





# A Faux Vintage PHOTOGRAPHIC ALBUM

BY PATTY WOOTTON

As a young girl, I spent many happy hours going through the vintage trunks stored in my relatives' basements and attics. Here I found the treasured items they had brought with them from Italy and Croatia: hand-woven linens, china, photographs, religious icons, postcards, letters, wool suits, and hats. My lifelong fascination with vintage items began here, and some of these treasures now reside in my own trunks and are inspiration for my artwork. I am always on the hunt for pieces I can incorporate into my art. Along with my collections of family photographs in black-and-white and sepia tones, my studio has many boxes of old photographs, daguerreotypes, and tintypes I have picked up in antique stores and thrift shops.

If I cannot find the piece I want for a specific project, I create it using a variety of techniques to re-create the old, dusty, faded, or rusty look of an item that has sat untouched in someone's attic for years. To achieve the patinas I want, I put some items in metal tubs with solvents, and then I set them outside on the woodpile to let nature take its course. I must be sure to let this strange madness take place somewhere far from my husband's woodworking projects!

This album is a first for me. I have created many altered pieces of art, including some of my granddaughter Evahesse, but I have never created a unified collection like this one. My granddaughter is a fantastic subject simply because she is so unaffected. One morning while drinking coffee in my studio, I began arranging and rearranging photographs on my art table in search of inspiration for my next project. I was drawn to the idea of creating an untraditional photo album of my family by transporting them to the 19th century. My love of sepia tones and daguerreotypes led me into interesting experiments, and my attempts to re-create gelatin silver photographs were both challenging and satisfying. As my work proceeded, each photograph took on a different persona and each "new" person took on her own name. In this way, my grandchildren and daughter transformed into people from a different era, and this vintage family album took shape. ►







### *Faking the Vintage Look*

Place photographs along with solvents, such as vinegar, coffee, water, Epsom salts, and bleach, in a container, and leave outdoors.



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### *Daguerreotype vs. Tintype*

The daguerreotype is the earliest photographic process. It is easily identifiable, as it was printed on a highly reflective surface of buffed silver. The daguerreotype can be distinguished by the fact that when held at an angle, the image cannot be seen, but instead looks like a mirror.

The tintype is printed on a black lacquered sheet of iron with an emulsion layer of collodion and silver. It can be distinguished from daguerreotypes by its darker image. ►





## Supplies

- \* Aged papers: found, made
- \* Awl
- \* Binder rings
- \* Brads
- \* Clamps
- \* Coffee/Tea
- \* Darning needle
- \* Decorative papers
- \* Gilding wax: silver (Pebeo)
- \* Glue: (Amazing Goop)
- \* Heat tool
- \* Hole punch
- \* Inkpad: Tea Stain (Ranger - Distress); black (Ranger - Archival)
- \* Linen
- \* Metal box
- \* Old books
- \* Paintbrush: small, flat
- \* Pastels: black, brown, gray (PanPastels)
- \* Pens: black, brown (Marvy - Le Pen)
- \* Photographs
- \* Pigment powder: silver (Ranger - Perfect Pearls)
- \* Rubber stamp: script
- \* Sandpaper: fine-grit
- \* Soft cloth (optional)
- \* Spray ink: Walnut Stain (Ranger - Distress)
- \* Straight pins
- \* Turpentine
- \* Vintage frames
- \* Wax: (Jeanne d'Arc Living)







### Technique

Tear covers off very old, timeworn books and set the pages aside. Gather vintage photo frames. Tea-dye and stain the book pages, keeping in mind which ephemera will be added to them. After the pages have dried, apply glue to the back of a book cover and layer on a few of the stained pages with dabs of glue, allowing some rough edges to remain visible. Press firmly together using clamps.

Stain the edges of each book cover using inks and pastels. Let dry thoroughly. Attach a photograph in the center of each book cover using glue, straight pins, and brads. Create a torn edge on some of the photographs, and lightly sand with very fine-grit sandpaper. Stain the photographs with inks, and let dry. Pour turpentine into a small bowl and add a very small amount of silver gilding wax. Using a flat brush, paint the mixture onto the photograph, creating a silver patina. If necessary, use a soft cloth to rub off any excess. Lightly brush a small amount of pigment powder over the photograph and blow off the excess with a heat tool.

Using strips of old papers and linen, create a label under each photograph. Apply various ephemera such as aged papers, decorative papers, and linen pieces for added interest. Stamp script randomly.

To assemble the album, use a hole punch and an awl to punch holes in each photograph, and put together the volume using binder rings. Use old Bible covers to create the front and back of the album, and apply a label with brads. Cover the album in a rust-stained cloth and place it in a weathered, worn metal box for safekeeping.



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