



# DECORATIVE FURNITURE

*with* DONNA DEWBERRY



*Enhance every room in your home  
with these easy painting projects*

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## Introduction

The concept of this book was created from many of the ideas that resulted from my interior decorating days. Sometimes a client of mine would have an unusual or sentimental piece she wanted to use as part of a room's decor, but the piece just wasn't right. So my thought was always... just paint it to fit! Decorative painting allows that alternative.

This book is for all those times when I had to stretch my abilities and to acknowledge that the only way to grow is to leave my comfort zone. With that in mind, I hope you will try some of these projects and in the process may discover a new depth to your own creativity.

I would like to tell you a true story that will help illustrate this point. My husband built custom homes for many years and worked with many interior decorators. One of the main things he learned was that often a homeowner wanted something a certain way but was unable to clearly explain what he or she wanted. And even though the interior decorator was a professional, many times she was not completely in tune with the owner's wishes.

So when I began decorating homes, my husband encouraged me to be a good listener. That turned out to be good advice, because many times I discovered that the client was not who I had perceived them to be.

There was one instance where I was finishing up an entire decorating project and applying the final touches and

hanging pictures. Suddenly my well-travelled (and to this point, accommodating) client pulled out a couple of small tables she had acquired in her travels. Now, these tables would have been okay in a den (or better yet, in a dentist's office) but they would have been completely out of place in her elegant living room. She was determined to have me fit them in, and if it weren't for my husband's advice, I would have refused.

My client began to relate how she had acquired these pieces and the memories they brought for her. I realized that if I did not incorporate them into the room, she would upon my departure.

I was then able to see these pieces from her point of view and realized that with a little paint and a few new pieces of hardware, they would actually make a nice addition to her living room.

My client was delighted! What could have been a disaster turned out to be just the opposite.

Isn't decorative painting wonderful? Just think — a few brushstrokes and a little color can change an ordinary or unworkable piece of furniture into a family heirloom, a treasured addition to your home's decor, and an expression of your own creativity.

# Materials

## Paints and Mediums

For all the projects in this book, I used FolkArt acrylic paints made by Plaid. They come in small plastic squeeze bottles that are really handy to use, and can be found at any craft or art supply store. I like FolkArt paints not only because they're rich and creamy and easy to blend, but also because they're lightfast and permanent — so important when painting furniture. Because they're acrylic and water-based, clean-up is easy. And they come in so many different colors that you'll rarely have to mix your own.

Some of the colors used in these projects are called FolkArt Artists' Pigment. They're still bottled acrylic paints but they have more pigment in them so the colors are a little more saturated.

Each project in this book includes a color swatch chart of all the colors I used to paint each piece of furniture, so you shouldn't have any trouble matching colors if you prefer to use a different brand of acrylic paint.

I also use FolkArt's Floating Medium for subtle shading and to make some of my colors a little more transparent. I just mix the gel-like Floating Medium with my paint color on the palette, or I load my brush first with Floating Medium, then side load into my paint color.

On a few of the furniture pieces in this book I used a tiny amount of FolkArt's Gold Reflecting Medium. It comes in the same kind of handy squeeze bottle as the regular acrylic colors, but if you can't find it at your local store, try using FolkArt's Inca Gold Metallic instead.

Finally, to preserve and protect all your handpainted pieces of furniture, I recommend using Waterbase Varnish by FolkArt in the satin finish. After you have completed painting each piece, check it over to make sure you're happy with it. Let the paint dry completely, then apply at least two coats of the varnish, sanding between each coat. If you plan to use the piece outdoors, use a varnish that is formulated for exterior use.

## Brushes

The brushes used in all my projects are the FolkArt One-Stroke brushes from Plaid. These can be purchased at any arts and crafts supply store and they come in the sizes I use most often: a 3/4-inch (19mm) flat, a no. 12 flat, no. 6 flat, no. 2 flat, a no. 2 script liner, a no. 1 script liner, a large and small scruffy brush, and a fan brush. The bristles on all these brushes are synthetic (except for the natural-bristle scruffy brushes) and were designed especially for my painting technique.

## Supplies

Most of the other supplies used for these projects can be found around the house or at art supply stores and home improvement centers. I don't use a fancy artist's palette for my paints — I just use plain white Styrofoam plates. The paint doesn't absorb into the plates; they're lightweight and easy to hold; and when you're finished, just throw them away!

I always keep a paper towel next to my painting area for blotting excess water out of my brush and for general cleanups. Clear plastic wrap can be used to make interesting "faux finish" effects. And a rectangular household sponge can be used to paint shading (see Project 10 for step-by-step photos on painting a trompe l'oeil cabinet with a household sponge).

I use sandpaper and sanding blocks to smooth out my raw wood furniture pieces, then foam brushes or rollers for basecoating them, sanding lightly between coats.

