



The Collage Workbook: How to Get Started and Stay Inspired

Randel Plowman

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Both a popular hobby and a recognized art form, collage encompasses a wide range of creative styles and techniques—explored here by the creator of the popular A Collage a Day blog. Offering step-by-step instruction, visual inspiration, and even a library of copyright-free images, this hands-on guide covers all the necessary materials, tools, and know-how, from adding color and transferring images, to décollage (tearing away layers). And to spark the reader's imagination, there are 52 creativity prompts, such as a collage using the letters of a single word.

The Collage Workbook: How to Get Started and Stay Inspired Details

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Laura says

There was a lot of interesting instruction and some good exercises in this book. Unfortunately it looks like the constantly referred to image library on the author's website has been removed; however he does offer quite a few images at the back for the purpose of scanning and reuse by readers.

Kevin says

Re-reading this in preparation for a collage-making instructional zine I'm currently working on with Portland artist Jackie Treiber and others. Lots of good ideas in here, many of which move beyond simple collaging and into multi-media. I took an on-line class with Mr. Plowman a couple of years ago when I first started collaging. He's a good person to learn from, especially for beginners.

Quinn says

It's less of a text and more of an inspiration book. Yes, there are some fast how-tos, but largely there is a double spread with some tips on one side and the image of the completed collage on the other. At the end there are copyright-free images you can use in your own work.

The collages were largely OK rather than well done. There are many of them, and I got the feeling that some of them were done for the book rather than done with time and purpose and collected for the book. The free images are not high enough quality to make me want to scan and use them.

Of course, this is highly subjective, so your opinion may vary. Of the how-to books, I prefer Claudine Helmuth, and of inspiration books, Collage Lost and Found by Giuseppina Cirincione.

F.P. says

I admit I absolutely adore collaging. I picked up this book recently, and I've been enjoying it so much that I find it hard to put down. It has freed me from feeling like I'm not a "real artist" because I don't enjoy working large-scale. Painting that way is just too physically tiring for me.

Now, thanks to this book, I keep working small and not feeling bad about that. I also keep repeating the exercises inside. They're so straightforward and neat that I CAN keep repeating them.

Terrie says

I picked this up second hand at Powell Books in Portland. I was intrigued by his style as I flipped through the book - again, not a lot of 'new' techniques, but lots of ideas, inspiration and room for further exploration.

Kate says

Fun hobby -- great ideas, organization and images!

Hella says

Nuttig boek. Het begint met de verschillende materialen die nodig zijn voor collage: lijm, schaar, mesje, verf etc. Het gaat in op design en het maken van lagen. Dan zijn er 50 verschillende opdrachten voor collages, in die zin is het een inspirerend boek om aan de slag te gaan met verschillende technieken en ontwerpen. De voorbeelden zijn allemaal uit het werk van de auteur, en zijn stijl spreekt me minder aan, maar dat is natuurlijk een kwestie van smaak.

As Fv says

I bought this book when someone in Amazon recommended it. I thought I would be learning new techniques but I found this book for someone who is new to collage art. And how could the writer have some spelling errors? or could have it been that this was not proofread at all? this is a big turn off.

innae says

A nice introduction to collage work. Some basic words on supplies and technique, then some idea starters/inspiration.

Natasha says

This was a good solid book and there was a lot to like about it. I preface the review with the fact that I am a painter more than a collager so that is my bias.

There is excellent design and composition information at the front end of the book which is a really useful reference. I found it really interesting and it was very clearly written and illustrated.

There were 50 prompts to explore as well, and he provides examples of where he went with the prompt. Many of the prompts I thought were really good and prompts that would be easily translatable to an art journal or an art piece and there were quite a few that I want to explore further.

He also provides some images at the back you can scan and use if you wish, and digital downloads of the images are available at a website he provides.

I think the book is really good in terms of the prompts provided, and would be a good book for many mediums.

The book did not really explore any new techniques or push the idea of collage to new levels, which may be understandable when all the work featured was his own so would be of the same general style.

I found it a really good introduction book for beginners to collage, and it was not intimidating at all. He gives a good overview on the materials you require and getting started. I am glad it was the first one I read, and I recommend it for the prompts if you are a prompty person and there were quite a few new prompts that I hadn't seen before and you could taken them in all sorts of directions to inspire your work.

Elizabeth A says

I'm in the midst of the 100-day project, and creating a collage a day, so thought this book would give me some ideas. It's a basic introduction to collage, and there are some exercises to try, but it felt more like a showcase of the author's work, than something I found useful. If, however, you are completely new to collage, this might be just the right book for you.

Tammy says

I enjoy Plowman's work and was curious to learn more about his approach to collage. The art is beautifully photographed; this is a gallery of Plowman's work more than anything else. It would have been lovely to include photographs that captured the texture of the collage work. So I like this as a beginner to intermediate collage idea book. The prompts are playful and varied. Collage concepts & techniques were not covered in any depth.

Serena says

A lot of very concrete exercises, multiple examples. Most of his collages are simple, less intimidating than some of the books out there.

Hannah Greendale says

The Collage Workbook offers a beginner's introduction to basic collage and use of mixed media.

The book provides a list of tools and mediums utilized by the author. A brief, comprehensive lesson is given on Elements of Design (like shape, texture, and line) and Principles of Design (like balance and proportion). Helpful instructions are provided for transferring images from tracing paper, as well as a step-by-step guide for matting your final art piece. The book includes 50 very simple exercises, followed by a small but intriguing selection of images that are free to use.

Unfortunately, the author relies heavily on the rule of thirds, so much of his work feels formulaic and

repetitive.

The Collage Workbook: How to Get Started and Stay Inspired is a nice introduction to basic collage tools and use of mixed media, though the lack of variation results in a body of work that's a tad monotonous.

Karrie Stewart says

A wonderful book for anyone with or without artist training. Randel gives info about all the items you'll need, a little art lesson and 50 projects to get you started with doing your own collages.
