



503found Hosts First Ever Meet the Artisans Event

Marie Spada June 8, 2015

Mingle With the Talent at 503found

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Walking into 503found is like stepping into an armoire, except rather than Narnia, you are walking into a real life Pinterest board. Wall art, jewelry, pottery, macrame, sculptures, tapestries, furniture and much more fills the space in a perfectly merchandised way that says, “I’m relaxed, but I’m also probably one of the most amazing home decor stores you’ve ever seen.” Owners Kim Rodosky and Kim Johnson have spent the last year making this labor of love thrive, and their passion for their business shines through (especially through their fabulous lighting fixtures). The owners of this magical shop have organized an incredible “Meet the Artisans” event for where their local artists will be showcasing their work in the store. Shoppers get a chance to meet the artists, hear their stories and discover new favorites in their own backyard.



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Q: How do you select the artists that you work with and feature in the store?
Kim Rodosky: It's really a combination of word of mouth, connections through other artist referrals, and even people just coming into the store with their work. We can tell right away if it's something that would go with our store. A lot more people are coming to us now, which is nice, because they see our style, know that we are happy to work with anyone and that we gravitate towards small businesses.

Q: Are you featuring all of your local artists that you carry in the store at your event on the 27th?

KR: Yes, they were all called out on the invite, and we are e-mailing them individually to let them know we want them to come hang out and bring more pieces. We will set up little centers with their work, so people can ask questions and talk to them, which gives us a way to bring attention to the fact that they are carried in our store.

Q: Who will you be featuring in this event?

KR: Marcelle Lynch, Deb Allen, Jim Olarte, Josette Patterson, Deborah Harold, Janet Bludau, Ryan Gavin, Lee Braun, Jesse Loves Jewels, Ally M, Nancy Villere Art and Jewelry, Shelly Damore and more!

Q: How often do you add new artists to your mix?

KR: Very randomly, whenever we see something that clicks with us. We also source at local art fairs, walking through shops and seeing fun stuff in the window and really, anywhere. We get things from online and word of mouth; we don't really have a strict method. We get a lot of fun things from our shopping trips, too. We travel to the markets, small furniture fairs, LA's small maker events, major trade shows in North Carolina, Atlanta and Las Vegas, flea markets in Pasadena, Long Beach, Paris and London. We just go wherever I'm feeling like there's something I want to look at. I do have a big family, though, so when I can't travel, I'll go online and research who is showing at that trade show and contact them that way. We can't get everywhere, so I'll hop online and go through lists of vendors. We also work a lot with vintage shops and one importer that does Scandinavian countries.



Q: What was your inspiration behind this first ever event?

KR: We are not a chain store, and we don't mass produce, so I think people come into our store and like that they can get something unique here. I really believe in small businesses and I think that the product is better. I think you might save initially with mass produced items, but eventually it all evens out. When you start to meet these artists and see how passionate they are about what they do, it's great for the clients. It's nice for them to see the story behind it, and I want to foster the

creativity in this area. If there's any way we can be a platform for all of these creative people, I would absolutely love that. Not to sound too dramatic, but I do feel like creativity is being swallowed up a little. With small businesses, you get a better quality and better look. Also, karma! We all have to support each other and what goes around comes around! I do also gravitate towards small businesses worldwide; it's nice to build that connection with the owner rather than a big corporation; it's so much more personal.

Q: What are you looking to accomplish with this event?

KR: Truly, what I'm looking to do is give artisans in our area a platform to display their product and showcase them, and hopefully they can sell more of their product!

Q: What is your personal favorite art medium?

KR: (Laughs) Oh, no! You can't ask me that! I love everything; I can't pick. At the moment, just because I'm so into it, and I know it's trendy, but I just love the wall hangings. I love the macrame, so the table runner that's being featured in the event is one of my favorites. I am also partial to art; I love art. I love pottery and photography.

Q: Is there one theme you look for when selecting an artist?

KR: I like something that is unique and well made. Art is different for everybody, so our art won't be for everybody. But our product is so unique and well done that it speaks to everyone on some level. Of course, it speaks to me because I love it, but it could be the subject matter, the depth, the colors or anything else that speaks to someone else.



