

diy home-décor projects for mixed-media artists

cheap decorating ideas

presented by cloth paper scissors®



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KELLI NINA PERKINS



Blinn. Learn how she gathers inspiration from unlikely places and makes use of the mantra “reuse, reduce, recycle.” Linda provides tutorials on how to make framed collage wall art, drapery panels, and decorative pillows.

Speaking of DIY home-décor pillows, you’ll love the “Market Fresh Veggies from Paper and Cloth” by Kelli Nina Perkins. She includes directions on how to make the base material, use color and embellishments, create a vegetable design, and stitch your pillow. (Kelli’s color tip: Try filling a small spray bottle with a slightly different shade of ink and spritzing it in a few areas to create a mottled look.)

I hope you enjoy this collection of DIY home-décor projects. The most difficult part might just be deciding which one to do first.

With warm regards,

Cherie

Cherie Haas
Online Editor,
Cloth Paper Scissors
Today

There’s something satisfying about DIY projects, especially when the results make your home more comfortable, more inviting, more you. And being a mixed-media artist, why wouldn’t you want to let your creativity flow from the art projects you usually do into some serious—and not-so-serious—DIY home décor? You can do just about anything with your talent and creativity!

In *DIY Home-Décor Projects for Mixed-Media Artists: Cheap Decorating Ideas*, we’ve gathered three articles on DIY home décor from your trusted mixed media magazine, *Cloth Paper Scissors*.

In the first article, Allison Berringer explains her process for creating chairs that are almost too cute to sit on. She uses stamps, stencils, acrylics, and more to add creative designs to chairs, taking them from plain to pow! Fortunately for us, Allison says she already went through “many long hours of trial and error, perseverance, frustration, and pleasure” to be able to find what works best when creating these artistic chairs to add to both office and home décor. It’ll leave you “Feeling Chair-itable.”

Next, you’ll discover “Cheap & Chic Mixed Media Décor” ideas with Linda

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COLLAGE ARTISTRY
MIXED MEDIA DISCOVERY

DIY Home-Décor Projects for Mixed-Media Artists: Cheap Decorating Ideas

presented by

Cloth Paper Scissors®

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feeling chair-itable

ever since I was a child, I have been fascinated with miniatures, especially miniature chairs. My grandfather made me a tiny table with one matching chair when I was barely two years old.

I have many pictures of me as a small child eating, playing, and sitting at that table. While I do not consciously remember the times I spent in that little chair, I do remember my grandfather, who played a role of utmost importance in my life. Perhaps that is why there is such a strong connection between miniature chairs and the man who loved me unconditionally. Now at the age of 39, I regretfully have only the little chair (the table warped and did not withstand the test of time), and it now holds a small assortment of teddy bears instead of me. There were other toys made especially for me as well: a dollhouse, a miniature oven made of wood, a doll cradle and highchair, but nothing fascinates me more

in my adult life than that little chair. Thus began the hunting at yard sales and antique stores add to my ever-growing collection of mini-chairs!



BY Allison Berringer

Several years ago I came across a lonely, unpainted wooden chair in a craft store and decided to see what I could do with it. The result was funky and colorful but not very original. I took the chair to work with me and there it sat for about two years before a colleague asked if I could paint two similar little chairs for her daughters. I was thrilled, and this time all of the designs on those chairs came from my imagination.

Luckily, I found a person who was willing to construct more little chairs for me, and the more comfortable I became experimenting with mixed media, the more I wanted to try my technique on the chairs. What you see here is the result of many long hours of trial and error, perseverance, frustration, and pleasure in knowing that the final product was from my imagination alone, at last!

directions

1. Sand the chair thoroughly.
2. Apply a base coat with gesso and a paint color or colors of your choice. Keep in mind that the base coat color(s) won't show through too much in the final product. You can also collage pictures or text onto the chair at this point. I usually use pages from a dictionary if I want to add more interest to the surface.
3. Stamp some designs onto the surface. My favorite stamps to use in this layer are textural ones.
4. Using stencils and acrylic paints, roughly stencil patterns onto the surface. These don't have to be exact; you will be adding many more layers.
5. Dry brush more acrylic paint onto the surface in contrasting or complementary colors.

