
Flower Pounding on Paper with Courtney Cerruti

Chapter 1 - Flower Pounding on Paper

Overview

(bright music) - Hi, I'm Courtney. I'm an artist and an author, and as a painter, I love looking at and working with flowers. They're so beautiful. There's lots of texture and colors. And I've tried flower pounding on paper before with sort of mixed results. But this season I dove in head first and tried all different types of botanicals. Flower pounding is a very simple and straightforward technique where you use watercolor paper, found or foraged botanicals, and a hammer to create a unique impression, like a monoprint. I'll go over my hammering technique, (hammer taps) the paper that I use. I'll share my experiments with you of what flowers work and what didn't work so well. I'm excited to show you how to enhance your images using watercolor, and also an alkaline and acid solution to tone your floral images with simple household ingredients. We'll finish by preserving our floral impressions using a wax medium. This technique is simple, it's forgiving, and best of all, it sparks curiosity. You'll wanna try every plant in your garden. (bright music)

Materials

- The essential materials for this are a hot press watercolor paper. I'm using Strathmore 140 pound in an 8-by-10 and a 5-by-7. A hammer is essential. I just have a little one because it's easier to use. Paper towels and wax paper, and of course you're gonna need flowers, botanicals, leaves. You can look in your yard. You can go and maybe forage some in your neighborhood. You can use blossoms from a bouquet purchased at a store, or you can go to your nursery and find plants that you're attracted to and that will work for this technique. I have a variety of things because I've spent a lot of time experimenting. I'm gonna show you what worked best for me, and some of the plants that I liked most were pansies and violas, and I have a few different colors of each of those. I also really liked the results from Sweet William, but I also have things like nasturtium. You can use dill weed, whether you purchase it from the grocery store or have it growing in your garden. Coreopsis works really well and comes in many varieties. I also have vinca and oxalis to experiment with. I'm gonna show you some toning techniques, and for that you're gonna need small jars. For your watercolor, you'll need a jar of water. And for toning we're gonna do an alkaline and acidic solution. The alkaline is water with a bit of baking soda, and our acidic solution is water with a bit of vinegar or lemon juice. Because I'm using three different jars with three different solutions, one of which is just water, you'll need three watercolor brushes. I'll also show you a finishing technique with Dorland's Wax Medium. You'll also need a sharp pair of snips or scissors for trimming your blossoms, and it's smart to have a pencil for making notes for all of your experiments. The watercolor I'll be using is just my standard palette. It's a mix of Daniel Smith and Schmincke. You can use almost any watercolor you have on hand. Depending on what season you're working in, some of these plants and botanicals may not be available. Don't let this stop your process. Look in your yard. See what's growing. Go to your local nursery and experiment. These types of techniques only occurred and were discovered because of experimentation. So don't let the season hold you back.

Gathering Flowers & Hammering technique

- When selecting your flowers you wanna start by just the natural color. Are they bright? Are they saturated in color? You can look at both the blooms and the leaves. You wanna avoid things that