A square plastic brush basin is very handy for cleaning paint out of your brushes. It has two separate compartments for dirty water and clean water.

Finally, I use tracing paper, black or gray graphite paper and a stylus or pencil to transfer my patterns onto my project pieces. These items can be found at art supply stores.





# How to Load Your Brushes with Paint

## Side Loading



**1** First, dampen your brush in clean water, then blot excess off on a paper towel. Work your dampened brush back and forth into the clear, gel-like Floating Medium.



**2** To side load your brush, stroke the prepared brush into your desired color, stroking next to the puddle of paint, not into its middle. Work the brush back and forth to load paint into both sides of the brush.

## Double Loading



**1** To double load your brush, dampen it in clean water, blot, then dip one corner into your first color.



**2** Flip your brush over and dip into the second color. Don't be concerned if your bristles split — they'll come back together as you work the paint in.



**3** On your palette, use a lot of pressure to work paint into the bristles.



**4** Reverse direction and stroke a second time going the opposite way. Keep the white side of the brush on the same side all the time.



**5** Repeat steps 3 and 4, working your brush back and forth, picking up more paint on the corners two or three times. The brush is fully loaded when the paint comes at least two-thirds of the way up the bristles.



**6** Now that the brush is fully loaded, very gently dip a corner into each color. You need to pick up more paint for almost every stroke. Don't stroke on your palette anymore after you've dipped the corners. Just begin painting on your surface.



## Multi-Loading

**7** To add more than two colors to your brush, dip the already-dipped corners into two other colors, ending up with two colors on each corner. I usually dip the darker corner into the darkest color, and the lighter corner into the lightest color. Do not work these third and fourth colors into your brush. Just leave them on the corners.

## Loading the Script Liner



**1** The script liner is the only brush I use where I may add water to the paint. Dip the bristles into water and make circular motions next to your puddle of paint on the palette, picking up a little bit of paint and working it into the water.



**2** When the paddle has an inky consistency, roll the bristles as you pull out of the puddle so paint doesn't drip off your brush.

## How to Use Floating Medium



**1** I like to use a "gel" floating medium when I'm getting very dry strokes because the paint is soaking into the wood, or because the climate is very dry. Fully load your brush with the desired paint colors, then dip the chisel edge of the brush into the floating medium.

If floating medium is not available, you can use water. Dip just the chisel edge into water, but be careful not to overdo it.



**2** Work the floating medium into the bristles back and forth on the palette. But be careful — your colors may become muddy if you pick up floating medium too often. ("Muddy" means you don't see your shading and highlighting colors — you get an overblended look.) I usually pick up more floating medium every third or fourth stroke when I'm painting.



## Loading the Scruffy Brush

A "scruffy" brush can be a one-inch (25mm) flat brush that may be worn out. Just cut the bristles off to leave a flat, stubby surface, then fluff them out with your finger to the desired shape.

My scruffy is oval shaped with soft, natural bristles, which makes it possible to pounce the bristles and have them spring back. I like to use this brush for moss, grass, and flower centers.



**1** With a dry scruffy, pounce with pressure into a puddle of your first color. Be sure to pounce into the edge of the paint puddle, not the center.



**2** Repeat this step with the other half of the brush into your second color. Pounce firmly into the paint.



**3** This is how your scruffy brush should look when it's correctly and fully loaded.



**4** You can multi-load your scruffy just as you can any other brush. Pounce your loaded scruffy on the palette, then pounce again into additional colors, darker colors to the darker side of the brush, lighter colors to the light side.

# Basic Painting Techniques

## Painting Vines

**1** To paint vines, use the chisel edge of your flat brush. If your brush is double loaded, always lead with the lighter color. Slightly tilt the lighter corner up. This drags the green (or darker) bristles behind, automatically shading your vine and highlighting it at the same time.



**2** To make the vines flow naturally, you need to move your whole arm, not just the brush. When your vines are finished, begin placing a leaf by touching the chisel edge of the brush in a V-shape, keeping the green side toward the ends of the V. The next photo shows how this leaf was completed, then connected to the vine via a stem.



## Painting Leaves



**1** Never start a leaf right on top of the vine. Leaves connect to a vine via stems, so start your leaf away from the vine. Again, mark your starting points with a "V" touched on with the chisel edge of your double-loaded flat brush.



**2** For the first half of the leaf, start your brush on one line of the V, holding the green to the outer edge of the leaf.



**3** Wiggle your brush as you stroke, watching the green edge to get the desired shape. Pull the green all the way to the tip of the leaf, then lift up onto the chisel edge to finish. If you want a smooth-edged leaf, don't wiggle the brush, just stroke it smoothly.



**4** Paint the other half of the leaf, starting on the V and keeping the green of your brush to the outer edge of the leaf.

**5** With the chisel edge of your flat brush, pull a stem from the vine halfway into the leaf while the leaf is still wet. Lead with the lighter color and stay up on the tip of the chisel edge so the stem doesn't get too heavy.





