

Image Transfer Follies

by Melissa Chapin

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[Editor's note -- Be sure to check out this link for Melissa's last column, "[Technique 1 - The Soak 'n Rub](#)", if you missed seeing it in e-Artella #e-2!]

So...you've mastered the soak and rub and now you want to integrate images into a larger piece of work or journal. Well it's time to explore solvent transfers! These are delectable and give you wonderful control over the strength of the transfer (think faux aging, creating shadowy images or gentle images reminiscent of Polaroid image transfers). Again, the key to the kingdom is play and experimentation! But who could possibly resist with all of the fantastic possibilities....



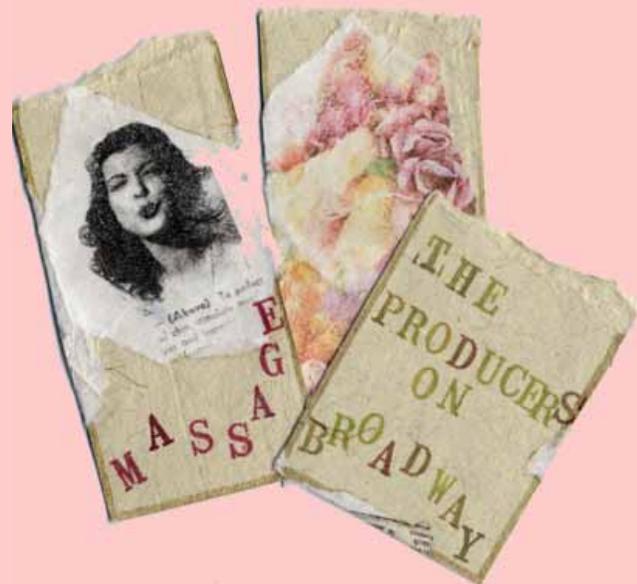
Technique 2: Photocopy Transfers Using Solvents!

Using new/fresh toner photocopies you can transfer the inks using a number of mediums: Acetone, Nail Polish Remover, Goof Off, Citrisolve Cleaner, Mineral Spirits, Turpentine, Lacquer Thinner, Oil of Wintergreen. Once you begin you will inevitably find others!

Basic Method

Place the photocopy face down on the receptor surface (try printmaking, sumi, watercolor and other papers) and brush the back with your solvent. Allow a few minutes for it to soak in and then starting with any detailed areas you want to emphasize (like faces) burnish with a spoon or hard brayer 3-4 times. Go over the image (peeking at the corner) until you get the desired transfer! This can take a bit of work and you will want to hold the photocopy steady for a crisp transfer. Resaturate the image if necessary.

*Another method is to apply the solvent to the front of the photocopy, allow it to soak in and then turn it over and transfer the image (as above) by burnishing. This often results in a dreamy, elusive transfer, less detail and some distortion of the image.



(Image Transfer Follies, continued)

A TIP: Most of all experiment with the amount of solvent you use, the pressure and timing of burnishing (I like to use a brayer for flat surfaces) as well as which solvent and receptive paper you choose. You will find different solvents better suited to different projects. I'll say it one more time—**EXPERIMENTATION IS KEY!**

ANOTHER TIP: Don't forget to *reverse* any images that contain text as the transfer will be a mirror image!

An Alternative : Think Easy!

***Please note that this is not a nontoxic method and you will need to work in a well-ventilated space! See the end of the article for more safety tips.**

