Explorations in Encaustic: A Daily Practice with Lisa Solomon

Chapter 1 - Explorations in Encaustic: A Daily Practice

Overview

(bright music) - If you wanna dip your toe into the mixed media universe, encaustics is a great place to start exploring. Hi, I'm Lisa Solomon. I am a Bay Area artist, and art professor, mom, a person who plays with all different kinds of mediums, and I'm here to introduce you to the wonderful world of encaustics. Encaustic is beeswax with pigment or not. Generally, we create an encaustic medium, which has a bit of Damar varnish in, but luckily, that is easy to purchase at the store. And then you can add all different kinds of materials into the wax to color it so that you can paint with it, you can pour with it, you can cast with it. There are so many things that you can do. In this class, I'm gonna show you how to set up an encaustic studio, how to melt the wax, how to color the wax, and then we're gonna play with all different materials. We're gonna bring in colored pencils and collage and gold leaf so that you'll really see how exciting and fun encaustic can be. Whatever your medium of choice is, encaustics can be added to that. You can combine anything that you're currently working with, and it creates a surface that really cannot be duplicated in any other medium. It's really got this luscious quality. You have to kind of allow it to do its thing, which actually frees me up to try new things, and let go and kind of let the process take over. (bright music)

Safety and set up

- Encaustic is using hot melted beeswax with pigment in it. There are several ways that you can color it and multiple ways to use it. But before we get started, I wanna go over some safety issues because there are a few things you need to be aware of before you start using it. The first thing you need to consider is where you're gonna set up. You should probably have a designated space in order to start using encaustic. That doesn't mean you need an entire separate room. A kitchen table or some other sort of space will work just fine, but you want the room to be ventilated. You definitely want a window that you can open and maybe even a fan to get some cross breeze so that you aren't inhaling all the fumes that are coming off of the wax. After that, there are a few other things you're gonna need. This is kind of a materials thing, but I wanna talk about it too because it is a safety issue. You're gonna need something to melt the wax. This is an electric griddle. You can use anything like this. There are some that have lips so that you can cook in them, but there are also some that are flat. Either kind will work. You definitely wanna have something that has a temperature gauge so that you can keep an eye on what's going on with the heat. You also might wanna consider having one of these. This is a flat thermometer. You can keep this on the bed of your heating element so you know what the temperature is at all times. You could also instead use a meat thermometer to dip into your wax to check the temperature at any time. That will also work excellently. Then just in terms of your own personal safety, you wanna have something to protect your hands. Just like with oil painting or acrylic painting or anything else, there are pigments in here that you don't really want to get into your skin. I like to use a barrier cream because it allows me to be able to touch things and it doesn't feel like I have something in between myself and what I'm working on. But certainly any kind of latex gloves will work. Anything else that you wanna use to protect your hands is great. You might also wanna consider some thicker, more protective gloves if you're gonna pick up any of the things that might be hot. So these leather gardening gloves will work. Also, like, barbecue oven mitts. I like to have things that have fingers so that I can actually feel

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what I'm doing, instead of, like, the oven mitts you use for cooking. That's like the mitten. Those won't work as well. You also might wanna consider a respirator because even though we're not heating the wax to a temperature where it's gonna burn, in case it does burn, if you ever see black smoke, you wanna turn everything off. You wanna have a respirator to keep you from inhaling all that stuff that really isn't good for your lungs. And speaking of burning, you probably wanna have a fire extinguisher handy. Again, I have never had anything catch on fire anytime I've used any of this stuff in the studio, but there is a heating element involved, there's paper. You wanna make sure that you have something to help prevent a fire, which also leads me to have some water. You might end up burning your fingers or you might end up wanting to just pour some water on something, like if a piece of paper catches on fire by accident, you might wanna just dunk it in water. So just having some water nearby is a really good thing. I also like to have some pliers because if I'm gonna pick up something that has hot wax in it, you can't use your fingers. And sometimes I don't wanna put gloves on. That takes too long. So I like to have a pair of pliers so I can pick up something. And then it never hurts to have safety goggles. Safety goggles are really good. You don't want hot wax in your eye. That would hurt a lot. So safety goggles are something. I'm probably not gonna wear them on camera, but you should do as I say, not as I do. And then I also like to wear an apron because I don't want hot wax getting all over my clothes. It's really hard to get wax out of any kind of material, which leads me to you want a giant thing of paper towels. As much as I wish we didn't have to go through paper towels in order to clean up, it makes a lot more sense than rags because you can't really wash the wax out of rags. And then I also like to have some baby wipes nearby because sometimes that little bit of wetness in the baby wipes will help clean things up, or if something spills, it's a little bit easier to do it, and it's cool so it'll cool down whatever it is that you're wiping up that's hot. Now that we've gone over all of the safety stuff, we're ready to have fun with encaustic.

Materials

- The basis for encaustic is beeswax and damar varnish. We use the term "encaustic medium," which is both of those put together, and that's gonna be what you use to make any sort of painting. You can buy beeswax. This is just straight beeswax in a brick, and you'll see it's a little bit darker in color. You may wanna get the bleached version because this pigment that's in the beeswax is gonna affect the color of the paints that you make. I also suggest that you just buy encaustic medium. This is pre-made with the absolute perfect ratio of damar varnish to beeswax. I don't know about you, but damar varnish is kind of stinky, and you have to use turpentine, and I don't want that stuff hanging out in my studio. You can buy it in a brick by this brand. This is R&F Encaustics. You can also buy it in pellets. The pellets are a little bit easier because you just pour them into a tin, and they melt really easily. A brick, you kind of have to like saw through with either a utility knife or a butter knife, and make your own kind of pellets. I prefer to use the small pellets, but whatever floats your boat. You also might wanna get some paraffin wax. It's a little different in weight, and it's definitely different in color. You can tint it with different pigments as well, but it's kind of a fun way to encase things in encaustic, and it's a little bit less expensive than the medium itself, so it might be nice to have around. You definitely need some kind of tin to put the encaustic in, to put into the heating element that you're gonna be using. I like to use things with lids. Just make sure they're metal, and that nothing is gonna flake off or fall off, or fall apart when you heat it up. You can also use muffin tins or anything else that would be safe to get to about 200 degrees. The next thing you're gonna need are some kind of fusing elements. So when you work with encaustic, every layer that you put

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on, you need to fuse together, and the reason for that is so that they don't flake off and fall off. You need to melt them a little bit, heat them, so that they end up like coming together. I personally like a heat gun. This is my favorite fusing element. Some people like to use a torch. I find this a little bit challenging to use, but if you have one on hand, especially if you make creme brulee, you can try it out and see if it works for you. Some people also really like to use irons. They make several different encaustic-specific irons that you can use. This is a very small quilting iron. Just make sure that you don't iron your clothes and use it for encaustic. It's a one thing only. So if you're gonna designate an iron, designate it for encaustic. I like to also have wooden sticks. These help to mix the pigments together. Wax is kind of challenging to get off of utensils, so I like to have a bunch of these, and then it's one stick, one color, so it just lives with the color, and I don't have to worry about cleaning it off. Something like a scraper, a utility, plastic knife, something to help you smooth things or take wax off is really helpful. So that's this. We also have a range of pigments here that we can use. One of the easiest ways to color the wax is to just use oil paint. So if you already have oil paint around, I'll show you how to dry it out and drop it into the encaustic medium. Dried pigments also work. So these are mica powders. They have a little bit of shimmer to them, but you can use any kind of dried pigment. You can also use oil sticks or oil pastels. You can cut little pieces off of them and drop them into the wax in order to color it any way that you want. It's really handy to have some wax paper around. This is what you wanna use in between an iron and your surface. This is particularly helpful for collaging elements in, and to protect the surface, so that you don't overmelt or overheat the stuff that's going into your wax. Then, you'll need a variety of tools, and I have a lot. You don't need this many, but you can use any kind of ceramic or linoleum cutting tools that you have, or I have a few things that are used for dressmaking, like the things that you draw patterns out with, trace patterns with. They also make really cool marks. Cookie cutters are good. A pair of tweezers is helpful. We also have, this is a Batik tool that's used when you are making Batik fabric, but it's also really helpful in encaustic. We have a bunch of wooden ceramic tools. We have a scraper tool. Here's our pair of pliers again, and then you definitely need a set of brushes that are only for encaustic. I have a variety. You want natural hair brushes if you can get them, because they clean up a little bit easier, and it's a little bit safer. I have hake brushes. These are the ones that are traditionally used for bookmaking in Japanese bookmaking techniques. You can get them in different sizes. I also have the really inexpensive brushes that you get at a hardware store. You know, the $2 brushes. Those actually are natural bristles, and they work really well, and then you need to think about surfaces. So the thing you wanna really keep in mind with encaustic is you don't want a bendable surface because if you work on, say, a regular piece of canvas, the canvas is gonna flip and flop, and the wax is gonna come off. So you want something hard to put the wax onto, so that it's gonna be stable. You can get plain birch boards. These are really great, and they come in all different sizes, and also all different thicknesses, so you can think about how thick you want your board to be. These are really excellent. These are cradled panels. So they usually come pre-kind of gessoed with white on them, which is a really nice thing. Encaustic doesn't have to be done on a white surface. You can do it on any kind of surface you want, but if you want kind of the clarity of that white coming through what you're doing, this is all set and ready to go. Also, this is great if you wanna embed something into your surface because it has a little lip on it, so whatever you put into the panel is gonna stay, and kind of be below the final lip of this panel. And then there are things that are literally called encaustic boards that you can purchase that are basically Masonite that have been covered with a white surface, and are all set for you to put your encaustic on top of. One other thing you wanna consider is a way or a means to protect your table or your surface. Wax can

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quickly build up and get really messy, and kind of not very fun to clean up. I like to use a giant cookie tray, and I do all of the work that I'm doing inside the tray, just kind of to have everything contained. This is a huge one, but it's really helpful. I wanna tell you about this cool new thing that did not exist when I first learned how to use encaustic. Cleanup used to be a terrible mess, but now there's this stuff called Slick Wax, and using this stuff, you can actually dip your brushes into it and dip your tools into it, and the wax that's in the brush will actually come off, and you can reuse the brush in a new color. This is game-changing because it means that you don't have to have a single brush for every single color that you make for encaustic. You can actually reuse your brushes over and over, and it's kind of amazing. The beauty of encaustic is that you can do almost anything with it. Literally anything. Anything you could think of to put into the encaustic, you most likely can. You can use all different kinds of other art materials that hopefully you already have lying around your house or your studio. This is just a general overview of some of the things that you could use with encaustic. I'm gonna start with materials that might be helpful in the long term as you keep working with the different mediums. This is linseed oil. It's going to help you release stamps, or you can use it at the end to clean up and burnish your wax. We've got some gesso in case you buy a panel that you wanna make white before you start putting your wax down. We've got some matte medium, which can also be used as a PVA glue. I'm gonna show you how to glue some paper down on your surface, so you could draw on your surface before you put wax on it. We've got stamps and microns, and Sharpies and India ink. These are all materials that you can use within the wax. I also have a hand-carved stamp. So if you hand carve your own stamps, you can use those with encaustic as well. We've got a brayer. This is gonna help put paper down or make sure collage elements are flat before you put them into the wax. We've got some stencils. We've got some tape. This is actually used in construction in drywall for mudding and taping, but it has a really cool grid on it, and you can use anything like this to create a pattern in the wax. I've got some molds because we're gonna pour some wax into it, and then use what we make inside of these, and glue them down with some additional wax. Got a stencil just to make some shapes to draw, and to also cut paper out maybe. A bone folder comes in handy. This is gonna help you burnish or also help you transfer from one material to another. Always need scissors. Always need a utility knife. This is actually sewing transfer paper. If you have the paper that helps you transfer a pattern onto your fabric, you can use that. This is carbon paper. Very similar, but has a graphite surface. These little guys help you draw onto both the transfer papers, and it's like a nice clean line 'cause they have those little balls on them, which is really helpful. We've got a whole stack of ephemera. So basically any kind of paper you wanna use, any kind of fabric you wanna use. Gold leaf is great. This is joss paper. We've got some pressed flowers, which we can embed into the wax. Underneath here, I've got a bunch of laser prints, so we're gonna do a little bit of image transferring, and so you need to have laser prints in order to do that. We've got some tissue paper because you can draw on tissue paper and embed it in the wax, and it creates a really nice surface. We've got fabric scraps, which can go in the wax, and some rope which can go in there. We've got all kinds of drawing and painting materials. So, watercolor. You can watercolor first on paper, and put it in. We've got chalk pastels, same thing. Colored pencils, markers, a regular pencil, a watercolor pencil, so you can draw first and wet it, and make it move around, and also the wax and the heat will probably make those move around a little bit, which can be fun. We've got some tape because you might wanna tape the sides of your panel, or you can also use tape to create a barrier to keep wax from going from one area to another. We've got some drawing paper, so that we could do some transferring, graphite pencil transferring, and also if you wanna cover your board before you start to work. And then we've got an old book

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because we're gonna create a project just utilizing a book, and kind of switching it up, and embedding some stuff in wax on top of the book. These are the items that I'm gonna be using, but again, you can use anything that you find lying around your studio. The one caveat being you don't wanna mix acrylic paint with the wax medium. It's that whole oil and water don't mix thing. You don't want plastic going into your oils and your wax material. Other than that, pretty much anything is fair game, and you should have fun experimenting with whatever you have.

