

OUTSIDE THE BOX

The Incredible PaperWorks Cigar Box Challenge



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What was the seed for this idea? Five years ago the PaperWorks memorial fund was established to accept donations in memory of PW members. The money was to be used to fund special programs and/or educational experiences for our membership. The board thought the idea of an all-member art challenge would be a great way to engage the diverse creativity of our group and use some monies from the Memorial Fund. Mabel Dean suggested

an Outside the Box Challenge, based on WomenBeyondBorders.org a cross-cultural group that has made art from over 10,000 boxes and displayed in over 50 countries with the goal to honor and document women's voices and visions and inspire creative expression. Linda Penny took on the project and organized our version of this challenge and so the Incredible PaperWorks Cigar Box Challenge was hatched!

Over 150 beautiful cigar boxes were sold at our fall meetings. Many boxes were exquisite pieces of art by themselves. We were excited by the possibilities they held. The question was: what "outside the box" idea would each of us explore? The possibilities were endless - how do you narrow down your ideas? Could we complete the box by the March 1 deadline?

Show day arrived, and 35 transformed cigar boxes were displayed along with the accompanying artist statements.

Each unique creation brought its own voice to thinking outside the box. They ranged from humorous, whimsical, sparkly, and poetic, to political, deep, mysterious, and questioning.

The hardest part was choosing your top five pieces to vote for! Winners were announced at the end of our event, but honestly, I think everyone who entered is a winner for their thoughtfulness, creativity, problem solving, and work completed to bring an idea to fruition.

A big thanks to Linda Penny, "organizer extraordinaire" ... and to you, our PaperWorks members, who share their creative energy and inspire me every day!

—Bobbie Wilson



WINNERS!



Left to right:

Most Creative Use of Cigar Box – Melinda Collins-Knick

Best Craftsmanship – Ilene Rae Sorenson

Best Expression of Relevant Message – Elizabeth Brizard

Best Dimensional Piece – Kristie Gijanto

Best in Show – Bobbie Wilson



Daily Office

Sue Agnew

My custom on New Year's Eve is to spend time contemplating the waning year and looking to the year ahead. On the last day of 2017 I decided I wanted to adopt a daily practice for 2018, but nothing so onerous that it would become a chore — so each day I read the Daily Office readings, selecting one verse and writing it on a card with a bit of ornamentation. I chose a cigar box to house the cards, turning it on its side to become a little “office” and decorating it with scripture related to writing.

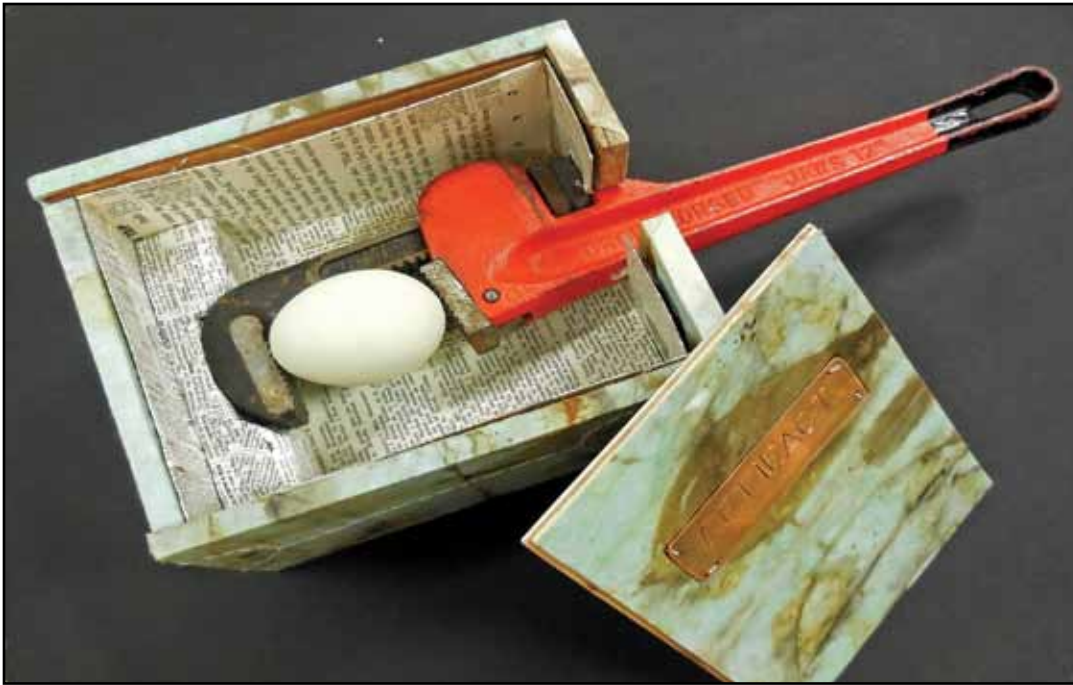


Book of Snakes

Jo Andersen

This book was inspired by one of my first handmade books. I made the original as a prototype for a small edition, which I never got around to making.

