
Gelli Plate Printing with Courtney Cerruti

Chapter 1 - Gelli Plate Printing

Overview

(upbeat music) - Hi, I'm Courtney, I'm an artist and author and I like to make a lot of things, I like to jump into a process. And I think the processes and crafts that inspire me the most are the ones that have something unexpected. It's why I love to paint with watercolor, it's why I love image transfers, and it's why I really enjoy monoprinting. Monoprinting is a particular type of print making where you pull one unique print every time you make a print, so you totally don't know what you're gonna get, there's always an element of surprise and we're gonna be doing this with a Gelli Plate, which is a commercially made thick sort of plasticky, rubbery plate that you can use over and over again to make many types of monoprints. We're gonna treat this class like a survey, so I'm gonna demonstrate everything that I love about using a Gelli Plate and then you can take what you like, whether it be materials or types of printing or things to work with, and replicate that at home. I'll cover some of my favorite materials to work with, including things that make marks, like botanicals, combs that I've cut out of cardboard, and little things you can find around the house. We'll talk about what types of ink and paint to use. We'll talk about what you can print onto, paper, deli paper, and even fabric. I'll even cover cleanup and troubleshooting. Using a Gelli Plate makes monoprinting at home super easy and the process is so addictive you'll wanna do this all day long.

Materials

- There are a lot of materials here, and that is because you can use almost anything to print with. The most important thing is having your Gelli plate, I've got two different kinds here. There are many brands that make this now, Gelli was the first one. And it comes in a case, you wanna keep your case because this helps preserve your plate, you can use it over and over and over. And it's a thick sort of plastic, flexible silicone style plate. They come in different sizes, and some brands will be thicker or thinner. I also like the Speedball brand. For printing, you can use a variety of acrylic paint, I've got it in a few different styles here. You can also play with water soluble mark making tools, alcohol inks, these little dot paint things are pretty fun. So whatever you have lying around the house should work. For making marks into your paint, you can use almost anything. I love to use fresh botanicals, so these are actually weeds, weeds make great things to print from because they have really interesting shapes. You can save packaging like bubble wrap or the netting that comes around produce. Things like rickrack, twine, you can even use faux botanicals. Feathers are great and they will change as you print with them because they'll absorb paint and become more plastic, and that means that they'll change their shape all the time, which is really fun. You can purchase rubber combs or spreaders or spatulas to make marks in your paint. You can create your own combs by cutting cardboard or old credit cards, you can also use rubber stamps or things like stencils and doilies. You can print on almost anything. I have some papers that I like to work with, this is pre-patterned paper, you can also use old wallpaper or found paper. Deli paper, which is slightly translucent, it has a fun texture and gets a little ripply when you add paint to it. I love text weight paper in a variety of colors, this happens to be from Paper Source but you can also use copy paper. Metallic is really fun to work with, this is all text weight but you could also use card stock. Also have some labels because sometimes printing on little things to make stickers can be really fun as well. You only need one or two brayers, I prefer to use a soft or medium brayer, not a hard rubber

brayer, and you can find these in the print making section. Because I'm gonna be showing you so many different techniques and I might wanna demonstrate a variety of colors, I have a few here so that I don't have to clean up in between color changes. Having a spray bottle, paper towels and baby wipes are good for creating different effects and also for clean up. If you do wanna print on fabric, then you'll need to have some fabric ready and some paint or ink that works with fabric. I have a Fabric Creations sort of soft craft paint as well as a printmaking ink that is for fabric. Make sure you check the label to make sure it is for fabric. And this is a already washed and uncoated muslin cut down to a small size. For our image transfer technique, you're gonna need a couple of fashion magazines. "Elle" and "Vogue" seem to work the best, but you can try anything. This technique can be a little bit hit or miss, and so it's really all about experimentation. I do find that working with a fluid acrylic ink or paint is the best for this type of image transfer. I really enjoy printing with a Gelli plate, and it actually is the thing that inspired me to write my "Surface Design" book. Before you start, don't forget to put on your apron.

