Shapeable Paper Leaves with CBTV Live

Chapter 1 - Chapter 1
Shapeable Paper Leaves
(upbeat music) â™ª Hey â™ª (upbeat music) - Live, like we always do on Tuesdays and Thursdays. And this project is a really fun one. It kind of came about in a variety of ways. First, it's a reference to Eric Carle, if you guys remember "The Very Hungry Caterpillar," which is one of my favorite childhood books. He's an illustrator and author and he paints all of his own paper, cuts it up, and then makes incredible illustrations. So, we're gonna do a little bit of that together. And then the second inspiration for this project is I used to work at Anthropology doing windows, and I made these huge leaves out of fabric. Today, we're gonna do that painted paper technique and then take those, cut them into leaves, and make them bendable on wire, so you can make some kind of home decor project. You could put this as a gift topper. It's really quick and easy to do, and it's a really fun project to use up your scraps or some of your painted papers. So first, we're gonna start on our painted paper. I have a large pad of Strathmore drawing paper. This is one of my most favorite papers to use. It's great for image transfer. If you watched my 30-day challenge, Creative Challenge that just ended last month, this is what I used. It's nice because it'll take wet media, although it's not a watercolor paper or mixed media paper, it's just a drawing paper. It has a really pretty creamy stock. And I have a variety of craft paints in green. You could use any color that you want. The first layer I'm applying is just with a hardware store brush. This actually has pink on it, which is totally fine. I want loose brush strokes. And remember, I just dived right into this and we're live, so if you have any questions, feel free to ask me, and Ali will let me know what your questions are. (paper scratching) So I'm using a little bit of water just to create some more brush strokes here. And the idea is that you're gonna cover this whole paper all the way to the edge (paper scratching) 'cause any white space is gonna be a little bit boring, actually. So, don't be afraid to be messy, and loose, and gestural. You can mix all kinds of greens on this paper. Now, if you have a particular type of leaf in mind, then you may wanna use those colors. (paper scratching) But I'm just doing a range 'cause that gives me some flexibility. And again, I'm just using my inexpensive hardware store brush. If you have seen my Painted Gift Wrap class, you'll know how much I love this brush. Actually, I'm gonna be teaching a class, tomorrow we're filming, and I'm using this brush again. I love it because it's really coarse bristles. And it doesn't even matter if you don't wash out your brush because then you get these great separations, which gives you these really cool marks like this. And that's what we want, we want a textured green base. (paper scratching) Try to go right to the edge like I said. You can do a mix of thicker paint and watered-down paint. You could even do dye, actually. I've played with using dyes also. Okay, this looks pretty good. Now, you wanna set this aside and you wanna paint the back in the same way. You don't have to use this exact same color palette. You can pick a totally different color combo on the back of your paper. One could be a light and a dark or a warm and a cool green spectrum. You could do some really pretty silvery blues. I have a swap out. (paper ripping) You know, that's what we love to do here at Creativebug. So, let me move this. (paper rustling) And actually, the scraps from this project are even as delightful as the actual pages. This is from my cuttings from earlier. (paper rustling) So you can see I have a ton of paper here. This one's really pale with a more vibrant kind of aqua. This one has a lot of texture. (paper rustling) This is kind of a soft wash on the back. (paper rustling) The drawing paper is nice because it's a medium weight, and then with the paint, it makes a little bit stiffer. You don't wanna use card stock so much

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because when you bend that when making the leaf, it can crack and bubble. So, I really recommend sticking with a light to medium-weight paper and then painting it yourself. Again, I was just using craft paint. This was actually my like blotter paper when I was working, and I love how this looks. I'm gonna save it and make a leaf out of that, too. And then all the scraps are really fun also. (paper rustling) So let's see, I think I wanna use this guy. I'm just gonna fold this in half and pick the side you don't want to show. So, if I want this to be my leaf on the outside, then I'm gonna fold it in half with the wrong side showing. (paper scratching) And I normally would freehand cut this, but if you need a little help, we're gonna draw it out first. Let's just do leaf like that. I'm gonna be cutting through two layers. (paper scraping) - [Ali] We've got a comment from Jody who says, "This is a great project for kids' paintings." - Hi, Jody. The comment was this is a great project for kids' paintings. And you're right, kids could totally help you with this. You could get the