

beadshop LIVE: 2.27.19 Tree of Life



*With Kate Richbourg on beadshop LIVE
Samples by Kate Richbourg
Photography by Baranduin Briggs and Karen Marshall
Episode Notes by Drea Carbone*

This classic technique is making quite the comeback! One of our most-requested classes is back, and the Tree of Life has taken on new life thanks to this broadcast and all the amazing work we've seen in our private FB Group, The Bead Table, since the show was live. Sprinkled through these Notes are some of our community's incredible work...the inspiration is taking root for sure.

Kate's created her tree, Moon Magic, with 3mm Czech Glass and stunning moonstone rondelles, but as she creates during the live you'll see she adds even more. Experiment with bead sizes, shapes, and colors to create your very own tree.

Want to skip the Chatter? Scroll forward to **Minute Marker 10:30**.

Minute Marker 10:30

Kate starts out by sharing some gorgeous inspiration photos of some really cool, gnarled trees. Kate also sketched out a tree design, inspired by these beautiful shots. Take a peek at some of those photos below:



Many thanks to those who shared images of trees in our Facebook Group!

Aren't these lovely?



Minute Marker 20:00

There's a quick chat about antiquing your wire. Kate reminds us of her [Free Tip Friday](#) using [Liver of Sulphur](#) to antique her bare copper wire. Keep in mind that the "Non-Tarnish" wires we sell will not react to an antiquing process, but a "Bare" one will!

Take a look at Bead Table Member Michelle Phipps' beautiful antiqued Tree of Life and matching earrings to the right.



Minute Marker 23:30

The wires we are using today are [16G](#) and [26G](#). The 16G is used as the frame for the piece, so a nice sturdy wire is desired. Kate selected 26G for her tree itself to ensure her gemstone beads will fit...but if you're using beads with larger holes you could size up to a [24G wire](#). Kate's sample today uses [Moonstone faceted rondelles](#) but she points out several other gems, pearls, and semi-precious stones that would look simply stunning on a tree of your own. Here's what she brought out for us to explore:



Garnet Faceted Rondelles



Labradorite Faceted Rondelles



Peridot Faceted Rondelles



Green Garnet Faceted Rondelles



Gray Petite Rice Pearls



Petite Rice Pearls

Not pictured: Our [Rice Beads](#). These vintage beads are beautiful, but we have a finite supply of them. Be on the lookout for new stones in this fun shape coming soon! Kate also mentions our [Aged Czech beads](#) later in the broadcast as a good choice!

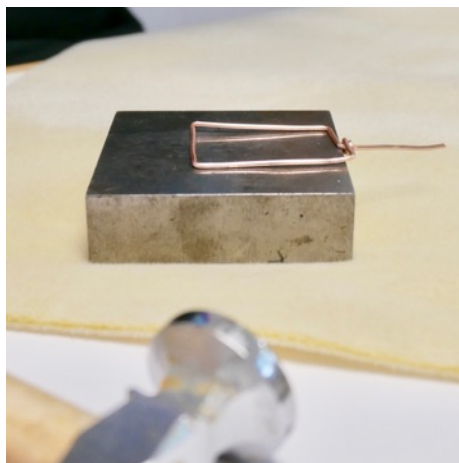
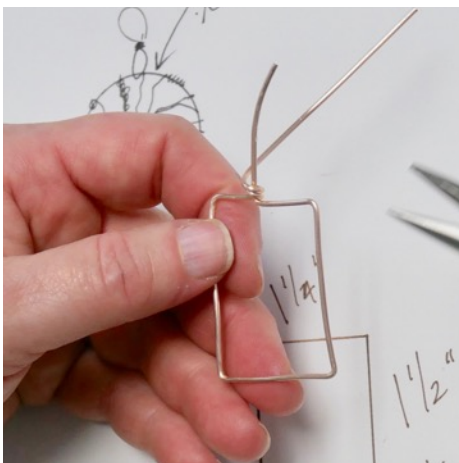
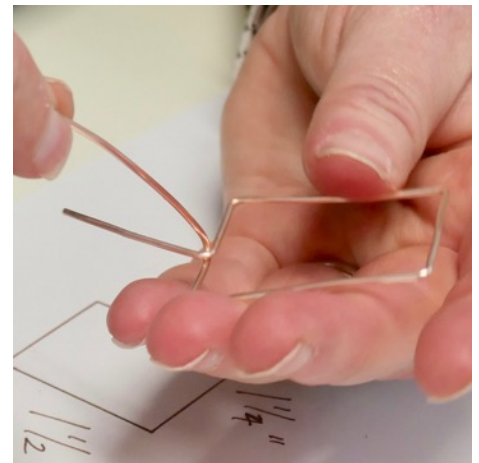
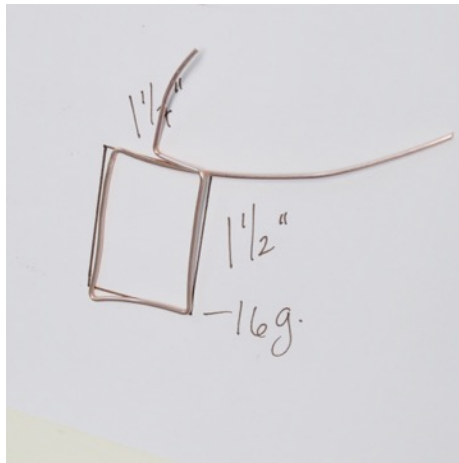
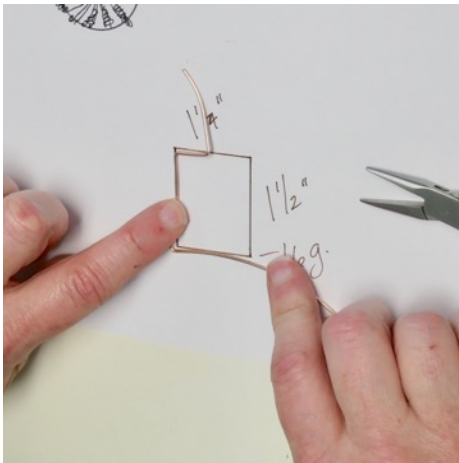
Minute Marker 30:00

