Botanical Boughs for All Seasons with Cobrina

Chapter 1 - Botanical Boughs for All Seasons

Overview

(casual inspiring music) - I love a bit of seasonal foliage to greet me at my front door. In this class, I will show you how using fresh, dried, or faux flowers can create a simple bouquet to hang on your front door or anywhere in your home. The first time I ever made one of these was by accident. I was trimming a bottom branch from my Christmas tree, and as it lay on the floor, I thought it just looked so beautiful. I went around my house and I started to forage dried plants from little vases and I started to layer it on top. I added a piece of ribbon and I hung it to my front door, and now I make one every season. Hi, I'm Cobrina of Creativebug, and I love seeing the potential in the nature all around us. I gather sticks and flowers when I'm out for a walk, and when I bring them home, I wrap them all up into a door bouquet or a triangle wreath. In addition to showing you how to build a layered bouquet, I'll share with you the way to add a simple common whipping knot for a clean finish. For a more graphic look, I'll show you how to build a triangle out of sticks to add more dimension. Often when I'm working in my garden, I'm trimming bushes and I can't just leave those branches there on the ground. I need to do something with them. This project gives those branches a purpose. These botanical bows are easy to update and refresh throughout the seasons. (inspiring uplifting music)

Materials

- I'm gonna show you two of my favorite ways to hang these botanical bows. For both you'll need some fresh and dried botanicals. This is a combination of found and purchased botanicals. I have some fresh, just really interesting looking pieces here that I picked up at a local grocery store. The thing to consider when buying store bought florals is how they'll dry. You may not know how they're gonna dry, but you can choose things that are a little hardier or woodier, and try to avoid things that have soft, delicate petals. I also have some dried items here, some that I foraged and some that I've pulled from bouquets, which is actually my favorite way to get these dried botanicals. You can pluck out these tatas or an amaranth, and give them a new life by hanging them upside down to dry and then reincorporating them into these bows. For the foundation of these bows I love to use greenery, some evergreen, some eucalyptus any kind of plant that will give a foundation. If you choose to turn on your bouquet into a triangle wreath you're going to need three sticks of equal length. I've found that 13 to 16 inches is a sweet spot for a front door, but I think a shorter version would look delightful for a bathroom or something. I have three pieces of bamboo here. Birch would also do nicely. And these sticks just happen to be cut from my maple tree that I was trimming last weekend. Make sure you brush them off so they're clean before you use them. The other things that you'll need are a way to latch your bouquet together. Rubber bands, floral tape, or floral wire are all great ways to do that. Some ribbon, it can be cotton or satin, it can be plain or it can be decorative but I do recommend that it's at least an inch wide. Otherwise, you're gonna spend a lot of time wrapping. You'll need some twine or some decorative cording for the corners of your branches. And lastly, some clippers to cut down your botanicals.

Make a door bouquet

- While building your bouquet, I really just want you to play. Things to consider are scale, texture,

