

Trash to Treasure: Painted Scrollwork Dresser

Kicking off a [Trash to Treasure Transformation Series](#) is the always amazing [Miss Mustard Seed](#). Her [furniture](#) elicits involuntary oohs and ahhs from me everytime. Visit her blog to see how she inspires us all to move mountains in our homes.

I'm so excited to have the opportunity to show off one of my most recent before & after transformations here at Brooklyn Limestone. This dresser has come a long way...

Here's how it started...



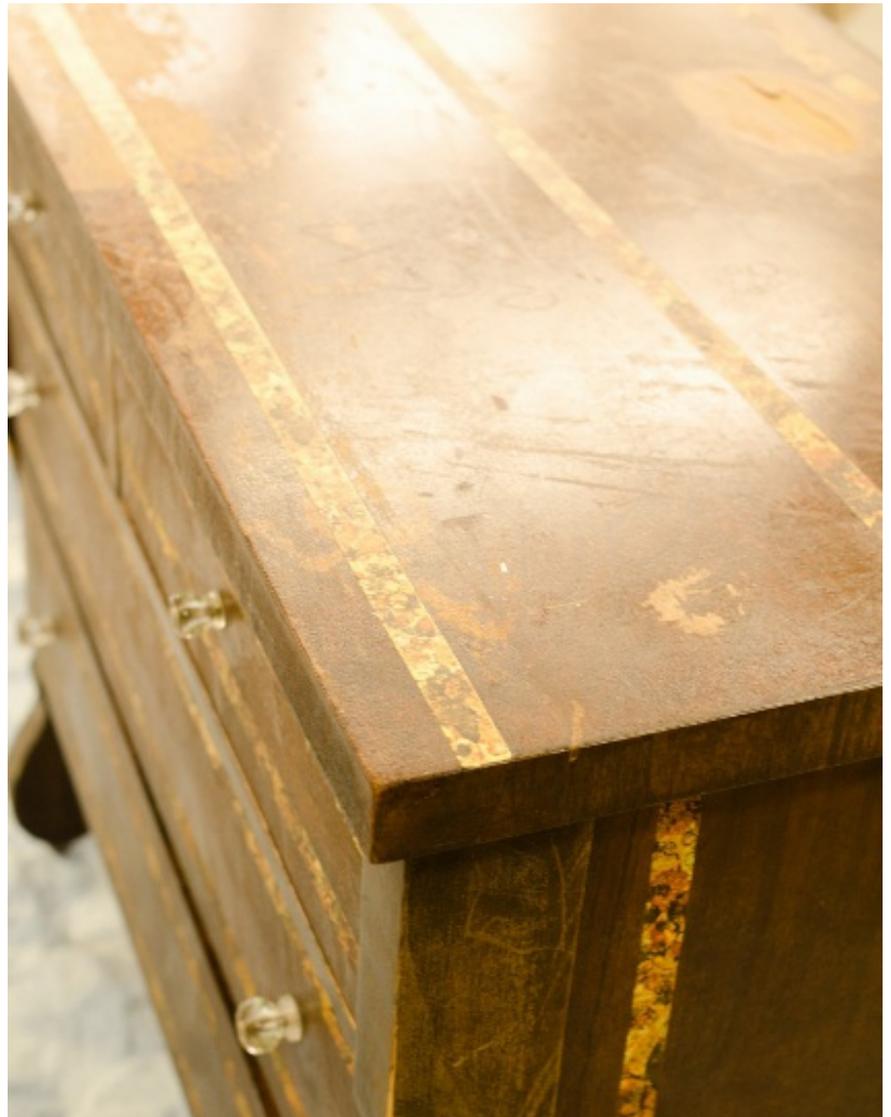


I didn't dig it out of the trash, so it's not a true trash to treasure, but I did find it for a great price at my favorite junk shop. A previous owner had dressed it up with strips of contact paper.

At first I was sad that someone would do such a thing to a pretty wood dresser, but then I realized it was really a clever idea. The execution may not have been great and the choice of paper wasn't my taste, but it is a cheap and easy way to give a piece a new look. It wasn't the look I was going for, though, so I peeled off the contact paper.

I had another issue to deal with...the top had a major cosmetic problem. There was some water damage that had caused the veneer to bubble and chip away.

Now, I do a lot of furniture repair and refinishing, but messing with veneer like this is beyond my repertoire. I almost didn't buy this piece because of that one spot. I thought about having my husband replace the entire top, but I decided to try to smooth out the bubbled area. I removed the loose veneer and filled in the space with 3-4 layers of wood filler. I sanded each layer heavily until the top was smooth (or as smooth as I could manage.) Once painted, it blends in pretty well.



Most people probably wouldn't even notice it unless they knew it was there.

This is definitely an example of my philosophy when working on vintage furniture. It's old and some of these pieces have had a pretty rough time.

I've bought pieces with missing drawers, missing legs, warped boards, wonky drawers and even one that had been a home to a family of mice. I make them functional and turn them into a beautiful piece for someone's home, but I never strive for perfection.

I embrace the quirks and dings and dents and chipped veneer the pieces have acquired along the way. They're a part of the story of the piece and I don't need to try to make it look new. I think furniture makeovers are less intimidating when tackled with that in mind.

I painted the body of the piece in black milk paint, refinished the drawers and added a decorative painted design. The entire dresser was finished with a soft furniture wax.

Fortunately, the dresser still had the original casters and glass knobs, so I didn't need to replace any of the hardware.

This piece is a little different for me, since I usually don't work with black paint, but I love how it turned out. I'm glad I took a chance on the ugly duckling with the contact paper stripes.

Thanks so much, Stefanie, for letting me share!