Day 1 - General techniques
- Now that you've got your studio set up and everything that you wanna work with, I'm gonna show you how to melt the wax and color it. The first thing you wanna do is turn on your griddle. I've got it on low right now, and I wanna check the temperature of my flat gauge. And it's just under 200, we wanna keep it around 200. So I'm gonna turn it up just a little bit. I had it up a little higher and then it got to 250. And everything is already pretty much melted, so I'm gonna try and keep an eye on that. You want the wax to be between 200 and 250. It won't start smoking or burning until it gets up to about 400, but I like to make sure I don't get anywhere near that. And it will stay melted at 200 to 250, so you wanna keep it there. You'll notice this one isn't quite melted yet, it started to, and so my sticks are in here so I can wiggle the wax around to help it melt. These things get hot really quickly, so if I wanna move them around, I wanna use a pair of pliers so that I can shift them in the griddle. One of the first things you wanna do when you turn your griddle on, if it starts to smoke because you've dropped some wax into the griddle or a piece of paint or something has flaked in there, you wanna take your paper towels and just clean up. So as the wax starts to melt, it'll be really easy to wipe it clean. This is a non-stick surface, so it's super easy and slick. Just make sure that you don't have any black smoke coming from the griddle as you're working. What I wanna do is use some empty tins and get some wax medium, I'm gonna use the pellets 'cause it's just so much easier than the bricks. And I'm gonna pour a decent amount into both of these, (pebbles falling) and get them onto the griddle so that they're heated and melted. It's gonna take a few minutes, maybe five to 10. I'm never quite sure exactly how long it takes to melt, it kind of depends on how much wax is in there. As the wax is melting, I'm gonna walk you through all the different ways that you can get pigment into the wax. One of the easiest things to use is oil paint to tint your wax. The only thing you need to do is put it out maybe 24 hours in advance onto a piece of paper towel. The reason why you wanna do that is the oil paint has a lot of linseed oil in it, and you don't wanna mix too much linseed oil into the wax medium itself. So you put it down on a piece of paper towel, and you let it dry out a little bit. I don't know if you can see, but this paper towel has kind of absorbed a lot of the linseed oil that has been hanging out in the paint. And then once it's sort of a little bit on the dry side, you can then add it to the medium in order to tint it. Another super easy thing to do is to use oil pastels, or oil paint sticks that you can get at the art store. You can slice pieces off of them, like here's a little piece of oil pastel, and you could put this into the wax and then stir it around. There isn't really a magic ratio in order to do this. If you don't put enough pigment in, then your wax isn't going to be very tinted, which may be something that you want. If you want your wax to be more opaque, in terms of its color and its pigmentation, then you can add more of the paint or the oil pastel or the oil stick into it so that it becomes kind of thicker and more colored. Anything that you wanna do, as long as you like the way it looks, is a good thing. The one thing I would also not recommend is mixing the different things that you're going to use together. So I would not use oil paint and oil pastels. I would stick to one or the other, only because you don't know how much oil content is in any of these things, and it gets a little tricky to figure out if there's too much oil or

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too little oil. So I would just stick to one thing in the wax. The last thing you can use are just plain old pigments. So these are mica pigments, they're a little bit shiny, but you can also use earth pigments, or you could run outside and use dirt if you wanted to. You can get pigments all over the place, they come in a gazillion colors. Most of the time, the shine does not come out in the wax. So if you want things to be metallic, it's gonna be a little bit challenging to get the wax to do that. So don't think that just because you see metallic in the pigment, it's going to be a metallic paint when you use it. In the griddle, I already have stuff melting away. This is a muffin tin with some yellow ochre oil paint, that if I stir it up a little bit, it might melt a little faster. In this one, I have just plain medium all by itself. I always like to have a tin of just plain medium. This is what you use to prep your surfaces, and also it's nice to just have something to clear coat. So I always have plain medium. This is mica powder, it's a green, kind of sparkly mica powder. This one also is mica powder, it's pink. This is an oil stick that I cut up, it's kind of turquoise, but I think the turquoise is at the bottom, so we can kind of stir it and you'll see it come to life a little bit. Yep, there it is. (tins shuffling) And we can leave that in there. This is the Slick Wax, the new stuff that I love. And I always have this also in my griddle so that I can clean brushes. I generally try really hard to make sure that I put the lid on this that says what it is, because this gets kind of gross in color and you might mistake it for having pigment in it. And it will not work when you put it on your surface, so just make sure you keep track of your Slick Wax and that it's in the same place every time. And then we've got our two that are pretty much melted now, so I can add the oil paint and maybe some mica powder. This is a sap green. So I'm just gonna take it on my stick, and put it in here and start to wiggle it around. You don't wanna touch the tins because they're hot. So if you feel like you need to pick them up, then you want to use the pliers. (tin shuffling) And you can see it's starting to incorporate, it's really just like cooking. (tin shuffling) Okay, I'm gonna let that sit and just kind of do its thing. (tin shuffling) And leave the stick there. And then in this one, we'll put a scoop of mica powder in. I don't have any royal blue, so we'll try this out. This is when you wanna be wearing a respirator, you don't wanna inhale the pigment powder. (container shuffling) Okay, we have another stick. (tin shuffling) See that powder incorporates really pretty quickly. Okay, so it looks like these guys are just about ready to go. I've got the colors that I'm gonna be using for all the next steps. I'm gonna show you how to shut everything down, because the next thing we're gonna do is prep surfaces, but you need to know how to kind of like clean up and make sure everything is ready to go for your next session. The first thing I'm gonna do is clean off my hands. I have barrier cream on them, so nothing is getting into my skin. But I definitely don't want pigments or oils sitting on them forever. And I'm gonna clean up my little spoon. And make sure that my pigment is closed, because it's not. I can save any oil paints that I've dried out. So I can fold this over, and stick it in a little box for safekeeping. And I'm gonna clean off my hands again, since I touched the pigment. I'm gonna turn the griddle all the way off, and I'm also gonna unplug it. I'm a little bit of a safety freak about this, so I wanna make sure that it's not gonna turn on accidentally. I have pets, I don't want my dog to knock everything over and have pigment flying everywhere, so that's unplugged. I generally wait for these guys to cool a little bit, but the reason why I like tins with lids is that I can label, so I know this is medium only. And then I can put that lid on the correct tin and save it for next time. And you can take all the sticks out if you want, or you can leave them if you're not gonna put lids on. Because remember, one stick, one color. And then I usually, because my griddle came with a lid, I put the lid on it. This just keeps dust and other stuff out of your wax. And you definitely don't wanna have stray hairs and lots of chunks of gross dirt from, I don't know, my studio's dirty, so there can be flying dust everywhere. So I put the lid on so that everything stays really nice and neat and clean. And then I just kind of wait for it to

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become solid before I walk out of the studio. I don't wanna leave anything hot unattended. And I think that's it, and then you'll be ready to get started. When you wanna start painting, you just turn everything back on and everything will be ready and good to go.

Day 2 - Backgrounds
- Let's prep some surfaces so that we'll be ready to paint with our encaustics. The first thing I'm gonna do is take this plain birch panel and cover it with gesso. If you find a panel and you like the tone of the wood, you can obviously leave it that way, but if you want a bright white surface to work with, you're gonna have to gesso first, and that takes a little bit of time to dry, so I'm gonna start with that. I'm gonna wet my brush just a little bit and try and put a fairly even coat of gesso. If you wanna be really finicky, you can sand between coats and get a really smooth surface, but if you know you're gonna do something fairly textured, you can just leave the texture of the gesso. In fact, if you want some really thick texture, you can use some modeling paste or some joint compound and lay a thick surface down first. Generally, I like to move the gesso in two directions, just to get it as smooth as possible. This would also be a great time, if you wanna keep your edges clean, before you start gessoing, to put tape down. I'll do that on a separate panel just to show you how that works. Okay, this looks pretty good. I see one lumpy spot. Okay, no stray hairs. Gonna put this off to the side to dry. I'm gonna tape the sides of this panel. I don't think I'm gonna put any gesso on this one, but just in terms of keeping the sides clean for when I lay the first ground down. (tape tearing) This is not necessary, but sometimes you want a really clean edge. (tape tearing) If you don't do this, wax is definitely gonna drip down onto the sides. (tape tearing) Okay. Great. Put that off to the side. I'm gonna prep this panel with a piece of paper. This panel actually has a little divot in it, which I don't wanna paint on top of, 'cause it won't look so great, but if I lay a nice, smooth piece of paper on here, I'll be able to use it, and it'll look really nice and clean. All right. In order to put paper on, you wanna use a PVA glue or some kind of acrylic matte medium. I just am gonna put it directly onto the panel and then use a brayer to roll it out so it's nice and even. (brayer tapping) A little more. (brayer tapping) Make sure you get to the corners. And do not leave a lot of the matte medium or glue on the surface. You will get lumps. You don't want lumpy paper. Unless you do, then leave the lumps. Okay, I'm gonna quickly put a wet wipe on here so that doesn't dry out, and then before my glue dries, I'm going to grab drawing paper. You can use watercolor paper, bristol paper, whatever paper you would want, mixed media paper. Give myself a little bit more room here, and I'm gonna end up cutting it, so it doesn't really matter if it's straight. I generally use my hands first and just rub edge to edge, and then you can use a clean brayer, or you can use something like a plastic scraper and just push the paper down. Unfortunately, the plastic scraper had some blue on it, but that's okay. Okay. I recommend letting this dry overnight so that it's really adhered to the surface. Okay, that goes over here. We are ready to prep these surfaces. The very first step is putting clear encaustic medium onto your board. You could certainly just start with any color that you wanted, but let's say you put a whole bunch of red down and then you decide, oh no, I don't want red on here at all, and you scrape it up, the red will probably stain the wood. If you put a clear coat down first, you'll be able to clear all of your encaustic off, and your wood will look like it was in its original shape, so I always recommend putting just a clear coat down to begin. We're gonna do that as evenly and as thinly as possible, and you need to do it on every surface. I tend to prep a bunch of panels at once so that I have them all ready to go, and then you can keep them wrapped up and keep them clean for when you wanna bring them out and paint with them. I've had my brush in the medium for a little bit because it was stiff and already full of wax. You wanna make sure your

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brush is loose before you start to prep any of your panels. This looks great. It's really soft. Okay, so a lot of times, we actually heat the surface a little bit first before we put the layer down so that the wax ends up being smooth. You don't have to do this, but I find that it helps. Gonna use my heat gun. Heat gun is my fusing tool of choice. You can pick your favorite fusing tool. This one is mine. (button clicking) (heat gun blowing) You want it to feel warm to the touch, and then it's ready. You can see that the wax cools fairly quickly on the surface. Itll kinda go down shiny and then start to dry. I try not to go over spots too many times, 'cause it just means more heat gun fusing, but occasionally, it is impossible, and you have to go over spots. You can generally kind of tilt your panel around and see if you've missed an area. Teeny tiny little areas we'll fill in when we heat gun it, but if you see a big swath of space that isn't covered in wax, you wanna make sure and cover it. I'm gonna heat this cradle panel surface up a little bit, too. (heat gun blowing) Okay, nice and warm. I'm gonna try and do this quickly. This one, I'm gonna try and go in one direction as much as possible. I'm gonna go over a few things to think about when you're fusing. So this is a heat gun that has two settings. There's a low setting, which is kind of like a blue, and then there's a high setting, which is red. It also has a dial here where you can turn it hotter and colder. This is all gonna get more important when we get further along and start to fuse things into the wax. At this stage, we wanna heat the wax so that it smooths out and becomes kind of flat, and everybody has their own technique and method to do this. It's kind of like a heat to distance ratio. You will see the wax start to wiggle and move around. As you start moving the heat gun back and forth, it will start to lay flat. If it's too hot or you're too angled, it's gonna move to one side. If you're too far away, it's not gonna heat it up enough, so you're gonna have to find the right ratio in order to make this work for you, and I feel like it changes depending on each heat gun that you use or with an iron or whatever it is that you're fusing with, so this is gonna take a little bit of practice, but once you get it down, it will become more comfortable (button clicking) (heat gun blowing) Turning it up. There we go. (heat gun blowing) (heat gun blowing) (heat gun blowing) Gonna let it cool for a second so I can check it. You'll notice that sometimes, little bubbles and pockets start to form. You're gonna wanna get rid of those, but sometimes, it takes a second to figure out where you need to reheat. (button clicking) (heat gun blowing) I think I've got this surface fairly flat. I could keep pushing the wax around forever, and you just wanna mostly make sure there aren't any bubbles, and you want it to feel kind of even. You don't want it to be like you've snowdrifted everything onto one side of the panel. I'm pretty happy with this one. I'm gonna move onto this one. You'll notice that because this surface is white and kind of plasticky, because that's the way the Masonite comes, the wax is gonna move around a little bit differently. And also, because this has a cradle edge on it, I wanna make sure that the wax goes all the way to the edges. There are a few spots in here where I feel like the wax is uneven. So again, it's just gonna be a distance heat ratio thing. You'll notice that all of a sudden, it melts really fast, and so that's when you kinda have to pull back and lift the heat gun and go back and forth, and you'll see the wax kind of even out and get ready to go. (button clicking) (heat gun blowing) (heat gun blowing) (heat gun blowing) Got one little empty spot. (heat gun blowing) I've shown you a couple different ways to prep your panels. After your gesso dries, make sure that you get a little light coat of wax on that as well, and then prep a few panels so that we're ready to go and paint on them.

