

# DESIGNED FOR LIVING

## THE NEW COLLECTIBLES

By  
RON  
SHIPMON

More than 50,000 professional artists call the Garden State home. Many of these craftsmen (and women) blend form, sculpture, and fine art to create designs that succeed aesthetically and functionally. These artists have fearless vision, re-imagining tables, chairs, clothing, and other objects into a cutting-edge art experience to be enjoyed every day.



**Christmas Stockings**  
Price: \$250-\$350  
Dimensions: 18" x 3"  
Material: Inlaid wood veneers  
(Stocking designs available upon request. Allow three to six weeks for delivery.)

**Dave Grunwald**  
Hunterdon: 609-775-8043

### David C. Grunwald

David C. Grunwald received a degree in architecture from the Rhode Island School of Design, where he learned glass blowing under the direction of renowned glass sculptor Dale Chihuly, and mastered woodworking with the influential Danish craftsman, Tage Frid.

He now melds all three disciplines in his Hunterdon studio. "I find New Jersey to be a very special place to create art because of its diversity of place. From the pastoral of our rural countryside, to our Shore's seascapes, and our urban areas. I find unlimited, continuous, and ever-changing inspiration for my designs," he says.

Grunwald has a well-earned reputation as a crafter of fine wood furniture. He works with hardwoods such as cherry, walnut, mahogany, maple lacewood, rosewood, and purpleheart.

His whimsical home accessories include an original line of Christmas stockings, handcrafted from a mosaic of inlaid veneers of a variety of woods.

To Grunwald, Christmas stockings represent the love, pageantry, and tradition of the season. These heirloom-quality stockings can be hung on the mantel and filled with presents or given as gifts.

# LIVING



**DanceScapes**  
Price: \$160  
Dimensions: 15" x 72"  
Material: Silk satin

**Ernestine Ruben**  
Princeton: 609-921-0565,  
[ernestineruben.com](http://ernestineruben.com); or  
Merrick & Moore Street,  
Princeton

### Ernestine Ruben

Ernestine Ruben, photographer, curator and lecturer, is internationally known for ingeniously replicating landscapes and architecture with sensual and fluid photographic images of the human form. Blindingly beautiful, they emphasize the passion and mystery of life.

Ruben's camera angles are improbable, even extreme. She invites shadows that obliterate familiar landmarks of the body and then combines odd portions of two bodies: the collarbones and Adam's apples of two men loom like monumental and somehow-incorrect torsos. Such complexity creates not merely abstract anomalies but new bodies—aspects of the human domain that other photographers have not captured before.

In her constant search to redefine images and how they are viewed, Ruben embarked on a new project a year ago: DanceScapes. A series of limited edition scarves (above) are inspired by Chinese calligraphy scrolls, and Ruben's consistent interest in the human body. "Photographs, for me, have always needed to come off the wall," she says. "Why? Because photography is about life. And life is about movement, breathing [air], heartbeat [rhythm]; often about essential elements such as water, fire, and earth. Printing an image onto silk and wrapping the body with this experience led me to the development of scarves. My love of life is expressed in these scarves."



#### Wings II Series

Price: \$450

Dimensions: 14" x 4 1/2"

Material: Ceramic

#### Shellie Jacobson

Skilled  
shelliejacobson.com

#### Shellie Jacobson

For more than 30 years, ceramic and book artist Shellie Jacobson has been involved in the teaching, creating, and exhibiting of new techniques in the ceramic arts. As a museum educator at the Hunterdon Museum of Art, Jacobson developed Bridging the Arts, a curriculum for outreach art programs in elementary schools.

It was during the Bridging the Arts project that she conceived the Wings ceramic series. Jacobson was attracted to wings—how they can shelter, conceal, and create flight. In her work, wings became a metaphor for power and freedom.

"Living close to nature, near [Flat] Rock Brook and its surrounding woods has immense impact on my work," Jacobson says. "My seasonal observations of the water and rocks and focusing on the flora and fauna have grown into a vast visual memory. Over time these memories filter into my work as forms, colors, and textures."

As she explored the notion of wings with her work, they became more of a navigator; as each piece emerged in the series, another part of the narrative found its expression. The wing series is ongoing and the artist continually adds to it.

Jacobson also creates one-of-a-kind artist's books, two of which will be included in an upcoming release of Lark Books' prestigious 500 Series. She maintains her ceramic studio and RockBrook Press in Skillman, where her books are bound and published.