After a gum arabic workshop, I decided to hand print with gum arabic the snake images and my dreams. A few recent dreams brought this project full circle personally. With the cigar box, I was also thinking of the old cans that when opened unleashed a manufactured spring action snake, or the sound of a rattlesnake. This is a jack-in-the-box type snake “curiosity” item.



Artifact

Helen Baribeau

A box can be described as a six-sided object that straddles two dimensions in space simultaneously.

Artifact has an exterior presence as well as an interior surprise.

The sculpture I created inhabits both aspects of the box thereby more than qualifying its "outside the box-ness."



I've used thread to draw on paper for years and I was excited when it occurred to me that I could stitch wood.

This revelation is my personal "outside the box" experience for this project. It was at this point that the art piece began to make itself.

Backyard in a Box

Gretchen Bierbaum

I have collected various seedpods in my yard and glued them onto my collages and into this assemblage titled *Backyard in a Box*.

Nature creates many perfect designs and it is difficult to improve on them. I can only embellish the seedpods, not alter their design.

And so it is told

Elizabeth Brizard

Anna rolled cigars.
Esther took in laundry.

Both worked to support their families.
Immigrant Anna was more successful
than her husband.
So he took the family back to the
“old country.”

Esther was suspected of bootlegging
because the men brought their
dirty shirts to her
in suitcases
So concerned neighbors called
the Police.

And so it is told.
What will be told of all
the women who follow. . . .

BEST EXPRESSION OF RELEVANT MESSAGE



Here's Lookin' at You

Judy Bjorling

I'm a painter and sculptor and frequently do collages. "Thinking outside the box" caused me to consider the box's "outside" as a cradleboard—a substrate I frequently use.

My wooden box had a liner and chains, as well. Cutting the liner in random shapes, I selected pieces that would leave interesting negative spaces; glued them to the box with a portion of the chain; and later drew in ink to unite the design. (The lid I gessoed and used as the base for a dryer-lint sculpture.)



Forgotten Treasures

Chris Bishop

This piece started with the aged cigar box that I've had for years waiting to be transformed. It reminded me of a special place that a long ago young child would store their special treasures and was just waiting to be found again. Being a mixed media artist and maker of assemblages I collect almost everything to use in my next project.

The frame, from a local thrift store, I aged along with the piece hanging from the top, which is made of a tin mold and the fan blade from a computer. The rest of the contents include a dried root and assorted beach items that pull the viewer in and tell their own stories.

hope Waking

Mary Carroll



hope Waking reflects my increasing buoyancy in a political climate dominated by conflict. I used vibrant colors, sparkling powders, and an envelope filled with good fortunes and sturdy tools. The work is light, cheerful, and very hopeful, reflecting my dream for a just society.

I painted a light background, adding layers of color; sgraffito, texture paste, embossing, and a library card pocket. Other techniques included stamping and stenciling. Decorative papers, cords, fabric beads, twigs, and business cards were added, and the collage mounted on a wooden board from the cigar box. Abstract and evocative; this is "outside the box".



MOST CREATIVE USE OF CIGAR BOX



My Garden in a Box



Melinda Collins-Knick

This piece is a continuation of a theme that has been consistent in my work for a year or more. I selected a small box to create intimacy. I settled on a variation of a flag book for the structure and incorporated natural elements (seeds, leaves, branches etc.) to create a visual garden.

The concept of "outside the box" is represented on two levels: I used a deconstructed box as a framework for the pages. The "Garden" explodes out of the box, inviting the viewer to consider the presence of native wildlife in the environment.

Past the Time

Janet Clemens

It's *Past the Time* when these machine parts were useful. But the colors and oldness of the worn and rusty parts still intrigue and delight me. So I found a way to use my collection of "useless" rusty treasures rescued from a forgotten old wooden box on my dad's workbench long ago. Now they are outside the box(es) showing off their beauty.





