



TRANSFERRING *Memories*

BY CYNTHIA KOVACK

After hearing of the Transfer Challenge, I sorted through photographs of my mother and her family from the early 1900s to the 1960s. I decided to combine transfers of these family photos into a keepsake. I found a vintage book that was perfect for a family journal.

Technique

To create one for yourself, first remove pages in the book to enable space for collage pieces. Then, brush a matte gel medium on the front and back covers, and on each book page that will be altered. A piece of waxed paper should be placed in between the pages to prevent sticking when making the transfer. To make the transfer, run an ink jet copy of the photos you will be using. If you want only one picture use clear packing tape over the face of the photo copy. If you want to work with a full sheet of copied photos use a sheet of clear, non-glossy, adhesive paper. Using a brayer or bone folder, rub photo copy face to sticky side of adhesive. You will know the picture is sufficiently attached to the adhesive paper when the picture is easily viewed. ►



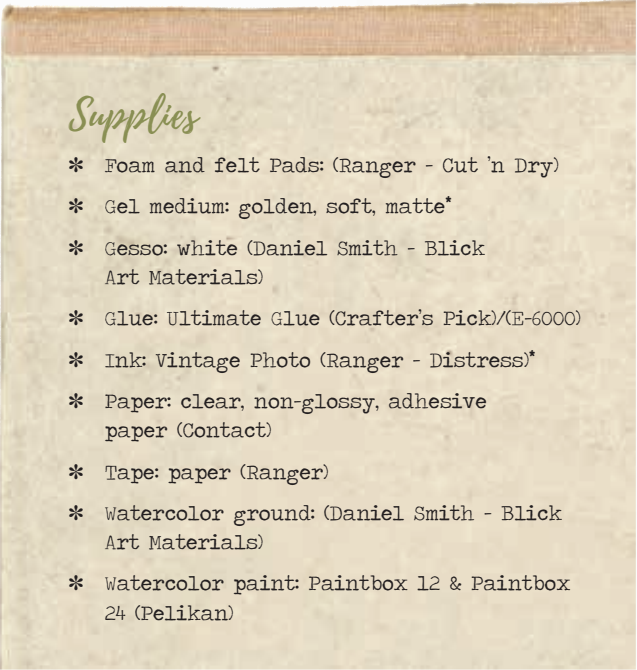
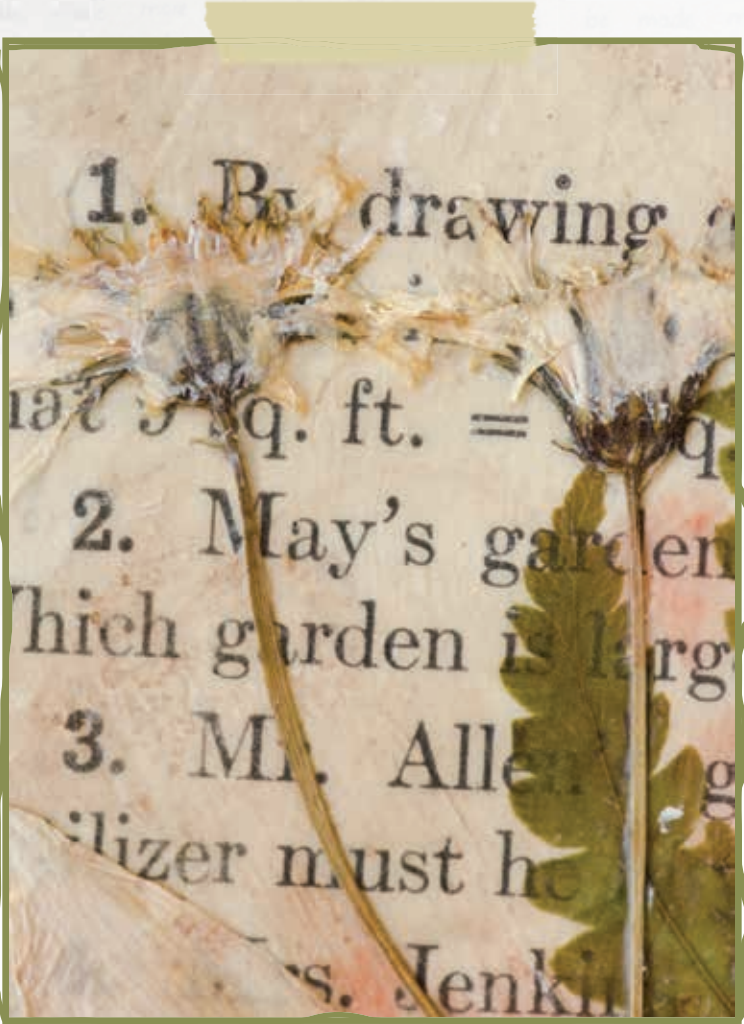
Cut your pictures to size, and soak in a warm water bath for 3–5 minutes. Lay the photo/photos face down onto a cotton towel, on a hard surface, and lightly rub the back of the picture with your finger to remove the paper background. If needed, add a little water to enable the paper to roll off more easily. It should be apparent when the paper is removed from the back when looking at the photo transfer front. (If white areas are visible, repeat the above process.) The ink from the print copy will remain on the adhesive and this will serve as your usable transfer. Next, cut a small piece of white paper and secure it behind the photo on the front cover to stop transparency.

