

Compliments of Stacey Shanner

AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

THE MAGAZINE CELEBRATING LIFE IN AMERICA

ISSUE 103



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*Your photo
and contact
info goes right
on the cover!*

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a call for **COLOR**

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contemporary home renovation

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ISSUE 103
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AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

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The ability to tailor your message based on specific client or prospect needs adds increased personalization to every issue, targeting all of your key relationships.

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RAZR HAWK DRIVER

RAZR X

Front of Tear Out Card 1

Home and Community Matters:

First home, new home, new town, or even a place you've called home for years—all stages of homeownership can benefit from tips and reminders on how to show our homes and communities some love.

Use the checklist on the back to make sure you're keeping up with all home and community matters, from maintenance tips and money savers, to being good to the environment and your neighbors.



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Back of Tear Out Card 1

Homeownership Checklist



🔑 MONEY SAVER ●
🔧 MAINTENANCE ●
🚒 SAFETY ●
👥 COMMUNITY ●
🌱 GREEN ●

- 🏠 Use a clothes rack for drying clothes in the winter, and go old-school with a clothesline to dry clothes in the summer. ●●
- 🏠 Lower the temperature on your hot water heater to 120°F, and use a hot water heater blanket top for extra insulation. ●●
- 🏠 Install CFL and LED lightbulbs. ●●
- 🏠 Improve indoor air quality by maintaining houseplants and air filtration systems. ●●
- 🏠 Take advantage of national and state tax benefits for home improvements. ●
- 🏠 Check the insulation in your attic, and install more if needed. ●●●
- 🏠 Make sure all home electronics have proper surge protection. ●●●
- 🏠 Clear all vents of dust and obstructions. ●●
- 🏠 Check that carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are in working order. ●●
- 🏠 Consider a smart power strip for electronics like your TV, which will cut the power to auxiliary electronics when not in use. ●●●
- 🏠 Review community and HOA rules often. ●
- 🏠 Set boundaries and reduce noise by training pets and teaching children good manners. ●
- 🏠 Develop relationships with neighbors—young, old, community locals, and new residents. ●
- 🏠 Be good to your neighbors by reporting suspicious activity, helping with weather related problems, or offering to help with a tedious home maintenance task. ●●
- 🏠 Plant shade trees near your house. ●●

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THE CAKE ARTIST

ISSUE 103



More than 2 people die from skin cancer every hour. See something new, changing or unusual? It could be skin cancer. Check yourself for The Big See today.



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FOCUS ON JAMES JIN

interview with james jin | written by shelly goldstein

New York City-based photographer James Jin is as skilled in the art of communication as he is with the camera. Jin stresses the importance of creating a judgment-free space for dancers to step out of their comfort zone and experiment with expressions and poses to truly make an image come alive.

What was your initial exposure to photography?

I picked up my dad's old film camera in high school because I thought it would make me look really cool. I don't know if it did, but I kept taking photos with it. I would take photos of friends and family wherever I went. I really loved catching people off guard. When I started working for the high school newspaper as a photographer, I picked up a digital camera.

When did you go from hobbyist to professional photographer?

I was studying business at Emory University and was inspired to take photos again my senior year. My then-girlfriend/now-wife, Alicia, grew up dancing at a studio in Georgia, so I'd shoot with her old dance friends. After we both graduated (my wife from Oklahoma City University), we moved to New York City to pursue our dream of living as artists in the city.

What is Dancers of New York, and what meaning does it hold for you?

Dancers of New York is the first thing I started when I moved to New York City. When I realized that there were so many other dancers there pursuing their



When I realized that there were so many other dancers there pursuing their dreams just like Alicia was, I thought it would be a cool idea to collect all those different stories together.

dreams just like Alicia was, I thought it would be a cool idea to collect all those different stories in one place. I would interview dancers at subway stops and photograph them.

It got a lot of traction within a year or two—and that was cool. But more than that, I hope that these stories inspired, comforted, or energized some other person out there who might have been struggling with something similar. I love to hear stories from my friends about



their friends talking about DONY. Something that I worked on making an impact on total strangers—that's special.

DONY used to be my entire body of work, but now it's an extension of my work—capturing people as honestly as possible. It also used to be very much a planned thing, but now I try to catch people off guard by asking to interview them when they're least ready.

What intrigues you about photographing dancers?

At first, I just appreciated the aesthetics of dance. It's a pretty art form. And as I started to photograph more and more dancers, I learned to appreciate the expressions of dance. There's something really powerful about being able to communicate without using any words.

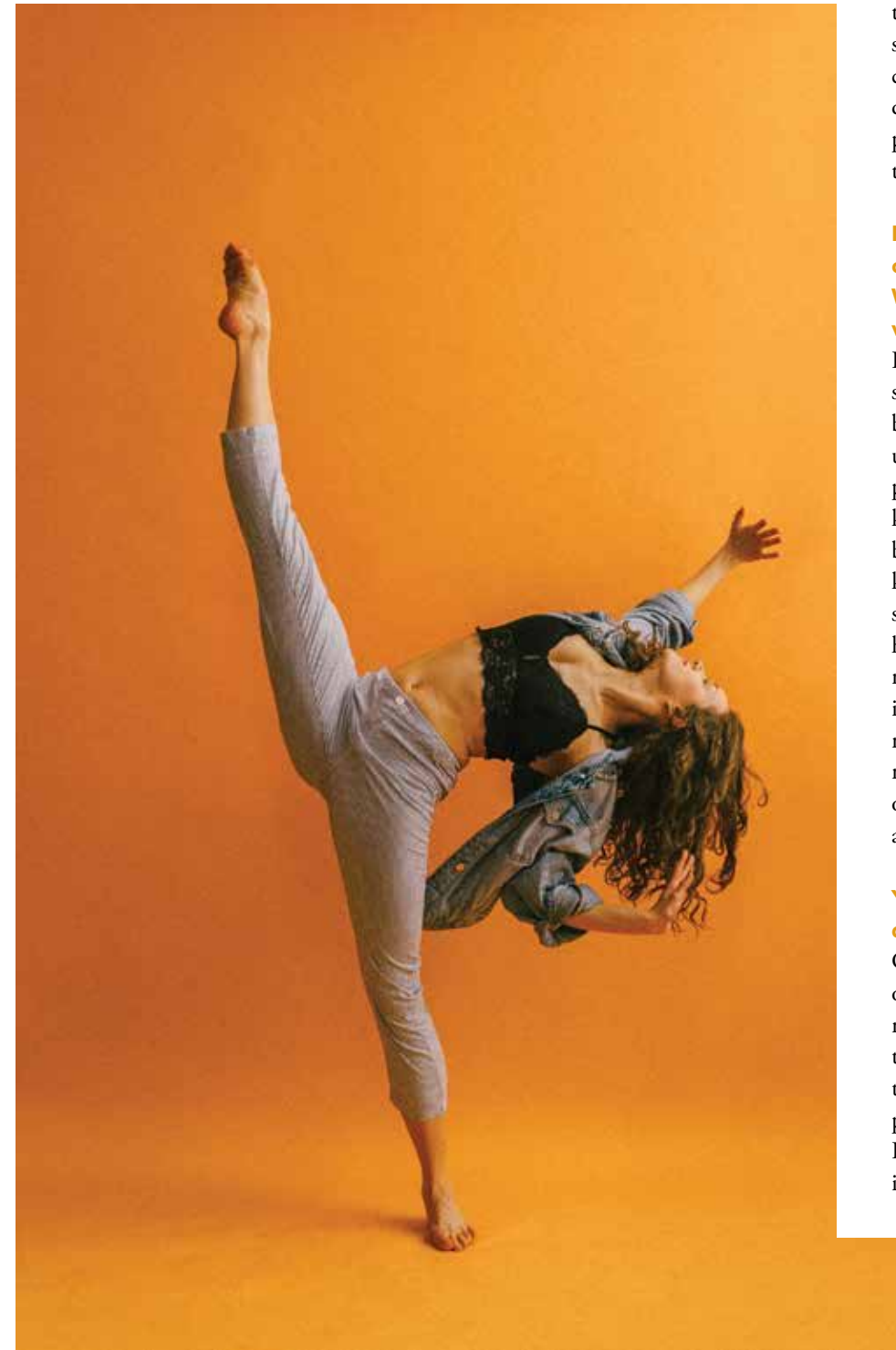
What does your creative process look like?