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and adding a pop of color. But more than anything, I just want you to think that it's beautiful. I'm gonna start with greens. I always like to build a foundation first, I found that evergreen branches, this one just forged on a walk that I took a couple days ago or eucalyptus foraged here in California is really, really easy to find. I'm gonna build my bouquet out of some of this fresh greenery just because I have it. This is some rosemary, some pieces of branches from bushes and actually a little bit of eucalyptus. I'm gonna start with a few of these branches and start to lay a foundation. I wanna think about more delicate flowers being able to lay on top of this. So you don't need too, too much, you don't wanna overwhelm, but think about the door that you're making this for. I'm thinking about my front door and so I want something that has enough gravitas. So I'll start here. I have some different textures going on and think about what I wanna pull in. I have some interesting dried pieces. This again is a eucalyptus branch that I just found on the ground and you'd think it's just a stick. But when you pick it up and you realize it has all of these beautiful little buttons all over it, what a treasure. Next, I wanna start bringing in some other textures, maybe playing with scale. I have this little branch of acorns which has a nice relationship with the eucalyptus buttons but it's also getting a little woody, a little sticky in here. So I might take that out and start layering some of my other fresh flowers in here. This is a new one I discovered at the store called Great Barnett. I'd never come across it before, but I think that it has such a beautiful texture and I love the little pops of color right at the end. So I might put a couple of pieces of that in there. And then I need something a little bit more foundational because we've got a lot of lines going on and I think maybe this cone bush could look really cool. Yeah, I'm liking how these two colors are playing off each other, but what I'm finding now is that I'm not loving this. So pull it out. It's a game of push and pull and you start to see the things that you like come forward. Like I want this eucalyptus that got buried in the back to come alongside this cone bush but I don't wanna lose my Great Burnet there so I can keep layering. I've got a beautiful palette here but it's not very diverse so I want to start to incorporate something else. I love these eryngo thistles. They're so, so neat. They're a little bulky for this project so I'm gonna just trim it down and maybe take one of them. Don't worry about trimming anything else down at this point. We're gonna take care of all of that at the end. We're really just focusing on what's happening in the lower 2/3 of this. So that's fun and I think I would love to have a repeat of that. And I often, I find that things grouped together look better than further apart, but it depends on your numbers. So if you wanna do odd numbers of things it can look better to move them apart. And if you're just gonna do pairs, keep them together. I also purchased some of this white statice which I thought was really, really interesting because I almost always see the purple statice and I know this dries very, very well. I grew up calling them just dried flowers but I found this white and I thought that that was feeling particularly unique and I like how that gives it a pop of something else going on. Brings up the eucalyptus a little bit. So just keep building this way. I might play with the idea of what another cone bush looks like in here if I wanna start growing this a little bit larger and then I could add another eryngo up here at the top. And I've got a lot of texture, liking my scale, but I definitely need more color. So I think maybe a Billy Ball is always fun. Oh my gosh, I love these. These silly little flowers, they dry just like that. I don't know how they do it. They're so beautiful and have so much whimsy. Throw a couple of those in there. Let's envision it hanging on our door. Definitely feel like I'm missing something in this quadrant so it's probably more greens because I need something else more behind than more stuff on top. I could try pulling in a little bit of this evergreen, see how that goes. That's interesting. But I think I'm going for something a little more autumnal than wintery so I'm gonna leave the evergreen aside for now and try a piece of eucalyptus. Nice. I like how that flares out at one side. I lost my little bits of Great Burnet in there so

