



An Artist Newsletter

by Becca Rahn



It's my 50th birthday in just a little over a week. And I decided that was a great reason to have a newsletter party! I did something a little silly with this newsletter: I've hidden links throughout this issue that are presents for YOU. There are some free class codes, a couple of handmade pieces to give away, and well, you'll just have to read it to find them.

I had a **fantastic** time teaching for the Potomac Fiber Arts Guild a couple of weeks ago. The tiny book above is a miniature version of the one I made with them in class. It was my first time teaching bookbinding techniques to a large group and it was a exciting (and a little scary) to put together an entirely new class. We made our own bookcloth, hand embroidered the covers, made paste paper for endpapers, and gave each other high fives for confidence before we started coptic stitching the bindings. I hope I get to teach it again soon! **What's something new and scary that you tried and loved lately?**

-- Becca

what's new?



One of those random-things-you-find-when-scrolling, I discovered a company called Joes Toes that make these adorable DIY slipper kits. I wrote about my wooly whales over on my blog. They were so much fun to make.

[Read More](#)

I also made a mini video tutorial for you about Spoonflower's new proofing tool. You can zoom in and proof your design right in the app now instead of needing to order a printed fabric proof. It works great!

[See the tutorial](#)



classes

I've still got a couple of free spaces available in my new Skillshare class: [Craft Modern Notebooks: Tear, Bind, and Stitch with Embroidered and Recycled Papers](#)

If you don't have a Skillshare membership but want to check it out, that link will let the first three to register take the class for free.



This Saturday I start the first in a FREE series of classes about tech/business skills for artists hosted by Dakota County Libraries. **There are still spaces open!** This week starts with an **intro to printing with Spoonflower to make your own fabrics. Held online via Zoom.**

I'll also be teaching about photography, print-on-demand and Etsy. Speaking of Etsy, you can use the coupon BIRTHDAYCAKE to get **15% off in my shop this week** and a limited edition Stanley sticker in every order.

on the studio table



New things in the studio this month...

Tools: Pressed felt trays. I got this one in the Target dollar section but you can find [similar ones at Amazon](#). I love that it's super lightweight so I can take them with me when I'm teaching to organize supplies.

Threads: DMC introduced a new line of [Eco Vita, wool embroidery threads](#) dyed with natural dyes. Haven't stitched with them yet but got a couple of colors to try out.

Sketchbook: [This handmade coptic stitched sketchbook will go to one lucky person who tells me their favorite kind of birthday cake.](#)

get in the game

, This week's favorite new game is called [Wyrmspan](#). If you've heard of Wingspan (which I talked about a few newsletters ago), this is designed by some of the same team, but features **dragons** instead of birds. I love anything with dragons, I'll be honest. You excavate caves, entice dragons to come and live there, and try to earn points by collecting helpful dragons and laying eggs. There are a couple of [great videos out to help you learn the game](#) and the game publisher [has a free app to help with scoring](#).



links you'll love

Etsy announced [some new initiatives to help discourage fraudulent shops](#): a \$15 set-up fee and enhanced ID checks. I think anything that helps to keep mass-produced resellers or fake accounts off the site is a great thing.

A local TV station did a profile of my friend [fiber artist Kristi Swee Kuder](#).

[Journalist Bianca Bosker wrote a new book "Get the Picture" about art gallery gatekeeping.](#)

"Working at galleries, I became initiated into the way that the art world wields strategic snobbery to keep people out. And I think it's deliberate and I think it's unnecessary," says Bosker.

[An interesting article about plagiarism vs inspiration.](#) It mostly references written works, but I think is equally applicable to other arts.

A [beautiful example of reversible redwork embroidery](#) in this FB post.

Waterlilies are my favorite flower, so the first three people to use the coupon code aquamarine to register for my [Waterlily Trinket Box class](#) can take it for free.

[Loved this reel about the history of the tomato pincushion.](#) It's not what I thought!

When Costume Institute staff first examined Maria Monaci Gallenga's gorgeous 1920s "Theodosia" tea gown, they were worried—it seemed too fragile to ever include in an exhibition. Much to the delight and enjoyment of visitors (and all of us staff, too!), they figured out a path forward. [Fascinating reel from the Met Costume Institute.](#)

[This folding gift box is so clever](#) I hope you'll forgive the product placements a little bit. I definitely am going to use up some scraps of pretty papers and make some of these.

Loved [watching this reel of an antique chain stitch embroidery machine!](#)

I like [the shape of these simple fabric trays](#). I use these kinds of things on my studio table all the time when I am assembling class kits. The link to download the free pattern is right at the top.

Happy Leap Day! If you love leap frogs, I have a yard of [rainforest frogs velvet](#) that I designed that's yours if you comment on [any of my instagram posts tomorrow](#) with the word "ribbit". (I'll do a drawing on March 8th.)

[A great article about how to get started folding origami.](#) I taught an origami class last week and I agree with so many of these recommendations. I know Wendy Zeichner from Origami USA (mentioned in the article) a little bit from having worked on their online conferences as a volunteer.



Becka Rahn

1714 LINCOLN ST NE, MINNEAPOLIS, 55413

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