My creative process is all about providing a space where dancers can enjoy being a little off-balance. I



encourage them to try new things, step out of their comfort zone, and give themselves permission to fail. Once they start to let go of their expectations and fears, their self-expression comes out. I think being honest in your movement is what makes photos dynamic.

Most of the dancers who come into the studio are strangers, but my goal is



always to build trust and connection. Over the years, I've come to realize that trust is something you earn—you can't squeeze it out of people. There are a couple of rules I abide by: I always ask dancers for permission to share their photos, and I try my best to take care of them while we're shooting.

How do you know when you've captured something worthwhile? Would you speak about how you view technical perfection?

I am always hoping to capture something honest and vulnerable—basically the qualities that make us human. I think, as a portrait photographer, it's good to be knowledgeable about cameras, but it's even more important to be knowledgeable about what it means to share a genuine moment with another human being. With that said, I am not really interested in technical perfection in either photography or dance. I'd much rather choose an image that makes me feel something (even if it's blurry) over a photo that simply looks pretty and ends there.

Your poses are often not the typical dancer poses. Is this on purpose?

Certain poses are never really the goal or the purpose of my work. I love to use my camera as a tool that helps people to be more boundless artists, and I think the interesting poses are just by-products of what happens in the studio. I encourage dancers to embrace their intuition and themselves.

What makes photography rewarding for you? What do you hope dancers take away from your sessions?

Photography is rewarding when I am using my camera to make a change I want to see in the world. I want to encourage dancers to take risks, be more vulnerable, and see themselves as artists—not just machines that do exactly what they're told to do. Art isn't just something pretty to look at. It's about making an impact. When I get feedback from dancers about their experience and how it has influenced their artistry, it's a special thing. I hope that the dancers who work with me take something away from our session and use it to make the change they want to see in the world.

Does your wife weigh in on your sessions? What is it like being married to another creative person?

Alicia definitely helped me out when I first started photographing dancers. I didn't know a thing about technique, so I'd ask her for advice. It's been incredible to share this journey with her. We have frequent talks about what we go through as artists, and we have a mutual understanding of what it takes to be in this field.

Did you question your talent through the years? Do you still question it?

Absolutely. I think those questions never go away. I think we all struggle with self-doubt. The frequency has changed, though. When I first started, it was almost a daily struggle. Now it's more of a semiannual thing.

“IT'S GOOD TO BE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT CAMERAS, BUT IT'S EVEN MORE IMPORTANT TO BE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO SHARE A GENUINE MOMENT WITH ANOTHER HUMAN BEING.”



Do you prefer studio shoots or environmental shoots?

I love studio shoots because they make it easier to take off the masks and armor that we have on. The fewer sets of eyes on you, the easier it is to be real and be human. Outdoor spaces are great in that other people, objects, and structures in the space can give you inspiration. For what I am interested in now, I prefer studio sessions.

How would you describe your personality and work ethic?

I am pretty easygoing with an offbeat sense of humor. I like to follow my own curiosity, and that's what primarily drives my work ethic. I am always working on doing better and becoming the person I want to be.

What's a little-known fun fact about you?

About once a day, one line from a song will get stuck in my head, and I will sing it all day. Just that one line. I don't know how Alicia puts up with it. Sometimes I even annoy myself.

What does "living the dream" mean to you?

For me, living the dream is the journey of finding sustainability in your art, making the change you want to see, feeling fulfilled, and paying your bills all at the same time. I don't know if we ever strike the perfect balance, but I am certainly trying my best to maintain that balance. I am very grateful to be able to do what I love with the people I love.

For more info, visit jamesjinimages.com



INTRO to INDIAN CUISINE

recipes by **monisha bharadwaj**
photography by **shana smith**



If you have a gas stovetop, you can cook the eggplant directly on the gas flame as it gets a lovely, smoky flavor that you can't get if you oven-bake it. Use a pair of tongs to turn it every minute or so—it should take about 8 minutes to cook, depending on the thickness and size of the eggplant. This smoky eggplant is cooked with different spices and flavorings around India—it is a Maharashtrian dish with the addition of locally grown peanuts.

SERVES 4

VANGYACHE BHARIT FIRE-ROASTED EGGPLANT WITH RED ONION AND YOGURT

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large eggplant
- 1 large red onion, finely chopped
- 2 fresh green chilies, finely chopped (seeds and all)
- 1 tomato, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro leaves
- 1 generous cup Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons roasted peanuts (salted or unsalted), crushed

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 Preheat the broiler to high.
- 2 Brush the eggplant with 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil or corn oil and place on a rack under the broiler, ensuring that you put the broiler pan underneath to collect the juice. Turn from time to time until the eggplant is soft and the skin is crispy and dry. Alternatively, cook it directly over a gas flame for about 8 minutes.
- 3 Let the eggplant cool slightly, then peel off the skin—it should come off easily. Mash the eggplant flesh in a bowl with a fork until there are no long strands. Set aside.
- 4 Heat 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil or corn oil in a frying pan and fry the onion on high heat until it starts to turn golden, about 3 minutes. Add the chilies, then reduce the heat and cook for 6–7 minutes, until you can cut through a piece of onion easily. Add the tomato and cook for a couple of minutes to soften.
- 5 Remove from the heat. Season with salt and stir in the cilantro, then mix in the mashed eggplant. Scoop the mixture into a bowl and let cool for 10 minutes, then finish it off by stirring in the yogurt. Sprinkle the peanuts on top.
- 6 Serve cold as a dip with pita breads or naans.

Indian in 7: Delicious Indian Recipes in 7 Ingredients or Fewer by Monisha Bharadwaj © 2019 Kyle Books.