Printing with acrylic paint

- We're gonna be printing with a five inch square plate. You can do all of these techniques with any sized plate that you have. When you get your plate, it's gonna be clear and shiny and new. It comes with two of these little plastic coverings and you wanna save those. It's fine if your plate becomes discolored with marks or inks, that's totally normal. And it's also fine if these get a little grimy, but do save them because they help the lifetime of your plate. I usually leave the back one on, and then I work on something like a silicone mat to keep it from slipping around on the table. So I've got my setup. I'm gonna be starting with acrylic paint and let's do a blue so you can see it. You can use almost any brand that you like, whatever you have lying around at home. And I'm just gonna put a little bit right on the surface of my plate. This happens to be the brand that my local art supply store has. We're going to fill our plate with paint. You wanna pick up your roller every time and let it spin. That's how you're gonna get a nice even coating. That's a little bit thick for my taste, but we'll pull our first print with it, so that you can see what it looks like. And you can place almost anything on this surface for your first print. Let's do a feather, just 'cause those are fun. And I wanna pick a contrasting paper color so you can really see this. We'll start with this buttery yellow. Now, you can see that this is pretty flat. I don't have anything super chunky or woody, which would make it a little bit harder to print with. So you just wanna make sure it's touching the surface. And I'm not worrying about registration or anything right now. I'm just using my hands. I'm gonna smooth over the back of this. Sometimes people like to use a clean brayer, especially if they're printing with chunkier items, but I actually just really liked to use my hands. All right, so this is our first print. Every time you lay something down, you get two prints. So this is our first one. Oh, I love it. So your first one, you create sort of like a silhouette style. And then we're gonna remove our object and just put that somewhere where it's not gonna stick to your other materials. It's fine if it dries. I'm gonna pick a different color. Now, you could print back on the same thing to get kind of a full picture of this feather, but I like to switch it up a little. Give it a good roll. Give it a good press. And that is your second print. Our first print is a more silhouette style with our object in place. And then when we remove our object, we get much more fine detail, sort of like a fossil or rubbing. So every print will give you both of these options. Because it's such a fine layer of paint that you've applied to this and the plate and the printing process, you can almost stack these on top. They're gonna dry really rapidly. That's what makes the layering part so fun. You can see that the plate is almost clean. There's a little bit of blue paint remaining. You can clean this with a baby wipe or a bit of paper

towel. I don't even bother. I just move on to my next color. So instead of cleaning my roller, I'm just gonna switch rollers. Let's do this great neon red. Picking up and rolling. This paint is a little more translucent. But that coverage is pretty good. Let's try something. Can use something like a cut piece of paper. This was from another craft project. And because I know that this ink is very translucent, I wanna pick a medium or light toned paper. So it'll be sort of color on color, which is nice. All right, so same process. Now, you can see through this paper, this is copy paper. And can you see where this is not making contact? The paper is not making contact with the plate. I wanna go in there with my fingers as best I can. And this will especially be true, if you're working with anything a little bit woodier or heavier that you're printing with. All right. Pull that away. You can see, I pulled up a little bit of that old blue, but that's what's really fun about this process, as you move through your colors. And now, this is not gonna have a lot of fine detail like our feather. But we are gonna be able to pull a second print from this. Let's use deli paper. You can see it's a little bit more translucent and soft feeling. It usually comes in these 12 by 12 sheets or on a roll. It's used for wrapping sandwiches. You can get it online or sometimes at food supply stores. And this is really fun to work with because you can do a lot of translucent layers. And you can see obviously too, if you're gonna do some kind of finite registration, you could see through the paper. Ooh, yeah. So now, we're picking up that second print, but a lot of texture from our previous print, which what happens with the jelly plate is as paint dries, you get these little remnants of previous prints, which is what's so fun about this process. All right, I wanna switch colors, but I also wanna clean my rollers. You can use just a scratch piece of paper, like this deli paper to just roll off extra paint. And then you can print on top of this later. It makes some cool marks. If you find that the paint has started to dry already, you can use something like a baby wipe to just clean away any dried paint. And you can also roll right onto this baby wipe to help. All of this stuff you can save and use in other craft projects. I use baby wipes for everything. You can let them dry and print on top of them as well. Those are clean enough. The plate is fine. I'm not worried about cleaning it. If I wanted to I could use a baby wipe there as well. Let's move on to our metallic paint. You can see I'm not using a ton of paint. If you get really thick paint, it can be harder to work with and also takes longer for your prints to dry. You can also see a little bit of the texture from previous prints showing up there. All right, let's try, let's try some bubble wrap. So bubble wrap is a case where we'll only get one print, right? Because if I put this down and leave it, there's nothing to print. So for anything large like the bubble wrap or anything else that you're making textures with, you can actually just place it down, remove it. And now you'll pull your print. Let's pull a darker piece of paper for this so you can see the contrast. Ooh, look at that. I love that. So you get some really interesting texture. You can see that one of those little bubbles has already been popped. Where you have like a little blank space and we're getting tiny hints of that neon red and probably even some of the blue. But because we're on blue paper, you can't tell as much. This is the unexpected part. That is so fun. If you're working with a larger plate or there's some spot that you missed in your printing, you can always pick up a scrap piece of paper, something smaller like a tag or just a print that's not that developed yet to pull up any extra. So here I can see, that I just have some residue. And I can just pull that up and use that to create more texture on any of my paper layers. Let's switch colors. I'm not gonna clean my plate or my rollers. Just gonna go with it. I mean, you can print this. This is a cool texture. If you wanted to print this, you could. I'm not worried that my paint is super thick. And you can see the potential for how the layers start to build. We've got a little bit of gold residue, this thicker texture of the paint we just laid down prints from before. I still have ink here. If I wanna go ahead and line this up, I can as best I can. So now we're starting to layer. Ooh, I love that actually, that's red. Okay, so this is

