

# Thrill of the hunt

## Finding beauty in the strangest places



**Form and sound** Vintage microphones are paired with a dressmaker's form named "Betty." The couple have fun creating commissions that resemble Betty, their original sculpture based on the 1930s concept of memory jars. The couple glues items such as stamps, buttons, Cracker Jack toys, discarded jewels and coins on mannequins or busts to create colorful, personal mosaics.

Photos by Andrew Sullivan



**Collective couple** Joy and Mark Indursky run the design and collectibles business, Lost Found Art LLC. Here, they stand in front of some of the collectibles that fill their North Stamford home.

By Beth Cooney

When Mark Indursky found the hulking, metal hospital gurney at a flea market, all he could see was potential.

His wife, Joy, saw a piece of bulky, ugly junk. And morbid junk at that. "I said, 'That's it, Mark. Enough. You have really gone too far this time.'"

Mark reached for his wallet, signaling to Joy she would have to learn to live with the gurney. For in that 1950s relic, Mark saw good design, vintage materials and "a really cool chaise if you add some purple cushions."

"Look at it," he says, contorting the old metal to show off its flexibility. Months after taking it home, he continues to champion its off-beat, retro good looks and potential as a home furnishing, although it remains in his basement workshop. "I mean, add the upholstery and it's going to be neat. And I bet

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**A world in detail** "Betty" in closeup is a feast for the eyes. Often the Indurskys use clients' personal items to complete the project. "Things like old charms or pieces of letters or invitations, little things people have been hanging onto for years," Joy Indursky says.



really comfortable, too." Joy is still adjusting to the idea of living with it. "He has come home with a lot of strange things; some of them I love. That one was the strangest."

This is how things work at the Indursky home in North Stamford, where Mark, a gatherer of items kitschy, cool and sometimes strange, has turned his finds into design statements that make the couple's country residence a funky, gallery-like setting. Some of their decor is for sale, or at least functions as a livable example of what Mark can do when he hunts, gathers and creates displays for his growing clientele.

"We are definitely eclectic," says Joy, a former fashion merchandiser who manages the couple's design and collectibles business, Lost Found Art LLC. "I've had some people here who

"We are definitely eclectic. I've had some people here who just kind of stare at things and say, 'Uh, interesting.' And you can tell they don't like it or don't get it. How people react to our house is very personal. But if they get it, they love it."

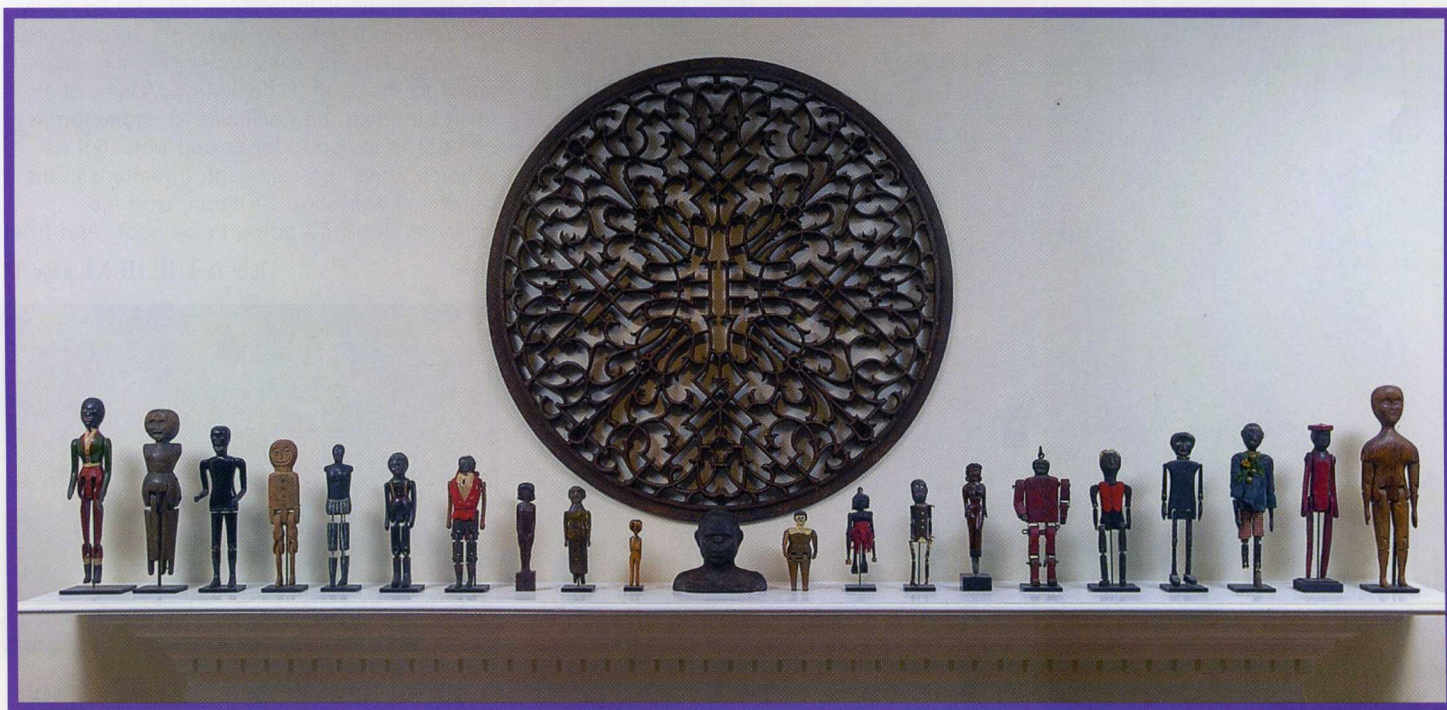
just kind of stare at things and say, 'Uh, interesting.' And you can tell they don't like it or don't get it. How people react to our house is very personal. But if they get it, they love it."

