

## Finding Meaning While Mixing Media

I sort mother's earrings—  
clip-on, pierced, screw post, hybrid—  
claim orphan stones for assemblage, mixed-media collage

What matters in mixing media  
is the wisdom, the memory within each piece.  
What matters is the meaning embedded in the composition

I arrange elements upon the page, one by one:  
an image of an experiment in erasure,  
an impromptu senryu on torn rice paper,  
a husband's handwritten note to enter an amount for check #2130.

I cull Van Gogh I Spy, but keep "Chair" and "Bridge"  
and snippets from Art on paper, an exhibit of Japanese woodblock prints;  
rosemary sprigs to scent; orchid petals;  
a Bufflehead feather;  
a running word list for words I want to know  
palimpsest, antifa, mirepoix, kintsugi, griot.

When it comes down to it,  
what really matters is  
what you leave in, what you leave out,  
fresh glue sticks to affix the whole,  
a heart that yearns to remember  
and find meaning in the sacred ordinary.

—Lynda Rush-Myers

image info

## Still Life on a Friday Afternoon

Turn your gaze from flowers and fruit bowls, stiff and formal,  
imprisoned in oil on canvas, ornately framed on museum walls.

Come, feast your eyes on this newly formed still life  
here amongst the debris of pens and paperwork crowding my desk.

Look, touch, rearrange if you will:

a brass button from a wartime uniform, dulled with age  
alien flowers trapped within a shiny glass paperweight  
tissues enclosed in a blue cellophane handipack, on which  
the front legs of a plastic toy lamb rest, its stomach soft and squeezable,  
a stress-buster freebie from a company offering to put logos  
on giveaway that that nobody really wants.

This is a still life created from memories and an ache for the past.  
Open your ears to their stories:

the button a cherished connection to a grandfather  
only known to me through the recollections of others  
the paperweight an impulsive purchase as a care-free  
student acquired for beauty not functionality  
the lamb a reminder of fun with work mates from a time  
when responsibility was a stranger.

What of the tissues?

It's true I've shed many tears sitting at this desk, but this pack  
remains unopened, a reminder that even the saddest of days  
draw to a close, and life is never truly still.

—Sharon J. Clark