Geode/Sanctum

Susan Corl

We are anxious by the news: Walls, Guns, Drugs, Poverty, Greed, Violence, Climate Change, Intolerance, War, Cruelty, Apathy, and Ignorance. There is a need to counteract this negativity with Love, Kindness, Beauty, and Truth.

My box is rather like a geode, rough and bleak on the outside with an inner sanctum for reflection and focus on the power of creativity, escape, and oblivion. My process includes mixed-media collage with found objects symbolizing "waiting for shoes to drop" and reference to the mob mentality of "drinking Kool-Aid" balanced by a safe place to indulge in Love, Beauty, and Chocolate.

South American Adventures

Judy Derickson

The topic "Outside The Box" encompasses the fact that I have gone out of my normal comfort zone to travel outside my country to South America. The handmade book that is inside the cigar box documents my adventures as a tourist and as an art teacher on a cruise ship going to Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina. This multi-tiered box has a reference to the South American drug cartels and their ability to smuggle drugs across borders in fake compartments. My box contains artifacts from my journey into the jungle that you can interact with and handle.



Lessons from Geese

Mabel Dean

Lessons From Geese

A message for our times...

When I started this project my goal was to create a memorable image with a meaningful message.

As I played with the very ugly box I had picked for the challenge, I was drawn to the "V" shape formed when it was partially opened. It reminded me of a favorite text, *Lessons From the Geese* by Dr Robert McNeish which was made popular by Milton Olson, a minister and bird lover:

The box became a stage for geese in flight. I installed the lessons inside on the stage floor. The flock flies "outside the box" to remind the viewer of the lessons to be found inside.



Frida

Linda Fernandez

Frida Kahlo's symbolic paintings and life are reflected in this blue box: blue for her house in Mexico, blue for her tears from a life of physical pain and grief over her inability to have children as well as for her and her husband Diego's numerous infidelities, blue for sadness over Diego's death.

My hand drawn/painted flowers represent the ones often found in Frida's hair.

I consider this work to represent the way Frida Kahlo lived her life -- OUTSIDE THE BOX.



You Can't Take the Cigar Box Out of the Girl

Ellen Kuyper-Galbreath

My piece, *You Can't Take the Cigar Box Out of the Girl*, was influenced by cigar tips, wood veneer, and wooden post still in the box when I picked it up. It explores tensions between staying true to oneself and going beyond, and between outer and inner worlds. To open use post as a handle, the ribbons open the next layer. There are elements in the inner sanctum that are practicing non-attachment and could fall outside the box.

BEST DIMENSIONAL PIECE



Octopus's Garden

Kristie Gijanto

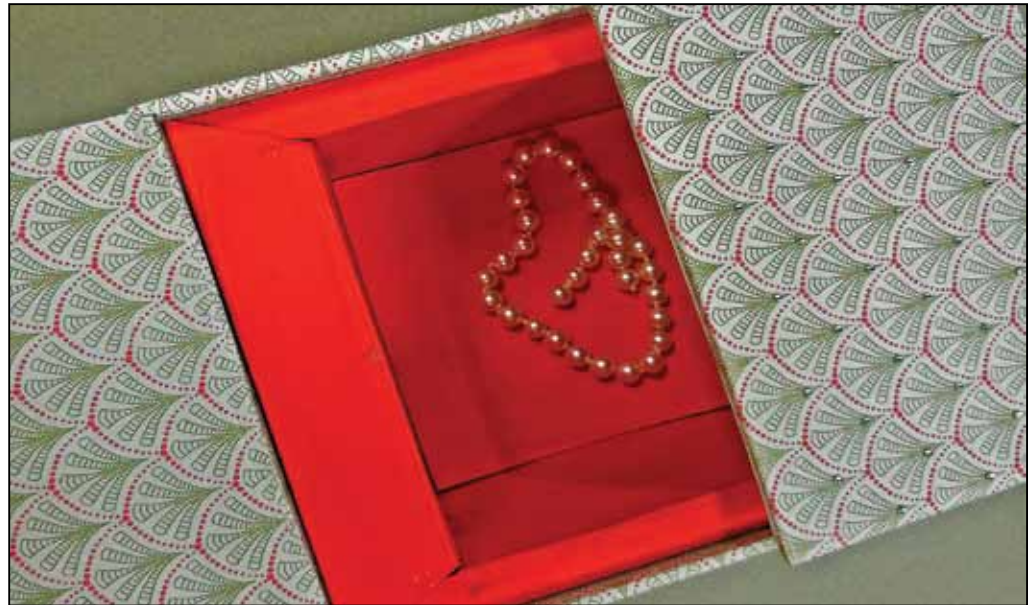
Using the Beatles song "Octopus's Garden" as my inspiration, I imagined an undersea garden in a shipwreck at the bottom of the sea. I used paper, paint, inks, heat embossing, and embellishments to turn the exterior into a ship's door with a porthole. I built a base from canvas board, foam, clay, and modeling paste. I created the garden with items one might find in the sea: driftwood, a ship's wheel, fishing nets, a diver's helmet, seashells. My piece is outside the box as it is a fantasy garden, outside the bounds of reality.

