

THE TEA-BAG

Diaries

BY KIM COLLISTER

As an artist, many of the things that most speak to me are not filled with words. Sometimes I am just lost for words and something visual will instantly complete my thoughts and feelings. I have been a journal junkie for years, and I never get tired of learning new techniques or exploring new journal possibilities.

Journaling is a great way to express yourself artistically, and making a journal can consist of anything from junk mail to tea bags. When I saw the *Somerset Studio* call for tea-related art, I knew this was something that would be relatively easy for me to do. One of my favorite things about using the tea bags is that they're very easy and forgiving to sew through, and they have a seamed edge that lends itself to lots of possibilities.

When I start a project, especially one that involves paper, I always check my stash of the free artist papers that *Somerset Studio* shares in each one of their issues. I was thrilled to find one that worked perfectly with this journal. Truth be told, I absolutely love to work in journals and admire those who make them, but I don't make perfect neat journals. The easier and messier they are to construct, the more I love them. ▶



I never realized what perfect journal pages tea bags make!

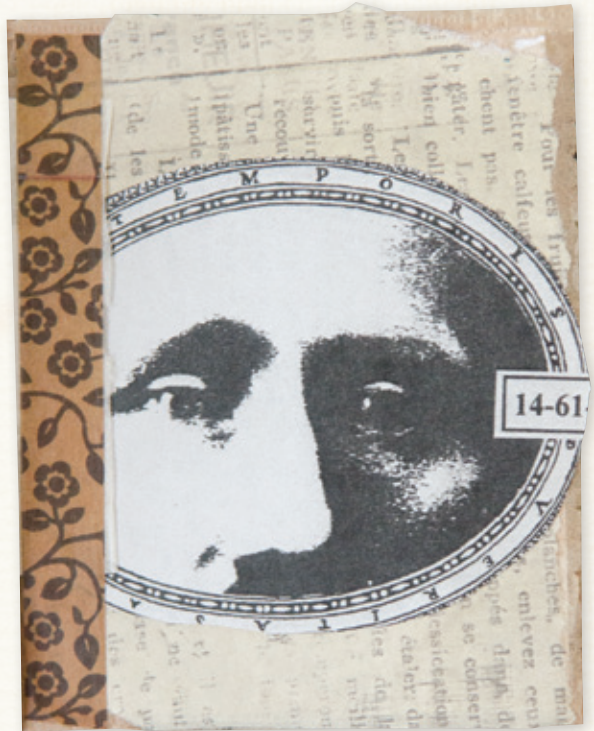




Supplies

- * Book text
- * Cardstock
- * Clip art: assorted; (Teesha Moore)
- * Decorative tape: black/Acrylic paint
- * Gel pen: white (Uni-ball - Signo)
- * Glue stick
- * Inkpad
- * Patterned paper: (Stampington - Artist Papers)
- * Rubber stamps: (Zettiology)
- * Sewing machine & thread
- * Scissors
- * Tea bags: large
- * Tissue paper





Technique

The thickness of your book will be decided by the number of tea bags you decide to use. Open the large tea bags. Use your sewing machine to stitch down the center of the layers of the tea bags, leaving the loose threads intact. Do this more than once. Cut an Artist Paper so that it overlaps the tea bags just a bit for the front and do the same for the back. This will be your cover. Use a glue stick to adhere the Artist Paper to the front side of the first journal page and do the same for the backside. Stamp image onto cardstock, trim, and then glue to the cover, and then do the same to the back cover. ►



Paint the tea tag black or use black decorative tape to cover it. Use a white gel pen to write on the tea tag. Open the journal and add the tea-tag string inside the front cover and place a strip of decorative tape down from the top to the bottom of the inside cover taping down the end of the string. Drape the tea tag over the front cover. Use decorative tape on the inside of the back cover as well to add some interest and dimension to pages.

For the journal pages, glue a variety of images that speak to you visually. Add pieces of old book pages, tissue paper, copies of vintage photos. Do not cut them perfectly; tear some of the photos instead of cutting them, and allow some of the edges of the images to stick out over the border of the pages.

Tip

- * Adding tissue paper over an image will give it a halo effect with the image softly showing through.

Kim Collister is an educator and mixed-media artist living her dream in the beauty of Central Arkansas. She sells her art at kimcollisterstudio.etsy.com and welcomes you to her blog at kimcollisterstudio.com. You can also connect with her on Facebook and other forms of social media.