

NOV/DEC 2008

Southern Accents

BEAUTIFUL HOMES, GRACIOUS LIVING, A SENSE OF PLACE

68
pages of

Holiday Ideas

GREAT HOSTS SHARE
THEIR SECRETS

GIFTS FOR
EVERYONE ON
YOUR LIST

TOUR OUR
COLORFUL
SHOWHOUSE

Southern Accents

NOV/DEC 2008

\$5.99US \$7.50CAN

12 >



Display Until Jan. 6
www.southernaccents.com

Vol. 31, No. 6

SOUTHEAST | STYLE SETTER



Scott Waterman

The artist draws inspiration from his Southern roots to create his beautiful, nature-influenced murals

ANYONE WHO DOUBTS THE FAMOUS QUOTATION by Seneca that “all art is but an imitation of nature” needs only to step into a room enveloped by the paintings of Scott Waterman. A renowned decorative painter, Waterman transforms rooms with his exquisite, life-size murals of nature scenes that bring the outdoors in. “I love how intricate and productive the plant world is,” he explains. “The murals are really an opportunity to create a whole new environment.”

With delicate brushstrokes, Waterman applies layer upon layer of a transparent acrylic paint on heavyweight muslin fabric panels to create a luminous, watercolorlike effect. “When applied to the wall, the seams of the muslin panels actually disappear, and the result is a rich sense of texture,” he says.

While he occasionally paints on location, Waterman works mostly from his Los Angeles studio and ships his art to clients who have commissioned paintings for foyers, rotundas, and even a wedding tent. Establishing a sense of place is always his top priority, so he often travels to the location to



Waterman creates a glamorous home office with this mural. The view from a wall of French doors inspired the plant, bird, and insect imagery. The design is based on traditional chinoiserie painted in grisaille.

see the space or to oversee installation. "I want my paintings to have a connection to their environment," he says.

Though his murals are displayed around the world, Waterman says much of his inspiration comes from the grand old trees of his Florida birthplace, as well as Atlanta, where he lived for 10 years and studied fine art.

Southern Accents: What sparks the creative process for you?

Scott Waterman: Travel is refreshing. Art and art history are essentially a bottomless well of inspiration, but as an artist I am especially inspired by nature, specifically plants. I love the natural landscape, as well as designed gardens—everything from minimalist Zen to the sort of chaos you find in a cottage garden. I even find individual plants and their processes endlessly fascinating. For instance, in my own garden, I recently had to dig up a nandina that had outgrown the spot where it was planted. To me, the gnarly root ball is such a marvel of line and form, as fascinating as any painting or decorative piece from the Art Nouveau period.

How do you translate your thoughts and inspiration into form?

I would describe the process I use to create my paintings and murals as collage, but not in the traditional sense. I have copious notebooks filled with collages that combine drawing and painting with cut-and-paste printed matter, but a few years ago I learned to use Photoshop. I find it the best



The painted surface is silver leaf on silk mounted on paper.

An advertisement for Circa Interiors and Antiques. The background is a photograph of a woman, Catherine Walters, smiling and holding a bottle of wine. The text is overlaid on the image. The logo "circa" is in a large, elegant font, with "INTERIORS AND ANTIQUES" in a smaller font below it. A quote from Catherine Walters is featured in the center. At the bottom, contact information for two locations is provided.

circa
INTERIORS AND ANTIQUES

"I love accessorizing with pieces of history. A bottle that once held French wine adds a sense of time and place to your room. It starts a conversation. It has personality." Catherine Walters

2321 CRESCENT AVE. CHARLOTTE, NC 28207 704.337.1668 2831 CULVER RD. BIRMINGHAM, AL 35292 205.848.9199 WWW.CIRCAONLINE.NET



"I made my own paint mixtures using acrylic colors, transparent acrylic media, dry pigments, and diatomaceous earth for a velvety, gouachelike appearance," he says.

way to quickly combine elements and then rearrange them, change their scale, value, color, and so many other qualities that by hand would take me much longer. When I put brush to canvas or paper, I'm still likely to make any number of decisions on the spot, but using a computer has helped me see so many more possibilities.

What artists, past and present, have inspired you?

I often think of James McNeill Whistler when asked to come up with a favorite artist. He's an iconic figure in art history, not only for his body of work but also for his great personality. He understood the essential abstract nature of painting, even representational painting. That, to me, makes him very modern, even conceptual. I recently had time to visit The Art Institute in Chicago, which has a number of beautiful Whistler portraits and landscapes. In his work, one can find minimalism—passages of subtle layered color—as well as rich decorative patterning. Contemporary artists Julian Schnabel and Takashi Murakami are also favorites of mine, and their work can have similar characteristics. Like Whistler, they have both ventured into other media, such as interior design and objects.

DEWOOLFSON[®]
natural. comfortable. home.

banner elk 800.833.3696
 blowing rock
 hillon head/bluffton
 charlotte

STONECREST AT HIPPER GLEN

www.dewoolfson.com

DEWOOLFSON DOWN INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Dewoolfson Down Intl., Inc.
 registered trademark of
 Abyss

What are your favorite and most challenging projects?

I especially love to work large and create whole environments with murals that wrap the room and set up a fugue of art and architecture. There are technical challenges with most of my commissioned works, as well as seemingly impossible deadlines, but I'd say the main challenge is handling all the practical considerations outside of the studio. I really do love to paint. If I'm not painting, I'm probably thinking about it and trying to finish whatever mundane task is at hand so I can get back to painting.

“I love how intricate and productive the plant world is. The murals are really an opportunity to create a whole new environment.”

—*Scott Waterman*

Do you plan to try other media in the near future?

I really do want to venture into other media—surface design for ceramics, household items, fabric, even clothing. I'd also love to see my work translated into animation, perhaps set design for film. Painting is simple, and I can do it on my own, but I look forward to collaborating with technicians and artisans to help me bring it to another level. ♦

For more information and to see more of Scott Waterman's murals, as well as his other works of art, visit www.scottwatermanartist.com.



*elegant design & decadent fabrics...
yours to discover*

*...in the living room, **atHome** dining room, & bedroom*

8921 18TH ST. SOUTH • BIRMINGHAM, AL 35269 • 205-879-3510
WWW.ATHOME-FURNISHINGS.COM



*Sumptuous bedding, luxurious bath products,
astounding furniture await you at www.athome.com*

© 2005 Home Furnishings, Inc. All rights reserved.