Day 3 - Embedding in wax

- Let's make our first encaustic piece. One of the easiest things to do is embed things in wax. So we're gonna start with that. If you know me at all, you know that I love rainbows, love repetitive

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shapes, love things all lined up in a row. I'm gonna take these oil pastels that I have and chop some little circle pieces into them and put those circle pieces into a panel. And then we're gonna fill the panel with wax. I have a full box of oil pastels. Let's pick a couple colors. I need a utility knife. It is a little tricky to cut these guys. Just be careful. They can break apart and get a little flaky. You kind of wanna try and do it in a smooth motion. So we'll do one more. And if you've used one end, feel free to peel off the bottom so you get a nice clean circle to work with. Keep in mind when you're cutting your oil pastels, the cradle panel is pretty shallow, so you don't need to cut them all exactly the same size, but they don't need to be too tall or too short. And it's kind of fun actually to have it undulate. So don't worry if they're not even, I have a whole box of these that I have already cut, and some of them are probably broken, so I will avoid using those. And some of them may have paper on them, so make sure you get any paper off and we will think about how we wanna arrange them. Of course, my immediate instinct is to do like a nice little grid in a row, and I've done that before. So I wanna try something a little bit different. Gonna get rid of some of these broken ones. I'm gonna think about maybe doing a little configuration in the center here. Sometimes, it's helpful to lay it out to see if you're gonna wanna do it. Yeah, I think something like that where I make a little flower and build it out concentrically, it can be helpful to have tweezers to help you pick these guys up and place them. I'm gonna just use my fingers, but let's make sure I clean that up and get any stray pieces of paper off. I'm gonna wanna heat the wax that I already have on here just a little bit, so that it will accept and maybe kind of glue down the oil pastels, just cleaning up so that I don't have lots of color. Okay, so we don't want this to get too hot and we definitely don't wanna melt the oil pastel. So I'm going to put it on low and I'm gonna make sure that my heat gun is not all the way on high. So this would be high. I'm gonna turn it down a little bit low. (loud sound of heat equipment) Maybe a little hotter. (loud sound of heat equipment) There we go. The wax is starting to get shiny and I'm gonna pick whatever color I'm gonna put in the middle (loud sound of heat equipment) and then, put it down and it sticks pretty fast. So you're gonna wanna do like a back and forth where you heat the wax and then put your next bit down. (loud sound of heat equipment) That looks good. This has paper on it, so I'm gonna get the paper off. While I'm peeling paper, I will think, oh, maybe ochre, let's do ochre, (loud sound of heat equipment) (blowing loudly) So you'll see if I get any of the oil pastel into the wax, it will melt and change the color. So I'm trying to keep it fairly clean. (loud sound of heat equipment) I actually like this grouping, so I'm gonna leave this as it is, and I'm gonna fill the rest of this with wax. You can use your encaustic medium to do that, but it's a little bit costly and it might feel like it's a waste of wax. It's not. If you wanna use it, please feel free. I'm gonna use paraffin though because it's a little less expensive and it will fill-in kind of similarly, and it's just as easy and will look just as beautiful. If you don't have paraffin, but you do have soy wax, you can use that or you can substitute some melted candle wax, whatever you have around in order to do this. The main thing is when you pour wax, you want everything to be as flat as possible, and you definitely wanna use a tray in case you miss the cradled panel. And you wanna make sure that you are not touching anything really hot with your bare hands. I have a bunch of paraffin wax in this big metal tin right here. I'm gonna remove the stick. I don't wanna contend with that as I'm pouring. And I am going to use pliers because this is probably pretty hot. It's on the large side, so I'm hoping it's not too hot. It's not. I can touch it a little bit with my finger and I'm going to just kind of gently pour, hold your breath. Okay. And I definitely wanna get a little bit in there, but not too much 'cause you'll see it starts to melt. Okay. A little bit of melting is actually kind of fun. Now we just have to let that cool. It's gonna take a while. Gotta have some patience, but eventually, it will look like this. From here, you just wanna let this cool. Do not disturb it. Try not to touch it. Try not to

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move the table, leave it alone. You will notice as it cools, it gets more and more opaque. So this one on the left that's already done has been dried overnight for sure. And you can actually see this one. There's a film starting to form on it, but you wanna give it some time to make sure that all the layers of wax are dry. And then once it is, you can lift it up and do whatever you want with it.

Day 4 - Drawing on surfaces
- Remember that piece of paper that we put down on a board? It is dry, and I'm going to hopefully trim it neatly off. So we just have paper covering the board and none of this extra stuff. Sometimes I like to very carefully fold the paper up to the board so I kind of have a little groove to trim. Also wanna make sure you have a very sharp knife. So if you have a utility knife, you might wanna break off the very last blade that you were using. Or if you have an X-Acto, you might wanna make sure you have a brand new one. Okay, now that I've got some grooves, brand new blade, you wanna try an angle and definitely have a cutting mat underneath. You do not wanna do this on a surface that you are going to ruin. You wanna try and cut as close to the board as possible without cutting the board itself. Once you get past the board, it doesn't really matter what happens. All right. Side two, I'm having a lucky streak. Okay, last one. Sometimes there is a little glue that seeps out, so just if you hit a spot that is a little tough, do not worry. Okay, there's our white paper, which now has a little bit of yellow on it from something on the mat board, but that's fine. I want to show you what happens when you try different mixed media on the paper under the encaustic. You will learn that some media are gonna move once you put the heat and the wax on it. Some are not gonna move, some are gonna stay really vibrant, some are gonna dull down. And I love testing. I love testing things. So we're just gonna do a series of tests. I'm gonna repeat a mark with all the different media that I have here, and then we will cover it with wax and we will see what happens. Okay, I am going to label, so you have pencil and thick clean color pen brush. And this is oil pastel. Okay, and let's do some chalk. Maybe for fun, I will do some that are filled in. Okay, and we have chalk. Let's do some watercolor. All right, that is watercolor. And then we also have watercolor pencils, which are a little bit different. So let's try those, but we'll put them on the same row. That is not the color I expected. Okay, so watercolor and watercolor pencils. And then we just have colored pencils left. Cut pencils. All right, and then straight medium it is. You could also experiment with putting colors on top. I'm sure that would shift. The chalk definitely moves. Hmm. I'm surprised that the watercolor pencil didn't move. I have a different brand of watercolor pencils that definitely move when you put the wax on top of them. All right, this looks like a pretty even layer. We can fuse, or I probably should have moved the cutting mat before, but once this dries, you can just scrape it off, and. (tool whirring) (tool continues whirring) Just not get a lot of wax here. So I'm gonna add a little bit. Okay, this is a cool experiment, and it also makes a great piece of art.

Day 5 - Adding paper elements
- Another fun thing to do with encaustic is to collage papers into it. You can mix and match any kind of papers that you have. They can be glossy, they can be flat, they can be delicate. The wax is pretty much gonna cover everything, and make everything look kind of matte. So if you're using something shiny, and you want it to stay shiny, you're gonna wanna try and avoid putting a final coat of wax on it. But otherwise, actually it kind of pulls everything together and makes everything look like it lives in the same plane, which is nice. I have a panel that is prepped and ready to go, and I have a whole bunch of ephemera. One of the things I like to do with encaustic is embed things that are kind of souveniry or remind me of things that I've done. So for example, I have a rail and subway

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route map from Japan. I've got some musical note paper that I've cut with scallop scissors, kind of all ready to go, some triangles and other things cut from Asian newspapers and scrap pieces of paper. I have these really cute deer origami paper cuts that I've had in my studio forever. I have these, I typed with a cursive typewriter that I have, and then I cut out these little squares and I already used the outside grid and I kept the little inside squares. So maybe we'll use some of those. You can also just hand write. You can take old journal pages, you can draw. So I don't know, I've got deer here. So let's maybe just, deer, deer, deer. We'll do a couple puns. Dear, dear, dear. Deer in the woods. Let's try different sizes and see. Is this a different size? Yes. (pen scratching) You can try a different kind of writing style. Maybe I'll try all caps. You get the idea. You can cut this paper any way you want to. I have a stencil and I can make circles or hexagons or triangles or you can freeform it. Maybe I'll take this "deer, a deer," and turn that into a circle. So I'll cut that out. Maybe I'll, how about an oval? Something about the last is kind of interesting. And then we'll cut those out. See if we wanna use them. Can also use a hole punch or an X-ACTO blade. Hole punch would make nice, perfect shapes. I'll stick that in there somewhere. If you are a planner, you can start by laying out your ephemera and figuring out what you wanna do compositionally. I think we should experiment with some color. We haven't used any colored wax yet, so, 'cause those deer are green and I think I definitely wanna use those. I'm gonna lay a little bit of the sap green. This is the wax that we colored with the oil paint. And we're gonna fuse this. So fusing it is gonna help it lay flat. Sap green is a transparent oil paint and that's why this encaustic then is a little more transparent and less opaque. And then I think I wanna try and add some lighter green, and I kind of want it to blend. So I'm gonna use my slick wax and a paper towel. So my slick wax is in this. I'm gonna get the excess and leave it in the tin. And then with a paper towel, I can clean up the brush and it is miraculously no longer sap green. This is why I love slick wax, it's so cool. Okay, and then I'm gonna go into this kind of more limey green, stir it a bit. Maybe I'll make a hill. Kind of a hill. I'm gonna slick wax that off. Get a little bit more sap green in that bottom. Be careful, the paper towels are going to get hot with the wax. (board sliding) Just wanna make sure we get this bottom part covered. So now we're gonna fuse this to smooth it out and to kind of make sure that the two colors merge together. (heater whirring) So you'll notice that it takes a minute and then all of a sudden it starts to happen really fast. So just keep an eye on it. (heater whirring) I'm not gonna worry too much yet about getting it flat and perfect because we're gonna be fusing repeatedly. So I'm just gonna leave it as is. But I'm gonna figure out where I wanna start to put some of the paper elements. I think maybe these pieces will live here. Where are we gonna put the deer? Somewhere over there. To get these in, we wanna lay a little bit of wax, medium clear underneath, and then we're gonna very carefully and gently push those down into the wax when it's warm. Put some wax here just kind of in the general area, thinking about how big these are. Right, that's one. And since we know it's gonna get covered, you do not need to be concerned about how neat you are applying the wax. I'm gonna heat that up. (heater whirring) This is when you kind of have to move quickly 'cause you don't want it to dry. Ooh. (heater whirring) I'm just going to get these in place and then I'm gonna use some wax paper and my iron to fully smooth these down. (paper crinkling) The wax paper helps protect any ink or anything on the surface. This is on low, it's on one. Do not want it to be too hot too soon. Then you can just use the iron to help fuse the paper down. (iron sliding) We're gonna put wax on top. So basically you just wanna make sure that they are close to flat on your board, but we're not gonna worry if they aren't perfect. So let's think about what to do next. I think maybe the deer. Do I want them on the hill or in between? I think I want them in between. These have some delicate cuts, so I might actually put some wax on top of them to help hold them in place. You can use tweezers

