- » BABY OIL
- » BENCH HOOK (OPTIONAL)

## START »

### 1. TRANSFER DESIGN ONTO THE PLATE

The first step is to plan out your design and get it onto the linoleum block in preparation for carving. Keep in mind that your image will print in reverse, so if you use any type in your design you'll need to reverse it on the plate. You can draw directly onto the linoleum or you can use a transfer method. If you decide to draw right onto the linoleum, start by sketching with pencil and then use a permanent marker to go over your lines and fill in the areas that will print.

**Carbon Method:** To transfer a design, sketch it onto a piece of drawing paper, cut it down to the final size and tape it, hinge style, to one side of the linoleum. Slide a sheet of carbon paper underneath your drawing, face down, and then use a ballpoint pen or hard pencil to trace over your drawing.



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Be careful not to press too hard; if you're using a very soft linoleum you could inadvertently leave indents where you don't want them. Once you have the outlines transferred, remove the carbon paper and the drawing and use a permanent marker to fill in the areas that will print.

**Toner Method:** You can also use a toner transfer method if you want to print your design from your computer. This will not work with an inkjet print, only a laser print. Place the laser-printed design facedown onto the linoleum, and using a cotton ball, wet the back of the paper with acetone or Bestine solvent. Lightly burnish the back of the paper for a few seconds and then gently peel it back from the block. Keep in mind that you need to work in a well-ventilated area if you use this method.



## 2. CARVE THE DESIGN

This is my favorite part — carving the block! Using a Speedball handle and the accompanying blades, you can now carve out any part of the design that will not print, thereby showing white, or the color of the paper. There are many different types of blades available depending on the look you want, but I generally use only two blades, the #1 and the #3. The #1 is good for detail work and the #3 is good for clearing out large white areas. Crosshatching or varying the thickness of your lines can create gray areas.

As you're carving, be mindful of the direction of your strokes. Some edges will inevitably be sticking up, which will create interesting line effects in the white areas. These carving lines are part of your design, so you'll get a better look by working them in coherent directions.

**IMPORTANT:** Always cut away from yourself when carving and don't put your opposite hand in front of the blade when you're holding the linoleum in place. A good device to help with safe carving is a bench hook (pictured at right), which gives you leverage by providing an edge to hook onto the table and an edge against which to brace the linoleum.

**Q: What is the best way to hold the carving tool?**

**A: This is usually a matter of personal preference, and after some time spent carving you'll discover what works best for you with the least amount of strain on your hand. I recommend that you start by holding the carving tool as you would a pencil. This will give you more control when cutting, especially for flowing curvy lines. You may want to switch to an overhand grip when clearing out large areas or cutting very deeply.**



You can also make interesting marks and patterns on the linoleum by sanding the surface or marring it with various tools. After you've finished carving the plate, be sure to thoroughly clean off any stray pieces of linoleum. These little bits and pieces can stick to your brayer or your printable areas and leave unwanted white spots when you print.

**Q: How deeply into the linoleum should I carve?**

**A: You don't have to carve very deeply at all. The linoleum will hold very light delicate lines just barely incised into the surface. You can use the deeper cuts for thicker, more expressive lines, or when you are clearing out an area that does not print.**

### 3. PREPARE THE PAPER

Next you'll want to prepare your paper before getting the ink ready. You can print on any type of paper, but for this example we're going to use BFK Rives archival printmaking paper because it has a smooth absorbent surface that holds the ink well. It's also heavy enough to hold up to any additional work you want to do on the print afterwards, such as adding color with pencils or watercolors. Measure the size of your design and add at least 4" to the height and width to give yourself a 2" border on all sides. You can cut the edges with an X-Acto knife and a metal straight-edge, or hand-deckle the edges by tearing the paper to the correct size.



### 4. ROLL OUT THE INK

You can print multicolor linocuts by using separate plates for each color, or by using a graded ink roll. For this project, however, we'll print with one color. You'll need a piece of glass or acrylic on which to roll out your ink.

You can use either water-based or oil-based inks. The advantage to water-based inks is that they clean up easily without the use of solvents, but they do tend to dry faster, which can be bad if you're doing a longer print run. I prefer Daniel Smith oil-based relief ink because it provides better coverage and won't dissolve if I decide to use watercolors on the print afterwards. Baby oil is a safe, nontoxic way to clean up oil-based inks.

Use a putty knife to spread 2 or 3 lines of ink onto the palette at a width slightly wider than your



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brayer. This is what you'll use to charge or ink your brayer. Use your brayer to roll out the ink into an evenly coated rectangle. You don't need to apply pressure when doing this. Just let the weight of the brayer do the work.

Keep rolling it out until you get an orange-peel effect in the surface of the ink. If you have too much ink on your palette, you'll get smears when you're rolling and you'll see globs of ink on the brayer instead of a nice even coating.



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## 5. INK THE PLATE

Once the brayer is fully charged with ink you can roll it onto the linoleum. It will take several passes to get the linoleum plate fully covered. You'll need to charge the brayer several times during this initial inking. You want to find that happy medium of good coverage, but not too much ink. You can try a test print on newsprint or another inexpensive paper if you'd like to test your ink coverage.