where it starts to get interesting, exciting, because you see how things can progress. Let's try a different kind of bubble wrap. I become obsessed with bubble wrap. Let's go back to our teal color, which is where I'd started. And you can even print that. If you wanna play with your fingers or other mark making tools, you can. Right now, we're just going to get another fine coat of paint onto the surface of our plate. Here's this really random bubble wrap. Now, press it down so I can get a texture. Ooh, that's fun. It looks like lemons. Let's print it on this. And I'm not worrying about lining this up. I'm just gonna flip this over and print somewhere on the page. That's like, it does, it totally looks like little lemons. That's cool. All right, new color. Not cleaning anything. Go for this great Vermilion red. I am gonna use the brayer that had pink on it earlier. Just get less color mixing. So that is a very fine, fine layer. I might want just a bit more. Something that thin can dry quickly. That's why working with like an open acrylic or a fluid acrylic can sometimes be nice. You have a little bit more working time. Really less is more. All right, let's pick something like a stencil. Work with this guy. So put the stencil down and we're gonna pull a print like this. Let's actually work on top of the deli paper. This will smooch into the stencil nicely. So using my fingers or you could use a clean brayer, pressing here to pull our first print. Awesome. It definitely gives a stencil feel. And we're gonna pull this away and we'll have just those lines left because this paper has absorbed its own print. And where do we want to print those lines? Let's do it on top of this, because I think the red will be interesting on the teal. And I'm moving more quickly because the paint on the surface is not super wet. All right, so this is pretty faint. This is like a ghosty texture print. At this point, you can see that there is paint on the plate, but it's pretty dry. What you can do is just roll down a clear layer. People usually like to do this with white or a really pale color. And we're gonna see if we can pull that up in a new print, laying down a little bit of white. You don't want too much paint because then this technique won't work. You want just enough to coat your plate. Instead of waiting to clean a brayer, I'm gonna use a new brayer. And sometimes I'll use one brayer just for my white paint, if I think I'm gonna be doing a lot of this technique. And this is just pulling up dry paint that's already on the surface. Okay, that looks good. We're not gonna get a lot of layering. What's gonna happen is a white field with whatever's below on top. And so I can use almost any color of paper. We'll just use this guy, 'cause he's here and ready to go. It feels a little bit slippery, which means I may have used a little bit too much white paint. Let's just see what we get. No, it worked. So I pulled up a lot of that red that we didn't get in this print because the paint had started to dry. And there's no reason to clean the plate. Let's just pick up something else and see what we get. Do another print to kind of clean our plate. Now, if it's really dry and you're having a hard time getting things off because you've been really working the plate, you can use a brayer to help increase the pressure. Here, when you're rubbing the back. Cool. Ooh, I love that the red and the white on top of the gold is super cool. At this point, you have a nice bit of sort of paint debris on your plate, and this is what some people live for. They just kind of keep printing until they build up a lot of these kind of crazy little bits of ghost prints. Do a white layer and pull off all this great texture. For me, I like a little bit cleaner, more graphic print. And so I would probably clean this off and I would just do that with a baby wipe. And you can see that the paint comes right off. And this is what's so fun about the printing process. You don't know what you're gonna get until you start playing and layering your colors. This could be your paper color, your translucent acrylic paints. Feel free to make overprints, triple prints. There is no limit to how much you can do with this plate.