## Painting a One-Stroke Leaf

**1** Double load your flat brush with green and either yellow or white. With the green side of the brush to the outer edge of the leaf, push down on the bristles so they're bent almost to the ferrule and begin your stroke.



**2** As you continue the stroke, turn the green corner of the brush toward where you want the tip of the leaf to end.



**3** Lift the brush as you slide to the point, ending up on the chisel edge of your brush. Now pull a stem into the leaf from the vine, leading with the lighter color.



## Creating a Natural Growth Pattern



1 As you paint your leaves and vines, check that they have a natural looking growth pattern to them. In this example, you can see that I've painted the leaves going all in one direction — not a natural look.



2 Use your fingers to indicate the direction the leaves are pointing.



3 Now turn your hand so your fingers are pointing the other direction. Now you can see that you'll need to add some leaves on the other side of the vine.



4 Doesn't this look more natural? All I did was add a few more one-stroke leaves to the left side of the vine.

## Curlicues and Calyxes



**1** Curlicues, or tendrils of new growth, are easy to paint with a script liner loaded with inky paint (see page 14, "Loading the Script Liner"). Holding the brush handle perpendicular to the surface, brace your pinky finger against the surface and move your whole arm in a smooth flowing motion.



**2** To paint a calyx (the protective leaves that grow up over a flower bud), double load a small flat brush with green and a lighter color such as yellow. Touch the chisel edge at the base of the bud, leaning the lighter corner of the brush toward the top of the bud. Stroke upward around the bud, lifting up to the chisel edge. Repeat on the other side of the bud.



**3** The center calyx is painted the same way, but the stroke is shorter — go only halfway up the bud.



**4** Pull a stem from beneath the bud and slide back to your main vine to connect.



## Painting Fern Leaves



**1** Double load a small flat brush, and paint the stem in the center. Pull fern leaves toward the stem by starting up on the chisel edge of the brush, then pushing down on the bristles.



**2** To taper each leaflet toward the stem end, lift back up to the chisel edge as you get closer to the stem. For natural looking ferns, overlap some of the leaflets.

## Transferring the Pattern



Patterns for all of the projects in this book are provided for you. The easiest way to transfer a pattern to your chosen surface is to first enlarge the pattern to the percentage given (any photocopy center can do this for you). Then place a piece of tracing paper over the enlarged pattern. Trace the pattern with a pen.

Now position the tracing paper on your surface and tape it down in a few places with low-tack tape. Slide some graphite paper in between the tracing paper and the surface, making sure the graphite side is toward the surface.

Using a stylus or pencil, trace only the outer edges of the design's major elements, not all the little details. Check your work by lifting up a corner every once in a while to make sure you haven't missed a line. Remove the graphite and the tracing paper, and you're ready to paint!



# Child's Tall Chest

## MATERIALS

PAINT: FolkArt by Plaid

(AP) = FolkArt Artists' Pigment



Wicker White



Orange Light



Sterling Blue



Berries 'n' Cream



Sunflower



Gray Plum



Basil Green

### Surface

- Tall, 6-drawer chest from Cabin Crafers
- Curtain finials from a home improvement center

### Brushes

- 6-inch (15cm) flat
- no. 12 flat
- no. 6 flat
- no. 2 script liner

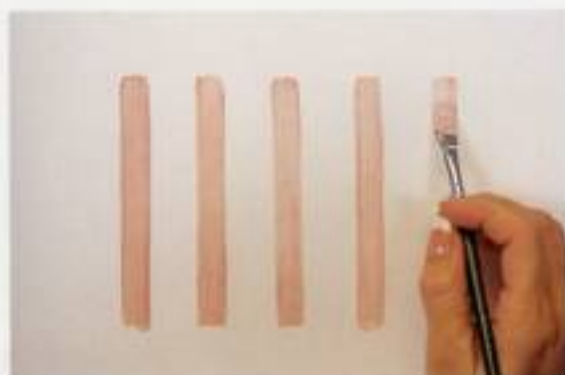
### Additional Supplies

- Fine sandpaper
- Waterbased satin varnish to seal and protect your painted finish

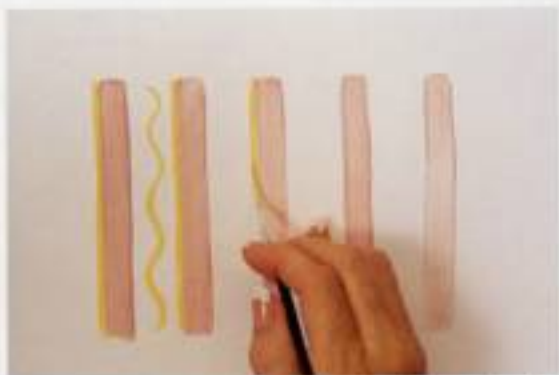
This tall, six-drawer chest is perfect for a child's little treasures. It started out as a plain, unfinished wood cabinet. I bought two wooden curtain finials, screwed and glued the finials to the top, and painted the whole thing with two to three basecoats of Wicker White, sanding lightly between coats. The designs painted on the drawer fronts and finials are so whimsical and easy to do you won't need a pattern. Just paint them freehand!



