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# New book demonstrates (tasteful) crafting with books

By Laura Pearson  
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Books integrate well into many an interior design scheme, and in some cases, they're the focal point. But search "book crafts" on Google or Pinterest, and you'll turn up a variety of ideas that are — at least in our book — tediously twee: book purses; book boutonnieres; lines from classic texts decoupage onto high-heeled shoes (really), and the list goes on. Also, the idea of ripping up books and/or using them as mere decoration makes us shudder a little. Who decided that vintage edition of "To Kill a Mockingbird" wanted to wind up a birdhouse? Or that copy of "Rabbit Run," a table runner?



The gallery table functions as both a table and a display case for books and ephemera. It's one of the DIY projects in "Novel Living" by Lisa Occhipinti. (Abrams Books, Thayer Allyson Gowdy)

Tweeness aside, sometimes ragged books or books scored from the library's free bin beg to be repurposed. That's where "Novel Living," by California-based artist and writer Lisa Occhipinti, proves useful — with craft ideas that are a bit more restrained. Think: Book-themed wallpaper made by scanning old library pockets; a storytime mobile featuring mini vintage kids' books (or facsimiles thereof) dangling from simple basswood armature.

"Novel Living" also covers the art of collecting and exhibiting books, and our favorite

projects are those that put literary treasures on handsome display. See: The lighted book boxes, and museumlike gallery table that functions as both table and display case.

"We all know the standard interior design practice of adding a mirror to make a room appear larger," Occhipinti writes, "Books are mirrors of a different kind ... adding another type of breadth to a room." Bibliophiles with an urge to decorate, or interior designers with a bookish bent, take note.

**Novel Living: Collecting, Decorating and Crafting with Books by Lisa Occhipinti, Stewart, Tabori and Chang, \$24.95, [abramsbooks.com](http://abramsbooks.com)**