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AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

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Vinyl Fever

THE RESURGENCE OF RECORDS

text: JAMES P. GOSS | photography: AS NOTED

In these times of “vintage is cool,” it’s no surprise that vinyl records are enjoying a surge in popularity right now.

IF YOU ARE ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO likes record stores—and vinyl records—you may already know that the old vinyl record (or LP) has recently made a comeback. Since 2006, annual sales of vinyl records have steadily increased. Many currently popular bands now choose to release vinyl versions of their albums; and, in response to increased demand, both large and small record labels are actively reissuing classic discs.

Vinyl is cool again. High school and college-age collectors (traditionally men, but increasingly women) are building their record collections. Within the past few years, prices have risen for rare and classic records. Finding great records in very good to excellent condition is becoming more difficult. Even people who sold off their records a long time ago are returning to the vinyl format and buying vintage stereo gear.

All this is happening at a time when most of the people who buy music are downloading it or getting it for free on the Internet. According to the Recording Industry Association of America (a music sales’ tracker), in 2012, digital downloads of music comprised half of all US music sales for the first time in history.

In 1988, when the vinyl record album was declared obsolete and replaced with the CD, interest in the vinyl format lingered. For many years, club DJs and hip-hop artists depended on vinyl: spinning and scratching—and rap and hip-hop—were built around it. Technological improvements to the sound quality of analog “playback” systems evolved, giving birth to a whole new era of audiophile equipment.

Within the same time period, the size of listening devices and digital playback systems shrunk. And, due to the algorithms used to shrink the music and deliver it to listeners, sound quality—what audiophiles call the “warmth” and “definition” of vinyl or analog sound—has also suffered.

Analog sound may be marginalized, but for true believers in vinyl, it possesses much more of the music the recording artists, producers, and audio engineers intended.

In fact, within this group of vinyl record fans, many music industry professionals and record collectors continue to believe in the superior audio quality of monophonic (mono) recordings. Before digital technology came along, countless original master recordings were monophonic. For mono devotees, stereo recordings place a distant second.

Now, in an era of digital convenience, many people continue to believe in vinyl, despite its niche status in the global music marketplace. Within this seemingly infinite marketplace, music consumers have a wide array of music formats (vinyl, CD, downloads) to choose from. Vinyl remains an attractive option.

For many independent record store owners, the mid-1970s represent the glory days for the vinyl record. In the years since, record stores have tried to keep up with the times. Many have struggled to reinvent themselves and remain relevant. In the US, the years 2000 to 2010 were particularly harsh for record retailers: more than 4,000 stores closed. By 2012, only around 1,600 record stores remained open.

photo of Twist and Shout | NATASHA ALEXANDER



photo of Nob Hill Music | STEVE SCHROEDER



photo of Louisiana Music Factory | LINDA ABBOTT



photo of Amoeba Music



photo of Louisiana Music Factory | LINDA ABBOTT



photo of Twist and Shout | NATASHA ALEXANDER



In contrast to the grim statistics, a closer look at America's present-day record store subculture reveals a vibrant scene. The resurgence in the popularity of the vinyl record has resulted in a boom in record store activity.

Credit needs to be given to the loose confederation of independent record store owners and music industry insiders who created Record Store Day. The annual event spotlights record retailers on the third Saturday in April. Record Store Day has boosted morale and brought renewed hope to record store owners, music consumers, recording artists, and record labels.

For music lovers, there's nothing quite like a visit to a great American record store. From casual music fans to die-hard musicologists and record collectors, there's something for everyone, and our remaining record stores delight, educate, and entertain. Record stores have always been valuable within their communities, and where they continue to thrive, they add immeasurably to our collective cultural experience.

Hollywood, California, is home to one of the world's great record stores: Amoeba Music. The roster of great bands who've played at the LA store, the largest of three locations, reads like a *Who's Who in the Music Business*. Movie and television personalities visit the store on Sunset Boulevard and load up on vinyl or other music-related goodies. (For a peek, check out Amoeba's "What's in My Bag?" segment on their website, www.amoeba.com.)

Amoeba owner Marc Weinstein proudly explains that the 43,000-square-foot store in LA is a testament to all the great music known to exist—and to all the record lovers looking for it. Weinstein's stated mission is to display as much of the world's available music as possible, something he feels is desperately needed within our larger musical culture. Amoeba tries to do what any great record store endeavors to do: validate the tastes of the customers. It's this deeper, more mysterious connection or exchange that informs the business transactions at Amoeba, where the company motto is, "Peace through music."

The Squirrel Hill section of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is home to the legendary Jerry's Records. Housed on the second floor of a former automobile dealership, Jerry's is to record lovers what rocket travel is to astronauts: the be-all, end-all, way-out destination. The all-vinyl store contains two million records, LPs and 45s (7-inch singles) only.

Appreciative customers rave about Jerry's fair prices, mostly in the three- to five-dollar range. When asked about this, owner Jerry Weber explains, "I'd rather sell a hundred records for three, four, or five dollars than one record for five hundred." Since 2002, musician (and record collector) Chris Kardasz has managed the 45s department. "Stuff [record store lingo for records] comes through here just like a pipeline. Whatever you're looking for, it shows up here—sooner or later."

In Denver, Colorado, Twist and Shout, owned and operated by Paul and Jill Epstein,

is another well-known and well-loved record store. Located within the Lowenstein complex—a city-sponsored public/private partnership which also houses a movie theater and independent bookseller Tattered Cover—Twist and Shout is 10,000 square feet of mile-high music nirvana.

Visitors to New Orleans' French Quarter enjoy the Louisiana Music Factory. For the annual Jazz and Heritage Festival, there's always big doings at this record store. The Music Factory supports numerous local musicians through both in-store music presentations and a diversity of available titles for sale produced by local musicians and bands.

While many great record stores can be found in big cities, a lot of great stores exist in smaller markets too. Lawrence, Kansas, home to the University of Kansas, is also home to Love Garden, one of the area's best-loved record stores. Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, a former lumber industry town and scenic vacation spot, is home to another popular record store, The Long Ear (or the Ear, as it's affectionately known).

Both stores are experiencing a renewed interest in the vinyl format. More than half of Love Garden's square footage is devoted to new and used records. Love Garden also sells reasonably priced vintage audio equipment, something owner Kelly Corcoran feels passionate about. According to Kelly, another facet of the vinyl trend in Lawrence is the increase in prices for classic albums (in good condition). He also says his customers seem to be

Weinstein's stated mission is to display as much of the world's available music as possible, something he feels is desperately needed within our larger musical culture. Amoeba tries to do what any great record store endeavors to do: validate the tastes of the customers. It's this deeper, more mysterious connection or exchange that informs the business transactions at Amoeba, where the company motto is, "Peace through music."

becoming a little less adventurous. Many focus on buying the tried-and-true classic albums, like Bob Dylan's *Blonde on Blonde* (1966), one of a core group of approximately five hundred top-selling vintage pieces at Love Garden.

At the Ear in Coeur d'Alene, husband-and-wife team Terry and Deon Borchard claim that interest in used and new vinyl continues to expand. "We're selling a heck of a lot more used vinyl," Deon says. And new vinyl gets snapped up by collectors, she notes. "It's quality stuff," Terry adds, referring to the sound of a lot of the new vinyl, presented on thick, deep groove, 180-gram pressings. Last year marked the Borchards' fortieth year in record retail.

