

SECOND SATURDAYS FROM HOME:

BRANCHING OUT: LEAFY PRINTS

Create your own colorful art project using plants and flowers from your own backyard!



Materials:

- Found leaves and flowers
- Watercolor paper
- Hammer or large rock
- Paper Towels
- Sturdy work surface to hammer on

HOW-TO:

1. Collect all the materials you are going to need!
PRO TIP: When collecting leaves and flowers in your neighborhood, look for leaves that aren't too thick and don't feel waxy. If your leaves are too thick, they will likely have a lot of water in them and will squish too much when you begin to hammer them flat. Waxy leaves are the opposite! The waxy coating will prevent any pigment from being released so it may not print at all when you hammer it flat.
2. Test out your leaves and flowers! This project requires a lot of trial and error! You won't know how your leaves and flowers will print until you do it! Be patient and experiment with the different materials you found.
3. To set up your paper and leaves to print, first put your paper down on a firm work surface. Place your leaves and flowers exactly where they belong on your piece of paper and cover your leaves and paper with a paper towel! The paper towel will help absorb any moisture coming out of your leaves as you hammer into them and will prevent those leaves and flowers from sticking to the hammer.
4. Now it is time to hammer! This is one of the few art projects that you get to really hammer hard into your project! Either using a hammer you find in your garage or a heavy rock you find outside, begin to pound down on your leaves. As you hammer, the leaves and petals will flatten and release their pigment onto the sheet of paper.

PRO TIP: This is another great opportunity to experiment! You can get different results depending on how you use your hammer! Striking your hammer close together to cover every inch of your leaf or petal will look different than if your hammer strokes are more spread out! Experiment with both!

5. Once you have hammered across every leaf and petal, gently peel the paper towel away and any loose leaves, stems and petals. TA-DA! You have made a leaf print! You can continue to add and layer more leaves and flowers to your image or grab a new sheet of paper and start again!
6. Check out our website for a video demonstration of this project and a video of Tree Folks taking us through Laguna Gloria for a tree identification! Find more information below about the artwork that inspired this project, *Iron Tree Trunk* by Ai Weiwei.
7. **SHARE YOUR CREATIONS!** Show us all the amazing art you are creating by tagging @contemporaryatx #SecondSaturdaysAtHome



DID YOU KNOW:

1. Ai Weiwei's sculpture *Iron Tree Trunk* is made of the exact material in the title – IRON! You will notice from its color that the material is very rusty. He created this sculpture from iron so it would intentionally continue to rust and change over time. You will notice different patterns and colors each time you visit this sculpture at Laguna Gloria.
2. Ai Weiwei is a conceptual artist. A conceptual artist is an artist that decides first on the idea they want to share with their art and decides on materials and technique later, once the idea is fully formed. The material choice is intentional to help express the ideas more fully.
3. *Iron Tree Trunk* is inspired by a trip to Jingdezhen, China. Local vendors in this area sell objects from nature, such as a stone or branch, for customers to take home. This object serves as a way to connect to nature within the home.