finger paints out, that would be really fun. It's a great, great project to do with kids of all ages. And just so you know, we really listen to your comments. We really appreciate when you write in and ask questions. We've heard from many of you that you can't always hear when people ask questions, so we're gonna be really good and try to say the comments and questions out loud so you can hear them. So, thank you for writing in. (paper rustling) Trying to keep my two layers together as best I can. (paper scraping) And like I said, you can freehand these shapes if that's better for you. (paper scraping) And this is just a loose leaf shape. It's not a particular leaf that I was trying to mimic. And I can feel that on the bottom, I'm off a little bit because when I was cutting, I kind of nudged that, so we'll just go to the back and trim it up. (scissors clattering) So these are my wrong sides, and I'm gonna flip these over because this is actually the side that I want to show. And the reason that we paint both sides is because when you glue, which is our next step, and you come in and glue these edges, sometimes you'll see a little bit showing through. And the variety in greens can be really nice, but you can also trim it away. So, it's just something to think about. All right, now the next things that... The next few things that you're gonna need are some hot glue and some wire. The thicker the wire for this, a really heavy gauge is gonna be the best because we're gonna stand these up in a vase so you can have like a permanent arrangement, you can play with them. Like I said, you can shape them. So, you need to have a wire that is going to withstand that. And I've got two wires here that I got from my local Joanne. One is an 18-gauge and one is a 16-gauge. And let me just show you out of the package. They come in packages. And one is cloth or thread-wrapped. That's this light one. So this has kind of a fabric feel on the outside. And this one is smooth green floral wire. So, that's probably something that you've seen before. This is 16-gauge and this is 18-gauge. And actually, the lower the number, the thicker the gauge. So the 16-gauge is actually a thicker wire than the 18-gauge is. It's a little counterintuitive if you haven't encountered it before. And you can use either for this project. I like the color of the thread-wrapped one for this one, so we're gonna do this guy. I am using a high-temp hot glue gun, which I would prefer for this project. I'm gonna start by just doing a line of hot glue down the center. (glue gun clattering) And line my wire. Now, you wanna get your wire maybe not right to the tip, but close, so that way you can bend this leaf all the way from the base of it to the tip of it. And just for good measure, I'm actually gonna do a little bit more hot glue on top. (glue gun clicking) And then you can do a couple of things. You can do your hot glue along the edges, I would say about 1/8 of an inch from the edge. That way, you can trim down if you're off at all. You can also instead, or in addition to, do some hot glue like veins here. And that's fun also. I like to try to line up at the base. Place it down. And you can do a little bit of wiggle adjustments. You do have to work before the hot glue sets up. (paper scratching) And then I do a little bit of trimming. So the edge is pretty blunt. I'm just gonna come in here. Yeah, let's do it this

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way. My scissors aren't very sharp, so... Just trim that down a little. (scissor snipping) Good. And then anywhere where it didn't line everything up perfectly, because we do have the thickness of the wire in there, I'm just gonna give it a trim, and you can check the back, too. Now, I actually don't mind that, that's why you painted the inside or both sides green so that if anything shows, it's still green. But if you want, you can totally turn this off and reshape your leaf. (scissors clattering) So now, because you put that wire in there, your leaf can bend and has a lot of life and body. And they're actually really beautiful. You can play with the different shapes. I make a lot of paper flowers for weddings, and friends' birthdays, and so forth. And these are a really nice kind of hearty leaf to pair with a really delicate tissue paper or crepe paper blossom. So, this is really cool. And if you wanna do something like a wreath, you could make lots of these and put them into a wreath. Because they're shapeable, you have a lot of opportunity to play with them. I wanna show you one other type of sort of eucalyptus leaf so you can see how to combine wires. Remember, if you have questions, let me know. (scissor clattering) - [Ali] Courtney, Jones is joining us. Can you tell them what you're making? - Hi, everyone. Welcome to Creativebug. We're live like we always are on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and I'm working on shapeable paper leaves. So we started by painting our Strathmore drawing paper on both sides with some very loose gestural painting strokes, kind of like I did in my Painted Gift Wrap class. And then once it was dry, we took two layers and glued them together with one of these floral