Groovacious, located in Cedar City, Utah, is another small-town store with plenty of vinyl on hand: nearly half the floor space is devoted to records. In 2000, owners Tim and Lisa Cretsinger moved from Salem, Oregon. Groovefest, their annual summertime music festival, is currently in its twelfth year.

Used vinyl has long served as a source of profit for record stores. With new vinyl, profit margins are slim to none. So, it's not unusual for stores to stock new vinyl by current artists (or reissues of other popular artists) as a way to attract people into their stores. Available reissues or new vinyl are typically manufactured in limited quantities—another factor affecting retail pricing. By contrast, stores can acquire individual pieces (LPs, CDs, 45s, etc.) or large music collections very inexpensively.

To continue to thrive in their communities, record store owners and staffers need to remain tuned in to what their customers want; and they need to actively seek out quality record stock to replenish supplies.

While on Route 66, our nation's first cross-country highway, record hunters can visit Nob Hill Music. Located near the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, Nob Hill's always-crowded 300 square feet illustrate the resurgence in popularity of vinyl. "It's a voracious trend," owner Steve Schroeder explains, with "a huge crowd of people returning to the

vinyl format. I have people who are getting rid of their iPods."

Like many record store retailers, Steve enjoys the fact that his store is a community gathering place—something in short supply in the digital age. "We're very fractionalized and separated by our technology," he says. A former political consultant, Steve likes "looking people in the eye, shaking hands or talking, and connecting friends to people who can help them. I know it's just a little thing, but if enough of us started doing that, I think our world would start improving."

In an era of increasing anonymity and digital isolation, the vinyl record is bringing people together. Vinyl is cool. And for music fans around the world, visiting and shopping at record stores remains a rewarding—and fun—experience.

AL :: www.vinylives.com
Additional reading: *Vinyl Lives* (Aventine Press, 2010) and *Vinyl Lives II* (Aventine Press, 2013)

Noodle Devotion

PASTA RECIPES FOR THE MODERN CHEF

text: FRANCINE SEGAN | photography: LUCY SCHAEFFER

Pasta is a perfect dish for warmer weather and dining alfresco. Find some fresh variations in Pasta Modern: New and Inspired Recipes from Italy by Francine Segan (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2013).



It would be difficult to improve on that magical combination of simple ingredients in classic carbonara, but this version just might sway your loyalties. Sweet caramelized onions and squash take the place of pancetta, adding even more creaminess. If you like, you can plate this chubby tube pasta upright, what they call “on their feet” in Italy.

pumpkin carbonara with paccheri

SERVES 4 | FROM CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN ITALY

ingredients:

- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- Olive oil
- 2 cups diced, seeded, and peeled kabocha or butternut squash
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 large egg yolks
- Pecorino or other aged cheese
- 1 pound paccheri or any short, thick pasta

cooking instructions:

- 1.** In a large sauté pan over medium heat, warm 2 tablespoons oil, and cook the onions until they are very soft, about 8 minutes. Raise the heat to high, and continue cooking until the onions are golden and caramelized, about 4 more minutes. Remove the onions from the pan, and set aside.
- 2.** In the same pan, add another 1 or 2 tablespoons oil, and fry the squash until tender and golden at the edges, about 8 minutes. Return the onions to the pan, season with salt and pepper, and keep warm.
- 3.** In a large serving bowl, beat the yolks with pepper and 2 heaping tablespoons grated cheese.
- 4.** Boil the pasta in salted water until it is al dente. Drain, and toss in the egg mixture, stirring until creamy; then stir in the hot onion-squash mixture. Serve topped with grated or shaved cheese.



Berries, tingly mint, and aromatic basil combine with ricotta to create a highly unusual but crowd-pleasing pasta dish. Staggeringly simple to make, the sauce is ready before the water boils. Here it's paired with pretty bell-shaped campanelle pasta, but it's fantastic with any shape.

berries, basil, and bells

SERVES 4 | FROM SICILY

ingredients:

1 pound campanelle or any short pasta
Salt
2 tablespoons butter
1 cup fresh blueberries
1 cup fresh raspberries
1 cup ricotta
About 15 small fresh mint leaves
About 12 small fresh basil leaves
Freshly ground black pepper

cooking instructions:

1. Boil the pasta in salted water until it is al dente. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, in a skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add three-fourths of the berries, reserving the rest for garnish, and cook until softened, about 2 minutes. Transfer the fruit to a large serving bowl along with the ricotta, mint, and basil leaves, and stir the mixture with a fork to combine.
3. Toss the pasta with the ricotta mixture. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and serve topped with the reserved berries.



Neapolitans consider this dish a sure cure for insomnia! No need to count sheep when you can sup on the fluffy white clouds of this satisfying dish. A good night's sleep is guaranteed.

Creamy, but made without cream, potato and garlic dissolve into velvety delight. The pasta cooks right in the sauce like risotto, a technique called risottare. This dish is traditionally made with a mix of all sorts of different pasta shapes.

risotto-style spaghetti with potatoes

SERVES 4 | FROM CAMPANIA, NAPLES

ingredients:

- 1 pound potatoes, any type, peeled and diced
- Olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 8 ounces spaghetti, broken into bite-size pieces
- Grated pecorino or other aged cheese
- 1/3 cup finely minced fresh parsley leaves and stems
- 1 small dried red chile pepper, minced
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

cooking instructions:

1. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine the potatoes, 1/4 cup oil, and the garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes start to break up a bit, about 10 minutes.
2. Add about 2 cups hot water, just enough to cover the potatoes by 1/2 inch. Raise the heat, bring everything to a boil, then lower the heat, and simmer until the potatoes are very soft, about 10 minutes more. Add the pasta, and stir until combined; simmer until the pasta is almost al dente.
3. Stir in 1/3 cup of cheese, the parsley, and the chile pepper to taste, and cook for another minute, adding hot water or olive oil if needed. Season to taste with salt.
4. Serve topped with more cheese and an additional sprinkle of parsley, chile, and pepper.



Lemons and red onions, classic southern Italian ingredients, here combine with this creamy newcomer to the Mediterranean for an alluring fusion of textures and aromas. The avocado is used raw, and creates a healthier, more flavorsome “cream” in the sauce. The shrimp add briny tang, and the lemon brightens the dish.

lemon-avocado spaghetti with shrimp

SERVES 4 | FROM SICILY AND SOUTHERN ITALY

ingredients:

1 large red onion, finely sliced
¼ cup dry white wine
8 ounces small shrimp, shelled and deveined
Olive oil
Salt
1 pound spaghetti or any pasta
1 avocado
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
Freshly ground black pepper

cooking instructions:

1. In a skillet large enough to hold the pasta, combine the onions and wine over medium heat, and simmer until the onions are soft, about 10 minutes. Add the shrimp, and raise the heat to high to evaporate any remaining wine; cook until the onions are caramelized and the shrimp are cooked, about 5 minutes. Off the heat, add 1 tablespoon oil, and salt to taste.
2. Boil the pasta in salted water until it is al dente. Drain, and toss with the onions.
3. Meanwhile, peel and pit the avocado, and puree it with the lemon juice in a blender or small food processor until very smooth. Stir the mixture into the pasta, and add half the lemon zest until well combined; reseason the dish with salt, if needed. Top the pasta with the remaining zest and pepper.

