

COVERS

Mass-produced books are typically categorized as either softcover or hardcover. A softcover book is described as having a cover made of flexible cardboard or paper that is glued directly onto the spine, and a hardcover book is made of two cover boards of inflexible material separated by a spine. But those categorizations blur completely when you attempt to apply them to artist books. We'll be looking at soft and hard covers made from a wide range of materials, and at a simple way of attaching them to a book block.

The simplest kinds of covers are created in two or three pieces then attached to the book. This allows for an almost infinite choice of cover materials, including found objects, wood, clay, polymer clay, heavy leather, copper and binder's board. If desired, the boards and spines can be covered and decorated with leather, cloth, paper (Unryu is especially forgiving) or metal foil before being attached.

Some of the possibilities for future covers that I have found or made include a plaster "head-

stone," the printing block for a game board, small wooden cutting boards, a wooden bookend with a small metal image of Pegasus, dove-tailed boards, square metal pieces, a carved woodblock for printing, a cast resin plaque resembling ivory, a black painted clay square with the title "witch" embossed into it and two polymer clay covers wrapped over wood with objects embedded.

In a couple of demonstrations coming up, the back and front covers are made independently from the book block, then attached. In the first demonstration, the fabric-covered boards are attached to an

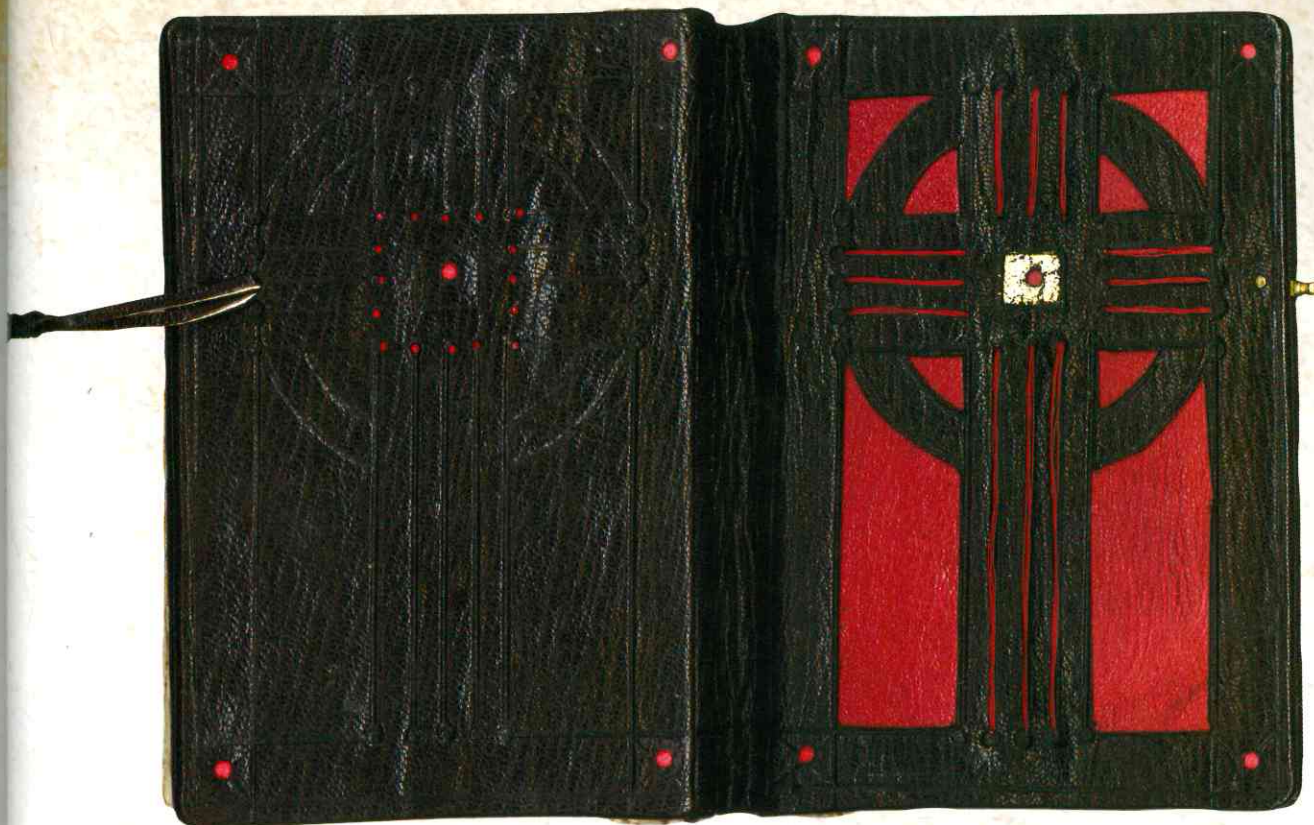
accordion book that has no spine. In the second demonstration, a leather spine is glued to a drumleaf structure, and printed copper foil over wood covers are glued to the first and last folio pages, which serve as endpapers.