Printing with inks

- If you want a softer, more watercolor effect, you can work with things like India ink or any

water-based ink. I'll also show you some tricks with alcohol ink. Just drop a few drops, and then you can spread this around. I'm using just this little spatula, which you can use to make marks. You could use your fingers. You could use a paintbrush. And the reason we're not gonna use actual watercolor paint for this is 'cause watercolor just tends to be way more expensive. And so you can get sort of a watercolor feel with ink. I think this technique works really nicely with using bubble wrap or other things that you can leave an impression in. So we'll press that. It's gonna move the ink around. And you can even pick this up and place it in a few places. So let's say we wanna spread that ink more to create kinda overall texture. And let's try this with the deli paper. A really light pressing here because everything's a little bit more liquid. And you can see, you get a softer, wetter sort of feel. And these places where you have the ink that's come together, you also get the kind of separation and texture. And the reason is anytime you apply something that's really wet or liquidy to this plate, the plate sort of has almost like an oil base to it. Although we're working with all water-soluble materials, the plate itself kind of has this resistance inherent in the quality. And so that's what creates that separation, that really fine separation. And you'd find the same thing if you worked with acrylic paint, and you watered it down a lot. Without cleaning anything up, let's just add, actually, let's do a real dark color. This is an acrylic ink. It's gray. Now, you can see why you wouldn't wanna work with stencils or anything that has a lot of fine detail because this is gonna really be slippery and not give you really clean, crisp edges. And that's why working with something like bubble wrap works really well. So now I'm just kinda picking up the ink and moving it around the plate, just using my bubble wrap. There's a lot of liquid here, and so I don't think we're gonna get a lot of texture. And we're gonna use some alcohol ink, which is not gonna mix with the water. So we're gonna get a really interesting sort of effect. Now, you can print just like this and kinda capture these really beautiful splotches, but you can also press more texture into this. I'm actually gonna use this and see what we get. This is a netting from produce. Now, if I put my hands on this, I'm gonna get this all over my hands. So you can also just use something like a spatula, something that's nonabsorbent, like a piece of paper, obviously, 'cause you would just make a print. Let's see if that leaves any texture. It looks like it's gonna leave a little bit of texture in this gold area. So let's see what this looks like. Do it on a darker piece of paper. Our gray is not gonna show up because I'm using gray paper, but our gold should, and there might even be a little bit of pink leftover. Inks are gonna be translucent, so it's gonna give you a different effect. Ooh, it's very galaxy. That's super cool. So we had some unmixed white that was in the gray acrylic ink, a little bit of that pink, and this gold. I love that. That's really pretty. It's more like a marble effect when you're working with ink like this. Now, for cleanup, you can use a baby wipe if you press really hard. This alcohol ink is not gonna wanna easily clean up. What you can do instead is just use a little bit of rubbing alcohol to clean off your plate. Or you can just wipe it down as best you can and then just keep moving on. If we go back to our acrylic paint that we used earlier, I'm gonna show you how to use it like an ink. So here, we're gonna add it to our plate and roll it out. And now I'm gonna use a spray bottle. And we're actually just gonna print this like this and see what it does. I'll go back to the deli paper, since I've got some other weird texture on here. I think this is actually just gonna give me a pretty solid plate. But you can see all those little spray marks that showed up because we watered down our acrylic paint. You could drop more things into this. Let's do a contrasting color. Let's do a little bit of this ink, but just a little because we're gonna water it down. You can see too where it's not clinging because the surface of the plate it still wet, and let's actually use that to our advantage. Okay. Let's keep it like that. And we'll print on top. So you get more separation, more translucency. This can be printed here as well. I can feel that this is really sticking, which means my paper is absorbing all of that

water that we have on our surface. But look how cool this texture is. I love that. I'm giving you some foundational rules to play with, but really, you should try to break them as well. What's great about this plate is it's pretty resistant, and so you can play with things that are water-based. You could try oil-based. You could see what happens when you mix those together and the resistance that's created. That's gonna give you some really interesting texture. That's what we did with the water-based ink as well as the alcohol ink. You could see that it was kind of fighting to move around on the plate. And it gave us this really beautiful sort of cosmos print, which was totally unexpected. I had no idea what was gonna happen. So feel free to just use whatever you have and see what happens when you put it on the plate. Apply it thickly, apply it thinly, spray it, use a baby wipe to wipe some of it off and see what happens when things start to mix, and you're gonna get the best results that way.

