



Design Notes

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Creative Books

Welcome

Have you taken a workshop lately? Have you learned something new? Its fun and a great opportunity to gain new skills as well as making new friends. I

As a teacher I find it so important to take the occasional class to see how others approach their teaching, use their skills and interact with students. I've had the opportunity to take two classes this fall, a little tricky to fit into my schedule but well worth the extra work.

The first class was with Sherrill Kahn, an artist from California who is known as the owner of **ImpressMe** rubber stamps. She guided her students through three information packed days using fabric paints, layers of colour and surface embellishments with paint and stamps. Check out: <http://www.impressmenow.com>

The second class I've just finished. It was a two day batik workshop with Els Van Baarle from the Netherlands. You can see

her website at <http://www.elsevanbaarle.com>

Els creates the most amazing batiks fabrics, I have been a huge fan of her work for many years and I was absolutely thrilled that the workshop was close by and I could attend. I'll be posting pictures of the workshop shortly so check them out on my blog.

Right now, I have rinsed several pieces of fabric and they are drying, waiting for another layer of wax and dye.

Each of the workshops showed a very different approach to fabric design and while I knew most of the content, being a surface design teacher myself, it was refreshing to see how the teachers worked and have the joy of being a student and at the other side of the worktable.

I hope that you will take advantage of the workshops and classes that are in your area and learn something new too!

This month I'd like to tell you about one of my favourite books that I've used recently. The **Art Stamping Workshop** by Gloria Page is full of great ideas on making your own stamps with a variety of media including wood and lino blocks, soft blocks, erasers, corks and more. The projects are fun and creative. Try it out on fabric, paper, wood and clay.

I'll be showing two new handmade blocks on my blog each Monday, so check it out at:

<http://www.susanpm.blogspot.com>

Creating Design-Weaving!

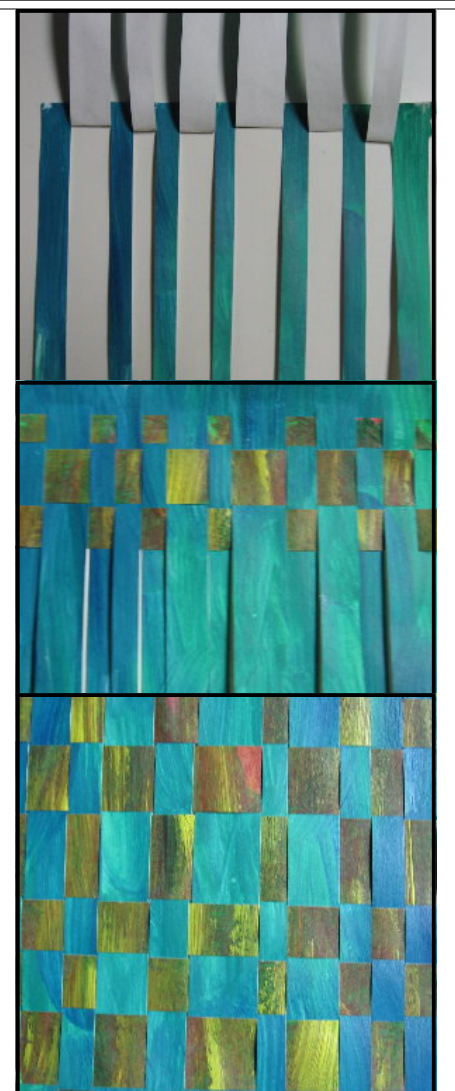
Last month we spent some time playing with paper and I suggested that it's a very good place to start creating some interesting design. This month we're back into kindergarten again but this time with strips of paper or fabric to try some weaving. Remember over and under, over and under?

- Begin by cutting strips and laying them flat, long edges touching. The strips can be any width, but to begin don't make them less than 1/2" wide.
- When weaving fabric lay the strips onto batting and pin the strips into the batting at one end.
- Pull every other strip back and lay a strip down at right angle. **Top Photo**

- Place the strips back into position and pull the opposite strips back. **Middle Photo**
- Place another strip down and reposition the strips as before.
- You may need to coax the strips to lay flat and adjust as you proceed.
- Repeat the steps until you have completed the weaving. **Bottom Photo**

Try various colours to create pattern, vary the widths of the strips or try different weaving patterns.