Pandora's Box

Megha Ruez Morganfield

I present to you,
Pandora's Box.

We know so little of her, save two important facts. Her name, Pandora, means "all-giving" in Greek. And that, on that fateful mythic day, "hope" was the only thing she was able to prevent from escaping the box, thus assuring all humanity this gift.



Here I have chosen to depict "hope" as pearls... for the grains of sand that oysters turn into beautiful orbs, for each of us who have come across roughness in our lives... and because we know there is always hope, we too can create luster and jewels from adversity.

Desi's Dream

Krista Neis

Cuba and Nicaragua are famous for, among many things, lively music and fine tobacco.

Historically, Caribbean and Central American music is a mixture of Indigenous, African, and European influences. In the 1930s, Desi Arnaz helped popularize the conga in the US. Other musicians developed son montuno, rumba, conjunto, mambo, and chachachá -- sounds that, with conga, became the most important influences on the invention of salsa.



Made in Nicaragua, this box lends itself to percussion. In converting it to a musical instrument, I used found materials and chose not to permanently alter its elegant sculptural form.



“New Memory Transport System” N.M.T.S

Gary C. Parkinson

My process began when I noticed all of my sister-in-law's female friends carried their phones in a purse. We all have to transport our phone/memory in some manner to aid us in remembering phone #'s, what is on our grocery list, where we are driving to, an answer to any trivia question, and many more things. The N.M.T.S is a new way to transport our memory.



Thinking and Growing Outside the Box

Sherrie Posternak

Of particular interest to me currently is personally and artistically “thinking outside the box” and the removal of boundaries around disciplines. Here inside the box is an interpretation of layers of soil, seeds, and worms that cultivate the soil to help things grow. And outside the box, on top, this work is fulfilled, with evidence of new plant growth. A group of more worms sit in a plant saucer outside, ready to help others who need cultivation.

Materials: cigar box, encaustic, pigment stick, seeds, rubber worms, coffee grounds, sand, cording, shoelaces, terra cotta plant saucer.



Story from a desert

Beata Wehr

I created this story placing objects I found here, at the Sonoran Desert, INSIDE THE BOX.

They speak about this place: magnificent and yet harsh nature and us, humans living here.

The objects are either beautiful or dangerous or both and their placement resembles the landscape.

The image is mysterious and its meaning needs to be uncovered or constructed by the viewer. Hopefully in the process the story will come OUT OF THE BOX to live freely as feelings, memories, and thoughts of those who interacted with it.

I Don't Have Anything to Wear

Francine Schooling

How often have we said this? My husband has often laughed, or looked at me with a sideways glance when I have slipped this phrase. He is used to hearing me say I can't find a particular ink, stamps, paint, paper, or tools that always seem to be on "an adventure" at my house.