Final layers

- Once you've been printing for a while, you're going to have a stack of prints to look through. Some of these you may save, you may cut up to use in other art like collage or even scrapbook pages. Let's look through some of the things I've printed so far. I like this one on deli paper because there's a lot of different textures, but there's no focal point. They're kind of all very similar in saturation and sort of size of texture. So this might be a really good candidate for what we're going to do next. So put that in its own pile. I like this. It has some bold graphics, some small texture and some details, so I'd probably keep it as is. I really like this blotty stuff, even though this is a bit muddy. Like this, I'd probably definitely save, and this I might print over. This one doesn't really have enough of anything, it's just a single print that picked up a lot of textures so that I might print on top of. This one's kind of interesting, it has some detail, but this might also be a good candidate for printing over. This one, for sure. Lots of great detail and color, but no focal points. I actually love that. This is the only one so far that I've printed on an existing printed pattern and it was just a single print. I really liked that one. That's our galaxy. I'm gonna leave that as is. This one just has a lot of detail, but no bold, kind of focal point. I'll probably print over that. So I'm just gonna look through here and sort of separate into anything I may want to do a really heavy-duty printing by going to black. I think some of this is really pretty, this gold really pops on this dark, so I don't want to print over this necessarily. I'll probably cut up portions of it. Maybe I'll print over that one. So if there are prints that feel a little bit muddy, or I don't have a purpose for them, or I don't 100% love them as they are, you may want to cut them up, that can really change how they feel, but you can also try this next layer, which is just using black ink, which is really vibrant and saturated. I always save black for the very last step when I'm printing, just so that I can kind of get this like dramatic wow for things that I'm feeling like less excited about. I'm using a water soluble block printing ink, just because that's what I have on hand, but you can also just use black acrylic paint. 'Cause it's a brand new bottle, I have a little bit of the mixing fluids. I'm just going to wipe that away. We should still probably have enough ink on there. If we don't, we can add more. This tends to be just a little bit thicker than acrylic paints. A little bit more just to incorporate it since there's so much of that printing fluid or binder. There we go. So this is just printing how we've been printing, but I'm going to be a little bit more intentional in my choice. I think I want to use something like the feathers. I really like feathers because they have both fine detail and also like kind of our bold graphic shape. Let's just see what this does for us. Let's try it on this guy. So really muted tones, a lot of subtle texture, but nothing really bold. And I do have some black on my mat. This is going to transfer potentially to my paper. So I'm just going to wipe that away 'cause it's still wet. If it's dry, I'm not worried about it. Here we go. (hands

rubbing) And I just like how I'm getting like a lot of contrast. I don't have a ton of detail here 'cause this is our silhouette version, but I like this, I would probably do another step. I can even remove this and try printing again and see what I get. That's really black. I kind of obliterated some of my detail from before. So now I've kind of made it muddy again, which I don't love. I would probably cut this up, but I do really like the texture of the gold showing through all those fine little details in the feather. Let's try another one. Re-ink my plate. I still have enough ink on my brayer. Let's do a different kind of feather this time. You can see that these feathers have been used over and over again. (hand rubbing) I really like how that looks. You get the detail of all layers from below, but that solid black makes it a more interesting print. For these more fossils, the second prints, I might even just work on scratch paper for that or new print paper, so let's try this metallic paper. We haven't used the metallic paper before. You can see how vibrant the black is on just a clean sheet of metallic gold paper. (hand rubbing) You get this cool really fossil sort of look and I love the metallic paper that shows through. Let's do two more just so you can see the effect. You can see how viscous the printing ink is. This is kind of similar to a feather. This is actually like a faux botanical, but it has that same thing, kind of a bold shape, very graphic, but also fine detail. Let's use this. Let's do it on this guy. I'm going to have to press a lot harder to get kind of an interesting silhouette because this faux botanical has like a really woody, you know, wired edge in the center. And I can kind of peak and see. Oh yeah, I'm getting it, that's good. So here super vibrant black, but then that really cool, all of those layers coming through there. So I love this strip here. You can also see that this black printing ink stays wet longer, so you're going to want allow these to drive flat. And let's remove that. And we can just print it on some deli paper, maybe on top of this guy. So these second pulls, I'm not as interested in because they have more detail and less contrast. I'm going for really high contrast, but you might still get something you really like and that's unexpected. That's kind of cool. Let's do one more. I probably still have enough ink on my brayer. Again, going for bold and graphic. I think a feather again. Let's do this feather this time, or maybe two feathers. That feather and this feather. And let's do it on top of this guy. So, some subtle detail. (hands rubbing) I love that. So this is where you can get some really interesting layering happening because just subtle moments from all the layers below are coming through in those open spots and the black is kind of obliterating everything else. So it really draws your eye to those open spots. Because this ink is much more viscous, we want to clean this up because I'm actually going to move to gold ink and show you printing on black paper this time. I don't want the metallic paint or the iridescent paint to be diluted by remnants of black ink. So there are two things I like to use. You could, of course, use the gold paint like we used earlier, but I also really like this Color Shift paint. This is with Folk Art. It's a craft you can find in the craft store. It comes in a lot of colors. It's pretty subtle, but it's a really cool metallic, so I'll show you using it on black paper. This one is sort of like a blue tone, but then it also has like a peachy undertone. It's also translucent. So this is going to be like a subtle iridescence. And let's do it with something bold just so you can see what it looks like. I'm now working on a black paper. (hand rubbing) And it creates this like cool, in this case, purple because of the black paper. And of course you can pull a second print with this too, and we'll do that on black, just so you can see what it looks like. You get some fine lines there. And I'll show you the other color that I have with me by Color Shift, and this is a black gold. This is going to be really subtle on black paper initially. Let's do a stencil for this one. So really press. (hands rubbing) What you get is this cool gold. Can even see a little bit of that purple from that first layer. And then why don't we, just because, print back on top of this, just for fun. Pretty subtle, but this is how you start to build up a lot of small detail and texture. I like to save using black ink or paint as my final layer because it gives