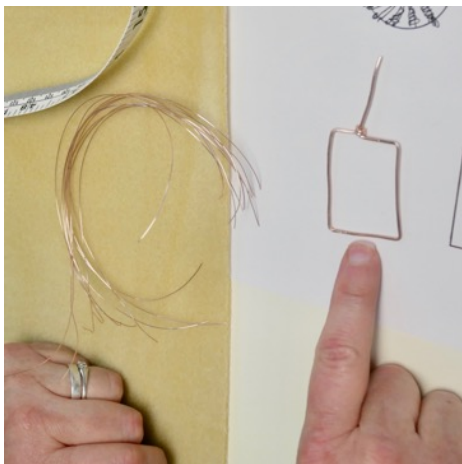
We have some great components that could work for your Tree of Life Frame, but this part of the broadcast cuts out! Find these hoops and frames in the [Connectors Category](#) under [Components](#) on our homepage.

While you could freehand your frame, Kate shows how to draw a guide. She uses a straight edge ruler to both measure and mark her desired frame, which she then uses to create her own frame:



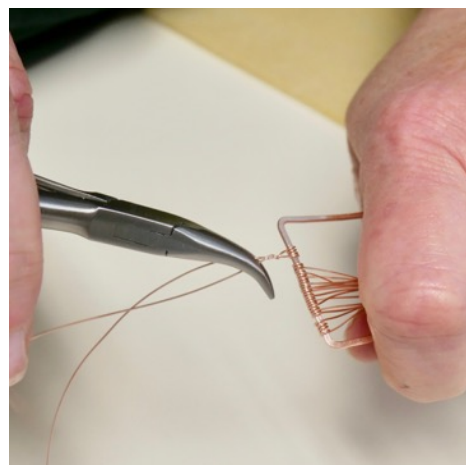
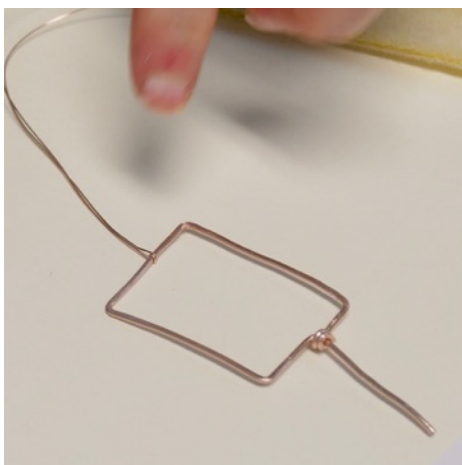
Using her drawn guide, a length of 16G wire, and her chain nose pliers, Kate bends her frame into shape. Note how the ends of her wires meet in the center of the top of the frame to form a bail. She makes a simple wrapped coil to hold it in place but does not curve a bail yet. [Hammering](#) work-hardens and flattens the frame.