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or an awl to kind of keep things flat. I'm trying to make sure the antlers and the grass don't get bent. Right, got one more set of deer. Maybe I'll put them a little lower. Maybe I don't want them to overlap. So these antlers were a little bent, so I'm trying to very carefully make sure they get down. Good. And let's see, we have our deer, deer. Saw. That would be a cute little awning. So again, this paper is pretty folded. I'm gonna make sure the wax kind of glues it down. Okay. Like that, yeah. I'll cut that a little bit. Got an awning. Do we wanna put anything else in here? Hmm. Do we want any of these? They go down here. Okay, I'm just gonna heat that area up 'cause it's already pretty thick. (heater whirring) Oh, don't blow away. (heater whirring) All right, and then I feel like this spot is empty. What should we do up there? Hmm. Hmm, hmm, hmm. Do you want a bird with a crown? I feel like the red is too harsh. Some of that. Maybe part red. Yes, all right, part red. This has a little bit of red. This is plain. Cut our bird friend out. That is a good spot for you. There's some wax there too, so I'm just gonna heat that up. (heater whirring) All right. Oh no, I blew all my things away. So it actually kind of stuck. So I'm just gonna go ahead and cover them up. And then when this is all dry, I'll cut the ends off. So everything now just needs kind of like a coat. If you wanted to add more color here, you could. You could paint some clouds or fill in more paper. And I'm just gonna gently put a nice coat. Make sure everything is tacked down. Depending on what materials you use, so you could use a marker that might move a little bit once you put the wax on. These are micron pens, so they're not gonna move. And I wanna show you the difference between when you cover and don't cover the silver of the joss paper. So we'll cover this one and you will see it will all of a sudden become matte and no longer shiny silver. And just like when you were prepping, you want to make sure you kind of fill in any big gaps and then we're gonna fuse and hopefully smooth a lot of this out. Those antlers are not all the way down. Okay, in this one I'm going to try and not go over silver. And it will be hard while we're fusing to make sure that the wax doesn't enter that silver area. I think everything has a good coat of wax. If you are noticing that some things are lifting up when you go to fuse, just make sure you use an awl or your tweezers to push them back down. One tip, as you're fusing, try and start in one section and slowly move in the same direction. So I'm gonna start in the upper right and then move toward the left, and then I'm gonna move from the left to the right. I'm just gonna kind of go in rows, and that will help to make the wax lay flat and nice and even. And take your time and know that the first couple times you do this, it's going to be really challenging and you're gonna get lumps and bumps, and that's part of encaustic. It's really hard to make a perfectly flat surface. So don't worry if you see a few things, just get it to a space where you think aesthetically it works for you. (heater whirring) (tools rattling) I'm satisfied with where this is for now. I've fused it enough, I'm happy with the amount of textures. There's a little bit of bubbling, there's a little bit of unevenness, but I actually like the way it looks. So I'm gonna leave this alone for now. But one of the great things about encaustic is that we could continue on with this forever. We can keep adding collage elements, we can take them off. So if I didn't want a piece of paper, if I wanted to take these deer off, I could fuse it, heat it, pull the deer off, refuse it, make it flat again. This can continue on and on and on and on. It's kind of amazing. It's like collaging with glue except for the glue is movable and removable and addable.

Day 6 - Mark making with ink

- Today we're gonna play with ink and see how it interacts with encaustic. I'm gonna start my piece by stamping a little bit of India ink using a rubber stamp. I think I'm gonna build off the image that's on the stamp and just kind of play around and see what happens. Height, nice. Put a little bit of ink here so I have access and I'm gonna brush onto the stamp. The great thing about India Ink is it just

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sits on top of the wax, so you do have to let it dry a little bit, but it works beautifully. We'll do a couple. Let's do, let's do that Then, pay attention to this, it's kind of like a hydrangea. I wanna kind of recreate the leaves maybe, that's a really nice shape and some of the flowers. I'm gonna just use the Sharpie to draw and make a little bit larger version of one portion of the flower, and we'll also do a leaf that way. Just create a little bit of texture with the Sharpie on the wax that do its thing. And then we can try a micron and see, I don't know if it's gonna sit on top of the wax or not, but we can certainly give it a try. And let's do it slightly different size. Yes. Works just great. Will do a couple of that shape. Okay, then paint. Let's do like a fill in. This space feels a little empty, so let's kind of do the opposite. We'll leave the center a little open. We'll do some kind of abstract. That's good, you can also use a bamboo quill has a different quality of line as well. We'll do a leaf shape over here too, or maybe not. Need more ink. There we go. Let's do, do a little bit of texture in this one too. If you want to, you can smear the ink too, while it's still wet. I think now's a good time to maybe put some wax down and see how the wax interacts. This space feels a little empty, but that's okay. We'll fill it up later, okay, dry. I'm thinking, I wanna see what happens when we put some color on here too. Maybe I wanna do, we'll think about the rule of third. So if I'm gonna divide this into three, like let's try some color on the bottom half, and I've got this really pretty pink right here, so we'll use that. I'm just gonna turn this. So the stamp is still a little wet and it's dragging the ink a little bit, but I like that effect, so not gonna worry about it. I don't wanna build this up too much because I wanna be able to see the ink underneath. Gonna fuse that. (heat gun hisses) You do have to be careful if you fuse too fast and the wax gets too hot, it's gonna move the ink around. So definitely keep a height distance or turn your heat gun or whatever you're using to low so that you don't move the ink further than you want it to go. (heat gun hisses) I'm gonna let that cool and just put some plain medium on this top two thirds. Oh, I took the micron off. See if the sharpie stays. The sharpie stays, so you can see the heat of the wax removed one of the micron flowers and some of the ink got on the brush and then it sort of spread around. I'm not really concerned with that because I'm interested in sort of the abstraction of the flowers. So we'll draw another one in there as we keep going. If you don't want the ink on your brush to smear around with the rest of the medium, you're gonna wanna clean it off with the slick wax and wipe it down with a paper towel and then reapply medium. Let's fuse this a little bit. (heat gun hisses) Okay, you can see that flower was just starting to move, so I turned the heat off. Gonna let this cool for a minute and we're gonna layer some more ink on top of it and maybe a little bit more pink too. All right, let's continue to riff off of this flower. I'm really kind of enjoying how this looks like dry brush and the brush tip is kind of split apart, so I'm getting double lines. That looks pretty interesting to me. Okay, I'm gonna leave that and then maybe we will stamp. We'll put a new guy, Trying to make it a little bit lighter so that it's more textural. Let's see if I can get a little bit more ink on for one last impression. Okay, I'm gonna use this tracing wheel to put some texture and some black dots onto the surface. Just trying to make sure most of the wheel is covered, feeling like it's not turning in the ink. Let's try some down here. Getting some. If you want this texture to stick, you're gonna wanna do this at the end. So I'm gonna fuse this and then maybe go back in. But I do want these little bits of dots that are showing up. All right, let's put a little bit of wax on here. That is still wet, so I'm gonna see if I can dry that with the heat gun, and maybe we can try putting a little bit of a green or another color. I'm gonna let that sit in there and get a little soft. I'm gonna fill in some of these spots. Remember, you could put paper in here. You could cut a flower shape out and embed it. Go back to the collage elements. You can also try different kinds of ink. I know India ink is safe and works, but you could certainly try other kinds and see what happens. See, maybe we'll make kind of a leaf shape or heart

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shape. Lets do this way. See. All right. I'm gonna fuse all of this and we will see if we wanna add anything else. (heat gun hisses) All right, that's looking pretty good. You'll notice I picked up this wooden tool. It's a ceramic tool in order to clean up some of the edges. So I had got some pink wax on the framing of the cradle, and somehow a little blue piece of something ended up on the surface, so I heated the wax and used this in order to clean it off. If you want your cradle to remain pristine, you can tape it off or you can sand it when you're all done. But before you sand, make sure you get any of the extra wax off of the wood. I think I'm gonna leave this as it is. You can see there are several layers of ink and wax that I've worked with. You can continue to layer. I've got a little bit of wax that is sitting on top of everything. The green in particular, I have some ink that is sitting on top and does not need to be covered in wax. It can be left like that. That is one of the beauties of encaustic is that you can just continue to layer and layer. You can leave certain elements on the top without any more wax covering it, or you can put more wax on and start all over again.

Day 7 - Using stamps
- Building on what we did yesterday. We are going to use stamps. We're gonna use all kinds of stamps. We've got commercial stamps, the rubber kind. I've got wooden stamps, I've got metal stamps, the kind that you can use in leather or in jewelry making. I also have a hand carved stamp. If you take my stamp carving class, you can use any of the stamps that we carved in that. And we're gonna get started by thinking about how we want our composition to work. Because we're kind of experimenting. I wanna really clearly know which area is for what. I'm gonna divide the cradle panel that I have into four sections. Just gonna take a pencil and I'm gonna use this as a ruler and eyeball. Nothing in encaustic is super precise, so I'm not gonna measure or be concerned. This is just so that I kind of have an idea of where I'm going. And this pencil, it's not sharpened on one side. That's okay, there. (laughs happily) Okay, got four quadrants. I think in the first one, we are gonna use an ink pad and a rubber stamp, and we're gonna stamp underneath a color of wax that we are going to place down. You need to be sure and use a pigment ink pad if you're gonna be using encaustic, because again, the heat might move regular ink around. It might even move pigment ink around, but we're gonna give it a shot. I use my hand carved stamp, sort of reminiscent of a cherry blossom and put that into one quadrant. Do it a couple times, almost looks like a crest. Okay? And then I think in the opposite quadrant, we will stamp into hot wax with a commercial rubber stamp. In order to prep the area for the wax to go in, I'm gonna lay down a color. I think I'm gonna stick with maybe some fall, autumn type colors. I'll put a clear encaustic over that. And then I've got a yellow, a red, green, kinda a turquoisey. So let's do warm colors this. I'll let this brush heat up a little bit and just get a nice layer. This encaustic medium has yellow ochre oil paint in it, and I think it's at a pretty high ratio, meaning there's a significant amount of yellow ochre oil paint in with the encaustic medium. That's why you can't see through it. And also yellow ochre itself is an opaque color and that's also why it isn't as transparent as the sap green that we made earlier. This area has enough wax in it, I think. So I'm gonna fuse it and make it a little bit flatter and smoother, (using an equipment loudly) having a little bit of a harder time because I applied more wax at the top and I'm trying to make sure and not disturb the stamp. So I'm gonna add a little bit more in the middle here, see if I can help. There we go. Got a little clumpy in that corner, trying to get some of that clump out. Okay, gonna let that cool for a second and get this extra clump back in the wax. And then I'm just gonna try and clean this up a little bit so that we're back to kind of our even, more even quadrants. Gonna slick wax this wooden tool. See if I can kind of use it to still wet. Still a little wet, but that's okay. There we go. Much better. Okay, we're gonna let that cool down for a second. I'm just gonna fill these other