are too juicy or succulent things that are too woody or coarse. And you absolutely want fresh flowers. You'll want to pick or trim flowers right when you're ready to do this process. You don't wanna pick them the day before because then they'll wilt and you won't be able to get a good impression. What I do is I like to put everything around me so that I can easily snip blooms and leaves off of my plants as I'm working. The setup for your station in front of you is a layer of maybe four or five paper towels, your watercolor paper. I'm using hot press because it has no texture or very little texture, which will allow the impression of the flower to be the best it can be. I've got a little hammer here and my wax paper. You'll also want your snips for trimming your flowers. I think we'll start with pansies and violas which are very similar in their impression. They're shapes, they come in a variety of colors. Place four or five layers of your paper towel down, followed by your watercolor paper. Now you'll see that my paper is bigger than the padding so I'll just move this around as I'm doing my experiments. And this is an 8 by 10 sheet so that I can try lots of different blooms. I'm not working on a finished project here, like a card. I'm just experimenting. And then using some snips. I'll start by just trimming off. Or you can even at this stage pinch these flowers from their stems. Let's try a few different pansies and violas. We'll start with three, I don't want them to wilt. Because we're just experimenting I'm not worrying about placement too much. I'll place this down and then trim away any juicy or succulent parts, especially the green parts. They tend to kind of create a mess or muddy puddle when you hammer them. We're really going after the petals themselves and the impression that they're gonna leave. So that's fine. I'm just starting in a corner. You wanna make sure that the good "good or most vibrant part of your flower is face down." I've got my wax paper. You can use one or two layers. That doesn't matter too much. What's nice about using wax paper and not another paper towel, sometimes I've seen people use paper towel plus wax paper is then I can see where the placement of the petals are. So my little petal was folded. I'm just gonna flatten that down and then I can't talk while I'm hammering. So what I'm gonna do is just hammer all around until you'll see the petals will flatten right out onto the paper and they're gonna leave an impression. So I'll hammer and then I'll show you. (hammer banging) Lots of little taps I'm working a circular motion so I make sure to get everything. (hammer banging) You can see that some of that green is squishing out. I'm gonna just check on this, 'cause I don't want the green to transfer too much. These petals are very delicate especially after you've hammered them. So if you can't remove too much of the green, that's okay. I got a little bit of it off there. (hammer banging) Okay, I think that's good. You might see things start to shift. If that happens, you'll just wanna stop. You can remove your wax paper. And then I like to roll, if you will from the center. These petals are, like I said very delicate and there's not gonna be much of them left after pounding, so they're very squishy. You can use your nail to pick that up. So what you're seeing now is not the petal anymore it's the actual impression of the flower left on the paper. And I've noticed that the violas and the panes are almost photographic in the impression they leave. I've got a little bit of that green juiciness there, which I don't love. I might just take a little bit of my paper towel and try to roll that away. But wow, look at that. So vibrant. I love how these little striations from the petals transferred so well. And thinking about this, I'm not surprised that I'm really just in love with this technique because I've done so many image transfers which is a chemical process. I love that I'm basically doing image transfers entirely naturally by using florals and a hammer. Let's try this one. If you find like tweezers might be helpful you could try working with those, too. I'm just gonna snip away as much of that green part as I can. You can also try removing it. If your petals separate, which they're very likely to do when you remove the backing that's holding them all together, that's okay too. You can just rearrange them back to kind of how they were. So here my petals are separating so I'm not

even gonna attempt to lay it down perfectly. I'm just gonna remove that green. Do be careful not to crush your petals though or leave fingernail marks in them because then you won't get as fresh an impression. I'm happy with that arrangement. And then when I look at my wax paper I wanna remove any petals or bits of plant material from the last hammering. Lay that down carefully. Make sure my petals are as flat as I like. And we're just gonna repeat the process. I've got the paper towel underneath, my watercolor paper, my pansy face down, and then we can hammer. (hammer banging) You can see how quickly that petal flattens out. (hammer banging) I do think that this hammer has a slight dome to it and so really hammering around and making sure I have good coverage is essential. You do wanna check and make sure that your hammer is as flat as it can be. And if you start to get any plant debris or build up you may just wanna wipe it off with a paper towel. (hammer banging) Okay, move your wax paper gently roll away these flattened petals. I think some of that dark purple pigment from the plant itself maybe transferred there. But look at that, rolling that away. And what you're seeing now is literally just the natural dyes from the plant transferred to the paper. Let's try the orange blossom and see how that looks. With our little trio of violas. I'm gonna carefully try to remove these green leaves. Any juicy parts: try to remove before you hammer. All right, now we'll just continue hammering. (hammer banging) I feel like it's possible I didn't hammer enough in that area. So before I try to remove any petals I'm gonna give it a few more whacks. (hammer banging) Okay, I am rolling out from the center. Ooh, that's pretty. It's a little paler than the actual petals. And I think working from the center is best because this impression is a little bit damp and because we've really smashed the petals, it is possible to when you're kind of swiping with your fingers to drag some pigment onto the rest of the paper which we wanna avoid. So we have a nice clean impression. So pretty, let's try all of our violas at once. So I have a couple more here. Now, this one I could maybe try to get an impression from but the petals are curved and it's a little bit dry so I would prefer to pick something that is more open and fresh. We've got that one. I like this little six pack because it has some variation. So this, this one has a bit of yellow. We also have these color variations and yellow. Lets move these outta my way. Put this one face down, trim away. The leaves and stem. Gently, if you tear a petal, you can just try to carefully replace it back on the paper as best you can. Right now we're experimenting. If you start to design an image using your petals you may wanna actually separate them anyway. You can create patterns and mandalas in which case you're not gonna be worried about their original layout. Okay, I think that's close enough. They're so delicate, it's easy to get them sort of spinning. We'll replace our wax paper carefully and then hammer. (hammer banging) Whew, that was vibrant. Gah, it's so beautiful. It's so beautiful. Even that tiny brighter speck of yellow that it leaves. It's pretty impressive. I'm gonna do the same thing with these remaining three which will test all the variations I have and then we'll make some notes to remind ourselves what we've tested. I am always impressed by the mark that the violas and pansies leave. They're so vibrant, they're so detailed. You will notice that the colors that transfer the most or seem to transfer the most are like the yellows, oranges and then a lot of purpley blues. I found the pinks and reds. Even if the blossom is that color, the impression that it leaves on the page is not quite as pink or red, it's much more purple. And you saw that here with these violas that had a sort of wine color in the petal. But when they transfer their sort of eggplant-y in color. We're gonna make some notes so we don't forget. These were all violas. You could write the particular mix or breed. I find that a lot of the nurseries are not that specific especially if you get like a little six pack they might have a lot of different colors in them. You could also put the month or the year or where you sourced these. I think violas for me is plenty information. Let's try the coreopsis next. This is often used in a lot of natural dyeing on fabric and it

