

Journaling: Taking the Leap

“I journal almost everyday,” reports Debra Valoff, former owner of Rubbermoon Rubber Stamps. “I usually have about ten different journals going at a time. Now that I’m retired, I love spending time playing in them.”

Debra’s playfulness shows on her journal pages featured here, and she shares techniques used to make these pages special. Perhaps, when you are working on your own journal—or journals—you can incorporate some or all of these techniques on your pages.

Dangling Doodles

The quote on this two-page spread is charming and bound to make you smile. Debra says that sometimes a quote like this will get her creativity going, but “just as often it’s a stamp, photo or other artwork” that inspires her.

Debra uses a wire-bound Strathmore Visual Journal, measuring 5.5” x 8” with Bristol paper pages, thick enough to withstand multiple layers of ink and paint, which is what it took to create the backgrounds on these *Dangling*

Doodles pages.

Should you want to do something similar, first apply an overall wash of watercolors to the page(s). Then splatter more color on top. Debra added splatters by loading a very wet brush with watercolor paint, then tapping the brush across a pencil. What you’ll end up with is a dappled background. Don’t expect it to be exactly like Debra’s, but expect a beautiful background to work with.

Debra added stamps to her pages, then got to the real nitty gritty—doodling. She added lines, curlicues, circles, squares—and doodles! If you’ve heard about Zentangles®, this will be right up your alley. If you haven’t, see the story on page 40 to 43, where doodling with a different name—tangling—takes center stage.

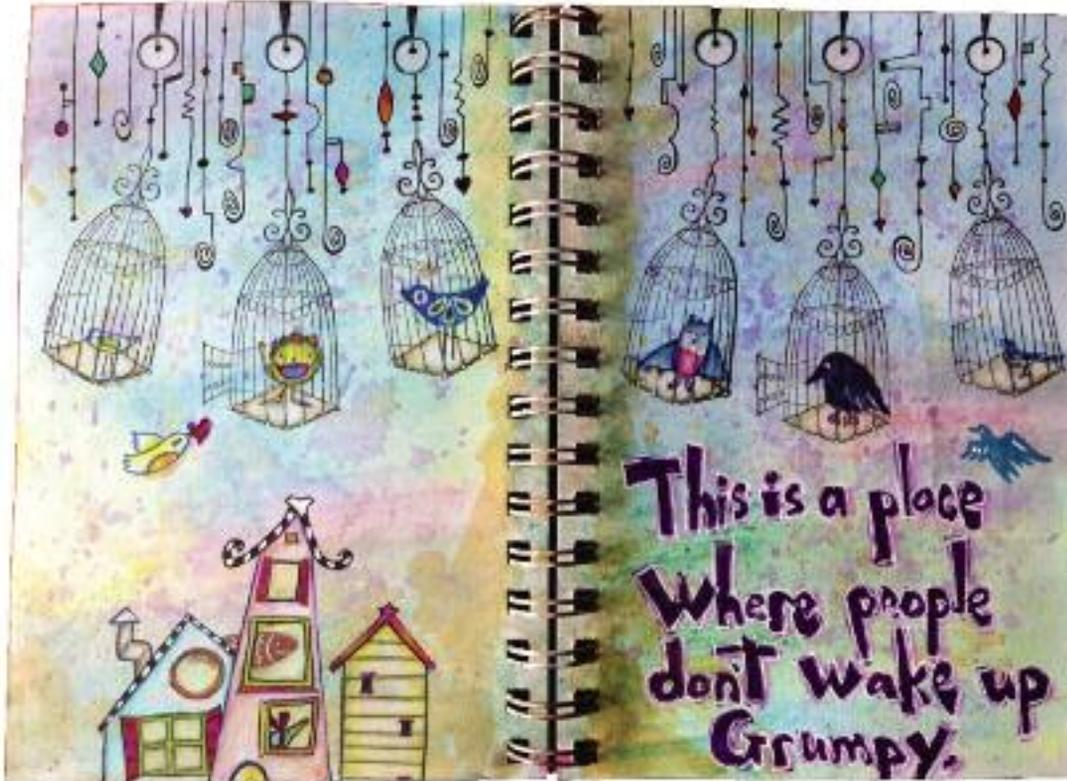
Debra’s doodling tips: “Jump in and have fun creating squiggles and shapes [on your pages]. Leave a few open spaces, too. That’s where you can add ‘pops of color.’ I suggest repeating a lot of the elements on your doodling pages to provide a sense of cohesiveness.” Debra uses a

Copic Multiliner pen for doodling.

The images on these journal pages were colored with Prismacolor pencils. Debra used a wide Tombow marker for the lettering, adding a white outline with a Uniball Signo pen. The looseness of the lettering works well with those funky doodles. It’s unlikely someone would wake up grumpy now.

Leap of Faith

To make the backgrounds for these pages, Debra diluted reinker inks in spray bottles and



Dangling Doodles Journal Pages / Debra Valoff

(Stamp credits: Bird in the far right cage—Stampa Barbara [Stamp A Mania]; all other images—Rubbermoon.)

sprayed her pages with ink. She moved the ink around on the pages with a one-inch sponge brush. These brushes are readily available at paint stores. Plus, they're inexpensive and easy to clean.

What helps make these journal pages special are the repeated background images of flowers and designs, and the image of the woman, who seems to be pointing to the quote on the facing page—and looking like she's having a leap of faith.

If you'd like to try your hand at stenciling, consider following Debra's technique.

- She started with a Rubbermoon image of a house with a woman inside. It's a fairly simple image—easy to cut out. After stamping the image with black ink, she enlarged it 300%



Leap of Faith Journal Pages / Debra Valoff

(Stamp credits: Background image—hand-carved by Gretchen Ehram; tube of paint, house with woman [image name is "eek a rat"]—Rubbermoon.)

on a copier. The image went from 1.5" x 1.75" to 4.5" x 5.25".

- After the house was sufficiently enlarged, she traced the house on a piece of template plastic. You can find this plastic at Michaels Craft or quilt-

ing supply stores. She could have traced the house on plain paper, if she planned to use the stencil just once—the plastic stencil will last for numerous projects.

- She cut out the house shape to make a stencil in the shape of a house, using a sharp X-acto knife. She did the same for the woman image.

- She then cut around the house image, leaving a 1" border. She did the same for the woman image.

- As you can see in the photo, at left, Debra ended up with solid house and woman shapes—these could serve as masks.

Debra mentioned stenciling is popular right now. With a simple rubber stamp in hand, you, too, can take a leap—perhaps a leap of faith—and include stenciling in your journals.

Rubberta Stampling is the editor of RubberStampMadness. Her journal skills leaped 300% after writing this article.

Making Your Own Stencils

The original image of the house and woman that provided Debra Valoff's stencils is shown here next to the 300% enlargement that was traced on template material. The results—after careful cutting—were stencils and masks she incorporated on her journal pages. The masks are the solid shapes of the woman and the house shown in the upper left and upper right. The stencils are the open shapes of the woman and house.