In the third demonstration, a leather cover, incorporating an inset tile, is glued to a book block of signatures sewn through a leather spine.



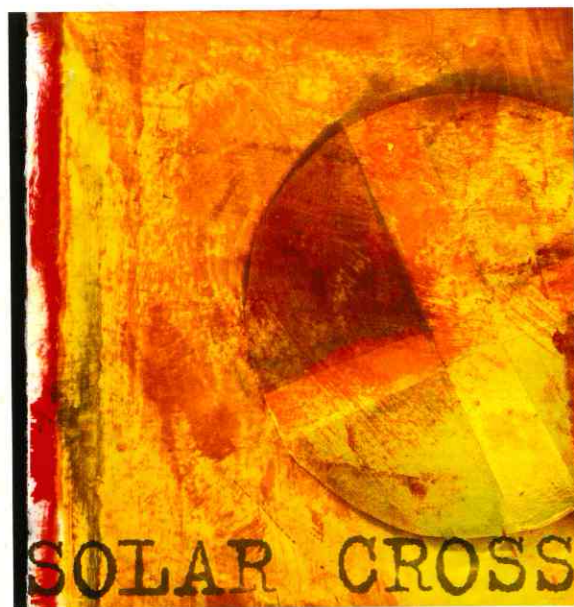
Goin Home, 1999, 52 pages, 7" x 6 1/4" (18cm x 16cm)

After being away for a number of years, I returned to the area of my childhood, the Gulf Coast of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. The book I collaged while visiting was a commercial blank book, similar to *Vietnam Journal* (see page 6). The paper cover was wrapped with a vintage quilt piece. A closure was made from a metal ornament with an image detail glued into the circular section above the gargoyle head. The ornament was glued to extend beyond the flap, a metal plate was glued to the front cover under the ornament overlap, and a magnet strip was attached to the back of the ornament to hold the cover closed. The title was written with silver marker.



Magdalene Laundries, 2003, 72 pages, 6" x 4½" (15cm x 11cm) (See more images on pages 22-23 and another view of cover page)

The book used for *Magdalene Laundries* has a binding in the late Coptic style, which was made in a workshop with Shanna Leino. Historically accurate in structure, the boards were made with layers of laminated papyrus that were wrapped with black leather for the cover. Working from a drawing I made, the decoration for both the front and back covers was completed before the leather was attached to the book. It included blind tooling the drawing into the leather with a folder, sections cut or punched out to expose red leather glued underneath, stitching with red thread and a small square of gold leaf. A loop of leather thong was secured in the back cover to wrap around a handmade brass peg held into the front cover with a rivet.



Solar Cross, 2007, 28 pages, 13¾" x 13¼" (35cm x 34cm)

An inkjet print over a collage constructed of gold moiré film, aluminum foil tape and silver leaf glued to precoated aluminum became the cover for *Solar Cross*. The printed cover was adhered with a sheet of MACtac clear adhesive to the paper cover of a book originally made in a workshop with Suzanne Moore. (See page 91.) A spine of crumpled, sanded aluminum foil tape was added to cover the aluminum edges. Black oil paint was rubbed into the creases and abrasions to tone the silver.

