

COASTAL



life

Capturing the Essence of New England

Time & Tide



STORY BY NICOLE M. BOUCHARD
EXCLUSIVE TO COASTAL LIFE

ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE MAJESTIC, MOUNTAINOUS LAND OF CAMDEN

a mother and her daughter worked tirelessly side by side in kind spirit within a quaint shop that sold rugs and pillows which were vastly desired for their entrancing use of color and the delicacy of the designs that captivated the eye with stories of deer, rabbits, foxes, birds and vines coexisting in the natural world...



THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

The vegetable garden is a most important part of the home, and one which should be carefully planned and managed. It is a place where the family can obtain fresh, healthy food, and where the children can learn about the growing process. The garden should be divided into sections for different types of vegetables, and should be well-watered and protected from pests. The following are some of the most common vegetables grown in the garden:

Carrots, cabbages, cauliflowers, beans, peas, and potatoes are all popular choices. The garden should be kept clean and free of weeds, and the soil should be rich and fertile. The vegetables should be harvested at the right time to ensure the best quality. The garden is a wonderful place to spend time, and it can be a great source of pride and satisfaction for the whole family.





Jo Ellen Designs in Camden, Maine, weaves stories through their designs which are reminiscent of the natural beauty of the vivid, yet tastefully restrained illustrations present in the old Nordic fairy tale books which featured the works of authors such as Hans Christian Anderson. Such a correlation might be drawn not only due to the bold colors and fine, elegant artistry of the interwoven animals and growth of the vines that sustain them, but also due to the fact that Jo Ellen Stammen has a sterling reputation of having been a children's book illustrator. Her daughter, Jessica, is no stranger to the art world as an alumni of Cooper Union Art School, yet she also lends her skills in management and takes an active role in the charitable portion of the business which donates ten percent of their profits to charities and scholarship funds. The Designs for Good! Program

designates certain designs with certain charitable organizations giving ten dollars through each pillow and rug purchase. Complimenting each other in many ways, these fine artists have their roles clearly defined in Jo Ellen Designs. Jo Ellen is the owner and Principal Designer. Jessica acts as Manager and Public Relations coordinator. Together they form a dynamic team bringing their skill sets and experienced backgrounds to form the ideal mixture.

Jo Ellen illustrated her first book, "Wild Fox", as a heart and soul collaboration with author, Cherie Mason. At the time, they were both relatively unknown and they went with the regional publisher, Down East Books. Regional publishers had never been in the mix for consideration of the Caldecott Awards, yet "Wild Fox" was among the ten finalists. It was also named "Natural Book of the Year" by Smithsonian Magazine. With the heart of Maine in







her stories, animals figure prominently. Initially, she had used the medium of colored pencils for her illustrations. It was a tedious process that pained the wrist. By the time she illustrated "If you were Born a Kitten" for Simon & Schuster, she was working with dry chalk pastels which gave more ease and printed better. It was very successful and deemed "the surprise of the season". The true story of the fire in Brooklyn which surrounded a cat going into a burning building numerous times to save the kittens was turned into the beloved book, "Hero Cat", used for Fire Week in schools. This book won Jo Ellen the Christopher Award. As an award-winning designer, fine artist and illustrator with three grown children, Jo Ellen sought a new canvas for her works with more freedom and concentration on interior décor which had always been a strong interest for her. Experimentation with paper cuts led to some initial designs. Research into fabrics led to the choice of rugs as her new art form. "From a design stance, I was interested in a negative and positive canvas and I love the warmth of the texture in woolen rugs. It would also make the artwork



accessible and affordable to the public. The designs tell hidden stories and feature animals which are truly enlightening creatures." The rugs are imported as having had them made locally would have multiplied the price as much as ten times. The 100% wool, flame retardant, hand-hooked rugs and pillows do not spot easily and are fairly simple to keep clean. As opposed to fibers that break easily, wool can stand up to being bent 20,000 times, thus resulting in the handsome rugs having longevity.

