
Cricut Crafts: Make a Tunnel Book with Courtney Cerruti

Chapter 1 - Make a Tunnel Book

Overview

(light instrumental music) - Hi, I'm Courtney I'm an artist and author and I love to work with paper. It's one of my most favorite materials. Often I love to cut it up and make it into books and one of my most favorite structures is an accordion book. If you think about the fans that you used to make like in the first grade all of those little pleats allow you to create a structure that you can make a book from. In this project we're gonna use the accordion structure to create a tunnel book. We'll make two accordion side panels and then layer flat sheets in between and you get this magic little book that looks like you're peeking into a world. We're gonna use our Cricut machine to cut all of these intricate pieces. It actually looks quite complicated but it's super easy to put together. I'll show you some of my favorite painting techniques using metallic paint to create a really cool galaxy for your outer space book and octopus skin for your undersea book. These books are really magical and once you see the structure and understand how easy they are to put together you'll want to make a ton of them. (light instrumental music)

Materials

- A majority of what you need is going to be paper. For the outer space book you're gonna need one sheet of card stock in a metallic silver, one sheet of watercolor paper, and three sheets of black card stock. Most of the sheets I'm working with are 8 1/2 by 11, but you can also work with 12 by 12s. For both of the projects, whichever tunnel book you're making, you're, of course, gonna need your Cricut. I'm using a Maker, but you can also use an Explore. For all of these I'm gonna be cutting them on the standard grip mat and I wanna make sure I have my scoring tool and my fine point blade. For the outer space book if you want to put a face in your astronaut you can print out a little photo. I'm doing one of my dog, Charlie. For the undersea book you're gonna need one sheet of card stock for your octopus. I like this coral color. We're gonna do a painted treatment on top, but you can change this color to be whatever octopus color you like. You'll need two sheets of watercolor paper and one sheet of a light blue, one sheet of a medium blue, and one sheet of a dark blue card stock. These are for your ocean waves. So you can really alternate these colors if you want, but you do wanna make sure that they're different shades or different colors, so that you get some distinction between the layers. For both of the books you're also gonna need a two inch hardware store paintbrush, scissors, a glue stick, I love the Scotch Create stick, water, and a paper towel. I also like to use a watercolor brush. It doesn't matter the size or brand, just something that's a round brush is easy to work with. And I've got metallic watercolor paints and a set of regular watercolor paints. These are my earth tones to paint my earth. And of course, you're gonna need whatever device you prefer to access Cricut Design Space.

Space book: Cutting on Cricut

- We're gonna start by cutting all of our components on the Cricut first. Because I created this project, it's already in my Design Space. For you, you wanna click on the link in your materials section. When the project comes up, it's gonna look like this. You're gonna just press make it because I've done all of the work for you. But I wanna show you what the components are so you kind of get an idea of it when you start to put paper on the mat. So I'm gonna click customize it, just