Indian home-style cooking often features dishes like this one—where vegetables are cooked simply without too much spice and sauce. Green beans are commonly eaten all over India, where they are often referred to as French beans. One seldom sees this versatile vegetable on restaurant menus, though. You can buy trimmed beans or trim them yourself—simply cut off the ends and remove the strings from the sides. To grate a tomato, cut it in half and grate the cut sides on the large holes of a grater, discarding the skin.

SERVES 4

FARASBEAN BHAJI GREEN BEAN AND TOMATO CURRY

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 teaspoon black or brown mustard seeds
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon medium chili powder
- 14 ounces green beans, chopped into ¾-inch pieces
- 2 ripe tomatoes, coarsely grated (and skin discarded)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted cashews

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1** Warm 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil or corn oil in a heavy-based frying pan on high heat and add the mustard seeds. When they pop, add the onion. Cook for 3–4 minutes (still on high heat), until the onion begins to change color, then reduce the heat and cook for a further 2–3 minutes, until soft.
- 2** Tip in the turmeric and chili powder and cook for a couple of minutes, then stir in the green beans. Pour in the tomatoes and season with salt.
- 3** Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 10 minutes, or until the beans are cooked. Add the cashews, remove from the heat, and serve hot.



This recipe makes a wonderful main course, served with a mixed salad. The chops will be more tender if you marinate them overnight. In India, some cooks include a tablespoon of grated raw papaya in the marinade, as the enzyme papain helps to tenderize the meat. You can use either lamb rib chops or lamb loin chops for this recipe, but bear in mind that loin chops will take 3–4 minutes longer to cook on each side. These chops could also be cooked on a barbecue. (Wrap the bones in foil to prevent them from burning!)

SERVES 4

CHAAMP LAJAWAB SPICY LAMB CHOPS

INGREDIENTS:

Ginger-Garlic Paste:

- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger, skin scraped off and flesh chopped
- 2 teaspoons garlic, peeled and chopped (by volume)

- 8 lamb chops
- 1 teaspoon freshly crushed black pepper
- 1 teaspoon medium chili powder
- 2 teaspoons garam masala
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plain yogurt

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1** Combine the ginger and garlic to make the paste; you can grate both or crush them using a mortar and pestle. (You don't need to discard the green "soul" from the center of the garlic; it is edible and any bitterness it has will add to the balance of flavors in the overall dish.)
- 2** Combine the chops, black pepper, chili powder, garam masala, yogurt, and some salt in a mixing bowl, stirring to mix evenly. Cover and let marinate in the refrigerator overnight to allow the meat to absorb the flavors of the spices.
- 3** Preheat the broiler to medium-high.
- 4** Place the chops on the broiler rack over a pan and broil for 4–5 minutes on each side for medium-rare, or for 6–7 minutes on each side for well done.
- 5** Transfer the chops to a warm plate and let rest for 5–7 minutes before serving.
- 6** Serve with a mixed salad.



Laddoos are a traditional Indian sweet, often made with flour, milk, nuts, and fruit, and spices such as saffron and cardamom. They are eaten on festive days, such as Diwali, the Hindu festival of light. Many people outside of India are not aware that chocolate forms a part of Indian dessert-making. I like using dark cocoa powder for this recipe as it gives a more intense color and taste, but you can use any cocoa powder that is chocolaty in taste.

MAKES 20 LADDOOS

CHOCOLATE LADDOOS **CHOCOLATE AND MILK BALLS**

INGREDIENTS:

2 tablespoons salted butter, plus extra for greasing
14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
1 cup cocoa powder
5 tablespoons chopped cashews or almonds
2 tablespoons dried shredded coconut

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1** Put the butter and condensed milk into a heavy-based saucepan. Cook on low heat for about 10 minutes, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens and begins to leave the sides of the pan.
- 2** Mix in the cocoa powder, stirring to remove any lumps, and make a smooth paste, then stir in half of the cashews or almonds.
- 3** Grease a baking dish with a little extra butter, then pour in the thick cocoa mixture and smooth the surface with a spatula. Let cool and set at room temperature.
- 4** Break off small pieces of the set mixture and roll each piece into a cherry-size ball. Dip some of the chocolate balls in the remaining chopped cashews or almonds and some in the shredded coconut until coated, leaving some plain, too, so that you have a mix of textured laddoos.
- 5** Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week.

HIDDEN DEEP IN THE ROLLING

mountains of Appalachia, a peaceful giant keeps watch over the universe.

Green Bank, West Virginia (population: 143), located in Pocahontas County, is home to the Green Bank Telescope (GBT)—the largest fully steerable telescope in the world.

SHOOTING FOR THE STARS

This particular part of the country was chosen for space exploration because of its location. Set high in the Allegheny Mountains about a half hour from Virginia and home to clear, dark skies, it is an ideal place to search for life in the cosmos. The National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) was founded here in 1956, and its first transmissions (made by antenna) were made two years later. Through the years, the telescopes built here grew in size and scope. In 1958, the first of three eighty-five foot versions made its debut; by 1962, a three-hundred-foot telescope was operational.

But NRAO's crowning achievement was the construction of the Green Bank Telescope, also known as the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope. The ten-year project, which cost \$95 million, required hundreds of skilled workers representing trades from concrete work to earth moving to steel construction to logistics to carpentry. A specialized derrick crane was also erected on site over a six-month period to allow the construction of the main part of the telescope to begin. Construction was completed in the year 2000.

A GREEN BANK guide to the galaxy

written by **matthew brady**
photography by **green bank observatory**





How large is the telescope? Its surface spans 2.3 acres (more area than two football fields), and, at 485 feet tall, it's taller than the Statue of Liberty and just a shade shorter than the Eiffel Tower and the Washington Monument; incredibly, it also weighs in at just under seventeen *million* pounds.

This massive instrument has been, and continues to be, a key tool in the history of space exploration. Its ability to collect information at very small wavelengths (as small as three millimeters) has made it one of the most sensitive radio telescopes in the world—which has opened the door to countless groundbreaking discoveries. For example, in the 1970s, the observatory first detected Sagittarius A*, the black hole in the center of the Milky Way. In the twenty-first century, the GBT has twice been used to observe the universe's most massive neutron stars—super-dense stars about the size of a city. The most recent time was in September

2019, when the telescope was used to discover the most massive neutron star ever, which the Green Bank Observatory says is so dense, it is “teetering on the edge of existence,” as the power of its gravity threatens its self-collapse.

To achieve all this, though, the telescope's Achilles' heel—radio waves—first needed to be vanquished.

A QUIET PLACE

The Green Bank Telescope can pick up signals as tiny as a billionth of a billionth of a millionth of a watt—from thirteen billion light years away. (Go ahead: take a minute to wrap your head around that.) It stands to reason, then, that it can also pick up any radio waves in its own backyard.

As a result, for the past sixty years, the town of Green Bank has existed under what many would consider untenable restrictions in the twenty-first century, with no radio, cellphone,

or television towers—any of which can cause interference while monitoring intergalactic waves. For residents, that means no cell phone signal, no cordless phones, no Bluetooth, no Wi-Fi, and no microwaves—nothing wireless is allowed within a ten-mile radius of the telescope. But this doesn't mean that residents are completely unplugged from technology—they just find innovative solutions to stay connected.