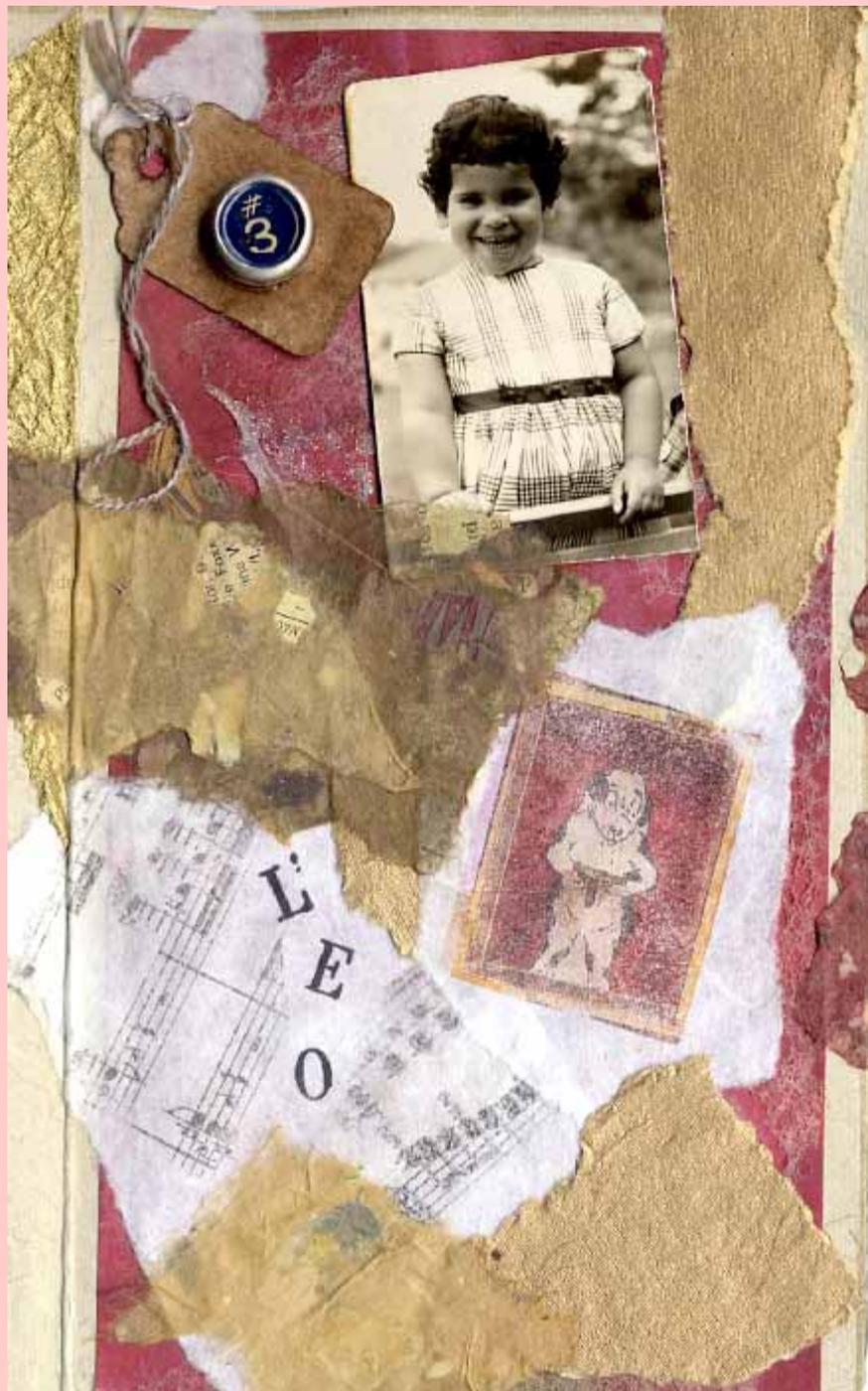
A remarkably easy way to start with the same basic method is using the Xylene/Xylene alternative blender markers costing \$2.25-\$5 and found in most art stores! Many rubber stamp stores also carry these transfer markers but they tend to be more expensive.

Have a nonabsorbent surface (like an acrylic clipboard) under your receptor paper and face the photocopy down, going over the back of the image four or more times with the blender marker.

