November/December MMXX

The Triad's Curated Lifestyle & Design Magazine



ARTFULLY INSPIRED



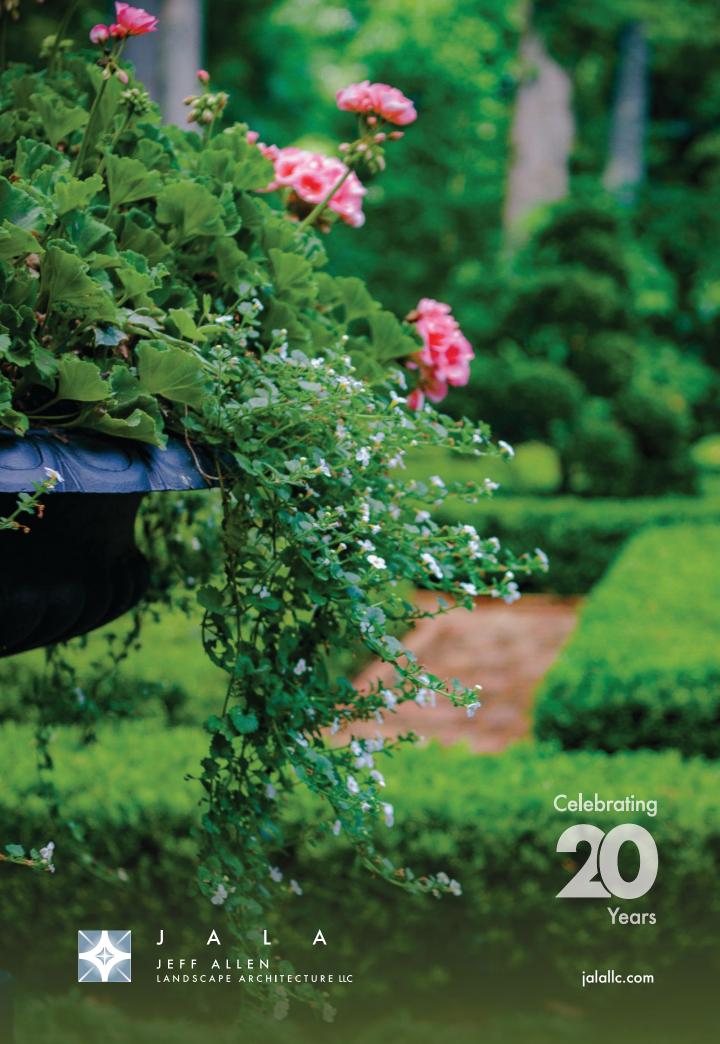
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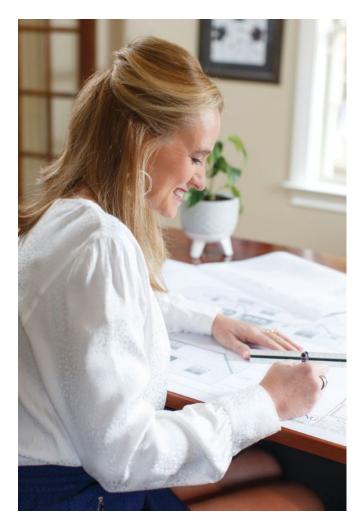






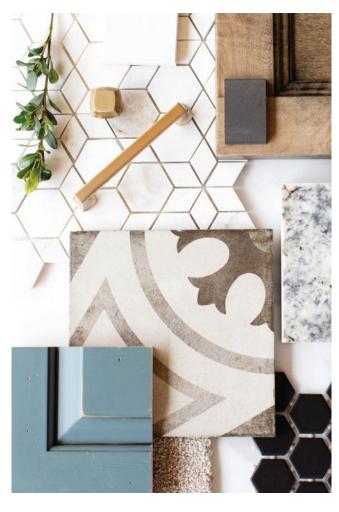














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from the EDITOR

There is no moderation in MOD. Zilch. Nada. Zippo.

MOD is a vibe that's too bold for middle-of-the-road and too cool to follow the rules. It's all about living bold, thinking big, and creating what's new, what's next, what's bright.

So get ready, dear readers. Prepare to be dazzled, because this issue of *MOD Society* is chock-full of spirit, style and shine.

Meet Felix Semper, an amazingly talented artist (with a splash of wizard and street performer thrown in) who creates moving, mesmerizing sculptures and rich, vibrant paintings. His fan base includes celebrities, musicians and international royalty, and his work has gone viral.

Greensboro Science Center is ablaze in lights for the holiday season with its debut Winter Wonderlights installation. But all that high-voltage sparkle can't hold a candle to the Center's leading luminary, Glenn Dobrogosz.

Tour the artfully inspired home of Laura and Michael Handy, designed with flair and family-living ease by Vivid Interiors partners Gina Auten Hicks and Laura Mensch. It is **MOD** to the max!

Mary Tribble of Wake Forest University shares a riveting story of family secrets and reconciliation with our Southern past. It's a time capsule of sorts, opened at just the right moment in history.

Visit the Yadkin Valley vineyard Medaloni Cellars where founder Joey Medaloni and artist Amy Gordon raise a glass to the kindred arts of winemaking and abstract painting.

We enjoy gathering some of our favorite style pros for the feature Curated Style in which they share their fashion philosophy and tips to live and dress by. (You might be surprised by the favs in their closets!)

Interior design expert Laura Redd describes her serendipitous career journey, European influences, and form-follows-function approach. And Terry Lowdermilk gives us chic décor counsel in "Ask the Designer."

We're all about the dazzle in Simply Stunning by Divas Bridal and Boutique. Owner Kathleen Pickering is a rare gem who not only styles and sells fabulous bridal gowns, mother-of-the-bride dresses and cocktail wear, but she also designs and customizes gowns and dresses herself.

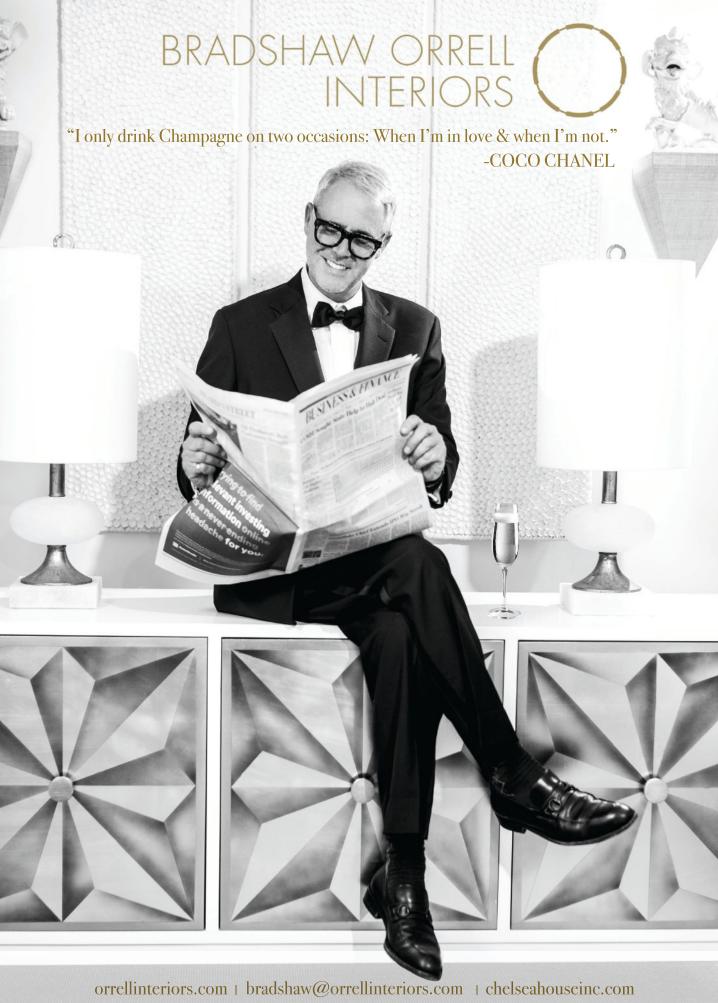
There's plenty of holiday twinkle and joy in our pages, from our newest *MOD* columnist, Lisa Johnson, sharing gracious, always-in-good-taste gifting guidance, to Clothes Whisperer Maribeth Geraci reminding us to dazzle.

As promised, this issue is spilling over with scintillating personalities, shine, and *MOD* sophistication. What you won't find? Ho-hum, bah-humbug moderation.

Wishing you and yours all the sparkle of the season, and a Happy New Year!

Lucinda Trew, editor

Luanda

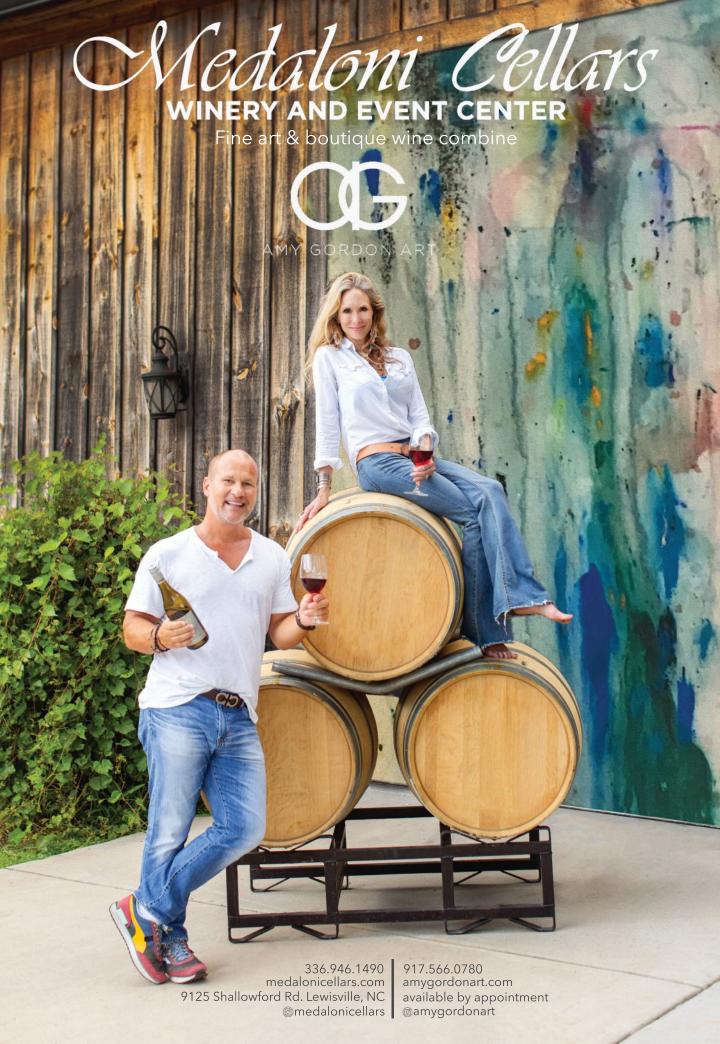


524 south elm st. greensboro, nc +336.209.3524





1175 Revolution Mill Dr. | Suite 11









18 CURATED STYLE

We visit with our go-to style gurus for some best-dressed insight and advice. Spoiler alert: self-awareness, authenticity and being comfortable in your own skin (and high top sneakers) get the highest marks.

