



Studio & Storage

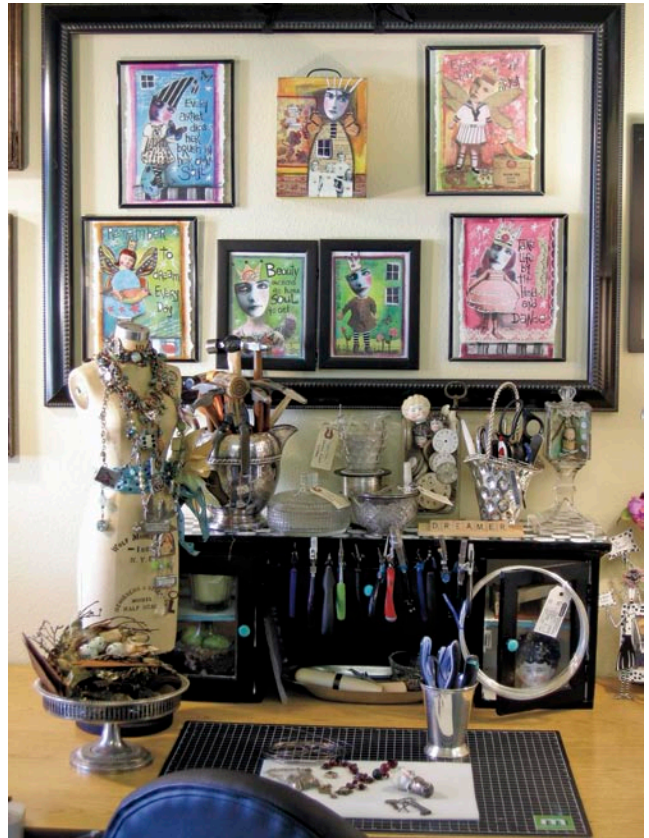
Inspired spaces and hiding places

By Jane Dickerson

Saying you have a studio is very affirming. It seems to me to be the defining real estate of an artist. If you have a studio, then you can believe you are an artist . . . that's where an artist works. Recently, I was talking to my father on the phone and I told him that I had been working in my studio. A prolonged silence followed. "Your studio?" he said somewhat ironically. I confirmed, "Yes, my studio!" Okay, some people might mistake it for a folding table in the kitchen, next to the microwave, and situated over the kitty litter box, but to me I was declaring out loud, "Hey, I make stuff and I'm gonna be an artist and have a studio!" As I claimed my space, I felt, at last, I had arrived . . . this is my place, this is me.

Wherever you are in your artistic process, consider your workspace your studio. It is your zone to breathe, to create, and to be your truest self. It can be the corner of the basement, the spare closet in the guest room, or the old changing table that once belonged to your now-teenage son. Define it and own it. Decorate it and fill it with whatever inspires you. As you shop and collect materials and supplies, you and your studio will evolve.

To create your studio space, you'll want to include a clear work surface with good lighting; tools of your craft; beads and beading supplies or materials for the medium you are working in; storage boxes, bags, bins, drawers, or whatever you prefer



Opposite page: Photo by Cynthia Mooney. See Cynthia's studio in the Fall/Winter 2008 issue of Studios magazine.

This page: Photos by Diana Frey. See Diana's studio in the Spring/Summer 2009 issue of Studios magazine.



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to organize and contain your materials; a trash can; an “in progress” tray ; and an ergonomic chair. I also like to have a take-and-make portable system, either a tray or a box of goodies that I can take with me when I sit in front of the TV.

Tips for Your Perfect Studio

Location, location, location. I dream of the perfect studio, with order and color coordinated bins. I used to work in total silence, in the basement. Ugh. It was lonely, far from the bathroom, and chilly. Now I've settled in the kitchen near the tea kettle, my cats, the fridge (okay, pretend I didn't say that), and all of the creature comforts. Where you work needs to be a happy, comfortable place for you. One thing that surprised me when I moved my supplies into the kitchen and didn't have a place to sit down was that I actually liked designing standing up. Who knew? The kitchen counter is just the right height: When I'm making something, I find I am constantly moving around and digging into multiple boxes. Sitting down periodi-

cally is a must, but I found that I explored more when I could pick and peck more freely.

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Surround yourself with sound. What a difference it makes to design while listening to music and humming down memory lane to oldies on the radio. I find it relaxes me, makes me smile, and really inspires me to be creative. Beading while watching TV is great if you have all of your supplies within reach. I once tried to bead while watching a foreign film with subtitles. Doesn't work.



This page: Photo by Chrysti Hydeck. See Chrysti's studio in the Fall/Winter 2008 issue of Studios magazine.

This page: Photo by Gaye Medbury. See Gaye's studio in the Spring/Summer 2009 issue of Studios magazine.

Opposite page: This Is Me pendant by Susan Nestor.



“Sometimes the act of organizing and cleaning up your studio is just the inspiration you need to rediscover beads you forgot you even had.”

Organization and storage—your style! Have you noticed how your bead stash expands from one bag to one neat compartmentalized box, to multiple boxes, to stackable boxes, and beyond? Denise Peck, the editor of *Step by Step Wire Jewelry*, discovered recently that her whole house has turned into her studio. She had morphed from one space to the whole place! Whatever system works for you is the best system. One beader suggested using utensil trays—separating the beads by color but mixing up different sizes, styles, and materials within that color range. By putting complementary colors in the other

tray slots, she felt it was easier to see what beads looked good together. Some people need every bead in its perfect place so they know where everything is. You can organize by color, size, material, manufacturer, whatever works for you. Sometimes the act of organizing and cleaning up your studio is just the inspiration you need to rediscover beads you forgot you even had. When I’m stuck and don’t know what to make, I clean; it’s like reuniting with old friends. No guilt, strictly pleasure.

Seeing is believing. Always remember to enjoy your accomplishments. Display your work all around you. I love that idea! Whenever you spend time in your studio, you will be reminded—I am an artist, this is me.



12 Easy Storage Solutions!

By Jane Dickerson

When it comes to storing your beading tools and materials, you can use everything from recycled prescription bottles and breath-mint tins to deluxe storage systems with special drawer inserts. The key is to find what works best for you and what fits your space and budget! Here are a few options we like and you might want to try.



1

Label maker. Gotta have it! Put labels on everything and you'll instantly feel organized.



3

Mini loaf tins. Perfect for holding reels of beading wire.

2

Tic tac boxes. Keep tiny items organized and ready to pour out when needed.



4

Kids' pencil boxes. Colorful catchalls for beading supplies.



5

Craft store plastic boxes with compartments. See everything at once!



6

Craft Mates.

Snapping organizers for beads and findings.



Photo by Fire Mountain Gems and Beads.

7

Zip-up bags.

Solutions for any storage crisis.



11

Hardware store, small-parts storage containers.

Cool stuff!



Photo by Fire Mountain Gems and Beads.

8

Wooden utensil holder.

Keep your ducks in a row!



9

Best Craft Organizer.

Tread yourself to the ultimate storage system!



Photo by Best Craft Organizer.

10

Wooden tool holder.

Pliers stand ready at hand.



12

Clear flip-top Sterlite storage bins.

Have 'em in 3 sizes!