6. Accent areas of color with the colored pencils. I love to use a scribbling effect.
7. Keep building up texture by doing layer after layer of more stamping, painting, stenciling, and dry brushing until you are satisfied with the results.
8. Stamp larger shapes using foam stamps and pigment ink. While the ink is still wet, add embossing powder and emboss with a heat gun. Outline these larger shapes with a white or light colored pencil to accent the shape and add contrast.
9. Attach paper ephemera using gel medium.
10. Attach any 3-D objects using E-6000 (be sure to allow ample drying time with this glue), or by drilling, hammering, and gluing things like the chicken wire and hardware pieces. Use tacky glue for any smaller objects. ●

MATERIALS

- Wooden chair
- Sandpaper
- Gesso
- Acrylic paints (various colors)
- Colored pencils
- Gel medium
- Tacky glue
- E-6000® glue
- Rubber and foam stamps
- Stamp pads (solvent and pigment)
- Embossing powders (various colors)
- Hammer
- Screwdriver
- Drill
- Stencils
- Heat gun
- Embellishments: 3-D metal hardware, chicken wire, colored wire, ephemera, text, old jewelry parts, beaded fringe, large plastic beads, and anything else you'd like to add to give your chair character (I used images from ARTchix Studio.)



CHEAP & CHIC mixed-media DÉCOR

Remember when green was just another chip on the color wheel? The color of money and a healthy salad? Now, green mixes with red and blue states to color politics.

Let me state up front that on the color spectrum of actually “going green” I am barely to lime. I am a mixed-media artist with a mission to hunt, gather, and hoard. How does one reconcile that with a yearning to live a more simple life and honor the environment? For my husband and me, the first step was to build a

smaller
home with
a self-sustaining
(almost) landscape.



BY Linda Blinn





We do not have a grass lawn and envision a vegetable garden (I'll get back to you later on that idea, but Barbara Kingsolver's book *ANIMAL, VEGETABLE, MIRACLE* did get me thinking).

My new studio is light and airy but scaled down in size, resulting in less room for my swag, my stuff, my stash. This has led to a shortness of breath, profuse sweating, and voices in my head whispering, "Time is up, Missy!" The challenge was to use some of my collections in functional ways such as home décor, set them free (give away, donate), or spend the rest of my

life perfecting an inventory system to manage and store my art materials. I went with the first two options.

These mixed-media home décor projects illustrate my new—I can barely utter the word—thriftness. Out came a stockpile of natural linen fabric (old and not-so-old) for drapes, along with cherished embellishments like vintage buttons and notions. The only purchase I made for any of the projects featured here is the sassy, oversized rickrack used in the drapes (shown on page 10).

Inspired by the drapes in Tricia Guild's book *Patterns*, I mixed printed linen

panels with plain ones. Currently there is a resurgence of pattern in fabric for home décor and, wonder of wonders, wallpaper is back with a whole new attitude. Perfect timing for mixed-media artists! Our collages, surface design techniques, and fabric art can now claim vertical wall space looking fresh and fabulous.

Pillows made from burlap sacks, seen in a trendy home store, influenced the concept for another project. They were printed with text and large-scale numbers, an easy motif to duplicate with the chunky foam alphabet stamps



I purchased years ago from the Ballard Design catalog.

Since all Roman numerals can be made with only seven letters, I took a quick look online to refresh my memory and pulled out the necessary letters: I, V, X, L, C, D, and M.

For the front of the pillows, I cobbled together leftover linen from the drapes, added scraps of fabric with text, then stamped, stenciled, and spattered the surface—familiar techniques to all

mixed-media artists. If you have ever made a collage and can sew a fairly straight line, you can make these pillows.

There is nothing like spending an hour in one of the Anthropologie stores to power up on inspiration for home décor projects. (I realize some people actually do go there to buy clothes.) It was there I saw an entire wall of frames—all sizes and styles, made into a cohesive collection by painting them with white

gesso. Although I am familiar with this design concept, it was the matte finish of the gesso that sent me home with a mission. I buy gesso by the gallon (so crisp and fresh on ceilings!) and already had the requisite collection of old frames.

Humming “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” put me in the right frame of mind. Promising to “use what you already have,” I cut up a previously made collage: at 3' x 5' it was too large for my

smaller rooms. By laying the frames on top of the collage and moving and turning them in different directions, I was able to find a pleasing composition for each frame. It also helped that the existing gesso spattering on the collages related to the frames.