The Mathematics of Design

MAXWELL & FISHER INTERIORS

text: ROBERT GOFF | photography: BHGM PHOTOGRAPHY

Designer Robert Goff approaches interior design as a math problem waiting to be solved, molding the clients' needs into a complete vision.

GROWING UP IN WOODSTOCK, VERMONT, a 250-year-old New England town, I learned at an early age the aesthetic integrity of preservation and restoration of older things such as hand-built homes, barns, covered bridges, and furniture. I remember going to a yard sale at a house built in 1815 and seeing a slender, tall back wing chair. Its profile appeared so sculptural I had to buy it. The maroon upholstered seat cushion had been chewed up by a puppy that was once part of the household, so the owner tucked it away in a barn where it sat for years. With no intention of fixing it up right away, I paid \$12.50 for the chair and hauled it home thinking one day I would rescue it and give it a new life.

After finishing college and venturing out into the world with a business degree to begin a marketing career in New York City, the wing chair sat in my parents attic for a decade until my mother called to inform me they were selling the Vermont house and needed me to collect the chair, along with many other “collectibles” I had accumulated over the years. The question before me was what to do with all these old pieces.

Since I had gone to the trouble to rescue them, I felt obligated to restore each piece. With the creative advice of an upholsterer who steered me in the right direction, I was able to bring all my items back to life with modern adaptations. Once all the pieces were installed in my apartment, I received nothing but rave reviews on how customized my interior looked, which led me to realize the value of interior design.



Design work is like solving a complicated math equation, forcing the right and left sides of the brain to unite across artistic and mechanical disciplines. A designer creates a crosshatch between the two to solve for many independent variables—all under one roof or within one room. The sum total must be whole and always able to be proofed back against an original design objective. Above all, it must demonstrate a value-added service of pushing the envelope of creativity to give clients something unique and distinctive, delivering an unexpected result of thinking outside the box.

TRANSITIONING INTO A DESIGNER

After working for international marketing consulting firms across the country, I found myself returning to New York City after finishing an assignment to look for a new job.

At the time, the job market was sluggish, so I decided to take a time-out and explore options for making a career change. One snowy afternoon, I was driving through the historic New England towns north of Manhattan in Westchester County. I stopped to poke around at an antique shop in a house built circa 1770 with a barn attached to it. It was a large business and featured antiques from Europe. The shop owner was an interior designer who created a unique display style of all her merchandise I had never seen before. Intrigued by this shop, I volunteered to create a website for them, which evolved into a part-time sales job. I ultimately became the shop's in-house client resource for design advice and support. Two years later, I relocated to Dallas, and opened my own interior design firm, Maxwell & Fisher Interior Design, in the fall of 2007.

DESIGN STYLE/PLANNING PROCESS

You can deduce quite a bit about a client's personality based on what they've surrounded themselves with. I always start a new project with some basic interior detective questions: (1) Why have you invited me to your home for an evaluation? (2) What about your existing interior do you like and dislike? (3) If you closed your eyes and cost didn't factor into the project, what would your ultimate interior look like?

Before I begin my hunting and gathering phase for paint colors, fabrics, and furnishings to use in my design plan, I first take my clients to the nearest design center to expose them to a slice of interior design they would not normally have access to. It is during these showroom tours which I use as my test lab where I observe what appeals to clients, as well as point out examples I am considering for their project to set their perception of an overall design plan.

ROOMS WITH A SKYLINE VIEW

The clients for this featured project are both extremely busy with demanding jobs that require weekly cross-country or international travel; therefore, they are seldom at home. Having neither pets nor children, they wanted an oasis for relaxation during the brief times they were in Seattle. They also wanted to create a showcase for entertaining a large number of people, both for corporate and personal functions. They were prepared to invest in an interior that truly made a bold statement announcing, "They had arrived."

The design inspiration came from three elements and was used throughout the entire interior: (1) Create a layout direction within each room to capitalize on the Seattle city skyline view as the focal point; (2) use primary colors found in nature so the interior would complement all the exterior lush greenery as seen through the large glass walls of windows; and (3) incorporate family heirlooms into the mix of furnishings while keeping it modern and transitionally "now."

The stucco home was very modern to begin with—four floors squarely stacked on top of each other but joined together by a staircase at one end of the home connecting each floor, a rooftop deck of 1,000 square feet that can only be described as the "jewel in the crown," and two floors of floor-to-ceiling windows that overlooked the downtown Seattle skyline from atop a bluff.

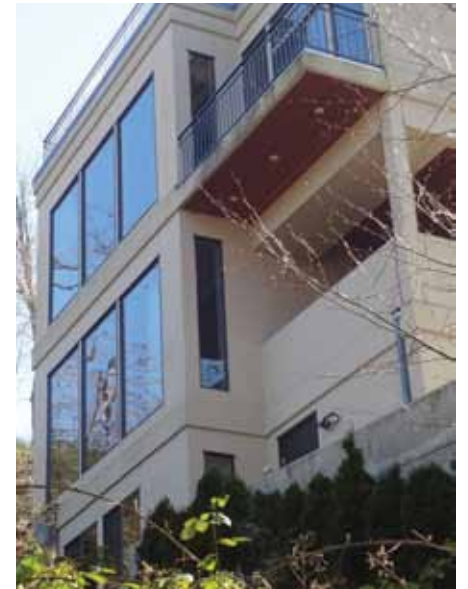
The client inherited some family pieces I was asked to incorporate into the mix of new furnishings. Luckily all the pieces were either art deco, an eclectic style with bold geometric shapes, or art nouveau, a style inspired by natural forms and structures. These items all had scalloped layering, bold dimensions, and looked highly architectural in form and profile. We used this as an influence when choosing some of the furniture styles.

DESIGN DETAILS: KITCHEN

The kitchen has many natural elements like dark wood cabinets, glass tiles for the backsplash, limestone-colored tile flooring, and stone countertops. In the center of the kitchen is a large stone-top island with a cooktop. I wanted to use the island as an interactive area for people to gather around, or for the homeowners to work on their laptops when not entertaining. To achieve this, I chose counter stools that are oversized and upholstered so it would appear more inviting—more like a reading chair rather than a stool. Underneath the generous overhang of the island countertop, there are four stainless support braces with circular cutouts, similar to the look of support brackets you find in the underbellies of airplanes. Throughout the project, the clients and I referred to these as "the Boeing brackets," given Seattle is home to the Boeing Corporation. The brackets provided a sculptural element with a natural repetitive theme.

DINING AREA

The client had a mission style dining set with simple, clean lines and seating for six. Given the expansive new dining space and the passion for entertaining, the opportunity to



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entertain on a larger scale became an obvious possibility. I tracked down the maker of the existing dining set which turned out to be an Amish workshop in Ohio. They were able to find the original pattern templates for both the leaves and chairs, so we had more of each custom made to accommodate twelve at a sit-down dinner. As if this wasn't the only stroke of luck, later that same week, I was visiting a local consignment shop having a sale. Buried in the back of the shop was a pair of modern china cabinets in the exact same wood finish as the dining table and chairs, and they featured a stainless circular face grill that matched the brackets on the kitchen island. I had all the dining chair seats upholstered in a sky blue fabric with straw tan- and hay gold-colored dots to keep within the circular accents. To enhance the blue in the seat fabric, I chose a darker stone blue accent color for one of the smaller walls to serve as a backdrop for the china cabinets.