so I can show you those layers. The cool thing about the Cricut Design Space is no matter how many components you have to cut, they all just kind of sit on the board and the Cricut actually knows how to place it on the mats. So you don't have to worry about how things are overlapping. The way the tunnel book is created, the very back panel is gonna be this black piece here. We're gonna paint a galaxy texture on it, so right now it doesn't look like much. This is designed to all fit in a five by seven size, so you could actually slip it into an envelope and make it a card if you wanted. So this back panel is five by seven. We have two side panels, those create our accordion fold, and you can see that they are a cut and scored element. So those little gray lines are all the scoring marks to make those accordion folds really easy. The other things that happen on black paper are part of the moon texture, this is the very back layer of the moon texture and the very front layer of the moon texture. In between those is where our silver paper is gonna be, and this is kind of what gives us the moon texture itself. We have our astronaut, he's gonna be made out of our watercolor paper. And then the Earth in the distance, also made out of watercolor paper. They'll be cut on the same mat. We're gonna paint this to look like the Earth later. And you can see there's a little score mark here, and that's for when we attach it to the accordion folds that it kind of lies and sticks out flat. Now that you understand all of the layers, we're gonna go ahead and click make it. But when you go to do this, go straight to the make it button. Now you'll see that the Cricut has sorted everything by mat and there are five separate cuts. We're just gonna use the same mat and switch out our paper in between. Our first one is the silver moon texture, so we're gonna put our silver card stock right onto the mat. This is an eight and a half by 11 sheet, it'll all fit my cuts. I'm gonna line this up right at the corner and smooth it down. This is a nice, new mat. So lucky. I'm gonna select continue. For all of the mats, I'm gonna cut this at the medium card stock setting. And I'm not doing any scoring in this first mat, so the tools are fine as is. I already have the fine point blade in the machine. From here, both the Design Space and the machine will prompt me as to what to do next and you can see that on the machine, the little flashing arrow button, this means I'm ready to load or unload the mat. Place the mat under the little feed guides until it hits the bar and then press the flashing arrow. (machine whirring) That will load your mat, and now you can press the flashing C button to cut. (machine whirring) I'm going to eject the mat, pressing the flashing arrow button. I can remove the uncut part. This is a brand new mat, so it's really gripping everything. But I'm not gonna save that part of the paper. I'm not worried about it. I have this great trick that another artist, Natalie Malin showed me. You can actually bend the mat more and keep the paper pretty flat. So we're gonna just roll this away. Some of these cuts are pretty intricate. But this keeps us from curving that paper. It's okay, we'll just flatten that out a little. These ends will be hidden in our tunnel book. And then to remove these pieces, you can use your scraper tool, or sometimes I just like to use my library card. And just remove any little tiny cut bits. You can see these openings and cuts and this is what's gonna create our cool craggy moon surface texture. Set that aside. You'll see that the Design Space tells us to load our second mat, which is our watercolor paper. It's gonna be thicker than card stock even. Put it in the upper left corner and smooth it down. Now for this mat, you need both a scoring tool and a cutting tool, so we're gonna make an edit. I'm not using the scoring wheel, I'm using the scoring stylus. So in Design Space, click on edit tools, select scoring stylus, and continue. And now we'll put the scoring stylus into the machine. So open lever A, place the stylus into that opening, and press until you hear a click, and then close this. Then you can load your mat like we did before. The C is flashing, so we're ready to cut. (machine whirring) Don't remove your mat. I know you're tempted to because of the flashing arrow button. But because we're working with a heavy watercolor paper, it can be sometimes hard to match that up with the

settings on the Cricut. We were cutting everything at the medium card stock setting, which is pretty good. But because this is a bit thicker, I like to do what's called a double cut. And you cannot remove your mat if you want everything to line up. So what we're gonna do is kinda trick the machine into thinking it hasn't cut this yet. We're gonna click back on this layer and then instead of hitting the flashing arrow button, we're just gonna hit the cut button again, even though it's not flashing. (machine whirring) Now you're allowed to eject the mat, so go ahead and press the flashing arrow. And we're gonna do that same thing where we roll back the mat instead of rolling back the paper. We're gonna peel away the mat gently, just try to keep your little guys as flat as possible. You see that double cut works really nicely. That double cutting is really essential for all this fine detailing here, especially with the watercolor paper. Now we'll just continue through the rest of the project. We have three mats left, they're all in black card stock. Follow the prompts on Design Space and on your machine to cut the rest of your mats. (machine whirring) Last mat. (machine whirring) All right, once you're cut everything, you can select finish on your Cricut Design Space and put away your machine. The components that you're gonna have is our backing, which we'll paint like a galaxy, two accordion side panels, which we'll pleat using these score lines, the back part of your moon texture, the middle part of your moon texture, and the foreground of your moon texture, your astronaut, and your planet Earth.