works well for flower pounding. We definitely need to remove the stem and these leaves and sort of both succulent and woody portions of the flower. We could try and leave some of the pollen in the center here and see if it gives us an impression. So I'll just find a new place on my paper here. It's pretty 3D so we're definitely gonna need to smush it. Try trimming a little more away. I wanna avoid messing up the petals too much because I like their arrangement. They seem so particular to this flower. And then of course we're experimenting. So part of the process is also to let go of perfection and just see what you get. So I'm gonna smush. You can see that my petals are changing their arrangement a little bit because I've destroyed the center that keeps them in place. And what I'm gonna do is just hammer all around this center three-dimensional part because if I just pound that it's not gonna do me any favors for my impression. It's just gonna create a big muddy puddle. That one's a bit twisted, but we're just gonna go with it. I'm afraid the flower's gonna fall apart too much. (hammer banging) You can see that sometimes I'm putting my fingers in a V shape to hold down the wax paper to keep the flower in place. Make sure you don't hammer your fingers. (hammer banging) And now that I've done one pass the petals are stuck down to the paper. They're not going to move as much so I don't have to worry about placing my hand so close. I can just hold the wax paper kind of further away and continue hammering to make sure I have a good impression. (hammer banging) If you start to get little errant parts from the center migrating and anything that looks like a little splash, I'm just gonna have to say that is where my experiment stops with this blossom it's totally fine. But you can see what a clear impression those petals leave. The center is not going to leave a really great mark. You can see a few little yellow dots. You could come back in with watercolor or colored pencil if you wanted to add a more true center. Again, removing the petals from the center out because they can leave pigment on the paper. If you remember, our coreopsis had a really true deep red petal, but in the impression it's much darker. It's like a deep brown. So I'll make a note here, coreopsis. And then you might want to say what particular species or flower name the coreopsis is. Some of them are called ring of fire. This one I'm just gonna write coreopsis 'cause I'm gonna try one other coreopsis as well. This is a smaller blossom, much more yellow overall but it has that cool ring of pigment. This blossom's looking a little droopy so I don't know what kind of impression it's gonna make, but we'll just see. So my whole flower got destroyed there. That is okay. What we'll do is rearrange the petals ourself and do that. I'll just be very careful not to crush the petals. Put them in my hand. Whoop, I'm just gonna shake off these internal the center bits here. Now, you want to put the right side or the top side of the petal face down on the paper. This is probably gonna distort that perfect ring that nature made, but we're gonna just be okay with that. And again, if you want to actually use individual petals to create a design at a later stage when you're done with your experiments, this is what you'd be doing anyway. You might wanna use tweezers to help. You can overlap petals they do in nature, so that's fine. Okay, we've got one left. Maybe we'll just put that in here. Okay, okay. If your wax paper starts to get a lot of wet or pigment residue, you don't want that transferring onto your page so you can fold it in half or you can work with a new piece of wax paper. I've got a clean little part right there. Open that up so you can still see through it. All right, and I'm gonna hammer away. (hammer banging) Looks like I didn't maybe hammer all the way to the edge. There's nothing I can do about these two petals because I've already removed them but I could put my wax paper back down and just try to continue on these ones (hammer banging) or you can just let it go. You can see there's a lot of texture in these leaves I think because they were a little bit wilted. You have more little white spots, but I love the striation and you definitely see that ring. Again, that red tone became much more brown in its transfer. Let's try maybe the nasturtium. This is a really different kind of flower than what we've

