

yellow hues. Readers may do a double take at the Pressed Flower Faux Frames that look like wall art work but are a chocolate sponge framed in sugar paste. A Floral Krispie Cake Topper brings the cereal to new levels and is an ideal upgrade to candles. Templates for butterflies, letters, and numbers close the volume. Home bakers looking to up their decorating game will want to check out this eye-catching cookbook. (July)

Crafts & Hobbies

The Ultimate Kogin Collection: Projects and Patterns for Counted Sashiko Embroidery

Susan Briscoe. Sewandso, \$24.99 (128p) ISBN 978-1-4463-0732-8

Textile designer Briscoe (*The Ultimate Sashiko Sourcebook*) devotes this beautiful but less than accessible volume to the traditional Japanese needlework art, for which she provides more than 200 patterns and projects. While the book gives an excellent introduction to the history of Kogin, traced back to the late 18th century on the island of Honshu; and plenty of illustrations of the finished designs, it lacks the detailed, step-by-step instructions that would have made it invaluable to neophytes. Kogin, a technique of counting and repeating stitches, was originally used to add embroidery to clothing for added warmth during the winter, and it is now used decoratively as a way to create intricate patterns. Unfortunately, the intricacy of the designs here will be difficult for beginners to follow without more instructions or explanatory photographs. Instead, the book concentrates on the construction of projects that will showcase the finished embroidery, such as greeting cards, coin purses, and table runners. Confirmed Kogin enthusiasts will be pleased with this well-illustrated book, but newcomers to the craft will need to look elsewhere for a more detailed introduction. (July)

Dresden Quilt Blocks Reimagined: Sew Your Own Playful Plates; 25 Elements to Mix & Match

Candyce Copp Grisham. C&T, \$24.95 (80p) ISBN 978-1-61745-793-7

Dresden quilt blocks, named for the Dresden porcelain of late Victorian times, have been popular since the 1920s, but Grisham, who has taught quilting for two

decades, brings new vitality to the pattern with this appealing guide for “the confident beginner.” Readers learn about a variety of



different shapes, fabrics, and imaginative designs, all in the name of creating a “modern translation of a traditional block.” Grisham

urges using a wedge ruler to cut the individual pieces that, together, make up a Dresden quilt’s signature circular “plate” block, here comprising 20 wedges, cut at an 18-degree angle. She also provides a chart to help crafters understand the relationship between the size of individual wedges, plates, and the finished block. Grisham shows sample projects using three fabrics, then four, and all the way up to a kaleidoscopic 20, and describes how to make edges ranging from curved to three-sided to 20-pointed, along with advice on how to create a center that will aesthetically unite the finished plate. Ending with a gallery of variations on the Dresden quilt theme that prove positively dazzling, Grisham will leave crafters eager to follow in her footsteps. (July)

Gingermelon’s Embroidered Animals: Heirloom Dolls to Sew, Embellish and Treasure

Shelly Down. Sewandso, \$24.99 trade paperback (128p) ISBN 978-1-4463-0730-4

In this appealing how-to offering, Down (*My Felt Doll*) instructs crafters how to create tiny and whimsical fairylike animals. Every project begins with the same basic doll, which requires well under a yard of fabric (Down uses everything from cotton lawn to suede in her creations), easily sourced from any sewist’s scraps. After providing a concise list of other necessary supplies (including embroidery floss, an embroidery hoop, clear-drying craft glue, and a fine point disappearing ink marker), Down shows how many cute variations that simple doll base can yield. A unicorn wearing leg warmers shares space with a deer decked out in a delicate evening dress and (faux) fur cape, a mouse in capri pants, and a nautical fox (detailed down to a tiny sailboat embroidered onto his crisp white

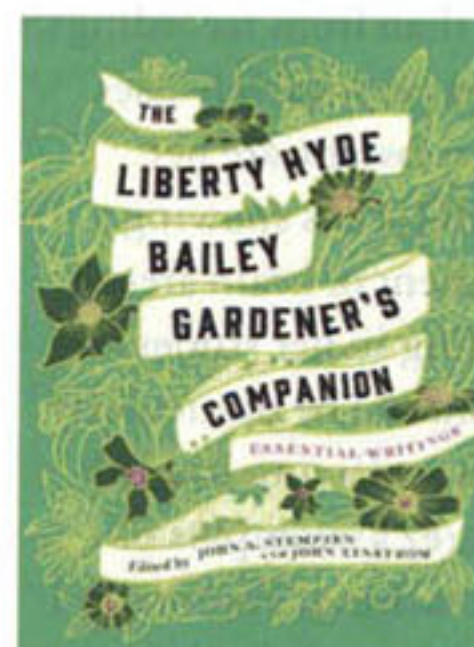
shirt). Perhaps the most charming is “Darling Ellie,” an elephant ballerina who looks surprisingly graceful in her fluff of pink tulle and satin-ribbon pointe shoes. Throughout, Down includes easy-to-follow patterns, guidance on intricate hand-embroidered accents, and encouraging words to lend confidence to beginning sewists. As such, her slim volume can add a welcome dollop of playfulness to any crafter’s library. (July)

Home & Garden

The Liberty Hyde Bailey Gardener’s Companion: Essential Writings

Liberty Hyde Bailey, edited by John Stempien and John Lindstrom. Comstock, \$26.95 (318p) ISBN 978-1-5017-4023-7

This illustrated collection of essays and poems by famed botanist Bailey (1858–1954), known as the father of modern horticulture, elucidates his philosophical and practical approach to gardening: “The kinds [of flowers] I like best are the ones easiest to grow.” Editors Stempien and Lindstrom, who have both served as director of the Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum in South Haven, Mich., group the material thematically; starting with general garden advice, proceeding through Bailey’s thoughts on growing



plants, flowers, fruits, and vegetables; and ending with his reflections on the cycle of the seasons. His work can seem prescient, as when Bailey muses, “I

wonder whether in time the perfection of fabrication will not reach such a point that some fruits will be known to the great public only by the picture on the package or on the bottle.” Bailey’s work manages, at its best, to marry literature—he finds in a poem by Emerson an “expression of a universal passion—the passion to know the fields and the growing things”—with practical instruction in a graceful, thoughtful manner. This earnest collection will likely introduce Bailey’s name to a new generation of gardeners and acquaint older ones with the ideas

of a justly celebrated master. (Sept.)