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## 6. PULL A PRINT

Hopefully your hands are still ink-free at this point, but if not, be sure to wipe them off before grabbing a sheet of paper. Use an L-shaped piece of mat board to align your paper correctly.



**Q: What type of brayer should I use?**

**A: This is also a matter of personal preference, depending on how you like to print. A really hard brayer will roll the ink right on top of the surface of the plate. A softer brayer will squish down slightly into some of the carved out areas and will deposit ink on more than one level. I use a softer brayer because I like some of the line work in the white areas to get inked.**



Once the paper is in place on top of the linoleum, carefully burnish it up to all the edges of the plate. The paper will be lightly held in place by the ink. You can use a printmaker's baren, a spoon, or even just your hand for burnishing. You just need something that will slide smoothly and evenly across the surface of the paper without catching, tearing, or denting your paper. If you're having problems getting the spoon or baren to slide properly, use a thin sheet of Mylar or acetate on top of the paper.



## 7. CHECK THE PRINT

Once you've finished burnishing, carefully peel back the paper from the plate. At this point you can evaluate your image and decide if it needs more carving. If this is the case, simply clean off the ink, cut the areas that need work, and repeat the printing process to get another proof.

If you are happy with the outcome, you can continue to pull prints by re-inking the plate for each new print. You don't need to clean the plate off in between prints. Lay out the prints to dry on clean newsprint, being careful not to let them overlap. If you're using the oil-based ink, it could take 2 days or more for the print to dry completely. If you don't have room to leave them sitting out, let them dry for an hour or so and then stack them with sheets of plain newsprint in between each print for the remainder of the drying time. You're done!



## FINISH X

Thanks to the inspiration and DNA of crafty parents, Donna Barger can't remember a time when she wasn't in the middle of an art project. Freelance graphic designer and illustrator by day, she and her sister Robin run their quirky art and accessories business Four Idle Hands ([fouridlehands.com](http://fouridlehands.com)) by night. She happily avoids snow living in Los Angeles with her rocket scientist husband and is also an organizer of the Bazaar Bizarre craft fair.



**QUICK CRAFT**

# Modded Circular Needles

**Hate double-pointed knitting needles?** I do — they slip out of my fingers and then out of the stitches. So I make my own short circular needles. Here's how.

**You will need:** Bamboo circular needles with a tube rather than a cable (check eBay; alternately, any cheap bamboo circulars and some  $\frac{1}{4}$ " flexible PVC tubing), box cutter, solvent (rubbing alcohol and/or acetone), super glue, cotton balls, tin snips or the equivalent (I use penny cutter shears), small pencil sharpener, sandpaper (100 and 220 grit), cake of beeswax



## 1. Shorten the tubing.

Carefully slit the tubing where it attaches to one of the points and apply solvent with a cotton ball to loosen the tubing from the point. Then cut the tubing to size. For very short needles, the tubing should be at least twice the point length to avoid harming the tubing during use. I use  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " points and 4" tubing for my 7" needles and still wear them out.

## 2. Shrink your bamboo needles.

Using your shears, cut the 2 bamboo points to the same length. (Save the extra parts! You can use them, too.) Next, pencil-sharpen the bamboo stumps to shape them appropriately — this requires using the sharpener at a shallower angle than usual. Use medium (100 grit) and then very fine (220 grit) sandpaper to smooth the new needle tips. Wipe them down, and then go over them with beeswax to fill in remaining gaps.

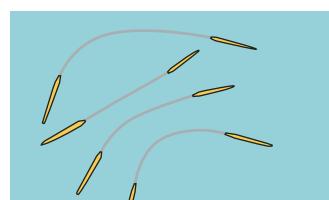
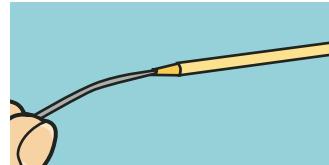


## 3. Reassemble your needles.

Put a dab of super glue on the plug of each detached tip, and then fiddle it into the tubing. You're done!

**Oh, but let's not waste materials. You should have a length of tubing and some bamboo needle left over, including already-shaped tips.**

- a. Cut the already-shaped tips down to size with your shears. (Keep the leftover bamboo; you might want to make more needles.)
- b. Using your box cutter, sharpen the blunt ends of the tips so that you can use them as plugs for the tubing.
- c. Cut the tubing to size and glue in the tips!



PLAY

## FANCIFUL FORTRESS, THE INKJET WAY

Use a printer to turn  
cardboard into stone.

By Steve Lodefink



## MATERIALS

- [A] Inkjet prints
  - [B] Corrugated boxes (2)
  - [C] Utility knife
  - [D] Scissors
  - [E] Clear packing tape
  - [F] 3M 777 spray adhesive
- Computer with image-editing software



If you have kids, chances are at some point you've cut a couple of holes in an upside-down cardboard box and called it a "tunnel" for the train set, or a "house" for a doll family. Although kids seem to love them, these impromptu structures tend to be pretty forgettable. I've found that with some inkjet prints and spray adhesive, you can turn these quickie buildings into toys that, while still ephemeral, will hold your child's attention for months rather than hours.