Space book: Assembly

- Now we get to do the fun, messy part which is painting our galaxy background and our planet Earth. I'm gonna move the planet away because I tend to get very splashy with my galaxy painting. I'm working on the backing piece which doesn't have any score marks, it's just a five by seven black piece of cardstock. I've got my wax paper down 'cause I'm gonna splatter. My watercolor brush is really nice and wet and I'm gonna go into my metallic paints. Let's start with this blue. There aren't any rules to this. So I like to splatter by taking a brush in my left hand or your non-dominant hand and just tapping. And as this paint dries, it will become more shimmery. Rinse out my brush, pick a new color. I like to get it really juicy so you might have to dip into the water a few times. Make sure it goes off the edge. Let's do the white. Throw all our little stars in the sky. Maybe I'll do pink, sometimes you look up and you see those red stars. Let's do a pinky color. Maybe just a little bit of that. So that's our galaxy, I'm gonna let that dry. Set it aside. Now we're gonna paint our Earth. You do wanna pay attention to where that score mark is if you're trying to paint continents or something specific. Because there's always cloud cover, I'm just gonna paint a general Earth-looking planet and I'm just gonna keep in mind that my score mark is there so this is how I'll see it in the tunnel book. I'm not gonna use my metallic watercolors, I'm just gonna use my regular watercolors for this. Start with my ocean blue color, just kinda dabbing around. Dark blue. Let things bleed into each other. And make sure you go all the way to the edge. Get some brown in there. And get some green. Having a little bit of white space is fine too. That looks good. Set that aside to dry and while that's drying, we'll work on our accordion sides. So you've got two of the same panel with the same score marks and we're just gonna fold on these score marks. So you can flip it back and forth if that helps you or hold it up so you can see the score marks so you'll fold one toward you and the next one you'll fold away from you. So I kind of use the table to help me. So that one goes towards me, this one's away from me. That's why the scores are so great 'cause you get really nice folds. Fold this towards me and this last guy. You can use your library card to kinda flatten that if you want. And then we'll fold the other one in exactly the same way. All right, these edge folds are kind of facing toward you instead of away from you so you think about it like your book is hugging you, like its

arms are coming out to hug you and that's gonna be the sides. So they're not going away and facing away, they're kinda coming toward like this. So we've got those ready, we've got our background which is our galaxy, our Earth is still drying, and then we've got our other components which is, the three parts of our moon and our astronaut. You can leave the astronaut face open, you could put a cool piece of silver paper back there. I wanna put a face in there. And I'm gonna use Charlie, my dog, that handsome photo of him but I think for filling the space, I like this one. I wanna loosely cut it into sort of a quarter shape. The size of a coin so that I have a space to glue it onto the back of the astronaut. Let's line this up and see how it looks. Want his face to pretty well in the center which I like but can you see how this little red part is sticking through in my highlight? I'm just gonna trim that off a little. It's not a ton of space on that side but on the other side it's a pretty wide margin so it'll be glued down really well there. So even if a little bit is peeking through, it's not as obvious 'cause it's not bright red. Yeah, I think that looks good. Flip over your astronaut and get your wax paper back. Usually you glue the smaller thing but because I don't wanna accidentally get glue on his face, I'm actually gonna attach the glue to the astronaut. Just around the edge there, you don't need a ton of glue. Place it and then we can sorta move it around and press it into place with our fingers. Yeah, it's good. Now we can start assembling. I'm gonna start from the back layer and work my way forward so at first this can feel a little wobbly but it'll start to come together. For the backing, I'm gonna add glue on just the right and left edges of the back side of our galaxy. You have about a half an inch inside those accordion folds and I'm gluing it on my wax paper so I don't get on the table. So we can lay this first layer flat and then, we're gonna stand it up probably. So if it helps you to kinda pull back that, that's fine. Just use your thumb to press it in place. Get all the glue there. Same thing here. Remember, make sure your accordion is hugging you, that these edges are coming out like this and not going back. You can always lay this under wax paper and a book overnight to make it really flat once you're all done. So that's gonna be our backing. Then our next layer is our Earth. We're just gonna apply glue to the right side of that score mark. And then I'm gonna gently fold that edge toward you where the score mark is and then back. They may not wanna cooperate right away because you painted it but that's fine, it's just to help you attach this part. So you have an option here. You can have your planet Earth sticking out above your backing for kind of an epic effect, or you can just shimmy it down so that it totally fits within your backing, say if you wanted to send this as a card or something, so that's up to you. I like it both ways. If you're having a hard time sticking that down, you can always flatten this out and with your fingers, just make sure that that is nice and stuck down. This will make more sense as we get the whole thing put together, but because we're gluing to the back side of all of these pleats, nothing is at a 90 degree angle, it's all at an irregular, un-square angle. So the score for the Earth just allows us to let this go flatter, sort of parallel to the galaxy in the background. You'll see it as this all comes together and gets glued up. Our next layer is the moon background. You can also paint this a dark metallic color if you want. I'll show you a variation later where I've done that, but you can also just use it flat black like this. I'm just gonna add glue to the front side about a half an inch in on the left and right. So if you look in the back little V, we've got our galaxy and our Earth. Now we're moving to this V and we're gonna glue on this side of the V. And same thing on the other side. So it all feels a bit precarious until everything is glued in place and it stands upright. It'll start to do that now. Just use your fingers to pinch everything in place. And again, if you wanna lie it down just to flatten it temporarily, you can. Just make sure that your layers don't get glued to each other. Next little V is where this goes. And we're gonna glue it. Again on the front side, just be careful here. There are a lot of those open cuts. And on this side too. Into the V. Use your finger to press it down. It's going to

