

HOMES + DECOR

The Still Life Photographer Who Is Reinterpreting Dutch Masters

In her new book, *Seizing Beauty*, Paulette Tavormina creates fruit-and-floral portraits of dazzling splendor

By Jennifer Fernandez

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Photo: Paulette Tavormina/Courtesy of the Monacelli Press

Fans of still lifes painted by the Dutch masters of the 17th and 18th century will find plenty to love in the work of Paulette Tavormina. In her new book, *Seizing Beauty* (The Monacelli Press, \$65), in stores now, the New York-based photographer has compiled a collection of carefully crafted vignettes of astounding beauty, combining fruit, flowers, and unexpected fauna (a monarch here, a grasshopper there) in moody compositions that seem to glow from within. A tableaux of lemons and pomegranates comes to life under Tavormina's atmospheric light; peonies and wisteria seem to bloom on cue. Accompanied by essays by such art and photography historians as Silvia Malaguzzi, Anke Van Wagenberg Ter-Hoeven, and Mark Alice Durant, each shot is at once classic and of-the-moment, a meditation on the fleeting nature of life and love as interpreted through Tavormina's romantic lens. Here, ten of the tome's most inspiring works.



Photo: Paulette Tavormina/Courtesy of the Monacelli Press

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Lemons and Pomegranates, After J.V.H., 2010.

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