At our house, Playmobil knights and vikings are all the rage, and while the Playmobil castle and fortress sets are thoughtfully designed and constructed, they are also pretty expensive for what will certainly be a short-lived obsession. By the time our cardboard fortress wears out, we'll be on to the next thing. If not, we'll just whip up another one for pennies on the dollar compared to commercial sets.

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Steve Lodefink makes web pages and knickknacks in Seattle.

### 1. MAKE AND PRINT THE TEXTURES

Once you decide what you're going to build, poke around the web for appropriate "texture" images. A couple of handy sites are Mayang's Free Texture Library ([mayang.com/textures](http://mayang.com/textures)) and Image\*After ([imageafter.com](http://imageafter.com)).

After you find a texture you like, you'll probably need to manipulate the file a bit before printing it out to use on your project. At least you'll need to resize the image to fit your printer paper, but chances are you'll also want to tile the image to fill the page.

Typical file preparation involves the following steps:

- Open a new document in your image-editing software and set document size to 8.5×11 at 150 dpi.
- Open your texture image, choose "Select All," and copy the contents of the image to the clipboard.
- Paste the image into your new file. Repeat as many times as necessary to fill the page with the texture, butting the tiles against one another in a neat grid.
- Print out as many sheets as you need.

There are simple techniques for creating seamless tiled images using Photoshop or other image-editing programs, but simply copying and pasting the image to fill the page usually suffices.

Using 8.5×11 plain paper, our fortress required about 10 sheets of the main body stone, 6 sheets of the upper stone, and 4 sheets of "wood floor" texture for the decks. The bigger your building, the more prints you'll need.

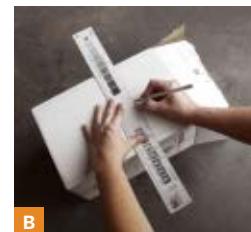
**\* TIP:** Printing lighter-colored textures will be easier on your ink cartridges than dark, saturated ones.

## 2. BUILD THE BASIC STRUCTURE

Our basic fortress is comprised of 2 boxes: a file-archive box as the base, and a smaller box as the tower section (Figure A). We started by cutting one third off one end of the smaller box (Figure B) and taping the flaps closed (Figure C).

Form the tower battlements by cutting evenly spaced notches around the open end of the small piece (Figure D). Invert this section and tape it atop the small box (Figure E).

If your large box lends itself to this method, then repeat this same procedure to construct the main section of the castle. Our large box was different, having a separate lid, so we used scrap corrugated cardboard to form the main castle battlements.



## 3. ADHERE THE INKJET PRINTS

Trim your texture printouts to appropriately shaped panels and start decorating your building. Adhere the prints with a spray-on adhesive. For the paper to stick properly, spray the printout and area of the box where you'll be applying it (Figure F).

First lay the print facedown on a large piece of cardboard to catch the over-spray, and spray a light coat of adhesive all the way to the edges. Then spray the building, using heavy paper or cardboard to protect the rest of the structure. Stick the print to the box and trim any overhang (Figure G). Continue until it is entirely papered (Figure H).



## 4. FINAL ASSEMBLY AND FINISHING TOUCHES

You may decorate parts of your building prior to attaching them together, like areas where sections join or overlap. We finished the main decking and tower siding before taping them together. The rest was then papered, and the door added (Figure I).

There's no end to the amount of detailing and add-ons that you can do with this kind of model — if time and imagination permit, go nuts and add windows, walkways, ladders, and drawbridges.

As a finishing touch, we made inkjet flags on bamboo skewers to fly from the tower. To make the flags, print out a strip of 2 flag images, with one flipped horizontally. Apply adhesive to the back of the flag pair and fold it around a bamboo skewer.

Now sit back, and watch as tiny plastic Barbarians lay siege to a Roman stronghold. ☠





Mark Frauenfelder  
Old School

» Mark Frauenfelder is editor-in-chief of MAKE magazine.  
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# Simply Impossible

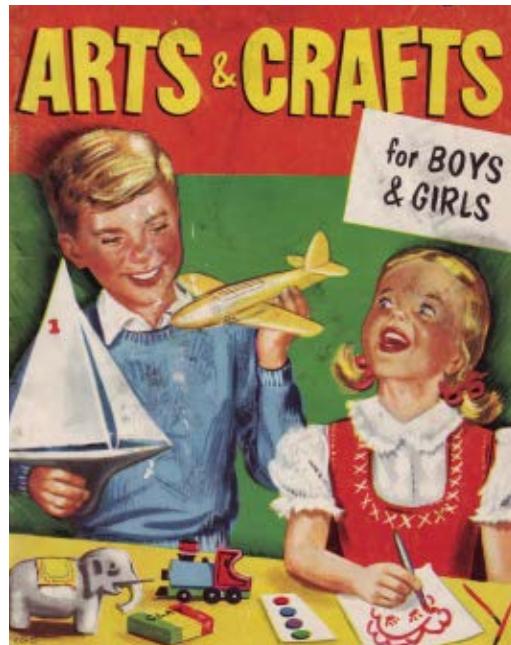
**Y**ears ago, I read a funny item in an old issue of *Mad* magazine, probably from the late 1950s or early 1960s. It was a parody of deceptive product packages. The funniest example was about a wooden model of a sailing ship. The illustration on the box showed a handsome vessel on the high seas, with details such as cannon portholes, sails snapping in the wind, and various deck adornments. But the only things inside the box were a block of wood and an instruction sheet that read: "Use a sharp knife to carve away anything that doesn't look like a ship."