wires. This is a 16-gauge wire. You can also use an 18-gauge wire, and that gives it lots... of strength so that you can shape it. It's really pretty because it holds its shape. The thing with working with paper is often, things will kind of droop and wilt, and to get something that has a lot of like dynamic movement and holds its shape, well, you really need a sturdy wire, so that's what this is. (scissor clattering) All right, so this next one for eucalyptus, you can cut them in pairs. We'll do that since that's how we started our first one. But eucalyptus leaves are just round. Well, there are multiple kinds, but the one that we're doing are just pairs of round leaves. So these are fun to make because they're kind of just irregular shapes. I don't need to draw them out, I can just freehand them. So there's one set. (paper scraping) And the other thing that's awesome and something I talk about in my Paste Paper class is you may not like the way a paper looks overall, but once you cut it down into just this leaf shape, you wind up seeing all the variety, and beauty, and texture that's really unexpected, so it's another kind of fun discovery in the process. (paper rustling) And then you might figure out other things you can use this painted paper for. (scissor clattering) All right, that guy's really huge in comparison to those. So, why don't we make this a little smaller? It's a little overzealous with my circle cutting. (scissor clattering) All right. So I wanna determine what the outsides are gonna be. I really like these textured ones. Now, the one thing about the circles is when you get your hot glue, you wanna remember exactly where things line up. So, that's that orientation, that's that orientation. It helps if you have a little sharp point where you're like, "Oh, yeah, that's where they go." And that's that orientation. - [Ali] We have our first question. Mandy says, "Just tuned in, looks like you're using craft paint on mixed media paper. - Name again? - [Ali] Mandy. - Mandy. Hi Mandy, welcome. The question is: Am I using craft paint on mixed media paper? I am using craft paint a variety. I like Fogart, Martha Stewart, just whatever colors grab my eye. I'm working on a Strathmore drawing paper. It's the one that comes in a spiral pad. It has a brown cover. It's my favorite paper. If you've seen my Image Transfer class, it's one of my favorite papers to use for image transfers. I use it in my Painted Gift Wrap class. If you saw my 30-day Creative Challenge that just happened in August, then I use that paper for most of the month as well. So, it really works, even though it's not intended for what media works really well for this. (glue gun clicking) And I am running out of hot glue. All right, so for this, same thing, we're

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gonna do a line around the center, and then, sorry, a line in the center for our wire and then one around the edge. So, work swiftly. If you wanna add a little more hot glue where that center wire is gonna go, and then do your best to line up your circles or whatever leaf shape you're doing, and then press. Now, to be honest, you're not gonna probably be bending these leaves too much. You might a little, but this still gives you some flexibility, and we're gonna do something else with these wires in a minute. So it's nice to have it. And it does look like a vein if you can see it because it's in the center. It does look like a vein and a leaf, which I like. We are gonna do a line in the center a little bit around the edge. I'm working with that cloth-wrapped wire that I like so well. That. (glue gun clicking) Do a little more hot glue. The most awkward thing about a hot glue gun besides when you burn yourself is trying to get the second or replacement hot glue stick in there. I have a trick for that too, actually. All right, two. Let's do our third one. (glue gun clattering) You should see the rhythm by now. Down the center, around the outside for these little eucalyptus shapes. (glue gun clattering) If you want to, add a little more glue in the center, or sometimes just right at the bottom here. Carefully place that guy. That one's not as perfect as my other ones. Happens occasionally. Again, I could trim this if I want to, but these colors are so similar I'm not even worried about it, it's fine. All right, so for this, I do this a lot when I'm making paper flowers. I tend to... You can create many, many of these. You could put 12 together, even if you wanted. So you could put them all right on top. We're going to attach them and then flay them open. But I actually am going to do them a little bit staggered. - [Ali] Sherry Johnson says, "Mid-rib veins are what you call large veins down the center of real leaves." - "Mid-rib veins are what you call the veins down the center of leaves." Someone just commented that, thank you for commenting that. I know I should actually brush up on my botanical terms because I actually love working with flowers, and painting them, and making them and so forth. So, thank you, I appreciate that. So, we're gonna do these three together, and I'm using floral tape. If you haven't used floral tape before, it's a paper tape, it has