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MARCH / APRIL 2022

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ISSUE



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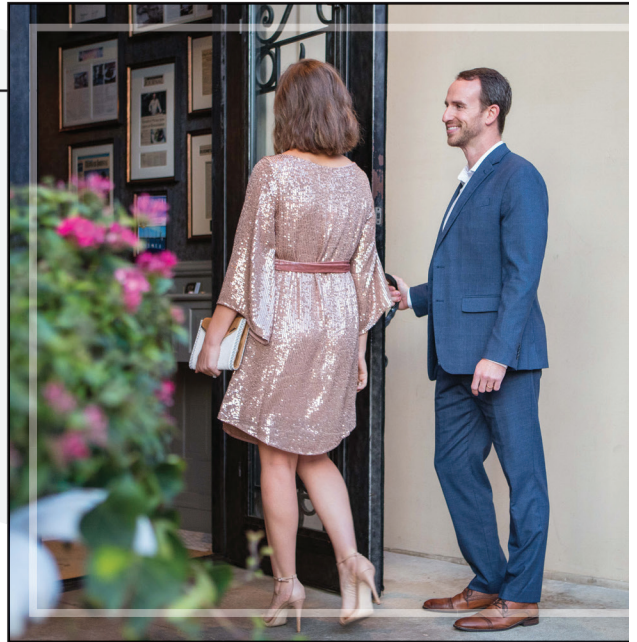


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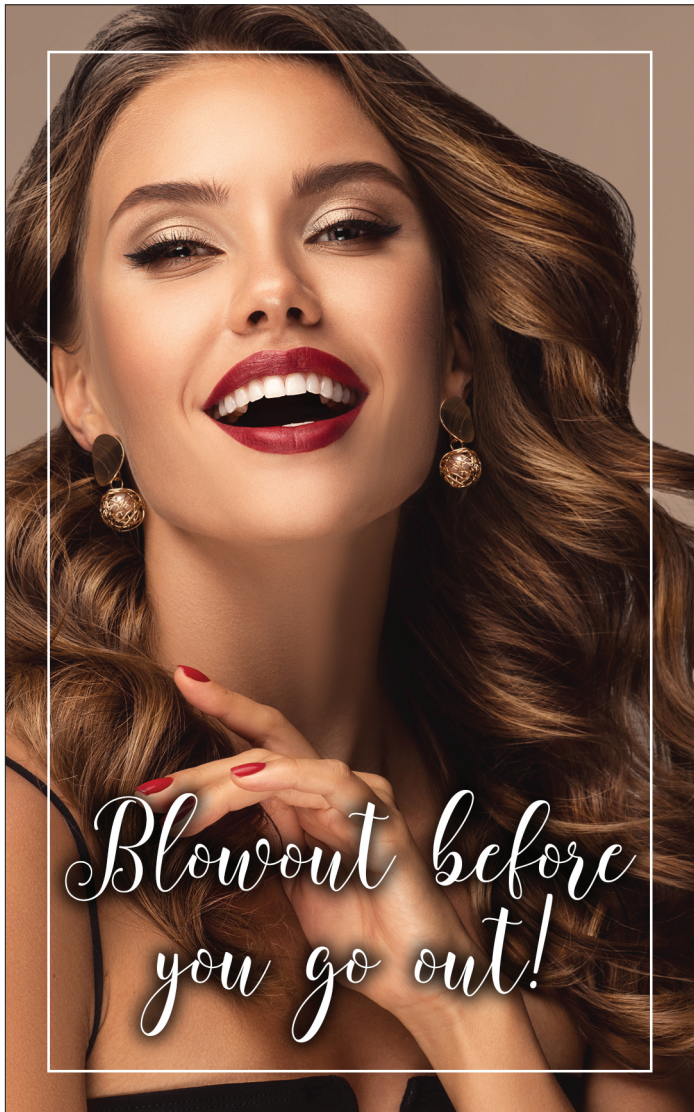


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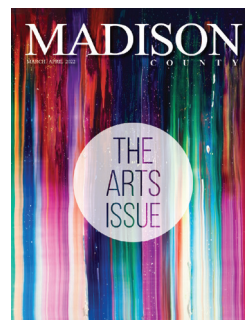
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# SNAKEBITE

by Duncan Dent

“Lovely day for a Guinness,” reads the old Guinness ads with a toucan balancing an iconic glass of the stuff on his beak.

That ad applies to most days but for extra so for Saint Patrick’s Day. Proper drinking on the March holiday is about as easy as cracking a Guinness and taking the time to savor the rich flavor and enjoy the rattle of the widget inside the can as the beer drains.

Guinness is a dignified drink and contains a multitude of mysteries. The dark and thick impenetrable black color is actually dark ruby red and the widget rattling inside the can, I am told, facilitates the nitro infusion process which gives the beer its silky smooth texture and facilitates the creamy head of foam.