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quadrants and once they're done, I'll show you how I'm gonna stamp into them. I've got my four quadrants ready. You'll notice that different pigments in encaustic will react a little differently. So as I was fusing, the red pigment in here moved a lot faster and was more aggressive than the yellow ochre or the green or the encaustic medium itself. So as I was trying to keep these edges clean, I was going back and forth with scraping some stuff away, adding a little bit more. It's just the nature of different pigments. They all have kind of a different feel to them and you're gonna have to discover and get used to working with them. But once you figure it out, it gets a little bit easier. And it's also kind of the fun. Keep in mind that encaustic is never going to be perfectly neat and perfectly precise. And so in some ways, it'll allows you to kind of let go and play because you know that there's no way for everything to be perfectly straight and perfectly accurate. You'll notice that the pigment stamp underneath held up fairly well. It did move a little bit when I got the heat a little bit closer. I'm curious to see how it would hold up if we put a stamp on top. So I'm gonna put one more stamp on top just to kind of see what the difference is of looking through the encaustic medium and then having the pigment stamp on top. Do that first. I'll just try and center it in the three that I did or fairly close to centering it. And I'm fairly certain this caustic is dry enough to do this. Don't do it while it is still melty and soft. Yeah, that looks great. So I'm gonna leave that and then I'm gonna figure out which quadrant should have which kind of stamp. I think that the two more opaque colors are going to probably show a stamp a little bit more because they are so thick and kind of so rich in color. So I think I'm gonna use the wooden stamps and the rubber stamps down here, and then I'll use the metal stamps in the green because they're so strong, I think that they're gonna cut through that green, even though, it's a little more transparent. One thing you might wanna have on hand is some Linseed Oil. The Linseed Oil will help the stamp resist the wax so that you can stick it in and pull it out a little bit easier. I don't need that for the metal ones. I know those guys are gonna be great. But for the rubber ones and maybe the wooden ones, I'm gonna put a little bit of linseed oil on the stamps themselves. I'm just gonna use a paper towel to put the linseed Oil on the stamp. Keep in mind that Linseed Oil is self-combustible, so do not put it on a rag and ball up the rag and throw it in the corner and leave it because it could catch on fire all by itself and definitely wear gloves. I have barrier cream on my hands. All right, so I've got a little bit of Linseed Oil on my stamp ready-to-go. I am going to fuse or heat up the wax until it's soft enough for me to put the stamp in and we will see how it's gonna work. (loud sound of heat equipment) Okay. The trick is you want it soft but not liquid. (loud sound of heat equipment) Yay. Okay, so the stamp made an impression, which is great. It's a little bit tricky to know when exactly to stamp in the wax. It's gonna take some practice. It's visually hard to know. You want it to be shiny, but you don't want it to be melting and pooling and moving. So it's a lot of, if you notice, I went back and forth with the heat gun, trying to get the wax hot enough, but not so hot. Give yourself some time, definitely try it out a couple times and then once you get used to it, it will become second nature. Now I'm gonna use the wooden stamps and I'm gonna do them in the yellow ochre quadrant. I'm going to move this over so it's comfortable. Also, you gotta learn to be ambidextrous when you're doing this. Maybe I'll use the O. So I'm gonna put it in a little bit of the linseed oil that's on the paper towel, just to give it a little bit of resist. Okay, we gotta get it warm and melty, but not runny. (loud sound of heat equipment) Sometimes, also with wooden stamps, you can heat the stamp and see if it'll go into the wax nicely. So I'll try that out and see how it goes. (loud sound of heat equipment) I don't think I can comfortably fit anymore. I cannot. Maybe I'll finish off with a couple Os. I was thinking less about using them as a letter and more about using them as an abstract shape. So I'm gonna turn the L on its side and fill up that area as well. (loud sound of heat equipment) Okay, now

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we're gonna put the metal stamps into the green quadrant. I wanna stick with the abstract theme, so I think I'm gonna use an O or a zero. And then I also have one of these tracing burnisher metal ball guys, and I'm gonna dip that in the green too and see what happens. I'm gonna move this this way so it's closer to me and I'm gonna hold the heat gun in my left hand and get our wax kind of nice and melty soft. (loud sound of heat equipment) We've got some O's and I think I'm gonna keep them in the middle there and we're gonna try this burnisher. Maybe I'll make a little square around them and see what happens. (loud sound of heat equipment) Staying pretty soft, so I'm not gonna reheat it. I think I can make it all the way around. Go, go. Okay, we've got all different kinds of stamps. If you have a collection of stamps, this is the perfect way to integrate that with encaustic.

Day 8 - Using stencils

- Stencils are in a similar family to stamps. They're really fun to use, especially if you are a little bit uncomfortable with drawing or feeling a little bit nervous about how to use the wax. I'm gonna show you how to use some store-bought stencils along with the encaustic. These are some store-bought plastic stencils that are ready to use. When you are working with encaustic and stencils, you want your first layer to be as smooth and flat as possible. In order to achieve that, since I have a cradle panel, I'm just gonna pour a layer of wax and hope that I get it to lay pretty flat. Use my pliers. Gonna start with this turquoisey color. Okay. And pour, pour, pour, pour, pour, pour, pour, pour. Okay. I don't have a ton of wax in this, so I'm trying to make sure I spread it out as evenly as I can. Okay, we're gonna have to let the fusing technique take care of the rest, but I'm just gonna keep moving this around to try and make it as easy as possible for me to fuse. Okay. It's getting dry, so I'm gonna go ahead and heat it up. Since I'm just trying to get really smooth and I don't care if it gets all over the sides, I'm just heating it up really fast. It'll be like one bubble, but I'm not gonna be concerned about that. Little gap here. What we got there. Okay. I'm gonna see if I can eyeball when this is hot, but not liquidy. I think that's pretty close. I'm gonna put this stencil down. Great. And I'm going to brayer lightly to make sure that it's making contact. Okay, the middle is still a little liquidy, so I'm staying away from that as I am pushing this down. Yep, I got a little bit. Keep in mind, because this is encaustic, you are not gonna get a perfect stencil. We're not gonna lift this up and have it be an absolutely perfect pattern. In fact, oftentimes one side works a little bit better than the other. So if you're looking for perfection, this is not the method, but it's gonna look really cool. Gonna let that cool a little bit more. And while that is cooling, I'm gonna move this out of the way. I'm gonna use this blue, kind of sparkly blue, to do a tone on tone thing. I'm gonna stir it and make sure all the mica powder is nicely incorporated. And check on this. Okay, that seems pretty good. So we're gonna take a brush and you wanna try and hit it like you would with paint. You're gonna look for the open areas and make sure that you get the wax in the open areas. Don't wanna get this too thick 'cause it'll just make it harder for you to remove the stencil, but you wanna make sure you get anything that you want filled in. It looks pretty good to me. Okay, we're gonna lightly fuse it just so that everything gets stuck together. Oh, and it looks like I missed one little spot, so I'm gonna fill that in. Okay, and then you wanna wait for it to cool, but not get so cold that you can't pull it off. Sort of an in between-ish state of wax. And you wanna pull slowly and in one direction. And there we have a really nice stencil that actually came out really clean and beautiful. Alternately, you can use things like this compound tape and we can lay this down and use it as a stencil as well. It's gonna be a little trickier because this is no longer a flat surface. So I'm gonna be open to the idea that it's gonna get very abstract. So I wanna cut it two size, whatever size I think I want. Maybe I won't make it go edge to edge. Just think about placing it. Maybe I'll place it on this side. Okay. So

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again, I wanna heat this up a little bit so that I can be sure and get this in embedded. Not fully, but touching. All right. And then got a very small amount of this green left. Maybe I'll use that. All right. Seems pretty good. And we're gonna paint over. Seems nice and filled in. Fuse it lightly, and then get ready to pull it up. And a second to cool down. All right, that came out really well too. We've got two stencils layered on top of each other. These are actually some of the cleanest stencils I've ever pulled off encaustic. So lucky that they got filmed. You can keep going and add stencils on top of stencils, or you could add collage elements, or if you wanted to clean up your cradled panel edges, you could heat that up again and scrape that off. Or you could cover the whole cradle panel edge. There's so many other things you could do to this, but I'm gonna leave it the way it is.

Day 9 - Create texture by carving away
- Today we're gonna carve some wax away. We're gonna fill some wax in. We're gonna just kind of play with different ways that you can layer and take away and put wax into spaces that already exist or create spaces for the wax to go into. I have cleaned my brushes from the last round and I notice that I'm a little low on slick wax. It's getting a little grimy and it's a little low in the tin, so I'm gonna put a little puck of that in there and it'll melt while we're working away and create more so that I can clean the brushes off again when we're done. We have the two pieces that we've already created. So this is the stamp one. This is the stencil one. We're gonna play around with both of these a little bit. The first thing I'm thinking I wanna do is just clean this edge off. I have some wood carving tools and just a flat one that's sharp will help me get the wax off the cradle. If it's feeling a little challenging or like I'm just starting to dig into the wood, you can heat that up a little bit so that the wax is softer. You wanna do it carefully, you don't wanna mess with your stencils. (heat gun humming) Just even a little softer should make it come up really fast. Yeah, that did the trick. So in case you wanna clean, that is how you can get some stuff off of the sides. I'm just gonna leave that alone for now. I'm first gonna think about just using some carving tools and creating some layers in the red stamp area. The stamp came out fairly well, but there are areas in the middle that didn't quite press down. So I wanna see what happens if I try to draw. Let's find something pointy and sharp. Hmm, maybe this one. Thinking about what the flower shapes were, they were kind of like a little bit lines in here. So I'm gonna bring those out and kind of re-create the flower. That looks good. Maybe get this a little bit more defined as well. So I'm using this stamp as a guide, what I can see. And then just working from memory, thinking about what the flower looks like and what the leaves look like. This still has a little bit of linseed oil on it, so it's a little shiny that will eventually dissipate. Okay, so that looks good. Now let's think about maybe carving into the red wax. And this is where you can figure out, do you wanna go all the way back to the white of the panel? Do you wanna just carve some shapes and make sure you don't go that deep? Maybe I will try to do like a little outline, like highlight of the stamp. So I'm thinking maybe like a little oval around it. I am eyeballing this so I'm not expecting it to be a perfect oval or a perfect shape. And again, if I want this to go a little smoother, I can heat the wax. But it's not too difficult, so I'm just gonna keep going. And also, I don't want to remelt my stamp since I have such a nice stamp impression. All right, there's our oval. I can actually stick these carvings back into my little tins so we don't waste them. And then I'm thinking it's time to start filling in some areas so I can show you how to carve away. I added some titanium white encaustic to my palette. Just a quick note on titanium white, it is one of the more challenging pigments to work with. It has a tendency to bubble. It gets uneven fairly quickly. So just be aware that if you're using titanium white oil paint to tint your encaustic medium, it's a little more difficult to work with than some of the other colors, but it's really beautiful and I think it's worth it. So I'm

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gonna use the white. I'm gonna fill in some of the stamps and I'm not gonna worry if I go over areas 'cause I'm gonna carve it away so it ends up looking kind of flat. It's gonna look great. And I think the white here will look really nice because we have the white in that other corner. One thing to consider while you're filling these is if you want your final product to be really flat, you wanna make sure that you fill into the same level. So here it would be the same level as the ochre. If you're not too concerned and you're okay with things being kind of uneven and not level, you can fill in as much as you want. All right, I'm gonna leave those. I'm gonna clean this brush and I'm gonna put some green to kind of go across from the green in the little moat that I carved around the stamp. I wanna leave this stamp as is. So I'm gonna try and not touch that. We'll leave those for a second and we'll try out some more fun stuff on the stencil one. We can heat it up a little bit and then use one of these tools and see if we can scrape into it and get a couple of different kind of textures that way. You could try out all different shapes and sizes. You can also sometimes heat something like this and press it down to change the surface. So definitely play around with what you have. And maybe on top of that I will also use a cookie cutter. We can take a cookie cutter and heat it up or heat the wax up and then stamp it also. And that will kind of carve away some of the wax. So we'll try both of those. (heat gun humming) Okay, after a few attempts and using two hands, you can see there's a little bit of what kind of looks like cut grass. So I'm gonna leave that. If I wanted that to be deeper, I could use one of the wood carving tools in order to get that effect. And I'm also gonna try and heat up my cookie cutter and see if I can stamp that in. So you'll notice that I put the heat gun down and I was just heating the tool because they needed two hands to work around. That is definitely a possibility. But make sure you don't put your heat gun down on wood or on paper or anything that's gonna burn. (heat gun humming) Okay, we've got a star. It's metal, so I used the pliers 'cause it definitely got too hot. You can use plastic cookie cutters, but if you have your heat gun on too high, that may melt the cookie cutter. So again, caution. I'm gonna fuse these guys together (heat gun humming) trying very carefully not to mess up my stamp, which is still so nice. I think we should also maybe play with layering some color in here just to see what happens. I'm gonna go ahead and try and get white inside the star and a little bit inside this area of the stencil as well. Okay, that looks good. And then I'm thinking on how to emphasize the little tracks that I created. You can see that in this area, the green filled in the stencil and then when I was pushing it around with the tool, it's kind of doing that fill in. So I'm gonna fill in maybe two of these lines with the green color, kind of have that be a transition. Let's put green in here and green in here and I'll leave the other two kind of alone More. Okay, and then that needs to all get lightly fused. (heat gun humming) Carving the wax away is a really fun technique to use. It is a little bit tricky. It takes a little bit of time and definitely some patience. What you wanna do is have a tool like this and you wanna make sure that it's clean. So if you need to stick it in the slick wax or onto your heating elements and get any old wax off of it, you are gonna wanna do that. You wanna carve when stuff is cold because otherwise if it's too hot you're gonna carve away too fast. And it's really just a move slow and gently take away any excess that you don't want to be on your panel. I'm gonna start with the green oval shape that I made 'cause it's fairly simple and it will pretty easily demonstrate the process. So you want to very gently carve any excess away. And I'm gonna keep carving this amount of green until I get back to the red color. And if it's a really cold day and you're having a really hard time taking the wax away, heat up the tool a little bit or very lightly heat up the wax and then start again. As you do this, you will definitely get a feel for how much pressure. You don't wanna push too hard 'cause if you push too hard, you're gonna carve like a really deep trench and you don't wanna do it too lightly because otherwise nothing will come off. So it's a real balance. But

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once you get the hang of it, it's really fun. And this is kind of, I think, the most magical part about encaustic is playing with where you want things to be seamless and where you want things to be more messy and loose. So you can see as I'm working it now pretty much looks like the green never was interrupting the red. And it's just this really beautiful seamless line. Do not worry if you start to see some shiny areas or some marks from your tool, you can lightly fuse to get those to disappear. I think that's pretty clean. So I'm gonna stop fussing with this one and move on to carving away all the other areas. (bright music) I am done carving away. I think it looks really great. You'll see how nice and flat everything looks. The white comes out so nicely, the stars super bright and clear. Got a nice green oval. All my O's and L's are nicely also filled in. And we have two green lines here. Everything looks great. I'm gonna lightly fuse just to make sure that everything is really stuck together. And to get rid of some of the scrape marks. You'll notice that the wax gets a little bit shiny from all the scraping. So if we just quickly, lightly fuse, that'll take care of that. But before I do that, I'm gonna take all my scraps because you know wax is so precious and we don't wanna waste it. I usually create a tin of like leftovers and it usually turns kind of brown or gray, but that's a good color. So we're gonna put all the wax together, all the scrapies into this tin and save them. All right, I think I got all those. Put you guys away. Here's another little scrap. And I also finished cleaning off the wood of the cradle, so it's a little cleaner as well. Okay, here we go. This is when I hold my breath 'cause you don't wanna move everything around so much. (heat gun humming) Almost lost my stamp, but I didn't. Okay, that looks pretty good. I'm gonna let that cool and then we're gonna call these done.

