



Emu Egg Art Inspiration

There are many ways in which to decorate your egg from carving & etching to painting in acrylics, oils or gouache. You can also use fabric paints, gold leaf, decoupage & air dry clay to create a raised design. Unleash your creativity which is only limited by your imagination.

For those wishing to paint an egg I can recommend a book titled 'Painted Eggs' by Heidi Haupt-Battaglia. It is out of print (1991) but several copies are available on Ebay at the moment. (see pic below)

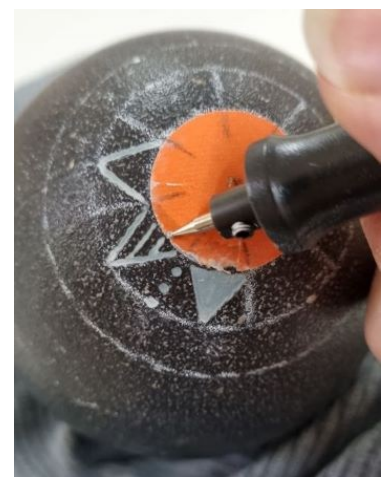
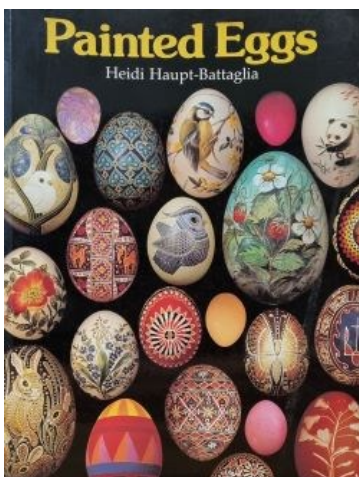
Preparing the Egg - The Emu Eggs we have supplied have already been blown out so you will find a small hole in the base. It is not always centred so keep this in mind if you plan on inserting a wire to attach it to a base as it may need to be off set.

Clean the Egg with a cotton ball dipped in vinegar to remove any grease from handling. If you plan on carving that is all you need to do but if you want to paint the Egg you will need to sand the area to ensure the paint will key to the surface.

If using light colours I suggest applying 2 coats of gesso as the Emu Egg surface is naturally dark grey. Make sure to let the gesso dry for 8hrs before painting over to ensure a good bond. If you are painting bands use 'Frog Tape' (green painters tape available from bunnings) to mask the areas you wish to paint and apply the gesso with a sponge stick or wide shader. If you plan on painting the entire egg you will obtain a smoother coat by using a sponge stick to dab on the gesso and base colour.

1) Finding the centre - All eggs are different and not always symmetrical like most organic things in nature. To find the centre top tip, smear some acrylic paint onto a tile/plate & hold the egg upside down as straight as you possibly can and dip it in the paint. The paint will stick to the highest point. Take a look at it and if needed make an adjustment using a damp cotton bud to leave a small dot - let dry. A large circular sticker is a good way to begin measuring bands. Measure to find the centre and mark the quarters with a pencil. Use a toothpick to pierce through the centre and use it as a guide to line up the sticker to the centre paint marker on the top of the egg. Slide the sticker down into place and press firmly to the egg. Use a measuring tape to mark the distance of the bands using a white coloured pencil.

2) Carving using an engraving pen - I used a battery operated engraving pen purchased from Bunnings. A Kincome K13001 Engraver - Multi Surface. It is easy to hold and has a ball point tip. Some Egg artists use a Dremel or high speed air engraving tool. These can be expensive so the Kincome is a good cheap option at under \$50. Mark your design using a white coloured pencil and slowly pass the vibrating ball tip over your design. It may take a couple of passes to obtain the width of line you want, wipe away the dust with a damp cotton bud or ball. It is best to use a mask to avoid inhaling the egg dust. This tool will give you the ability to do fine lined work like scratchboard. The colours of the layers of the Emu Egg range from teale blue to aqua to white. Remember that once you reach the white layer it is as thin as a sheet of paper so don't go too far or a hole will appear. Some artists like to drill holes right through and enlarge the blow hole in the bottom to fit an LED light fitting so if you happen to make a mistake this is an option.



3) Transferring a design - I use white 'Saral transfer paper' available from The Art Shop. It is wax free and has a soft pastel like coating on the underside. Cut a small piece the size of your design . Draw your design onto a piece of paper & sandwich the transfer paper underneath and tape in place - see pic 3 . Use a sharp pencil to draw over the design then carefully remove the taped design. A white line image will be left.

4 & 5 - Resting the egg in the wheat bag, hold it steady with one hand and engrave with the other. Start at the top of the design and work your way down taking care not to rest your hand over the design as it may rub off. Use a damp cotton bud to clean the engraved section to see how deep a line you have created. At first it may start as a faint dotted line, but the more passes over the line the deeper and clearer it will become.

Egg Stands - All eggs submitted must come with a stand. There are many ways that you can display your finished egg. A simple one is to use two wooden curtain rings glued together. A short piece of 50ml PVC pipe sanded, painted & decorated will also do the trick. You can purchase stands at Crystal / gemstone suppliers . Some of these are marble designed to hold a ball. Etsy have a variety of 'Emu Egg' stands so worth taking a look online. One of our members is a wood worker and she has offered to make some simple wooden stands. More information on these in our March Email update.

Online Inspiration - There are numerous tutorials online on You Tube covering a variety of techniques from carving to etching, painting and decorating -

Here are some tutorials to search -

How to etch emu eggs to create Pysanky or Batik style etched etching eggshell

Pysanky classes & an Emu Egg

Creating an Etched Emu Egg Shell

I do hope that this article has inspired you to take up the challenge and participate in our very first 'Meegnificent Emu Egg Exhibition'. As we have over 100 eggs this could become an annual Exhibition and we hope that at least 30 take up the challenge this year. Remember that Entries are to be delivered by March 30th so get cracking ! Both the Entry & Conditions of Entry forms can be downloaded from our website home page - www.sherbrookegallery.com

Leanne Vassallo