I thought this was an excellent joke (I still do), but I never thought anyone would attempt to pull off a stunt like that outside the pages of a funny book. That was before I got my hands on a copy of *Arts & Crafts for Boys & Girls*, by Helen Jill Fletcher (1954, Paxton-Slade Publishing Co., 29 cents).

This 64-page activity book is printed on the kind of cheap pulp found in coloring books. The cover shows a boy holding a swell-looking toy sailboat and airplane. The airplane is so impressive that the girl (in an outfit that looks like it belongs in the von Trapp family) has turned her attention away from her painting mid-stroke to admire her brother's craft-making skills. The look on her face is one of near-psychotic glee.

The book doesn't have any projects involving sailboats, airplanes, or painting. However, it does have instructions for making egg trees, egg faces, egg baskets, egg gardens, and egg dolls. It also has a guide to making a tin-and-rubber turtle, a tin-can garden, tin-can bookends, and a tin-can birdhouse. For children interested in smoking, Fletcher shows them how to make an ashtray out of hollow plastic tubing, sheet plastic, and cement.

But the project that reminded me of the *Mad* magazine piece is the chalk sculpture section. The instructions, in their entirety, are provided at right.



## HOW TO DO CHALK SCULPTURE

Scrape away unwanted portions of blackboard chalk with a penknife, a small pointed blade, or a pin. Work slowly, exerting very little pressure so that the chalk will not crumble.



That's it.

The project then goes on to show you "four views of a chalk Madonna figurine" followed by what appear to be an Egyptian pharaoh, a Balinese princess, a horse, and a sleepy giraffe. Fletcher thoughtfully drew a dotted line around each figurine indicating the "unwanted portions" to be scraped away.

Just think how much sooner Michelangelo would have completed his sculpture of David had he been so fortunate as to have such sage tutelage! ☑

Thanks to Mister Jalopy for sharing his copy of *Arts & Crafts for Boys & Girls*, which he procured at a yard sale.



# BAZAAAR

CRAFTY GOODS WE ADORE. By Natalie Zee Drieu

## Yarntainer

\$7-\$12

[yarntainer.com](http://yarntainer.com)

● Ever have a runaway yarn ball experience? The Yarntainer, which comes in five sizes, helps solve all that while keeping your yarn tangle-free and clean. It's especially handy when you're knitting with two or more balls of yarn at once because of its nifty closed top that feeds through the individual strands of yarn. It's also a great way to keep your pets from messin' around with your yarn!

*yarntastic!*





## Susan Beal's A-Line Skirt Kit

\$28

[susanstars.com/skirtkits](http://susanstars.com/skirtkits)



- Everything you need to make a skirt as soon as you open the package. This kit is perfect for the beginner sewer who wants the satisfaction of being able to quickly finish a project. The skirts come in a variety of prints and colors from florals to basic black. You can make the skirt according to directions or go on your own path of self-expression by adding accents and embellishments. Beal provides an additional photo tutorial online on how you can customize your skirt, as well as a great Flickr group featuring finished skirts with different embellishments that are sure to stir up your creative juices.



## Glitter Wares Ephemera Packs

\$5

[shop.glitterworkshop.com/index.php](http://shop.glitterworkshop.com/index.php)

- Opening up an ephemera pack is like opening up a treasure chest of paper. Simple pure heaven! I love all the bits and scraps of vintage photos, cards, paper, and buttons that are special to each pack — the perfect unique accents to decorate cards, or add to photo albums or scrapbooks. Each pack is different, so get a few and enjoy the randomness and inspiration.



## The Small Object Little Woodland Pals Stamps

\$18

[thesmallobject.com/products/stampsWoodland.html](http://thesmallobject.com/products/stampsWoodland.html)



The cutest stamps ever to see the light of day! This three-piece stamp set featuring an acorn, squirrel, and hedgehog can offer that perfect embellishment to your notes, gifts, and more.

Like  
a box of  
chocolates ...

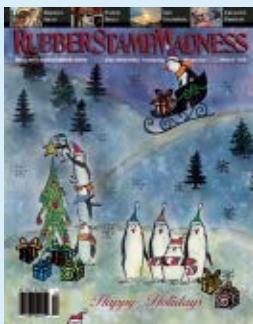


## ◀ Stitch & Bitch Magnetic Seam Guide

\$10

[sewfastseweeasy.com/storewelcome.php](http://sewfastseweeasy.com/storewelcome.php)

I've always wanted to sew like a pro but I could never seem to sew in a straight line. Now it's easy with this magnetic seam guide by Stitch & Bitch. Just place the guide at the correct line measurement on your sewing machine and your fabric will glide easily along, creating perfectly straight lines every time.