MAKING AND ATTACHING INDEPENDENT COVERS

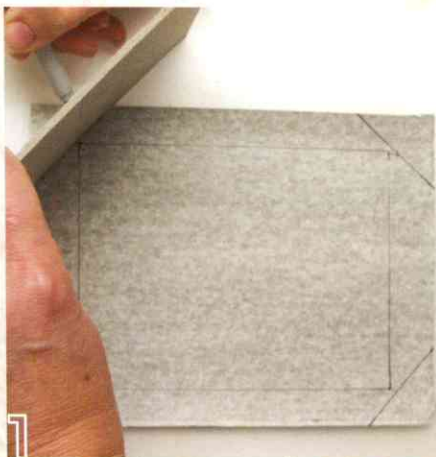
Materials

Book block
Boards to be covered
Material to cover boards
Pencil
Snap-blade or craft knife
Cutting board
Ruler or straightedge
Scissors
Glue or adhesive as needed
Glue brush
Folder
Paper, waxed
Paper, scrap or other clean waste paper
Weight
Chopping mats or other nonabsorbent hard surface

A concertina book is featured in this demo, and this type of binding is typically left without a spine so that it can expand and stand for viewing.

Paper-backed fabric designed for bookmaking is ideal for inkjet printing, but you can also choose other fabric for printing—it just needs to be ironed to a stiff backing, such as freezer paper, first.

Steps A1, A2 and A3 show additional alternative steps. I wrapped a piece of badly worn antique fabric as a second layer around a set of covers in the same olive green book cloth. I inkjet printed the title, "Viewpoint," onto the antique fabric.



1. To prepare your paper for covering the first board, place the board on the cover material and trace around it, adding a 1" (3cm) margin to be the turn-in (the portion that is wrapped around) on each side. Trim the excess cover material.

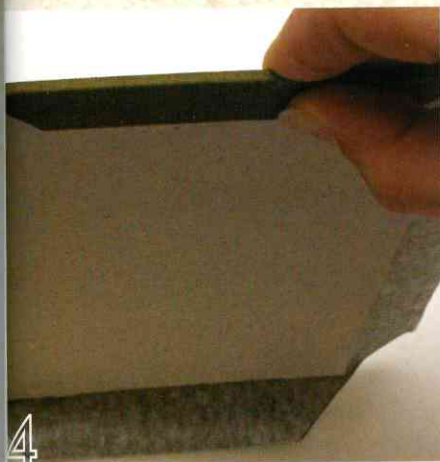
Set the board against each corner and, using the board's thickness as a guide, draw a diagonal line across the corners.

2. Trim the corner triangles away to remove bulk. Coat the back of the cover material and the front of the board with glue, covering the edges completely.



3. Place the board on the cover material. Wrap the turn-ins of two opposite edges around to the back of the board and smooth. Crimp the allowance that had been left to cover the corners and burnish with a folder. Repeat the process for the remaining two edges and for the other cover.

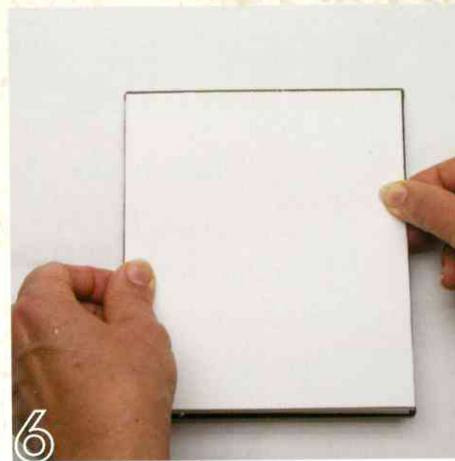




4. Instead of just wrapping the cover material turn-ins around with your fingers, you can lift the edge of the cover that is away from you and roll it forward on the edge remaining on the table to achieve a smooth turn-in.



5. To attach the covers to the book block, orient the front, back, top and bottom of the book and have the covers oriented to match. Place a sheet of scrap paper under the first page of the book, and apply a coat of glue on the outside front of the book block.