This is because Green Bank falls within the National Radio Quiet Zone, a 13,000-square-mile radius established in 1958 by the FCC to keep radio frequencies from interfering with telescopes like those in Green Bank. It's serious business: trucks patrol the town to monitor if anyone isn't complying with the radio wave rules, which residents have to agree to in writing. The observatory staff uses only diesel vehicles near the telescopes to avoid spark plugs. It's a place like no other for locals—and for astronomers across the globe.

AN INTERGALACTIC HOTSPOT

Today, both professional and amateur scientists flock to Green Bank Observatory, which was created in 2016 to take over operations of the facilities and its eight telescopes from the NRAO. Over six hundred people, both professionals and students, request to use the Green Bank Telescope each year, yet only about a quarter of the proposals are accepted.

But there's so much more to experience. At the 25,000-square-foot Green Bank Science Center, which is free to visit, you can take a self-guided walking tour of the grounds and a scale model of the universe. You can also take one of several paid guided tours, including a guided site tour that takes you on a bus through the grounds right to the base of the GBT, as well as special behind-the-scenes guided tours for SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence), high-tech tours, and history tours.

Scientists, visitors, and students trek here all year long, but the busiest time of year is during the summer. In addition to offering camps and workshops for students and adults, the observatory has special events like the Space Race Rumpus bike festival and StarQuest, the largest multiday star-viewing event in the region. Most popular, though, is Astronomer for a Day, an overnight program for student groups that teaches them how to use a real radio telescope.

On the surface, Green Bank, West Virginia, may seem like the unlikely mecca for cutting-edge space discoveries. With its thirty-five-to-one ratio of visitors to residents and retro vibe, it feels like a place adrift from time. But perhaps that's actually why it's the perfect place for what the Green Bank Telescope teaches us—there's so much to learn; we just have to listen.

For more info, visit greenbankobservatory.org

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THE LARGEST AND MOST POPULOUS city in Oregon, Portland won its name in a coin toss, when landowners Asa Lovejoy and Francis Pettygrove both wanted to name the new settlement after their hometowns—Boston, Massachusetts, and Portland, Maine, respectively. Pettygrove obviously won, and the famous penny now resides at the Oregon Historical Society in downtown Portland.

Basing a major decision on a coin toss feels apropos for a city known for being eccentric with a decidedly live-and-let-live mind-set. This eco-conscious hotspot caters to everyone from outdoor adventurers to live music fans to foodies who are as interested in cheap food-cart eats as they are in gourmet farm-to-table fare. Portland is chock-full of hipster vibes, cozy coffee shops, and pockets of community scattered throughout its neighborhoods.

FRIDAY

After checking in to Hotel Lucia in downtown Portland, my first order of business was food, and a stool at the bar at Bamboo Sushi beckoned. So did the specialty vegetarian roll called Green Machine, a tantalizing combination of tempura-fried long beans and green onion, topped with avocado and a cilantro sweet-chili aioli. This hip restaurant not only serves up delicious sushi but also became the world's first certified-sustainable sushi restaurant in 2008, ethically sourcing fish from plentiful populations and reducing its carbon footprint.

After my meal, I Ubered to Southeast Portland to the Clinton Street Theater. This charming single-screen venue—which features a popcorn machine in its tiny lobby—is one of the oldest movie



keep portland *wondrous*

written by **shelley goldstein** | photography by **shelley rose photography**

Clinton Street Theater



Monticello Antique Marketplace

houses in the country, and it frequently works directly with independent filmmakers. On this particular night, the documentary *Flamenco Syndrome* was premiering. I purchased my ticket and some gummy worms (total price: a very reasonable \$7.50) and found a seat. *Flamenco Syndrome* is Bijoyini Chatterjee's first feature-length documentary, and she even Skyped in for a virtual question-and-answer session after the viewing.

Patrons stood around outside the theater talking to each other as I Ubered back to my neighborhood for a late-night bite at Petunia's Pies & Pastries. The vibe in the evening is all dimmed lights and lit candles, and I happily dined on vegan



mac and cheese and a slice of turtle cheesecake before calling it a night.

SATURDAY

There are two restaurants I never miss when I visit Portland: the previously mentioned Petunia's and Harlow, a hipster bohemian spot on Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard, located east of the Willamette River. This morning I opted for the Farmer's Vegetable Scramble: farm-fresh eggs scrambled with roasted root vegetables, spinach, and kale in a creamy chipotle cashew hollandaise over quinoa. I found a seat in a sunny window nook and people-watched as I savored all the flavors and textures of brunch. Portland really knows how to do healthy cuisine well, and Harlow, in particular, partners with over a dozen local vendors to create not only a pleasurable eating experience but also a community-minded one.

Fueled up and ready to take on the day, I took an Uber another ten minutes east to the Monticello Antique Marketplace to hang out and draw with the Portland Coffee and Sketch Club, an artists' gathering that meets in different venues around the city. This week's challenge was to sketch a scene from one of the many vignettes at the antiques mall. I found the group in the back corner of Monti's Café spread out across three tables that were nestled among bookshelves overlooking the antiques. The vibe was relaxed and casual, and the group included beginner artists, a woman working on her first graphic novel, an aspiring actor, and a professional caricature artist.

My sketch tucked away to be finished with some paint later, I made my way to the Portland Mercado in Southeast Portland to meet my friend, Huyen,



Tierra del Sol at the Portland Mercado

for an early dinner. This colorful public market place was created to support and grow Latino businesses and serves as a hub for Latino culture and community. Opened in the spring of 2015, it's a combination of outdoor food trucks and indoor businesses. Huyen and I made a beeline for Tierra del Sol, a food truck owned by Mexican-born Amalia Sierra. A few minutes later, we had plates full of tacos—veggie for me, carnitas for my friend. Impending storms meant we found our way inside and joined other diners at community-sized tables. There we found an exhibit that details the chronology of Latino entrepreneurship in Portland, an important educational display at this cultural hub.

With some room in our stomachs for dessert, we decided to check out Little





Chickpea in the Pearl District. A new concept in dairy-free “ice cream,” Little Chickpea’s is made from chickpeas, as the name suggests. We sampled four out of the eight flavors: Cherry Chai, Lemon Ginger, Cold Brew Coffee, and Mint Matcha. The airy, industrial-style space also features an open kitchen where the “ice cream” is made.

It was nearing sunset, and one of my new drawing pals had tipped me off to a popular Portland event in Northwest Portland called the Swift Watch. When Huyen and I arrived at the side lawn of Chapman Elementary School, people were spread out on blankets and volunteers from Portland Audubon were behind a booth answering the questions of curious onlookers. As the signs on the side lawn of the school explain, “Each September, thousands of Vaux’s Swifts congregate in the chimney of Chapman Elementary School before they fly south for the winter. Just before dark, the swifts amass above the school in a huge spiral formation and fly into the chimney to roost, giving the impression of an avian whirlpool.” Unfortunately, the rain earlier that evening meant the swifts got cold and flew into the chimney before their usual time. We saw several small groups of swifts, but we had to resort to a YouTube video to get the full effect.



