

# BY DESIGN

FLOWER ARRANGING STUDY GROUP



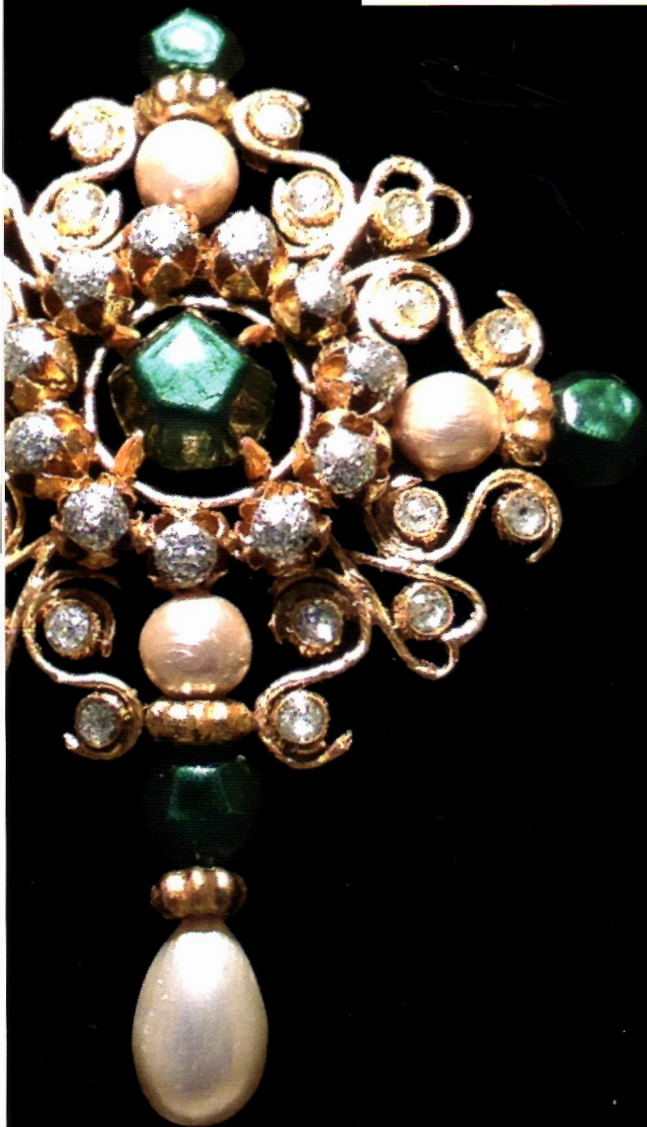
## Gilded: Artful Living

Botanical Art At The  
Newport Flower Show

## A Gilded Brooch

### *Creating Botanical Art Jewelry*

*article and photographs by Sarah Boynton*



The theme of the 2016 Newport Flower Show was *"Gilded, Artful Living."* I entered the class to make an ornamental brooch from the Gilded Age, intrigued by the challenge of creating a pin from such a lovely time. My task was to fashion 'A brooch made entirely of dried plant materials created to artfully make a statement,' staged on a velvet stand in a 12" circular opening niche.

My first step was to research the jewelry from the Gilded Age. Most brooches from that time were made of gold and had glorious gemstones, diamonds and pearls. For me, the challenge was creating the wonderful swirls of gold characteristic of this opulent era.

I then designed the pin, taking elements from some of the lovely brooches I'd found through my research and incorporating them into my own style. I chose to make a longer design due to the size of the stand given to us and the opening of the niche. Brooches are generally curved (do not lay flat); therefore, I needed to actually create the pin on a curved surface in order to keep the shape. I decided to use a styrofoam ball cut in half to get the curve I needed. I then taped my design onto the ball to use as a form to follow while creating the brooch.

Once the design was complete, I began constructing the framework for the "gems." I took a thin piece of raffia and coated it with a mixture of white glue and water. Using a small drill, I twisted the raffia until it was fairly tight. Some of the raffia was twisted with a tiny copper wire in the center to add structural integrity to the

design. I let the raffia partially dry, taped to a non-stick surface. Using a curved tool, I then created tiny "s" shapes and tiny elongated hearts and allowed them to dry. Once completely dry, I glued each piece, along with the eucalyptus and andromeda pods, onto the curved form to create the pin's framework. Once the framework was completely dried, I carefully took it off the styrofoam form and flipped it over to coat the underside with epoxy to ensure the pin would hold up.