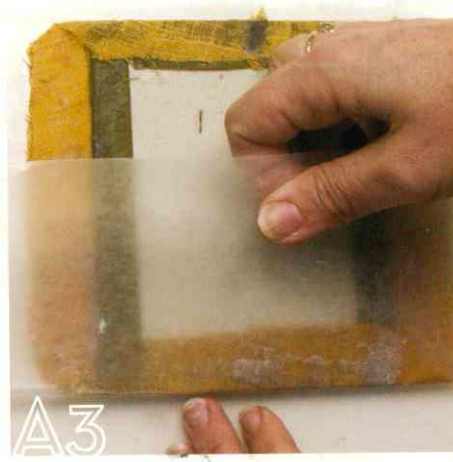
6. Align the book block with the cover so that the margins are visible, and carefully press it onto the cover. Repeat the steps with the last page and the back cover. Press under weight until dry.



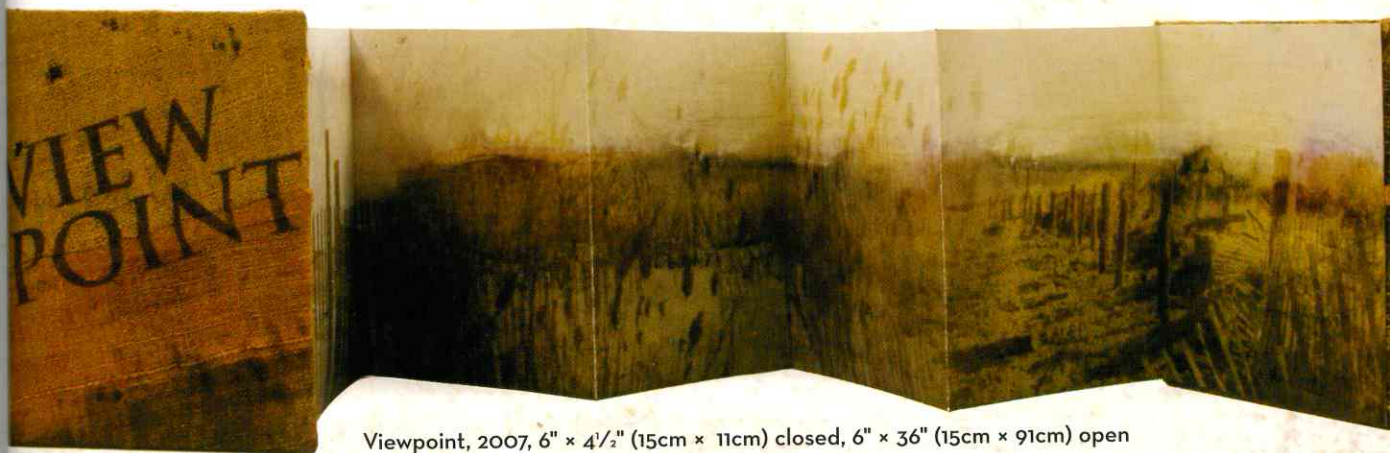
A1. Because my fabric in this alternative process is thin and delicate with tears and holes, I'm gluing it over a set of boards, as prepared in Steps 1-4. I coated the board with a heavy layer of gel medium.



A2. I repeated the wrapping process by gluing the printed fabric onto the pre-wrapped board.



A3. Instead of rolling the board forward, as described in the previous demonstration to achieve the smooth turn-in of the flap, you can use waxed paper as your scrap paper and pull it around the board edge to push the fabric margin smoothly onto the back of the cover.



