



BOTANICAL ARTS - CREATIVE FUN!

By Dodie Jackson
Garden Club of Houston
Laurel Garden Club

Botanical Arts is creative fun whether it is for flower show competition or just a delightful personal project. There is a distinction to be made between Jewelry and Embellishments. Jewelry is made from scratch. An Embellishment is an object that is covered or partially covered with botanical materials, i.e. a decorative box, a shoe, or an egg would fall under Embellishments, a bracelet or earrings would be considered jewelry.

Remember to use the principles and elements of design when creating your piece: Line, Form, Space, Texture, Color, Proportion.

RULES:

To be a true "Botanical Art," don't use anything with carved wood or manufactured materials, such as pasta and Popsicle sticks. You cannot use clay, seashells, real or fake gems or glitter. There are non-plant materials you can use for mechanics, such as cardboard, metal and twine, but they must be fully covered with botanical material.

MATERIALS:

All materials should be dried and stored in a dry box. Do not store your materials in sealed plastic bags as they will degrade. Always get at least three pieces of plant material. Some flower shows will require one piece for the Sample Card. The second is for the piece itself and the third is for possible repairs.

From the kitchen: seeds like coriander, celery, coffee, dill, mustard, poppy, peppercorns, pumpkin, sesame, corn, most nuts, rice, dried beans, and dried split peas.

Leaves and Stems: Most leaves will dry beautifully for use, but the following seem to be tried and true: magnolia, pine, dogwood, ferns, grape vines, grasses of all kinds, wisteria, vinca, bamboo and boxwood.



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Seed pods and berries: daylily, hyacinth bean, nandina, pinecones, pine nuts, rose hip, sunflowers, squash, walnuts, pecans, acorns honey locust, poke berries.

Other:

Allium, astilbe, butterfly vine, moonflower, hibiscus, hydrangea, rudbeckia, viburnum, sedum, yew, yucca, cactus needles, sunflower petals and centers, tallow berries, thistle, poppy heads, button mums, inland sea oats, gourds, pea pods, lily pods, lavender stems, lambs ear, dusty miller, ferns and fern fronds.

***Note: dried mushrooms are NOT considered botanical material, as they are a fungus, but can be used when identified as such.

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES:

Styrofoam block, good worktable with good light and a magnifier, needle nose pliers, pins of every kind, quilting, straight, T-pins, sewing scissors, plant clippers, cardboard, gesso, nail polishes in many colors, nail polish thinner, varnish, paint thinner, tweezers, glue dots,

toothpicks, wax paper, sanding paper, very fine, paint brushes, masking tape, paints, acrylic and oil base, paper plates for mixing paints and glues, bead drill or a Dremell drill, clamps

Judges will look for the following:

- * Is the piece clean with no glue showing, or glue strings?
- * Does the piece have the elements of design?
- * Does the piece look like a piece of fine jewelry?
- * Does it look real?
- * Does it fit with the Class Description?

HELPFUL TIPS:

* Choose a work space where you can come and go. There is a lot of time in drying paints and glues, make sure you have good ventilation.

101 Sherbrook Circle • Conroe, Texas 77385-7750
(936) 321-6990 Metro • (936) 273-1200 Conroe • Fax (936) 273-1655



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- * Place an old white sheet under your work area, as it will help you find tiny pieces of plant material that may fall to the floor.
- * Work with a good light. I use a Spectrum light, available at craft stores.
- * Make a template of what your piece will be displayed on. That will ensure your piece is not too large or small for its space in the show.
- * Set extra pieces aside as you work. It will make it easier to assemble your sample card.
- * Buy a good sable paint brush, as sable does not shed. It is so hard to pick those hairs out of wet paint!