



Secrets of Rusty Things: Transforming Found Objects Into Art

Michael Demeng

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If you've ever wanted to learn the secrets which turn a tap handle into a mysterious woman from the sea, which transform plastic aquarium plants into subterranean roots stretching far beneath the known world and those which can make an icy cave from a bourbon box, then prepare yourself for inspiration that will have you checking your trash bin, twice.

In "Secrets of Rusty Things," renowned assemblage artist Michael DeMeng guides you down the intuitive, curious and often rock-strewn path of an artist's creative process, where illusions are just as important as any other aspect to the art. You'll discover new ideas of where to look for, not only discarded objects, but new items that you may not have previously seen as having a place in a future work of art. You'll be inspired by ways to add meaningful symbolism to your artworks' stories both through the use of color and shape. And you'll see how an ancient tale can parallel the artist's plight and invoke a new piece of art.

From the pondering of each ancient myth and its connection to the modern-day artist, to the gluing together of objects, to the paint that unifies and disguises the original bits and pieces, this is an intimate view into the creative process unlike any workshop you've ever attended.

Secrets of Rusty Things: Transforming Found Objects Into Art Details

Date : Published June 1st 2007 by Northlight (first published January 1st 2007)

ISBN : 9781581809282

Author : Michael Demeng

Format : Paperback 128 pages

Genre : Art, Nonfiction, Crafts, Adult

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Lori says

Very inspiring... I find assemblage art interesting, but his works are a bit too dark for me.

Smellsofbikes says

A good book about artistic process. It's a bit hard to read because it's not particularly linear, but it's a neat set of representations of creativity.

Paula says

This would be a great book if you are into soldering rusty metal things or doing assemblage with rusty metal things. I'm into neither, so it just wasn't for me.

Leslie says

I love this book!! Micheal De Meng is a genius, for sure. I love the illustrations, how he ties his work in with mythology, how he tells us what's in his mind. That's the best part. Being in his mind while he works and seeing what happens

Wendi says

Kind of boring. But then again, I'm not really into this kind of art expression. It might be a really cool book if you're into it, but I'm just not. meh

Nathan Shumate says

It was Ron Pippin's assemblage art that started the fire in me, but it was Michael DeMeng's work that fanned the flame. I love how, unlike many assemblage artists, DeMeng uses color to tie together disparate shapes and textures. This book is never far from my hand when I'm working.

Andee says

Filled with how-2 and eye candy, a great read if you are into found art or assemblages, I am dabbling so it was helpful and inspirational.

Hope says

Pretty worthless as a how-to manual, but fabulous eye-candy by one of the most intriguing and (successful)assemblage artists working today.

Manintheboat says

I love eyeballs too. I enjoyed the way he discussed his artist process. I loved the notes in the margins.

Angela says

I expected this book to be a how-to for rusty assemblage art, so I was disappointed when I realized it's more of an artist's journal. I'm not usually a fan of books that focus on why the author created a piece a certain way.

I did like the sidebar comments, talking about how he found items for his artwork (garage sales, secondhand stores, etc.). He also included the occasional practical tip (like using Liquid Nails or Great Stuff foam insulation).

But for the most part, it seemed like a series of rambling narratives. I found the layout distracting: each project has a main section telling about his process, and a sidebar section telling about where he found his materials. The fact that the sidebar story spanned several pages bugged me. It made it necessary to either read each chapter through twice, or stop & start each part of the story with each page turn. Not sure why they'd choose to break it up like that.

Still, the artist has some neat ideas & I did find some inspiration for an upcoming project. I'll give it a mild recommendation.

Stephanie says

If you are interested in found object art or this artist specifically, this is a very interesting book. Each chapter is a piece of art that he has sculpted. The chapters begin with the myth that inspired the sculpture then go on to tell about the process. I found the book to be very personal and very interesting.

Amanda O'Kelley says

I love this book because it combines my love for visual art and Michael's down to earth documentation of

each piece and what mythology inspired it, and what materials brought the pieces to life. I really want to be this author's friend and help him create some cool pieces. The author is an actual shop teacher that receives a lot of his materials from donors around the town he lives in.

Kelly says

This book was more of a walk-through of works that Demeng has completed rather than the how-to book that I hoped it would be. Still, Demeng's works are breathtaking and this translates perfectly through the beautiful photographs in the book.

Shelley says

The artwork in this book maketh me drool. True, it's not much on "how-to", but I can't blame DeMeng... after all, he makes money teaching classes, and who wants to give all their secrets away anyhow? I like the stuff about his hunts for materials... when it comes to digging through mounds of junk looking for those special bits and pieces, I can relate.

Judah says

Great artwork, not a lot of information on the techniques used, more an explanation of **why** the artist chose to visually interpret as he did, usually with a side story of where the various pieces used came from.