Viewpoint, 2007, 6" x 4 1/2" (15cm x 11cm) closed, 6" x 36" (15cm x 91cm) open

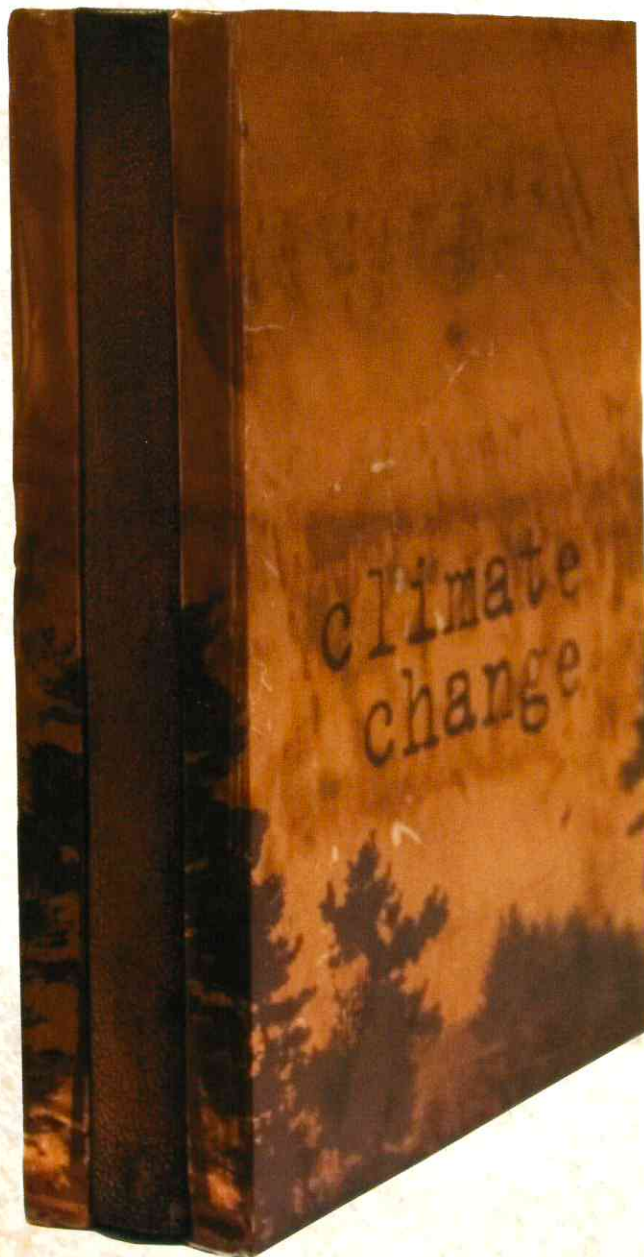
FOIL OVER WOOD

Materials

Book block
Boards to be covered
Material to cover boards (foil)
Glue or adhesive as needed
Glue brush
Folder
Material for spine
Oil pastels, pigment or paint
to color leather
Weight
Optional: digital file of cover,
computer, imaging software,
inkjet printer, white paper for
carrier sheet if needed, ink-
jet precoat and a brush for
applying precoat

A spine is included in this demo, though just like the cover in the previous demo, the pieces are covered independently. The spine is attached to the book block, and the covers attached to the spine. The spine wrap can also be a design element that not only hides parts of the binding, but also protects the back of the book.

The cover for *Climate Change* uses inkjet-printed copper foil over wood and a leather spine, but you could use heavy aluminum foil and fabric. (If your printer has "pizza wheels" that track on nonporous surfaces, reread the information on page 11.) Any heavy board would be suitable, but model airplane plywood is becoming one of my favorite boards for its lightweight strength and ease of use. The images for this project were created on pages 28-29 and the book block constructed on pages 86-87.



Climate Change, 2007, 24 pages, 7" x 5 1/2"
(18cm x 14cm)



1. Design the cover on paper or make the cover image in the computer. This image, a medium gray silhouette, was designed to allow the copper to show through and extended to carry onto the wrapped edges. The cut lines, shown in red, were printed on a paper template but not on the copper.

2. Apply two coats of precoat to the foil, allowing each coat to dry thoroughly, and brushing one coat in one direction and the second coat in a perpendicular direction. Tape the copper to a piece of carrier paper and print the cover design with an inkjet printer onto the precoated foil.

3. Attach the foil to your cover boards in the same manner as the fabric on pages 120-121. If your foil happens to be adhesive-backed material, you won't need to add glue. Leave an allowance for wrapping the corners by measuring with the thickness of the board as described in Step 1 on page 120. Because I wanted the copper to really cover well, I made a pattern with an extra extension for wrapping around the side of the corner and used it for cutting all four corners.