## Paint Colorful Designs



**1** Fully load a no. 12 flat brush with Berries 'n Cream. Starting at the top edge of the first drawer front, stroke downward to make pink stripes.



**2** Using a no. 2 script liner and inky Sunflower, pull yellow pinstripes down the side of the pink stripes. Then pull a wavy yellow stripe down the center.

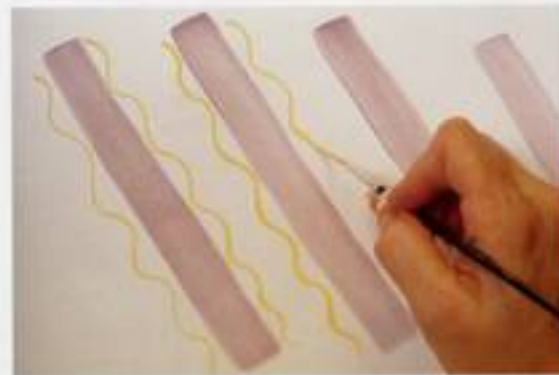


**3** For the second drawer, fully load a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch (19mm) flat with Sterling Blue. Paint columns of angled checks from top to bottom, with each check touching the corner of the previous check.



**4** For the third drawer, fully load a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch (19mm) flat with Sunflower. Paint wavy yellow strokes from left to right. Using a no. 2 script liner loaded with inky Sterling Blue, add pinstripes between the yellow waves.

**5** For the fourth drawer, load a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch (19mm) flat with Gray Plum and paint diagonal stripes. Add wavy lines of inky Sunflower using a no. 2 script liner.





6 On the fifth drawer, paint a plaid with Basil Green on a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch (19mm) flat. Pull vertical strokes from top to bottom, then horizontals from left to right.



7 On the bottom drawer, paint circles of different sizes with a no. 12 flat fully loaded with Orange Light.



8 With inky Basil Green on a no. 2 script liner, paint a fine outline around each orange circle.



9 The decorative finials for the top of the chest had already been basecoated with Wicker White. Then I loaded Berries 'n Cream on a no. 6 flat and painted pink spiral stripes around the base, then a ring of Basil Green. I added Sunflower on the bigger ball, Basil Green vertical stripes, and finally Sterling Blue on the top ball. It's easier to paint the finials first, then attach them to the chest when the paint is completely dry.



10 The side panels of the chest were freehanded with a diagonal design. I loaded a no. 12 flat with Sterling Blue and pulled diagonal striping from top to bottom. I repeated this, reversing the diagonals. I added dots of Wicker White in the middle of all the criss-crosses. With Sunflower, I painted a teardrop in the center of each square by pushing down on the chisel edge of the flat brush and stroking upward.





# Cherries & Berries Desk Top

## MATERIALS

PAINT: FolkArt by Plaid

(AP) = FolkArt Artists' Pigment



Bayberry



Engine Red



Burnt Carmine (AP)



Wicker White



Midnight



Thicket



Burnt Umber (AP)



Yellow Ochre (AP)



Sunflower



Butter Pecan

### Surface

- Wooden desk top and metal stand by Robinson's Woods

### Brushes

- 1/2-inch (19mm) flat
- no. 12 flat
- no. 10 flat
- no. 6 flat
- no. 2 script liner

### Additional Supplies

- Floating Medium
- Fine sandpaper
- Waterbased satin varnish

The tilted desk top by itself would be a treasure, but add the metal stand and it becomes a charming accessory to a kitchen or family room. I basecoated the wooden desk top and the lower shelf with Bayberry, sanding lightly between coats. When the final basecoat was completely dry, I transferred the pattern for the cherries and berries design. For the metal stand I used red spray paint to accentuate the red cherries.

## Branches, Vines and Leaves



**1** Basecoat all sides of the desktop with Bayberry. Double load a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch (19mm) flat brush with Burnt Umber and Wicker White. Paint the larger branches around the perimeter, leading with the white edge of the brush.



**2** With the same brush, add smaller cherry branches to the lower right corner and top middle.



**3** Double load a no. 12 flat brush with Sunflower and Thicket and paint wandering vines up and around the branches, staying up on the chisel edge of the brush.



**4** Now double load a no. 10 flat brush with Thicket and Sunflower, and paint the larger two-sided leaves. Then add one-stroke leaves with the same colors on a no. 6 flat.



**5** Add clusters of cherry leaves onto the two cherry branches with Butter Pecan and Thicket double loaded on a no. 10 flat brush.