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I wanna add some more of those back as well. And then you may need to reconfigure your layering. So maybe this cone goes up again and my Billy Ball comes back up, my eryngo comes back up. It's looking nice. I think I'd also like still more white so I'm gonna pull in a little bit of baby's breath. This is dried. It's okay to mix fresh and dried. You can even use faux flowers here, mix in paper flowers, anything you'd like. I think of these as ephemeral. They are not designed to last forever. They are absolutely just seasonal whimsy. All right, keep playing with this one and find the perfect balance. Fronts and backs are something to consider. This has a beautiful shape that curves right into the bouquet if it's laid with the back down. So consider that. All right, getting closer. I feel like there's an empty space here. Throw another eryngo in there. I found a lot of these things, like I said, just in my garden or around even things that I didn't think would dry well. This is a hydrangea, I had no idea really how it would dry. I've only seen them dead on bushes and didn't think they were particularly beautiful. But I actually like how this dried and think that that could be an interesting component like that. Especially if you started with it fresh and all of this hung and then you would know that it would end up dried like that. Take leaves away as you need to. Okay, I'm liking that. I think, let's see. Could I put one more? Hmm. Let's see what else I have a little pop of orange here. Maybe that's what I need. I think just a little more autumnal brightness. Take those leaves. And often multiples will be the most dynamic. Think also too, you can come from behind. So rather than laying everything on top I might slide this right into the spot that I want it. Now that I've got this and I think I'm feeling good about it I'm gonna just take a rubber band and wrap it around the bottom. This is a lot to deal with here and so I'm just gonna trim the really long stuff. Don't worry about making any of it perfect yet. It's just make it easy for you to get the rubber band around. Now that you've got your composition, you don't want it to shift although you may need to do a little adjusting after the rubber band does its work. Okay, once you're happy with the composition of your bouquet, clear your table and bring in your ribbon. I've chosen green and I've cut about five feet of length and we're going to wrap the base of this leaving a long tail so that you can hang it on your door. This technique that I'm gonna show you is called the whipping knot. It's generally done with rope, but I find that ribbon does a beautiful job as well. I've got these fairly trimmed up. This part, you can decide how much of it you want wrapped. If you want a lot of ribbon at the top you can wrap all of that. Or we can trim this down a little bit and only have a shorter amount of ribbon. So I'm gonna trim these a little bit. Might have to go piece by piece 'cause some of these are quite woody. That one on its own. There we go. And you can then wrap this in floral tape or you can even just add another rubber band to bind all of those stems together. Making a smoother surface for your ribbon to adhere to. Take one end of your ribbon and fold it over about four inches or the length of what you want to cover. And we're going to start with the loop at the top and also the back. So gently flip it over and work this knot on the back, that will hide any of your knots which won't be visible, but some of the wrapping on the back here. So my end is up and my loop is at the top of my bouquet and I'm just gonna hold this all together and start to wrap. You want a little of your tail coming out 'cause you're gonna pull on that at the end. So make sure that when you start to wrap, you have a little bit to pull on and then just hold all that together with your thumb and start to wrap nice and tightly. Once you get about that first wrap, it's okay to start to move it around. So I'm gonna turn it back to the front so that I can see what it looks like on the front and continue to wrap up the end. So you can see, you could do this with twine, but it would take you forever. It might be a really cool look, but I find that the ribbon just makes really quick work of wrapping this end. Then I get to the top, I flip it back over and I have this loop again that I wanna go through. I'm just gonna use my finger to open it up a little bit and get the tail of my ribbon to go through that. This could be

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a little tricky. You could put a safety pin on the end to feed it through. Might use an end of a scissor just to help it push through that loop. Here we go. Still holding everything nice and taut. You now have that wrap going through that loop. You're gonna hold onto this end and pull it tight and then start to pull this bottom piece, which is the top of this loop, and you're gonna pull that until your knot disappears underneath the wrapping like so. Turn it back to the front and make sure that nothing's showing. You can wiggle some of this stuff up. I personally kind of like the top also showing. You could wrap it all the way to the top if you'd like. And sometimes I will trim this tail completely off, but I also find it can be beautiful just cut at an angle as part of your composition. Now this tail is as long as it needs to be to hang on your door. For my door, I hang it at about this height with this much length from a tack at the top of the door frame. The rest of the ribbon then can be trimmed off or hangs over into the inside of your house. I made this one for autumn. I wanna show you another variation that I made for spring. This one is using all dried florals. None of this was fresh when I put it together and I attached a peach silk ribbon on the end for hanging. It has a really different light springtime feel and because it's already dried, I know that this is what it's gonna look like. If you don't have access to fresh or dried flowers, you can absolutely make this door hanger with faux botanicals. I did the same common whipping knot that I showed you but I added just a little bit of twine as the hanger. If you have the kind of door that you can put a nail in. I added a little bow and I just think it looks beautiful and fresh even though it's all made from faux flowers.

