



Recycling Into Art

Resource Page for Parents and Project Leaders

For inspiration here are some artist websites you can visit:

Barbara De Pirro: www.depirro.com/

Barbara donated several items for this workshop today. She is a Pacific Northwest Artist, primarily a painter, who often works on reusing materials that normally would be thrown away. Right now she is concentrating on plastics. To view some of her plastic creations displayed at the Museum of Glass Education Studio, click on the *sculpture/installations* icon .

Diane Kurzyna: www.rubyreusable.com/

Olympia Dumpster Divers: www.rubyreusable.com/artblog/

Diane is also a Pacific Northwest artist who works with all sorts of fun materials. Her dolls, constructed out of Wonder ® bread wrappers, can be viewed at Matters Gallery in Olympia, a gallery which highlights local artists who recycle used materials in their art. Olympia Dumpster Divers is a great source for links to organizations and artists who focus on promoting “the appreciation of art from recycled, reused, discarded, unwanted, unloved, tossed and found, pre- and post- consumer waste materials.”

Marita Dingus: www.sedegrsallery.com/Artists/036/36-000.html

Marita works with a variety of discarded items. Marita’s mixed media sculpture can be found in museums and corporate collections both locally (she was born and raised in Seattle) and around the world.

Jonathan Ro-Schofield: www.jonnycardboard.com/

Jonathan is a display artist from the United Kingdom. I stumbled on his site while researching materials for today’s workshop. His cardboard creations are truly inspiring so be sure and take a look for some inspiration on using cardboard as a material to recycle into art!



Recycling Into Art

Working with different materials

Here are some materials you may consider:



embellishments on your mixed material artwork.

Soda Cans: Soda cans are a great material to work with but you have to be careful because cut edges can be sharp (you may need to ask an adult to help). The cans can be cut using heavy duty kitchen-type shears. First you need to cut off the top. I did this by using the scissors to poke a hole near the top and then inserted the scissors tips into the can for cutting. Once the top is off you can rinse out the can, cut a slit down the side and remove the bottom and create a soda can sheet to use on your artwork. Other ideas could include crushing the can, priming it with acrylic white paint (left over wall or house paint works well), and using the can as your canvas. You might also save soda can tabs for



Newspaper: You have probably used newspaper for paper mâché sculpting. You can also create a building material by cutting the newspaper into strips and rolling the strips around a dowel and gluing the ends with white school glue or a glue stick. I sectioned the newspaper by cutting the folded edge to create two sheets, folding the sheets into fourths and then cutting along the fold lines. Once the paper has been rolled you can use white school-type glue to create three dimensional art. You can also cut the rolls apart and use them on a mixed material collage. The comic pages make very colorful beads. This is done by cutting the paper into long triangles and rolling them around your dowel and gluing the short end. I have seen some really creative art jewelry made with this process. You can put a finish on the newspaper with watered down glue. You will find your finished product to be very sturdy and if anything comes apart, you can just glue it back together!



Magazines: Magazines are great for paper collages. As a painter, I will sometimes use a magazine collage as the starting point for my artwork. For example, the photo on the left is the abstract collage I created for *Butterfly Box*, pictured on the right. I first tear up the pages and separate the colors, stacking them in piles. I now have a palette of color to use in my projects (pictured below)



You could also go through and pick certain images and combine them to create a story or illustrate an idea. It could be fun to create a puppet of sorts by gluing down puppet parts to a scrap piece of a heavier weight paper, cutting around each image separately and then attaching the elements together using brads. This allows each part to move. You might try attaching moving pieces to a collage using this technique. *Migraine Headache* and *Shoe Fairy* are examples of how you can take images from magazines to illustrate your ideas.



Magazines can be used for bead making by cutting a triangle or rectangle out of a magazine illustration and rolling it around a dowel to create a bead. While it is fun to use illustrations because of the variety of colors available, you may also experiment with lettering as it can create interesting patterns when grouped together (*Ladder to the Sky*).

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Tissue Paper: The colorful tissue papers used for wrapping presents are a wonderful material to recycle into paper mâché sculpture. Tear the tissue into strips and layer them into a Vaseline® coated bowl or around an inflated balloon and then saturate

each strip with eco-friendly flour and paste glue, which you can apply either with your hands (if you like getting messy) or with a paintbrush. You will need to apply 10-12 layers of tissue and it will take a few days for your artwork to dry. Once dry, you can remove your project by sliding a dinner knife between the bowl and the paper or, if you have used a balloon, by popping and removing the balloon.



When I make hand bound books like *Oops* (pictured left) I often use starch paper made out of starch and recycled tissue on the cover. I start with a sheet of scrap paper (I like to recycle paper from my copier). I then begin layering tissue paper strips covering each strip with a thin layer of the starch. Another fun idea is to use the colored tissues and starch to layer colors for telling a story or illustrating an idea. This would be like drawing a picture but you would be using the tissue and starch instead of crayons or paint.



Junk Mail: Junk mail is another great material for paper mâché. Tear junk mail into small pieces, place in a bowl and add hot water to cover. After soaking for about three hours, drain the paper and spoon in some flour and water eco-friendly glue. The paper pulp you have just created can then be placed by clumps into a Vaseline® coated bowl. The paper pulp can also be wrapped around a Vaseline® coated dowel to create large paper beads.

Once the beads are dry, slide them off the dowel and string onto scrap yarn, string, or plastic twine that you have made from re-using plastic grocery bags, cut into strips and braided. The glue is made by combining one cup flour and one cup water in a saucepan. Mix the flour and water together and add 2 more cups of water. Stirring continuously, heat this mixture to boiling. Remove from the heat and let the glue cool before using. (Glue recipe and paper mâché ideas are from the book, *make it!* by Jane Bull)



Plastic: Pacific Northwest artist, Barbara De Pirro, reuses plastic milk bottles, straws, package labels, water bottles, grocery bags, and assorted food containers and lids in her art. By cutting and

arranging the plastic pieces she creates wonderful installations that may feature milk bottle sea grasses and water bottle stars dangling from the ceiling (pictured above right). Using some of her favorite materials, you might consider creating your own imaginative landscape. Bottle caps can be grouped together to express an idea as well. My *rEcycled E* was made by gluing bottle caps together and is embellished with all sorts of fun pieces and bits of plastic.



Cardboard: Cardboard is a great material for sculptural art. It can be cut and glued together using white school glue to create fun objects such as the lamp at the right. Glued cardboard is amazingly sturdy; our little lamp was originally one part of an entire room decorated with cardboard furniture strong enough to sit on. Other ways you might use cardboard include cutting the material into strips which you can then curl, and twist and arrange for three dimensional

line art (the ridges in the cardboard structure make an interesting pattern when used creatively) or you can use pieces of cardboard as a canvas for painting and paper collage.