Minute Marker 40:00

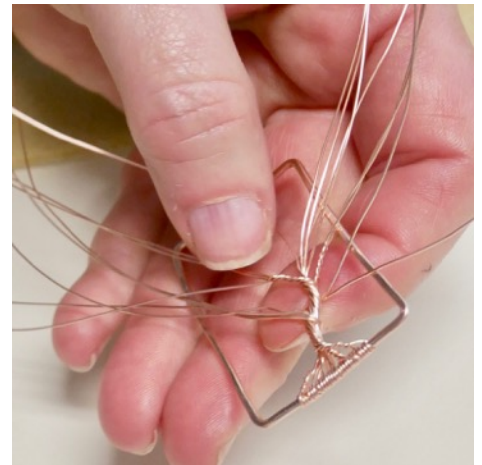
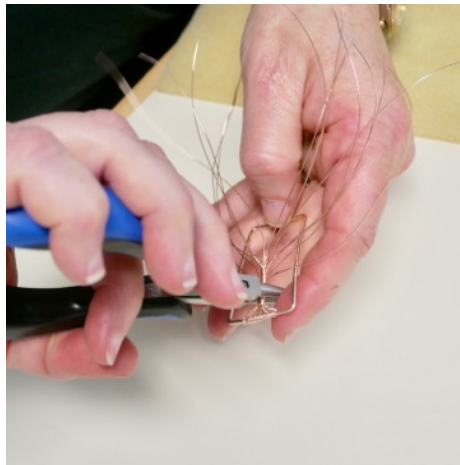
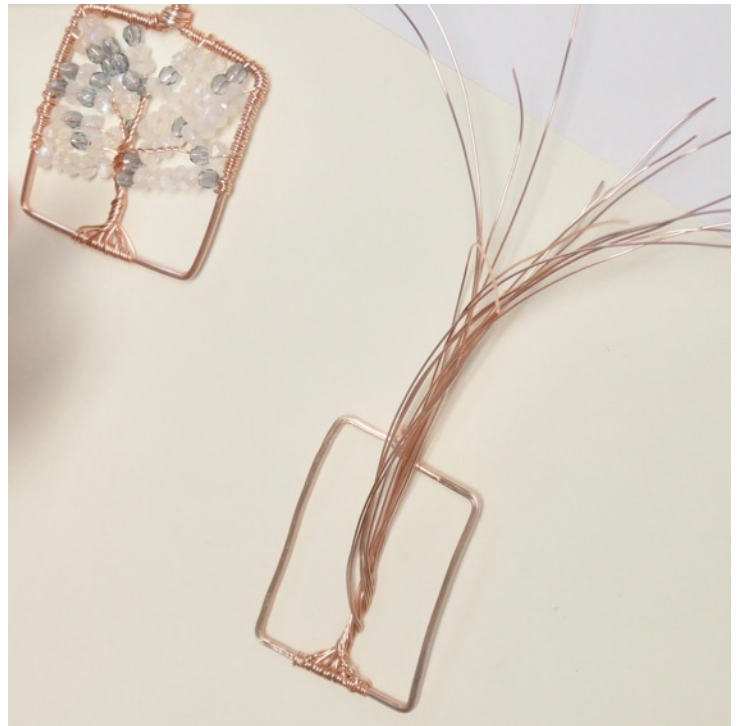
Let's get started on the tree! This part takes a little improvisation. Kate cuts several lengths of 26G wire, each about 10" long. Starting at the center of each length, wrap each a few times around the bottom of the frame. These will be the beginnings of your roots and then twist into your trunk and finally become your branches. Each wire will become two roots and two branches, since you are wrapping from their middle points and then forming your tree with both long ends of the wire. Look to your tree photos for inspiration and guidance. If you want your roots more spread out, add more wraps around the bottom frame to space them out a bit more. Want them closer together? Do the opposite, maybe only wrap once or twice. Once you have as many wires as you want and in the places you want, you can flip all your wires up so they're reaching upwards towards the top of your frame.



Kate twists a few of her wires together to create detailed roots. You don't have to do this, but it creates a different look to your roots. She starts with two on one end, then takes the next group of four and twists those, and so on, varying how many of her roots she pulls together so that her tree will actually look like a natural tree. Use your bent chain nose pliers to grasp the wires together and then twist all together.

Minute Marker 54:00

Form your trunk once you're satisfied with your roots. Pull all of the wires together and twist them all together for a few turns...and then spread the wires out to form your branches. Just as with your roots you'll want some wires to twist together and some not, so you have varied branch sizes and lengths. Kate's using her bent chain nose pliers to get good control of her twists. She also uses her round nose pliers to add some shape to her trunk...looks very bonsai, doesn't it?