4. Cut a piece of leather, paper or fabric 1" (3cm) taller and 1" (3cm) wider than the book block spine. Score 1/2" (13mm) turn-

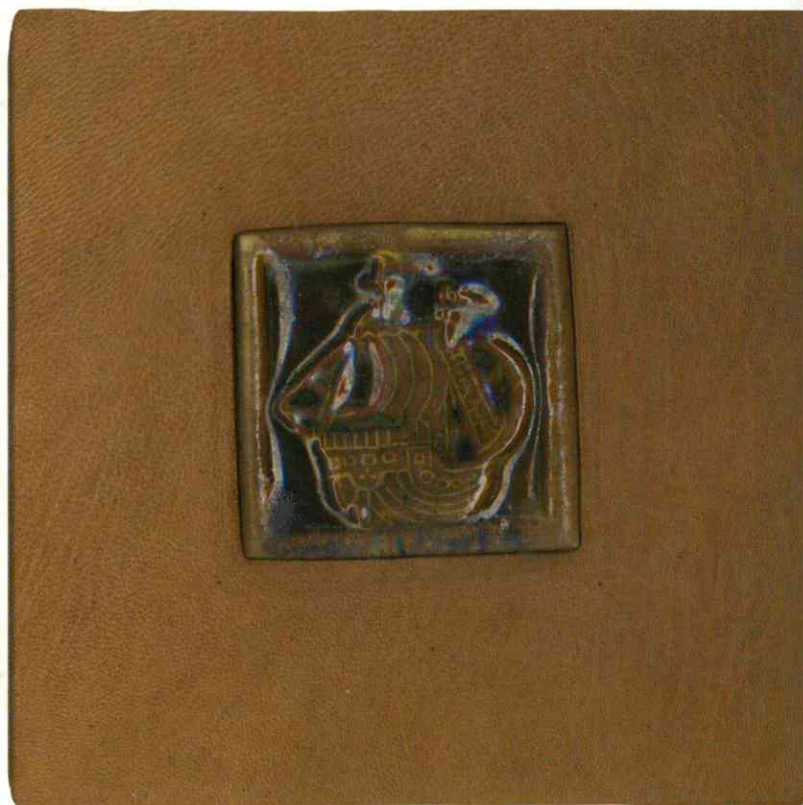
ins at the head and tail edges of the spine material with a folder. Brush glue over the turn-ins on the back of the material and fold them flat, pressing with a folder. Brush glue on the back of the spine material and on the spine of the book block. Center the spine material over the spine of the book block, wrapping the excess over onto the book block, and burnish everything well.

5. Following Steps 5 and 6 on page 121, apply a coat of glue on the outside front of the book block. Align the book block with the cover so that the margins are visible, and carefully press the book block onto the cover.

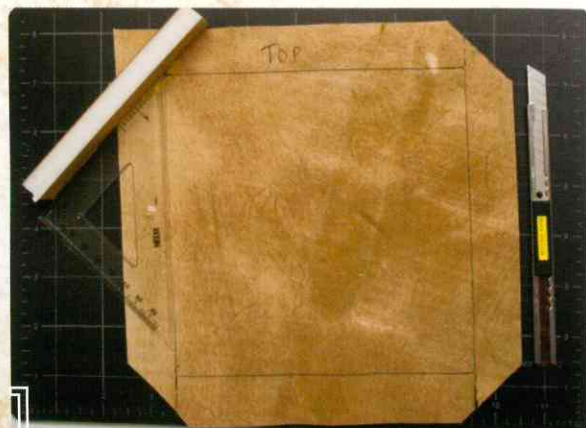
LEATHER COVER WITH INSET

Book block with attached spine material
 Item to insert
 Boards to be covered
 Material to cover boards
 Cutting board
 Ruler
 Pencil or pen
 90° triangle
 Snap-blade or craft knife
 Paper, scrap
 Paper, waxed
 Vinyl spackle
 Spreaders, credit cards or pieces of plastic
 Piece of nonwoven fabric or paper for filler
 Wheat paste
 Paste brush
 Glue or other adhesive
 Glue brushes, small and large
 Scissors
 Folder
 Paper for covering the inside of the covers
 Chopping mats or other nonabsorbent hard surfaces
 Weight