Day 10 - Image transfer

- Courtney, this one's for you. We're gonna do some image transfer. I'm gonna show you three different ways to transfer some stuff onto your encaustic. Got Xeroxes or toner printer. You need to make sure that this is a laser printer or toner printed image. You cannot do this with an inkjet. It will not work. I've cut out a raven. I'm gonna figure out where I want it to go. I think maybe peering down on the deer is a good spot. Balancing on the little silver. One thing to keep in mind is when you are going to image transfer, you need to have fused within the last 30 minutes or so so that the wax is still on the warm side. So I'm gonna take my raven off, make sure the wax in this area is fairly warm but not wet and sticky, and then put my raven back down. (dryer humming) Okay, we're gonna let that dry so it's not super shiny. I'm a teeny bit worried about how the raven might interact with the joss paper because we do still have to water transfer off the Xerox paper. So I might actually end up putting him up here. So I'm gonna heat up there a little bit too while I think about what I wanna do. (dryer humming) Okay, just to be safe, I'm gonna put 'em up top. All right. Still a little warm. We'll let that cool down just a tiny bit. I need a bone folder or something to help push my image down. I'm gonna go ahead and place the raven where I want him and put a sheet of wax paper on top. And then you are gonna burnish. Burnishing is going to hopefully transfer the toner ink into the wax. All right, I feel like that is pretty good. Just rub with my finger a little bit, make sure he's all the way down. Okay. And then just like with a regular image transfer, you're gonna use water and start to make the paper melts away. Try and cut your image as close as possible in the paper so you have less paper to have to remove. Kind of hear the squeak when my finger starts to hit just the wax. I wanna try to be a little careful here 'cause I've got the collage paper underneath. I don't wanna take that off. You can use a paper towel and see how much paper I have left? I think I've got most of it off. Just like when you image transfer with acrylic medium, there might be a little bit of a film. You'll keep seeing the film reappear. It gets white again, just keep scraping off that paper. I

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don't wanna pull this too much because I'm afraid I'm gonna start to lose the toner itself. So just gonna do a little bit more, 'cause I see a little bit of white. And then we're gonna wax on top and the wax will help make some of that paper film disappear. It may reappear again, but we're gonna hope we melt most of it away. A little bit of paper right there. Come on paper. There we go. A little bit in the feet, but I don't think that's gonna matter too much. All right, there we go. So we're gonna cover our raven with some just clear. And again, be careful 'cause if it's too hot or the toner is new, if you just printed this, it could move a little bit. So just keep an eye on what's happening with the wax. That looks pretty good though. I'm gonna fuse that. (dryer humming) Okay, we have a raven. The next way to transfer some images is you can use graphite and put it just on some regular white paper and flip it over and rub it and it will end up in your encaustic. I drew a little crown because the bird up here has a little crown. I don't know if there's enough space to stick the crown on the raven. Maybe we will stick the crown over here. So again, you're gonna flip it so that the graphite is touching. You're gonna take your bone folder, and this time you're not gonna use wax paper, you're just gonna directly rub. Make sure whatever you drew with is on the soft side so that it will come off the paper and into the encaustic. And we can do a little test. Yep, working great. And just make sure you get your entire image. And I'm on kind of two levels here, so I wanna make sure I get both Done. All right, there's my crown. If you wanna leave this as it is, you can. If you wanna put some wax over it and fuse it, you can. I'm gonna leave it as it is. When you start to fuse in this area though, keep an eye on it because the graphic can move around in the wax as well. And there are a couple other ways we can draw onto our board. I've got a sheet of carbon paper. We can use this. You can use a little burnishing tool or a pen or a pencil. I think because I started writing the word deer, I'm gonna see if I can add a few more scribbles of the word deer. So I think I'm actually gonna cut this smaller so that I don't accidentally get carbon everywhere. Now I kind of know where it is. Keep an eye on it. (tool scratching) Okay, and then we can lift that carefully away. Now we have some more deer, dears in the corner. And lastly, you can use wax transfer paper. If you are a sewer, you know exactly what this is, to trace your patterns. I'm gonna cut this down too, so I can keep an eye on it. Maybe I'll try to draw a couple more little crowns, kind of like the bird crown and let's put them in this area. You can also, if you heat the wax a little bit and stick this down, you can rubber stamp or wooden stamp into the wax transfer paper and it should transfer that image. One little funny cactus crown. Do one more. I'll try to do one even smaller. Two little cactus crowns. And again, I can put medium over this and fuse it or I can just leave it. The only thing to be concerned about is the wax is movable. So if you think that you're gonna keep working on this and you wanna protect it and seal it in, you are gonna wanna put some clear encaustic medium on top of that to protect it. Otherwise, I think I'm done image transferring.

Day 11 - Creating texture by adding wax

- A few days ago we created texture by carving away, adding wax and carving it and making it flat. Today we are going to just add wax to a surface, and I'm gonna show you a couple of cool tools that you can use in order to do this a little more precisely. Obviously you can paint, you can make brush strokes, you can add and pour wax, but I'm gonna show you two things. One is a tool, it's an Indonesian batik tool called a tjanting, and you fill it up with wax and it allows you to draw these really nice, clean, precise lines. And the second thing I'm gonna do is show you how to use those metal burnishing tools to make little dots. The tjanting tool takes a little bit of practice. You need it to heat up, and you need a tin of wax that is deep enough for it to go into. So you'll notice it has a sort of reservoir hole in it. You wanna make sure that that gets filled, and you also need the entire

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casing to be on the warm side, otherwise the wax will not flow. So it's been sitting in this soup of black encaustic wax for a little bit of time, and I'm gonna just make sure and tilt it so that it gets into the reservoir. You can obviously use a deeper tin and make this a little bit easier on yourself. And then I always have a piece of paper towel or a piece of paper or something to test it before I move onto my panel. You'll see we prepped a panel. It has a nice sort of flat, red, strawberry field for us to play with, and I'm just gonna make sure that this is working. You know it's working when it's dripping, so I know that's good. And then I'm just gonna test it on the paper towel. So you'll see what a fine line you can make with it. And you immediately wanna get it back into your wax because once the wax gets too hard, it will not come out of the tool. So you kinda have to plan ahead. If I was going to draw something very specific, I might carve into this wax field a little bit with a pencil so I have a line to follow. I think I'm gonna channel Cy Twombly and just do this squiggle movement because it's really fun and really simple, and it'll just show you how beautifully this creates a line. Okay, so do quick little stop here and then, woo. Okay, I'm running out, so I'm gonna make sure and I get back, fill, tip, and fill, check and make sure it's dripping. Do a quick little stop here and then continue on. Okay, I'm gonna fill a little bit again, I'm just gonna fill this whole panel 'cause I think it's gonna look great. (tjanting softly clattering) Maybe I'll do, I wanna do it consistent. Do I wanna change the scale? I'm gonna just try and stay consistent, ooh, one drop there, that's okay. Okay, one more good fill for good measure. Drip, drip, drip, drip. Okay, and then I wanna just get a little bit more on those guys. Perfect. Now you're gonna let that set. You can change colors, but you wanna make sure and get your tjanting tool into some slick wax and clean it all off so that there isn't any residue of a former color in there. And I am going to add some dots with my little burnishing tool. You kind of have to work quickly because you're gonna be moving from the wax to your panel. So I'm actually gonna move it closer so I don't have as far to go, and I need to think about where I wanna put some dots. Maybe, do I wanna go inside? Maybe inside my little squiggle. So I'm gonna put a little wax on here and then I'm going to very carefully and quickly move over. Okay, and now my tool is pretty full of wax, so I'm gonna stick it in the Slick Wax and get some of that off because otherwise my dots are gonna change size, which could be good. And I wanna keep them a little bit more consistent. And now I'm gonna go backwards because as I kept going, this one got bigger. The first one was pretty small, so I'm gonna go in the reverse order. Didn't have quite enough wax, let's do that again, there we go. And clean it off again. Do I wanna keep doing them inside? Do I feel like that's enough? Maybe I want to do a little congregation of dots. Ooh! I am gonna fill this one, then I will fill this one. Oh, big drop! It's getting dirty! One, two, three, let's go this direction. Just trying to balance out where the dots are going. And I've had a couple of drips and drops randomly appear, so maybe I'll add a few more so that it looks very intentional. It can be kind of hard to try and do them on purpose. Maybe I can do it with the, yeah. Random drop. Random drop, oh, it's cooling off. Stick it back in. All right, I'll do a couple more random drops and then maybe I'll layer a few more squiggles. (tjanting softly clattering) (tjanting softly clattering) This is so much fun for me because I'm usually so uptight and worried about what's gonna happen with the piece, but with encaustic it just kind of all looks good. I love this piece. It feels like a page out of a sketchbook. I'm gonna put it aside and figure out what I wanna do with it and come back to it later and keep layering on top of it.

Day 12 - Gold foil and tissue

- I wanna show you a couple other techniques you can use to add things to your encaustic pieces. The first one is gold leaf, which is always fun 'cause it's sparkly. I actually have gold foil. It's not

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technically gold leaf. You can use gold leaf. It's a teeny bit tricky because it's so thin and so delicate, which is why I have gold foil, which is actually double-sided. So if you are a silver person, you can use the silver side, or you can use the gold side, or you can mix it up. We're gonna keep working on the dear, deer piece. And I think, I don't wanna use this entire sheet because it is so large and will take up so much space. And I also wanna show you, just like I did with the joss paper, what the difference is between when you cover up the gold leaf with wax and when you don't cover it up with wax. So I'm gonna cut just maybe some little squares to go with these squares or similar two squares. Let's see if I can cut straight. Not bad, ooh, there's two pieces. I have extra. So like that-ish. I'm just gonna use this to help me measure, to make them all a little bit more similar. Oh, oh, I bent it. If you have wax on your piece, which I do, you can just heat it up in order to get these new little pieces of gold leaf in or you can also go back to your clear medium and lay some down. I think I'm gonna lay a little bit more wax down because this area is pretty thin and I've got a little bit of paper that's sticking up. I'm gonna offset these so they don't line up perfectly. I do not wanna try and do that. So while this is still wet, I wanna make sure, get that down. That looks good. Then we'll do right next to it. That is good. And then I'm not even gonna care if I cover up my cactus crown a little bit. If I did not like the placement of one of these, I can just heat up the wax and peel it right off, but I think this is good, let's see. I am going to make the middle one not shiny, so I'm gonna use a smaller brush so I have a little bit more control, and cover that up. So you can see how dramatically the foil shifts in color. Also, you can use a burnishing tool to draw directly into it, and the drawing will sit in the gold. So I'm gonna just draw another one of these crown type things, sort of crown type cactus shape. I'll leave that and then I'm just gonna fuse because anytime you put new wax down, you need to lightly fuse to make sure it's gonna stay. (button clicks) (wax dryer spinning) (button clicks) That looks pretty good. The next method I'm gonna show you is using tissue paper to kind of lay a ground that you can then work on top of. You out of the way. Tissue paper is pretty delicate, but it's also a super fun way to add some color or add some background. I'm gonna use a plain panel that we have already prepped. I'm gonna take a piece of tissue and lay it on my table. I'm not gonna put it in my tray 'cause the tray is full of wax and I want the tissue to be pretty even. I like to use two sheets of tissue paper so that hopefully I won't tear it. I also wanna set myself up so I know kind of where my drawing field is. I'm gonna take my panel, and place it on the tissue paper, and just outline it, knowing that this is a little bit too big, but it'll gimme some guidelines. Then I've got all these beautiful colors. I'm just gonna keep channeling Cy Twombly because that was fun, and it was easy, and I don't have to think. And it's gonna be like a color meditation, which happens to be another class of mine on Creativebug that you can watch if you would like. I'm just gonna go in order. 'Cause if you watch that class, you know that this is one of the easiest ways to kinda think about or not think about what colors you need to use next. That always looks good because someone at the art supply factory is thinking about what colors these materials arrive to you. That one's a good one. I think that might be my favorite color in the box. White is not gonna show up, so we'll skip that, but that'll be good 'cause then yellow won't align, and we'll just keep going. I might actually stop in this row so that I have a little bit of a white field. Move those aside. You're gonna cut this out so it's easy. I'm actually going to cut it a little bit bigger to give myself a teeny bit of breathing room in case I don't center it perfectly. And I can trim that all off after I have adhered it to the board. This looks perfect. This panel is already prepped, so it has a layer of wax on it. I can reheat this wax. If I feel like it's not a smooth enough surface or if I want it a little bit thicker, I can add wax. I think I'm gonna add just a little bit more. This was prepped and it's pretty thin, so I'm just gonna add a little bit more wax and then I'm going to heat it. And we are gonna lay that tissue paper down kind of quickly once