ARTFULLY INSPIRED

Check out this amazing redesign by Vivid Interiors. It is fresh and contemporary — and home to six kids, four dogs, lovely art and lots of heart.

26 SITE FURNISHINGS

Jeff Allen reminds us not to overlook outdoor furnishings such as planters, urns, umbrellas and garden seating. They are the finishing touches that make all the difference.

40 ASK THE DESIGNER

Who better to pose our burning décor questions to than interior design aficionado Terry Lowdermilk? When he speaks, we listen.

43 POINTS OF VIEW

Gift-giving is a gift, believes Lisa Johnson, MOD Society's newest columnist. She shares her thoughts on gifting graciously.

45 CLOTHES WHISPERER

Time to deck the halls and dress up in holiday style says Clothes Whisperer Maribeth Geraci.







- 48 LEGACY REDEFINED

 Mary Tribble is Wake Forest legacy

 with long family ties to the university.

 She shares her quest to explore her

 heritage and come to terms with a

 changed narrative.
- THE DOBROGOSZ GLOW
 The Greensboro Science Center is
 showcasing Winter Wonderlights, a holiday
 extravaganza of lights. Visit the show,
 and get to know the Center's visionary
 innovator-in-chief, Glenn Dobrogosz.
- KINETIC ART

 Artist Felix Semper is stretching the bounds of sculpture in mind-bending, jawdropping ways. He paints and sculpts and shows his work at a Revolution Mills studio, but we're giving you a sneak peek here.

- VINE ART
 Joey Medaloni of Medaloni Cellars
 and artist Amy Gordon enjoy
 collaborating, talking art and
 inspiration and sharing a glass of
 the Yadkin Valley's finest.
- YES TO THE DRESS

 Shopping for a wedding dress can be a daunting task. Fitted or flowy? Lace or beads? What's a bride to do? Listen to the advice of Kathleen Pickering, bridal expert and owner of Simply Stunning by Divas.
- DESTINED FOR DESIGN

 Laura Redd studied interior design in

 Germany and brings European aesthetic

 and inspiration to all her projects.



CURATED

location courtesy of branch home | artwork by amy gordon





Carolyn Brown, Carolyn Todd's, Inc.

How do you define style?

Style, in my opinion, is expressing yourself through what you wear and how you feel when you are wearing a look you really love. You may feel comfortable, put together, attractive or confident, but whatever the feeling is, it should make you feel good! Having a loose definition of your personal style is an asset when it comes to shopping. All the sales associates at Carolyn Todd's know their personal styles and can help you create yours!

- **Q:** What is the #1 piece of fashion advice you give your clients?
- A: Wear what makes you feel happy! Happiness in fashion translates into a feeling of confidence and a sense of stylishness. We love to help our customers add pieces of current trends to their everyday outfits, elevating their closets and style!
- Q: How do you decide each season what to carry in your store? What is your fashion lens?
- A: I pay attention to what's trending both industry-wide and locally. That, combined with what my customers like, helps me narrow my focus when it comes to choosing which styles, colors and designers I'll carry for a particular season.
- Q: What's the most treasured item in your closet?
- A: My hiking boots (and my long black suede skirt) not worn at the same time, though!



Becky Causey, The View on Elm

How do you define style?

Style is rarely about being noticed but is about being remembered!

- Q: What is the #1 piece of fashion advice you give your clients?
- **A:** Think outside the box. Get out of your own way; trust a real professional.
- Q: How do you decide each season what to carry in your store? What is your fashion lens?
- A: My intuition is sometimes stronger than I realize, and I never go wrong following it. I am in constant contact with my international designers, so I'm always able to preview their introductions. I'm honored that many of them ask my advice when they are considering new designs. My buying decisions are based on my years of experience with the designers I carry, my deep knowledge of fashion trends, and most importantly, which frames will enhance the appearance of my discriminating clients.
- Q: What's the most treasured item in your closet?
- A: I have two: bright green Converse high top sneakers and an orange cashmere blanket that I wear as a wrap on every flight, to the best restaurants and even for a doctor's visit.



Katy Erikson, Monkee's of High Point

How do you define style?

Style is an expression of one's personality and lifestyle and changes depending on your stage in life. When my children were young, my style was super casual, usually consisting of workout attire. Today my style is still cool and casual but with a dress and booties. Style can also be expressed in ways other than clothes including hairstyle and color, jewelry, body art and accessories.

- Q: What is the #1 piece of fashion advice you give your clients?
- A: I tell my customers they need to be comfortable in what they wear. When you feel good, you look good! We build relationships and get to know our clients' comfort levels, because being comfortable is the most important aspect of style.
- Q: How do you decide each season what to carry in your store? What is your fashion lens?
- A: I attend several markets each year in New York and Atlanta. We look for color trends, prints and the latest fits. Accessories change often, and denim trends are constantly evolving too. Classic styles never go away. Knowing my customer helps determine what we put into the store. Fashion trends eventually come full circle.
- Q: What's the most treasured item in your closet?
- A: Currently, it is my favorite black sneakers. They are so comfortable, they feel like slippers, and I can put them on with a pair of leggings, jeans, or my favorite dress. They are versatile and complement any outfit. You will find me in them at least three days a week!



Maribeth Geraci, DressCode Style

How do you define style?

I believe true style is timeless, elegant and authentic. A woman has style when she has figured out what looks best on her and wears it uniquely. Style transcends the actual clothes you wear. It's about confidence too. Showing up with a look that feels impactful to you. In my coaching practice I call these looks "home run" outfits — they elevate you.

- Q: What is the #1 piece of fashion advice you give your clients?
- A: Don't be dictated to by trends, but know it's always important to stay modern. Wear what feels good and natural to you and your personality. Having that "feels good," "feels like me" reaction to your clothing choices makes a difference in how you move in them, and helps instill confidence.
- Q: How do you decide each season what to carry in your store? What is your fashion lens?
- A: My store selection reflects my fashion philosophy, classic with a twist. Fewer finer things. I love a European aesthetic that has clean lines and uses beautiful fabrics.
- Q: What's the most treasured item in your closet?
- A: Always a fabulous white shirt.



Lois Howard, The Contemporary Lady

How do you define style?

Style is an expression of individuality.

- Q: What is the #1 piece of fashion advice you give your clients?
- **A:** Wear clothing that flatters your body type and gives you confidence.
- **Q:** How do you decide each season what to carry in your store? What is your fashion lens?
- **A:** Past history helps with future buying and knowing your customer base and what they like and their lifestyles.
- Q: What's the most treasured item in your closet?
- A: A faux fur-trimmed cape.



Emem Ikon, Lillo Bella

How do you define style?

A style is a form of self-expression.

A hello. It's how we introduce ourselves to the world around us. Everyone has a unique style.

- Q: What is the #1 piece of fashion advice you give your clients?
- A: We advise our clients to ignore size labels. Sizes vary among designers. Buying what fits properly ensures that that they will wear their clothes more often. Uncomfortable clothes adorn closets, not the person who bought them. We want our clients to love and wear what they buy from us.
- Q: How do you decide each season what to carry in your store? What is your fashion lens?
- A: Our core customers' needs decide what we carry in our store. Many are career women with active work and home lives. This is the reason we stock a wonderful collection of work and travel wear in fabrics that are wrinkle resistant and travel friendly. We focus on designers who create a cross-generational, ageless lifestyle brand with an artistic flair.
- Q: What's the most treasured item in your closet?
- A: My black gabardine blazer and Jon Josef black pumps. I can dress up or down easily with them. Paired with jeans and a t-shirt, they take me many places.



David Kriegsman, Kriegsman Boutique & Luxury Outerwear

How do you define style?

Style is really about personal expression. We provide items not easily found elsewhere, and we like to delight our customers with unique choices. We appeal to customers whose tastes are traditional and those who may be more adventuresome. And we love to help people discover different ways to express their style.

- Q: What is the #1 piece of fashion advice you give your clients?
- A: Make sure you have the right fit. We are highly skilled at tailoring outerwear and many other difficult-to-fit garments. Our customers say it feels great to wear a piece that has been customized to their exact specifications.
- Q: How do you decide each season what to carry in your store? What is your fashion lens?
- A: For our ready-to-wear, we look for quality that provides lasting value. For our own designs, we use some of the world's finest cashmere, leather, wool and fur. We create outerwear that fits our customers' lifestyle, whether they are attending the opera or running errands. One of our bestsellers is a reversible coat with fur on one side and rain-resistant cloth on the other. It looks great and is very functional.
- Q: What's the most treasured item in your closet?
- A: Of course, I love my fur coat. We made it several years ago in the store. I'm also partial to my cashmere blazers, including a distinctive red one that always gets compliments. And I love ties.