## Rosebuds and Berries



**6** Double load a no. 6 flat with Engine Red and Wicker White. Paint the upper petal of the rosebud using a C-stroke. Remember to keep the Wicker White side of the brush toward the top.



**7** For the lower petal, start and end the same as the upper petal, but paint a U-stroke, keeping the Wicker White toward the top.



**8** To layer the rosebud, add a third petal on top of, but a little lower than, the second petal.



**9** After all the rosebuds are finished, load Midnight on a no. 6 flat and basecoat the berry shapes.



**10** With Midnight on the same no. 6 flat brush, side load into Wicker White on one corner of the brush and make tiny little C-strokes for the seeds.



## Cherries and White Flowers



**11** To paint the cherries, load a no. 6 flat with Engine Red and side load into Burnt Carmine. Paint each cherry with the Burnt Carmine to the outer edge to give a rounded look.



**12** Painting cherries is easy! Just paint half of the cherry, then flip your brush over to paint the other half, always keeping the Burnt Carmine to the outer edge.



**13** Load your no. 6 flat with Floating Medium, stroke into Wicker White on your palette, and paint highlights on the cherries.



**14** To paint the white blossoms, double load a no. 6 flat with Yellow Ochre and Wicker White. Form a five-petal flower with rippled edges, holding Wicker White to each petal's outer edge.

## Pattern for Cherries & Berries Desk Top

This pattern may be hand-traced or photocopied for personal use only. Enlarge at 213% to bring it up to full size.



**15** For the finishing details, double load a no. 2 script liner with Thicket and Sunflower. Use the tip of the bristles to dot the centers of the white blossoms. Using the same brush, touch the top of each cherry and pull back to the branch for stems.

Add calyxes to the rosebuds and the berries using a no. 6 flat double loaded with Sunflower and Thicket. Load a no. 2 script liner with inky Thicket to make curlicues for the new vines.

Finally, check your work and add more rosebuds, berries or leaves if needed, continuing the design onto the flat area of the desktop.

On the drawer fronts, I added mini versions of the cherries and white blossoms (see page 26), and I painted the metal stand red to accentuate the cherries.







# 3-Drawer Chest with Florals

## MATERIALS

PAINT: FolkArt by Plaid

AP = FolkArt Artists' Pigment



Wickie White



Butter Pecan



Italian Sage



Burnt Umber (AP)



Raw Umber (AP)



Thicket



Yellow Ochre (AP)



Poppy Red



Night Sky



Dark Plum



Sunflower



Yellow Light (AP)



Mushroom



Maroon



Inca Gold  
Metallic

### Surface

- Wooden 3-drawer chest on cast iron stand from Robinson's Woods

### Brushes

- 1/2-inch (15mm) flat
- no. 12 flat
- no. 8 flat
- no. 6 flat
- no. 2 script liner
- small scruffy

### Additional Supplies

- FolkArt Floating Medium
- Fine sandpaper
- Sponge roller
- Clear plastic wrap
- Tracing paper
- Stylus
- Gray graphite
- Gold Reflecting Medium (opt.)
- Waterbased satin varnish

This chest reminds me a little bit of some old pieces I have seen around that aren't too pretty anymore and need to be given new life. The chest in the picture is actually a new, unfinished wood piece I bought that came with its own metal stand. I replaced the knobs that were on the drawers with clear glass knobs from a home improvement center. And the subtle "faux finish," which was actually applied after the basecoat but before the floral designs, can help hide any slight dents or scratches in the wood.

## Patterns For Flowers on 3-Drawer Chest



The large pattern is for the top of the chest; the smaller one in the center is for the drawer fronts. These patterns may be hand-traced or photocopied for personal use only. Enlarge at 385% to bring them up to full size.





## Paint an Easy "Faux Finish"



**1** First sand your surface to a smooth finish. Start with the top of the chest and basecoat with Wicker White, two to three coats, sanding between each coat. Put Butter Pecan and Italian Sage on your palette. Dampen your sponge roller in clean water, then roll into the two colors randomly but don't blend. Have a piece of clear plastic wrap ready.



**2** Roll the two colors onto the surface, covering a small area at a time. Don't roll too much, you don't want your colors to blend.



**3** Lay a piece of clear plastic wrap down over the paint and pat it down. Don't smooth out the wrinkles. Lift, and if needed, lay back down to cover all areas painted. Pull off the wrap.



**4** Here's how the "faux finish" looks — it's not too uniform. It has a random, aged look.

## Paint Branches and Leaves



**1** Load a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch (19mm) flat with Raw Umber and Wicker White. Then pick up Floating Medium if needed. Paint the branches around the perimeter using the chisel edge of the brush. Keep the branches loose and flowing. Fill in with additional branches. Take a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch (19mm) flat double loaded with Mushroom and Thicket and dip the Thicket corner into Raw Umber. Paint all the large leaves, then start adding smaller one-stroke leaves with a no. 12 flat and the same colors.



