

EAA April Demonstration in-person at the Church

Monday, April 1, 2024 7:00p.m.

Nada Talevska - "Using Pressed Flowers to Make Art"

Our guest artist for the evening, **Nada Talevska** demonstrated "**Using Pressed Flowers to Make Art**". Nada started her journey into pressed flower art four years ago after leaving a successful 42 year career in the corporate world as a project manager. She found her creative gene, "which I didn't know I had until I quit working!" She always loved gardening, especially growing flowers, a skill acquired from her parents. Missing the colorful garden blooms in the winter months led her to learn how to press flowers, thus extending the life of her beautiful garden. She created a pressed flower collage for a family member....the rest is history. Now, she has an Etsy site and over 2000 FaceBook followers! Her artist talents soon extended beyond collages to creating faces using petals, stems, buds as eyelashes, lips and hair. Never having taken art classes, Nada learned to draw faces by watching lots of YouTube videos. This very popular demonstration was enjoyed by the 28 members and guests in attendance, including three new members. Several members of the Euclid Garden Club came to learn how to press flowers, a new category in their upcoming August show.



Nada started her presentation by explaining how she presses flowers, both the traditional way and the much quicker modern method. "Pick flowers at their peak, but not first thing in the morning as they are still too wet." The blooms must be dry. Nada shared that a friend's mother gave her 40 year old flowers pressed between newspapers from 1976 that still looked good. You can



also use a heavy book. However, she prefers using the traditional flower press that her husband made with two heavy plywood boards, four lag bolts and screw nuts. She uses newspaper, cardboard or any paper between the wooden boards in the press upon which she arranges the flowers. Check and change out the papers every few days. Flowers can take two to six weeks to dry...you must make sure all the moisture is out. The more modern method uses a

microwave oven. It contains plastic plates, wool and cotton squares. Line up the flowers on the cloth squares, assemble between plastic plates and microwave in 3 bursts of about 20 seconds each, being careful not to burn them. Check each time and wipe off the moisture on the plastic parts. Nada suggests not mixing flowers as they may dry at different rates. She cautions that the flowers may feel dry, but may not be. To be safe, put them between newspaper or copy paper and weight down with a heavy book or 10lb. weight.



What flowers does she press? Dahlias, Lenten roses, black-eyed Susans, daffodils, rose petals, baby irises, marigolds, carnations, their leaves and thin stems, too....just to name a few. Nada brought several examples to show how she prepares the flowers for the press. Using sharp cuticle scissors, she cuts off the stem, separates petals and arranges them on the paper. Position the flowers the way you want them to come out. It helps if they all face the same direction. Each flower can be a little different. For daffodils, place them on the side or trim off the centers. Don't trim off the back of marigolds and carnations unless you want tiny pieces! Use only rose petals, as whole roses are very hard to dry.

Another important step....preserve and inventory your collection. This is where her organization and spreadsheet skills come in handy! Nada places the dried items on white paper inside a clear cellophane or plastic sleeve, each one numbered and placed flat inside a drawer of a rolling cart. Her spreadsheet contains the inventory of over 170 different flowers and their location.



Next, Nada demonstrated adding a few leaves and flowers to the design piece she started at home. Her essential tools include three cheap brushes for glue, Exacto knife, scissors, and at least three tweezers....”splurge on good ones!” She uses smooth Bristol paper and PPA (Perfect Paper Adhesive) glue, which dries clear, purchased from Amazon. Parchment paper is used over glued flowers to ensure they lay down flat. Tips: When picking up dried material, remember which side is up. When adding glue to big flowers, start in the center and go out in one direction. Glue as you go. It’s ok to get glue on the paper, it won’t show. As for the design, “whatever moves you; the key is movement.” There are no special framing needs, but she does recommend uv, non-glare glass. Plexiglass seems to work ok, too. Nada recommends not hanging pressed flower art in a humid space, like your bathroom! And that concludes her wonderful demonstration enjoyed by all. Thank you, Nada. Visit her website: www.pressedflowerartisan.com.



The video of her demonstration will soon be available on EAA’s YouTube channel...thank you to Aaron Parker for recording the demo and Rozenia for editing and posting.



It was BYOT (Bring Your Own Treats) to share with everyone after the meeting. Thanks to the members who brought in goodies and a special thank you to Cynthia Beacham for going ‘over and above’. She didn’t bring in just one goodie, but many non-sweet goodies to share. Terese, Bernie and Bee did an excellent job organizing the table and serving the tea/coffee...many thanks!