Kathleen Pickering, Simply Stunning by Divas

How do you define style?

Style is never forced. It is knowing what looks good on you and being confident about it. For some women, style takes a while to mature, but when it does, it looks effortless and natural.

- Q: What is the #1 piece of fashion advice you give
- A: If you're going to try a new trend, always choose black.
- Q: How do you decide each season what to carry in your store? What is your fashion lens?
- A: We listen to what our customers are requesting and spend many hours researching new designers.
- Q: What's the most treasured item in your closet?
- A: My black Louboutin pumps and black cashmere fur-trimmed sweater.













You could say that Laura Handy's home décor is a case of art inspiring art.

Laura appreciates art; collects beautiful, eclectic pieces; and enjoys painting herself, when time allows. That time is rare, given that Laura is mom to six children between the ages of 12 and 21 and wife to orthopedic surgeon Dr. Michael Handy.

Despite the demands of a bustling, happily boisterous household, Laura has made room for art, and, with the help of Vivid Interiors, made the rooms of her home into works of art.

It began in 2015 when Laura visited the Vivid store to purchase a piece of art by Amy Gordon. She found exactly what she was looking for, an expressive abstract that now hangs in her foyer. She stopped in again when she was shopping for powder room wallpaper. She described what she was looking for to owners Gina Auten Hicks and Laura Mensch, and voila!, they pulled the perfect sample, a stylish white and rose gold floral motif by Hygge & West. After a few more visits (and several art purchases), the Vivid partners decided it was time for them to see Laura's home in person, so they said, "You just need to have us over."

The rest, as they say, is history.

Gina and Laura Mensch have been collaborating with Laura and Michael Handy ever since, giving a bright, modern lift to the traditional home in Greensboro's Starmount Forest neighborhood. Together they've redone seven rooms in the home and touched or touched up most of the others.

The result is a creative blend of comfort and sophistication, ease and elegance. The Handy's home is a place where art is an accent, found in unexpected, unpretentious places like behind the ping-pong table. Beautiful, original pieces and artful touches are displayed graciously and playfully in a home where six kids, four dogs and loads of friends and family can gather, laugh and live.

Every room in the home gets used, and the family enjoys an active, casual lifestyle. "Some people want to wait for their kids to grow up before decorating their home," observes Laura Mensch, with an appreciative laugh. "Not Laura! She told us, 'I can't wait that long!""

Fittingly, the foyer is where the first Amy Gordon painting hangs – Vivid's entry into the home's entry way. And the foyer makes quite the first impression, a tasteful modern twist on a traditional setting. The traditional is architectural: arched doorways, decorative molding, a soaring, three-story ceiling. Clean, classic décor with an edge helps modernize and mix it up. There's a fabulous, funky white table with a base resembling tree roots. It sits on a hide rug that warms the creamy marble flooring. To the right of the front door is a low, contemporary white bench cushioned in lush indigo velvet and accented with throw pillows that add sheen, contrast and texture.

Showcased above the bench, centered between two slender gold sconces and a sleek frame of molding, is a dramatic, spiky white mirror in what Laura Mensch describes as a gessolike finish. It is high-impact, high-style and near-impossible to find any more. Gina recalls nearly crying when they learned that the mirror, a prize find, had gone out of stock. And then the happy-dance moment when they purchased one directly from a vendor at the High Point Furniture Market.

The foyer does exactly what it is meant to do by providing a quick and quirky taste of what's to come: contemporary, one-of-a-kind finds that come together in unconventional, unforgettable ways.

The dining room is probably the most formal room in this easygoing home, but there's nothing fussy or flashy about it. The long table accommodates large family dinners, the chairs are upholstered in a neutral, durable fabric with nail-head trim, and the color palette is tone-on-tone with soft silvers and whites, which carries over into Laura's dream kitchen.

The kitchen continues the eclectic vibe, combining sleek modernity and surfaces with a bit of old-world charm, courtesy of the French-style range in gun-metal gray with bronze hardware. The range was the signature piece and focal point for the kitchen, and Laura Mensch describes the process of designing a hood to complement the piece. They worked with Thompson Traders of Greensboro to come up with a hood that is the perfect finish — pale, champagne metal polished to a soft sheen and trimmed in burnished gold.

Make no mistake, though. This is a working kitchen, a flurry of lunch-making, pie-baking, coming and going, greeting and eating. The breakfast room sits against a sunny backdrop of Palladian widows and features a warm teak table and sturdy side chairs with charming framed backs.

The keeping room off the kitchen is another wonderful mélange: ballet-pink leather swivel chairs, a round wooden coffee table with a marble top encircled by intricate pomegranate carvings and a dazzling chandelier made of recycled Coke bottles by Ro Sham Beaux of Charleston, South Carolina. And of course, there is art, a soft and dreamy abstract by Amy Simms.

There's even an artist's room, previously a space for home-schooling, where Laura can set up an easel and take advantage of great natural lighting pouring in from south-facing French doors. It is a warm and cozy space featuring organic materials and textural aspects like the stone fireplace, Cubist-style rattan chairs, rope chandelier and a large, rustic-looking coffee table that can handle projects, paint and brushes.

And for inspiration, Laura has the most serene master suite. It is a soft, spa-like retreat (did we mention she has six children?), in calm tones of celadon green. Laura Mensch and Gina chose a grass cloth wall covering for the bedroom and coordinating, custom-made drapes that call









to mind watercolor paintings. A mirror framed in creamy white wooden beads hangs above a white chest of drawers. And the Vivid team make their mark here and throughout with signature, stand-out lighting, in this case a dramatic white upsweep of a chandelier crafted of wood and metal.

Much of the furniture in this room was custom built, including Michael's armoire. When the team couldn't find a piece that met the doctor's practical needs and Laura's aesthetic preference, Gina designed and commissioned a local woodworker to build a clean, modern piece. She wanted something masculine and substantial, yet in keeping with the room's light, natural ambience. The white armoire with oversized circular handles of curly maple fits the bill. A metal framed bench with a velvet gray-green cushion sits at the end of the bed, and the elements of texture extend up the bed with soft, shiny and shaggy pillows.

The master bathroom extends the cool, soothing color palette. Bright, fresh white extends from the marble floor to quartz countertops to the chandelier, which matches the bedroom chandelier. The vanity sconces are gem-like, made from carved bronze and fractured glass by designer Kelly Wearstler.

The walls are painted white with just the slightest tinge of gray, the ceiling a muted green, and the water closet is papered in a waterscape pattern similar to the bedroom drapes. Both the water closet and shower feature lovely leaded glass windows, providing both privacy and prisms of sunshine. And beside the sleek, stand-alone tub sits an exquisite teak root table. "In such a polished space, we strive to bring it back down a bit with an organic element," Gina

Continued on page 66

Regarding the Home...

HOMEOWNER: Laura and Michael Handy

INTERIOR DESIGN: Vivid Interiors

KITCHEN REMODEL: Patrick Bunn Innovative Kitchen & Bath WOODWORKER: John King, Southern Yankee Workshop

Featured Home Photos

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Page 30	Master Bedroom
Page 31	Master Bedroom
Page 32	Master Bathroom



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PUBLISHER

MSM Media LLC

EDITOR

Lucinda Trew editor@yourmodsociety.com

COPY EDITOR

Jennifer Weaver-Spencer

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Jeff Allen Christi Barbour & Christi Spangle Maribeth Geraci Lisa Johnson Terry Lowdermilk

PHOTOGRAPHER

Aura Marzouk

ART DIRECTOR

Betsy Huffine

ADVERTISING

Advertising@yourMOD society.com

SOCIAL MEDIA DIRECTOR

Kimberly Jones

MSM Media LLC

4441 Six Forks Road, Suite 106, Box 133 Raleigh, NC 27609

yourMODsociety.com

MODsociety.greensboro

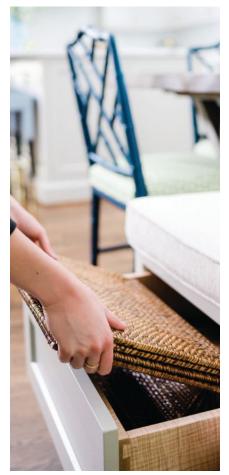
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BEHIND the design

WITH BARBOUR SPANGLE DESIGN







We've all been spending so much time at home, becoming more and more aware of our environment and its function. Binging shows like "The Home Edit" on Netflix has us ready for an overhaul of our spaces to make them more functional. From working from home to schooling at home, we want our spaces to feel lived in and loved while feeling fresh and light.

This home to a family of 5 gives a nod to the history of the home while bringing in modern touches with finishes that are life-friendly. At Barbour Spangle, we believe highly-livable spaces can be both beautiful and functional.

What's our secret to order in chaos? Organization. When everything has a place, it makes it easier for kids (and husbands) to put things away.

We believe an organized and functional home leads to a happier home. Thoughtful storage, like these hidden drawers, keep your space looking clean and clutter free.

On the flip side, a display of organization can also provide a feast for the eyes like this immaculate pantry that has us running to The Container Store.

Between Zoom calls and e-learning, we are getting creative with places to work and learn. Rooms with multiple uses, like this laundry room with a built-in desk, will continue to provide function and value long after we've all put 2020 behind us.



JALA

Jeff Allen Landscape Architecture LLC

One thing often forgotten early in the landscape design process is site furnishings. I consider site furnishings to be planters, urns, sculpture, wall reliefs or masks, lantern posts and of course furniture. No garden or landscape would be complete without these. These design elements are included from the start of our design process. I do not expect to have everything picked out from the beginning, but I want to make sure that all the appropriate site furnishings are included.

Furniture layout is an essential part of our design process and helps determine how we size terraces. Is your space formal or relaxed? Is it designed for entertaining, dining, or is it a private oasis? There are a wide variety of choices and price ranges for outdoor furniture available on the market right now. Other considerations are the number of people you plan to accommodate. I often ask, "How many people do you plan to host?" This helps in sizing the furniture and creating a flexible space and a series of terraces that can expand a typical party of 12 to 20 to 50 or larger.