Having been featured on The Today Show, Casaguar.com, Downeast Online, Victoria Magazine and Home Magazine, these delicious designs have captivated discerning eyes of the design world and the general public. A tale of faith and sheer determination, the anecdote of their debut is something to admire. Jo Ellen tells the story with a delightful excitement in her voice. It was just two weeks before the New York International Gift Fair August 2007 show when Jo Ellen was ready to submit an application. Though many vendors had been on the list for up to three years, she believed in her work and told them that she understood that she'd missed the deadline, but that she had packed up her car and was ready for them should a cancellation happen and reveal an opening. "I had to look at it in little steps. Had I envisioned the big picture, it might have seemed overwhelming or impossible." With numerous e-mails, she kept on top of things though it still seemed insurmountable. Having been vastly impressed with her work, a decision was made suddenly in the event of a cancellation. Jo Ellen joked with her family when the phone rang one evening that it would have to do with the show. Glancing at the caller id, she was astonished to see that she was right! Their products did indeed debut at the August 2007 show and have garnered incredible interest since.

Jessica Stammen describes having grown up around her artistic mother and having many artistic materials available to play with, should she want to. The artistic life was not imposed on Jessica or her two brothers- it was simply there should they desire to take part in it. Only realizing her artistic passion in her sophomore year of high school through an oil painting class, Jessica then tailored her final two years toward getting into Cooper Union School of Art in New York. She told herself that she would get in and she did. She also thrived there and was named one of Glamour Magazine's Top Ten College Women of 2002. Her role as artist in residence at St. Paul's Chapel at Ground Zero for nine months after 9/11 led to her commission to make a memorial piece from a salvaged part of the North Tower. Having received the Clark





Foundation Fellowship "to support graduate pursuits of potential visionary leaders in the non-profit sector" she also went on to NYU for her Masters. Her years in managing a fine arts gallery brought her experience in public relations, website development, marketing and sales. With a passion for the higher good, she combines her business skills with a compassionate slant toward charitable venues. "I grew in a compassionate, giving family and as I've grown, that seed in my heart has flourished with my experiences and desire to connect people with resources, time, energy and talent. One area of public service that I feel is overlooked is simply sharing one's talent and gifts with the world. That in and of itself is a noble purpose." Regarding the emergence of the business and her role within it, Jessica explains that "...like the Tradeshaw where we debuted, you dive in, learn as you're doing it-learn on your feet. That's the creative way to life. In painting, you might go in with a vague idea but you won't know where it's going to go until you're in the midst of it. I suppose that's the art behind the science of life- being in the zone and flow of things."

Their beautiful pieces around which an entire room can be designed, invite a playful sense of color and nature into home interiors. Each of the designs is a mode of artistic self-expression. "Garden Deer" in black, red or tan, has a soothing feel of tranquility amidst a pattern that seems as though it might have appeared on a medieval tapestry. The level of care and detail bred into the designs is reminiscent of historical time periods that

focused heavily on artisan quality and enduring materials. Not only pleasing to the aesthetic, this design benefits an organization which utilizes a peanut-based food source to nurture those in need. In addition to the numerous entreating pillows and rugs, their store features a growing collection of items such as unique Indian textile blocks, antiques, calligraphy brushes, an Indonesian wedding chest, chairs and tables painted with Jo Ellen designs upon their surface, graphite sculptures, fair trade brooms, liquid cardboard and paper-cut art. There

is also the possibility of further family involvement with the youngest son, Tim, being a talented jeweler working in the realm of three-dimensional art, studying at the Savannah College of Art and Design.

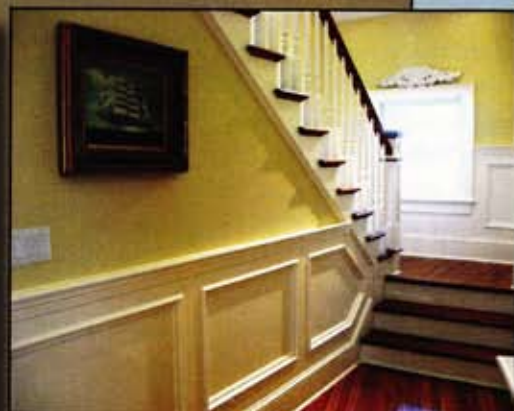
With great faith, great talent, great vision and heart, Jo Ellen Designs shares with us a world of unparalleled, intricate beauty, all within the soothing confines of our inner-child capacity for imagination and receptivity to the art of great storytelling. ☪

For more information, visit www.joellendesigns.com

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