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WITH *needle* felting

many art quilters have succumbed to the machine needle-felting craze, and mixed-media artists aren't far behind. There are a number of exciting effects mixed-media artists can achieve with a needle-felting machine (and no, you don't just have to needle-felt wool—pretty much any assortment of soft fabrics and materials can be machine needle felted together).

From a distance, a needle-felting machine looks like a sewing machine, however it doesn't sew. Instead of a top thread and a bobbin thread, a needle-felting machine has a cluster of very sharp needles whose sole task is to punch fibers and fabrics together when you press down on the presser foot. Machine needle felting is really easy to do, and the results can be so beautiful, it gives that sense of instant gratification. I was so inspired when I saw some of Jean Littlejohn's needle-felted pieces in person that I recently tried my hand at my own mixed-media, needle-felted scroll, shown here.

by *beryl* **t**aylor





directions

1. To make the background interesting, needle felt a layer of scrim onto the cotton velvet.
2. Cut circles of acrylic felt and needle felt them into place.

tip: *If you feel that you've overdone your needle felting and have lost too much of the background, simply flip your piece over and needle felt from the back to bring the colors back through to the front.*

3. Cut a smaller piece of silk waste and place it in the center of each acrylic felt circle. Needle felt from the front and from the back to integrate.
4. Take your piece of painted WonderUnder and place it on top of the piece. With your pencil, mark where the felted circles are underneath the WonderUnder and cut these circles out of the fusible. (This is so the painted WonderUnder won't cover up the felted circles.) With your iron set at the cotton setting, iron the WonderUnder on top of the entire piece. Pull back the release paper from the WonderUnder.
5. Needle felt areas where you have fused the WonderUnder. This will help to give the piece an aged effect.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needle-felting machine (I use a Babylock® Embellisher.) • Cotton velvet for base • Scrim, in colors of choice • Acrylic felt • Bits of silk roving, waste (Oliver Twist Strata Packs are ideal for this.) • Painted WonderUnder®, cut to same size as base (painting method below) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencil • Scissors • Iron • Fabric foils • Rubber stamp with text imagery • Black inepad • Thick silk thread and needle for hand stitching |
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materials

how to paint WONDERUNDER OR OTHER FUSIBLE WEBBING

1. Take a metallic paint such as a Lumiere® by Jacquard®, and slightly water it down with water.
2. With a foam brush, lightly paint the fusible side of the WonderUnder.
3. Allow it to dry overnight.

6. Take 1 or more foils, and iron the foil onto the WonderUnder in various areas.
7. For added depth, needle felt bits of chiffons or other light fabrics in the areas without foil.
8. Take your text rubber stamp and stamp randomly.
9. Embellish the piece with a running stitch using a heavy silk thread. ●



Above: For this little needle-felted book I used a variety of silks and light novelty fabrics to create interesting pages. Once the foundation of fabrics was needle felted together, I embellished the pages with beads and ephemera and then stitched the pages together to form a book.

Below: Small strips of a printed rayon fabric were needle felted to create a colorful background for this spread.