Other elements include pool lounge furnishings (chaises, umbrellas and side tables).

I enjoy collaborating with interior designers when laying out furniture as they have insight and experience regarding furniture arrangement. They have a great range of choices and are talented at fabrics and textures that blend well with the interior furniture.

For planters, our clients want colorful displays and seasonal interest throughout the year. I prefer to do this in small pockets that provide large impact and are flexible and easily changed. Planters can guide you to a main entrance, frame a long view, soften corners like drapery, accent a gateway and be the focal point on an axis, but always add a beautiful display of flowers or sculptural topiary.

Choosing the right planter is important to the overall design. Material selections range from terra cotta, lead and zinc to cast stone, cast concrete and decorative fiberglass. The materials should be durable and hold up over the winter. It is important to establish your locations early in the process so you can accommodate irrigation and lighting during the construction phase.

- Jeff Allen, Landscape Architect





Casual furniture rich in texture is a great spot to get out of the sun and cool off with beautiful views overlooking the pool. A series of planters filled with boxwoods line the pool.



These chaise lounge chairs and umbrellas poolside provide the perfect spot to soak up some sun and spend the afternoon with a good book.



This terrace overlooks a garden and is a quiet place for a social gathering or to spend time with family. A variety of planters and urns strategically placed throughout add the right accessory on the coffee table, provide a focal point from both inside and outside the home and flank the French doors off the living room for a welcoming entry.



A modest terrace with casual seating is inviting and the perfect spot for a glass of wine. Lush planters filled with tropicals flank the French doors onto the terrace. The planter detailing complements the brick coining of the architecture.



Low terra cotta bowls filled with annuals were inspired by our lient's travels to Japan. They are placed along the edge of a porch and soften the brick columns

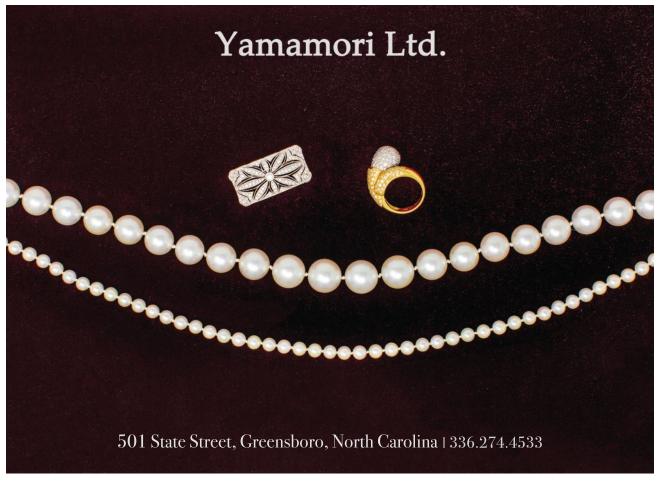


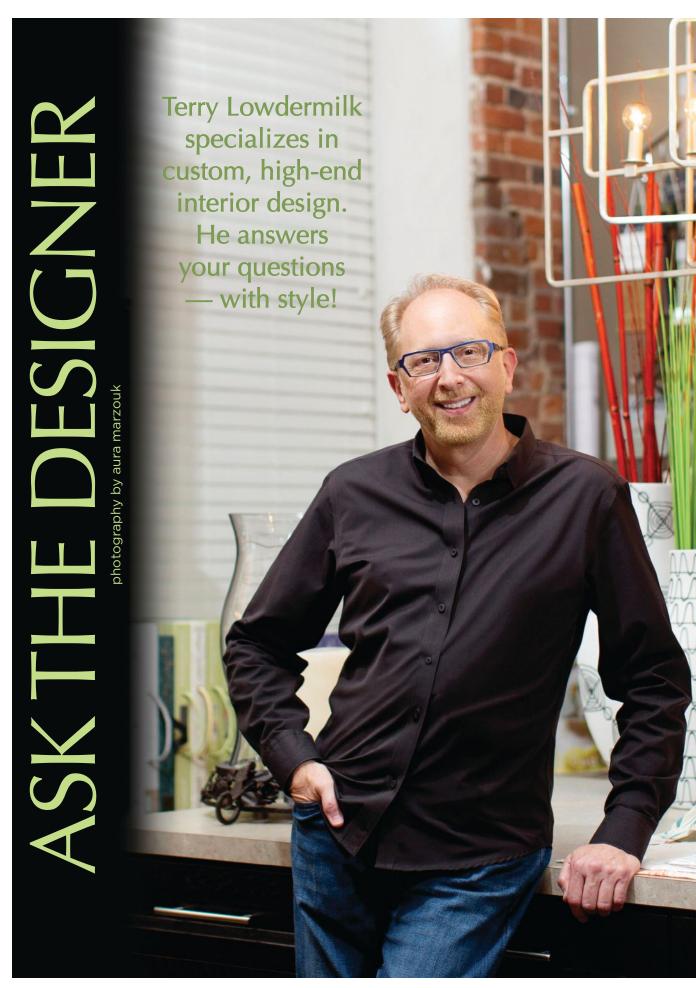
This smart square planter sits in the background and completes this garden composition. The color of the planter picks up on the hydrangea blossoms and the rounded boxwood contrasts the clipped boxwood hedge.

JAMES S. COLLINS ARCHITECT











What elements define your style, and where do you find inspiration?

My love for architectural details is very much a part of my style. I refer back to the many books I read during my schooling and those I continue to collect. I also am an avid "old movie" fan. I enjoy seeing the sets designed in older movies with beautiful architectural details and use of furnishings and decorative ornaments. This can range from the many looks of Auntie Mame's apartment in New York, in "Mame," or the Frank Lloyd Wright home in "A Summer Place." In my opinion, good classic elements are always in style whether they wrap around a traditional, transitional or contemporary interior. I also seek out inspiration from my clients' taste, desires for certain color schemes, discussions about their travels, interests and hobbies. Obviously, it is a designer's job to create beautiful and working environments for his or her clients. But, listening to them is also important in obtaining that personal inspiration. The other element added into the mix would be pulling inspiration from the many companies showcasing their furnishings and accessories at market, shopping for antiques and looking for art and other decorative items. One painting or beautiful rug can go a long way in inspiring a great space!

How do you decide which projects are a good fit for you and your company?

Right off hand, one could say that the availability of time would be the first consideration. For me, I prefer to meet with a potential client and find out the scope of the project and to what extent I would be involved. Their timing of completion and expectations play into this decision. The size of the project is not a concern, as I like to work on smaller projects along with larger projects. A good mix works well for me. However, I prefer to work with clients who appear to be open to new ideas, as it is the designer's job to bring new thoughts and ideas to the table. If it appears that we are going to be on two separate pages, I feel it is best that I let them know I am not the designer for them. I do pride myself in adapting to the styles that fit my clients, but, if there are certain requirements of materials and products I am not comfortable working with, I prefer to inform them up front.

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POINTS OF VIEW

There is a gift to gift-giving, and Lisa Johnson helps us unwrap the secret of selecting perfect presents for the special people in our lives.

am a big believer in expanding my perspective and embracing new and divergent points of view. I find that makes life more interesting, adventuresome and fun than focusing too narrowly.

I like to be curious — it helps me remain open to possibilities. Expanding your view can take many forms, from reading a book or listening to a podcast on a topic you know little about to striking up a conversation with someone you don't know. So, in a year of challenges, let's try to find the good, the new and the unexpected.

One of the ways in which I've benefited from expanded points of view is within my business. My business is a collection.

A collection of

services, a collection of interesting and bold clients, a collection of talented and artisanal resources and a collection of objects that reflect timeless antiques and contemporary works. Because I've expanded my point of view. I've been able to learn from others and create a diverse collection to fit my ever-evolving clientele.

As we prepare for the upcoming holidays, let's be open to expanding our perspectives as our celebrations may

take different forms. Perhaps we want to continue a tradition but be open to something new? And gifting, where do we start? Now more than ever, when the world has hit pause, we should be mindful of how we

> gift. It is a gift to gift, and those who do it well possess a rare and lovely talent.

Gifting requires thought, not impulse. It requires a knowledge of the receiver's passions and needs. Do we add to a collection. or do we seek something new? For some, it could be sharing your time or talent with someone who appreciates the gift of human interaction. For others, it is finding the perfect gift that brings amusement or fulfills a need.

To gift well, be prepared! Gift with passion and meaning no matter how small or large the gift. Gift because you want to, not because you need to. Doing so will bring you as much pleasure as the person receiving the gift. So, in the midst of the hustle and bustle of the holidays, unfocus a bit so that you enjoy an expanded view!

> - Lisa Johnson Lisa Johnson & Company | Shop on Blair







photography by aura marzouk

This is the time of year we usually get excited about the holidays, family time, parties, travel and dressing up! However, our lives still have a dark cloud hanging overhead, and "canceled" notices continue to arrive. So, let's circle back to my question of the year, why bother to fix up and dress up?

Putting some effort into our outfits and appearance is a key way to care for our mental health in these notso-normal-times. It may seem frivolous and ridiculous but trust me: it does help — a lot. It provides a sense of normalcy. Ask yourself: are we going to get excited about the holidaze, or are we going to try and survive not only the holidaze, but the entire winter?

We all need to snap out of it! It's a tough go right now, and it's dragging on longer than many of us thought possible, but during the holidays gratitude should reign!

Even if I dress up for myself, or just my immediate family, I will look festive, and I'll make sure my attitude matches my outfit.

Virtual holiday party ideas are already popping up on the internet. If you are lucky enough to have an outdoor fireplace and entertaining area, then buy your invitations and start planning a fun outdoor soirée. If you usually host a holiday party in your home, think about splitting your group and having two parties to allow more room for social distancing. Get creative, and get your party started! Plan your party outfit, think through all your details, and look your best. Lift your spirits!

