

Sculpted Book Cover By Andrew Thornton

Materials:

Plasticine/Plastilina Modeling Clay
Alumilite White (Amazing Casting) Resin
Mixing Cups
Popsicle stick
Alumi-Dust Powdered Pigment
Alumilite Dye
Dawn Dish Detergent
Rubbing Alcohol
Ranger Alcohol Inks
Gilder's Paste
Gloves
Binder Rings/Ribbon/"D" Rings/Metal Shower Curtain Rings

Tools:

Carving Tools
Soft Paint Brush
Eye Protection
Proxxon Drill Press
Hole Puncher

Optional:

Heat Gun
Rolling Pin
Mask
Gloves in a Bottle Shielding Lotion
Prepared Silicone Molds
Ebony Pencil
Tile

This technique shows you how to make a one-time use mold that creates sculptural "monoprints". These resin pieces can be utilized as plaques, book covers, or picture frames, for example.

1. Roughly measure the pages of the book that you are making the cover for. Apply Gloves in a Bottle Shielding Lotion to your hands. Roll out or press out approximately a 1/2 inch layer of plasticine clay the size and shape of the pages. If the clay is hard, turn the heat gun on to the lowest setting and lightly pass over the clay until softened. Plasticine clay is a wax and oil-

based clay, which means that it will never dry out and can be worked with several times (as long as it stays clean). I like to build the mold on a ceramic tile so that I can pick up and move my project if I need to.

2. Build walls of clay around your shape. Smooth down any seams with a wet fingertip if necessary. You don't want any places that the resin might seep out. (If you are making a frame, create an inner wall or raised area in the middle of your rolled out clay.)
3. Use carving tools to create your design. A beveled tipped tool will make smooth impressions without creating excess carved away material. If you do carve out material, make sure to pick up any crumbs and do not carve too deep. If you carve too deep, the resin might seep out. If you are making words, flip the letters and write them backwards.
4. Tip: If you are having a hard time freestyling your design or are having trouble with your words coming out right, draw your pattern or words on a piece of paper with a dark Ebony pencil, press the graphite side down directly on the clay and lightly burnish the back of the paper. This will leave a ghost outline. You can also use tracing paper and lightly trace the motif with a tool for a faint impression.
5. If you mess up, you can always use the back of a spoon to heal the accident. If it is extra stubborn, lightly hit it with the heat gun to soften the clay. Keep in mind that the deeper your marks are, the heavier your end product will be and the more resin you'll use.
6. If you have ample ventilation, this step is not necessary, but whenever working with pigments, wearing a mask is a helpful precaution to keep you from inhaling any particulates. Put your mask on and dust the mold with the Alumi-Dust. This will not only add color, but it'll also act as a resist, so that your resin pulls out easily and cleanly.
7. I always have a few prepared silicone molds on the side. This way you don't waste any resin if you mix too much. Put your gloves on. Mix resin according to manufacturer's directions. Add a drop of dye to the tip of your popsicle stick and mix that into the combined resin. Keep in mind that since the color of your resin is white, the saturation of the color of the dye will be lessened. For example, if you use red dye, the end product will be pink if you don't add enough dye. Use a light hand as a little goes a long way.
8. If you didn't make enough resin, you can always mix up another batch and pour that on top to fill in anywhere that your first pour didn't reach. You'll want a desired thickness of at least ¼ inch.

- You can go thicker for picture frames or plaques, just make sure to adjust the height of your mold walls so that you don't overspill.
9. Once the resin has fully cured, pry the resin cover out of the clay. Clean it thoroughly with Dawn dish detergent. Once it is dry, wipe it down with rubbing alcohol. This will help remove any excess oils and make the embellishments adhere better.
 10. Make sure your pages have holes. If not, punch holes and then line up one page with the book cover. Using a marker, indicate where to drill the holes.
 11. Put your safety glasses on. Make sure to read over your operational manual and drill the holes in the resin piece with the Proxxon Drill.
 12. Embellish and decorate the surface of the book cover with alcohol inks. Add a finishing touch of Gilder's Paste to bring out the highlights. You can seal the piece with a spray sealer if necessary.
 13. Repeat above steps for the back of the book. Or glue this to an existing book as a variation.
 14. "Bind" your book, but stacking the hole-punched pages of the book in between two resin book covers. Open binder or shower curtain rings and pass them through the holes and snap shut for a quick book. These rings make it easy to add or subtract pages from your book easily.

For more information visit
Andrew-thornton.blogspot.com/