feel a bit precarious, that's okay. And every once in awhile just lay it flat and make sure things are lining up okay. You have a few minutes of wiggle room just to make sure everything's in place. And it's gonna bow just a little bit but that's fine. All right our final layer goes on this top section of the V. It's going to be the front part of our moon and our astronaut together, so I'm gonna glue the astronaut to this land and then this land to the front V. So just a tiny bit of glue on his moon boots. And I just wanna kinda see where he's gonna stand. There is good. Press into place and then this is on the back side. Just a little bit of glue. Line it up to the edge. Press it into place. I like to work from the back front because it can be hard to get all these layers in if you've kinda sectioned off the front part already, so this is the easiest way to assemble this. Can see all those layers. And then when you stand it up, it's really impressive 'cause you've got your astronaut and then the moon behind him or her, planet Earth and then of course the galaxy and they're all being held in place by these accordion pleated sides. You can put this under a heavy book just to kind of flatten everything out if you've done a lot of gluing. You wanna make sure that you don't have glue actually attaching each of those little Vs, you wanna keep those accordion pleats open so that you have really distinct layers. You can customize this, of course your astronaut can be any animal or human. You can play with painting different layers in different ways or changing up your cardstock options. I love this little tunnel book because it's kind of like a pop-up card but it really allows you some depth and dimension all using two-dimensional paper.

Underwater book: Cutting on Cricut

- For our undersea tunnel book we're gonna start a little bit differently and we're gonna paint our papers before we cut. I've got the coral colored paper in front of me, this is for the octopus. You could use any color paper that you like. The cool thing about octopuses is they can blend into their surroundings, so they sometimes have a lot of texture and color patterns on their skin and we're gonna create something sort of like that. I'm using the dark metallic silver, which is gonna dry a little bit lighter than what you see here and we're doing the same sort of galaxy splatter technique that we did in our moon tunnel book. Just tapping on the brush. Rinse that and set it down. I'm gonna use the hardware store brush, which has really rough bristles, it's a really inexpensive brush. I'm just gonna dip the tip into water and then I'm gonna dip in two different colors at once, so just a little bit of gold and copper sort of. I wanna make sure that these bristles still stay separated, so that I can get some crazy looking texture here. I'm just kind of dancing the brush around. It's not a technical maneuver. And while that's a bit wet we'll go back in and add a little bit more splatter. I could do some of the copper and back to our metallic. It'll spread differently on the parts that are now wet. We'll set that aside to dry. It has to be fully dry before we can cut it. And now our watercolor paper, this is going to be our back most component and our side accordions. We're just gonna use the hardware store brush, although if you wanted to do the splatter technique you could. It's a little too wet, because these are really close together, I'm just gonna daub it on my paper towel, so it's a little bit drier. And then I wanna do the blue greens, a tiny bit more water, because this is the watery part of the book. Again, all the way off the edge, but just dancing it around. And this is just to make it more interesting. If you didn't wanna do the painted technique you could use solid paper in a different color or you could use like a scrap booking already patterned paper and that would be fine too. Okay, maybe I do wanna do a few splatters, why not? Let's do this sort of sea foam green, it's pretty. I'm gonna do the same thing on my other piece of watercolor paper. And then I'm also gonna do it onto the backside of one of these, so that my accordion sides are painted on both front and back. We didn't have to do that in the moon book, because we were using black paper, which