A number of great holiday fashions are trending. Try a monochrome head-to-toe color in sequins or satin, or, perfect for fireside entertaining, a furtrimmed cashmere sweater worn with the pant of the year, joggers. If your event is more casual, there is always the high-waisted wide leg dark denim paired with an elegant dressy blouse. Buy them, wear them, make yourself sparkle and shine. The New Year awaits.

- Maribeth Geraci, DressCode Style







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LEGACY REDEFINED

photography by aura marzouk

Mary Tribble is Wake Forest legacy, gold and black going way, way back. She's a proud alum (Class of 1982 and Class of 2019), a university staff member, the great-great-great granddaughter of Wake Forest University's (WFU) founder and first president, Dr. Samuel Wait, and the great-niece of Harold Tribble, the university's 10th president.

But it was her great-great-great grandmother, Samuel's wife, Sarah (Sally) Merriam Wait, who captured Mary's attention and sent her shimmying up the family tree to discover new truths and old tales about her family's legacy.

Mary had long been curious about Sally Wait, who was, in keeping with early 19th century mores, overshadowed by her Baptist minister and missionary husband. Much has been written and recorded about the devout Samuel but very little regarding his wife.

While working at the university as Senior Advisor for Engagement Strategies, Mary decided to pursue a master's degree in Liberal Studies at WFU. She devoted her master's thesis to telling Sally's story, from being raised in New England to marrying an ambitious young minister to landing, after lengthy travels with and separations from her itinerant husband, in North Carolina.

As a strong and accomplished woman herself, Mary felt a feminist tug to tell Sally's story.

Before accepting the WFU position, Mary enjoyed a successful 25-year career in Charlotte as owner of Tribble Creative Group, an event marketing business and the innovative force behind the city's most defining moments and galas including NCAA Final Four tournaments, charity and cultural galas, international conferences, an NBA All-Star weekend and the launch of the North Carolina Conference for Women. Two months after selling her business in 2010, Mary was asked to serve as Chief of Event Planning for the 2012 Democratic National Convention to be held in Charlotte.

She's also a writer, public speaker and world traveler who has trekked through the Sahara Desert, Bali, Costa Rica, Tibet and the Andes in Peru. Mary is a seeker. Her quest to learn about Sally Wait led her to the special collection stacks of Wake Forest's Z. Smith Reynolds Library. There she spent hours and days, weeks and months poring over letters, journals, household records and receipts. She recalls savoring her time in the musty archives, piecing together the couple's courtship and marriage, kinship and mission.

And then, on a day she can't rewind or forget, she was shown the bill of sale for two enslaved women owned by her ancestors. It was a revelation that set in motion the rewriting of family, and institutional, history.

"I grew up with this family lore that we were poor Baptist ministers," Mary explains. "We couldn't have owned slaves; we wouldn't have owned slaves." And, there was more to it than the unmasking of family secrets. By this point, Mary had spent years in the archives getting to know Sally, connecting with her, investing in the ancestral narrative.

But now she had the receipts. She also had family artifacts, including the handwritten draft of a speech delivered by the Waits' grandson, John Bruce Brewer who was tasked with introducing the fifth president of WFU in 1927 and providing color and context on the previous four. Brewer would have been 81 at the time and was in the unique position of having known every single former president of Wake Forest.

And he changed history with the stroke of a pen. Describing Samuel Wait, Brewer wrote, "All he had to begin with was the prayers and support of some of the best people in the world, a farm of 620 acres, a dwelling house, carriage house and several negro cabins "

That was the original text. But there was a hand-written edit, a cross-out destined to recast history and shake the branches of Mary's family tree. John Bruce Brewer scratched out "negro cabins" and substituted "log cabins."

A minor modification on paper; a far more momentous shift in family and scholarly lore.

Mary's comprehension of Samuel and Sally's participation in southern slave culture coincided with a confluence of events occurring within, and far beyond, her quiet corner of the library.

WFU had named a new Dean of Library, Tim Pyatt, in 2015. In reviewing and reflecting on a new online course on WFU history, Dean Pyatt raised thoughtful questions about the narrative of the school, founded decades before the Civil War. The closer, more comprehensive look led to the creation of WFU's Slavery, Race and Memory Project, an effort to develop and implement an academically-centered approach to examining the history of slavery and its implications at Wake Forest. Mary serves on the steering committee.

Shortly thereafter, WFU joined Universities Studying Slavery (USS), a growing consortium of university institutions collaborating to address "both historical and contemporary issues dealing with race and inequality in higher education and in university communities as well as the complicated legacies of slavery in modern American society." Mary attends many of the USS conferences, and WFU and Guilford College were slated to host the Fall 2020 meeting prior to COVID-19.

Mary had to come to terms with her own personal reaction and the fact that her inquiry into family history revealed far more than she had bargained for. "It's a complicated story and a complicated past," she says. "You think you know the top-line story that's been passed down and carried forward with pride. And then, you realize that you didn't know all of the story, and it's not an entirely great story. But you have an obligation to face it, to understand it and to bring it to light."

She is doing that, bearing witness to a past she's only recently learned of, and carrying forward the WFU motto, Pro Humanitate (for humanity), a calling to use one's knowledge, talents and compassion to better the lives of others.

It is important, she believes, to acknowledge the past and apply its lessons to the future. She recalls sharing her story with several classes and the nervous pit in her stomach as she stood before the attentive students. "I had to tell them that the founder of their university had enslaved people, and I am descended from those enslavers."

Mary wrote an essay on the Wait family, women and slavery for the Slavery, Race and Memory Project's initial publication "To Stand With and For Humanity."

She presented a synopsis of the piece to the university's Board of Trustees last June.

The response she's received has been empathetic and empowering. It helped that Wake Forest administrators, along with institutions and economies across the country, were coming to terms with a past that had been built in large part by slave labor. "We were and are an exceptional institution," Mary says, "but that exceptionalism came with a human cost. We can't erase the toll of suffering, but we can acknowledge it and seek healing and meaningful change."

Mary's role at the university includes oversight of the Wake Forest historical museum, located in Wake Forest, North Carolina, where the school was located before moving to Winston-Salem in 1956. Efforts are now underway to update the museum's narrative to more forthrightly address how the university and the town participated in the slave economy.

Earlier this year at WFU's Founder's Day Convocation in Wait Chapel, President Nathan Hatch delivered a speech in which he apologized for the school's historical connection with slavery. "I apologize for the exploitation and use of enslaved people — both those known and unknown — who helped create and build this university through no choice of their own," he said.

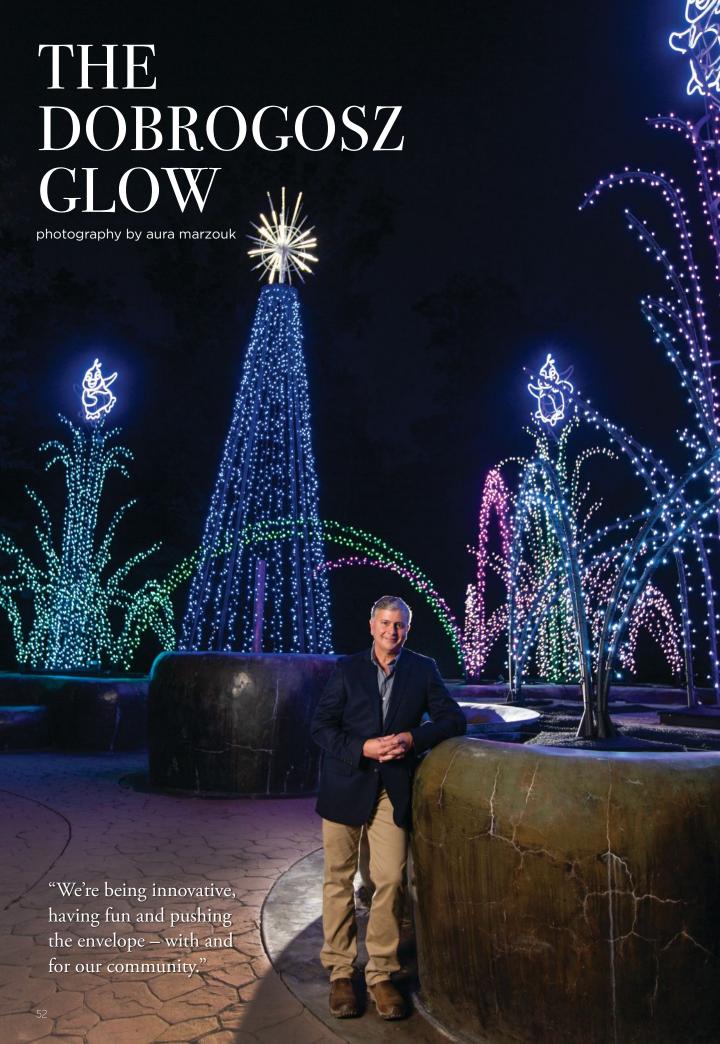
Mary's thesis on Sally Wait has taken quite the turn, but as a seeker of truth that works Pro Humanitate, she is grateful for all she's learned. She graduated last spring, and her thesis has become a book that will be published by the University of Tennessee Press. She bought a home in Old Salem that coincidentally, if one believes in coincidence, was originally owned by the gentleman who hired Mary for her first job out of college, working for the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts.

She has a puppy now, too, who she's named Achsah, after Sally Wait's abolitionist sister-in-law. Life is good, legacy is complicated, and Mary is grateful for the chance to help set the historical record straight and become reacquainted with her great-great-great-great grandmother. — Lucinda Trew, editor

For more information: about.wfu.edu/history/the-slavery-race-and-memory-project/, www.marytribble.com/walking-inside-story/







The Greensboro Science Center is all about growing and glowing — this year.

The glowing comes with the debut of Winter Wonderlights, a dazzling holiday light extravaganza running nightly (with the exception of November 26, December 24 and December 25) at the center through January 3, 2021. Light designers, who toiled like elves into the wee hours to ready the show, have created beautiful displays in 12 unique zones within the zoo, science center and carousel areas. Highlights (emphasis on lights!) include Snowball Surprise, Gingerbread Barn, Dancing Fountains and Forest of Light.