Milonga 24



Altoids wall at Tango Berretin

To warm up our bodies from the chilly, rainy night, we drove downtown to the Portland City Grill, renowned for its stunning views of the city from its thirtieth-floor perch. The place was appropriately packed for a Saturday night and the coveted nooks near the windows were all occupied, so we sipped elderflower cocktails at the bar as we gazed around at the well-dressed crowd.

After a brief interlude to change into fancier clothes, I met back up with my friend at Tango Berretin in Southeast Portland. This venue, which typically hosts Argentine tango events and classes, looks like it was lifted from a European street, with its whimsical mural painted on the side of the building and string lights and white café curtains beckoning onlookers to wonder what magic is



happening within. Once inside, the charming quirkiness increases, with tango stilettos in an assortment of styles glued to the ceiling and a whole wall framing the drinking fountain devoted to empty Altoids tins. Tonight, the event was Milonga 24, and dancers embraced each other to the sounds of the old tango orchestras being thoughtfully deejayed off a laptop.

SUNDAY

I woke up to drizzle and wind, and it took some mental effort to drag myself out of my warm bed and into the cold. After breakfast at Petunia’s, I hopped across the street to the Never Coffee Lab. This place is so darn aesthetically pleasing, with a splashy abstract mural on one wall, framed art by the talented Shiela Laufer on another wall, and a display of bagged coffee in a rainbow of colors. It’s known for its specialty lattes, which are described in great detail on oversized business cards perched on a wooden tray like Scrabble tiles. I chose the Hunny, featuring flowering jasmine, dark chocolate, and wildflower honey.



Never Coffee Lab



Portland is known for its 37,000 acres of green spaces, making the city feel more like a leafy oasis than an urban jungle. However, the rain meant my previous outdoor itinerary of strolling the Portland Japanese Garden and surveying the grounds at the Pittock Mansion needed some modifications.

So I headed back to Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard to check out some of the shops I had seen when I was eating at Harlow the day before. Red Light Clothing Exchange is a great place for vintage pieces, ranging from everyday T-shirts to Twiggy-worthy dresses from the 1960s. The next stop was ORO to browse hipster-chic jewelry laid out on wooden tables in a pleasingly minimalist shop that felt friendly and affordable. Tender Loving Empire caught my attention with clever art prints strung up on the walls and great music playing. Tender Loving Empire is actually a record label for most all of the artists showcased in their shop. In the back is a niche devoted to vinyl, which requires you to pass by displays of adorable baby onesies and hand-sewn baby toys in the shape of clouds. And



ORO



House of Vintage

finally, the House of Vintage is worth a visit just for the sheer size of the place. According to online building records, this behemoth of a space, built in 1918, was once an auto-service shop and then became the Rose City Paper Box Company in the 1950s. It's a collective of vintage vendors now, and you will often hear the voice of a Zoltar fortune-telling machine (like the one in the movie *Big*) ring out.

I wrapped up my trip with a late-night visit to Powell's City of Books, five blocks from my hotel, in the Pearl District. This place, founded in 1971, is an institution, and you can't help but feel like you're part of a vast community of readers and lovers of bookstores. Huyen met up with me, and I suggested we play a game where one person asks a question and the other person closes his or her eyes and points to a book.

"What would the universe like me to know?" I asked. Huyen grabbed *Mrs. Vargas and the Dead Naturalist*, the book I had blindly gestured to, and flipped it over. "This is a book of wonders. Each story unfolds with humor and simplicity and perfect naturalness into something original and totally unpredictable," Ursula K. Le Guin had written in her review of Kathleen Alcalá's novel.

Portland is indeed filled with simple wonders, many of those in the form of the communities I saw—like the filmgoers, the Latino business owners, the health foodies, the artists, the bird-watchers, the dancers, the baristas, the makers, and the readers.

For more info, visit travelportland.com



“ THIS PLACE, FOUNDED IN 1971, IS AN INSTITUTION, AND YOU CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL LIKE YOU'RE PART OF A VAST COMMUNITY OF READERS AND LOVERS OF BOOKSTORES. ”

Powell's City of Books

After working at several museums, Annie Elliott realized that a hands-on approach to designing spaces was her true passion, and so began her second career as an interior designer. The DC-area designer's inclination toward color and layering makes her work undeniably her own—a style well-represented in a recent home renovation in Potomac, Maryland.

You have a rather unconventional background for an interior designer. Tell us about it:

I acted as a child, played the flute very seriously all through college, and, eventually, developed a passion for art history. I worked at the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia right after completing my undergraduate degree in English and art history at the University of Pennsylvania.

I ended up pursuing a graduate degree in art history, believing that would be my path to becoming a museum director. After I got my master's degree, I worked at the Smithsonian in administration, but I found myself being pulled further away from the art and people's experiences with it. My interest in art is aesthetic. I love beautiful things, but I'm also very interested in how people relate to art. So I started taking interior design graduate classes at what was then called the Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, DC. Then I got pregnant with twins, and my path sort of shifted.

It seems that your career began very organically. How did you first start acquiring clients?

It wasn't as though I said, "I'm going to start a business. What licenses do I need? How do I register with the city?" I did none of that. I thought I would tell my friends I was thinking about doing this and see what happens. So I did. Anytime someone moved,



they would ask me to help with paint colors and other design choices.

Then, one night, we had some friends over for dinner. I had just renovated our kitchen. It was really small, but I maximized every inch. Our friends loved it and asked if I could be a point person for the renovation they were doing on their home. That was my hands-on education—working on that project—and that's when I realized what I was capable of. I started attracting clients little by little.

Where did the name *Bossy Color* (the name of your blog and previous name of your business) come from?

My brother actually came up with the name, and I thought it was too funny not to use. It was also helpful for me in getting press early on. I think people saw the name of the company and knew they would get something different from me. I love to write, and the blog was helpful for me to clarify my positions on things and to show people my design perspective. I only decided to change the name of my company last year to Annie Elliott Design because I think it's a better representation of where my business is now.

How did the process for your recent Potomac project begin?

The clients were referred to me by a friend, and what made this project different and challenging was that they had a lot of Arts and Crafts furniture. It's a lot of heavy woodwork, and they weren't interested in painting the pieces. So the challenge was: how do I keep this furniture and also lighten up the house, make it current, make it friendly, and make it fun? Arts and Crafts, to me, is not fun. Luckily, the clients love color.

What was your inspiration for the family room in this project? Was there a focal point you built the design around?

The family room was used constantly, but not happily. The clients had already been renovating the kitchen next door, and they wanted a space that opened into the family room. We wanted the room to be more cohesive and warm. There is a beautiful





© Stacy Zarin Goldberg

stone fireplace that inspired me to work with really natural materials. The first step was adding grass cloth to the walls in a neutral color so it wouldn't be scary. But I thought if we left the ceiling white, it would have been boring—it's really easy for the ceiling to get overlooked. The ceiling wallpaper we went with is a warm, light brown but with a little bit of sparkle from the silver star pattern, which keeps it fun.