Underwater book: Assembly

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first little fold. So it's all a bit floppy until we glue it together but this is just to kinda show you what it's gonna look like. And it's all meant to kinda nestle inside of each other. And then this wave is going in the opposite direction. It will get placed in that next little divot. And then our darkest wave. And then our octopus. And then finally on the front to kinda tie it all together our little sea floor. So I'm gonna apply glue just on the half edge of each of these layers and attach them into these V's. And I've got my wax paper and my glue stick handy to do that. (paper rustling) So you can work with it sort of flat to begin with. And this paper is very rigid. So you may really have to press it down. And this is why painting both sides is so cool because you get this kind of water sea, sea foam effect. So this will be the structure. This layer also goes in this first little divot here. I'm not gonna actually glue it to the backing. I'm just gonna glue those half inch edges so that it still has a little bit of play and dimension. So flip it over. Go ahead and glue it just about a half inch on the left and right. Lay it flat. All of these interior layers I've designed slightly shy of seven inches wide so everything fits together. You won't see it when this comes together. Our next layer goes into the next little V spot. And make sure your waves are going in the opposite direction. I just really like how that looks. So I'm gonna put glue on that backside of this. (paper rustling) Also make sure that your sections are coming right down to the bottom of those accordion sides so that everything can easily stand. Okay, that's looking good. These waves are gonna go in the opposite direction so flip them over. Glue. I'm using my Scotch Create Stick which I love. Shimmy that all the way down to the bottom. Careful not to get any glue. You just kinda rub it away. You can really see how the layers are starting to develop. Octopus, we're only applying glue on the backside half inch here too and this is gonna be delicate but it'll be nestled into your oceans so it'll be okay. And these are all getting placed on the same part of the V. So look at these V's. It's on this one, this one, this one instead of glued forward. All right, last layer. And I chose to do this on the outside kind of capping off the whole scene so that you could have these little coral-y things sticking out. And you can choose to do it either way because we're using double sided paper. I think I like that way. You can add a little bit more glue here because you have more space there. On the front you can really see where it's going. This I like to go right to the edge. So flesh with the edge and the bottom. That kinda brings everything together. There we go. Look how cute these are! We have an outer space tunnel book and an under water tunnel book. You can really add more elements to this if you wanted to hand cut some things and glue them into these little edges. Now that you know how this format works you totally could. I've kinda been wanting to add a little bit of clear acid tape on the front and with marker pen draw more layers like maybe some little fish and bubbles for my undersea one and maybe some planets and comets on my outer space one. The tunnel book actually comes together really easily. It's a very simple side accordion format with just these little elements tipped in and so now that you see it all together you understand how it works. And tunnel books have been made for centuries. You could do a flat panel with circles. You can play with these multiple layers. You could adjust the length of the accordion pleats for things that are much much longer. You can even stretch out these ones once they're fully dry and stable. I wanted to show you this little accordion variation I found in a store in France. It's made by (speaking in foreign language). Instead of having two side panels it has a center base that has slots in it that allow for multiple layers to be viewed at once. So this is the backing and it stands up and then this one has a lot of layers and really pretty. And I think the idea for this is you're meant to color it. So this is just something I saw in my travels. I always am collecting accordion format books and tunnel books although tunnel books tend to be much more unusual and hard to find. But I thought this was really really cool and it just gives you further understanding of how these multiple layers separated by a

little bit of space create depth and dimension. These are so magical. They have that same feel of a pop up, even though they don't have the exact same elements because you get the depth you get the same kind of surprise and I designed these to be five by seven so if you wanna make it into a card you can easily slip it into an envelope and send it to a friend. (upbeat music)