

# WITH ONE PALETTE

by Melody M. Nuñez

I generally prefer clean, uncluttered designs with colors that pop but aren't chaotic. This particular color palette of black, ivory, and metallic creates visual harmony. It's subtle, clean, nostalgic, and timeless. And while I frequently use all the colors in this palette in my artwork, I don't use them exclusively.

In addition to collage, journaling, and other mixed-media work, I love to take photographs. When my photography comes up in conversation, people often ask if I shoot in black and white or color. And while I love the feeling and clean look that black and white film produces, I never seem to shoot it. I love color, and think of it as a party for my eyes! I often shoot slide film, largely because the color saturation is better.

And though I shoot photographs in color, I do have a special place in my heart for black and white photos — especially vintage black and white images. I was drawn to aged portraits in antique stores before I had any idea of what to do with them or that paper arts even existed. Thanks to their neutral color base, virtually any color can be used with vintage images. I really enjoyed maintaining a sense of years-gone-by as I created these particular pieces.

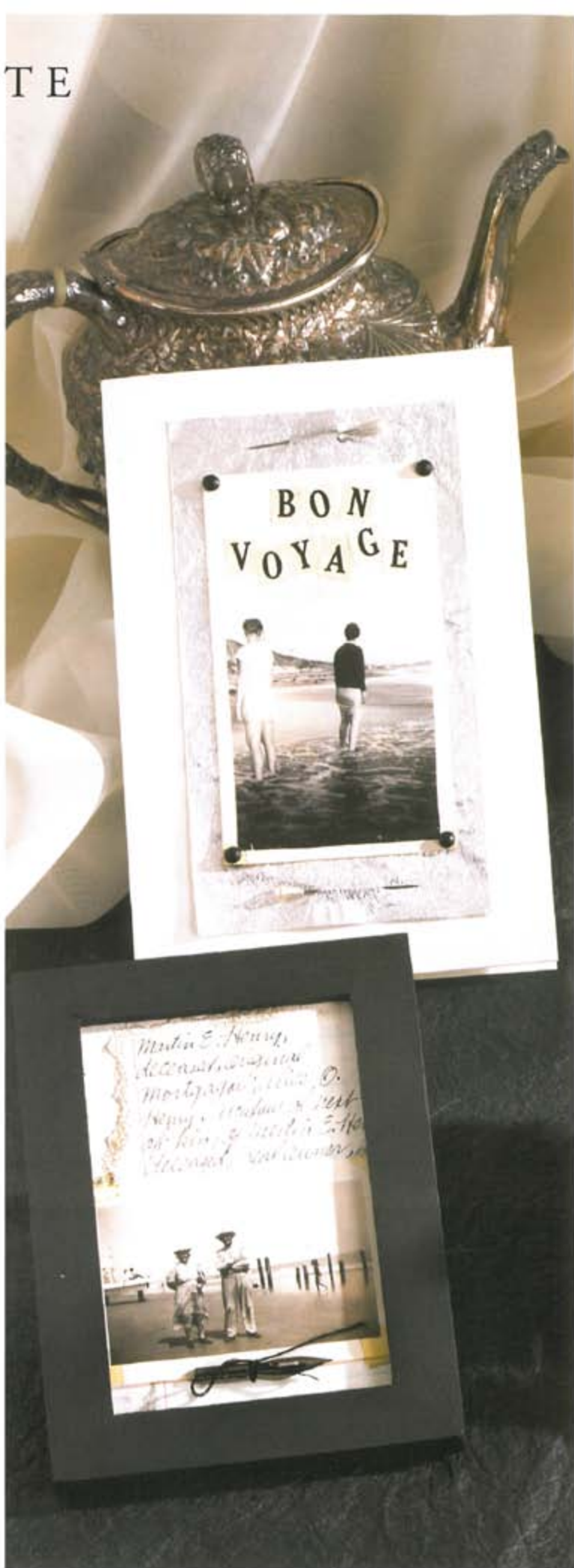
This grouping of artwork was a happy accident, rather than a well-planned artistic statement. And while I may stumble my way into certain things, I have enough sense to know when I'm on to something good. The first two pieces I created were the *Fictitious Family Album* and the *Lace Curtains at the Window* collage. Created separately without the other piece in mind, I made use of some antique store pictures I'd collected in each project. In the interest of keeping the focus on the images, I used my palette to subtly accent and enhance the main images.

I like to think of all of these pieces as "contemporary vintage." While I've used some vintage photos and ephemera from days gone by, I also made use of modern day finds that fit into my color palette. For example, the *Lace Curtains at the Window* collage features vintage elements like the photo, buttons and a worn tape measure, but I've also used silver clips from the dry cleaner and ivory masking tape as a border. The *Bon Voyage* card uses another vintage photo and old alphabet postage squares, but I've paired these elements with the silver "buffer" sheet from a box of chocolates, white and silver corsage pins I bought at a local craft store, and lots of staples.

Changing up your usual methods of creating can yield wonderful results, and that certainly includes stretching the use of color to a palette you wouldn't ordinarily consider. This particular palette has taught me that the workhorses or neutrals of the color world can easily become the stars if you'll just give them a chance to shine at center stage!

NOTE: The *Fictitious Family Album* will be featured as a technique article, in a future issue of *Somerset Studio*.

Melody M. Nuñez is an artist and writer residing in Orange County, California. She's a regular contributor to *Somerset Studio* and *Legacy*.





*Ivory • Black • Metallic*