For those who can appreciate the couple's distinctive design sense, a visit to the Indursky home is, as Mark says, "like opening a box of eye candy."

Their kitchen walls pop with vintage metal lunch boxes from shows such as "Julia," "Charlie's Angels," "The Partridge Family" and "Planet of the Apes." Antique ice fishing decoys are suspended from walls in the guest bath. Old casino gaming wheels and pinball machines greet visitors to the family room.

The visual treats are everywhere, even in the upstairs study lounge of their 12-year-old daughter, Maris. There, her father hung his growing collection of vintage toy ray guns mounted on a key lime-green board. The collection was inspired by the 1997 movie, "Men in Black," and the retro superhero guns actors Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones carried.

"We are not about chintz and toile," says Mark. "I like things that pop and create visual interest because of their texture or design or a one-of-a-kind quality." Hence, there are furnishings such as vintage spools of colorful thread mounted on a glass tabletop — an ode to the couple's years in the fashion business — and wine corks strung together for curtains. Their kitchen table is a traditional, light pine, but the orange plastic chairs add a



**Standing guard** Mark Indursky's passion right now is for articulated figures, rather crude toys from the 1800s and beyond, which he displays on the mantel in his North Stamford home. Notice the figures' detail in the picture at top.





**For the lunch bunch** The Indurskys' lunch box and Thermos collection is a big hit with visitors. "Moms will come over to pick up their kids from play dates, see the kitchen and go crazy," says Joy. "You can spend an hour just studying the lunch boxes and reminiscing."

pop art statement. "It works," says Joy, and it's more interesting than if the couple had stuck with a matched set.

Mark employs a similar inventiveness when seeking out and arranging collectibles. "I just look for things that are really interesting design elements. I don't care so much about their original use as I do about their appeal as decorative elements. I like things that have an almost sculptural quality," he says, adding that as much as he appreciates teacups, or rare pottery, he would never collect them. "I just saw someone decorate with barbed wire as an accent and it worked. But with kids, I wouldn't do that."

The collection of antique industrial factory pulleys displayed side-by-side on a sideboard in the French country dining room is a good example of Mark's original eye.

"You could hang them on a wall or put them on a shelf and they would work," he says. "But suspended like this, from these metal hangers I made in my workshop, I think they are more interesting."

Mark has an affinity for old baseball gear. "I'm not big on sports memorabilia, but I love old baseball stuff because of the way it wears," he says. "Something like an old catcher's chest protector or wooden bats, they are just cool." He is fond of kids' baseball gloves "because they are just so hard to find and together they look really neat. Adult ones wouldn't be as interesting."

Mark's day job is in sales in the women's fashion industry, but he is also an artist who once worked as an illustrator. Paired with his wife's fashion flair and her own artistic interests, they have styled their residence to suit dual purposes. Although it is first and foremost a home, they treat it as a gallery. Serious clients may get an invite to see firsthand what they can do with a collection and their knack for creative display.