me really eye-catching, popping, really dramatic results.

Printing on fabric

- You can also use your Gelli plate to print on fabric. I've got a bunch of muslin that I just tore down to kind of workable sizes. These would be really cute, like bunting or some kind of flags. You can also actually print to make a quilt or print a T-shirt if you want, whatever you feel like. If you are working on fabric, you need to make sure that you're working with a paint or ink that is for fabrics, so be sure to read the label. I'm working with Fabric Creations. I've just got a couple of pinks and a really pretty dark blue. I'm gonna start with a light color. This paint or ink may have a slightly different texture. Just roll it on as evenly as possible, and I'm gonna use bubble wrap for this one. Do it a couple of times. Add some really subtle texture here. Oh, that landed that way, that's okay. We'll just go with it. So really soft, subtle texture. All of your fabric prints are gonna be a little bit softer just because the paint is absorbing into the fabric, and actually, why don't we just print those little bits, too? This is just a first layer, so. I don't want that. Okay, first layer. Now I'm gonna go dark. I'm not even gonna clean my plate. I'm just gonna go with the dark blue. I've got a separate roller for that so I don't have to clean. I'm working with the fabric paint. I feel like I pick up more texture between the layers, which I really like, 'cause it gives it a distressed look. Let's go with something bold. We'll use a stencil. Let's do this poke out stencil. I'm gonna have to press really hard to get the fabric into those dots. I'm not even allowing the first layer to dry entirely, which is fine. You are gonna make sure to heat set or iron or do whatever the directions on the label for the bottle or ink that you're using says, otherwise it won't work on fabric. It'll probably come out in the wash or lighten in the wash. Really press. Okay. Ooh, cool. So I love that. You can see how the circles, though, are softer. Now remove this, and actually, we could try printing this on fabric. So it's not gonna be as bold a print because we still have some texture below, but I think it still could be cool. Oop, it's pretty light. Let's actually use a clean brayer and apply a little more pressure and see if we can get that to print more. A little bit. It also moved a bit. That's okay, I kind of like that. I still have some paint here. Instead of doing it on fabric, I'm gonna put on paper. I know we're using a fabric paint, but you can also use that on paper, and I just have some labels here that I like to use for picking up any remnants, just because I think they make really cool mailing labels. These two stuck. I love how they look. It's like little moons with craters. You can also just pick up any other random little bits, and I can keep printing on that, too. All right, I have a few cloths that I already printed in a pink. Let's do a bolder shape in the dark blue and see if we can get this to come through. So adding blue again, still working with my fabric paint. I really love this color 'cause it's sort of like a denim color. It's called navy. And let's do that paper cut out we had, and we're gonna do it on this patch of fabric. Just press so that you can really get those edge definition off the paper cut out below. Ooh cool. That is so fun. You can see here where I use the same paper cut with a little bit less ink and no under printing, and just kind of the variation once you start to layer, and you can see how certain paint will resist. I think the paint wasn't mixed all the way, and so some of these are lighter and some of them are darker, but I really like that. Again, it goes back to that unexpected component. Let's do one more print with this. Let's try something like the netting. I'm just gonna do this on a blank piece of fabric. I found that when I used the roller, it kind of bunched the fabric up and made it shift, so instead I'm just gonna use my hands and just apply more pressure if I think I need it. Let's see, ooh yeah, that's cool. And I've got a sheet of labels here. I'll just try printing what's left over, just to see what it looks like. Ooh yeah, that's cool too. Now you probably are not gonna be able to run this through your printer, but you can definitely hand write on it. I love that. Or use it as a collage