Minute Marker 1:01:00

Time to add your foliage...beads! Kate's using the two beads from her original sample, Moonstone Faceted Rondelles and 3mm Montana Blue, but she's also adding an 11/0 bead for more color and depth. These are the [11-142FR Matte Transparent Smoky Amethyst AB 11/0 Miyuki Seed Beads](#). She makes herself a little mix of the beads and starts adding them to a low branch. She adds enough to fit between her trunk and the edge of the frame, then begins to wrap the wire around the frame.

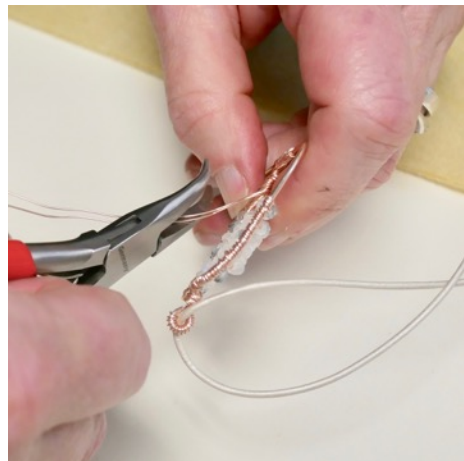
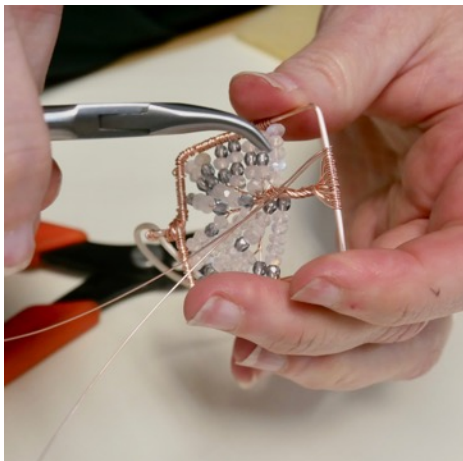


To wrap, or not to wrap? There are different methods of wrapping the frame. Some folks like to just have a few wraps to secure the branches and show the frame, others like to have the whole frame covered with wraps. It's entirely up to you! Look at these two samples made below, posted by Bead Table members. On the left, Susanne S. has a piece where she wrapped the wire entirely around the frame to cover all of it. On the right, see how Kim L. left more of her frame unwrapped. Also notice Kim's wire-wrapped bail and charm...a little extra fanciness!



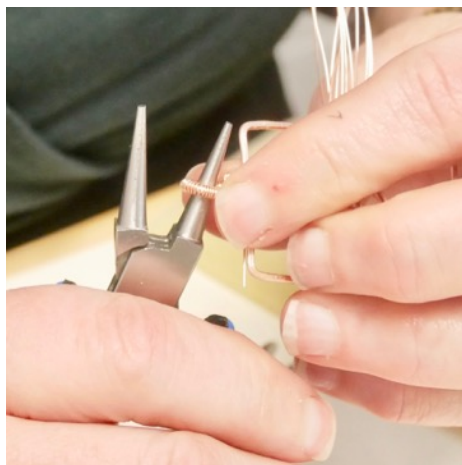
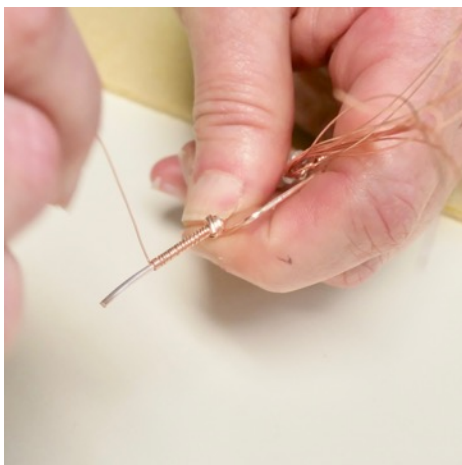
Minute Marker 1:12:30

A question is asked: Can a wire be added? You bet! Kate shows us how on her completed sample. Another 10" length of wire is used and is wrapped around the bottom of the frame alongside the rest of the roots. She gives these two wires a little twist and then brings the pair around her trunk, wrapping around the trunk to blend in with the rest of her wires. As the top of the trunk she twists them again into a single branch that then splits out into two. Tucked behind her other branches, they make a seamless addition to her piece and fill in a gap Kate didn't like before.