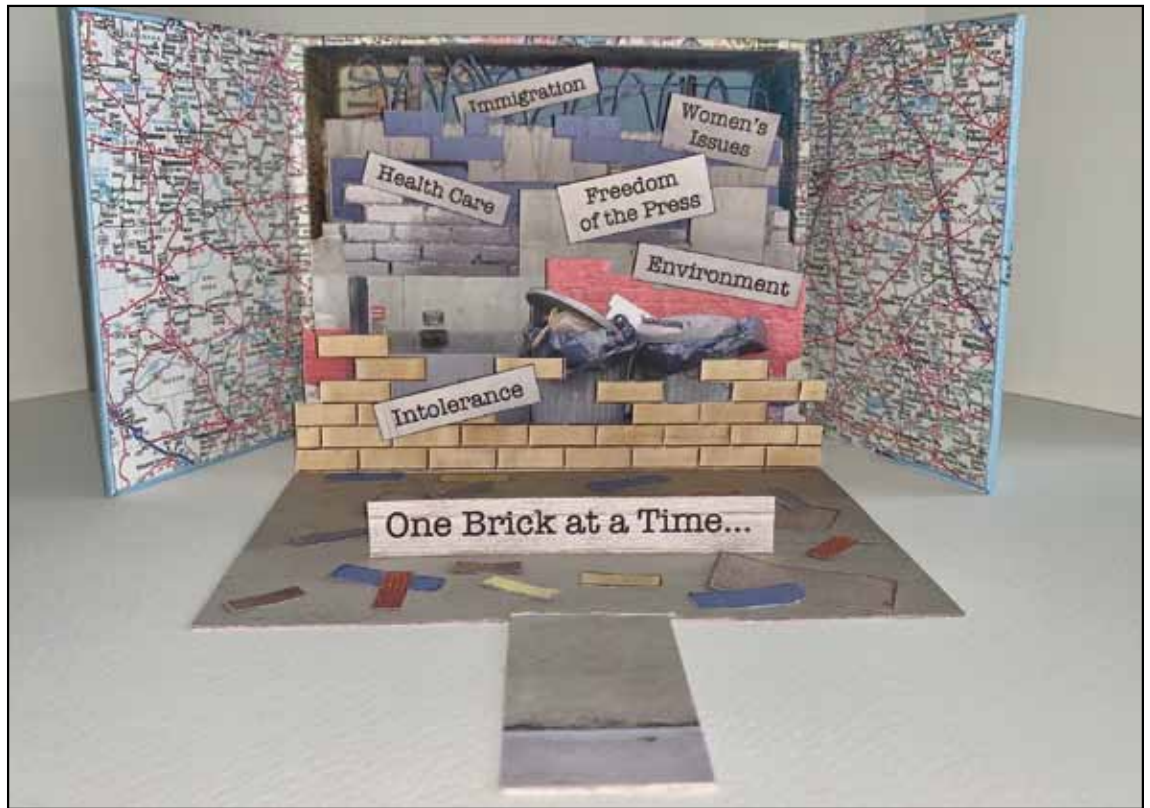
I think it's more the effort of coordinating, trying on, and actually fitting into an outfit. Such a daunting task some days... Mondays seem especially challenging. Selecting ink, paper, and tools - much easier and fun! They don't care what I wear -- then I create.



One Brick at a Time

Linda Penny

The "Outside the Box" challenge presented an opportunity to comment on the insidious political and social climate present today. Using the tunnel book structure, the major issues are symbolized with walls, and the need to remove these obstacles "one brick at a time." The box covered with a map and news headlines represent what is going on in our country. As you open the box (the United States) the problems within appear. Finally, the public expression of political thoughts and beliefs is "outside the box" for me.



Cuba Travels

Barbara Seyfried

The outside the box cigar box project was created when I returned from my trip to Cuba -- which I have always wanted to travel to for many years. It was an adventure seeing Cuba, the people, the architecture, works of art, and the cultural events of the country.

In creating my cigar box, I made a photo album of the people, places, and the works of art during my travels there. Each individual photo has a frame and decoration attached to it. The cigar box top also has photos attached on the front and back for display. With the cigar box display as an album, these are my photo memories of the wonderful time there.