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we heat it up. So I'm just adding a little bit more here so I have more wiggle room to play with when I heat it up. And this does not need to be perfectly, perfectly smooth 'cause we're gonna fuse it. And the tissue paper is probably gonna end up hiding any imperfections anyways. This is nicely fused, so all the wax is sticking to itself. And now, I'm just gonna try and heat it so that it stays a little bit on the wet side. The longer you heat it, kinda the slower it dries. And then I'm going to quickly try and get the tissue paper in place and smooth it down without any wrinkles. (button clicks) (wax dryer humming) (button clicks) I'm gonna try and start at the top so that if I need to reheat the wax, I can. (whispers) There we go, beautiful! It's like putting down wallpaper if you've ever hung wallpaper. In some ways, I actually think the tissue paper is easier than collaging other papers because it is so thin. You can smooth it fairly easily, but you can rip it really easily too. One direction, one. It feels like it's pretty stuck, which is great, and it's still warm, which is great. Then we're gonna cover it with one layer of clear medium. You could use a color tube, but because this colored pencil is so light, I don't wanna use a color 'cause it's gonna cover it up. I want it to kind of shine on its own. So we're gonna put clear on top of the whole thing. And now, I'm gonna try and be a little more even because I am gonna fuse, but I don't wanna have to fuse forever to get rid of all my paintbrush lines. Isn't that amazing? I love this so much. Love how this looks. It's like magic. I'm gonna fuse this, and then I'm gonna let it dry overnight so I can trim off all the excess tissue paper, and then I'm gonna put it aside, and save it for a future piece.

Day 13 - Adding natural elements

- Because encaustic is so versatile and you can add so many things to it, I wanna show you how I put dried flowers into it. Make sure that any natural element you use, any leaves, any petals, rocks, shells, sticks are not wet. You don't want any mold to end up growing underneath your wax. So just make sure everything's dry and flat and pressed and ready to go. It's super easy to press your own flowers or you can buy some. These actually I got online and they're really pretty and we're just gonna make a nice composition and put some beeswax in there. I've got two sheets of pressed flowers here. I'm working with two just to give myself some variety. They came laid out this way and they're actually in kind of beautiful compositions so you could very easily almost just flip this over and put it on your panel but I think I'm gonna play just a little bit. They are delicate so I'm trying to be careful. I can also use tweezers if I feel like I'm about to mangle them. Hopefully I'm not. I don't want this to get too, too busy. I'll do these little guys, call it a day. All right, I think that's good. I'll keep these over here in case I change my mind a little bit. I wanna just brush some fresh hot wax underneath them and then stick them into that while it's still warm and melty. So I'm going to just gently hopefully take these guys off and kind of remember my composition. I'm just gonna do it in stages so that I don't have to remember everything. Go over here, and you're gonna come off because you are underneath. Got a brush. Just dip this and I'm using straight beeswax this time so it's gonna be a little bit more yellow in color. I think this just was heated so it's drying fairly quickly. That's great. I'm gonna heat this up because it cooled so quickly. So I am unfortunately gonna take all these off and I'm just gonna hopefully remember my composition or we'll make a new one so that they don't blow around as much. Oh. Okay, you wanna stay, that's fine. Okay, I'm gonna scooch you guys. Try and keep you out of the wind of the heat gun. You'll notice straight beeswax is darker in color. It doesn't have the damar varnish in it which means it flows a little bit differently. It's a little more sticky. It also just naturally is more yellow and so just like you learn in color theory, whenever something comes with a color, when you add pigment to it, those two colors are gonna interact. So if I were to put a blue in here, a very light blue, it might look a little bit more green because of the

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natural color of the beeswax but the beeswax color itself is really beautiful so if you wanna use it on its own, it's just got its own kind of flavor to it which I think is really lovely. We'll heat you up. Okay, that's stuck down enough so I'm not gonna worry about it. And of course, I blew my flowers all over the place. Okay, let's put a little bit more. In this first stage, it doesn't matter if you get everything in the wax. You just kind of wanna get everything glued down. So I'm just kinda working in little stages and this is stuck down enough so I'm not gonna worry about it. I can do this fast enough. You are not gonna be able to wiggle these so make sure you like where they are before you put them down. Now that all the flowers are down, I'm gonna fill it in with a layer of just the yellow beeswax. You're gonna notice it's gonna change some of the tone of the flowers. You might want to be a little gentle as you get it on top of the flowers so you don't pull any of the petals off. It might be that these white flowers kinda disappear in the yellow of the beeswax. We'll see once we fuse and if I wanted to bring something back out, I could pull a couple more of the pink ones for contrast. While the wax is really liquidy, if I wanted to try and nudge something, I could. I'm not gonna risk it but you could. I think that's looking pretty good. In looking at this, I feel like these two white flowers maybe are too close to one another and maybe aren't the strongest in the composition. Let's see if I can heat this up and scoop this flower out and swap it. Okay, I know I'm pretty much gonna have to let go of that flower and not reuse it unless I wanted it to be kind of wrinkled. Should we do this pink? Yeah, I think that'll be good. That's just a little brighter and stands out a little bit more in the composition so I'm gonna cover that up with some new wax and maybe get to these little edges and I couldn't quite fill in when I was fusing. I was trying not to make a very thick layer of the wax because it is a little bit more yellow so I'm gonna use this opportunity to fill in a little bit. Okay, one more fuse. Okay, I think that looks great. If you wanted the pressed flowers to be closer to the top of your cradled edge, you could pour some beeswax in first so I could have poured all of that nice yellow tone in there, heated it up a little bit, put everything in it, put one final top coat on it and then the stuff would be a little closer to the surface which could be great. This is a great way to just kind of like preserve a memory. If you go to the beach and like sea glass would look great or shells would look great or if there was a really special hike that you took or maybe somebody gave you some flowers that you wanna keep, this is a really nice way to preserve them. Just to give you some options, I'm gonna show you another pressed flower piece that I did. This is just on one of those encaustic boards and I laid down three colors first and then put the flowers on top and then did a very thin clear coat of medium just to kind of hold them in place and you'll see they look entirely different. This one's a little calmer. This one's a little more vibrant, maybe caught some sunset vibes. This is an open invitation to try a lot of things.

Day 14 - Creating 3D elements

- We'll continue on the 3D trend today. We're gonna pour some wax into some molds and then use those elements and we'll also fool around with a little bit of rope maybe, just to show you how you can raise the surface of your encaustic pieces and how it is really versatile and you can add almost anything to it, including like, rusty nails. Anything that you wanna add, you probably can as long as you're willing to put enough wax onto your surface. This is our tissue paper piece that we made a few days ago. I'm gonna think about what I wanna do to add to it. I have a couple of cornstarch and silicone molds that I made as demos for a sculpture class that I taught online a little bit ago and I've already poured and pulled - cast - a piece in this rope mold in pure beeswax. I also have this resin mold, so if you have a bunch of these from Twinkie's resin class, feel free to bust them out now to use with wax too. We're gonna pour a little bit of wax in one of these and let it cool and we'll attach

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that to the surface too, maybe this beautiful red for fun. Remove the sticks. Let's see if I can pour this, ha ha. Of course, I picked the trickiest one to pour and use that little lip and I'll just do a little one. Okay, if you want your mold to be clean, you might want to get rid of this extra before it cools all the way. I'm just gonna take this off and then I'm gonna leave the rest. I don't mind if it's a little bit imperfect. Okay, so we'll let that cool and then we'll figure out where we wanna put those two. I also have some rope, I think, continuing to riff off of our friend, Cy Twombly, I wanna continue this loop-de-loop. So maybe I'll prep the loops beforehand. And obviously, you can play with the scale. I won't make them quite so prominent. You can use ribbon and string and scraps of fabric. Any fiber-esque material will work great. So I'm gonna place some new, hot wax and then sort of slowly slide this down. I'm hoping, I think I want it to be like, in this area and it's cooling pretty fast, so I'll just put a layer down and then heat it up and get my rope into place. I think because this is loop-de-loop, I think I can put it into place and heat it up and then smush it down. I'm gonna try that technique. All right, there we go. You are gonna live there. So just like with the dried flowers, I'm not worried about it getting totally pressed down. I just wanna make sure I have contact and that it's not gonna move and I don't wanna have my finger sitting under the heat gun. It actually gets really hot and you could burn yourself. So that's why I was using the tweezers to hold the rope kind of in place. This one is the least stuck. Hit that one again. There we go. Okay, not gonna cover that yet because we have other pieces we wanna contend with. So I wanna get those into place before I decide where I'm gonna put more wax on top and maybe, it's not gonna super fit in this area. Maybe we'll go ahead and put that there and hopefully this is cool enough. Yes it is. Okay, so I can, with my tweezers, break off some of this excess and I'm gonna use this as the backside, so I don't really care if it's not perfect or smooth on that side. Okay, so these two wax castings, I have to be a little more careful because if I heat them too much, they're gonna totally dissolve and melt away. So I have to be a little cautious in terms of much I heat them up and where I'm gonna end up putting them. So maybe I'll put this one down here. I think that looks good. I'm gonna heat this up just a little bit and then some fresh wax. And same with this one. I'm gonna heat this up just a little bit, not too much. Don't want it to melt. You can also make 3D elements out of tissue paper so you can fold it, you can cut little squares, you can dip it into the wax and have it hold its shape. Maybe I will try and make a kind of rope or on theme. This is a one theme pony. Okay, kind of looks like rope. Okay, do I wanna do a loop-di-loop? I think we'll do an arch, arch is easier. Okay, I think this yellow ochre might be nice. So mix it up, make sure it is not clumpy. I wanna make sure this holds its shape. So I think I'm just gonna dip this side first 'cause I can hold onto the edges. Still a little wet, but that's okay. This yellow ochre is so opaque, it no longer even looks like tissue paper. Maybe I will quickly show you what just tissue paper dipped in a clearer wax looks like 'cause it is really pretty. You can sit there and do that again. All right, twist, twist, twist, twist, make a new rope. And this one might be a little longer so I might be able to get three. Nope, I can't, okay, arch it is. I'll make a smaller one 'cause that one also is a little big. Okay, and I'll just put this in the regular beeswax and you'll see it's a little less heavy. And look. Okay, so remember if you wanna change the shape, do it before it's dry. Once it's dry, it's pretty stuck. Okay, where am I gonna stick you? Hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm. I think this is still hot enough for me to just place and stick down enough to just secure it a little bit. I'll add some wax to it in a sec, but just to make sure it's stuck. I think that is, that's great. These two wax pieces are definitely stuck and now I have to decide if I wanna cover this in wax or if I wanna just make sure it's secure and leave the rope as is. I think I'll cover it, just because it might collect dust or it just might look nice to see with the wax on top, I'm gonna use just the medium so it doesn't have too much of the yellow tone. And we'll just cover it up this way too. I am going to be positive it's not

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gonna flop around or move at any point. I've seen some pieces where people have used fiber, embedded in wax, using a cradle panel and placing things, fiber, cloth, string, rope into the panel, then pouring wax on top of it. That looks really great too. And if you crochet or make ribbon flowers, you can put those in here too. Okay, think that's good. And I'm gonna make sure that this arch, tissue paper arch, also nicely secured. And now I'm gonna fuse, keeping in mind I want to be careful not to fully melt the castings, but I want to fuse the rest. Let's start on this end 'cause it's safer. The edge of this casting is starting to get melty, so I'm gonna pull back and forth to make sure I don't melt it. There's a little pool of wax in there. I'm trying to make it dissipate a little more evenly. Okay, I think everything is pretty well secure, not going anywhere. The last thing I can do is either decide to leave some extra rope. Oh nope, that is not quite secure, still hot. Shame on me. I can cut these and I'm gonna hit that edge a little bit with some wax 'cause it doesn't have any on it and I wanna make sure that it doesn't fray. I'll do this a little bit again since I moved it when it was hot. Okay, just re-fuse that a little bit. Okay, and I think I'm gonna leave that alone now. I think it looks great.

