

## A NEW BEGINNING

Have you ever seen old photos just tossed aside and sold as junk at a flea market or thrift store? I've often wondered who the people were and what role they may have had in history. How is it that they were forgotten and lost in time? I don't believe I've ever seen an adult posing a smile or a child laughing in an antique photo.

I was inspired by my great grandmother to create this small 5" x 7" piece. I never personally meet her. She had passed before I was born. I can say that I did get to know her in a way while creating this. I actually had to clone the copy I made of the original photo. There were cracks and some small chips missing that needed a touchup. My great grandmother was Saponi Indian, also known as Virginia Blackfeet. She married outside her tribe as my grandfather was European. Here my great grandmother holds

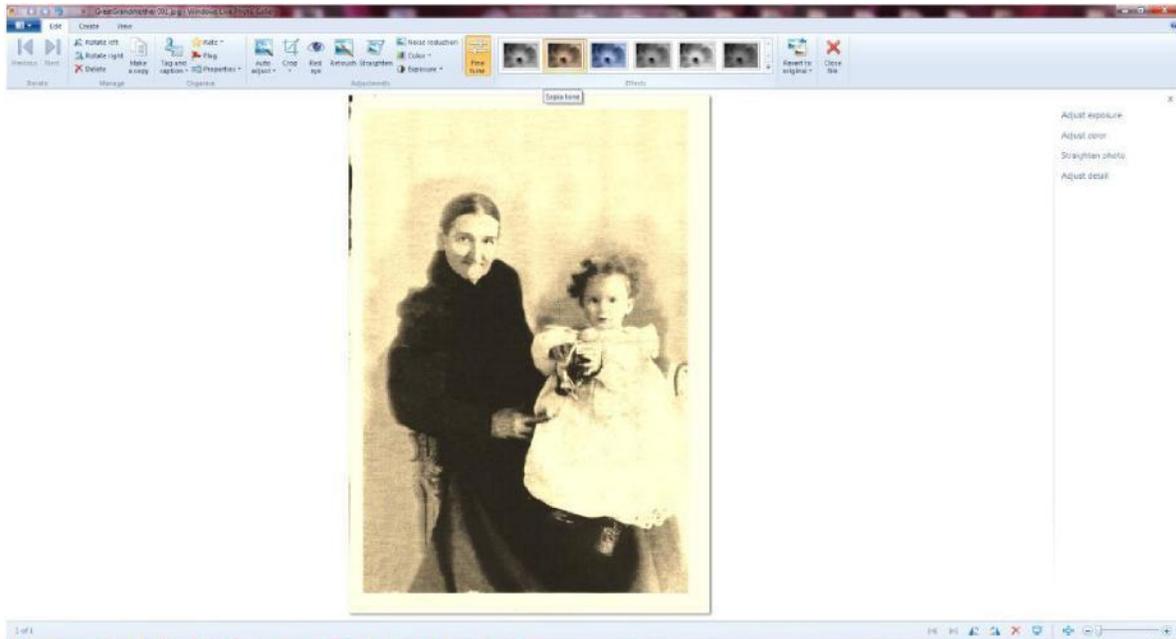
her first born grandchild, my great aunt. I felt a true connection cloning the cracks in this wonderful photo. I studied every inch of my grandmother's kind face. She appears strong yet distant in a mysterious sort of way. It may well have been that she was out of her element. I am not sure why her right hand is posed as it is, but her hand appears to have done a lot of hard work as most of our ancestors did compared to today's standard. Who would have thought at the time this photo was taken, that long after her passing, she and her great granddaughter would create something special together. Now that's an artful journey.

While the turtle is the symbol of truth and bravery through very difficult times, the grandmother turtle as seen in the lower left is present making sure the sacred laws will always be remembered and never vanish. The motif and feathers symbolize freedom, hope, strength, honor, and wisdom.

- Scan or copy an old photo. Plan to include a few symbols or words that tell a story about the individual(s) in the photo.

## **Materials & Supplies:**

- ✓ Scanner/copier and printer
- ✓ Canvas or other support sized according to the print and other media to include in your composition
- ✓ Assorted media you want to include in your composition
- ✓ Print or copy of a photo (Do not use the original)
- ✓ Soft flat brush, small round for detailed
- ✓ Cotton swabs, fingers work too!
- ✓ A burnishing tool or brayer (the back of a spoon will work too)
- ✓ Acrylic Matte Medium or white glue
- ✓ Spray acrylic matte sealer or spray matte fixative
- ✓ Assorted acrylic paints
- ✓ Acrylic stains or burnt umber or burnt sienna
- ✓ Stamps and permanent ink (used to represent symbols that says something about the person(s) in the photo)
- ✓ Embossing powder & embossing heat tool (optional)
- ✓ Cup of water for brushes
- ✓ Paper towels



Scan your photo and open it in your Windows live photo gallery or other editing software. I cropped the photo and selected the sepia tone effect so that the photo still appears aged.

Print it according to the size and placement that you want it to have on your canvas.



If using an inkjet printer, it is very important to first spray the print with several light coats of matte fixative or matte acrylic sealer. Never brush a sealer or any type of wet medium over an unprotected inkjet print until first sprayed with a sealer. The ink will smear if you do.