LIVING AREA

I chose two primary colors found in nature for an overall harmonious blend: a deep blue from Sherwin-Williams® and several pale yellows from Farrow and Ball®, both reminiscent of a blue sky and of sunshine—something we don't see too much of in the Pacific Northwest. The yellow had a creamy eggnog hue to it and was used predominately to connect all the open areas to introduce the subliminal concept of brightness during daylight hours and a candlelit glow during evening hours.

I carried variations of these two primary colors across several furnishing elements in the living, dining, and kitchen areas as seen in the blue and pale yellow ribbons in the custom rug pattern, the blue in the accent pillows and glazed pottery planters, the accent walls to create a splash of color for the dining and living areas, and the golden hay-colored tweed on the sofa fabric.

The fireplace surround with its block-form and simple, clean lines influenced my design strategy in the living room. The cocktail table



In contrast to all the lighter, brighter colors of the public areas, the **design strategy** for the master bedroom was to bathe the walls in Bittersweet Chocolate by Benjamin Moore®, working up to the **gold-capped** ceiling and lighting trough.

base and the sofa arms carry the bold, layered block form through the space.

Throughout this main floor's interior, I wanted movement and repetition of natural elements, both in color and shapes. The fabrics on the two barrel club chairs were in a blush color to keep within the mocha rug color of the dining area. Ribbon patterns in the rug, the tweed in the sofa, and the chain link in the chair fabric all give a sense of natural shapes creating movement, vitality, and dimension to the furnishings.

ROOFTOP DECK

With a clear view of the downtown Seattle skyline, I chose not to overfurnish the rooftop deck so it wouldn't compete with the view of Seattle. We positioned a large outdoor sectional facing directly east in the direction of the Seattle Space Needle. Off to the side, we positioned a dining table to seat up to ten comfortably with cushioned chairs and a stone-tiled top. Back behind the dining area, the builder constructed a full outdoor kitchen. We dotted the perimeter of the areas

with tall, glazed ceramic pottery filled with bamboo and annuals.

MASTER BEDROOM

The clients travel and work exhaustively, so I wanted the master bedroom to be a sanctuary, and subconsciously evoke a feeling of rest. In contrast to all the lighter, brighter colors of the public areas, the design strategy for the master bedroom was to bathe the walls in Bittersweet Chocolate by Benjamin Moore®, working up to the gold-capped ceiling and lighting trough. The gold from the paint color is echoed in the custom bed and bedding to pull the ceiling color down into the room onto the largest piece of furniture—the bed frame. By removing sconces from a wall where the builder intended the bed to be placed, we were able to reposition the room so the master bed faced the windows and the Seattle skyline instead of a fireplace. The room was an odd square with dark wood floors, and no ready-made rugs were available in such an odd size, so I had one custom made for the room. The fireplace surround was a gray, dry-stacked mosaic stone, so I



chose a similar stone gray color for the custom rug. One of the clients grew up in Ireland and frequently returns to visit family in Dublin. Given his strong Irish roots, he is proud of his family's ancestral history and wanted to reflect that in some way in the interior. I was able to incorporate the Celtic symbol triskele in the master bedroom rug design with swirls hand-carved into the rug pile. This swirl was thought to reflect the personal spirit of an individual's attainment of balance in the inner consciousness and cosmic energy—what

better place than in a master bedroom where the primary focus of sleep also achieves this? Given the home faces east, the sun during the summer season can be blinding in the early hours of the morning, so we had to use black-out lining on the custom drapes which covered an entire wall of floor-to-ceiling windows when drawn. This provided us with an area to use another intertwining ribbon pattern to give it movement, with each ribbon color picking up on one of the other natural colors in the room—gold from the ceiling,



straw color from the bedding, and a gray background echoing the warmth of the custom rug and fireplace stone.

The interior changed from a sterile builder-beige house to a customized home that reflects the personal sophistication of the clients, their avocations, and their lifestyle of enjoying finer food, wines, and travel. Overall, it's an oasis for comfort and luxury throughout each room.

AL :: www.maxwellandfisher.com



Photo Pop!

TEN IDEAS FOR FRESH PHOTOGRAPHY

text: SHELLEY ROSE | photography: SHELLEY ROSE PHOTOGRAPHY

When creative block hits, change your perspective, and punch up your photography with these ten tips.

CAPTURE THE DETAILS

Get up close and personal with your subjects. In this image of a rose, the detail of the petals overlapping and folding over one another is the focus. It was shot close enough to capture the paper-thin quality of the petals.



NATURE AS ART

Think of petals and leaves as shapes, curves, textures, and lines rather than components of flowers or plants. In this way, each photograph becomes an abstract painting of sorts. Study how the light reflects off each bend. A macro lens will be helpful for sharpness and clarity.

2

REPETITION

Look for repeating objects, lines, or patterns. In this photo, the benches and the shadows repeat and carry your eye down the walkway.





BEAUTY IN MUNDANE MOMENTS

You don't need to travel to an exotic locale to get a beautiful photograph. Capturing familiar objects or scenes with an artist's eye can result in an unexpected image. This stack of pillows and blankets on a couch created a very muted palette that worked well with the softness of the subject matter. The laundry image has a moody quality to it, aesthetically strengthened by the repetition of lines in the shadows, the stripes in the sweater, and the gridded plastic of the basket.



FRAME WITHIN A FRAME

This technique adds focus and depth to a photograph. In the image to the left, the statue is framed by the archway, leading your eye to the statue and the Spanish town of Toledo beyond it. Frames do not have to be architecture; they can be trees, flowers, hands, doors, windows, etc.



A SLICE OF INTIMACY

The photo on the left was taken candidly, in between posed shots. It's a genuine moment of love between a mother and baby daughter. The photo below was posed, but the use of the mirror, the slightly messy floor, and the strategic cropping create the sense of a private moment.





CROPPING

This is a great technique for drawing focus to a certain area. In the top photo, the face is mostly kept out of the frame; the viewer's eye goes to her arms and her left leg. There is a feeling of quiet contemplation. In the image to the right, the viewer only sees a small segment of the parents. The sleeping baby is the star of the show, with the mother's shoulder kept in the frame to create a sense of safety and peace.



8

GET TEXTURED

There is a subtle beauty in textures created by nature, like raindrops on a window, fuzzy moss on a fallen branch, or the peeling and fraying of distressed wood. In the photo to the right, the green lichen glows against the charcoal of the tree bark, giving the photo a secret garden-like feel.



SEIZE THE SEASON

When in Rome, do as the Romans do. When in spring, take photographs of tulips. Iconic images of autumn leaves, a snowy pathway, or a sunset over the ocean are classic.

10



INTRODUCE ANOTHER ELEMENT

Posed photos can often look forced and don't capture the true personality of the subjects. Introducing a prop or element that the subject can interact with creates a much more natural environment. In the shot above, bubbles were blown for the baby to gaze at and reach out to, creating a sense of child-like wonder.

AL :: shelleyrosephotography.wordpress.com

Georgia on My Mind

A VISIT TO ST. SIMONS ISLAND

text: LAUREN ACOMO | photography: SHELLEY ROSE PHOTOGRAPHY

This little slice of paradise in Georgia offers visitors luxury accommodations, down-home eats, eclectic shops, surf, and sand.