One of the kickers for this room was the drapes. There are hills I'll die on and hills I won't die on—but these drapes were my hill. The drapes just struck the right tone: they are the perfect color, and they aren't overly formal. I'm really happy they ended up going with them.

Wallpaper is incorporated a lot in this project. How do you go about selecting patterns that make a statement without looking overly busy with other elements in the room?

I usually start a project with whatever is going to make the biggest statement. The dining room has



blue grass cloth, floral drapes, and a patterned rug, but I think we prevented it from going over the top by limiting the multicolored pattern to one element—the drapes. And if you vary the scale by balancing the size of the patterned elements in a room, it lets the eyes rest.

Is there a room or an element in this project you were especially excited about?

While the mudroom was just a small piece of the project, it was a fun one because the clients totally thought it was a throwaway space. I came across a

It seems that people are embracing a maximalist direction, and by that I mean pattern on pattern or color on color—maybe a little less breathing room than we've seen in the past.

multicolored dog wallpaper and thought, "I wonder," because the clients have a dog they adore, and I also love dogs. I put this wallpaper against a red tile floor, which made it an unexpectedly fun space.

I'm also really proud of the family room. We custom-built a very large media cabinet, and it's beautiful and practical. We really decorated that room. Every surface has something on it, and it all works together. It was a room I knew we could do from start to finish.

Is this increased use of patterns and layers something you've seen a shift toward recently?

I'm not one for trends, but I am one for being current and modern. It seems that people are embracing a maximalist direction, and by that I mean pattern on pattern or color on color—maybe a little less breathing room than we've seen in the past. The trend is toward more rather than paring down.

Do you find that clients in the DC area have a specific style they like to stick to? Is the style exclusive to this part of the country?

I think DC is unique in that its residents are from all over the world. Most of my clients have lived in other countries and picked up things on their travels. That informs my clients' style, perhaps more than geography.

What is your primary emotion when you finish a project?

It's unusual for us to have a project day where we say, "Yes, we're done." It's a gradual phasing-out process. On installation day, which is really the first step toward being finished, I feel so proud of the work my team and I have done. And I'm usually very confident in thinking that no other designer in DC would have produced the same design. But, most of all, it's amazing when the client loves it. Someone once asked me why I design, and I said, "I just want to help people love their houses, be happy every day, and be excited to show their friends." I truly believe that when you love your home and it projects who you are to the world, you're invincible.

For more info, visit annieelliottdesign.com



OUT ON A LIMB

interview with **pete nelson** | written by **matthew brady** | photography by **nelson treehouse and supply**

A lifelong fan of treehouses, Pete Nelson decided to turn his passion into a business, Nelson Treehouse and Supply, and later starred in his family's reality show, Treehouse Masters. With the show's eleven-season run completed, Pete has happily returned to the trees.

Were treehouses and nature part of your childhood?

My dad went to forestry school. He would take me up to Harriman State Park in New York and show me the distinct pattern of birch tree leaves and the difference between white and red oak leaves. Some of my fondest memories, even in winter, are of my dad sharing the

peacefulness of the woods. Even as a kid, I knew it was a special place.

My dad built a treehouse for me when I was around five, so from about that age until the time I got my learner's permit, treehouses were ubiquitous for me. I also built several others—very poorly—which never came to fruition as I had

envisioned them in my head. I found myself dreaming about the architecture and the design of treehouses.

What happened next?

I went to college in Colorado and majored in economics. However, I quickly realized that all my classmates would eat me for lunch if I competed

with them for jobs, so I asked myself what I could do that'd make me excited for the next fifty years of my career. Designing treehouses was only a dream until 1987, when I had an epiphany that I needed to be amongst the trees and building grown-up treehouses. The first one I built was in my backyard, and I started building more here and there.



Pete Nelson poses in front of one of his creations.

However, becoming a full-time treehouse guy was a long and arduous journey. My sweet wife, Judy, was supportive the whole time, thank goodness. We had moved from Colorado to Seattle, where I was building single-family houses. After my epiphany, I spent the next fifteen years working on mostly new residential construction in the Seattle area. I was always in the background researching the work of other like-minded people who were fantasizing about creating their dream treehouses in various parts of the world, and I'd go on little junkets to take pictures. I was also gradually gauging interest to see if there was a grown-up treehouse market.

Things really got rolling when my first treehouse book was published in 1994. That allowed me to share my dream with the world and to start building treehouses across the country.

When did Animal Planet enter the picture?

I got the call from Animal Planet around 2011. I somewhat reluctantly agreed to do the show. I had been approached a number of times during those years about doing a reality show, but I felt a certain level of trust with the Animal Planet people, who promised they wouldn't cause unneeded reality TV drama, and they were true to their word.



We couldn't miss our deadlines with Animal Planet, though—their budget allowed us nineteen film days, and that would usually translate to three weeks max on site. We'd literally visit a property one day, design that night, return to the site, sell our ideas, and try to start within a few days.

What has been your focus since Treehouse Masters ended?

We took a bit of a breather in the wintertime—it took me four or five months alone to come down from being the Pete that's on TV. In spring of 2019, we got back to building treehouses.

We now talk a lot about what our hopes and dreams are as a company. Wherever the right clients are, we'll travel and build. We take it very seriously, but we like to have a lot of fun, and we're in that remarkable position of being on top of our game in the nascent business of building treehouses.

Our effort now is not to build every treehouse in the world—but to build the best treehouses in the world. To that end, I want the company to stay small because I don't want it to get untenable. We really want to grow with intention, rather than by demand, and savor this good time.

What are some of your company's biggest accomplishments?

I feel so honored that we've put out six coffee table books on treehouses. We've also created treehouse retreats. We built our first, Treehouse Point, in 2006 in Fall City, Washington, where we're located, and a second location in Texas. Treehouse Resort and Spa is scheduled to open in 2020 in Redmond, Washington, with twenty-seven treehouses. It's going to be a supersized

version of Treehouse Point. I'm so excited about it.

What has been the biggest advancement in your field?

The hardware that we're using to connect to the trees. In 1997, Michael Garnier, who had started a treehouse bed-and-breakfast in the early '90s and hosts our annual treehouse conference, an engineer named Charley Greenwood, and I found that a three-inch-diameter bolt in a Douglas fir could sustain a serious amount of weight: around six to seven hundred pounds. We refined it and developed the treehouse attachment bolt (TAB), which can hold up to ten thousand pounds of force.

I'm delighted by how the trees are responding to this hardware. They're absorbing it—as the TABs weather and age, the trees just grow their rings around them, and the bolt and the platform level stay where they are. It's like a gnat landing on an elephant when we put the TABs in these enormous Doug firs in the Pacific Northwest. They don't feel it; it's nothing to them.

Besides Douglas firs, what are the best trees for treehouses?

I've rarely met a tree that I didn't like. However, only certain types make for good treehouse trees. In the end, the long-living ones—oaks, pines, maples, Doug firs, and elms—work the best. Red cedars, gorgeous trees that we love so much in the Pacific Northwest, are one of my favorites, too, but they have lots of branches to contend with. The Doug fir goes straight up, sometimes fifty feet before the first branch, and you can just latch onto the side of that tree. The size of the tree isn't overly critical; I say work with what you have.