## ◀ RubberStampMadness

\$6/issue

[rsmadness.com](http://rsmadness.com)

Calling RubberStampMadness "old school" does it a disservice, implying it hasn't kept up with the times. Rubber stamping/scrapbooking has just gone mainstream commercial. RSM covers this progression, and the art's migration from paper to the rest of the 3D world. But RSM stays true to its ziney roots, with funky looks, coverage of fringier artists, and a sense of humor missing from newer mags.



## ◀ Staedtler Mastercarve Artist Carving Block

\$2-\$22.50, various sizes

[dickblick.com/zz404/00/](http://dickblick.com/zz404/00/)

There's no better carving block on the block because this one slices just like a stick of "butta." It's my favorite block to use — its soft vinyl texture allows for easy transfer of detailed stamp carvings with no crumbling, so you can concentrate on making great stamps, not the hassle of cleaning up.



## ◀ ColdHeat Freestyle Cordless Glue Gun

\$30

[coldheat.com/products.cfm?id=2](http://coldheat.com/products.cfm?id=2)

I hadn't used a glue gun in about ten years. They were messy and hot; I think I burned myself the last time I used one, so I've been forever scarred. But the cordless ColdHeat glue gun is fantastic. The handle fits nicely in your hand and there's no overheating with this thing, so your fingers and hands will be burn-free. There's also a neat little spot light to help light your path. Not only is it easy to use, it really glues just about anything. It works perfectly with fabric (non-washable end products), and now I'm seriously thinking up other projects that will require me to glue more.

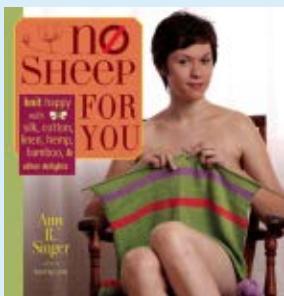


## ◀ Kitty, Bunny and Bear

By Hillary Lang \$10

[weewonderfuls.typepad.com/wee\\_wonderfuls/store/](http://weewonderfuls.typepad.com/wee_wonderfuls/store/)

Hillary Lang of Wee Wonderfuls brings her cute dolls to life in this *Kitty, Bunny and Bear* pattern booklet. Lang's well-known for her signature plush dolls, and with this booklet you'll be able to make one of your own in no time with the easy-to-follow instructions. When you're done, head over to the Wee Wonderfuls site to download the free knit cardigan pattern to keep your new friend warm and snuggly!



## ◀ No Sheep For You

By Amy R. Singer, ISBN: 1596680121 \$23

[interweave.com/knit/books/no\\_sheep/default.asp](http://interweave.com/knit/books/no_sheep/default.asp)

Itchy, scratchy yarn got you down? Not a problem, says [knitty.com](http://knitty.com) founder and editor Amy R. Singer. Singer herself is allergic to wool, and her book gives comprehensive info on knitting with alternatives like cotton, silk, linen, rayon, hemp, bamboo, and other natural or synthetic materials. The book is also filled with beautiful knitting patterns; you'll find yourself drooling over the variety of projects you can knit.

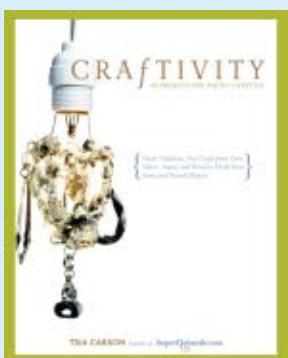


## ◀ Sublime Stitching

By Jenny Hart, ISBN: 0811850110 \$20

[chroniclebooks.com](http://chroniclebooks.com)

I loved Jenny Hart's *Stitch-It Kit*, but was surprised at my stinginess when it came to her hip patterns. When one of my friends wanted to snag a few, I reluctantly gave her two — the kit only had 35 transfers, after all. So when I got *Sublime Stitching*, Hart's new pattern-packed book of designs (100s of them, including stylized cats, martini glasses, conga drums, big-headed babies, insects ...), I swelled with newfound generosity. And for embroidery newbies, there's also a nice section on basic how-tos.



## ◀ Craftivity

By Tsia Carson, ISBN: 0060841303 \$20

[supernaturale.com/articles.html?id=194](http://supernaturale.com/articles.html?id=194)

I've been eagerly awaiting Tsia Carson's ([supernaturale.com](http://supernaturale.com)) *Craftivity* since last spring, when Jenny Hart told me she was embroidering a screen door as a how-to project for the book. And to my surprise, the book is even more fun than I'd anticipated. I love the variety of projects, ranging from dyeing wool with unsweetened Kool-Aid (black cherry and orange work terrifically, but blue is pretty much a dud), to making an outdoor fireplace with a wheelbarrow, to making a broken-glass chandelier. No matter what your preferred materials — fabrics, wood, glass, paper, plastic — you'll find projects that will have you running to your craft room.



Shannon Okey  
Recycle It

» Shannon Okey is the author of *Spin to Knit* (Interweave Press) and the bestselling *Knitgrrl* series. Her next book, *Felt Frenzy* (co-authored with Heather Brack), will be released in 2007. You can find her at [admin@knitgrrl.com](mailto:admin@knitgrrl.com), and on her various book tours.