Stitch down the edges, play with threads, embellishments, stitches or couching. Add borders, create scenes, use as a background. There are many possibilities for creating design with this simple exercise.

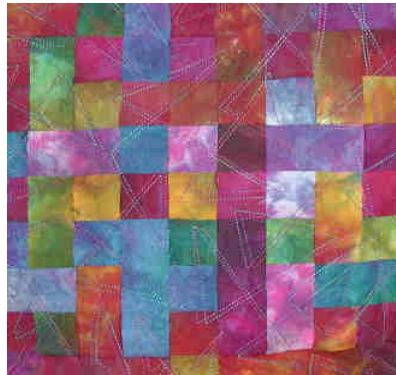


You may have heard me discuss a dyeing technique called low water immersion and wondered what it was. Or you may be thinking that fabric dyeing is difficult or messy. I began dyeing fabric on top of my washer and dryer in the laundry room. The process doesn't take up much space and the only rule about the dyes and chemicals is that the tools you use should never be used again for food preparation.

To begin, find a book on dyeing, I recommend Ann Johnston's book **Color by Accident**. This book covers everything a beginner needs to know about dyeing including all the products, chemicals and fabric steps you will need. This book will be an excellent addition to your library.

Another good resource is Paula Burch, her website: <http://www.pburch.net/dyeing/lowwaterimmersion.shtml> has mountains of information for dyeing, batik, and tie-dye.

How many of you have tried dyeing your own fabric? You may never buy the printed stuff again!



“Much like a patchwork quilt, inspiration that stirs and motivates me is made of many things.”

Robert Reynolds

Follow Your Dreams

“ dreams are the soaring of wings on the highest breezes of our imagination”

Ask yourself some questions:

- why do I dream?
- what inspires me to dream?
- what shape do my dreams take?
- when do I dream?

“If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride!” Wishing is different from dreaming, wishing implies that if we wish for something, then it happens without any action on our part. Dreaming is an empowering force, it is the first

step in a journey to completion.

Dreaming helps us to set goals, it encourages us to strive further in our work, whatever form that may be, and it is right that our dreams change with circumstance and reality.

Begin by considering a four stage process:

1. the dream moves us towards inspiration.
2. we plan, develop and refine.
3. the DO-ing part, the work and construction.
4. time for reflection and evaluation.

What are your dreams? What do you strive for? Do you plan? Do you want change in your life? What are you doing to make it happen?

CREATIVE BLOGGING

Check out some of these blogs:

<http://www.virginiaspiegel.com/blog/>

<http://sharonb.wordpress.com/>

<http://akquilter1.blogspot.com/>

<http://digitalgran.blogspot.com/>

<http://sharonoyoung.blogspot.com/>

Teaching

<http://susanpm.com/pages/schedule.html>

Check out my teaching schedule for 2009, I'll be in Ontario during October, and I have a few free dates available.

From My Sketchbook-Pick a Pack of Pens!

How many pens/pencils/markers do you have? Do you scribble, sketch or doodle? I love to collect pens of different sorts and you might like to pick up at few the next time you're near an art store. Here's some possibilities:

- Lead pencils, 2B, HB and 2H
- Fine tip markers, I like the Pigma Micron, they come in different colours and tip sizes, I have every size in black
- Staedtler Fineliners--pack of 24 colours

- Jelly pens, metallics and fun stuff-have a look in the scrapbooking section.

Keep a pencil sharpener handy, I have a battery, an electric and a hand operated on!

Pack a few pens and pencils where ever you go. Try writing your grocery list in pink, guaranteed to make shopping more fun!

Here are a few doodles from my sketch book; I'm not working at great art, just trying out ideas and creating pattern and texture. I hope you'll try some!