What features do your treehouses offer? How long does it take to construct one?

The time frame will depend on the project. Much like ground houses, there are permits involved, and they vary by state. Plus, the standard features have changed over time. The treehouses always had electricity, but composting toilets turned to flushing toilets, and flushing toilets sometimes begat real

showers, which sometimes have tile. There were always kitchens with under-counter refrigerators, but now they tend to be full kitchens with real refrigerators. So the three-week project can become more like a six-week project.

Has treehouse living grown in popularity over the years?

To me, seeing is believing. The amount of work being done in the trees is mind-boggling. On Instagram, you'll see that so many people are building treehouses, in all shapes and sizes. It's such a viable form of architecture now.

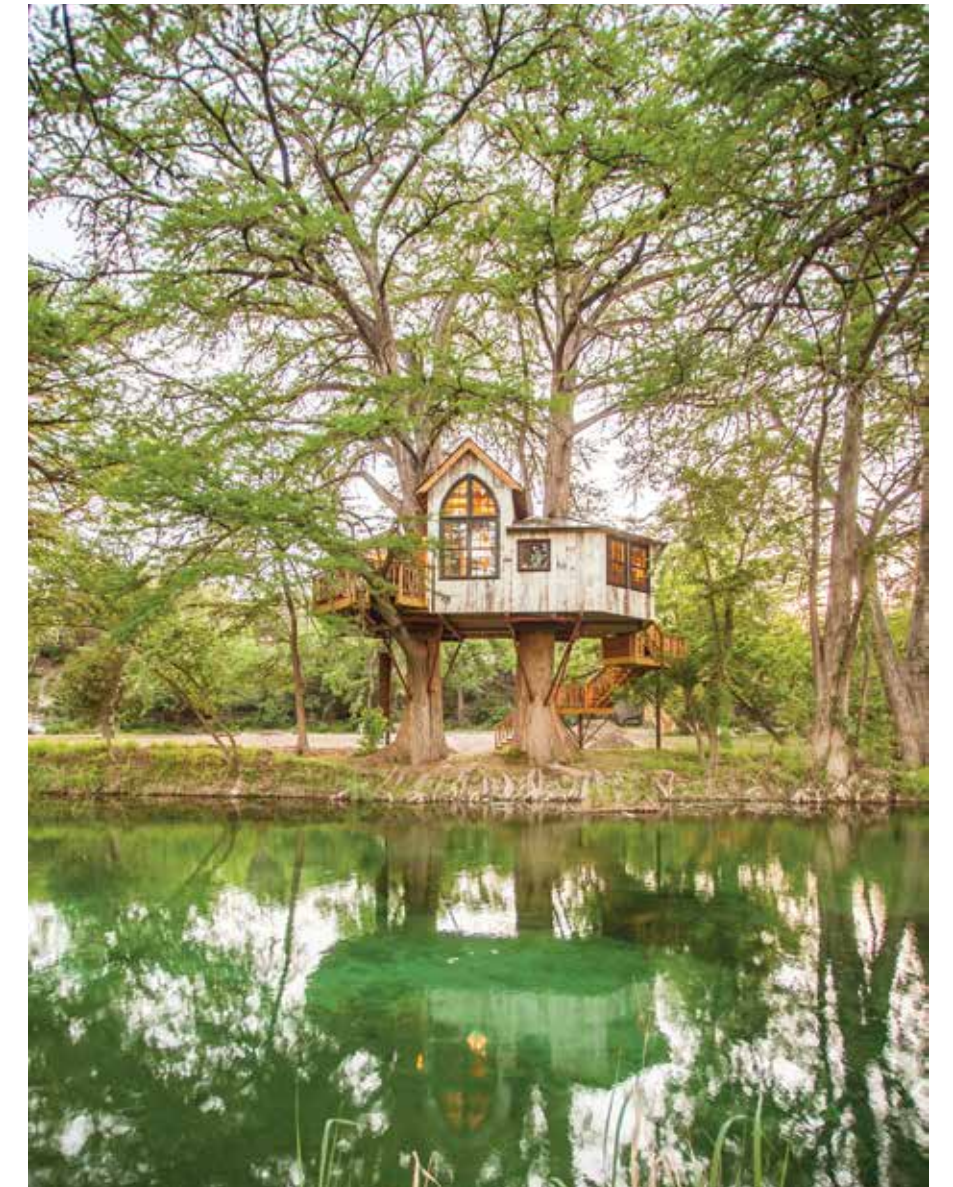
Ultimately, what is the magic of treehouses?

One of my dad's friends told me something I'll never forget: treehouses are the perfect amateur project. A treehouse is often how most of us builders cut our teeth. I'd thought amateurism is just where you make something that's full of mistakes. Learning from mistakes is important, but building treehouses is done out of love. The root word of amateur is "to love," and, even if a treehouse doesn't turn out the way you originally envisioned, it's a labor of love.

Treehouses bring families together and communities together, and they get people outside. Treehouses allow you to get away, disappear into nature, and enjoy the splendor that's all around us. Your heart rate actually drops when you're up in the trees. You feel safe. You can breathe a little bit and forget about life.

For more info, visit nelsontreehouse.com

"I'VE RARELY MET A TREE THAT I DIDN'T LIKE. HOWEVER, ONLY CERTAIN TYPES MAKE FOR GOOD TREEHOUSE TREES. IN THE END, THE LONG-LIVING ONES—OAKS, PINES, MAPLES, DOUG FIRS, AND ELMS—WORK THE BEST.



the cake artist

interview with [maggie austin](#) | written by [rebecca poole](#) | photography by [maggie austin](#)



Maggie Austin's cakes can best be described as dazzling works of art. Her attention to detail, matched with her inventiveness, never fails to result in masterpieces that look worthy of their own museum exhibit.

You were an aspiring ballerina. How did you end up as a cake designer?

An injury ended my career as a ballet dancer. Classical ballet had been the love of my life and my sole focus from the age of four, so it was a very difficult time for me. I decided to attend The French Pastry School in Chicago, where I took a six-month overview of pastry making, and I really connected with the process of making sugar flowers. I decided to move to the DC area upon completing school and moved in with my sister, Jess. Soon after, we decided to make a website that showcased my sugar flower work. We ended up connecting with a local wedding planner, and she wrote a blog post about my work.

Two weeks after Maggie Austin Cake launched, I got a call from the *Today* show, which featured one of my wedding cakes. We hit the ground running, to say the least. Within a couple years, I was working with clients all over the world and teaching

workshops when I had time. Today, teaching is my real passion, and we've adjusted our business to give me as many opportunities as possible to do that.

Do you find that there are similarities between the worlds of ballet and cake design?

Absolutely. Both worlds are all about attention to detail and complete focus on the process. Ballet is the relentless pursuit of perfection, but I've let that part go. Imperfection is so much more interesting.

What's your approach like? Is there a type of environment you work best in?

Every project has its own unique process. Sometimes there are client meetings and sketches and a firm delivery date. Sometimes there are visits to the National Gallery for research on a new workshop idea. Sometimes I find a cool wildflower in my yard that I just need to re-create in sugar. Regardless, I work best in my quiet studio with my dog, Bessie, who frequently reminds me to head outside and enjoy the fresh air.

