





THE ARTIST'S — VIEW —

In a world of disposable home goods, the lost art of true art for some is, well, lost. Dazzled by the oh-so-affordable fun finds in big box stores, we love changing our home décor as fast as we change our minds. However, the purpose of personalized commissioned art is to enrich not only our homes, but the lives of generations to come. Local artist B'Beth Weldon tells us why.

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Recalling long art history study sessions from years ago, two words can sum it up: pure torture. However, all these years later, I literally leap across any room to shout, "That's a Modigliani!" or "That's a Rembrandt!" any chance I get. I also remember taking in a van Gogh at the Met with my brother who said, "I could do that." Quick to scold him with, "Well, you didn't," I spun on my heel to flee his obvious art ignorance. What a difference time makes. I never could have guessed then how that basic knowledge would grow into full-blown art appreciation.

Amazed by this area's thriving art scene, I was thrilled to meet artist B'Beth Weldon. Her journey began at just 6 years old in Fairhope with adventure-filled days spent under the powerful masts of sailboats, exploring the Delta, riding horses from dawn to dusk, and reveling in vigorous polo matches under the Southern sun. Her mother, a painter, invited her to join her artist group to absorb, stretch, and grow as a painter in her own right while surrounded and encouraged by strong women.

From this poetic foundation, B'Beth received degrees in business and the arts from Mount Vernon College (George Washington University) in Washington, D.C., and enjoyed positions at the Smithsonian and Capital Children's Museum. Today, she is a globally recognized painter known for her abstracts, landscapes, and sport art. Her award-winning pieces can be found in galleries, private collections, and exhibitions in the United States, Europe, and Asia, and in the permanent collection of the United States Sports Academy in Daphne.

Discovering she's responsible for the sophisticated polothemed paintings gracing the walls in the newly renovated Fairhope Inn, I was instantly smitten. She also created the masterpiece that greets locals at Fairhope's Mitchell Cancer Institute Kilborn Clinic, as well as NYC's Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. To put it bluntly, B'Beth is legit.

Witnessing our housing market boom and decorating frenzy, I'm curious about the process of custom paintings. "I love having people visit my studio to view my work, as the colors, textures, and size get lost in translation in a photograph or on Instagram," B'Beth shares. "And often they see something they want slightly different, which is how commissions happen!" she says.

As for the specifics, B'Beth shares, "Listening to the client and discussing their preferred subject matter, we review mediums, size, and pricing. I like to see the space where the work will hang as it allows me to envision how it should feel and to find personal touches to incorporate that will complement the interior design," she says.



With work around the world, B'Beth adds, "Many clients live abroad or in different states, so I communicate through video chats and include everyone from interior designers to contractors and craftsmen to ensure we're on the same page. From there, we exchange paint chips, treatment ideas, fabric swatches, and images for inspiration," she shares, noting she can jump in at any stage and is familiar with them all!

Her vast interior design knowledge is another benefit. "Sometimes a large canvas actually makes a space feel larger and a well-placed gallery wall boasting a mix of photographs, drawings, and paintings is inviting," B'Beth says. "I love when a space tells a story. Also, I find that small paintings in guest bathrooms, a kitchen nook, or over a side table create a beautiful space," she shares.

While some build the room around the art, others build the art around the room. "Choosing the furniture and fabrics first can make finding the perfect art difficult," B'Beth says. "It's popular (and cost effective) to have the art and furniture married from the start to achieve the homeowner's or the interior designer's desired effect. This teamwork approach is really fun and effective and results in pieces that last a lifetime."

Finding mass-produced pieces impersonal, B'Beth feels a commissioned piece allows for a different freedom. "You can love the work of an artist, but not quite find a subject in their current portfolio that resonates with your particular wants," she shares. "A commissioned work can bring your dream to life. I once commissioned an artist to paint my daughter and I with

our favorite horses. It's whimsical, unique, and ultimately an heirloom," she recalls fondly.

With her three panel triptychs in high demand, her art can be seen at Fairhope's Camellia Café, Chapel Farm Collection, the Sophiella Gallery in Mobile, and on her website. "Breaking up one landscape or abstract over three panels offers that wow factor and keeps the eye more active," B'Beth explains. "Starting with landscapes years ago, they're still popular, but I've enjoyed breaking things up with my horse, fishing, hunting, and sailing scenes. I'm thrilled with the requests for my modern abstract and prismatic paintings — even the small ones framed in acrylic. My pen and inks are also big gift items as they're affordable and portray a lot of masculine outdoorsy scenes," she adds.

Never having lost her childhood fascination with light, color, and movement, B'Beth's ability to capture the essence of a moment transforms the space where it lives. Multidimensional, her work evokes emotion and invites viewers to dig deeper into their souls. Whether comprised of clean lines or heavy strokes, her paintings are simple and powerful, inviting the viewer to jump inside. With more time at home (and more time spent staring at our own four walls), now seems like the perfect time to add some interest to our homes and invest in an heirloom (or two) of our own.

B'Beth Weldon

BBethWeldon.com