IN MY MIND WAS A SCENE STRAIGHT OUT of a Ginger Rogers' movie: swirls of silk and velvet as the ladies were twirled around the terrazzo dance floor by sure-footed, rhythmically inclined gentlemen in tuxedos. I could almost hear the big band tunes wafting in and out of the dancers, carried along by the sea breeze to the dance floor under the stars. This was a reality in 1935, when the King and Prince Club opened its doors, quickly establishing its reputation for elegance and warm hospitality. The stained glass windows in the ballroom-turned-dining room depict scenes from the resort's history and serve as a beautiful reminder of that time. The hotel closed to guests for five years during World War II, remaining open only to house US Navy personnel.

THE KING AND PRINCE

This club is now the famed King and Prince Beach and Golf Resort, situated on the largest

of Georgia's Golden Isles—St. Simons Island. Home to beautiful beaches, golfing, fishing, shopping, and outdoor activities, this oasis of an island has something to offer everyone. The King and Prince takes hospitality very seriously—from the gentleman who selected peach wine for a welcoming gift, to the bartender who offered to open it, to the chefs and waiters who were diligent in accommodating special food requests, to the directors and assistants who knew how to extend warm welcomes, a few laughs, and help at every turn. The staff takes pride in this Mediterranean-inspired respite, and it shows.

The breakfast buffet is not to be missed. A good motto: seize every opportunity for grits! Add to that made-to-order omelettes, Belgian waffles, bacon, biscuits, fresh fruit, and pastries, all while dining oceanside at the King's Tavern Restaurant inside the King and Prince. On a rainy day, it's the



For true tea lovers, try a flavored black or green tea. Beacon Blend is the perfect summertime iced tea, with a base of black and green tea, plus papaya cubes, rose hip peels, and sunflower petals.



perfect spot to watch the waves crash over the sand. The Ocean Terrace Grille puts you even closer to the shore. The black bean hummus plate and a frozen daiquiri taste delicious in the sunshine.

PIER VILLAGE

To take further advantage of the sunshine, rent bikes at Ocean Motion Surf Co., and follow Ocean Boulevard down to the Pier Village. Eclectic shops and restaurants line Mallery Street, like Moondance Vintage Clothing which features pieces from the 1940s to the 1970s. Grab some frozen yogurt at Yobe, and write a message or doodle on their outdoor chalkboard. Turn the corner onto Beachview Drive, and spend some time at the Serenity House Tea Society, where someone is always happy to brew up some tea for you to try. It's easy to lose track of time with neat rows of tea

canisters just begging for a sniff. The Nutty Toasted Almond fruit infusion smells heavenly, with apple pieces, crushed almonds, and bits of cinnamon. For true tea lovers, try a flavored black or green tea. Beacon Blend is the perfect summertime iced tea, with a base of black and green tea, plus papaya cubes, rose hip peels, and sunflower petals.

For the best ice cream on the island, swing by Moo Cow Ice Cream on Ocean Boulevard. Popular, albeit quirky, ice cream flavors include candied bacon, avocado, and chocolate-covered potato chip ice cream. Peruse the other side of the shop for eclectic home goods as you take licks of homemade yumminess.



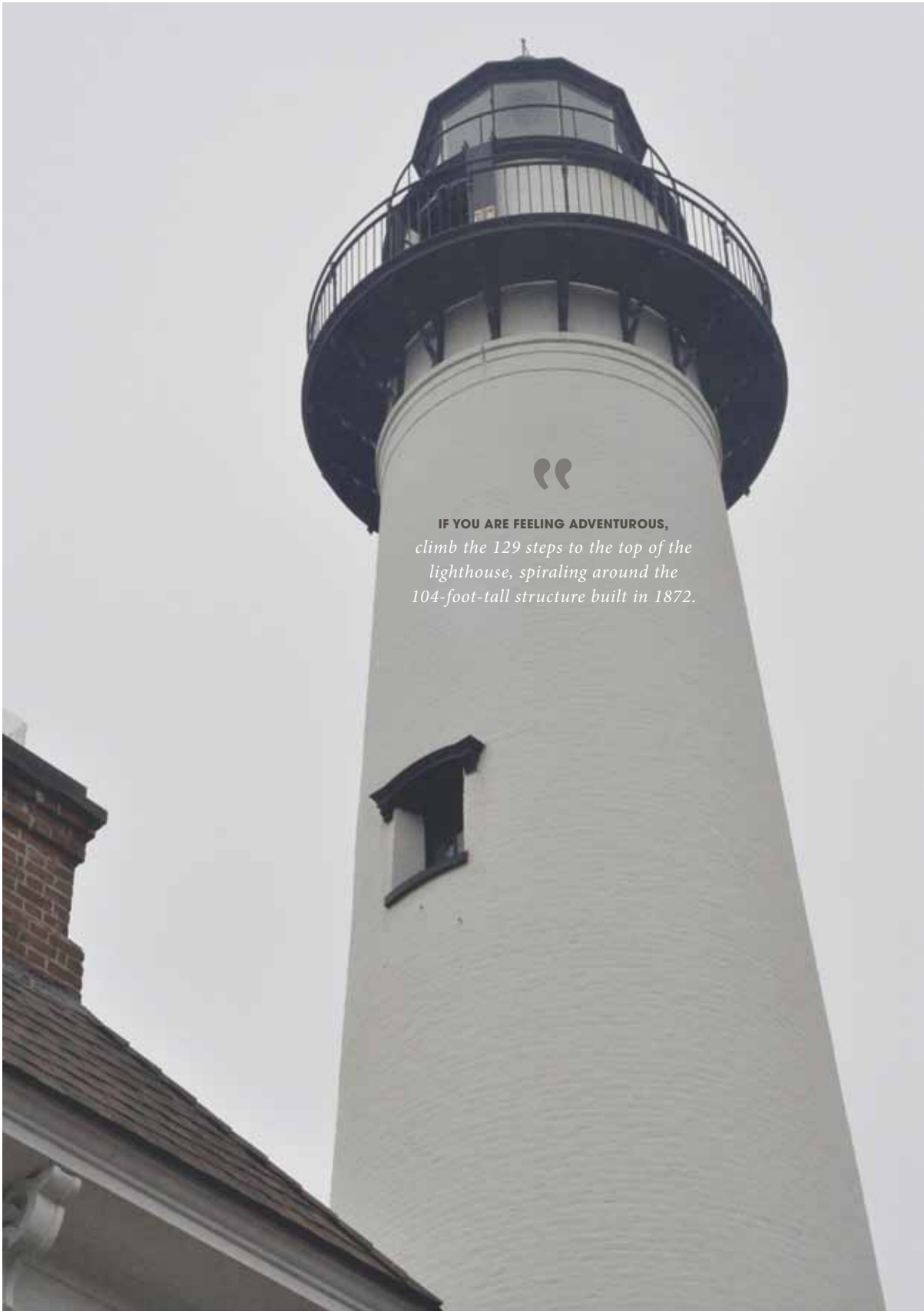


A BIT OF HISTORY

A short jump back on the bike, and the Lighthouse Museum beckons visitors to learn the history of St. Simons Island. If you are feeling adventurous, climb the 129 steps to the top of the lighthouse, spiraling around the 104-foot-tall structure built in 1872. A view of the island is your reward, along with your cardio for the day. You can also see how the lighthouse keeper lived, and read the history of James Gould, the first lightkeeper of the original lighthouse, who held this position at an annual salary of \$400 until his 1837 retirement. The keeper's second-floor quarters contain a parlor, kitchen, and two bedrooms furnished with period pieces, including beds with rope mattress suspension. In the summertime, the gazebo and oceanfront lawn serve as the setting for a series of outdoor music concerts.