#### Cafe table

Price: \$18,750

Dimensions: 55" x 22" x 22"

#### Mirror frame (right)

Price: \$7,350

Dimensions: 60.5" x 22" x 3.5"

Material: Aluminum

#### John Nicolai

25 Princess Diana Drive,  
Trenton; 609-477-4364;  
johnnicolaistudios.com



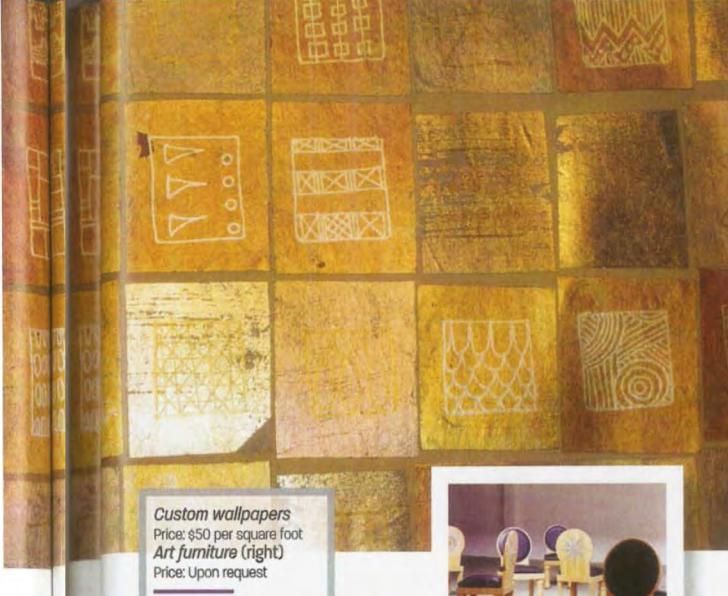
#### John Alexander Nicolai

John Alexander Nicolai is a self-proclaimed pack rat. He is hard-pressed to part with much. His obsession began at the tender age of four. He collected almost anything: boxes, wooden thread spools, pipe cleaners. He saw unlimited possibilities in each object.

This early passion later led Nicolai to salvage architectural objects from 18th- and 19th-century buildings and sell them at flea markets.

While working at a foundry, Nicolai had an epiphany. He would no longer just sell these treasures, he would use the foundry process to transform them. "My greatest fulfillment arises out of creating and the creation process itself. Making art is really not a choice, rather it is a need," he says.

Nicolai believes people transcend time and place through contact with old objects. The architectural objects incorporated in his work are "borrowed from another time," and reclaimed for another use. His work combines many elements, evoking what he calls "historical futurism or unrecognizable nostalgia." His goal is to make each object seem as though it was found at an archeological dig in the distant future.



#### Custom wallpapers

Price: \$50 per square foot

#### Art furniture (right)

Price: Upon request

#### Cheryl R. Riley

150 Bay Street, Studio 824,  
Jersey City  
201-984-2358;  
cherylriley.com



#### Cheryl R. Riley

Painter, sculptor, and National Endowment for the Arts award recipient Cheryl R. Riley was invited to exhibit her work at the Newark Museum in 2000, which birthed the idea of creating site-specific wallpaper installations for residential and commercial spaces. Inspired by Asian and African culture, ancient cave paintings, and Egyptian hieroglyphics, Riley incorporates brilliant hand-crafted iconic images on paper. She then applies the work directly to the wall paying homage to the work of the great muralist Diego Rivera.

"My parents were my inspiration," says Riley. "I have been creative since I can remember, drawing on my bedroom walls with my mother's approval before I began kindergarten."

A high-end furniture maker for many years, Riley counts Robin Williams and Denzel Washington among the collectors of her furniture. Her work can be seen in many permanent collections, including the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum.

The Houston native relocated to Jersey City's Powerhouse Art District in 2006.

#### Jim Perry

Jim Perry inherited an artistic pedigree. His mother, Mary Stewart Perry, was a respected artist, and his uncle was the Academy Award-winning actor Jimmy Stewart. With a creative bloodline, Perry followed suit studying sculpture at Bard College. His sculptural work caught the attention of a Whitney Museum of American Art curator, earning him a coveted slot in the Whitney Museum Biennial Exhibition. After a 28-year detour into journalism—as an editor for the *New York Times*—he opened a one-man shop in Princeton.

Although Perry's sculptural work tends to be more abstract, he employs age-old construction techniques, such as mortise and tenon and dovetail joinery, to create Shaker-style furniture—some purely traditional, others not so. "Whether creating an abstract piece of sculpture or furniture, I am concerned with form, shape, and proportion. In this sense, the two mediums go hand and hand," Perry says.



#### Table

Price: Upon request

Material: Solid cherry

Dimensions:

43" w x 75" d x 30" h

#### Jim Perry Studio

Princeton  
jimperrystudio.com