wax, and it is activated. The wax and the stickiness is activated by both stretching and the heat from your hands. So, I'm gonna not attach them right here because I wanna be able to fan them open. I'm gonna come down about six inches and we're gonna give it a little spin. And I'm gonna hold this out at an angle, and I'm gonna spin and pull, and the tape is gonna go down the length. Now, when I teach paper flower making in person, the thing that people have a hard time with is they hold it out here and then it just spins in one spot. You wanna hold it at an angle and you'll see it'll travel down the length of my wire. This is the gesture that at 2:00 in the morning, when making 100 paper leaves for a friend's wedding, your arm is killing you. - [Ali] All right, we've got a couple of questions. Kara asks, "Why wouldn't you put multiple eucalyptus leaves on the one stem?" - We are. Kara's asking why wouldn't I put multiple eucalyptus leaves on the one stem? I think what Kara is asking is putting like two or three here. You totally could, you absolutely could. But because we're live, I'm gonna show you this one technique, and then we're gonna add it to another stem like this that I've already made. But, I think that would be really pretty. You could graduate the size of your circles, so you could do a larger one at the base, and they would grow smaller as you get to the end, and that would be really nice. Okay, so I have those three. They've been attached with my floral wire, floral tape, rather. And then you get to splay them out like this. And you can bend them at different angles, too. That's what's so awesome about it being on this really strong wire. And I can even take the ones that I've already made and attach them. So, just like we did three stems into one, you could do multiples of these together to make this huge, like, really amazing arrangement if you wanted. Just saying. - [Ali] We have another question, you ready? Kristy is wondering, "If I don't have floral tape, would washi tape work?" - Ooh, Kristy, girl after my own heart, would washi tape work instead

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of floral tape? Unfortunately, no, it doesn't work that well. I love washi tape, I have way too many rolls of it. Ask me 'cause I was like literally sorting it last night at midnight. It doesn't hold as well. And if you're working on wire, it eventually is gonna come undone. But floral tape, it comes in a few different green colors. It comes in white, and if you're lucky, it comes in gold and silver. So, you could add a little washi tape accent in another way. Sometimes, I'll put a little washi tape banner on something, but it doesn't work for this. It's a good question. The floral tape really is the best thing for this project, and it's really inexpensive, lasts a long time. Like I said, it comes in a variety of colors. It also comes in brown, I don't think I mentioned that. - [Ali] Okay, wait, next question, Ursula. - [Courtney] Hi, Ursula. - [Ali] Is wondering, "Can I use a punch for the eucalyptus if I have lots to make?" - Oh, Ursula's daughter is getting married, and I suspect that this might be a question related to her wedding decor. And the question is: Can she use a punch instead of hand-cutting all of this? I personally love the irregularity of the hand-cut look. If you wanna do a punch, you could. The hand-punch ones, because this paper's a little bit thicker now that we've painted it, over time, you're gonna get frayed, dull edges that could tear. If you have something like a Cricut or a dye cutting machine, you could punch a lot of these at once. Good questions. But you could also cut more than the pair that I was cutting at a time. You could probably cut four or six layers. All right, so I'm just re-wrapping that for good measure. This is super sturdy now, and you can see that I've got six different leaves here that I can arrange to my heart's content, and I could continue adding. I mean, I could make like a peacock fan of these incredible eucalyptus leaves. And this is really just the tip of the iceberg. I make a lot of paper flowers, I love making paper leaves, and I'll show you kind of a variety here. Hopefully, you guys can all see these. You could do these really giant tropical leaves. I think this is called Monstera, a Monstera leaf, which is really popular. And for these inside openings, I just use an X-ACTO knife. You can see I have some baby eucalyptus here and a really vibrant lemony green. And then we can add this to our mix. I feel like it might be missing like a bright magenta flower, but it's pretty spectacular. And really, you can do realistic leaves, you can play with imaginary leaves. It's a fun way to use your extra painted paper. The scraps are incredible. So, cut that up and make it into confetti or something. And it's also a fun way to play with floral supply if you haven't worked with the wire or the floral tape in before, this is a good project to get you started. Thank you guys for joining us, and we're coming at you live on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so join us on Thursday. (upbeat music) â™ª Hey â™ª

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