Tear the print along its outer border as seen in the above photo.



Plan your composition before you actually start painting. This will also help stir your creative muse.



Use a cotton swab to apply the stain along the outer edges of the print so it appears aged. I have applied an oak stain for this painting. Thinned burnt umber or burnt sienna paint works too. You can also create a nice stain with a mix of yellow ochre and a hint of burnt umber. Dilute with enough water so your stain is the consistency of thin syrup. Try diluting various neutral colors to create a wider selection of stains. Remember, a stain isn't just to create an aged appearance. A stain can also consist of any color used to compliment the colors in the photo.



Paint the canvas with a background color of your choice. Keep the overall color scheme that you want to use in mind. Let the background compliment another color in your painting. Only one of the two complimentary colors should be dominate while the other is used as an accent color. The same goes for color temperature. The soft cool greenish blue patinas will be the dominate colors in this painting while the warm reds will be the complimentary colors. Dry completely before continuing.



Use a soft bristle brush to apply the matte medium to the canvas and some to the entire back of the print. Attach the print to the canvas. Start with one end of the print, making sure to line up the print as desired. Use a brayer or burnishing tool to help smooth the surface and to remove air pockets. Rub from the center outward to the edge of the print so that any trapped air pockets are removed as you smooth the surface flat. Now do the same to the remaining half of the print.

\*Use the smooth edge of the handle of a pair of scissors or the curved bottom side of a spoon if you do not have a brayer or burnishing tool. Apply two thin coats of matte medium over the entire painting. Dry between applications.



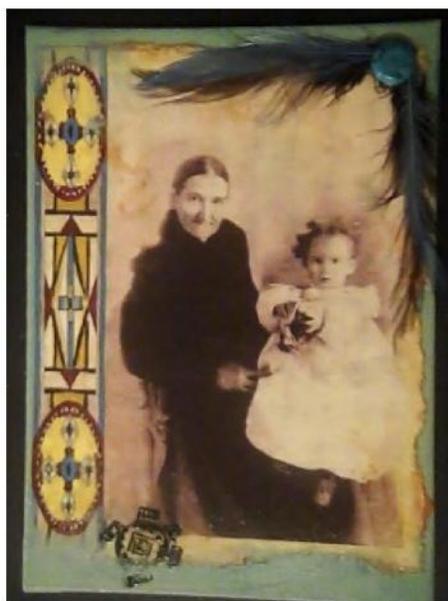
Attach any additional printed material that you want in your painting using the same method just used to the photo. I painted a black and white print of a motif before I attached it to my painting. Notice how it slightly overlaps the torn left edge of the photo. It has now become an actual part of the photo and not just a separate motif. It now has purpose for its placement as symbolic meaning and it also serves to help balance the composition.



At this point, I have also decided that I want to add two feathers and a small piece of turquoise. I am using a piece of faux turquoise I made from polymer clay. Again I have practiced where I want to place my media and turtle stamp until pleased with my decision.

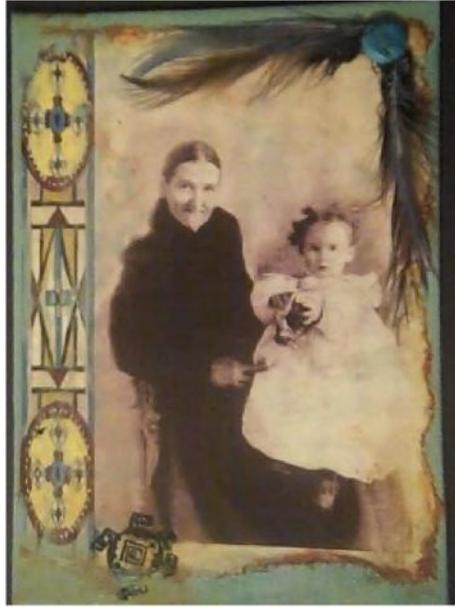


I decided to emboss a black turtle for a little extra texture, value, and contrast to the lower left of the painting. This will also help create some balance and harmony.



I like the feel of the feathers and touch of turquoise in the upper right corner for color and more texture. They also help to balance and to frame in some areas of the painting while helping to pull it together. However, the feathers needed some minor adjustments. An additional black feather was added as well as a hint of the soft background color gently rubbed over them. This soft greenish patina adds a nice contrast against the black feathers.

I have applied some of the background color to the top and bottom of the motif and to the photo's background so that the three surfaces blend and become a part of the whole painting while adding a hint of surface texture.



Adding a touch of additional oak and burnt sienna stain along some areas of the photo's border and background, and also to the corner areas of the canvas background pulls the painting together and becomes complete.

- The Indian motif that I used in my painting was from a clipart book 'North American Indian Motifs' by Dover Publishing. This book is available with or without the CD-ROM version for Macintosh and Windows.
- The software instructions used for this tutorial are for Windows users. Please do not ask me for tech support regarding this tutorial. I know only about my own computer software and hardware. Detailed information and support for Windows photo & media gallery is on [Microsoft's website](#).

Wishing you a day full of inspiration and creative visions!

**CJ**