BEACH EATS

Beachcomber BBQ, right around the corner from the King and Prince, is a shack-like joint with a relaxed, beach-bum vibe. You order at a window, and pick up your food when they call your name. Grab a seat at the picnic table, and enjoy the flip-flop-friendly atmosphere. Standouts include pulled pork sandwiches, ribs, and



“
IF YOU ARE FEELING ADVENTUROUS,
climb the 129 steps to the top of the
lighthouse, spiraling around the
104-foot-tall structure built in 1872.

Brunswick stew. They've been enjoying extra attention since Alton Brown introduced television audiences to their pulled pork in the Food Network show, *The Best Thing I Ever Ate*.

LET'S GO SHRIMPING

If you're blessed with clear skies, head out to sea aboard the *Lady Jane*, a United States Coast Guard-certified passenger steel shrimping vessel. The knowledgeable crew sifts through hauls of sea creatures brought up by shrimp nets. You might see horseshoe crabs, stingrays, baby sharks, and loggerhead turtles. The boat stays in the calm waters of St. Simons Sound, so put aside worries of motion sickness, and enjoy the boiled shrimp fest prepared by the crew halfway through the cruise.

SEA TURTLES

For another marine experience, take a drive to Jekyll Island, and visit the sea turtles at the Georgia Sea Turtle Center. This hospital for ill and injured sea turtles is the only one of its kind in the state of Georgia. The exhibits are interactive and informative, and a great way to educate yourself on the life cycle,

environment, basic needs, and dangers facing these sea creatures. After you've made your way through the hands-on Exhibit Gallery, walk back to the Rehabilitation Pavilion where recovering sea turtle patients can be seen from an elevated walkway. The staff periodically gives presentations, explaining the injuries and recovery process. Visitors may also catch a feeding, which comes in different forms depending on the extent of injuries. Healthier patients will sometimes receive their evening meal frozen inside a block of ice. Patients have to pursue the ice block as it floats around their tank, gaining exercise in the process. The ice also helps to maintain a healthy beak, which is made of keratin, just like human fingernails.

The best thing about St. Simons Island is the freedom to do every activity or no activity at all. Stroll along the sand, breathe the saltwater air, and revel in this year-round vacation spot. Play a round of tennis at the King and Prince, or smooth away your worries with a trip to the spa. And whatever you do, don't miss the grits!

AL :: www.kingandprince.com



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Plume Perfection

CHRIS MAYNARD'S FEATHER ART

text: CHRIS MAYNARD | photography: CHRIS MAYNARD

Feather artist Chris Maynard studies the anatomy and essence of bird feathers, cutting shapes and carefully arranging them into art.

Life’s exuberance inspires me. **Birds** are easily seen, so we know them pretty well. And they do things that inspire us—mainly **flight and song**.

WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU CAN REMEMBER MAKING?

My mother was a professional artist. She involved me in creative projects. One of my first memories is of her guiding my hand with a brush as she made a cloth book with paintings of dragons for my little sisters. The cloth was used cotton diapers—laundered, of course. We always made our own presents as gifts to each other for holidays and birthdays—everyone was busy and happy making them. My favorite thing to do at the coast was to run around collecting crab shells, clam shells, rocks, and flotsam to create big dioramas in the sand that would eventually wash away during the next high tide cycle.

WHAT IS YOUR MOTIVATION FOR CREATING?

I love life so much that I try to capture some of its moments in art. I want to share it. Life marches on; it escapes capture. But I still try.

HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN YOUR STYLE?

My art has a dose of realism: portraying birds and feathers, you cannot get more real than using the feathers themselves. The cutouts and designs are a representation of what is in my mind, which is a feeling of the bird or a bird theme like flight or transformation. I try to capture the essence of a bird’s behavior through simple lines and silhouettes all precisely arranged.

HOW DID YOUR FEATHER ART TRANSPIRE?

I began seriously working with feathers through photographing them. No one was doing this—celebrating feathers in an artistic way. I got to work with a lot of beautiful feathers from around the world. And not having to possess the feathers in order to photograph them, I could use many more kinds of feathers that are not legal to have because of laws that protect endangered birds and North American birds. But eventually I wanted to

use the feathers themselves in my artwork, not just images of them. There is a guy who puts bugs in shadowboxes and arranges them in interesting ways. They are what I call “gee whiz!” (the big ones that people are often squeamish about). But putting them in a box in a precise design allows people to see them differently and appreciate them. I do the same with feathers, although most people are attracted to feathers in the first place.

TAKE US BACK TO THAT FIRST FEATHER ART PIECE YOU CREATED. WHAT WAS IT ABOUT THAT EXPERIENCE THAT MADE YOU WANT TO FOCUS IN THIS DIRECTION?

For the first pieces I made, the feathers were not cut but arranged geometrically. The piece *Splash* was one of these. In this one, I really began to notice that feathers are not flat. Each one has evolved into a different shape to perform its functions on the bird. Body feathers are curved to conform to the roundness of the bird’s body, and to be able to puff outward to keep a bird warm when needed. And each feather lays down on the bird in a repeating pattern. I found that with my arrangements, I could direct the viewer’s attention to qualities of the feathers they could otherwise miss—the curve, the form, and the pattern.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FEATHERS THAT YOU ARE DRAWN TO?

I love life and all its forms, its mysteries, and awesomeness. Feathers capture many aspects of life in their forms, as do other beautiful creations like the human body, trees, or clouds. But a person needs to make a niche in life to have a little place in which to view the world. Feathers became mine. Birds grow new feathers pretty much every year. Only when the feather is grown and its cells die does it fully perform its functions like flight and warmth for the bird. Then the birds shed or molt their feathers, which keep their perfect forms and some of the bird’s essence.

For art, I try to capture an essence of life, and feathers are perfect for this because they have it imprinted in their forms, patterns, and colors.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT NATURE THAT INSPIRES THE CONTENT OF YOUR ART?

Life’s exuberance inspires me. Birds are easily seen, so we know them pretty well. And they do things that inspire us—mainly flight and song. But they do other things which we relate to and have meaning—like making nests, raising babies, and migrating. So the character of each kind of bird inspires me. The way a duck circles around to land on a lake and the way it swims so comfortably, the way it puts its head underwater and dabbles to get food. The way the male hangs around when the female is on the nest. If I don’t take time to observe birds and think about them, I lose a portion of my creative ideas. Also just looking at feathers is inspiring. An example of my thought process is in one of the partially metallic blue feathers of a Mallard duck. I noticed this color on some of the wing feathers and thought of the color of water and how water is so much of this bird’s surroundings. This bird is at home on the water. I pondered, “Why this color on this bird?” Perhaps this blue color could be a sort of camouflage that has to do with the color of the water and reflections.

TALK ABOUT THE PROCESS OF CREATION:

I begin with an idea. I have notebooks full of quickly sketched ideas—many more than I will ever pursue. I will take one of these ideas and flesh it out a bit more with drawings. The idea might come to me in several ways—observing the behavior of a bird or a theme like migration. The other day, I had an idea for a piece as I was watching the seagulls fly over the bay in the late evening light and wondering where these birds go to sleep at night. I like a bit of mystery to wonder about.

