

**Fwd: December Artist Newsletter • Becka Rahn, teaching artist**

1 message

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My grandma celebrated her 100th birthday earlier this month. Since my mom, sisters, and I all live pretty far away from her, we decided that we would all bake birthday cupcakes on the day so we could celebrate together with her from afar. It was the perfect excuse to do something whimsical and "craft" together.

One of the reasons I love teaching (and taking) classes is that I really love that feeling of getting together with other people and making something with our hands all together. I am terrible at small talk, cringe at ice breaker games, and avoid parties whenever possible, but put an art supply or two

in my hand and I can sit around a table and socialize for hours. I hope that the busy end of December brought you some time to cook, craft, or chat together with some people that you love.

-- Becka

## what's new?



Here's a behind-the-scenes peek of taking a photo of a new piece I have in the [Pop Goes the Easel show at North Suburban Center for the Arts](#). The show opens on January 25 and is pop-art themed.

My piece is called "Any Day But Tuesday" and has a tiny working clock in it.

## classes

### **Embroidery Thursdays:**

#### **Tropical Fish Bag**

The next installment in my embroidery class series is open now! Join us for the live Zoom class on Thursdays at Noon (Central) or sign up for the on-demand version (available Jan 18) and work at your own pace. Each week will focus on a new embroidery stitch and you will complete a section of the design. The finished panels can be made into a zipper bag (or many other options).



All the details on my blog.  
Registration Deadline: January  
8, 2024



on the studio table



My studio was entirely occupied with making things for gifts or commissions in December, so I don't have much new I can share. Instead I'll show a couple of favorite tools that got a lot of use this past month.

**Tools:** This magnetic pincushion by [EscapeClubCreative](#) is the best one I've ever owned.

**Tools:** These [superfine point tweezers](#) are handmade by my friend Jeff of Javos Ironworks. If you love nice tools, these are the bomb.

**Tools:** I didn't know how much I'd use this [little L square](#) until I had one. If you do any paper crafting, this is a really handy tool.

## get in the game



I played a lot of a game called Wingspan over the last month. It's a bird-themed game that is great for birdwatchers or science geeks. The image shows the iOS version which I've been playing on my iPad since I've had a nasty cold and haven't been able to play with anyone in person. It's what is often called an "engine builder" mechanic, where your birds have special powers (like stashing grains or stealing fish) and you can play cards that build and chain off of each other to generate points. Both [the board game](#) and [iOS versions](#) are great!

## links you'll love



This is GORGEOUS and thoughtful: [Knitting Helps Us Embrace Life's Messy Imperfections: Crafters across Britain speak to how knitting can help us heal, even at our most broken.](#)

"I like that the patch isn't the most prominent feature; the stitches are..." A cool article from the [BBC](#) [about sashiko stitching.](#)

I watched this video over again about 4 times because it was so neat: [A vintage bow making machine.](#)

Also fun to watch from the Met Museum [talking about replacing the skirt on a Degas dancer sculpture.](#)

The recipe I used to make my grandma's birthday cupcakes was the [Plush Confetti Cupcakes from Smitten Kitchen](#). It's a vegan cupcake recipe which works great made vegan or with regular milk and butter which is what I had on hand. I stirred a handful of fresh raspberries into this batch because they needed to be eaten and that was outstanding.

I've been reading the [Dragon School series by Sarah Wilson](#) recently. It popped up on some "favorite fantasy series of all time" list and I had never heard of it. If you like Anne McCaffrey, you'll probably like these too.



Spoonflower's Blog has [a really cute project tutorial by Robert Mahar](#) about making pressed flower tea towels.

My mom, sister and I got into a conversation about Wordle starting words over lunch one day. I always start with "CRAFT", sister's is "LUNCH" and my mom picks a new random start word every time.

[According to this article, none of us is doing it right.](#)

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