A Whitman Sampler

Ann Stephens

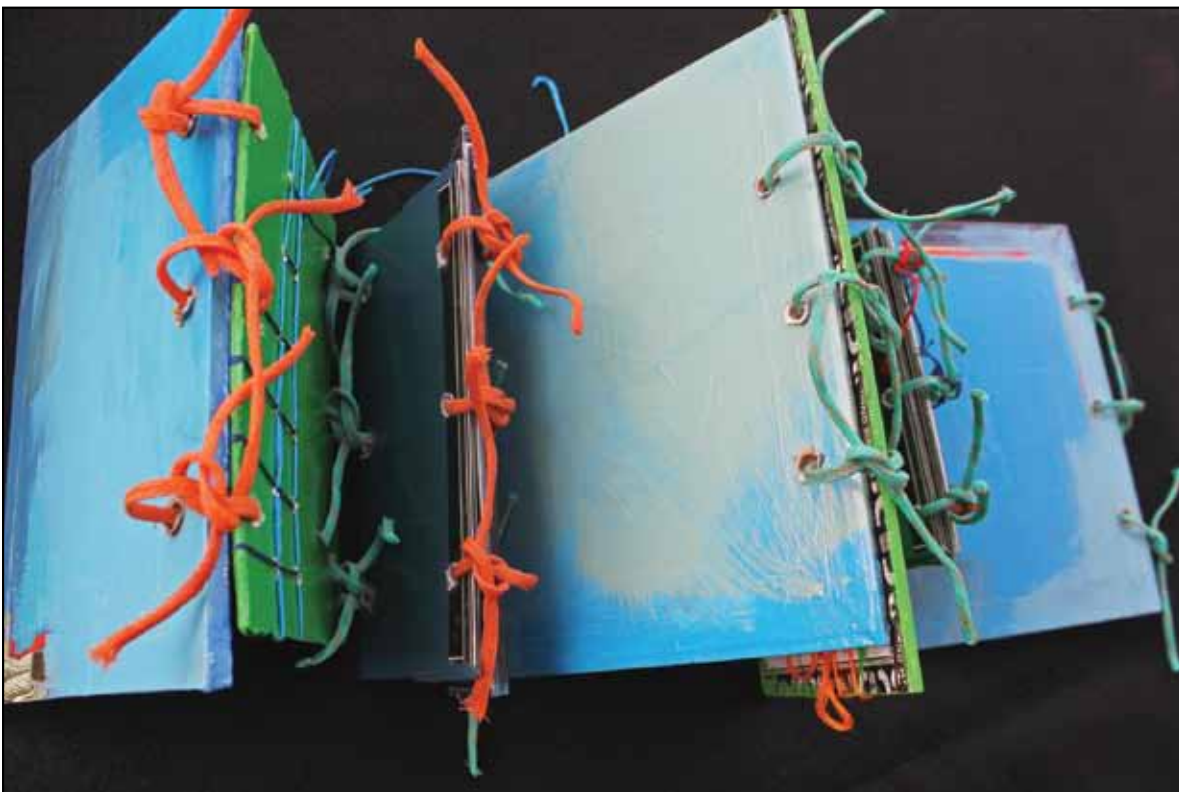
When we encounter something new, our brain first looks for something familiar. For example, when we see a yellow box with green writing on the top we think, "That's a box of chocolates." However, what's outside the box doesn't always reveal its true contents. Inside this particular box is not chocolate, but, using a play on words, a sample of Walt Whitman's poems presented in a sampling of book structures. (This challenge was an "outside the box" experience for me—my first foray into this type of artistic endeavor.)