Q: Do you ever offer interior design services?

KR: On occasion, we will help with design advice, but we mostly love to work with interior designers – from those just starting out to those who have huge followings. We’ve found that designers from across OC and Southern California are always looking for new, unique pieces and resources for their projects – and that’s something we want to support! Often, designers are so busy that they can use another set of arms and legs to research items, shop markets, and to pull accessories. We want to be that helpful resource for designers – like an extension of their team.

Q: You mentioned to me earlier that you like to offer services that make the designer’s job easier. Can you tell me more about what that entails?

KR: We let them do very generous memos for their clients, meaning they can take home merchandise and try it in their house to see if they like it before they buy it. We also help designers source products that they are looking for, and we will source for them on trips. We like to help them with project ideas and we’ll do that complimentary. We loan products for home tours and photo shoots without making their client buy it. We feel like if we keep putting that out there, it will come back to us in other ways.

Q: What’s your favorite style of home to decorate?

KR: Somebody who is eclectic and likes to mix time periods and styles, while still tying it together through one theme, like color. I also like family-friendly homes, and I like homes that like to express themselves in a fun, unique way. I love art, so I love to bring that in whenever I can. Often, I find that people just go in and do the first layer of standard must-haves in a home. If they just go in and do that little bit of extra layer of personality through art, rugs, blankets, baskets and books — it will set them apart. Many people stop at that first layer and then ask, “Well, should I get a designer?” I always tell them yes, because the designer will add that second layer that sets your house apart and makes it more reflective of you.

Q: What do you think is one must-have item that is essential to every home?

KR: A great dining table because it brings you all together.

Q: What do you find to be the most common themes for the OC shopper?

KR: That’s a hard question because I don’t think there’s necessarily a common OC shopper since so many people are from so many different places. We have such a mix of East Coast, Midwest, California and all over. At the end of the day, it is a coastal community, so comfort is essential. Linens and things that hold up in the weather are popular here too because there is that beach community feeling.



Q: How has the taste of OC shoppers shifted over the years if at all?

KR: I do think because of the internet and things like Pinterest and Houzz, people are much more into the do-it-yourself thing than before. People are looking for

more unique things, and trends are moving out quicker. Before, a trend would last for two years and now it will last six months. They see every idea so much that they get over it so much more quickly now. The shopper is much more educated and design savvy now and they can find things themselves, do research for themselves, and they have a better idea of what they want. On the flip side, that's also one of the reasons why people say they don't want a designer. The more I watch, the more I think that it's even more of a reason to have a designer. They will keep you a little more timeless rather than have you fall into all of the trends and they'll help prevent impulse buying because they'll give you a plan to stick to.

Q: What was once a hot seller for you that has now cooled down and, conversely, what was once a slower item that has now picked up?

KR: You know, it's so weird because last summer, it was all about upholstery and couches and chairs, so we stocked up on them and then they all died down. Art has been huge for us. Beads always sell and African headdresses are really hot with our clients right now; we sell out of those. Our lighting is always consistent, and we always sell out of that. Statement chairs always do great, too.

Q: Who are some of your exclusives?

KR: Injiri Textiles, 1882 Ltd., Seventh & 7th Designs, and vintage and found objects from all over the world, including places like Atlanta, Paris and Turkey.

Q: What would you say sets you apart from other galleries or shops in the OC area?

KR: I think our collection is constantly changing, and we source from so many different places, that our collection is unique. I also pride us on having fantastic customer service; that is so important to me. Whoever you are walking through that door, whether you're a big designer coming in for the 10th time or coming straight off of the beach, we will go out of our way to make you feel comfortable. Design should be fun and relaxed, and I've tried to create that environment here. We are also really involved in our community. We are all from here, and we stay involved with all of the charities, home tours, schools, foundations and auctions. We try to support the community in any way we can, from the local artisan to the schools. We believe in supporting everyone.

Q: This shop is a true labor of love; what would you say is your biggest achievement within the store?

KR: That we are here! This is something we just jumped into with both feet. I am just happy we are still up and running and doing well! I think we are all so proud of how quickly we were able to adapt. I am a first-time business owner, and Kim has worked through the years, but we just keep working hard and going forward.

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