At the close of a challenging year, Winter Wonderlights is a welcome blaze of brightness and cheer. The project, which has been in the works for a couple of years, comes when it's needed most. It is, literally and figuratively, light at the end of the 2020 tunnel, and a beacon of happy times to come.

Glenn Dobrogosz, the Center's president and CEO, is delighted to bring a new tradition and tourism draw to Greensboro. The light show is just the latest in Glenn's efforts to energize and expand what he says used to be viewed as "the sleepy museum of Lawndale Drive."

Not anymore! Since his arrival in 2004, the Greensboro Science Center has expanded dramatically. Staff size has tripled. The budget has tripled, as have the center's wild and wondrous collections. And attendance, the metric Glenn puts the greatest stock in, has nearly quadrupled. The center is now the fastest growing attraction in North Carolina.

Glenn has many answers when asked to reveal the secret to that success: a commitment to constant, innovative, bar-raising change; phenomenal staff, board members and volunteers; a supportive community.

All well and good and so, so true. But spend time with Glenn and you'll quickly realize that he is high-voltage charismatic; a champion of change who thinks boldly, moves quickly, bores easily and inspires those around him with his energy and passion.

When he arrived in Greensboro 16 years ago, he set about developing a master plan for the center with input from his staff, board members and new community. He and a team visited successful facilities across the Eastern Seaboard, came home to the Triad and decided to go big and bold. "Science City USA," the center's 2006 master plan, proposed a "three-in-one" campus that would combine a zoo, science museum and the state's first inland aquarium. The plan was aimed at making Greensboro a pacesetter in

terms of science tourism, adding a new dimension to the town's traditional tourism focuses of ACC basketball and downtown attractions. "We wanted to create a signature, stand-out experience that would make our community proud and appeal to all demographics," Glenn explains.

When Animal Discovery Zoo opened in 2007, attendance doubled. Six years later, attendance doubled yet again with the debut of Carolina SciQuarium (now the Wiseman Aquarium), which expanded by an additional 5,000 square feet in 2017. Other attractions added during master plan implementation include the OmniSphere Theater; SkyWild, a treetop adventure course; SciPlay Bay, an "underwater" exploration center; Prehistoric Passages: Realm of Dragons, a dinosaur exhibit starring komodo dragons; and the Rotary Club of Greensboro Carousel, aptly described as the crown jewel of the Battleground Parks District.

And there's plenty more to come, including Revolution Ridge, an 11-acre expansion of the zoo, which will be home to endangered species such as the pygmy hippo, red panda and okapi. Revolution Ridge, slated to open early next year, has a cool back-story. It all began, Glenn recounts, when a group of history buffs visited the center's grounds, which abut the Guilford National Military Park. Wielding metal detectors, they discovered a bounty of Revolutionary Warera musket balls. This got Glenn thinking. "We're on sacred land here, land where humans fought for the sacred right of freedom. Endangered species across the globe seek the same thing, to be left alone to live in peace and freedom." The addition of Revolution Ridge allows the Center to teach about conservation and animal protection in a revolutionary way and, at the same time, to connect with the region's history.

Here's another cool back-story, how Glenn found his way to an amazing career and his North Carolina home. It all began in the Caribbean country of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Glenn was a recent college graduate serving a teaching stint with the Peace Corps. While there he worked with a wildlife group doing counts of the Saint Vincent parrot, a vulnerable species being hunted as a food source. To help stabilize the parrot population, the group sought and achieved a USAID grant to build a chicken plant on the island to provide alternative bird meat – and protect the parrots. That is when he knew he wanted to work in zoology and learn more about endangered species.



He headed to Gainesville, Florida and enrolled in the Santa Fe College zoology technology program, where he met his wife Tonya, also a student. They married, graduated and took jobs at the Indianapolis Zoo. Tonya's position involved working with tigers and bears; Glenn was assigned elephant duty, filling a dumpster a day with manure.

The couple traveled next to Nashville, Tennessee and then north to Watertown, New York where Glenn landed his first directorship position at New York State Zoo at Thompson Park. They lived in an old limestone home in the middle of the zoo, and Glenn likes to joke that his daughter was born in the zoo. Close, but not completely accurate. Hannah was born at a hospital. But she did spend the first six years of her life in the zoo, growing up amid wolverines, bears and bobcats.

Glenn led a dramatic transformation of the Watertown zoo, including record-breaking fundraising, the launch of a collegiate zoology program, and accreditation by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. Then, he headed back south, first for a two-year stay in Georgia, and finally, thankfully, to Greensboro.

A lot has changed during his 16-year tenure, and he and his team are gearing up for a whole lot more.

The Center has a multi-disciplinary innovation committee whose members come together to do the kind of blue-sky brainstorming that elevates the Center and the community it serves. Glenn, his staff and the board are focused intently on the future. "The Gateway Plan: Opening Minds and Building Futures through Science and the Arts" is their new 2020-2030 vision. As you might expect, it's ambitious and innovative, representing an estimated \$45 million in capital improvements, 460 jobs and \$80 million in economic impact over the decade. The Gateway Plan fuses the arts and sciences with science-inspired sculptures, architecture and exhibits. It promises increased interactivity, accessibility and discovery experiences, all centered around science education, species conservation and experiential learning. "We're all about change," Glenn says. "We're innovating, having fun and pushing the envelope with and for our community."

The future is bright at the Greensboro Science Center, beginning with the must-see Winter Wonderlights and continuing with the inextinguishable Dobrogosz glow.

- Lucinda Trew, editor

For more information: www.greensboroscience.org



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KINETIC ART

photography by aura marzouk



Felix Semper is all about the flex. In art and in life he's learned how to stretch, adapt, create and amaze those around him.

Felix is a visual artist who used to be a custom homebuilder. His sculptures, which appear to be chiseled from blocks of marble, granite or wood are actually paper, meticulously layered, glued, carved and painted.

The optical illusion doesn't end there. The solid-looking sculptures stretch accordion-style, awing viewers with their fluidity and fun twists (both literal and figurative) on what's before them. Felix never tires of the reaction. Like a fedorawearing magician, he stands behind a sculpture of Notorious B.I.G., lifts the gold crown he's given the rapper, and Biggie extends and undulates like a Slinky. Appreciative gasps are audible as spectators reach for cell phones to record the revelation. Felix's art is viral.

He's relatively new to the art world, a talented wunderkind who seems to have reshaped himself as adeptly as he maneuvers paper and paint in his Revolution Mills studio. Felix is a trained electrician, a trade he learned from his father. He went on to run a successful homebuilding business in Greensboro, Semper Homes, until the 2008 housing crisis hit. He filed for bankruptcy a year later and turned to his lifelong love of drawing and painting as a way to save his soul.

His turn at sculpting came during one of North Carolina's rare snow days. Felix, who professes to hate the cold (he was born in Havana, Cuba), headed outside and started digging and sculpting. He recalls being outside for hours, creating a life-size likeness of King Neptune and a woman rising from frosty waves. "My wife Mara kept coming out to check on me, and she was amazed. And honestly, I surprised myself, too. I had never done any kind of sculpture."

He took some classes, at first working mostly with clay. He found that he had a keen sense of the three-dimensional and was able to visualize how space and materials could be manipulated aesthetically. Looking back, he sees how that sensibility helped him in the construction business, and how he's been able to apply construction techniques to his art.

Felix quickly discovered he had a talent for sculpture, and that he loved it. "But I also knew that if I wanted to make an impact with my art, especially starting so late in life, I had to create something iconic, something that people hadn't seen before."

And that's when he turned the page to paper.

Felix had a notion of how paper could move and be assembled in interesting, kinetic ways from early on. He recalls experimenting with paper while working as a paste-up artist in a Miami print shop after high school, intrigued by its movement and malleability. Cutting stacks and pads of paper at the shop, he knew there was something there, but it would be years later before he put it to the test.

He started out carving sculptures from blocks of paper, but they were static and, in his mind, unremarkable. And then he landed on the idea of animating his sculptures by systematically gluing paper and creating patterns and puzzle-like alignments.

He took his first stretchy sculpture, an early Cigar Guy piece, to New York City to get feedback. He found a bench in Washington Square Park and had a friend film the reactions of passersby. At first, people would nod and smile politely. Then, Felix started shifting and twisting the sculpture, miraculously making it move and morph. "Their eyes got wide, and their jaws dropped," he recalls. Folks captured video, sent his work soaring through social media and mobs converged to view Felix's work, both in person and online.

Since then, his work has gained worldwide exposure and fans. He's a favorite of talk show host Wendy Williams, who has had him on her show and purchased pieces of his work, as have Ryan Seacrest and Kelly Ripa. His admirers and collectors span a luminary orbit, from celebrities including rappers Fat Joe, DJ Khaled and A\$AP Rocky to movie moguls, business tycoons and royals from around the world.

Felix has huge followings in India and in China. Several years ago, the Chinese government hosted an exhibition of his work. It was so successful and well-attended that extra security was called in to keep the crowds at bay. His plans for a follow-up six-city art tour in China were postponed because of the pandemic, but he's eager to return, and to accept an invitation by King Salman of Saudi Arabia.

Felix's work is pop culture-inspired and relatable. In addition to Notorious B.I.G., he's crafted sculptures of Tupac Shakur, Bob Marley (which, when opened, reveals 22 original paintings), Andy Warhol and Marilyn Monroe. He's paid homage to Pablo Picasso (carved from a stack of books about Picasso), Ernest Hemingway, Frida Kahlo and even SpongeBob SquarePants.

He also pays tribute to pop-culture icons such as Howdy Doody, the Birkin bag, Frosted Flakes, Air Jordans, Cheez-It and Louis Vuitton. In fact, brands like Adidas now reach out to Felix to commission signature works.