element. You don't have to use it as a mailing label. This would be good for gift wrap, also. Just like printing with paper, printing on fabric allows you to experiment as well. You can try using different colors of fabric, you could use already printed fabric. I think these would make really beautiful buntings. You could use them in an art quilt or even a regular quilt, as long as you follow the instructions on whatever fabric paint you're using to make sure that you heat set it and that it can be washable. I really like working with the Fabric Creations and other types of fabric paint because it creates a really soft and supple surface, and doesn't stiffen the fabric at all.

Image transfer technique

- For our final technique, we're going to attempt to do an image transfer using a Gelli plate. Now, I'm not going to lie to you, this is very tricky. It only works maybe 25% of the time. But I'm gonna tell you what has worked best for me and hopefully, you can replicate this at home. We're working with a clean Gelli plate, so wipe it down, and a clean brayer. I like to work with a fluid acrylic, it doesn't matter the brand, and then have some white paint handy as well, and a heat gun. We're actually gonna use a heat gun for this because I feel like I get the best results with that. And then two magazines that seem to work the best for the image transfer are two fashion magazines, Elle and Vogue. I'm gonna start by finding my image. Now, image transfers do reverse the text, so keep that in mind. Let's see. I want something bold. This girl is fun, we'll do her. (page ripping) Tear her out, maybe have another one ready. Oh, let's try her. (page ripping) And I can have a couple from Vogue magazine ready, too. (page ripping) (page ripping) Okay. So paper to print on, a few images. I'm gonna start with my fluid color. Now this is very particular. We are gonna put a very fine layer on this. Clean brayer, clean plate, very fine. You wanna be able to see through the paint slightly. I would say that is a little too thick. So I'm gonna take a baby wipe or paper towel or just a piece of paper and pull up a little bit of that ink. Roll out. That looks better. It's gonna be almost dry, that's what it's gonna feel like. Now let's do our page face down. You're gonna press like normal. And we're gonna peel away. And at this stage, you can usually see if any of your magazine image is left on the plate and it is. It's very subtle. So let's see if you can see it. Those dark pockets are air bubbles, so I could've maybe pressed a little bit more evenly. Do you see the really fine image there? Now, if you were to print it like this, it wouldn't come up because there's such a fine, fine, fine, fine layer. If you wanna be really particular and really cautious, you can use your heat gun to heat this up, but I think it's pretty dry. We're just gonna go ahead and roll some white ink right on top of this. This layer also has to be pretty thin. It's a different brayer. This feels good. The amount of ink feels about right. Yeah, that's even better. All right, say a little prayer to the printing gods. And let's see. Barely. So you can see the air pockets came up and you can kind of see her face, but it's super faint. So let's try it again. All right, sometimes when you really clean a plate right away, you kind of need to pull a print or two to sort of prime it. It can be very sticky. So maybe this will do the trick. And also go high contrasting colors. So we're doing that white background and I've got a really dark blue that's gonna give us a better result. I think that's a little bit too much ink. I'm just gonna take a little bit of ink off my brayer. Okay, that feels pretty good. Let's try our Vogue magazine, see if that'll give us better luck. Had a lot of air bubbles last time, so I'm gonna try to avoid that this time by smoothing from the center out. Let's remove. Can see her face. Now maybe I'll let it dry a little bit more or I'll use my heat gun just really quick to make sure it's dried. Remember when we did just our acrylic ink kind of a few segments back and we put that white coating? That's what we're doing for the image transfer. We kind of need to do that every time. So using my heat gun, I'm gonna dry this. (heat gun whirring) You, of course, don't have to use a heat gun. You can just be patient, but I'm not good at