worked with so far. Has more of like a tube shape here and all of that needs to be trimmed. If you're working with anything that's a tube you need to cut that off because it's gonna hold moisture and it's gonna be too juicy when you pound with the hammer. But at the same time, if you go on a morning walk and you select a bunch of blossoms and they have any dew on them or you've just watered your garden, you wanna make sure that your blossoms are totally dry, not dried out, they need to be fresh, but they can't have droplets of water because that will just leave a hole in the pigment that gets left on the page and it'll decrease the the quality of the impression. I think I'm just gonna trim there to start and then I'm gonna maybe trim a little bit further down. I'm cutting off some of the petal itself but I wanna remove this tube as best I can. I'm gonna use a fresh piece of wax paper for this one. And this is folded a little bit but I'm okay with that and we'll just hammer away. (hammer banging) Oh, this one's much juicier. You can see that there are these like little splatter marks happening on the edges of the petals. I might try to be a bit gentler or hammer not all the way to the edge. (hammer banging) There also may not be much you can control. (hammer banging) And I can see there are like little pounce marks here. Sometimes if you're working with something textured like this paper towel has a bit of texture on it depending on what you're working on. Sometimes those marks can transfer when you hammer. So this is a much more textured print. It's gonna be a little less true to the original flower. And I would say that most flowers and plants I tried gave me an impression similar to this and that it was interesting. It looked like a flower. It had some kind of pigment but it was not almost photographic like the coreopsis or the viola are. What I do like about the nasturtium in this orange color, this was the pinkest or most red impression I got out of all the flowers I tried. So I'm gonna write nasturtium here. I haven't tried one of the leaves. Why don't we try one of the leaves? I find most leaves are a little bit too juicy or too woody for a nice clean impression and they weren't worth the trouble. But let's try with a nasturtium leaf because it almost has a petal like quality. It's succulent but not too juicy. It's not dried out. And I find that nasturtium leaves are so recognizable. (hammer banging) Oh, juicy. (hammer banging) So here I can already tell that in hammering I'm destroying the leaf and I don't think I'm gonna get a very clean impression. I could just pull up some of it and see what happens. Yeah, you get a little bit of green. I found that most leaves weren't really worth the trouble. They didn't leave a clean impression. They were sort of muddy and they took away from the clean crisp impressions that some of the florals left. So I find that they're not really worth the trouble. But you could always experiment. You should experiment to see what you like. Let's try oxalis. I love these in real life. The ones I've experimented with for flower pounding haven't really turned out that well but let's give it a go. Trim off the stem, place my wax paper and hammer. (hammer banging) And I haven't said this before but you'll see that I'm doing like short, soft little lots of repeated taps and I'm not trying to hammer in a nail. (hammer banging) I'm just tapping. Oh, that stuck to my wax paper. So again, you get a little bit of an impression you could go back in with watercolor and maybe really complete those leaves but I don't think they're that clear and crisp. Let's try one more flower. This is called vinca. It comes in lots of different colors. Reminds me of like an impatiens a little bit more succulent compared to the viola or pansy, but not too juicy. I picked this magenta color because I was hopeful that the pink would transfer. And you'll notice that I'm not using a lot of these flowers come in white and I'm not using anything that's fully white. The pansies that have white transfer are real pale yellow. I just like things with more contrast because I think they're more impressive to look at. And we'll just hammer this one. (hammer banging) You can see even just from pounding like that magenta petal goes from pink to a really deep, dark, purple-y eggplant color. (hammer banging) Yeah, so that magenta flower became a really deep almost like a morning glory color but it leaves a