Make a triangle frame

- If you're looking for something more modern to hang on your door, this triangle structure adds a little bit more dimension to the door bouquet. I'm using three sticks that I pruned off my tree. I've laid them out in a way that feels good. This one has a little bend to it and I like it at the bottom. And so I'm going to bind these together by crossing them and just taking a rubber band. And I found that actually losing the triangle shape makes it a little bit easier to do this action. So tie it really tight and keep that rubber band as close together as you can 'cause we're gonna cover that up and then you can open that back up and take your next set and bind those two together. You can do this in decorative twine or wire. I think a beautiful copper wire would look nice, but I found this is just the fastest way to get it done. Now we're gonna take our last corner here. You can choose to have the bottom branch on top or below this other branch. I think I'm gonna have it on top so that it's nice and forward. And just bind those together. That looks good. I actually liked how this stick had kind of sat in this crevice a little bit. So I'm gonna just move that down so that I get that little thing at the top. Okay, and now I'm gonna wrap the rubber band in twine. I have this nice mint twine that I think will look really neat and I'm gonna cut maybe about two feet of it and just head to the back of your project and tie a knot. Tie an overhand knot with a lot of tail 'cause you're gonna end this by tying those two tails together. Tie it with two knots and then just wrap from the front so you can see that you're covering the rubber band around and around until the rubber band disappears. Okay, the rubber band is all hidden. And go back to the back and just tie this tail to the tail that you started with, again in a double knot. Try not to lose your tension. Okay. Trim that off. Do that to the other bottom corner. And we're gonna meet back at the top. For the top, we're gonna create a hanger. So cut yourself about two and a half feet of twine and start the same way. Start to wrap. And about halfway up in the back, just gonna make a loop as much as you think you need to hang on your door. It's probably three or four inches, could be less. And hold that with your thumb as you continue to wrap. Little bit of handiwork here to keep that loop until it's wrapped down. It'll just take a couple times round and then you can flip it back to the front and make sure that all of your rubber

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band is covered. Keeping that loop out of your wrap. Okay, that looks pretty covered. Head back to the bottom here where I have my tail. Tie those together. Double knot. This one's a little short. And trim those tails. Now you have an integrated hanger and all of your rubber bands are covered up. From here, you can really choose your own adventure as far as what you add to it and where. We can use the bouquet that we just made and play with some positioning. So for example, you could lay it along the bottom for a really beautiful full look. You could hang it right down the middle for something that feels very modern and dynamic for sure. There's lots of options here. I think I'm gonna create something a little bit smaller for this. I've already gathered some flowers. I'm not gonna do any foundational greens for this. I have this really cool kangaroo's paw that I found a broken branch of on a walk recently and some lavender that I harvested from my garden. And I just think that this altogether is a really beautiful, simple floral touch that can make this stick really shine. So from here I'm gonna trim my ends and add my rubber band. Take a look if anything needs to be moved or adjusted. I think I might even like this to be a little higher up. So I'm just gonna add to my work that I did here and add another. Whoops. That's all right. Got it in the rubber band. Gonna add this rubber band to hold all those pieces together 'cause I want this to be a little bit more petite. Okay, I like that. And now I can trim the rest of this off that I don't want. Now I can play again. Where do we want this to hang? I think I like it in this bottom corner. So I'm gonna take a piece of my floral wire and just wrap it on here. Don't have to do anything fancy. Just wrap it around and twist it so that you get some security while you continue to work. You could use ribbon here and wrap it around and tie it in the back. I'm gonna use twine. I'm gonna cut two and a half feet and head to the back. Always put your knots on the back and start as high as you need to to hide your rubber band and your wire. So just like we did the corners, you're gonna start with a knot, a double knot with a little bit of a tail, and then we can just wrap. This is such a short amount that it's not gonna take me forever like it would on that door hanger. Once it's secure even, you can cut that rubber band off rather than trying to hide it. Okay, I'm running out of my twine so I'm gonna tie these two ends together. Double knot. And then I can move this knot slightly to the back and I can even remove this piece of wire. Let's use my stronger clippers here. Okay. And let's trim our tails. This feels like a natural and beautiful celebration of spring and flowers. And I want to show you another variation using the bamboo. Did the same thing, but with the natural jute twine. And I think adding my Christmas door hanger to the top of this gives it a really fun and modern feel. This is an excellent way to extend the life of a bouquet or found and foraged foliage. Feel free to customize these in any way you'd like. You can paint the sticks, you can add feathers or ornaments. It's a beautiful way to celebrate each season.

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