# Big Wheel Keep on Turning

**I**(heart) yarn, but learned to spin my own so I could make it exactly the way I like it. Spinning isn't difficult, and you can get started with less than \$10 in materials — if you're crafty. (You're reading this, aren't you? Then you're qualified.) Make a spindle from an old CD, brush your dog, and you'll be ready to go.

Why bother making your own yarn? It allows for extra artistry before you work even a single stitch. You can hand-dye your fiber; include beads, sequins, or shredded fabric; or ply with metallic thread — you name it. There is truly no limit to what you can include. After all, if you're going to spin your own yarn, why should it look like something you can buy at the store?

Other fiberistas have figured this out, too. The Spinning and Weaving Association ([spinweave.org](http://spinweave.org)) estimates there are at least 100,000 handspinners in the United States. If you've never spun before, here's a crash course.

Handspinning is the simple act of twisting a piece of fiber that has been drafted (stretched out into a long strip of overlapping strands). Practice with a cotton ball before you move on to the weird fibers below: gently pull the ball into a long strand with your fingers and roll it in one direction on your leg until the middle starts to kink. Then allow the strip to twist back onto itself, and you'll have a very short piece of plied yarn!

Using a CD spindle (see sidebar on how to make one, page 169), tie a piece of yarn onto the spindle shaft, below the CD. This is called the leader. (I prefer wool for my leaders because it helps grab the new fiber.) Then bring the leader over to the top side of the spindle, loop it through the cup hook, and wrap the new fiber you want to spin around the leader. One flick of the wrist, and off you go!

For detailed photos of the intricacies of spinning, and problems you might run into along the

way, check out my book *Spin to Knit* (Interweave Press, 2006).

With that shameless plug out of the way, let's take a look at some unusual spinning fibers you can try. Sheep are so last year.

## FIDO FIBER

You'd be surprised how nicely Pekinese spins and knits (see Figure B). If you don't have a dog, no worries: short-haired cat fur is spinnable if it's mixed with wool, and long-haired Persian-type fur will spin by itself. Mixing fibers is often a matter of practicality. Unless you have ten cats that shed year-round, you're not going to gather enough fur to spin much.

Then you must consider the staple length, or the average length of a single strand in a given type of fiber. It will play a role in working with many of the fibers discussed here. A Great Pyrenees with 4-inch-long hair will be much easier to spin than a dachshund — even a long-haired one like mine — because the shaft of each individual body hair is like a slippery plastic tube, and shorter ones are easier to pull apart while spinning. However, many dog breeds have two layers of fur: coarse outer guard hairs and a fluffy undercoat, just like cashmere goats. If you comb your dog carefully, you can often extract just the fluffy bits, which are much easier to spin. Combs are best for extracting just the fluff because brushes tend to mix in guard hairs.

There's something you should know before embarking on a sweater made of Rover: the empty core in a strand of dog hair traps air and body heat very efficiently. Garments made of dog yarn are great for arctic expeditions, but not so great for a house with central heating — unless you're a true freezebaby. After all, how do you think dogs stay warm outside in the snow?

## HUMAN HAIR

Why on Earth would you want to spin human hair? In my case, to see if I could. So, I hacked off a few inches before my last dye job (wool isn't the only thing I like to dye) and tried to spin it alone. Here's what happened: see Figure A. As an experiment, it wasn't bad, but I prefer a hair + wool mix. One hundred percent hair may be long enough to spin, but it's a little abrasive to wear.

## HAIRDRESSER'S RAYON

Speaking of hair, if you've ever had a perm or color job, you've seen hairdresser's rayon (the white cottony stuff hairdressers stick around your hairline to prevent goop from dripping down your face). You can buy it in large boxes at beauty supply stores. (While you're there, be sure to pick up some hair

*Garments made of  
dog yarn are great  
for arctic expeditions.*

color bottles — they're great for dyeing yarn!) Made of cotton and viscose in varying proportions, it's lightweight and perfect for summer garments. The fiber arrives coiled in its box, practically ready to spin. All you need to do is fluff it up with your hands, or "pre-draft." Pre-drafting is pulling the fiber apart and loosening it into an airy cloud of fluff, which is much easier to feed onto your spindle or wheel than a solid length of material. If you find that your finished yarn is lumpy, take time to pre-draft it before spinning. This applies to wool or any other fiber with a decent staple length — dog hair doesn't generally require it, nor do super-short fibers like milkweed.

## WOVEN FABRIC

Woven fabric? Yup, you can spin that, too. The most common example is sari silk yarn, made from junked saris. The saris are torn to bits in the large-scale equivalent of a paper shredder. You can buy the shredded bits online, or you can make your own from any fabric. Better craft and quilting stores sell "strippers" that shred fabric into half-inch pieces. They're used in rug hooking and other crafts.

Although you can knit or crochet the strips directly, spinning them into a longer length of yarn will give you fewer ends to weave in and less chance of the threads unraveling over time (see Figure C). Of course, you can also mix the fabric strips into wool, or whatever else you're spinning, for added color and texture. Little sprigs of colored fabric look very cool popping out of plain wool yarn.