really nice clean impression. You have pretty good edges. You can see some of the striation in the petals. And again, this comes in lots of colors that's called vinca. This process of experimentation is my favorite. If I had enough time, I would try every blossom, petal, and leaf I could get my hands on. And I did do a lot of experiments so I wanted to share those with you. Here's some impressions that worked okay and not so well. This is geranium. This was a light pink color in its actual petal and then its transfer was much more purple, dill, mint didn't work that well. This was just a blossom I found on the street. I don't even know what flower that was. Here are a few other things we've already tried together. We did vinca, but you could see that where I pounded it left these little dot of impressions and not the full petal. Coreopsis, geranium again, coreopsis, more geranium. You'll see that there are some greens and teals and that's achieved by toning which I'll show you a little bit later. Cosmos works really well. The Marigold family, Daisy family, coreopsis, those all kind of have similar texture and weight to their petals and they transfer really nicely. So if you have Cosmos I tried hydrangeas, mums, more oxalis. This was a geranium leaf which just left a big muddy puddle. These were larkspur petals which I got a really nice blue from but not a lot of transfer. That was really clear in its petal shape. Coreopsis here. This is alstroemeria, petunia, an acer or maple leaf. You might get a little friend hanging out on your experiment sheet. Dill that was a clearer impression of cill. Calibrachoa, I'm not even sure how to say that. That was like a pretty succulent petal but I found it a little bit too juicy. And this was red trumpet vine I found in the neighborhood. And again, I just trimmed off the tubular part of the flower and just use the petals. And this had some more pink to it but it started to turn brown. If we go back to our nasturtium the nasturtium was a little bit more pink. I was genuinely surprised at how quickly I filled up these pages. And I love looking at these sheets. They really show how much fun I had in the process.

Toning and watercolor additions

- Once you've made your experiments, you might wanna create single cards with images of flowers and botanicals. And there are a couple of things you can do to transform or elevate the impression that you've created. I wanna show you how to use watercolor and then an acidic and alkaline solution to play with the tone. This is something that I was inspired to do, because I know a little bit about natural dyeing on fabric and I've seen people use things like lemon juice, which is acidic, to shift the color. So maybe something goes down as pink, but by adding the acidic element, it becomes blue or green. And I thought, "Why couldn't I do that with the pigment in the flower?" And it actually worked and was sort of unexpected and fun. So I have about a half a cup of water in each of these three bowls. One bowl has about a half a teaspoon of baking soda. One bowl has about a half a teaspoon or a handful of drops of vinegar, or you could use lemon juice. And then the other one is just water for our watercolor. So the baking soda solution is alkaline or basic, and that means it has, I think, a pH of seven or higher, and it's going to shift the colors of some of the pigments on the paper. The acidic solution, which is the water and vinegar, is acidic and has a pH lower than seven and it's also gonna shift in a different way. So I wanted to show you what that looks like. I have the sheet of impressions that we did together, and then I have another few flower images that I created previously. You'll wanna make sure that you keep whatever brush with each individual bowl. So we don't wanna mix the brush that you're using in the alkaline solution back into the acid solution, 'cause then you'll just dilute the effort of trying to make these different tonal changes and shifts. So I'm working with several round watercolor brushes. The size really doesn't matter. These happen to be a 10, an 8, and a 5. So this is our alkaline or basic solution. It's water and baking soda. And let's just see what happens. (artist gasps) (artist exhales) I mean, I can't even predict what's