Day 15 - Book cover
- I wanna share with you a couple ways that I've used encaustic in my own practice that aren't necessarily traditional. This is not panels and not a painting. When I was an undergrad, I did a lot of work in ceramics, and I cast these molds, these little kind of, I called them dress form figurines, and I played with them, I punched holes in them, I wrapped them in different materials, and then I discovered that if I put beeswax on them, they got this really beautiful and amazing surface. So beeswax on top of ceramic is something that I think is really great. Obviously, don't eat out of this. You don't wanna eat your beeswax, but for something decorative, or if you had a kiln and wanted to make some flat tiles. I've also drawn with India ink on top of ceramic, and then put beeswax on top of that, and that also looks really beautiful, so you can think about other ways to utilize wax as a material, and then I wanna show you a project that I did in my studio for myself, mostly for fun. This is an old Jung book on memories and dreams, and I just thought it would be really fun to create something out of this sort of textbook that doesn't really have any use for me, but I really like the ideas behind it. I really like thinking about the psychology of your dreams and what they might mean, and I thought this would be kind of a pretty way to keep the book around and repurpose it and reuse it instead of it just collecting dust on a shelf. Today, I'm gonna show you how I created this. I embedded a photo, which actually came from inside the book. You could obviously choose any random photo, or if you didn't want to lose a photo, you could photocopy it or scan it and print it or do any other method in order to have imagery in here, but I chose something from inside the book, and then I measured it and cut a little hole, a groove into the cover, and then I thought about kind of what the image meant and what the book was about, and I often associate dreams with kind of space and constellations, and so I created this kind of little moon map, constellation map, with some traditional names of constellations and drew all this stuff with a gold gel pen, and then placed one layer of wax on top to just kind of seal it. And if I wanted to really make this a sculptural object, I could wax the book closed. I could glue it together and put some wax along all the edges, and then it would never open again, but I like the idea of it still being a functional book with this beautiful cover. We have found this great book on shorthand, and we're gonna use this to do a very similar thing. I'm gonna poke around inside and see if there is a photo or some kind of image I wanna put on the cover. Oh my God, this is so beautiful. Now I wanna learn shorthand. I might take this page out because I might use this for inspiration, or I might use it as the image on the cover, and then

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let's see what else we have. Ooh. Ooh. Choices, choices. This is kinda great. Okay, I'm gonna use that. This one I'm gonna cut a little bit more carefully instead of tearing it. So looking at the cover, I don't have a ton of space to create a little window unless I wanted to get rid of something, but I don't. I want to be able to see Gregg Shorthand, and I want this little GPCO or whatever that is, so I'm gonna use this little space as my window. Do I want "kit, get, need" or "mat, calm, came"? I think I'll use "kit, get, need," and I don't want that text. I just want... Okay, do I want a little space or do I want up to the box? I think up to the box. I can be really fussy and measure kind of where the middle of the book is. Five-inch book. Two and a half is the center. I'm gonna eyeball within in the space. All right, so there's my frame. I'm gonna use my ruler to keep me cutting on a straight line, and I have already broken off the tip of my utility knife, so it's pretty new. It has a little bit of wax on it from other things we've cut, but not at the tip of the blade, so I'm not gonna worry about that. Okay, and this is where you wanna be careful. Don't cut your finger. Go slow. Once you create a groove, it'll be a little bit easier, and you wanna make sure that you cut all the way through. And I'm gonna wait to get to the corners until I have all four sides, or wait to get into the precision of the corners. Okay. So you can start to see if you can peel up the cover material. Sometimes it's really easy, sometimes it's not. Sometimes I just dig into the middle like this and create little sections and try to lift them out more individually. (upbeat electronic music) Just trying to make it fairly level inside this little well, and I like it when the image kind of meets up with the cover of the book. If you wanted to, you could sink it a little deeper. I would just caution, the book cover is not super thick, and you might cut all the way through it. Could still work. If you do, don't despair if you do that by accident. Okay, what I'm doing here is just trying to level out the well without removing too much more material. I'm using kind of the top of the blade like a sander. It's kind of like sanding. Anything that's taller than it kind of gets swept up and taken out. Okay, so the only area I'm a little bit worried about are the corners, and this corner in particular feels a little high. There we go. And once you kinda create this well, it's a little bit easier, because you can butt up against the edge that you've created, so you'll know. Still be careful, but it's not quite as precarious as in the very beginning. Okay, so let's test. That looks pretty good. It's gonna be fairly nice and level. I might just trim off this little bit of excess again to make it a teeny bit easier to fit in there. Okay. So let's get rid of all the dusty bits, (book scratching) and now we are pros at using the wax and laying things into the wax and covering it up with wax, so this hopefully should not be too stressful. I'm gonna hold this in my left hand. I might need a smaller brush. All right, got a smaller brush. Just gonna use the medium, lay some wax in there. I'm gonna build up a little bit of it. This will also tamp down any last bits of dust. All right. That looks good. I'm gonna heat that. Get the paper in there. (heat gun blowing) Thanks. Right in there nicely. "Kit, get, need," and then cover that with some wax. Do not fall, my heat gun. Just gonna get it up to the level of the book and then fuse it so we can make it smooth, and we can read the text again. Right, we'll let that sit. I'm gonna think about how I wanna decorate the cover. Use this inside sheet as inspiration. I definitely do not know how to do shorthand at all. Got a couple of gel pens, which will reflect, I think, nicely on this dark color. I often wanna make sure and test the gel pens so that I know the ink is flowing. Ooh, that fluorescent yellow is nice. Okay, white is nice. Gold also works. Let's do the fluorescent yellow. It'll pop on the red cover, and I think I'm just gonna mimic what I see here, pretend like I know how to do shorthand, which I do not, but that's okay. Kind of like calligraphy in a foreign language that I don't know how to speak. Sorry to anyone who knows what they're doing in shorthand. And I'm just gonna go ahead and cover the text on the cover. I don't mind, but you could avoid it if you wanted to. We have my very fake impression of shorthand on the cover, but the contrast looks really good, I think, and we're gonna put a light layer

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of medium on top of everything that will also make sure that the gel pen stays in place and won't rub off, and use the bigger brush, so that... Do it a little more smooth. (button clicking) (heat gun blowing) (button clicking) Looks pretty fused. I'm gonna wait for it to cool a little bit and then turn it on the spine, because I had a little bit drip onto the spine, which is fine, but I'm gonna fuse that so that it's a little more even. You can use this method to sort of sculpturize a book that you wanna keep, or you can create a journal or embellish your sketchbook. This would be a really great way to create a personal book that you will really enjoy using.

Day 16 - Final thoughts
- On our last day together, I wanna take a look at all the work that we've made in class and also some things that I've done in my own studio for fun. You'll be able to now I think, recognize the different techniques and the pieces that you haven't seen on camera yet. I also wanna go over a few storage tips and a couple ideas on ways to finish things. So first off, I think you'll remember that this piece had tape on the sides, so I took all the tape off and it is very clean and very precise. You can take this edge and leave it, or if you want to, sometimes it's nice to put a color. In this piece, I used just a regular paint pen and painted the sides yellow, and then I added another layer of wax so that it sort of reflected the surface in a similar way so that it wasn't just bright yellow paint sitting on the sides. That's a way you can also consider finishing your pieces. You could also put a pretty washi tape or glue some paper down on the sides of your panels. Any of those would be great ways to finish. In terms of storing, you really wanna think about the delicacy of the surface of your works. So if everything's in a cradle panel and nothing is close to the edge and there's nothing hanging off, you don't really have to be super concerned other than beeswax does attract dust. So if you're not gonna put things on the wall, you might wanna store them very carefully long term, that means using some glassine or some tissue paper on the surface and then wrapping in plastic. Do not put plastic or bubble wrap directly on the surface of the wax because if it heats up, the plastic will embed into your wax and create a texture that you probably weren't expecting. Also, don't keep any of your beeswax pieces in direct sunlight. So this is true, even if you're gonna display them in your house, you don't want them next to a window that gets full sun all day long. They aren't super precious. It's not like watercolors where things are gonna fade, but you definitely don't wanna come home to a little pool of wax on the floor because it's been dripping slowly 'cause it got really hot. So just keep all of that in mind. Cool, dry storage. Make sure everything's wrapped up very carefully. Keep everything clean. If the surface does get dusty, you can use a really nice soft microfiber cloth to clean things off. I sometimes also put a tiny bit of linseed oil on a paper towel or a soft cloth and rub it against the surface, and that usually just kind of burnishes things and clean things up really nicely. Let's take a look at some of these pieces. In the beginning of the month, we started off really simply just testing some materials and seeing what would happen. Here are a couple of my examples of that where I just used a ruler, stencil and used oil pastel and created a series of hexagons. Here we've got two different versions of the oil pastel embedded into the paraffin wax. So just changing the composition really changes how the piece looks overall. This is a really simple way to set up a collage piece. This was a piece of gridded paper that I used my cursive typewriter to type on, just kind of random journaling, and I very carefully cut out gridded squares and then just placed it and embedded it in wax. It looks complicated, but it's not at all. We have all of our collage techniques and our carving and filling techniques, and we have our 3D techniques over here. In this piece, I actually laid a piece of tape down and created a barrier so that when I put this titanium white in, I had a stop line. So that's how this line is fairly clean. I used a plastic cookie cutter in here,

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and I actually just used some oil paint. You can certainly mix those two materials together. I didn't wanna put more wax on the titanium white because remember, the titanium is a little bit fussy and a little hard to fuse and keep really flat. And I also just wanted kind of like some painterly mark making. So I took a paper towel and took some, I think it's alizarin crimson, and I just kind of rubbed it around and used some linseed oil until I got the marks that I wanted. So that is certainly something you can try. The top of this piece has the tissue paper technique that I love, which is the same thing that we channeled Wombly for. And then I created these little 3D triangle boats, hats. I don't know what they are, and I dipped them in wax and I stuck them on something. Like this is really delicate. So in fact, in transporting this here, this little green guy came off. But it's very easy to just use your heat gun and reapply. This is something to keep in mind when you transit these pieces around. Definitely have a heat gun or something with you so that you can reapply things if they come off in the car or BART or in the bus or wherever you may be. This piece also has some stenciling and I use the tjanting tool to create these circles. And I just created these little raised dots over here, very similar to what we did in this piece in class. And then here we have the plethora of collaging and different mark making materials. In this piece, I stamped some of those wooden letters. This is a U that I turned both upside down and right side up, and then I filled it with some India ink and then placed wax on top of it. And then this was yellow wax transfer paper instead of the red that we used in the dear deer piece. And you can easily see here the difference between when you cover gold foil and don't cover gold foil. You have so many options. I also wanna show you a couple of pieces that some friends of mine made. So this piece is a really cool bird motif. I believe she used a stamp and then created a line and filled it. So this is carved kind of like how we did the star here, and then she went over it with brown and filled in the bird. So it's a really delicate, super fine line, which can be a little challenging but not terrible. And here we have a piece by my friend Beverly Rayner. It was definitely the inspiration for the book project. She did a series of these where she took letters. I think she found them, although some of them may have been from her family members, and she took the letters and dipped them in wax so they become a little bit translucent and you can sort of see that there's something inside. And then she carved out these little areas and put lips in them. So it was kind of like people were reading the letters to you and put them in these really beautiful frames. I definitely love these. And she also did a series of book pieces with lips in them as well. They're really stunning. If you have a minute, you should check her out. I hope that you've seen how much fun encaustic can be and that it's really so easy to blend maybe other parts of your studio practice with it. If you are a collager or a photographer or a fiber artist or a stamper or whatever it is that you do, you can certainly blend it with encaustic. And encaustic only adds this really beautiful way of integrating all these different materials. It may seem like it's a little bit hard to get started, but I promise you, once you have your materials and get set up, if you can leave them out and ready to go, you will certainly add encaustic to your practice.

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