Minute Marker 1:20:00

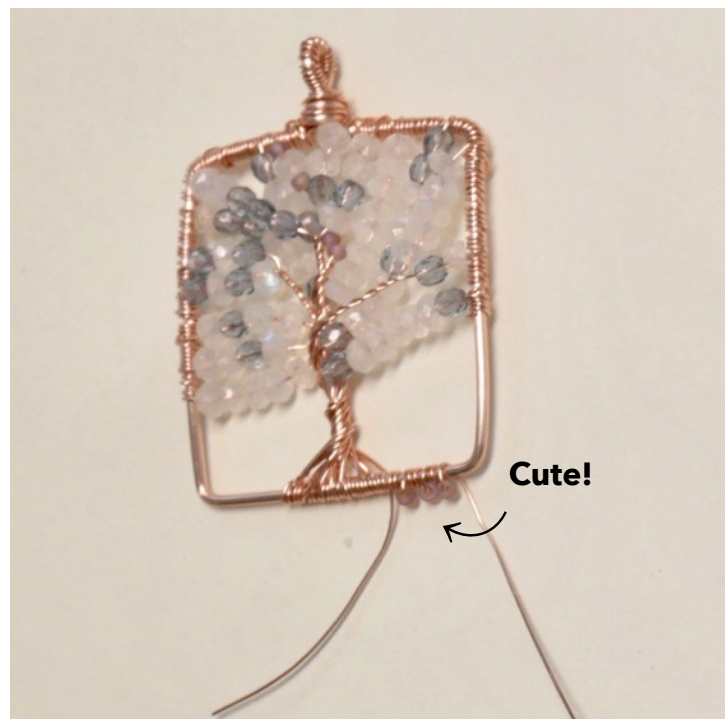
Let's make that bail! That 16G wire that's still sticking out of the top of your frame will become your bail. Kate wraps another 10" piece of 26G wire around and around the 16G to create a long coil covering it. She bends the 16G wire down at an angle and then uses her round nose pliers just as a mandrel, not squeezing the bail so she doesn't damage the wire coil. She trims the end of the bail wire to shorten it and then uses her chain nose pliers help to bring the bail to a close, and her excess 26G wire is wrapped around the base of the bail.



Minute Marker 1:25:00

Anyone up for little extra design flair? Kate adds a beaded edge to her completed sample. Isn't that cute? Just wire wrap those 11/0s right around the bottom edge of your frame. Wrap the wire around, then add a bead, wrap around again, add a bead, and so on to create a little edge.

It's almost like little leaves or petals that have fallen from the tree to the forest floor. Love this look!



That's it, gang! Your design possibilities truly are endless with a Tree of Life. Pick your colors, wires, techniques, extras... there's so much you can create. We have loved seeing everyone's trees on the Facebook Group lately...keep 'em coming!

Check out what Faye made here...it's a tree growing out of a Pi Disc! AH-mazing!



Kate's finished on-air sample

Links to Events and More...

- [Last Week's FB Live Broadcast: Fun With Czech Glass](#)
- [Facebook Live Youtube Playlist](#)
- [FB Live Archive Page](#) on [beadshop.com](#)
- [Free Tip Friday YouTube Playlist](#)
- [FTF Archive Page](#) on [beadshop.com](#)
- [The Journey Bead Retreat](#)



Links to Us...

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- [The Bead Table Blog](#)
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- [FB Community-The Bead Table](#)
- info@beadshop.com
- kate@beadshop.com
- janice@beadshop.com
- drea@beadshop.com

Links to This Project's Ingredients...

[Tree of Life and Recipe](#)

[Original Tree of Life Handout](#)

1 Pkg [16G Rose Gold Non-Tarnish ParaWire](#)

1 Pkg [26G Rose Gold Non-Tarnish ParaWire](#)

1 Strand [Moonstone Faceted Rondelles 3-4mm](#)

1 Strand [3mm Fire Polish- Montana Blue](#)

1 Strand [11-142fr Matte Tr Smoky Amethyst AB](#)

(On air, Kate adds 1 Tube [11-142FR Matte Trans Smoky Amethyst](#))



Alley Mori made a sample, as well. I knew you'd want to see it! It's lovely.

Hers uses a [Nunn Design Round Hoop in Antique Gold](#), [4mm Green Garnet Rounds](#) and [4mm Czech Jonquil Fire Polish](#). [Antique Copper Wire](#) is used for the tree, and [Antique Copper Smooth Sailing Chain](#) and a [Swivel Clasp](#) look lovely with a pair of [8mm Green Garnet Rounds](#) complete the look.