going to happen. Sometimes you'll get deep blues or deep greens, acid greens, you can tone the white or yellowish parts of a flower and they become very vibrant yellow. This color might also shift as time goes by. So this might become more deeper or brighter. If you increase or decrease the baking soda in your solution, it may change this tint a little bit. So this is really truly about experimentation. Let's see what the acidic solution does on the same blossom. This is the vinegar and water solution. Hmm, so that's not doing much at the moment. We could come back to that in a few minutes and see if anything happens. All right, let's try a different blossom and see if we get a different reaction. Oh yeah. So I mean you'll see a little bit of difference or change, because you're wetting your image, but that looks like it's brightening it a little bit. But don't be seduced right away, because this can quickly shift. Let's try something else. Let's try one of these coreopsis and see if we get any reaction. I'm not getting a ton of reaction with the vinegar. You can add a little bit more vinegar to your solution if you think something should happen and it doesn't. It's a very imprecise amount. I don't know, another quarter to half teaspoon in there. Give it a good stir. Let's go back to our vinca. We got a little bit of shift from purple to maybe a little bit more blue. Let's see if this does anything. Okay, so yeah, this is working. See how it's turning pink? I was so excited about that. And then it goes from this vibrant pink to back to the purple you had, and then it shifts to blue actually, which I find so interesting. I don't know why these things are happening. There's clearly science behind it. I'm not sure what it is. So we'll see what happens after a while. Let's try coreopsis now that we've added more vinegar to our solution. You can see that that's shifting a bit. Make sure you keep your appropriate brush with the corresponding bowl. I'm gonna go to the basic solution and try the coreopsis. Wow, look at that. I don't know that it's gonna stay that vibrant orange. So this is the basic solution or alkaline solution. This is baking soda. I mean, that is so transformative. It's really cool. I hope it stays that color. That really transformed that. Let's try it on this coreopsis. Whoa. So that's funny, because I'm not getting much of a reaction with the vinegar, but I'm getting a really beautiful reaction with the alkaline, the baking soda solution. Ooh, I'm so tempted to just do this whole thing. I'm just gonna do this whole thing. Why not? Okay, you can see on the vinca that that acidic solution didn't do very much. (brush tapping) I don't think it's uncommon that both basic and acidic solutions will work on every single flower. This is truly experimentation. I really don't know how each flower will react. Go back here. So here I'm adding the basic solution and I'm getting a very dark brown. And you may wanna write some notes as you do this. So this is alkaline. Alkaline. I feel like I'm getting more interest with the alkaline here. I love that rich orange, because I was unable to get a lot of reds when I was just doing the hammering. And that's super different too. Let's try a pansy or a viola. Okay, let's try this guy. Wow. So I get a really vibrant yellow and then almost a teal blue. Let's try this one. So it looks like the yellows become cooler, more vibrant, and the purples become very blue in color. Let's try the orange one. You can see how quickly, I could just tone this whole thing if I wanted. That's interesting. That just increased the vibrancy. And that just may be 'cause it's wet, it may not react with that one. We didn't do any Sweet William together, but this is one, an impression I already made. And I mean, look at how much that change is. It's wild. I really could not have predicted that. Let's try the vinegar on that one and see if we get any change. The vinegar turns pink initially, but we'll see as it dries if it does anything. Oh, let's also try while we've got the vinegar out. Hmm. Maybe just one of these, just that little petal. So you can have a lot of fun with toning using the alkaline and the acidic solutions, and just varying your concentration. Looks like I am getting some bleeding here. Maybe I could try that again on a different bloom with less liquid. I love that coreopsis, I'm so surprised by that result. But I did wanna show what you can do if you get an impression that maybe you wanted to have a little more solid a petal like these