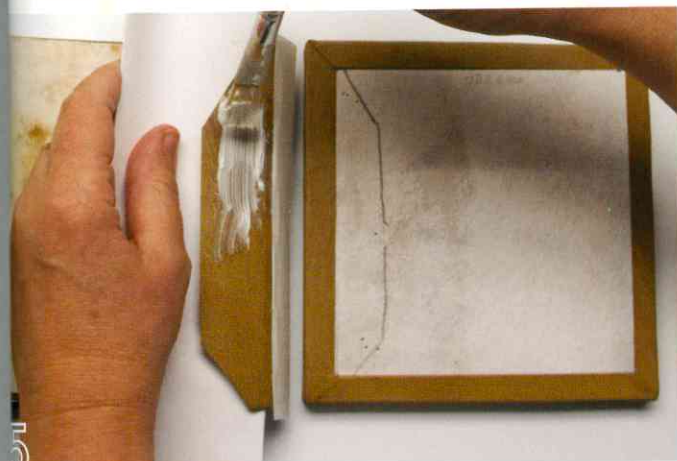
Having aged the paper on page 21 and sewn the book signatures into a leather spine on pages 110-111, we're ready to make a cover for *Mayflower* and attach it to the spine. Except for being covered with leather and having an inset, this three-piece cover is made using the same techniques as the previous cover. Because there is a thick glazed tile to be incorporated into the front cover, I'm using a piece of Gatorfoam, a dimensionally stable archival board, about the same thickness as the tile, but binder's board, wood or plywood cut to size and sanded are also good choices. Glue works well with most materials, but it can stain leather; wheat paste is preferred.



Mayflower, 2008, 60 pages, 6" x 6" x 1 1/2" (15cm x 15cm x 4cm) leather over Gatorfoam with glazed tile inset



1. Cut the cover material as described in Step 1 on page 120. A 90° triangle parallel to the traced edge of the board will help to draw a perfect diagonal line across the corner of the cover material for the board corner allowance. Note the space left for the thickness of the Gatorfoam board.



2. Position the item to be incorporated on the cover material and trace around it. Make several cuts from the center to the traced edges. Coat the back of the cut edges with wheat paste, turn them under and press them in place with a folder. Position the cut material on the cover board and use the hole as a template for tracing on the board. Cut the hole in the board deep enough to accommodate the item and place the item into the hole, with glue if needed.

Because my shape was square and centered on the cover, it was easy to position and trace around. I cut an X from corner to corner across the center of the traced shape to open the leather. Instead of cutting and turning under the edges, you may want to stretch the cover material into the space if your item is relatively shallow. Wheat paste rubbed into leather helps it to stretch well.

Coat the entire back of the cover material with wheat paste. Place the cover material on the board, around the embedded item, wrap the board edges with the excess material and press into place with a folder.

3. Fill any gaps on the back of the front cover with vinyl spackle and let dry.

4. Wrap the board for the back cover. Fill the indentation created by the wrapped leather edges on both covers with a material the thickness of the leather and glue in place, using PVA or gel medium. (PVA is a medium wetter than gel and will go into the fibers of heavy fabric, if that is what you are using to even out the surface.)

5. On your pre-made book block, trim the edges of the spine material on a diagonal at the head and tail of the book

block so that they won't be seen when the covers are attached. With scrap paper under the trimmed spine material, coat with glue. Press the appropriate cover against the glued spine material. Repeat with the remaining cover. Because this cover is glued only to the spine material, the process is slightly different than the previous examples. I'm using the book block made on pages 110-111.

6. Cut two pieces of paper, slightly smaller than the book covers, and coat them with glue. Press one against the inside front cover and the other against the inside back cover. Place waxed paper between the book block and the cover. Place the book between two chopping mats and press under weight until dry.

The brown handmade paper I chose for the inside covers is similar in color and texture to my leather.

BOOK+ *Art*

Handcrafting Artists' Books

Dorothy Simpson Krause