## SALAD SPINNER

Cotton isn't the only fluffy, puffy plant product you can spin. Common milkweed, spotted along roadsides everywhere in the fall, has been used for years as a stuffing material. During World War II, the hollow fibers were used to stuff life jackets. These days, you might find them in down comforters, since milkweed fluff neutralizes some of the allergens while increasing the down's overall insulative value. Cattails and dandelions have fluff, too, but milkweed pods are easier to gather and store if you're not ready to start spinning right away. To harvest the fluff, crack open the pods when they're still slightly green (once they're fully dry, it can be difficult to separate the seeds from the fluff) and remove the seeds. Keep your finger on the nicely aligned fluff until all the seeds are gone and you can open the pod to remove it. Store in a paper bag or container where the fluff can dry out.



Figure A: Human hair. Figure B: Pekinese hair. Figure C: Knitted fabric.

» Shannon Okey: Recycle It



If you have trouble spinning the fluff, mix in some wool, anywhere from one-third to one-half. You'll still get a soft, silky, hand-washable yarn, but the longer staple length will be easier to work with. To mix fibers, you'll need two paddle hairbrushes (this is the low-tech way — get the kind with widely spaced plastic bristles if you can) or carding paddles (the "right" way). In either case, your goal is to mix the two fibers together and align them in one direction, which makes it easier to draft them onto your spindle or wheel. Place a thin layer of fiber A on top of one brush or paddle, and top it with a layer of fiber B. Brushing in the same direction each time, continue until the two fibers are mixed. Then pull the blend off the brush or paddle, keeping the fibers aligned, and spin as is. If you've got Serious Spinner friends, beg them to blend the fibers on a drum carder, since it's much

## Why on Earth would you want to spin human hair? In my case, to see if I could.

faster. But for experimenting, this will work fine.

Milkweed is not the only strange plant fiber that's fun to spin; you can also buy ready-made soy fiber or lyocell (aka Tencel). These types of fiber are my personal favorites. Soy fiber is created from the leftover materials of tofu manufacturing — beautiful silky strands of spinnable fiber and dinner, all from one plant. Compared to "real" silk from silkworms, soy fiber is extremely soft. If you put your hands in a bag of each, you can tell the silkworm version by its "crunchy" feel — just rub a little between your fingers.

Lyocell is made from wood pulp using an eco-friendly process called solvent spinning. Lyocell is great mixed with wool to add texture, and it takes dye differently, which can be used to good effect.

See? Your house and yard are full of things to spin, so get cracking. Rumpelstiltskin, and make your own gold.

Seen above left, a milkweed pod filled with spinnable fiber. Below, meet Joy, my portable spinning wheel. She folds into a bag for easy carrying.



### HOW TO MAKE A CD SPINDLE

The CD spindles I referenced are cheap and easy to make if you want to spin right away. Cut a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " dowel down to approximately 12" and screw a brass cup hook into the very top. Insert a rubber grommet (available from [bonkersfiber.com](http://bonkersfiber.com)) into the middle of the CD and push the dowel through the center, leaving a few inches between the cup-hook end and the CD's surface. I've even used two clear discs (the kind that come at the top of bulk CD-Rs) with fabric or paper sandwiched in between for a little color, and substituted elastic adhesive (used to put posters on the walls without marking them) for the grommet. Or you can make a spindle with a 2"-3" wooden car wheel (available at craft and toy shops) instead of a CD. Get creative — a beautiful spindle will make you want to spin more.

**Where to buy:** Unless you're gathering dog fur and milkweed or shredding your own fabric, you may need to buy some of the fibers listed here. Email me at [admin@knitgirl.com](mailto:admin@knitgirl.com) if you have questions.

- » South West Trading Company ([soysilk.com](http://soysilk.com)): Soysilk brand soy and other spinnable fibers.
- » Mango Moon ([mangomoonyarns.com](http://mangomoonyarns.com)): Sari silk yarn.
- » Shangri-la Crafts: ([rugsandcrafts.com](http://rugsandcrafts.com)): Banana fiber yarn and recycled sari silk fiber.
- » Halcyon Yarn ([halcyonyarn.com](http://halcyonyarn.com)): Soy, hemp, bamboo, and wools if you need a mixer.
- » Hemp for Knitting ([hempforknitting.com](http://hempforknitting.com)): Beautifully colored hemp yarns and fibers.

### More Resources

- » Interweave Press spinning page ([interweave.com/spin/getting\\_started.asp](http://interweave.com/spin/getting_started.asp)): More details on building a CD spindle or a cigar-box charkha — the type of wheel Gandhi used. ☒