Parenting

The Natural Laws of Children: Why Children Thrive When We Understand How Their Brains Are Wired

Céline Alvarez, trans. from the French by Sherab Chödzin Kohn. Shambhala, \$19.95 trade paper (416p) ISBN 978-1-61180-673-1

Child development researcher Alvarez provides a cogent argument for child-directed early education, inspired by the pedagogy of Maria Montessori and bolstered by “current scientific research on human development and French linguistics.” For support, she reports on her successful three-year experiment in teaching a group of three-to-five-year-olds in an underprivileged French public school, using a guided exploration approach predicated on the child’s built-in desire to learn and the plasticity of young brains. Alvarez describes her students flourishing using traditional Montessori learning exercises, such as being directed to sort differently sized but otherwise identical red rods by length. She strongly argues for the superiority of classic tools over newer, technology-assisted methods, such as “Montessori-based” apps or videos, in the latter case describing how children picked up language more readily from hearing it in person than from recordings. Nonetheless, Alvarez persuasively uses modern methods to substantiate her approach, such as MRI scans showing accelerated development of brain areas associated with reading in her students. Kohn’s translation should be particularly credited for seamlessly offering English alternatives to Alvarez’s examples of phonetic language teaching. Parents and educators will find this study both fascinating and useful. (Aug.)

Being at Your Best When Your Kids Are at Their Worst: Practical Compassion in Parenting

Kim John Payne. Shambhala, \$19.95 (176p) ISBN 978-1-61180-214-6

Children who act out can tap adults’ emotional hot buttons, and the subsequent combustion is rarely productive for either party. Educational consultant Payne (*Simplicity Parenting*) builds on the practice of visualization he learned from sports psychologists as a young athlete in

this accessible book for parents and teachers. Part one contains advice and tools for breaking from the “action-reaction” response when provoked, and understanding that children “ping,” or elicit reactions from, the adults they rely on when they’re upset. Part two explains a four-step “compassionate response” for adults that is based on the work of influential authors such as Stephen Covey and Rudolf Steiner, and which overlaps with mindfulness practices. The idea is to start with the only thing one can control: one’s response, an insight Payne likens to the flight attendant’s warning to parents to secure their own oxygen mask first. Part three explains that once tapped into this practice, one can extend it to any child one encounters in crisis. In other words, the key to helping an out-of-control child is a self-regulated adult. This book proves to be a practical guide to carrying out this centered approach, as well as an easy and encouraging reading experience. (Sept.)

9 Months In, 9 Months Out: A Scientist’s Tale of Pregnancy and Parenthood

Vanessa LoBue. Oxford Univ., \$22.95 (288p) ISBN 978-0-19086-338-8

LoBue, an associate psychology professor and director of the Child Study Center at Rutgers University, draws on both current scientific thought and personal experience in this helpful resource. Chronicling her



own journey into first-time motherhood, LoBue begins with pregnancy and labor. Based on her readings in current research, she reemphasizes the advantages of vaginal birth over C-sections for both women and babies. From her own son’s birth, she draws the “moral... that labor is never what you expect”—she didn’t expect her son, Evan, “to come two weeks early on New Year’s Day” but also didn’t expect a first-time birth to go so smoothly. The book’s second section relates the realities of parenting a newborn, from nursing—having long heard it portrayed as the

“most natural thing in the world,” she was surprised by how difficult and painful it was—to postpartum depression, as LoBue finds herself most affected by loneliness. She also shares more general observations, such as that every child has “a very distinct personality” from the start, and that parenting is hard for everyone, even child-development experts. While unlikely to be a game-changer among parenting books, LoBue’s manual/memoir is honest, informed, and confidence-inspiring. (Aug.)

Religion/Spirituality

We Stand Divided: The Rift Between American Jews and Israel

Daniel Gordis. Ecco, \$26.99 (304p) ISBN 978-0-06-287369-9

A gloomy view of relations between American Jews and Israel is provided by *Jerusalem Post* columnist Gordis (*Saving Israel*) in this thoughtful examination of the history of relations between the two major Jewish communities. Gordis opens his analysis by quoting recent provocative remarks from Israeli diplomatic officials Alon Pinkas and Tzipi Hotovely. While Pinkas believes Israel’s policies stand at the heart of the divide, Hotovely believes American Jews fail to fully understand Israel’s realities. After setting up the rift, Gordis pulls back to offer a wider perspective, noting that for much of the time since political Zionism was created in 1897, the relationship between the American and Zionist Jewish communities “has been complex at best and often even openly antagonistic.” He makes a persuasive case that fundamental issues—such as the conflict between the universalist ideals of the U.S. and its Jewish population, and Israel’s particular religious nationalism—have always been at the heart of the schism. In the end, he believes the situation is not susceptible to easy resolution—even if Israel achieved peace with the Palestinians. Unfortunately, Gordis’s cogent presentation is marred by significant omissions, in particular the political alliance of President Trump and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Nonetheless, this will be a valuable conversation starter for