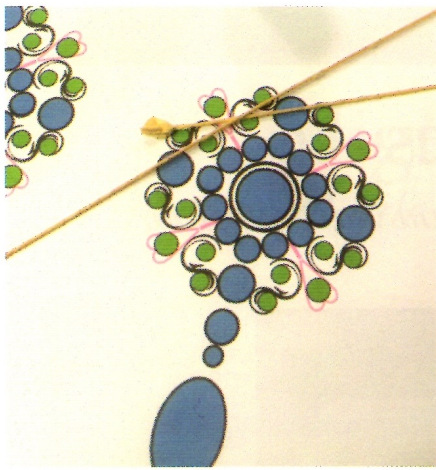
The next stage was to paint the entire pin with gold. My preference is to use spray paint to ensure a consistent smooth coat (Design Master, 24 Karat Gold spray paint). I then painted the center of the eucalyptus with glitter nail polish (Orly 'Tiara') to create the "diamonds." Next, I glued lentils into the andromeda pods and painted them with the same glitter nail polish for the bigger "diamonds."

To create the look of the large gems, I sanded a macadamia nut and fox nuts to give them a beveled look. I painted them, first with epoxy, and then with nail polish. This process produced a jeweled tone. Once the large faux emerald was glued into the center of the pin, I glued the tips of rhododendron seed pods to it to appear as prongs for the gemstone.

The smaller pearls on the brooch are actually soy beans, and the larger one is an almond sanded to give it shape. I then painted them with several thin coats of pearlized nail polish. The small gold spacers are pokeweed seed pods glued in place.

For those who have not entered a Botanical Arts Class, I encourage you to try. It is a fun and challenging craft that will teach you to look at nature in a whole new light! I am often asked how long it takes to create Botanical Art Jewelry. The simplest answer is that this particular piece took four books on tape and three bottles of wine.

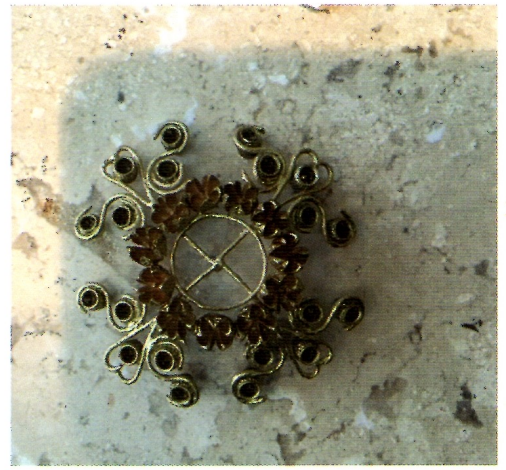
*To see more of Sarah Boynton's botanical art designs, go to her web site at <http://www.sarahboynton.net>.*



Sarah researched jewelry of the Gilded Age first, then sketched her pin design.



Sarah twists raffia tightly then uses a curved tool to make the "S" shapes and the tiny elongated hearts.



Sarah begins to piece together the pin's framework using eucalyptus and andromeda pods glued onto the pin's raffia framework. She then sprayed the entire pin gold.



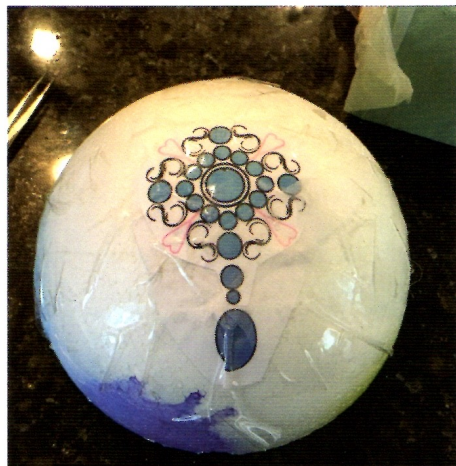
Next, Sarah creates the "diamonds" using glitter nail polish, "Tiara" by Orly.



For the look of large gems, Sarah uses macadamia and fox nuts and sands them to create a beveled look. Tips of rhododendron seed pods are used as "prongs."



The smaller pearls are sanded soybeans and the larger pearl is an almond. All are painted with a pearlized nail polish.



Because brooches are generally curved, Sarah attached her pin sketch to a styrofoam ball to get the curve she needed.



The completed pin fits perfectly on the curve of the styrofoam ball.



Sarah's Key Card of plant materials used and winning ribbons, including Newport Flower Show's Botanical Arts Best in Show in 2016.