Using the gel medium, attach antique music pages to the cover of the book, and tear one page diagonally for the back. Attach rusted ticking fabric and screen, tea stained doilies, antique door lock, buttons, string, and old book binding with adhesive. To distress the fabric, first dampen it, wrap it around rusted metal pieces, and place it outside in a bucket throughout the cold months. (I find rusted metal at scrap yards, antique shops, etc.).

To ink the edges of the book and the completed pages, use a piece of foam, or old brush to lightly dab a stamp pad, and lightly apply ink. On the inside pages, apply watercolor ground randomly, 2–3 places vertically, and on each background page — leaving areas of the printed page untouched. Apply watercolor to the watercolor ground areas, and water it down for transparency.



Secure the transferred photo of your choice to a page with decorative tape. (I used paper tape which is easily painted, or tinted with ink.) Paint a swipe of white gesso, or acrylic paint under each photo. When dry, use a marker to identify the photo by writing on the dried gesso or paint with name/place, date, or location. Then add watercolors, dried flowers, leaves, and quotes to the page with the gel medium to accent the background. A stencil was used to add interest on the edges of the page. I also used wax paper sheets between each dried page, and flattened the small book under a few heavy books for several days. ►





Tips

- * While both E-6000 and Ultimate Glue work well, the latter dries clear.
- * Using a matte gel medium strengthens the aged paper and prevents excess wrinkling.
- * Use a plastic palette to achieve a transparent mix when applying watercolor ground.
- * You can also use an acrylic paint, but make sure it has sufficient water to make transparent. You can check the color by loading your brush with the mixture, and paint onto a dry paper. If it's too dark, add more water.
- * Use two complementary colors; blue/orange, red/green, green/purple, etc. for this project.

Cynthia Kovack is a mixed-media artist residing in Cave Creek, Arizona. She teaches at art organizations, educational facilities, and national art seminars. She can be reached at ckovack@outlook.com for comments or questions. Please view her website at Cindykovack.com for additional artwork and her teaching schedule.



Beyond PAPER & PENCIL

BY JANE CHIPP

The art lessons I had at school were some of the most uninspiring hours of my life. We were given a pencil, paper, and a picture of a dog to copy. Only those pupils who showed a natural talent for realistic drawings received any feedback from the teacher. Even though I was constantly making dollhouses, sewing, decorating pebbles and shells, making jewelry from seed heads, etc., I didn't think I was artistic because I couldn't draw lifelike dogs! It took years for me to recognize that art has many forms, and they are all valid. I think I've been on a mission ever since to prove that anything goes.

Like many mixed-media artists, I collect things incessantly ... twigs, pebbles, seed heads, bits of metal that I find while I'm out and about, as well as my huge obsession with old photographs. These findings often become the substrates for my artwork.

I really enjoy wit in art. To me, wit isn't necessarily about humor, it's more about presenting images in a way that gives the viewer a happy glow when they see a piece of my art and "get it." For example, printing the words of a nature poem onto dried Lunaria seed heads creates a satisfying combination of subject matter and substrate, as does combining beach photographs with sea pottery or pebbles found on a beach. ►





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With my friend Jack Ravi, I run an art challenge each April on Instagram and try to use wit in my pieces. For example:

- I needed to portray a woman who was forgetful. In the UK we have a saying that someone "has a memory like a sieve," meaning that their thoughts fall through the holes. I combined a tiny sieve (tea strainer) and a vintage photo, and transferred the woman's head onto the sieve using a tissue print.
- To portray a family man who collected pencils, I transferred images of family members onto pencils.
- To illustrate a nature-loving woman who collected feathers, I transferred a photo of a woman onto a feather.

It took me a long time to work out how to effectively combine images with unusual surfaces. I needed a technique that allowed me to apply images to surfaces that have both unusual textures and that aren't flat. Working out how to print on tissue paper was a game-changer for me! Because tissue paper is thin, it easily molds around irregular shapes and allows the substrate to show through, helping to combine the two seamlessly. My technique for adding images to pebbles, seed heads, feathers, pencils, etc. isn't complex but does require some dexterity when working with fragile substrates. ►



SUPPLIES

- * Gel medium
- * Glue brush
- * Photographs
- * Printer
- * Printer paper
- * Scissors: small
- * Spray glue: repositionable
- * Substrates: seed heads/pottery pieces/pebbles/pencils/feathers
- * Tissue paper

TECHNIQUE

Lightly spray a piece of printer paper with the repositionable spray glue. Lay a piece of tissue paper onto the printer paper, and smooth it to avoid getting any wrinkles. The printer paper acts as a carrier so you can feed the tissue paper through the printer. Feed the carrier sheet into the printer and print your chosen image onto the tissue paper. Cut out the image to a size that is slightly smaller than the surface that you will collage it onto, and round any corners (sharp corners look too obvious). Apply a thin layer of gel medium to the substrate, and while it is still wet, apply the tissue print, gently smoothing out any creases.