that. And a little bit of white paint. Not too much, though. All right. I gave it a few extra rolls. It's possible that my white paint didn't kind of get into the blue paint enough to pull it up. So maybe this will help. All right. Let's see how this one goes. It's definitely not centered on my paper, but that's okay. You can also try getting a clean brayer and applying a little more pressure if you think that might help. It's really about experimentation. Feeling better about this one, yeah. Beautiful. I love the way that looks. Let's compare it to our original if you can kind of see it under that blue layer. It's gonna look different from your original photo but that's what makes it really super cool. Like it becomes its own thing. This, to me, feels like a vintage travel photo, something from a totally different time. It doesn't feel, in the same way, like a fashion tear, like this does. And then, you could print on top of this, you could color on top of this. So it's acrylic paint, you can do almost anything on top of it. Let's try one more. We might be pressing our luck, but let's just see what happens. Thin, thin, even layer of our fluid acrylic. We're gonna do this one, I think that's Naomi Campbell. She has not changed in 30 years. She still is beautiful as ever. This would've been a cool image, too. Gonna try to get some of those air bubbles out, although I do kind of like the texture. Makes it feel like you're working from an old glass slide or something. Okay, that looks good. At this stage, you can tell, right, if the ink from your magazine page has successfully transferred to the plate. That's half the battle. The other half is getting it up off the plate onto your paper. So if you're at this stage and you have nothing on your surface, you know, even if you kind of shimmy it in the light and nothing is showing up, you may have too much paint or too little paint on here or your magazine page may not work. You can try a few different pages and if you still don't work, switch your magazine. So this looks good here. We want this layer to dry. We heated ours up with the heat gun last time and that worked for us, so let's do it again. (heat gun whirring) Again, you don't have to heat it up. You can actually wait for it to dry. It does go pretty quickly. Little bit of white paint. And you can also try other pastel paints, just something light in color. You're wanting contrast here. And remember, we rolled it a few times to really activate the paint below. So it may seem weird to dry it and then wet it with this layer of paint, but that's how it works. You're drying it so that it doesn't smear when you get to this stage of rolling on your second layer of ink, but you need to kind of wetten it enough to lift it off the plate. Okay, good. And let's try it on this guy. We can try using the clean brayer, see if that pressure helps. That worked for us last time. I think it's gonna work. Yes. So it seems like Vogue magazine was definitely the winner and just following the steps. Thin, translucent layer of a fluid acrylic, letting it dry, adding the white, doing a few passes and then using a plain, clean brayer to really get that pressure. Look how beautiful.

Show and tell

- If you're just getting started, all you really need are a couple colors of acrylic paint, a Gelli plate, a brayer, and things to print on. But look how far it will take you. We made so many different things. I wanna share some of my favorites. These are just one color but I really liked the dark, kind of indigo blue black on the neon paper. You can see the fine detail in like this doily and these plants. Here's a similar style print. This time I did it on an envelope. I love to use envelopes for this. And you can see all that beautiful detail in this cord. Another envelope on a metallic which is really cool. Just the black ink. So very dramatic, high contrast. This was a found, I think eucalyptus leaf. Same detail. This paper started with a few marks and then just a single kind of coral orangy color. This was the second pull where it's the more fossil style as opposed to a first pull like this where you get those really cool silhouettes. This was two different kinds of yarn. And these were hand tatted lace doilies I picked up at a garage sale and I believe this was like a plastic fake lace doily also from a garage

sale. Those are great to print with. We worked on the deli paper. We got some really cool texture. These two were just from dropping the paint directly on the Gelli plate and then letting the brayer create a repeating pattern. So those will be fun to cut up or use as an under texture. I love this. Sticking with our same sort of neon coral and really cyaney blue color palette, we've got that first print and then the second print from the same object. This was a plant, a feather, and also just the paint marks. This one's fun because it was a really watery texture like when we worked with the ink and I just kind of sprayed it more and moved it around onto the surface of the plate and I got these kind of like puddly water texture which I like. I'll probably do something on top of that. Our labels. So these are ready to use as stickers. You can make garland or just use them on your next correspondence. More labels. This was the remnants with our fabric paint but could still work on paper. Two of some of our printed fabric. Working on muslin, just a single color in the dark blue and this one a layer of two prints with pink and blue. I love this. You can just do like a whole set for a bunting for a party or for a little room. Just really easy, quick decor. And finally our image transfers. Which I would leave to the end. You have to really want it and understand how the plate works and how your process goes. But these turned out so cool. I am obsessed. I love them so much. I did another one where I used a pink, instead of a white I used like a neon pink. So same blue first layer. Pull away my magazine and then pulled up that image with a neon pink. I really love how they look. Embrace the unexpected quality of monoprinting. Using the Gelli plate makes it so easy because it's quick to clean up, it's reusable, there's no fear in experimentation. You're not gonna waste anything. You can print on top of things. The materials are really easy. Just scratch paper, copy paper, old artwork you don't love anymore, and a little bit of acrylic paint. This technique has kept me interested for years because I love the surprise quality of it. It's what keeps me printing and once I start I can never stop. I think you'll probably feel the same way.