

## **Red Bloom Assemblage**

Jen Cushman

### **Tools and Supplies:**

Wood surface – “Vintage Plaque” by Walnut Hollow)

Acrylic Paint

Paintbrush

Copper sheet metal 24 gauge

Metal Stamps – Impress Arts

Masking Tape

18 Gauge Red Wire

8 mm Crystal Beads

Found Objects – Rusty Belt Buckle, Vintage Metal Hand, Vintage Corset Boning

Glue – E6000

Standard Ball Peen Hammer

Steel Bench Block

Round Nose Jewelry Pliers

Chain Nose Jewelry Pliers

Metal shears or tin snips

### **Directions:**

Paint your wood surface with your choice of acrylic paint. Let dry for about 5 minutes and then take the back of a smaller paintbrush and scratch messy words into the surface to create a background look of handwritten journaling. Let dry.

Working from the spool of wire, stretch out about 20 inches of wire to begin making your flower. Use your fingers to form a long loop and then use your chain nose pliers to pinch each end of the loop, making it more of a triangle shape. Keep it organic looking so the wire “petals” mimic those of a real flower.

At the bottom of your loop use your chain nose pliers to form a small U shape so you can begin hand forming another long loop from the wire. Place the tip of your chain nose pliers at each end of the loop and pull outward, making another triangle petal. To vary the petal shape, slightly adjust where you place the tip of you pliers and outwardly stretch your wire. Use your fingers to gently position your wire flowers into a pleasing, yet organic, shape.

Continue this process five times in order to make five petals.

Gently pull the center of the flower petals together and take the end of the wire and wrap it under, through and around the center to attach the wires together. Use your round nose pliers to make a small loop at the end as a catch or clasp to keep the wires in place. For a visual, think about the end of a brooch pin where there is a long wire bar on one end and a small barely-open loop on the other end where the pin catches into place.

To make the center stamen with beads, cut three 4-inch pieces of wire. Twist each piece of wire around the center of the flower so it’s securely attached. Place your chain nose pliers about 1 inch from the top of the wire and make a 60 degree bend. Add a bead onto to wire and then use you round nose pliers to create a simple loop at the end to hold bead into place. Tip: Bead should sit above the loop end. Do not bend the wire over the bead for attachment. Use your fingers to adjust the curve of the wire-and-bead stamen. Put completed flower aside.

Cut a three inch by three inch square from 24 gauge copper sheet metal using metal shears or tin snips.

Tape your metal sheet onto steel bench block. Pull the letters for your word or phrase from your metal stamping alphabet stamp. To figure out where to begin your phrase, start in the middle of your copper sheet. For example the first line of my phrase is “she was wild”. This means that I centered the word “was” first and stamped it. Then I stamped out on each side from there. After stamping “was” I stamped the e then the h then the s in order to get the word “she” correctly lined up next to the word “was”. The I stamped w, then l, then l then d for “wild”. This is the best way I’ve found to ensure your stamping is evenly spaced on your metal.

Once you’ve stamped your words or phrase, pull the tape from the copper sheet. Place it back on the bench block and use the ball side of your ball peen hammer to light add divots around the edges of the metal. This give a hand-hammered and texturized look that is nice after you patina your metal.

Tip: If the metal is curled up from the stamping, turn it over and gently hammer it flat with the flat head side of the hammer.

Place the metal into a plastic container with Liver of Sulfur or another type of metal patina solution

When the copper has turned black pull it from the patina solution and rinse in cold water. Gently polish the highlights with a piece of extra fine steel wool or a piece of a green kitchen scrub.

To complete the project, add a picture hanger to the back of the wood piece and then arrange the elements onto the painted wood surface and glue them into place.

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Artist Bio: Jen Cushman is a natural storyteller who found mixed media art 17 years ago and never looked back. She's drawn to the imperfect, the funky, the quirky, the artsy and the authentic. She's the author of *Making Metal Jewelry; How to Stamp, Forge, Fold and Form Metal Jewelry Designs* (North Light 2013) Jen's art has been published in numerous national publications including *Belle Armoire Jewelry*, *Jewelry Affaire*, *Somerset Studios*, *Somerset Workshop*, *Somerset Home*, *Cloth, Paper, Scissors* magazine, *Wirework*, *Bead Style* and more. She's also done six instructional art DVDs with F+W Media. An enthusiastic and supportive instructor, Jen teaches more than art-making techniques. She encourages others to explore their creative process to make work infused with personal significance and intention. Learn more at [www.jencushman.com](http://www.jencushman.com)