**2** With the same no. 12 flat, pick up Floating Medium on your brush and fill in clusters of even smaller one-stroke leaves. Pull stems into the leaves with a no. 2 script liner.



**3** Paint very small shadow leaves with Mushroom and Floating Medium double loaded on a no. 6 flat. Pull stems into the shadow leaves with the same colors on a script liner.

## Add Pink Flowers



**1** Using a no. 12 flat double loaded with Maroon and Wicker White, push down, wiggle and lift the brush to paint each petal in a sea-shell shape. Keep the white on the outer edge, and paint five to six petals for each blossom.



**2** Add a flower bud here and there, stroking a partial petal on the back of the bud.



**3** Layer partial petals to build the bud, always keeping the white side of your brush toward the top edge.



**4** Add a little green base to each bud with Thicket and Raw Umber on the chisel edge of your no. 12 flat. Make little strokes to attach the stems.



**5** To paint the flower centers, load a no. 2 script liner with Burnt Umber then drag the bristles through a puddle of white paint. Dot the centers with the tip of the bristles.



## Paint White Blossoms



**1** The white blossoms are larger than the pink ones but they're painted with the same technique. Double load Mushroom and Wicker White on a no. 12 flat to paint the petals, again keeping the white side of the brush toward the outer edge of each petal.



**2** Pounce centers in with a small scruffy brush loaded with Yellow Ochre.



**3** With the same scruffy brush, pounce into Thicket and Sunflower on your palette, then lightly pounce on top of the Yellow Ochre center.

## Purple and Yellow Blossoms



**1** To paint the purple blossoms, double load Dark Plum and Wicker White on a no. 12 flat. Start on the chisel edge, push down on the bristles and paint a tightly curved, teardrop-shaped petal with the white to the outside edge. Lift back up to the chisel edge to complete the petal. Stroke five or more petals for each blossom.



**2** An easy way to paint nice round centers is to touch the end of your brush handle into Sunflower, then dot each blossom center with the tip of the handle.



**1** To paint the yellow flowers, load Yellow Ochre and Wicker White on a no. 12 flat. Keep the Yellow Ochre toward the outer edge of the petals. Stroke the same as for the purple flowers, but leave more space between petals for a more open blossom.



**2** With inky Burnt Umber on a no. 2 script liner, touch the center and pull little stamens outward.



**3** With the same brush, stroke through Wicker White on your palette, then dot the ends of each stamen.



## Trumpet Vine



**1** To add variety to the flower shapes, paint some pink trumpet flowers with Poppy Red and Wicker White double loaded on a no. 12 flat. Wiggle the white edge of the brush upward to shape the back part of the opening.



**2** To shape the front of the opening, use the same brush and start a little lower over the back part. Wiggle the brush, with the white edge toward the top.



**3** Now pull the brush straight down on its chisel edge to fill in the rest of the front petal.



**4** Paint three or four long curving stamens on each blossom with inky Thicket on a no. 2 script liner. Start at the top of the stamen and pull back toward the opening.



**5** Dot the tip of each stamen with Wicker White and Yellow Ochre on your script liner.



## Blue Flowers

**1** These five-petal blue flowers are painted with a combination of Night Sky and Wicker White on a no. 12 flat. Keeping Night Sky to the outer edge, stroke upward to the point, then pull back down on the other side. Add a couple of buds in different stages of opening, using the same stroke.



**2** Dot in centers with a no. 2 script liner double loaded with Yellow Light and Wicker White.



**3** Here's how the top of the chest looks with all the blossoms and leaves finished. I added some curlicues of new stem growth with inky Thicket on a no. 2 script liner.



## Little Butterflies



**1** Double load a no. 12 flat with Wicker White and Yellow Ochre. Start on the chisel edge, push down on the bristles and lift back up to form the large back wing.



**2** Pick up more paint and use the same stroke to overlap the back wing with the front wing.



**3** Leading with Wicker White on the chisel edge, paint the bottom back wing, then overlap with the bottom front wing.



**4** With inky Burnt Umber on a no. 2 script liner, touch with the tip of the brush to form the head. Then lift up and pull away to form the body.



**5** For the butterfly's antennae, use the same brush with inky Burnt Umber and make light, curving strokes.



**6** If you wish, you can outline each wing with the same brush and inky Burnt Umber.



## Bumblebee



**1** The body of the bumblebee is painted with Yellow Ochre on a no. 6 flat. Dot the head on with Burnt Umber. Then load a no. 8 flat with Wicker White and stroke on back and front wings, the same as the butterfly.



**2** With a no. 1 script liner and inky Burnt Umber, make little parallel strokes to form furry stripes on the body.



**3** Use a no. 2 script liner and inky Burnt Umber to outline and stroke veins on the wings. Let dry. Soften the wing color with a bit of Inca Gold Metallic (or Gold Reflecting Medium).



