

## ★ Crafting Authentic Paper Flowers

**Sophie Longhurst**

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In *Crafting Authentic Paper Flowers*, florist and gardener Sophie Longhurst advises new crafters on the tools and techniques needed to produce paper flowers that look like they came from nature, but that will never wilt. Using crepe paper, paint, ink, glue, and other basic supplies, she produces intricate floral arrangements that could be mistaken for having been freshly picked.

Some of the designs are simple, as with those for rowan berries, which are made from clay rather than paper, and the hydrangea paniculata “limelight,” with delicate green, cream, and pink flowers. More complex creations include larkspur “annual delphinium,” with long stalks that feature delicate, pale flowers and feathery green foliage, and *Alcathaea suffrutescens* “parkalee,” which Longhurst describes as a cross between a mallow and a hollyhock, with semi-double ruffled flowers and purple-tinged stamens.

While creating these florals is a lengthy process, the crafter’s patience will be well rewarded with the end results, which mimic nature as closely as is possible with paper. Templates at the back of the book make cutting the natural shapes easier, while the step-by-step instructions, with illustrations of some of the steps for each stem, are sure to build confidence.

The results are gorgeous and look absolutely authentic. While those new to crafting paper flowers might not produce blossoms as pretty as those illustrated, Longhurst notes that she is completely self-taught, which is encouraging. The gorgeous photographs of finished flowers, arrangements, and other uses for florals are sure to inspire new artists to try them.

Paper flower making is a slow, contemplative process that requires the crafter to consider what a flower really looks like in nature in order to replicate it. The aim is beauty and realism, not perfection. *Crafting Authentic Paper Flowers* is a beautiful, inspirational, and aspirational guide to making paper flowers that look like they came right out of the garden.

SARAH WHITE (January / February 2022)

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