

Bonus Demonstration

Experimental Painting by Lisa L. Cyr

How to Make a Custom Tool

Using everyday materials, custom tools can be easily produced as a way to introduce signature markmaking and imprints onto the working surface.

These one-of-a-kind instruments allow for a distinctive, personal approach to picture making and can help extend the visual message of your artwork.



1 Making the Base

Using a hand saw, a two-inch diameter mailing tube is cut to approximately ten inches long. A bigger trim size can also be used for larger works. The plastic caps at the ends of the tube are pulled out and put to the side.



2 Coating the Surface

A four-inch paint roller is temporarily inserted part way into the tube, allowing it to be used as a holding device while coating the surface. Three coats of acrylic matte medium are applied with a soft flat brush all around the tube to seal the surface. Once dry, acrylic matte gel medium is applied to establish the base coat. A thicker application of gel medium will allow for a more dimensional texture while a thinner coat will result in a very subtle relief.

materials

Masonite
Mailing tube
Fabric lace
Relief blocks
Paint rollers: 9-inch (23cm) and 4-inch (10cm)
Paint roller handle
Offset pastry spatula
Metal ruler

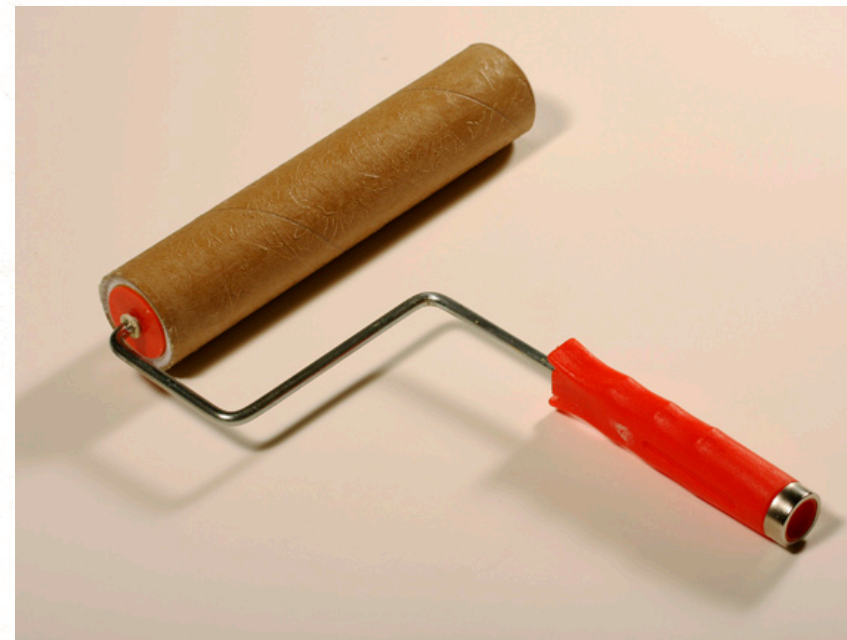
Acrylic matte medium
Acrylic matte gel medium
Molding paste
White gesso

Nylon brush: flat
Sandpaper
Cotton cloth
Hand saw



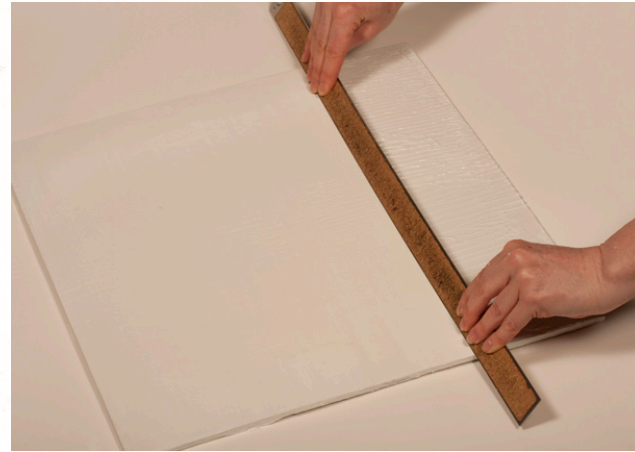
3 Creating the Design

While the gel medium is still wet, the tube is slowly but firmly rolled over a piece of fabric lace, debossing the surface with a generalized overall texture. For more detailed areas, various relief blocks are also imprinted into the surface. Almost any material, porous and non-porous, can be used to infuse texture. The tube is allowed to dry overnight in an upright position.