**4** For the antennae and legs, use inky Burnt Umber on a no. 2 script liner. Keep a light touch to achieve these very fine lines.



## *A Dragonfly and a Moth*



**1** Load a no. 6 flat with Raw Umber and a little Thicket and paint the body of the dragonfly. Start with your brush flat for the widest part, then turn and lift up to the chisel edge for the narrower tail.



**2** Stroke on long, oval wings with a no. 8 flat fully loaded with Wicker White, then side loaded into Raw Umber. Keep the Raw Umber on the outer edges. Let dry.



**3** Add details to the dragonfly, like antennas, wing veins and stripes on the body, using the same colors and techniques as for the bumblebee.



**4** To paint a little moth, use the same colors as for the dragonfly. Paint the moth's body first, then add wings and antennas.

## *Finished Top of Chest*



Here's how the top of the chest looks with all the flowers in place and the little insects buzzing around. I think adding the little critters gives this floral design the feel of a real garden in the height of summer.

## Completed Drawer Fronts



The three drawer fronts are painted with the same floral elements as the top of the chest. Just adapt them to fit the size and shape of your chest of drawers. After all painting is finished, seal the entire chest with two to three coats of waterbased satin varnish. I added clear crystal drawer pulls for a touch of elegance.





# Flowers and Birds on 2-Door Cabinet

## MATERIALS

PAINT: FolkArt by Plaid

(AP) = FolkArt Artists' Pigment



Licorice



Raw Umber (AP)



Burnt Umber (AP)



Wicker White



Thicket



Butter Pecan



Sunflower



Periwinkle



Rose Shimmer Metallic



Yellow Light (AP)



Night Sky



Yellow Ochre (AP)



Burnt Carmine (AP)



Poppo Red



School Bus Yellow

### Surface

- 2-door cabinet from Robinson's Woods

### Brushes

- 5-inch (127mm) flat
- no. 12 flat
- no. 10 flat
- no. 6 flat
- nos. 1 and 2 script liners
- large and small scuffy brushes

### Additional Supplies

- Floating Medium
- Fine sandpaper
- White graphite paper
- Stylus or pencil
- 4 wooden curtain finials for the cabinet's feet (optional)

Any type of old or new two-door storage cabinet you may have would work for this design. I love the way the black background dramatizes the bright colors of the birds and flowers. The cabinet's feet are actually wooden curtain finials I found at a home store and painted black. They add a touch of sophistication and flair, and give the cabinet a lighter look.

## Pattern for Left Door



These patterns may be hand-traced or photocopied for personal use only. Enlarge at 263% to bring them up to full size.



## Pattern for Right Door



## Bird's Nest and Vines



**1** Basecoat the entire cabinet with Licorice. Let it dry, then transfer the patterns onto the two door fronts. To paint the bird's nest, base on a white area for the inside of the nest. With a no. 12 flat double loaded with Wicker White and Burnt Umber, use the chisel edge of the brush to paint little twigs around and around to form the nest. Paint the hanging vines with the same chisel-edge strokes.



**2** Using a 3/8-inch (19mm) flat double loaded with Sunflower and Thicket, paint the vines around the nest, stroking upward from the bottom. Paint the vines on the hanging feeder stroking down from the top.



**3** With the same brush and colors, add Floating Medium and paint in the grasses and stems with upward strokes of the brush. Be sure to stay up on the chisel edge and move your whole arm to achieve an airy, natural look.



**4** Pounce in moss on the feeder (avoiding the bird) with a large scruffy brush multi-loaded with Raw Umber, Thicket and Wicker White.

## Leaves and Details



**5** Paint the daisy leaves with *Thicket*, a lot of *Floating Medium* and a little *Sunflower*, with the *Sunflower* toward the outer edges because of the dark background.



**6** Fill in the rest of the leaves on both vines with *Thicket*, *Yellow Light* and *Floating Medium*.



**7** Paint corn kernels in the feeder with *Sunflower* and *Yellow Ochre* pounced on with a scruffy. Then go back in with a no. 6 flat and *Sunflower* and make individual kernels, occasionally picking up a little *Burnt Umber* on your brush for variety. To paint the eggs in the nest, load a no. 12 flat with *Night Sky* and *Wicker White* and paint the egg in the back first, then the two in front. Keep the *Night Sky* toward the outer edge. To create the fuzzy inside of the nest, pounce a small scruffy loaded with *Burnt Umber*, *Raw Umber* and *Wicker White*.



## Paint the Bluebird



**8** Begin the bluebird with the head and back. Double load a no. 12 flat with Periwinkle and Night Sky. Paint the head with Night Sky to the outer edge.