Now that the studio is looking rather spiffy I am on my way to the garden. My flowers (grown from seed, I'm so proud!) are going to be my new art materials. Poppies, sunflowers, Bells of Ireland, and nasturtiums. Their organic shapes, textures, and geometry captivate me and offer endless possibilities for mixed-media art. I press them, preserve them in the freezer, and slather their petals and leaves with color to make monoprints.

framed collage wall art

directions

THE FRAMES

1. Sand the frames and wipe them clean with a damp cloth.

MATERIALS

- Previously used picture frames
- Gesso, white and black
- Golden® Interference Gold paint
- Ephemera including book pages, hotel receipts, record covers, and engineering drawings
- Gold foil pen
- Alphabet stamps, foam rubber (large)
- Large foam architectural stamps
- Rubber stamps and ink pads
- Acetate transparencies

2. Apply 2 or 3 coats of white gesso, sanding lightly between coats.

note: Gesso dries quickly, but be sure each coat is completely dry before applying the next one.

3. Apply Interference Gold paint to the frames, if desired. Wipe gently with a cloth, leaving the paint in the carved areas.

THE COLLAGE

1. Using your favorite techniques, create a collage with the ephemera, rubber stamps, and acetate transparencies.
2. Overstamp with large alphabet letters. For Roman numerals, use the

letters in as many combinations as you like.

3. Apply black or white gesso to the large foam architectural stamps and press firmly onto the collage surface.
4. Use an old toothbrush to splatter the collage surface with both black and white gesso. Add sparkle and depth by “flicking” a gold foil pen over the fabric.
5. Place the frames on your collage, moving them around until you find the desired composition for each.
6. Mark, cut out, and frame your pieces.



drapery panels

MATERIALS

- Vintage linen or purchased linen panels, 2 plain and 2 patterned (I used previously purchased natural linen fabric for my drapes—1 shown at right.)
- Buttons
- Cloth measuring tape
- Waxed linen thread
- Giant rickrack (1 ½" wide)
- Iron-on hem tape
- Hot glue gun and glue sticks

directions

1. Sew a plain and a patterned panel together along the long side (right sides facing), then press the seam open. Repeat with the second set of panels.
2. Attach large buttons to the plain panels with waxed linen thread.
3. Hem the bottoms and tops of the panels using iron-on tape.
4. Sew the cloth measuring tape across the bottom edge of the panels.
5. Attach rickrack down the center seam using a hot glue gun.

pillows

directions

1. Cut the fabric for the pillow front. I recommend cutting the fabric for

the pillow front and back at least 1" larger than the pillow form; this allows for ½" seam allowances.

2. Holding the stencil firmly in place, apply the fabric paint with a stencil brush and let it dry.
3. Apply fabric paint to the foam stamps and press firmly onto the fabric.
4. Sew fabric patches, measuring tape, or other embellishments to the fabric.
5. Spatter the surface with paint, gesso, or gold foil pen.

note: The patchwork for the front of the "and now" pillow was pieced together with the seam allowances showing on the outside.

6. Sew the pillow front to the back, right sides together, leaving an opening for the pillow form.
7. Insert the pillow form and stitch the opening closed either by hand or machine. ●

MATERIALS

- Linen fabric for pillow fronts
- Fabric for pillow backs
- Pillow forms
- Fabric paint in black and white
- Large chipboard stencils (Creative Imaginations d-mensions)
- Large and small chipboard alphabet and punctuation stencils (Creative Imaginations Bare Elements®)
- Purchased fabric with a text design
- Measuring tape
- Buttons
- Foam stamps



market-fresh VEGGIES

FROM PAPER & CLOTH



BY Kelli Nina Perkins

Vegetables make a great subject for art, because they are bursting with color and possess an amazing array of structure and design. Stroll through the produce section at the supermarket, or better yet, spend some time at a local farmer's market. Notice the color variations found in a single vitamin-rich vegetable. There are enough greens, reds, yellows, oranges, and purples to fill a journal or even inspire a poem.

