



paper

## Nature Journal

While I admit I am not a huge outdoor person, I do love taking walks with my family in our state parks. The sights are breathtaking and cause me to stop and take notice, even for just a quick photo. When I sit back and gaze at the photos I've taken, I realize that they could never do nature justice. While my sketches may not capture it perfectly either, I still think it's necessary and pleasurable to create a piece that defines how I see nature with my own eyes, rather than through a camera lens.

### \* { CaST aSiDE }

This book was made from a box that came in the mail. Many packages that contained other objects we have ordered have great potential: computer boxes, medicine boxes and much more. Before recycling them, see if you can get inspired by the shapes before you.

### MATERIALS

- \* acrylic paint
- \* box with deep cavity or opening
- \* brads
- \* cardboard
- \* cloth ribbon or twill
- \* collage images
- \* cotton fishing line
- \* Distress Ink in Tea Dye (Tim Holtz)
- \* feather
- \* fine-tip permanent marker
- \* newsprint paper
- \* patterned paper
- \* pencil
- \* short screws
- \* soft shredded wood
- \* twigs
- \* vellum envelope
- \* vintage dictionary pages
- \* vintage images

### TOOLS

- \* awl
- \* craft glue
- \* craft knife
- \* cutting mat
- \* foam brush
- \* rectangle stencil template (optional)
- \* sandpaper (optional)
- \* scissors
- \* sponge for applying ink
- \* straightedge



**1** Find a box that opens up like a cupboard or create one by slicing a slit down the center using a craft knife. The box should also have a deep cavity within it. If the box is waxy, sand it down. Paint the entire box with your choice of acrylics.



**2** Apply torn vintage dictionary pages to the still-wet paint, but don't cover the front flaps of the box. Apply more paint to cover small areas of the pages. Let the paint dry.



**3** Print and cut rectangles from a collage background image or use patterned paper to fit on the front flaps of the box. Glue the rectangles to the flaps. Paint a bit around the edges to "grunge" them up.



**4** Design a mini-collage to fit on the back of the box. I sketched eyes and collaged 2 hand images and a feather onto my mini-collage, but you can do whatever you like.



**5** Using an awl, poke holes in each corner of the collage. Place the collage on the back of the box and apply a dab of craft glue in each of the holes. Push short screws through the holes in the collage, punching through the back of the box.



**6** Sketch lines along the edges of the back of the box with a fine-tip permanent marker.



**7** Dab acrylic paint around the edges of the collaged image.



**8** Open up the front flaps of the box. Sketch tree branches onto the inner flaps of the box with a fine-tip permanent marker.



**9** Cut a rectangle that is slightly larger than the cavity in the box. You may wish to use a rectangle stencil template. Using a craft knife, cut out the center of the rectangle to create a frame.



**10** Glue a piece of scrapbooking paper to the frame. Flip the frame over and cut away the excess paper in the center of the frame with a craft knife.



**13** Using a separate piece of fishing line, tie a woman charm to the bundle of twigs so it nestles within the frame.



**14** Tuck a bit of soft shredded wood inside the frame.



**11** Print a quote onto newsprint paper and cut it out. Glue the quote to a piece of cardboard and then cut it out again. Ink the edges with Distress Ink. Attach the quote to the cardboard frame with brads. Glue the frame to the box, along the edges of the box cavity.



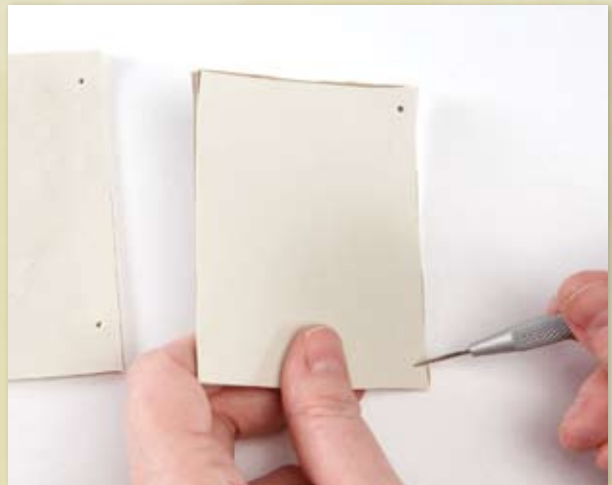
**12** Using the awl, make a hole in the top of the box, above the cavity, large enough for a bundle of twigs to fit through. Tie a bundle of twigs together with fishing line. Slide the twigs through the hole.



**15** Cut 3 cardboard pages to fit the inside flaps of the box. Their widths should match the width of the flaps, and their heights should differ by approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (13mm) increments. The rectangles I cut measured  $2\frac{1}{2}$ "  $\times$   $3\frac{1}{2}$ " (6.5cm  $\times$  9cm),  $2\frac{1}{2}$ "  $\times$  3" (6.5cm  $\times$  7.5cm) and  $2\frac{1}{2}$ "  $\times$   $2\frac{1}{2}$ " (6.5cm  $\times$  6.5cm).



**16** Glue pieces of newsprint paper to cover both sides of each cardboard page.



**17** For the largest and second-largest pages, use an awl to make a hole in all 4 corners. For the smallest page, make holes in the corners along the right-hand side.



**18** Arrange the pages from smallest to largest. Connect them by threading fishing line through the holes and tying double knots. The pages should fold back and forth like an accordion. Repeat Steps 15–18 to create a second set of pages.



**19** Poke holes in each of the outer corners of the box flaps. Using fishing line, tie a set of pages to each flap so that the smallest pages are farthest from the center. Glue a vellum envelope to the smallest page on 1 of the page sets.



**20** Close the box flaps. Cut a piece of cloth ribbon or twill that will wrap around the box completely, with some excess left over. Secure the flaps by tying the ribbon around the box in a loose bow.



*inspiring hint*

When creating a journal, choose a topic that interests you. I wanted to create a simple book that would remind me of my natural surroundings. Use this project as a starting point to create an art-themed journal in which you can sketch or doodle what you see around you.