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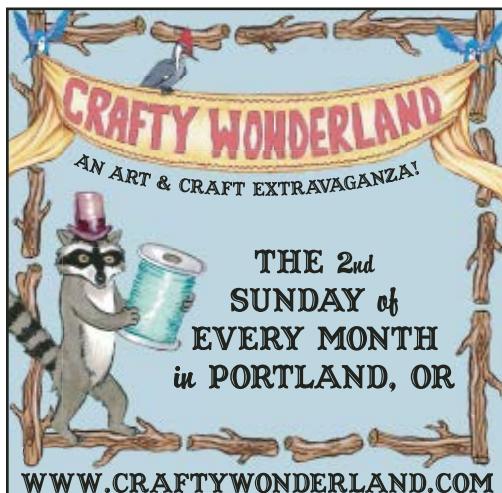
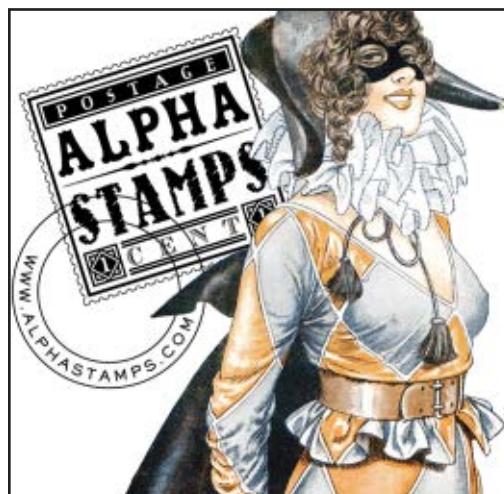
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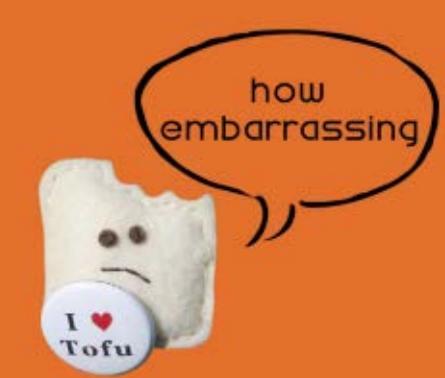
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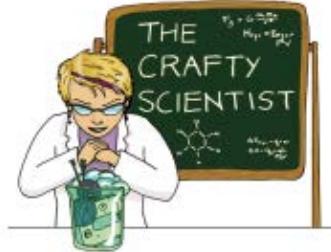
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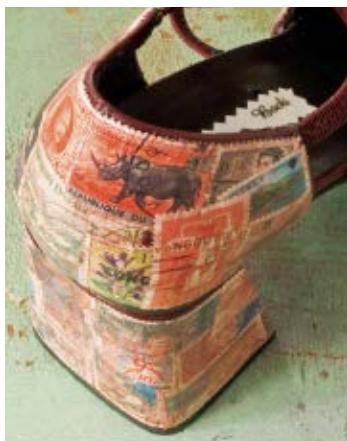
# Stamp Your Feet

► A die-hard devotee of all things vintage and antique, **Yasmin Bochi** began collecting stamps at age 10, when she had the rare fortune of having her grandmother's friends gift her their private collections. That childhood interest, like so many others, ended up forgotten in the closet for years.

"I can't really throw things away. I get attached to them, and they can sometimes have a second life," explains the Belgian resident. When the collection

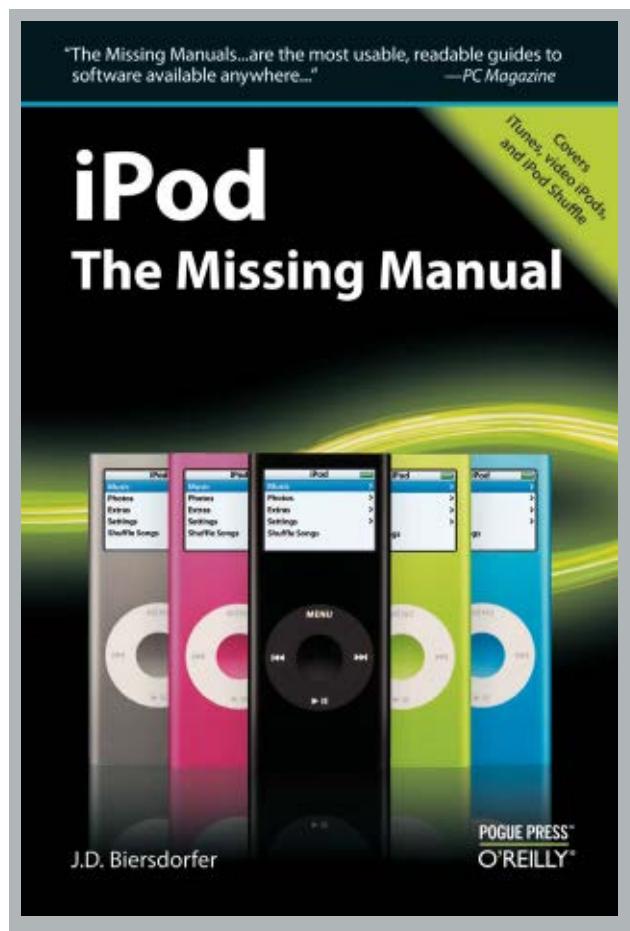
was rediscovered and dusted off, Bochi began experimenting with how the stamps could be reused, and this pair of shiny wine-colored heels was reborn. Aptly named *Around the World in 80 Stamps*, the shoes just might contain a few rare stamps that were accidentally used.

Bochi is no newcomer to recycling and reusing, with many of her upcycled creations online at [yasminbochi.com](http://yasminbochi.com).



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