FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

CLARION REVIEW ★★★☆☆ CRAFTS & HOBBIES

Montage Mirage Photo Tapestries: How to Montage Treasured Photos Using Scissors and Glue

Gwen Cheryl Lyn Sarandrea
Xlibris
Unknown $0.00 (pp)
978-1-4500-7232-8

One picture may be worth a thousand words, but to crafter Gwen Cheryl Lyn Sarandrea, one photo is not nearly enough to create her “Montage Mirage Photo Tapestries.” She chooses a theme and then selects harmonious and often sequential photos to flesh out her work, which is similar to a scrapbook or photo collage.

Sarandrea modernizes her craft, which dates back to the first postcards and photographs, by mixing old and new methods. Using scissors, glue, and photographs copied on a printer, the author creates touching photo groupings that serve as what she calls “visual meditations” and family heirlooms. She crops the photos “down to their essentials, then cluster[s] them into a pleasing arrangement onto large, acid-free poster board.” Interspersed among the photos, she inserts “integrating medium,” which she describes as “flowers, landscapes, concert and theater tickets or other memorabilia.”

Sarandrea’s seventy-two-page *Montage Mirage Photo Tapestries: How To Montage Treasured Photos Using Scissors and Glue* shows readers how to make twenty-five montage designs, each described on an informative two-page spread. One page features a four-color, full-page photo of a montage. The opposite page, laid out with an easy-to-read font, describes the design and how to create it. The content provides a decidedly personal look at the author and her art, which will endear this book to friends and family.

Bare-bones, how-to information includes helpful tips such as “Avoid putting glue under faces as it can show through in time.” There is also information about photo placement and how and where to add integrating medium. Sarandrea also writes about color: “You can’t go wrong when you place the same color flowers or images around the subject as the color of their clothes.”

The author’s montages offer a variety of themes and forms, but many of the photo arrays look very much the same. When reading about sequential layout for one montage, the reader may be unable to find where the sequence begins. Layout diagrams and step-by-step construction instructions should have been included.

The montages’ diversity of form and flair, author suggestions, and use of a variety of integrated medium, provide crafters with ideas on how they would want to use their own family or vacation photos. Readers are encouraged to shoot photos with a montage in mind. For example, snapping sequential photos of a toddler playing with blocks or interacting with a family pet make interesting themes for a fun montage. The author emphasizes finding a theme for each project.

Because the author focuses on balance and color choices as well as theme and use of embellishments, this book might also interest those who scrapbook and enjoy photo manipulation.

DAWN GOLDSMITH (March 27, 2012)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The author of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Reviews make no guarantee that the author will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission’s 16 CFR, Part 255.