

design your story

Save cherished holiday memories in a simple album, one photo and one story at a time. BY CATHY ZIELSKE

As much as I hate to admit it, I can't remember every little moment of my life. This is one of the reasons that mini albums are so magical! They're like little time capsules that immediately jog my memory and fill me with joy. This season I'm pulling out the old holiday photos to create an album filled with merry memories and a random collection of holiday photos and stories...before those memories are forever forgotten. I know that I for one, will be adding to this album for years to come!



The birth of the family portrait 2004

It all started with that silly piece of black velvet. It was right in those early precious days of scrapbooking and I was obsessed with the perfect portrait on black. I'd also really wanted a photo of us all in the same color, because I remember that being a trend back then. This set up for the holiday card was shot in Aidan's bedroom. We were all sitting on the floor in front of her closets, which had been obscured with the big swatch of black velvet. I had a remote trigger for my camera and fired away. Dan still thinks he looks a big devilish, but I think this is a pretty good shot. We never pulled the matchy-match look off again. It was truly a family self-portrait for the ages.




mini album

COLLECT YOUR MEMORIES

This mini album idea is so simple; find photos from the holiday season(s) and tell the stories behind them. Choose a coordinated product line to make your design choices easier and then get started!

STORY TIP: Don't overthink it. For my first album page, the story behind this family self-portrait was short and sweet.

DESIGN TIP: Work the products. I used one of the chipboard stickers from this Simple Stories line to create an elegant, minimal title page that sets the merry tone for my album.



TITLE PAGE + 6 x 8 ALBUM

merry memories

supplies CARDSTOCK: Gina K. Designs, Neenah; PATTERNED PAPER, ALBUM, CHIPBOARD, STICKERS: Simple Stories; INK: Tsukineko; EMBOSSING POWDER: Hero Arts; DIES: Lawn Fawn; FONTS: Archer, Heritage; ADHESIVE: Scrapbook Adhesives by 3L



The retrieval of the college girl | 2014

It was such a difficult first semester of college for you. Madison wasn't the right fit for you and on December 18th, I hit the road for the four-hour trek to bring you home. While I know that first foray into college life was a disappointment, I felt so happy to be able to be the one to come and gather you up to bring you back to a place where you could regroup and make new decisions on what your college years might look like. I could feel your relief the minute I arrived at your dorm as we quickly packed up your things and headed to our hotel. I will never forget that little road trip during the Christmas of 2014. It was a gift for this mama, having her girl come back home.



The birth of a performer | 2006

Oh, Coleman, those church plays! I think this was the year of *The Littlest Star*? Maybe? Honestly, I never can remember the actual plays, just the adorableness of one of my two favorite actors. I feel like these plays really sewed the seeds of performing in both you and Aidan. It takes a lot to get up in front of a group and sing and act and you both did it with such a natural ease. These plays are now a distant memory but it's so easy to look back on the pictures and see the confidence (and total cuteness!) of you as a performer. So maybe you've traded the traditional theater for drums and rock and roll. I say, it's all good. It's really just a joy to see you perform. Every single time.



DESIGN TIP: Make your photo colour work for you. The original shot of my son as an angel was really yellow and clashed with my holiday colour palette. I converted the shot to black and white and boom!—colour was no longer an issue. Plus, it lends a more timeless feel to this cherished photo.

NO RULES, JUST MERRY

There is such a joy in telling stories in random order. My album jumps around from year to year, and the only rule I followed was that the photos came from the month of December. That and I used photos that really spoke to my heart.

STORY TIP: Go with the flow. I don't get too hung up on what voice I use to write when I'm telling stories. I sit with the photo and think, "What do I want to say about this?" Sometimes I'll write directly to the subject, and sometimes I'll take a more global view on the story. Just write from your heart. A project like this should be joyous and fun!

DESIGN TIP: Repeat your design. Each page follows the same design in this album. I only change the photos, the stories, the patterned paper strips, and the page numbers on each page. Following a design recipe makes for a cohesive project.



Always leave room for silly | 2011

This was the day we decided to do our holiday card photo. The photo itself was taken on the front steps, but I figured I'd get a few shots of the two of you by the tree while you were both willing and still in a *let's do it* mentality. I always feel like I'm on borrowed time, just a tiny bit, when it comes to these holiday photos and you should all know how grateful I am that you indulge me every time. But this shot of Dad jumping in the background reminds me of another thing I am so very grateful for: the lightness and fun in our family. While we are not a perfect family, we all have the ability to laugh and let go and not take life too seriously too often. There's always room for silly.



DESIGN TIP: Do more with your stickers. I took the "sticky" off my stickers using a powder tool making it easier to pop them up using thin foam squares.



Download Cathy's free templates to create your own *Merry Memories* album. Find them here: scrapbookandcards.com/bonus-files

See more of Cathy's pages and stories at cathyzielske.com



Learn how to use Cathy's template set by watching her video tutorial. She shows you how to create an album page from pixel to paper. Watch here: bit.ly/SCT_Winter17czvideo