



Series 100

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Jenn Mason shows how to create a 3D mixed media shadow box.

Watch the video for this project online at:

<http://youtu.be/vrzBfuVSYIO>



Mixed-media Shadow Box

By Jenn Mason



When you want to add dimension to your next mixed-media collage, consider going 3-D by adding elements to your shadow box glass.

Materials

- Acrylic, 2 sheets (I use 8" x 10" pieces for both my printing plate and my inking plate.)
- Wax paper
- Scissors
- Acrylic paint, 2 or more colors
- Brayer, 2 (I use an acrylic brayer for rolling my paint and a rubber brayer for burnishing the back of the print during the printing process.)
- Mark-making tools: bubble wrap, paintbrush handle, netting, etc.
- Art paper cut to frame size (I use printing paper, but any heavy-weight, quality art paper will work.)
- Sakura pens: Permapaque®, Glaze®, Souffle™, Microperm®, IDenti®-pens, Gelly Roll®
- Shadow box frame
- Window cleaner and paper towels

Optional

- Reference image for tracing

Preparing to Print

Before you start printing, it's important to have all of your supplies together and your workspace all set up. The printing process is time sensitive. If you let the paint set too long on the acrylic plate, the print will not transfer to the art paper. To set up your workspace, lay your art paper on the left-hand side of your worktable, then place your printing plate (first acrylic sheet) in the center, and your inking plate (second acrylic sheet) on the right-hand side along with the acrylic brayer. Place the mark-making tools and rubber brayer just above the printing plate. You will also want to prepare any silhouette images you want to use by cutting them out of the wax paper with the scissors.

Note: This is the workspace set up for a right-handed person. Flip the orientation if you are left-handed.

Making a Print

1. Place a small amount of each of your paints on the inking plate and roll the color out with the acrylic brayer until you have even coverage on both your acrylic sheet and the brayer. Your colors should blend where they meet. This is a good place to experiment with shades and colors as you try additional prints.
2. Roll the paint-covered brayer on the printing plate. Consider how much painted area you want to show up on your art paper. I like to leave a small border around my print so I ink up a similar area on my printing plate.
3. Working quickly, use the mark-making tools to press or draw patterns and designs into the wet paint.
4. Place one of your wax- paper silhouettes on the printing plate.
5. Place the still wet printing plate, paint-side down, onto the art paper and burnish the back of the printing plate with the rubber brayer to transfer the print.
6. Immediately remove the printing plate and the wax paper. If you want to make another print, quickly add more paint before the plate dries. As long as you keep your printing plate wet with paint, you can keep printing. When the paint starts to get too dry [or starts to dry], immediately take the printing plate to the sink to wash it off. It's good to keep your inking plate moist, too. If you find that the paint is still drying too much for your liking, you may wish to investigate using an acrylic extender or a paint with more "open" time. Another option is using water-based printing inks.
7. In a sink, wash the paint off of your printing and inking plates and the acrylic brayer as soon as you are finished printing.

Decorating the Prints

1. Let the print(s) dry fully.
2. Use a combination of pens to add doodles, text, and texture to your prints—express yourself!

Creating the Shadow Box Layer

1. Dismantle the shadow box. For this step you will only need the glass and the insert that holds the glass off of the

artwork.

2. Use the window cleaner and paper towels to clean both sides of the glass.
3. Set the frame insert over the print and the glass on top of the frame insert.
4. Use an IDenti®-pen to draw the image you would like to paint on the back side of the glass, using the print underneath as your guide. If you want to copy a specific image you can place it under the glass and trace it from the top.

Note: You will remove the pen markings later—this is purely a guide for your painting.

5. Flip the glass over and paint your images with the Permapaque® markers. Let the marker dry. Add a second coat if necessary.
6. Flip the glass back over and use the window cleaner and a paper towel to remove the IDenti®-pen ink.
7. Assemble your shadow box and frame your print to create the finished mixed-media shadow box.