There's an entertainment factor to Felix's art, a gee-whiz, how'd-he-do-that element of wonder. After he completes a piece, he's eager to hit the streets and find a public place to show it off and gauge reaction. At times, he says, "I feel like a snake charmer. I love watching everyone's faces when I start twisting and stretching a piece. They seem mesmerized and can't take their eyes off the sculpture. It's almost like they go into a trance." And they record the show, sending videos of Felix and his dynamic sculpture to millions.

Felix paints as well, and prolifically. His paintings are bold, colorful and impactful, informed by the time he spent growing up in Cuba and Spain, and by graffiti artist Jean-Michel Basquiat (and yes, he's created a Basquiat sculpture). He has several series of painted work: the Cigar Series that pays tribute to his Cuban heritage and birthplace; The España Series, a dramatic collection of flamenco dancers, bulls and Spanish culture; the dream-like, more abstract Livefree Series; and the Design Series with a focus on form, geometric shape and controlled execution.

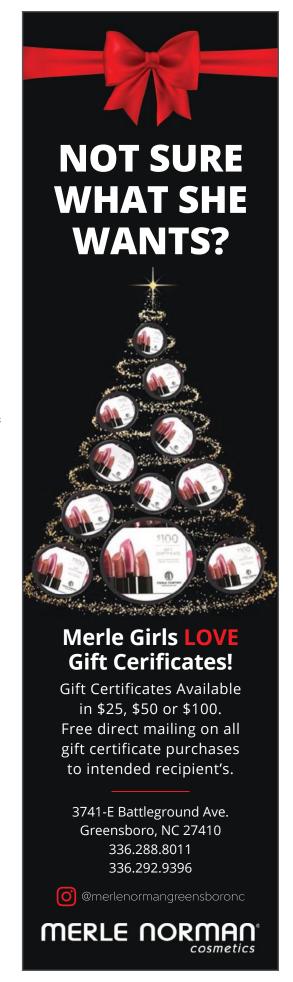
And while there's no shape-shifting aspect to his paintings, all of Felix's pieces vibrate with vivid color, imagination and energy.

He enjoys being able to move back and forth between media and believes it gives him a sense of balance. Sculpting his paper works is a meticulous and lengthy process. A single sculpture can take months to complete, thousands of sheets of paper, and requires precision planning and execution. He's engineered his own special set of blades for the carving task and is in the process of patenting his technique. Painting is much more spontaneous for Felix. He can pick up a brush and let the creativity flow without having to strategize or fabricate.

For a self-taught artist who has been practicing his craft full-time for less than a decade, Felix has created an abundant catalog of work. He's garnered a following of fans, from celebrities and collectors to upscale hotels, businesses and brands. And the future looks as bright as the jewels in Biggie's crown.

It's all about the flex for Felix. He is writing a book, developing two documentaries and constantly envisioning and inventing new art. "I'm always evolving," he says, "constantly changing and creating and coming up with new ways to express myself." – Lucinda Trew, editor

For more information: www.felixsemper.com







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MOD Society Magazine's Official Photographer



There's an art to entertaining, and Joey Medaloni is a master.

He and his family have run some of the Triad's hippest hotspots, restaurants and nightclubs, including Red Room, Sky Bar, Much and Mix. He opened Greensboro's N Club when he was just 26. They also own, oversee (and at times crew) Charleston Sailing Charters, whose fleet includes a 50-foot sailboat, Fate, a 40-foot powerboat, Kismet, and a charter plane that Joey pilots himself.

And now there's the vineyard, Medaloni Cellars, 22 acres of rolling hills in Yadkin Valley that produce consummate wines and celebratory events. This is Joey's place of inspiration, his gallery of grapes, gatherings and good times.

Medaloni Cellars opened to the public in 2012 after Joey sold his nightclubs, became proficient in the art of viticulture (the study of grape cultivation and winemaking) and purchased the perfect tract in Lewisville, North Carolina. Lewisville is a locale with ideal soil characteristics for growing quality grapes. In fact, says Joey, aside from the fact that "we get rain and they get fog," soil conditions of Bordeaux, France and Yadkin Valley, North Carolina are near identical and ideal for winemaking.

He studied long and hard (winemaking takes time, after all), and credits Markus Niggli of Markus Wine Co. in Lodi, California, and Mark Terry of Yadkin Valley as valued mentors. He also spent six months in France in an unpaid apprenticeship, soaking up all the Bordeaux know-how he could. That was in 2008.

In 2010, he and his family bought the vineyard property, which provided lovely views of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the ideal setting for making wine and taking time to entertain and unwind.

They planted vines of Vitis vinifera, Old World European grapes, and committed to producing authentic, top-tier wines unaltered by chemicals or added sweeteners. They began building a welcoming expanse of indoor and outdoor spaces: a tasting room and two bars, cabins for overnight stays (including a treehouse, the luxe Chateau Bergeron and a Flying Cloud Airstream camper), a perfect wedding and party venue and tuckedaway seating on walking trails that wind through the property. Joey called on his hospitality background and

brought food trucks, catering, music and entertainment to the Lewisville site.

The wine has surpassed expectations: exceptional Chardonnays and Rieslings, Cabernets, Merlots, Petit Sirahs and Rosés. And Medaloni Cellars is ranked as one of North Carolina's top wineries. Joey is adept at answering the predictable "What's your favorite?" question. Every wine has its place and occasion, he responds, like a proud papa asked to name his favorite child. "It depends on the time of day, what you're doing and who you're having the wine with."

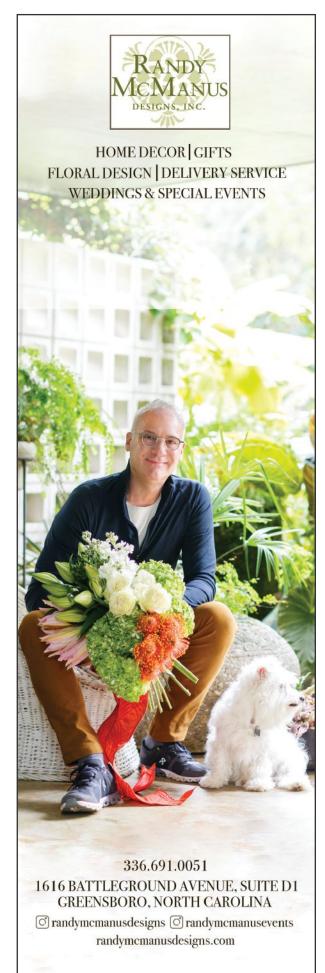
Medaloni Cellars has three unique brands. The Signature Series is entirely North Carolina-grown and produced, both in the Yadkin Valley and from acreage the winery leases in the Swan Creek, North Carolina area. It makes up 75 percent of the Medaloni wines. The Flight Series, accounting for the remaining 25 percent, includes wines made from grapes grown out-of-state, particularly the Lodi region of California. And then there is the Artist Series, limited vintages featuring label art by respected regional artists.

Joey believes in the aesthetic of good wine, fine art and the Carolina soul and soil that nurtures both. Joe Bergeron of Greensboro created the first Artist Series that includes rich paintings of landscapes, grapes and wine.

Amy Gordon, also of Greensboro, is the second commissioned artist, creating lovely, dreamy abstract works to grace Medaloni bottles. Like Joey, she appreciates the collaborative, aesthetic connection between art and wine. "Making wine is an art, like painting. You're creating something beautiful that provides pleasure, and you're both inspired and inspiring." She writes, on the label of a bottle of Medaloni red, "Art and wine have possessed an inspiring and deeply connected relationship for centuries. Abstracts, in their ambiguous nature, lend themselves to interpretation and imagination, while the patient process and unpredictable elements of winemaking are uncommonly complementary."

Amy values the opportunity to partner with local vintners. "It's not like working with a large conglomerate whose marketing department farms out design," she explains. "I know the people and the hands that touch this wine, and that's a good feeling."

Her canvases for Medaloni Cellars range from small



labels to the huge and heavy wine barrel Joey left on her porch recently, which she turned into an artful piece to showcase Artist Series bottles.

The good and glowy aftertaste (the "finish," in sommelier parlance) doesn't end there. Joey plans to auction commissioned artwork to benefit local schools and other community needs. Amy likes to gift bottles bearing her labels to customers who have purchased art so they can uncork, settle in and savor both the painting and the vino.

Joey doesn't miss the bright lights and late nights of nightclub ownership, preferring now to tend his land, harvest the fruits of his labor and work alongside his family business cohorts — his mom, dad, brother and nine-year-old son. He loves the entire winemaking process, from vine to barrel to bottle. And he loves bringing people together, entertaining and pouring his heart into making a great pour.

Medaloni Cellars wines are available at the Tasting Room in Greensboro and Winston-Salem, Proximity Hotel in Greensboro, Basil Leaf Thai in Winston-Salem, Gamekeeper Restaurant in Banner Elk, Medaloni Cellars Vineyard and via the Medaloni Wine Club. – Lucinda Trew, editor

For more information: www.medalonicellars.com For more information: amygordonart.com

ARTFULLY INSPIRED (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33)

explains. "We're always working that push-and-pull between polish and organic to make things softer and warmer."

Though it's difficult to choose, the master suite is Laura's favorite room. It is where she begins her day in devotion and unwinds at the end. It is also Laura Mensch's and Gina's favorite space in the house. Not surprising, given how closely these three have worked together. Laura has a great eye, the Vivid partners agree, and excellent instincts and taste.

Laura gives the love right back, describing the collaboration as easy and fluid, with an ongoing exchange of ideas and options. "They really listened. They listened to the functionality needs of my husband, to my more aesthetic approach and to the overall dynamics of our family."

Laura and Michael were so pleased with the result and the process that they called upon Vivid to design a new office building for Dr. Handy. The Vivid team left a gift for Laura, well-positioned wall space to hang artwork she'll create in her new artist's room — in her artfully-inspired home.

- Lucinda Trew, editor

For more information: www.vivid-interiors.com





SOCIETY SIGHTINGS

photography by aesthetic images

Golmont Wedding

For Bailey Jennings of Greensboro and Taylor Golmont of Charlotte, planning a wedding in 2020 was all about adjusting for what mattered most. The two spoke their vows on the dock at the Roaring Gap Club in Roaring Gap, North Carolina and celebrated with a slightly scaled-down reception at the Boat House.