The Indurskys started Lost Found Art, a niche business that specializes in creating unique decorative accents

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**Hook, line and sinker** Fish decoys decorate the downstairs bathroom in the home of Mark and Joy Indursky.

## The hunt

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based on their unusual collections, after friends and acquaintances saw what they did with collectibles and asked for help with their own. "What we do is very personal and is sometimes as simple as helping people find interesting ways to display collections they already own," says Mark.

Mark will also take on commissions to hunt for specific objects, which he gathers at flea markets, antique shows and other collectors. He sometimes buys and sells on eBay, although he's not a huge fan. ("You can't see or touch what you're buying and I don't like that.") He will dig into the trash, as he once did to salvage a rusty grate from Grand Central Terminal during its refurbishing.

"A lot of people don't have the time or instincts to search for this stuff and often, they are not quite sure what to do with it when they get it," Mark says. "I have a knack for doing both." He has located old radio microphones for musicians, and rare, antique gavels for attorneys, and spent months gathering a vintage abacus collection for an accounting firm to display in its lobby.

The couple also likes to seek out design elements with broader appeal.

Their lunch box and Thermos collection is a big hit with visitors. "Moms will come over to pick up their kids from play dates, see the kitchen and go crazy," says Joy. "You can spend an hour just studying the lunch boxes and reminiscing." Mark adds that while the lunch boxes are easier to find on the flea market circuit than some of his other treasures, they are among his most popular commissions. He even builds shelving for them. "It's something people love, but they are not always motivated to do on their own," he says.

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**Just 'pulley' it!** The collection of antique industrial factory pulleys displayed side-by-side on a sideboard in the French country dining room is a good example of Mark Indursky's original eye.



The couple have also had fun creating commissions that resemble "Betty," their original sculpture based on the 1930s concept of memory jars. The couple glues items such as stamps, buttons, Cracker Jack toys, discarded jewels and coins on mannequins or busts to create colorful, personal mosaics. The sculptures run about \$2,200, and often the Indurskys use clients' personal items to complete the project. "Things like old charms or pieces of letters or invitations, little things people have been hanging onto for years," Joy says. "When we're done, it's fun for them to just stare at the sculpture and look for those things. They'll find a charm or a piece of an old bracelet and just be thrilled."

Mark is fond enough of "Betty" to say she's not for sale, and there are other items in his collection he covets too much to part with. Right now, his passion is for articulated figures, rather crude toys from the 1800s and beyond, which he displays on his mantel.

Oh and that hospital gurney. "I might sell it someday," he says. "But first, I want to see it as that chaise."

#### Source

• Mark and Joy Indursky, [www.lostfoundart.com](http://www.lostfoundart.com) or 595-0575.

— Beth Cooney, a staff writer at *The Advocate*, is a frequent contributor to *HOME*.



**Zap it!** Mark Indursky hung his growing collection of vintage toy ray guns in the upstairs study lounge of his 12-year-old daughter, Maris. The collection was inspired by the 1997 movie, "Men in Black," and the retro superhero guns actors Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones carried.

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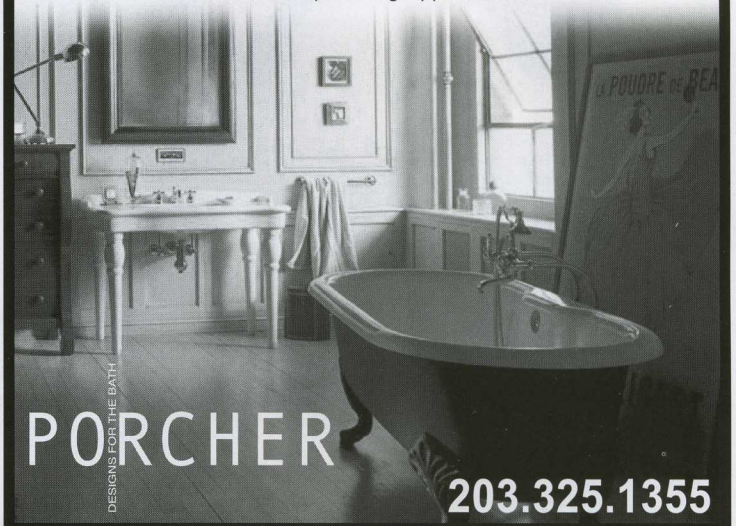
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