I use special glues and polymers to attach the feathers to the backing. I attach a special type of pin to the cutouts to raise everything off the background to give shadows when light is directed onto the work.



A big part of informing a design and the size of a piece is the feathers themselves. Feathers are always quite limited in terms of size, form, color, and pattern, especially in comparison with the options I would have if I just drew and painted them. Once I arrive at a design and have identified that I can find suitable feathers, I will make a mock-up on a board of the final envisioned size, substituting paper cutouts in place of feathers. I like to show the illusion of movement. Then I take a photograph to place in Photoshop to the exact size of the final piece. Only after this is done do I begin to prepare and cut the perfect chosen feathers.

I try to keep the background simple, often just a single color, though I sometimes use paper I have made especially for this (made from feathers). I use special glues and polymers to attach the feathers to the backing. I attach a special type of pin to the cutouts to raise everything off the background to give shadows when light is directed onto the work.

HOW DID YOU BECOME SO GOOD AT MANIPULATING FEATHERS INTO WORKS OF ART?

Like anyone, I develop my skills through focus and practice. I research my materials. I also research about the form and function of feathers so I am familiar with how feathers work. Feathers are made of a central shaft, round and hollow at the base, and become square or rectangular in cross section as you move up the feather to where the barbs branch off the shaft. The barbs create both the downy parts and the flatter vane on the feather. Depending on the function of the feather, barbs can look like wide I-beams in cross

section—these make for strong flight feathers. Or they can be thinner, shallower I-beams like turkey tail feathers, which are much easier to cut. It is important for me to limit my themes to those that are bird related. I do this work to honor the natural forms of the feathers and to honor birds. When asked to make a piece incorporating other elements, I have declined (so far) and instead worked with them to accomplish the same meaning using birds or just feathers.

DO YOU ENHANCE THE COLORS OF THE FEATHERS OR KEEP THINGS NATURAL?

It is important to me to honor and respect



each feather's color, shape, form, and pattern. So I do not modify these things. I do, of course, cut little shapes out of the feathers.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO COMPLETE AN AVERAGE PROJECT?

Probably what takes the most time is refining a design idea into something that seems worthy to pursue. Finding the right feathers also takes more time than one would think. First, obtaining good quality feathers, some of which are rare (though all are legal to have and sell) takes time. I get them from private aviaries and zoos. Then comes the process of selecting the perfect feather, sorting through sometimes hundreds of them for the right pattern, size, shape, or color. Sometimes I get lost just looking at beautiful patterns on individual feathers. The preparing and cutting and gluing and setting onto the final backing takes hours, of course, but sometimes not as long as everything else.

WHERE DO YOU ACQUIRE SUCH GORGEOUS FEATHERS?

I have long-standing relations with bird aviaries. I raise one kind of bird now—the

Impeyan pheasant. It is a squat, thick pheasant from the mountains of Nepal. The male (with its copper, bronze, and metallic reds, blues, and purple feathers) is a magnificent bird. Often people offer me birds that they have found. I politely refuse and tell them I cannot use the bird's feathers because all North American migratory birds are protected under the US Migratory Bird Act.

AS AN ARTIST, WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH THROUGH YOUR WORK?

I feel I am successful in my art when someone says, "I'll never see feathers the same way again." I want to solicit a respect, meaning, understanding, and enjoyment of life through this feather work.

HOW WOULD YOU SAY YOUR STYLE DIFFERS FROM OTHER CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS?

My style differs from other contemporary art mostly in that I use feathers. These days, artists and the public have grown to realize that the same abstract, simple forms we find attractive in art, are found in the natural world in abundance. Perhaps it was the invention of photography that allowed us more and more





I feel I am **successful** in my art when someone says, “I’ll **never see** feathers the same way again.”



freedom from seeing the ideal of all art as realism. Whatever the cause, we seem to appreciate the forms of nature more and more. And I have that in common with a lot of other artists. Perhaps in a few years, I can just hang a single, beautiful feather in the center of a big, otherwise empty gallery room for people to admire and contemplate, and that will be considered high art.

DESCRIBE THE ATMOSPHERE WHEN YOU ARE AT WORK:

As I write this, I am on a plane to Los Angeles—I take my notebook and pen with me wherever I go to write my ideas. My studio is newly remodeled to have spaces for storage of feathers, frames, tools, finished pieces, and lots of counterspace. I put a greenhouse on

the side—a quiet, nice place to sit and think. The actual cutting takes only a small space. I like winter time when it is dark and often rainy—a good time to be inside near a wood fire. I like cutting, gluing, and doing detail work during this time. And I plan to set some time aside to sit and watch the shorebirds in the early morning fly about and poke their beaks into the sand for the small creatures they eat on the beach at Santa Monica.

WHAT DO YOU FIND VISUALLY INSPIRING THAT YOU CAN’T WAIT TO RECREATE IN YOUR ART?

I find plants, animals, wind and sky, sand, and rocks inspiring. Not so much on the screens of the computers and phones, but real life where I get the three-dimensional sights,

sounds, and smells. Movement is inspiring. I especially like the macro world (little things). Since my medium is feathers and the subjects are bird-related themes, I find the visual attributes of birds inspiring—the way a gull opens its wings and just starts to take off, the way a hummingbird buzzes. I am inspired by themes that are important to a bird’s life, like migration or feather shedding. I like the idea of presenting a beautiful feather in a manner that helps people see it in a different way.

HOW DO YOU CONTINUE TO CHALLENGE YOURSELF AS AN ARTIST?

I improve my techniques, I improve my materials, and I keep making original work. A lot of people request work based on the same designs that I have already made, and I do



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these commissions. Balancing that with entirely new work is important. I am also beginning to work on large installations (this is new work that is not based on shadowboxes). Doing installations in museums and working with other artists is in the works. I’ve created feather “pillars” for weddings as a trial. I want to fill architectural spaces with feather spheres or arches. I am working out bugs and trying new design ideas. It’s a challenge to structure my schedule to devote some time every day to creating ideas and making them a reality. When I do the detail work, I only spend a little more than a couple hours at a time, before going for a walk, taking a break to give my eyes and body a rest. I enjoy working collaboratively with other artists and plan to do this more. I enjoy collaborating with a large variety of people from all types of persuasions. Often this is on commissions to arrive at a piece that means something more to them—people have all sorts of meaningful connections with birds, whether it is hunting turkeys or ducks, their pet parrot, or with crows that get into their cat’s food. But most people have a less direct association with feathers because they represent something important to them; it could be a spiritual connection or a connection with a theme like flight or delicacy. Turkey and duck hunters that I have worked with are very respectful and knowledgeable about their quarry. Working with these different people has challenged my thinking and perceptions and pushed the boundaries of my design and art.

WHAT ARTISTS HAVE INSPIRED AND SHAPED YOUR CRAFT?

Paul Klee captures the essence of beauty in his abstractions, and his art spans cultures



east and west. I love his colors, though they are not applicable to the limited palette I have with feathers. M.C. Escher brings the beauty of mathematics into an art form, and I find that precise arrangement is useful in helping the eye pay attention to the inherent natural beauty of feathers that usually go unnoticed unless the eye is told to look. I also like that he was honest about art being a process of visual deception—tricking the eye into illusions of depth and form. William Blake captures meaning in his watercolors. Joseph Cornell as well as the curiosity boxes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries speak to me, and my shadowboxes can be seen as having their

roots somewhat in this genre. Every contemporary artist I spend time with influences me creatively. Talking with them and listening to their thoughts inspires me—from realist painters like Robert Bateman to abstract artists like Tom Anderson to minimalist sculptors like Tony Angel. Even though my work seems original and nothing like this has ever been done, it is all based on the foundation of many artists who have preceded me.

WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE IN TEN YEARS?

I see myself continuing to work with feathers. Some will include feather designs in

shadowboxes. I will also consult on feather design and install feather art as big installations without shadowboxes—in offices, homes, museums, hospitals, and public places. I’d like to show more movement of feathers, and whether that turns out to be some creative engineering for installations, set designs, videos, or whatever remains to be seen. Then there is the whole world of fashion that I have not pursued. Although I would like to work with fashion to enhance people’s respect for the birds, I am not yet headed in that direction. I’d like to keep learning about this remarkable clothing that birds wear and use for so many things.

TALK ABOUT YOUR LIFE OUTSIDE OF YOUR WORK:

Art has been bringing me more into the big cities which I love, but my heart, my sustenance, comes from places with less cement. At my home south of Olympia, I plant a big vegetable garden every year. My method of growing vegetables takes very little time—it is low maintenance, which is good because more and more of my time is invested in art. Among the small areas I till is a patch devoted to winter squash which I have been growing for twenty years, selecting for the sweetest and longest lasting ones. They fill up the back of a small truck, and I eat and give them away all winter. I like knowing where my food comes from. I also like keeping in shape but not in a gym. So I hike, bike, and run, which sometimes turns into wandering and exploring new places, or getting distracted by birds and growing things. I like to read more than watch movies or television; the last book I read explored connections between beauty and science, *Survival of the Beautiful* by David Rothenberg.

IF YOU WEREN’T AN ARTIST, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?

Whatever I would be doing, I hope I would be using a great dose of creativity even if I wasn’t called an artist. Responding to life in creative ways keeps me making mistakes and sometimes succeeding in ways that explore far more possibilities than if I did not take creative risks.

AL :: www.featherfolio.com

The Green Scene

LOVE YOUR LIFE; LOVE THE ENVIRONMENT

text: AS NOTED | photography: AS NOTED

There are countless options for fitting eco-friendly items, like soaps and throw pillows, into your lifestyle and home.

Festival Sol Dinnerware

As shimmering and vibrant as sunshine glistening off waves, this recycled glass dinnerware instantly brightens any meal. Glass produced from recycled glass instead of raw materials reduces related air pollution by 20 percent and related water pollution by 50 percent. Recycling glass keeps used bottles and jars out of landfills, thereby decreasing the need for them.

www.vivaterra.com



Paddywax Soy Candles

Bold colors accent the simple, natural ceramic containers of the Homegrown Soy Wax Candles. Handmade ceramic pots are dipped in bold colored paints, then filled with soy wax scented with natural oils, and topped with a burnished wood lid. Available in Cucumber Melon, Mandarin Basil, Meyer Lemon, Rosemary Fennel, Currant Raspberry, and Watermelon Mint.

www.bambeco.com

Ruffled Sari Bag

These one-of-a-kind ruffled bags are handmade by craftspeople in India from recycled saris. For each one, the layers of silk and rayon come in a unique combination of colors and patterns, ranging from jewel tones to earth tones. The bag has an inner lining of lightweight white cotton with a large central compartment and a single side pocket for quick access to your keys, purse, or wallet. The clasp functions in two ways: there's a button and loop fastener, and a fabric cord that can tie the bag closed for greater security.

www.uncommongoods.com



Bloom Organic Pillow

Add some eco-friendly softness to your home with the Bloom Organic Pillow. A bold, colorful leaf motif traces across the pure, natural linen cover. A feather and down insert ensures long-term comfort and good looks. Bold, sophisticated, and just a little Scandinavian in style, these pillows are all eco.

www.bambeco.com



Soaps to Live By

Each organic bar soap is handcrafted from natural and organic ingredients like moisturizing coconut oil, sustainable palm oil, pure essential oils, and organic and natural ingredients that nurture your skin and your soul. Their labels are made from biostone and are fully compostable and biodegradable.

They've even partnered with Trees for the Future to plant a tree for every soap they sell.

www.soapstoliveby.com



photo | SHELLEY ROSE PHOTOGRAPHY



Fire Extinguisher Vase

When artist Valentino Llegada found a rusted fire extinguisher in his studio, he saw something beautiful in its weathered form. The striking, no-nonsense industrial design of the metal container nicely emphasizes the brushed contours of Llegada's richly colored paints. Filled with fresh cut flowers or propped on their own, these color-washed vases make a beautiful addition to any room.

www.uncommongoods.com



Teak Ducks

This mother duck and her ducklings will waddle into your home, and your heart. Completely hand-carved from recycled bamboo root and teakwood, these adorable ducks sport bright yellow rain gear, inquisitive eyes, and delightful webbed feet. For indoors or out—after all, they do have raincoats!

www.uncommongoods.com

Recycled Denim Rug

This rag rug is made from old worn-out Nudie Jeans denims. The jeans are cut down to serrated strips, which are sewn together and rolled up on spools. The strips are then woven together by hand on a manual shuttle loom. The weft is made from indigo dyed thread, the same that's used for the Nudie Jeans denims.

www.nudiejeans.com



Ring Ottoman

Cisco's goal is to build furniture that is made from the finest organic and sustainable sources. They work exclusively with vendors who practice humane and fair-trade business. The ring ottoman is available in three different sizes.

www.ciscohome.net



Recycled Glass Balloon Vases

These artfully lopsided recycled glass balloon vases create a dramatic accent, whether standing alone or grouped together.

www.vivaterra.com



Recycled Newspaper Dogs

These floppy-eared canines are all charm. Meet Rover, made from tightly woven and corded recycled newspaper from muzzle to tail. Say hello to Rascal, who started out as shredded and rolled newspapers and grew into this adorable eco-friendly canine. Guaranteed to leave no fur clumps behind the sofa cushion, your new best friends are flat-out adorable.

www.vivaterra.com



Recycled Bike Chain Paperweight

Each month, Graham and his team collect 3,000 pounds of used parts, drawing from 150 shops in 17 states. The parts that still have life in them are donated to a local nonprofit group that teaches bicycle repair to children, but the ones that are beyond repair are made into glowing examples of upcycled design, like this eye-catching paperweight.

www.uncommongoods.com

Priti NYC Eco-Friendly Nail Polishes

Vegan and nontoxic, these luxury polishes are the brainchild of founder Kim D'Amato. She launched Priti NYC in 2005 with one simple mission: to support organic farmers and to decrease the amount of chemicals poisoning the earth. Priti NYC polish is available in over one hundred different shades, including metallics, mattes, neons, darks, and nudes.

www.pritinyc.com



Huntington Spring Reclaimed Wood Wall Clock

Skilled artisans take wood reclaimed from old buildings and boats to make a charming Spring Reclaimed Wood Wall Clock.

Reclaimed wood gives each of these pieces a unique quality, so no two are exactly alike. Evoking days at the beach with pale shades of pink, yellow, creamy white, and ocean blues, each one-of-a-kind piece will bring a pop of welcome color and sustainable design to any room. This clock runs on batteries, so you can hang it on any wall, or you could even lean it on a shelf.

www.bambeco.com

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