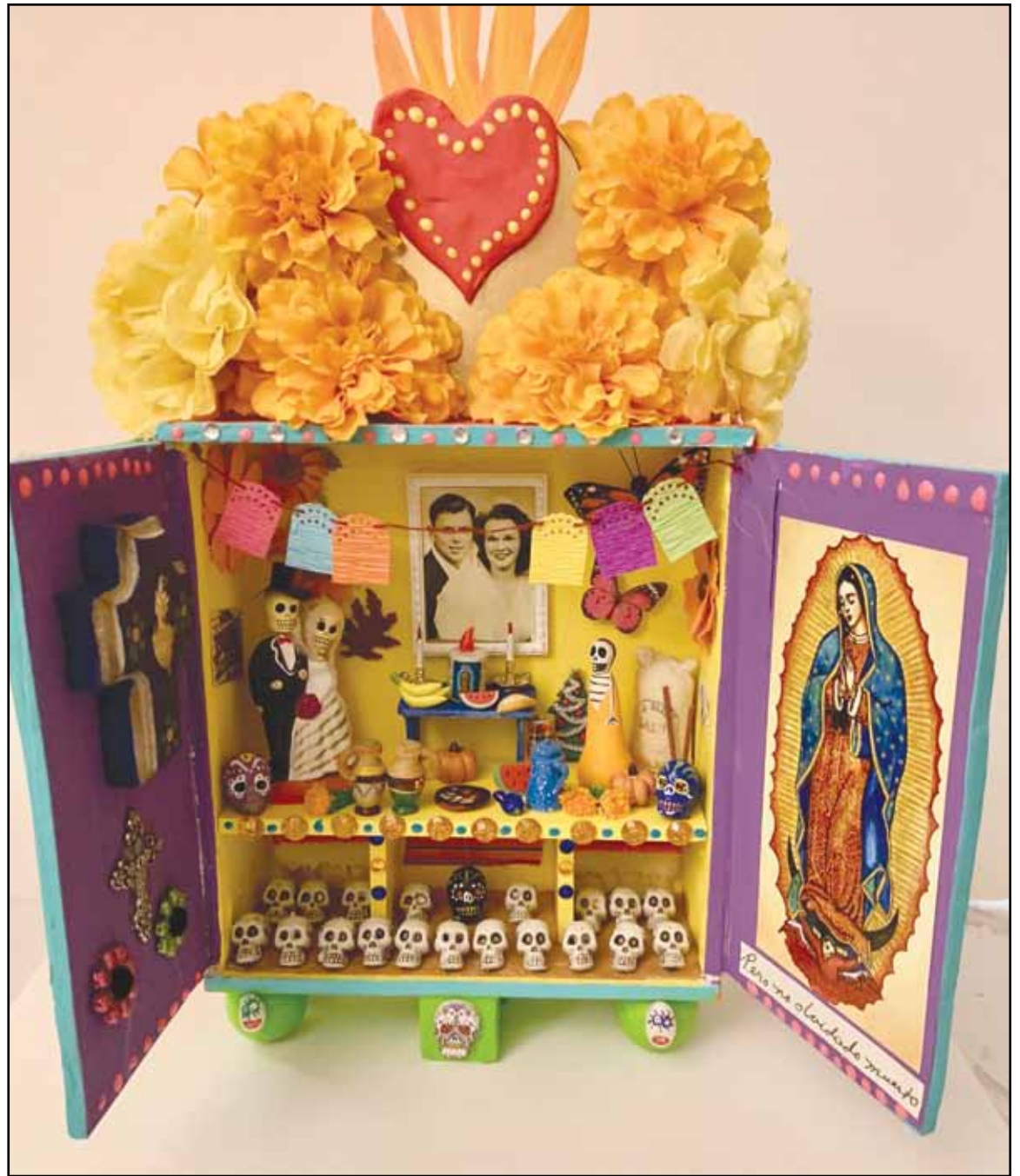


Book of Irish Sea Dreams

Ann Tracy

This work is outside the box because it has left its original format to be transported into a 2D wall piece, but can also be an off-the-wall artist book. I wanted to bring in more recycled objects, so I used ghost rope (abandoned fishing rope) that was gathered along the coast of the Irish Sea by a surfer/environmentalist friend. When it started taking on a book format, I realized it was a book about my desire to return to Ireland, and the personal dreams that go with that.





Dia De Los Muertos Altar Honoring My Parents

Connie Teeple

My altar celebrating Dia de Los Muertos carries much symbolism and is set in three levels: heaven, earth, and the underworld -- all outside any box.

Candles represent guiding lights.

Salt purifies water and foods to refresh the souls upon return.

Decorative cut tissue papers represent the deceased.

Incense is to draw the souls home.

By remembering my parents, I added things they loved, I contain my memories within the box, but I know their souls will live free.

Spring Forth

Michele Tremblay

My work is about creativity and how it comes from a basis of structured, learned knowledge but evolves naturally into novel products. The work is an altered book sculpture flowing from a cigar box. The box is a symbol -- "inside/outside the box" -- of the regular, the traditional, the learned. But ideas, art, and creativity are meant to grow beyond the known and become their own things -- new things.



Hey, Boo

Vanessa Dearing

One of my favorite books is *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. When I was small, the part of the book (and movie) involving the trial of a black man accused of raping a white woman was secondary to me. I was enthralled by the children's relationship with the mysterious neighbor, Boo Radley. It brought back all those childhood memories of the thrill and fear of things I couldn't understand. Boo's little gifts left for Jem and Scout and kept in a secret cigar box - I could picture myself treasuring these finds. My cigar box is a recreation of those treasures and the delight of the neighborhood stories that both scared and thrilled me as a child.

Garden Oasis

Jan Sennewald

PaperWork's challenge was a pleasant, playful experience. Upon purchasing a red cigar box— I decided mine would be a garden.

Once home, I found the saved nest, bird, a branch, and only purchased Popsicle sticks and grass to build my fence and tiny gate. I used clay to hold the branch in place. Tiny tiles decorate the wall behind and the edges of the box. Last, the mirror for a pond and a bird in the pond came together as a cheerful *Garden Oasis*.



BEST IN SHOW

Black Box

Bobbie Wilson

Colors are the smiles of nature, and the smiles of our soul.

I've always been attracted to bright colors -- their invisible force energizes and makes me happy -- yet the colors need to be balanced with black (absence of color) or there would be no depth or vibrancy. Life also needs the dark times to show us what happiness truly means. And our precious planet earth sports a crayon box of colors in every biome, from deserts and forests, to tropics and waters -- vibrant beams of living light against our spiraling universe of vast nothingness.