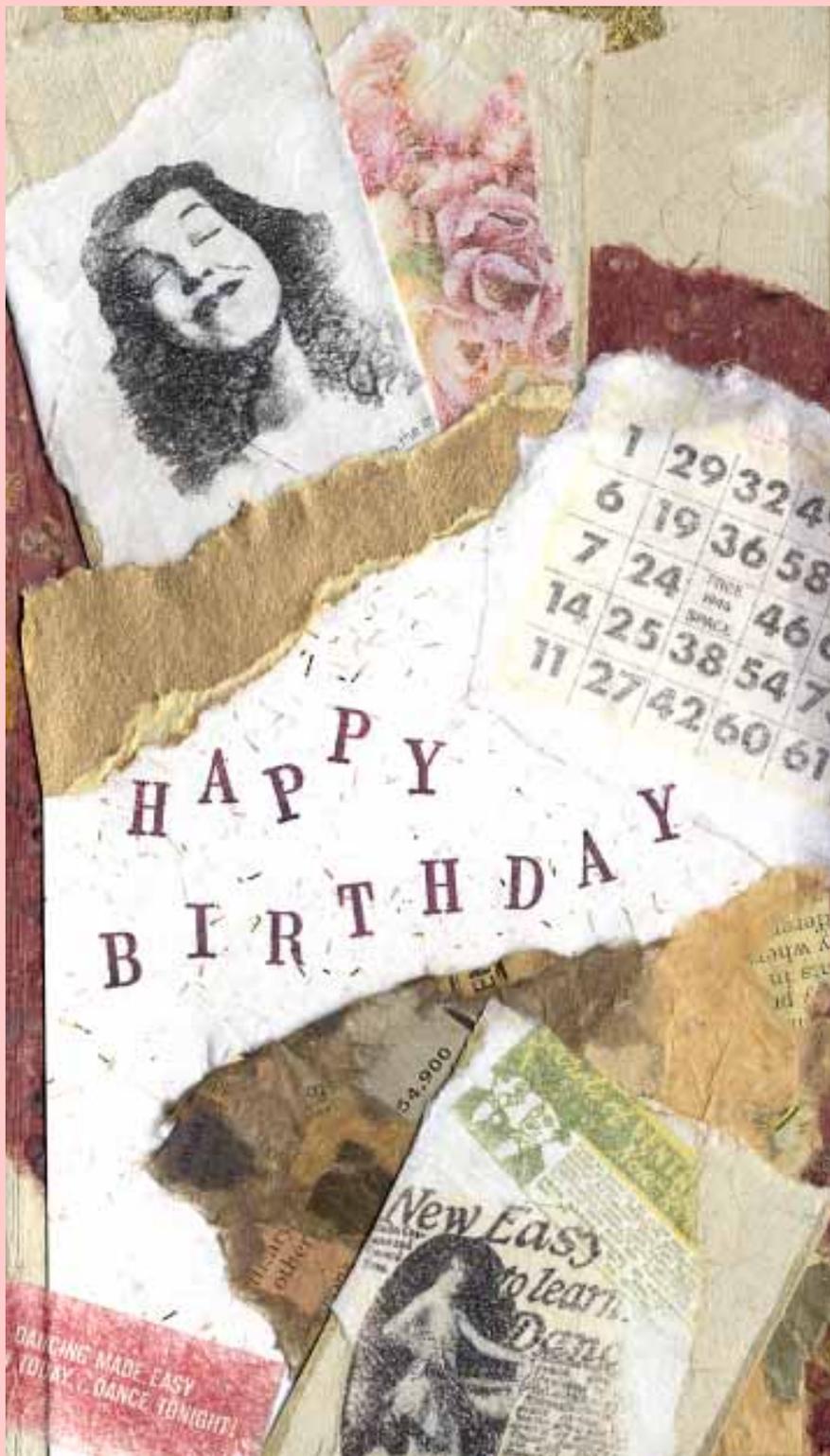
Once the paper is really saturated you will have a wonderful transfer! Again keep the paper steady to avoid a murky transfer!

The following markers work for this technique, but it's always best to try one and see if it works for you!:

- Chartpak blender marker
- Woodcrafter's Markers by ChartPak (Bright Gold, W46)
- Sanford's Design Colorless Blender
- Design Art Marker Blender #311
- Suze's Photo Finish Blenders



Birthday Surprises for Cheryl (front), 8½" x 5"



Birthday Surprises for Cheryl (inside panel), 8½" x 5"

Check it out! The birthday card shown in this article shows how versatile these transfers can be. Transfers of old games and advertisements reveal surprises on their reverse side, making a delectable treasure hunt birthday card...

A note of CAUTION! It's really best to work outside when using these methods! Most of these solvents (even the cleaners from the health food store like Citrisolve) contain powerful chemicals that require gloves and good ventilation. Always check on health concerns for the product you are using and note if you are not using it according to the directions (i.e., full strength instead of diluted). For indoor work without ventilation, it's best to rely on other methods such as the soak and rub, gel or inkjet transfers.

And speaking of which...stay tuned to the next issue of e-Artella for a fun dip into the world of inkjet transfers! See you then!

~Melissa Chapin
your image transfer hostess

[Melissa Chapin](#) is a NYC based mixed media artist, jewelry designer and arts instructor. She is currently working on a new series of Polaroid manipulations and is an Artist in Residence for the [Creative Center: Arts for People with Cancer](#). Her inspired jewelry designs are available at [heydayhandbags.com](#) and a more extensive artisan line will soon be featured in the Artella gift shop!