MATERIALS

- Plain muslin
- Freezer paper
- White craft glue
- Bristle brush, 1 1/2"
- Container or bucket
- Tissue paper, including sewing patterns and gift wrap
- Ephemera such as book text, maps, and sheet music
- Ink or acrylic paint
- Stamps
- Embossing powder
- Heat gun
- Oil pastels or Paintstiks®
- Art markers
- Gel medium
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Heavy paper (for making the pillow pattern)
- Sewing machine
- Black thread
- Light interfacing or stabilizer
- Matching fabric for back
- Fiberfill
- Pressing sheet



Vegetables make a great subject for art, because they are bursting with color and possess an amazing array of structure and design. Stroll through the produce section at the supermarket, or better yet, spend some time at a local farmer's market. Notice the color variations found in a single vitamin-rich vegetable. There are enough greens, reds, yellows, oranges, and purples to fill a journal or even inspire a poem.

Slice open a few of these edible treasures and get a closer look at the interior for a new design perspective. For a quick way to reveal the complex inner veggie world, slather one side with paint and stamp it on some paper, then use this as a model for imagining your pillow form. Save the other side for lunch and be sure to discard the one you used for printing.

Pillows are a festive platform for artful whimsy, and I've designed them in countless shapes and sizes. They can

display everything from photos of family to hand-painted drawings. Our beds, couches, and chairs fill vast spaces just waiting to serve as pedestals for expression. Why not mound up your living area with fun, flavorful designs?

The base material for these pillows is what I call paper-cloth. I learned how to make fabric paper from Beryl Taylor's book, *MIXED-MEDIA EXPLORATIONS*. Another reference is Beryl's article in the premier issue of *Cloth Paper Scissors* (interweavestore.com). Fabric makes it stitchable and strong, while paper allows for a wider range of surface preparations. Use plain, inexpensive muslin and lots of text-intense ephemera to create the first layer, then go wild with whatever surface design techniques you really enjoy. Paper-cloth can handle just about anything, from stamping to embossing. The more joyful expression you pack into your base material, the more spectacular your finished pieces will be.



directions

make the base material

To begin, you will make some plain sheets of paper-cloth that you can later decorate and cut for your pillow collage. Make sure one sheet is at least as large as the base of the pillow you want to create.

1. Lay a piece of muslin on the shiny side of a piece of freezer paper. Dilute white craft glue with water until it's soupy. With a bristle brush, wash the glue mixture onto the muslin to wet it. Layer pieces of tissue paper and ephemera ripped into strips, washing with glue after each layer.
2. Allow the sheets to dry overnight, then remove them from the freezer paper and iron flat, using a pressing sheet to protect your iron.

color and embellish

1. Determine what colors you need for your pillow. Color a large sheet for the background and some smaller sheets of paper-cloth for design elements. Use ink, color wash, or fluid acrylics to color the full sheet.

Dilute the paints and inks as necessary to allow the ephemera to show through. Allow to dry.

TIP: Try filling a small spray bottle with a slightly different shade of ink and spritzing it in a few areas to create a mottled look.

2. Once you have a background color, decorate the paper-cloth with rubber stamps or stencils and paints. Write on it with markers and oil pastels. Use embossing powders to create designs, and set them with a heat gun. Use gel medium to add more ephemera. Stitch on it with quilting stitches or write words with thread. Have fun! Let serendipity rule.

create a vegetable design

1. Draw a basic vegetable shape on heavy paper to create a pillow template and cut it out. Use this template to cut a piece of light stabilizer or interfacing.
2. Run a line of glue stick around the outside edge of the stabilizer, and

attach the stabilizer to the wrong side of the large sheet of paper-cloth that you prepared for the pillow face. Cut out the pillow face, using the stabilizer as a guide. Keep the stabilizer in place to add strength to the final shape.

3. Cut design elements like a stem, leaves, highlights, etc., out of different colors of paper-cloth and collage them to the background material with a glue stick. Overlap pieces to create a sense of depth. Remember that this is collage; have fun designing a beautiful veggie expression.

TIP: Use subtle color variations to emphasize the amazing range of hue and texture found in each natural wonder.

stitch your pillow

1. When you are happy with your pillow face, free-motion topstitch around the design elements to attach them to the background. Use black thread to give it a "thread-sketched" feel. Stitch close to the edges so that the pieces don't buckle when the pillow is stuffed.

note: You don't have to worry about the edges unraveling with paper-cloth.

2. Cut a piece of fabric for the back of the pillow, using the template as a guide. If you don't have matching fabric, paint plain muslin with diluted acrylic paint to match the front of the pillow.
3. Place the back and front together, right-sides out, and zigzag topstitch around the edges, leaving an opening for stuffing.
4. Stuff with fiberfill and hand stitch closed. ●

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