BEST CRAFTSMANSHIP



Golden Oak

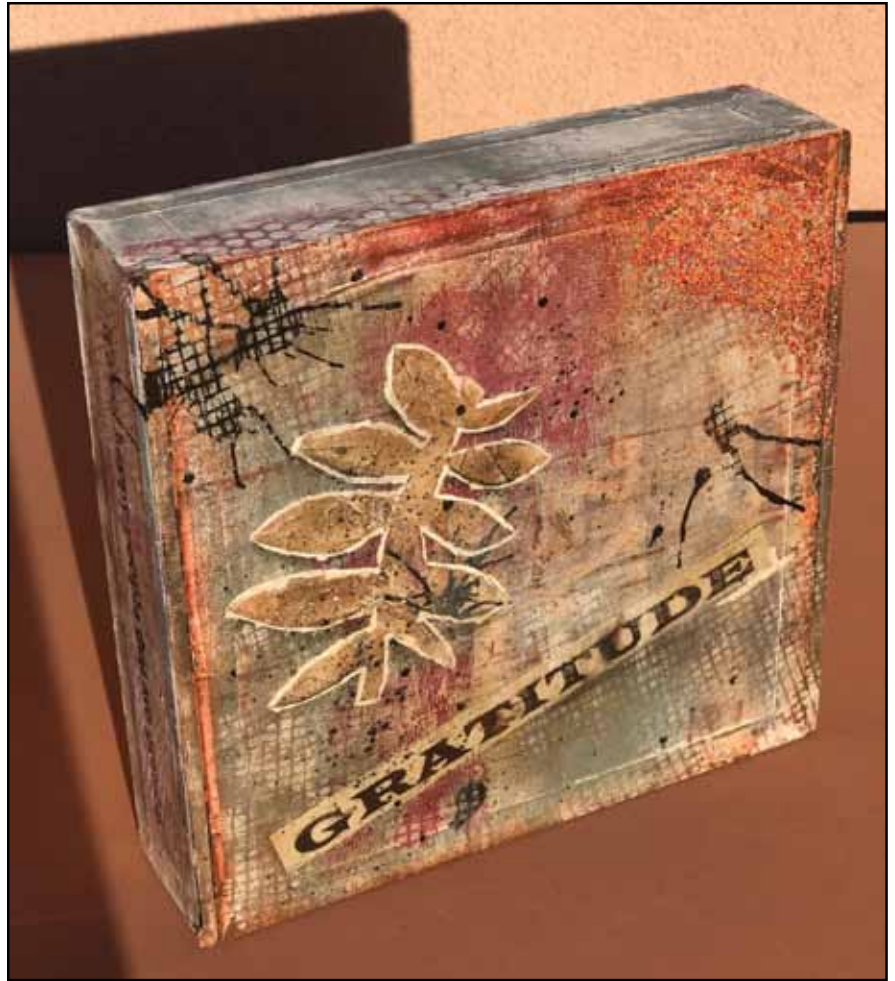
Ilene Rae Sorenson

I have worked as a fiber artist most of my career. Using a variety of materials and techniques I produce parts that are assembled into larger wall hangings. For the most part I utilize a monochromatic color palette of bright colors. Over time my work progressed from two-dimensional to high relief and on to free form sculpture. While working on "Outside the Box" I created a sculpture with limited color choices, new techniques and materials. My thinking took on a new direction moving outside the box.

Gratitude

Michele Vaughn

The cigar box challenge was the perfect opportunity to create a container to hold my expressions of things I'm grateful for. I will put things in the box that express what I am grateful for -- a word I jot on a piece of scrap paper, a photo, or an art piece I create. Practicing gratitude is a way for me to slow down and focus on those things that are a joy in my life and continually remind myself of all I have. It also helps put me back in balance when I get wobbly and unsure.



Possibility

Victoria VonElbe

The quotation refers to a verse of a poem by Emily Dickenson. It continues on the inside of the piece.

All elements were hand cut from wood, painted, and applied to the outside and inside. The piece can stand or hang.

Romeo y Julieta

Kathleen Koopman

This box had been calling to me for years: Romeo y Julieta, cigars handmade in Dominican Republic. Inspired by Shakespeare's love story *Romeo and Juliet*, my challenge was to develop the concept of a love-story-book that somehow filled the box.

Then I found *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* illustrated by Rockwell Kent ©1936 (limited edition 750 copies). The play was only 35 pages; how was I to remake them into a unique book that fit into the box? I decided to re-form the pages into scrolls to fill the box and let it speak for itself.



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President: Bobbi Wilson
Editor: Barbara Whittlesey
Layout & Design: Janet Windsor