A Letter to the Reader…

This collage was created as a visual for its corresponding paper. It was designed to tell the story of the life of Elizabeth Short: from the beginning, as young beauty with hopes and dreams and to the end, an American icon of murder and mystery.

Each image was chosen in order to match the ideas presented in the paper and the genre in which it was written in. For example, the paper is a collage of quotes, facts and theories. Quotes in the paper are demonstrated by certain images.

I arranged the photos in a way that I thought was most provoking and appealing. I juxtaposed the face of Betty, when she was alive and her face at the sight of the murder. I have images of her dream to become famous in Hollywood. I added red paint to the word Hollywood to show that it’s not just a place of dreams, but a place where dreams die too.

I printed off two Dahlias, one red and one Black. I painted over the red flower, in order for it to match the tone of my collage and to be more appealing. These flowers reflect the image that the media was presenting. I added red to the Black Dahlia as a contrast and to fit into my line from my paper “the Dahlias blood forever stains.”

Next, I used the title of a book written about the case. It is titled Severed: I thought it was perfect because the word is pasted together with different fonts, just like the murderer would write on post cards to the police. It also contributes to the story I was trying to tell, what happened to Betty. Next to the picture from the murder scene of Betty I added flowers for a mournful effect and to match the last quotation in my paper.

Then I added the picture of George Hodel to show who the murderer is. I thought his picture to be too plain so I added Red for the lives that he took. I added red on the side were is picture is closest to Betty, the other side I painted black--black, for his cruel heart and wicked deeds.

I also have a picture of the press gathered around Betty’s body; this provides a light into the past and what I was discussing in my paper. How the media was heavily involved in the case and how the images provide a lasting impression in the viewers mind. I have images from the movie that was created about her and images from her actual life in order to demonstrate the cultural perceptions presented in my project. Finally, there is a picture by Man Ray, close to the word severed in order to communicate how she was murdered.

Images scar the mind, affect the stomach and provoke the soul.

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1 The images used in this collage were gathered from the sources or references within the corresponding project.