**9** Stroke down the bluebird's back with the flat of the brush, ending up on the chisel edge.



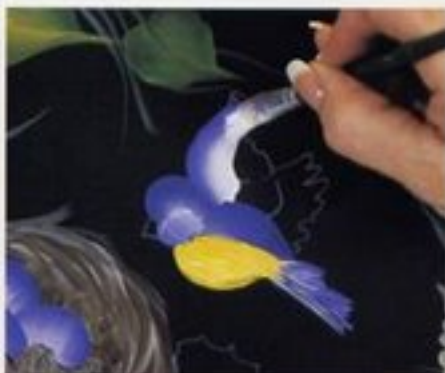
**10** Pick up Wicker White on the same brush and paint the bluebird's cheeks.



**11** The tail feathers are painted with Night Sky and Wicker White. Pull from the longest tail feather back toward the body, staying up on the chisel edge of the brush.



**12** Paint the breast with Yellow Light and Wicker White shaping it with the flat of the brush. Go back in on the chisel edge and detail some soft feathers on the breast.



**13** Double load Wicker White and Night Sky on your flat brush and paint the back wing.



**14** With the same brush and colors, add the longest feathers along the back wing, pulling the Night Sky from the outer edge in toward the wing.



**15** Double load Periwinkle and White on the same brush and add a second layer of feathers. Be sure to stay up on the chisel edge to get those fine, feathery lines.



**16** To paint the front wing, load your flat brush with Night Sky, Periwinkle and Wicker White and pull a long smooth stroke, overlapping the back wing.



**17** Add a layer of outer feathers with Periwinkle and Wicker White on the same brush, pulling the Periwinkle toward the wing's outer edge.



**18** Now pick up Yellow Light and Wicker White on the same brush for the second layer of feathers.



**19** Finish the front wing with a couple more layers of Periwinkle and Wicker White.





**20** Load a no. 1 script liner with Burnt Umber and add a neck band, eye and beak with short strokes.



**21** Dot in an eye with Licorice, and add white highlights on the eye and beak.



**22** Paint the other two bluebirds the same way using the same colors. Remember to paint the feathers underneath first. Start with the tail feathers, then the left wing, then the right.

## Daisies and Morning Glories



**23** Paint yellow daisies with School Bus Yellow, Yellow Ochre and Wicker White on a no. 10 flat. Pull the petals toward the daisy centers on the open flowers. For the buds, pull the petals toward the stems.

Wipe out excess yellow on your brush and pick up Wicker White. Repeat the same strokes for the white daisies. Pounce in the centers with Burnt Umber and Sunflower on a small scruffy brush.



**24** To paint the pink morning glories, double load Rose Shimmer and Wicker White on a no. 12 flat. Keeping the Rose Shimmer to the outside edge, begin painting the scallop shape of the trumpet, creating little "points" with your brush as you go.



**25** Complete the entire trumpet, wiggling your brush to make the scalloped edge and keeping the Rose Shimmer to the outside.



**26** Use the chisel edge of the same brush to add streaks to the throat of the flower from the center outward.



**27** With the same double-loaded brush, start at each point of the flower and pull the white corner of the brush from each point back to the throat to make ribs.



**28** Load a no. 1 script liner with School Bus Yellow and Thicket. Pull downward strokes to paint the center of throat.



**29** Finish up the front of the cabinet with little bumblebees and a butterfly or two. The bumblebees' bodies are Yellow Ochre and Burnt Umber; their wings are Wicker White. The butterfly's wings are Periwinkle and Wicker White, and the body is Licorice. See pages 43-45 for painting instructions for the insects.



## Dogwood Blossoms



**30** On the top of the cabinet I painted a branch of pink dogwood blossoms. Double load a no. 12 flat with Poppy Red and Wicker White. Holding white to the outer edge, stroke four large petals with a small indentation at the center of the curve.



**31** With a small scruffy brush double loaded with Yellow Ochre and Burnt Carmine, pounce on the dogwood centers.



**32** Load a no. 2 script liner with inky Burnt Carmine. Pull veins from the center out on each petal.



**33** Load a no. 6 flat with Floating Medium, then side load Burnt Carmine and shade the little indentations on the four petals.

## Wildflowers on Side Panel



**34** To dress up the side panels of the cabinet, you could add any sort of wildflower you like. I painted a sedum because I like the lacy look of the blossoms. With a  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch (19mm) flat double loaded with Sunflower and Thicket plus Floating Medium, pull short stemlets and large leaves, holding the yellow to the outer edge of the leaves.

**35** Using a large scruffy brush double loaded with Yellow Ochre and Wicker White, pounce on the arch shaped blossom of the sedum, keeping it light and airy. Highlight where the stem touches the stemlets with a little bit of yellow.



When you have completed the cabinet, protect the painting with a few coats of waterbased satin varnish. If you wish, paint four wooden curtain finials black and screw them to the bottom four corners of the cabinet to serve as ball feet.