If you're using shards found on the beach, soak them in clean water for a day to make sure all the sea salt has come out of them; otherwise, salt crystals might appear on the surface. Seed heads are extremely fragile. Apply the decoupage medium gently to the seed head (not to the tissue, as the tissue will curl up), and lay the printed tissue onto the glued surface. Press it very gently. When dry, trim off any excess tissue with small sharp scissors.



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Jane Chipp is a textile, collage, and assemblage artist who uses found and vintage materials. She is the author of "Artful Memories: How to Create Unique Art with Old Photographs." She is based in Plymouth, United Kingdom, and offers online workshops. To get in touch or find out more, you can find her on Instagram (@janechipp) and at janechippart.com. Jane sells vintage materials and her artwork at willowbluevintage.etsy.com.



A Custom Tote

IN A FEW SIMPLE STEPS

BY KIM COLLISTER

There is nothing I love more than a new road and a new path. It doesn't necessarily have to be an untraveled one, just one that I personally haven't traveled before. You never know what new things will propel you into another direction or spark your curiosity to venture farther. I love the quote by T.S. Eliot, "Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go."

When it comes to anything beautiful in the form of paper, tissue, or napkins, I'm always going to find them hard to pass up. I come from a large family of creatives and they know and love me well, so I hold my head high when I ask the question, "You're not going to throw that away, are you?" This is especially true when it comes to paper scraps of anything that inspires me.

When I saw that *Somerset Studio* had a call for art using napkins, I could not resist pulling out my stash and seeing what I could come up with. Initially, I began saving napkins merely as a tool for inspiration, and then over the years, I used them in various forms of art, but I had yet to experiment using fabric with them until the call sparked my interest.

I must say that I thoroughly enjoyed creating these totes, and I was pleasantly surprised to find the results were very impressive and the process much easier than I expected. I purchased some inexpensive bags at Hobby Lobby to experiment with. Now I will probably think twice before buying a tote when I can custom-make one in a few simple steps. ►

SUPPLIES

- * Acrylic paint
- * Cardboard
- * Decoupage medium: (Plaid - Mod Podge)
- * Gesso: white
- * Heat tool
- * Inkpad: Tuxedo (Tsukineko - StazOn)
- * Napkins
- * Paintbrushes
- * Pencil
- * Plastic wrap
- * Rubber stamps: alphabet
- * Tote bag/Drawstring bag: plain

TECHNIQUE

Slide a piece of cardboard inside the tote and place it on a flat surface. Cut a single image or a square from a napkin and separate the layers, using only the top one that has the image. Center the napkin on the tote and lightly mark around it with a pencil. Apply white gesso to the area where the napkin will be and extend it about 1 inch on all sides beyond the marks you just made. Once the gesso is dry, apply a thin layer of decoupage medium. Carefully lay the napkin in the center. Tear off a square of plastic wrap and place it on top of the image, gently smoothing it with your fingers starting at the center and working outward. Do not press too hard or the napkin may tear.

Gently lift the plastic wrap off the image. Use a heat tool to speed up the drying, moving it back and forth for just a few minutes; this will make the decoupage medium less tacky so you can gently pat areas where needed with your fingers to flatten down any bubbles or smooth creases. Next, apply a light layer of decoupage medium to the napkin surface, and let dry. After the napkin is no longer tacky and feels dry to the touch, select a color and paint a border around the napkin. Use a smaller paintbrush to add additional details to the image and/or the border. Use alphabet rubber stamps to add words on the border. Once your image is finished, apply another thin layer of decoupage medium over the napkin and let it dry completely.



TIP

- * When using the plastic wrap to smooth your image after applying a thin layer of decoupage medium, I've found it helps to apply a thin layer of lotion on your hands. This helps with smoothing the plastic wrap and lessens the possibility of tearing the napkin underneath. I regularly use Invisible Care on my hands when working with paint or blues, and you can find it on Amazon.

Kim Collister is a mixed-media artist and educator. She is a design team member for Retro Cafe Art Gallery and is a regular contributor to Stampington & Company publications. She welcomes email at shoppinggirl@gmail.com. You can also find her online at kimcollisterstudio.com, kimcollisterstudioetsy.com, and on Facebook and Instagram.