poundings here. I actually think that's really pretty. I like the translucency and the irregularity, but if you are going for something a little more close to reality, you can use watercolor. So I've got, as you can see, a very well-loved palette of watercolor here. It's a mix of tube watercolor. I'm just trying to find a blue that I want to use for to make my purple with. It's a mix of tube watercolor, Daniel Smith, Schmincke, maybe Winsor & Newton. You can see I rarely clean the mixing wells. And I'm gonna mix a purple to try to match that viola. You could make little color swatches on a scratch piece of paper or next to your blossom, but I'm not gonna be that precise. I'm just gonna go for it. It's gonna look really dark where it's wet, but as it dries, it should not leave such a dark edge there. You can also mix a darker color. I actually don't wanna fill in all of that veininess. I think that's really pretty. Can add it here. (water splashing) (brush tapping) If I did want to make one of these Sweet Williams a little pink, because naturally they are pink, they just don't leave a pink impression. I could come in and tone this with some watercolor and change its color without changing the impression too much. And what's fun about this technique is that if you're not comfortable or that adept at painting botanicals, you can do your pounded impression. You can make some minor watercolor adjustments and then have something that is a hybrid of the impression itself and the watercolor and it's just really pretty. (water splashing) (brush tapping) I feel like I could also mix up a color here to improve this nasturtium leaf. Ooh. Don't dip into your vinegar. So choosing a lighter color, like a little bit of a wash, and just give that leaf some edging, but not obliterate the texture from the print that we got. Just like very minimally enhancing the image. You do wanna be careful that you don't overwork the paper, because I can see that as the brush is moving along or if I add a lot of liquid, some of the natural pigment is bleeding a bit. And that's fine if you're okay with it. But if you want something a little more precise, then you just wanna keep that in mind when you're adding these tonal elements or adding watercolor. I think that's so pretty. It still feels really natural, but I get a little bit more definition by adding this watercolor element. Same thing with the vinca. I could go back in and paint some of the petals closer to their original color. I'm going right over that spot where we did the vinegar and didn't get much of a reaction. Okay. I'm not gonna do that whole one, because we already have our little alkaline solution there. Here's another example where I tried using alkaline and acidic solution on the sweet William. These were all purple. So that's what it looked like naturally when I did the impression. These were with the baking soda, and they were actually a really vibrant teal, similar to this. And then after two days, they increased in their intensity and lightness and became much more green and yellow. And then here I toned it with the vinegar, and I got more muted sort of cyanotype blues and a little bit of green cosmos, oops, it's upside down. But cosmos, here is the vinegar solution and here is the baking soda solution. And here's one of the pansies or violas that I used the vinegar solution on. And it was really purple and it just went almost entirely like blue green. And you can see these little petals that are teal or green. They're places where I've tested the toning. Same thing with the Sweet William here. The final thing you can do to preserve the work that you've done, your experiments, and any final projects you might have made like cards or pieces of artwork is to seal them in and protect them from light. And you can use a wax medium to do that. I like to work with Dorland's wax medium, but if you have another method of sealing, you can always experiment with that to make sure that the pigments stay in place and your color is preserved. I just like to use my finger and I just need a tiny bit. I sort of dab it and then rub it with another finger. You wanna make sure your hands are really clean, because if you have any flower parts or paint, you're gonna smear that all around. Looks like there might be something right there. And you most definitely wanna make sure that whatever you're applying this to is entirely dry, so not damp or cold to the touch, needs to be fully dry. I think it really helps with these

orange and yellow tones, like this part has the wax and this part doesn't, increases or brings out the vibrancy, and I think helps seals the color and protect it from light. And you can put this over watercolor and the acid or alkaline solutions. If you get a buildup on your fingers, just use a paper towel and you can also dab away any extra wax you may have added. (paper towel grinding) You don't want it to be gummy or sticky. It should really absorb into the paper. It's so pretty. Let's try this one. You can actually use this wax medium on watercolor and other types of artwork as well. It's a nice way to seal it and finish it. And again, everything has to be completely dry in order for it to work well and not smear. I would steer clear of the white paper and your notes and pencil. You're really just trying to get the blossoms. And you can probably apply this with a brush too. I just, I like the tactile quality of feeling like, "Do I have enough or do I have a little too much?" (paper towel grinding) Yeah, that orange is nice. It's funny, it's only like as I'm doing this that I'm thinking of how similar this all is to image transfer, because I also will seal my image transfers. And like I said earlier, we're just doing like a nature's version of an image transfer. But with flowers. I love processes where there's a lot of unexpected elements. I didn't know what I was gonna get when I put down that first viola and hammered all the petals. And I was so impressed with the image that was left behind on the paper. And that sort of sense of discovery is what spurs me on to try another petal, another leaf, another flower. I think things like that sort of spark curiosity in a way that some processes don't. And it just keeps me coming back to find out more, gather more information, play with more flowers. And I love that about flower pounding. We've only worked with paper in this class, but you could definitely experiment on fabric. You might need to introduce elements like mordant, alums, and things to make the pigment permanent on fabric that you intend to use or wash. But I think for paper and for the immediacy of the process, you can't go wrong. You can make a quick little card, you could add a flower into a journal. I love that you're not cutting something out and pasting it or pressing a flower and waiting weeks for it to dry. You can put a flower down, hammer it, and get an amazing impression. And there are not many things that you can do that rapidly that are that successful.