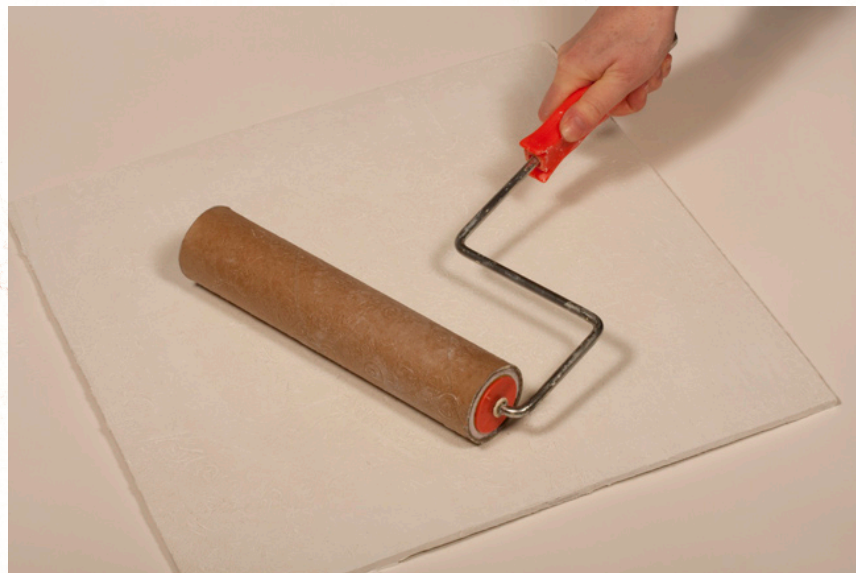
4 Assembling the Tool

Once the gel medium has fully cured, sandpaper is used to smooth out any unwanted peaks that may exist on the surface. The small roller is removed and a large roller attached to a handle is fully inserted inside for an even distribution of weight and ease of use. One of the plastic caps is used to seal the other side of the tube.



5 Preparing the Surface

A layer of molding paste is applied to a gesso-primed Masonite surface with a pastry spatula. A metal ruler is used along the vertical as well as the horizontal to thin down and evenly distribute the molding paste. A very heavy coating of molding paste will not work for this application.

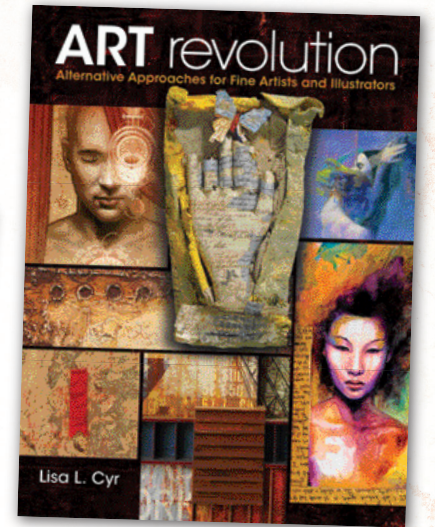
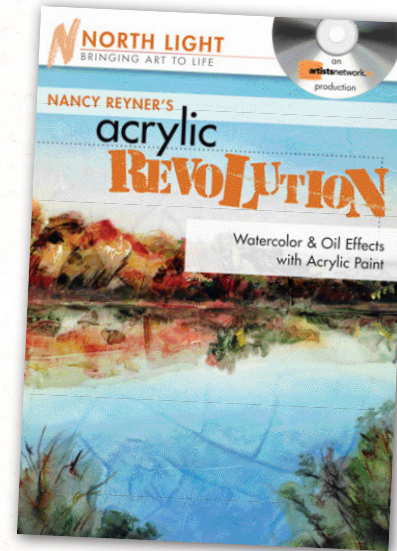


6 Revealing the Surface

The custom tool is employed by pressing down firmly on the surface and rolling it slowly in various random directions, allowing for a layered texture that is completely unique to unfold. If any molding paste builds up on the tube, it can be simply wiped away with a slightly damp cotton cloth. Since the tube is sealed, it can be cleaned with water and a nail brush and reused for other applications. When cleaning, it is important to insert the plastic caps on either side to protect the interior of the tube once the handle and roller have been pulled out.

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