What inspires you?

It depends on the project. Sometimes a tiny detail, like the lace of an heirloom handkerchief, is the foundation of the design. Other times, I'm inspired by an art exhibit, my walks outdoors, an amazing runway gown, or a painting my husband finds at an antique shop. Occasionally, I'll start working on a project and it takes me in a totally unexpected direction. I've learned to go with the flow of the work rather than struggle against it.



The details on your designs really stand out—particularly your sugar flower work. Did that aspect of cake decorating come easily?

During the two-week wedding cake session in school, I made my first sugar flowers. I was the slowest in class, and my flowers were so chunky! But I continued working on them, and I did get a lot better. Sugar flowers are definitely my favorite thing to do, but I don't try to be botanically correct. Instead, I try to capture the essence of the flower—the temporal nature of it. My ballet training gave me an endless amount of patience, which helps in this aspect of cake decorating. During my time interning at a restaurant in Chicago, I'd often come home from an extremely intense shift and make gum paste roses to relax. Jess and I initially wanted to have a business that was solely focused on my sugar flowers, but the idea of putting my work on someone else's cake just didn't feel right to me. In fact, my cake designs initially grew out of the need to have a vessel for my flowers.

What do you enjoy most about what you do?

I love photographing my designs. By the time I'm taking pictures, the project has taken on a life of its own. In that moment, I get to be the audience. That transition from creator to observer is truly rewarding.

You launched Maggie Austin Cake in 2010—how have things changed since then?

Things have changed radically. We went from four weddings per week and a few workshops here and there to a handful of weddings per year and many workshops. Some workshops, like the Wedding Intensive, focus on sugar



flower technique as well as practical business advice from Jess. Other workshops, like the Dutch Masters Floral Design, are about exploring art in an unconventional way. That's the wonderful thing about owning your own business: you get to take it in the direction you want.

You describe your cakes as haute couture. What led you to give your cakes this description?

This terminology comes from my love of the runway. In fashion, when each stitch is executed with such careful consideration, the garment becomes art. Custom cake design is similar. The thrill of it is that the cake is one stand-alone piece made just for that client, and it cannot be replicated.



“SUGAR FLOWERS ARE DEFINITELY MY FAVORITE THING TO DO, BUT I DON'T TRY TO BE BOTANICALLY CORRECT. INSTEAD, I TRY TO CAPTURE THE ESSENCE OF THE FLOWER—THE TEMPORAL NATURE OF IT.

Is there an event or a particular client experience that stands out as a milestone for you?

I have been honored to work with some extraordinary clients. I've made a birthday cake for Dr. Jane Goodall. I made the wedding cake for Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds. I've flown all over the world with my designs. But teaching has been the most fulfilling on a personal level. Students come with their own stories, struggles, and triumphs. It's an honor to be part of their discovery process.

What does a typical workshop consist of? Who is your audience?

Workshops are incredibly diverse, and that's what makes them special. We have renowned pastry chefs sitting beside retirees who have never worked with sugar. Students come to us from all over the world, and the friendships made in those short days are amazing. Our workshops are a safe and quiet refuge where artists are empowered to explore their own unique voices. I also

encourage them to make mistakes! My motto is Embrace the Imperfections.

What are some takeaways you hope students walk away with?

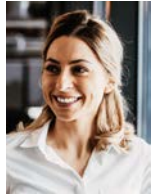
Creative people are, by nature, sensitive. It can be challenging to tune out the judgments, both internally and externally. Students at a workshop make beautiful things, but they also learn the importance of focusing on the process instead of the product. We celebrate that journey.

For more info, visit maggieaustindesign.com

Front of Tear Out Card 2

CHOCOLATE AND MILK BALLS

- 2 tbsp. salted butter, plus extra for greasing
- 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 c. cocoa powder
- 5 tbsp. chopped cashews or almonds
- 2 tbsp. dried shredded coconut



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WHAT MY Happy Customers ARE SAYING



Stacey's dedication to her customer's needs is unparalleled. We were very particular when it came to what we were looking for in a home. Stacey was so patient and understanding. She stuck with us through thick and thin. We highly recommend her!

-The Albright Family



We were so blown away with Stacey's can-do attitude. From the get-go, she left a great impression. When we decided to buy our first home, she was our go-to agent. She ended up finding us the home of our dreams! Thank you for everything, Stacey!

-Dana and Rob Stenger



I can't say enough about Stacey's level of commitment to her clients. My parents are seniors and needed help finding a new home closer to the family. Stacey was so sweet and helpful. My parents just loved her, and they love their new home, too!

-Margo Loveland



Stacey's savvy negotiating skills helped us score our new home at a great deal. We can't believe she helped us find this beautiful gem of a home. We will be telling all our friends and family about her superior level of customer service!

-The Everett Family

Back of Tear Out Card 2



CHOCOLATE LADDOOS

MAKES 20 LADDOOS

- Put the butter and condensed milk into a heavy-based saucepan. Cook on low heat for about 10 minutes, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens and begins to leave the sides of the pan.
- Mix in the cocoa powder, stirring to remove any lumps, and make a smooth paste, then stir in half of the cashews or almonds.
- Grease a baking dish with a little extra butter, then pour in the thick cocoa mixture and smooth the surface with a spatula. Let cool and set at room temperature.
- Break off small pieces of the set mixture and roll each piece into a cherry-size ball. Dip some of the chocolate balls in the remaining chopped cashews or almonds and some in the shredded coconut until coated, leaving some plain, too, so that you have a mix of textured laddoos.
- Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Indian in 7: Delicious Indian Recipes in 7 Ingredients or Fewer
 by Monisha Bharadwaj © 2019 Kyle Books.

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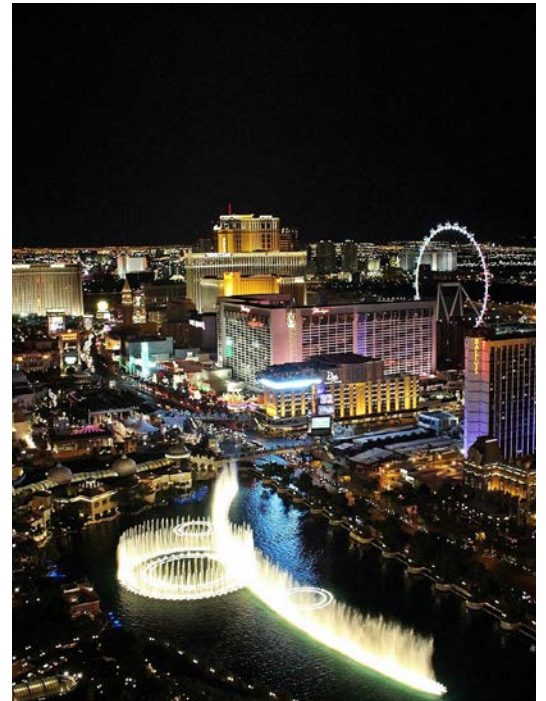
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