"It was special having our families together," says Bailey. "We enjoyed spending time with everyone throughout the entire weekend, which made it particularly unique."

Bailey and Taylor felt very much at home, thanks to lovely décor from Randy McManus Designs that included an enchanting flower arch and café lights leading to the waterfront ceremony, and floral arrangements that accented reception tables.

"Our favorite memory was seeing all the people who came to support us," says Taylor — including Roaring Gap neighbors who pulled up in boats to toast the newlyweds!



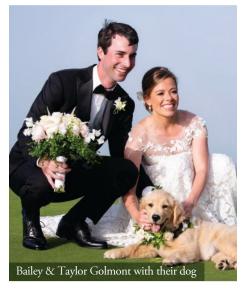




























photography by aura marzouk

"Everyone wants to be beautiful and breathtaking on that special day, and I love helping them achieve just the right look."



Kathleen Pickering is a bridal authority, a doyen of lace and tulle, an expert on the delicate etiquette of dressing for weddings.

She owns Simply Stunning by Divas, a boutique of gorgeous gowns for brides, mothers-of-the-bride and those seeking stylish cocktail and black-tie dresses.

The store itself is simply stunning, with ornate mirrors to twirl before and crystal chandeliers to sparkle beneath. And among the sparkle is a vintage sewing machine that belonged to Kathleen's grandmother. "Both my grandmothers were accomplished seamstresses and pattern-makers. My grandfathers were dapper dressers, as were my parents," she says. "They taught me about quality clothing, craftsmanship and enduring style."

She opened her first Greensboro boutique in the 1980s, featuring ready-to-wear as well as bridal and formal wear. The store has changed locations and product lines over the years, leading to its current offering of wedding, cocktail and evening wear.

Her decision to narrow her focus to bridal coincided with her own second wedding, which got her thinking about those seeking gowns appropriate for second weddings, mature brides and mothers-of-the bride. "Everyone wants to be beautiful and breathtaking on that special day," Kathleen explains, "and I love helping them achieve just the right look for the occasion." Given her 36 years of experience in the business, she has great advice to share with brides and bridal parties.

Tip #1: Give yourself plenty of time to plan and

prepare. You can't rush finding the right match, and you shouldn't rush finding the right dress. A dress can take up to six months to arrive from the manufacturer, and then time is required for alterations, she explains. The lead-time is especially important during this period of COVID-19 when deliveries of all kinds are experiencing delays. Fortunately, Simply Stunning has met all of its brides' wedding dates. "We have great relationships with the designers and companies we work with," Kathleen says. "And I will go to the ends of the earth to make sure our brides are taken care of." Timelines are critical, she stresses, and a little extra time can make all the difference.

Tip #2: Shop with an open mind. Sure, you've got ideas and a binder full of pictures. But Kathleen suggests trying different styles and discussing your preferences with your dress consultant who is familiar with the full range of designs and styles. "There have been so many times, more than I can count, when brides actually fell in love with a dress they didn't intend to even like or try on."

Tip #3: Shop with a tight — and trusted — circle.

Wedding dress shopping has become a team sport, but more isn't always better. Kathleen observes, "You want to find the right dress for you — not the dress that your entire entourage can agree upon." Bring a few supportive friends and family members, people whose style you admire, and trust your own taste and decision-making.

Tip #4: Think big picture — and the portraits that will hang in your home forever. Kathleen is a big believer in coordinating the overall aesthetic of a wedding and its participants. If a bride's dress is elegant and formal, the mother-of-the-bride dress should be as well. "Mothers-of-the-bride shouldn't dress like guests," she stresses. A short, sequined cocktail dress, pretty as it might be, isn't necessarily appropriate for a formal ceremony. Shopping together for a bride's gown, mother's dress and even grandmother's dress helps ensure a cohesive look.

Kathleen thinks back to when she worked with Montgomery Lee Petty, NASCAR icon Kyle Petty's daughter. Mother and daughter came in together and Kathleen, who customizes the majority of dresses she sells, created one-of-a-kind dresses for both — a gown featuring handmade lace, silk taffeta, and a cascading train, and a mother-of-the-bride dress in handembroidered bronze organza. Which leads to . . .

Tip #5: Your dress should fit — and reflect — you.

Simply Stunning has a talented staff of seamstresses who can alter, adjust and customize dresses to fit like a glove and flatter every figure. Kathleen is a designer herself who loves nothing more than styling gowns with special touches and turns. "Sometimes you like the sleeve of one dress and the bodice or skirt of another. We work with brides to deliver the absolute dream of a gown customized, tailored and accessorized specifically for you and your special day."

In fact, Kathleen has her own line of formal wear in the works, but COVID-19 put the launch on hold. She's designed a beautiful line of mother-of-the-bride and eveningwear that she can't wait to debut when the time is right. And she's named it after her mother, Marlena, carrying forward the fashion legacy.

- Lucinda Trew, editor

For more information: www.simplystunningbydivas.com

DESTINED FOR DESIGN photography by aura marzouk



Interior designer Laura Redd knows a thing or two about putting pieces together. On any given day you will find her arranging furniture, art, fabric and family homes to create fabulous spaces for fortunate clients. Today, she's reflecting on the shifting course of her 23year career and the chapters that led her to this special time and place.

As with all good stories, there have been a few plot twists along the way. As Laura observes, "You don't always know why you had to do the jobs you had to do, but you had to do them, and they make sense when you pause and take a look at how it all unfolded."

Laura's love of design began in high school when, at the urging of her father, she took an architectural and mechanical drawing course. She mastered the pre-AutoCAD tools of T-squares, triangles and layers of tissue paper. "That's when I fell in love with architecture, floor plans, drawing and design. That's when I knew what I wanted to do."

Life doesn't always follow the straight-edge path. Laura graduated from high school in 1981 during one of the worst economic downturns in U.S. history since the Great Depression. That meant a recalibration, local college in Bellevue, Illinois and pursuing a degree in the cutting-edge area of computer science and programming. She describes working in the mainframe lab, being the only woman in her class and immersing herself in the emerging language of computers. "There were no interior design options for me there," Laura says. "But I realized that computer programming is absolutely a form of design because you are creating an outcome and drawing upon your creative and problemsolving skills."

With degree in hand, Laura headed to Atlanta, Georgia to work for an affiliate of IBM that installed software for law and accounting firms. She was young, adventuresome and on the road constantly, traveling to client locations across the country. She recalls logging just 90 days at home during her first year and enjoying every minute of the itinerant IT lifestyle. She loved travelling, interacting with clients and teaching, especially the teaching. "I really enjoyed helping people understand and use tools that could make their lives and their work easier."

That affinity for education and communication

foreshadowed the collaborative client connections Laura enjoys today.

Her next career move involved a dramatic scene change. Laura married, moved to Germany and finally had the chance to pursue her passion at an international design school outside Frankfurt. She immersed herself in color theory, the history of environmental arts, lighting fundamentals and other courses that gave her the grounding and the ability to launch a successful career in design.

While living and studying abroad, Laura learned a principle that has guided her design philosophy and practice ever since — the notion of form following function and the mindful, multiple utility of design pieces. European homes tend to be much smaller than U.S. homes, she explains, so pieces typically have dual functions. A buffet table, for example, isn't just a place to serve from. It might also have drawers for storage or a mirror above it to reflect the other side of the room and give the illusion of greater space. Laura learned that nothing does nothing in European homes, and she brought that notion of space efficiency home to the United States with her.

She also found European culture to be far less disposable than American culture. "People there don't throw pieces away. They pass furniture, art and accessories down to family members, allowing Europeans to hold on to the history of products."

Today, Laura is a devoted advocate for re-inspiration and repurposing. She believes a fresh coat of paint, a new surface on a dilapidated table or reupholstering a tired pair of armchairs can all make a world of difference. She has created bathroom vanities from dining room sideboards, a luxurious dog bed from a bureau drawer and a hallway bench from an old twin bed.

That make-the-most of-every-space-and-furnishing approach serves her clients well. She is practical and prudent and views the design process as a collaborative team effort. While some designers are known for signature styles, Laura prefers to listen to her clients' dreams and partner with them to achieve "their end look, not my end look."

Laura pursued a new area of specialization in 2016 when her mother moved to a senior living facility.

Continued on page 78

Lillo Bella



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DESTINED FOR DESIGN (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 73)

She quickly realized the challenges associated with getting furniture to fit and function within small spaces, accommodating the necessary turning radius of a wheelchair or walker, and creating a sense of home with so much less. She earned ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and Aging in Place design certifications and was soon in high demand. She designed the common room at Greensboro's Heritage Greens, a bright, spacious multipurpose space that can accommodate concerts, card games, March Madness tournament viewing and dance events. Furniture must be sturdy enough to accommodate the falling weight of seniors who've lost the ability to lower themselves, light enough to move with ease and upholstered in durable fabrics. She's worked on a number of senior living projects since, all across the country.

Laura's favorite projects are those that positively impact a client's life. They can involve furniture selection, interior remodels, the addition of outdoor spaces — anything that makes a meaningful difference. "Good design is life changing," she maintains, "because our homes are where

we come to at the end of a hard day. And especially now, we need a refuge. Creating a refuge is what matters most to me."

Laura describes another new scope of work, the creation of 2D and 3D drawings for remodels and design plans, as "HGTV-esque." She and her team measure a space, input the metrics into a 3D program, and can show homeowners an accurate, end-result representation. "We're not only creating the vision with our clients, we're able to show the vision before we even start."

That's where Laura is today, pursuing her visionary, evolving path. She's embarking on new chapters and composing her own unique story. She's writing a book about home improvement and maintenance that ties back to her popular blog, "Love Your House." She continues to collaborate with clients and creative teams to produce amazing spaces. And she's championing the notion that good design is synonymous with living well, and something we need more of. — Lucinda Trew, editor

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