It is an almost perfect drink and hard to argue with but you are not here for a beer recommendation.

Guinness can be mixed into a variety of cocktails, many of which are two ingredients. A little Guinness and champagne is known as a Black Velvet but for March we recommend that Snakebite.

The Snakebite is a beer cocktail popular in England. They make it with hard apple cider, lager and a light pour of black currant cordial that sinks into the concoction like snake venom but in America, we make ours with the cider and healthy pour of Irish dry stout over the top.

There seems to exist a cultural taboo around mixing beer and, well, beer, and it is not without precedent. The legality of Snakebite itself in England has a muddy history, something about mixing drinks poured from separate taps. Former President Bill Clinton was reportedly refused the drink under such auspices.

A story published in the Harrogate Advertiser has Clinton visiting Harrogate, a spa town in Yorkshire, England, in June of 2001, just months after leaving the White House. Clinton and his entourage reportedly stopped for lunch at the Old Bell Tavern.

After Secret Service searched the place, Clinton reportedly belied up to the bar. Manager Jamie Allen said that he let

Clinton and his crew sample some of the ales they had on tap before settling on a Diet Coke.

“He did ask for a snakebite after one of his security men did, but we kindly refused him. It’s illegal to serve it here in the UK you see,” Allen said.

They reportedly enjoyed a lunch of steak and ale pie before visiting some of the town’s antique shops.

Further research suggests that no law prohibited the mixing of such a drink but the story was printed in black and white.

St. Patrick’s Day is a “lovely day for a Guinness” and a Snakebite is a good way to mix it up. Below we have included the version of the cocktail more widely known in the United States though if you happen to have some black currant cordial we have never been one to discourage a little experimentation in the home bar. Don’t worry, it is perfectly legal.



# MAKE YOUR OWN

---

## INGREDIENTS:

One bottle of hard apple cider  
One bottle of dry Irish stout

## DIRECTIONS:

Fill a pint glass halfway with the apple cider and then carefully pour the stout into the glass over the back of a bar spoon so that there is a layering effect. Enjoy.



# MAXIMIZE YOUR OUTDOOR LIVING SPACE

By Jana Hoops

After a two-year hiatus from outdoor living and entertaining in your own backyard, thanks to the pandemic we'll never forget, there's a feeling of new beginnings as Madison countians are taking back this spark of normalcy by refreshing their patio surroundings.

While we can at last entertain and visit with our friends and family indoors and out, what better way to say "welcome back" than hosting your own backyard reunion?

If you're ready to replace or refresh your outdoor furnishings, the market is brimming with great colors, materials, and styles to pick up your mood – and your warm weather traditions – and look forward.

Madison County's Tommy Stallings, owner of Madison Fireplace and Patio, and Mimi Martinson, owner of Martinson Garden Works, share trends that can bring it all together.





## COLOR TRENDS

Fortunately, color trends are all over the board, with clean, calming shades of greens and blues gaining the most popularity in 2022, followed by earthy neutrals and even bright, bold statement furnishings with colors that pop.

For those who prefer a lighter, edgy outdoor setting, Boho-chic is back! Think bright colors and mix-match patterns and textures, especially for accent pillows, cushions, and other accessories. Bright colors can also be found in standbys like Adirondack pool chairs and porch swings.

“The trend now is for white houses, so people are choosing grays and lighter neutrals for outdoor furniture, and popping it with cushions and umbrellas in turquoise, canvas (an off-white sail cloth), terra cotta and other colors,” Stallings said.

“Our Adirondack chairs are very popular,” he said. “They’re made of recycled plastic and are very heavy and substantial. Our biggest colors for these are neutrals and grays in colors called wood tones, weathered wood, sea shell (off white) and coastal gray.”

Martinson said she looks at colors as “two schools of thought” – i.e., two different palettes of colors, for indoors and out.

First is monochromatic (using the same color in different shades), a technique that is “definitely on trend” and lends a more sophisticated look, she said.

For example, blending an outdoor color scheme of today’s very trendy white container pots with bleached wood furnishings, a jute rug and different shades of white baskets creates a cohesive atmosphere that can work inside or out.

“Whites and neutrals and bleached woods together are definitely on trend,” she said.

On the other hand, there is plenty to be said for jewel colors, such as sapphire blue, deep red, sienna orange, cranberry, turquoise and citron green.

“We’re seeing that in outdoor accent pillows and other details,” she said. “Since we are all about gardens, we carry a lot of whimsical, colorful items.”



## MATERIALS

The buzz about materials in today's outdoor furnishings is "sustainability." Among materials trending now are recycled plastics, bamboo, natural or recycled fabrics, reclaimed wood, recycled steel and aluminum, natural stone, and recyclable resin, to name a few.

For Martinson, that means plenty of stained wood Adirondack rockers, woven wicker outdoor rockers and "lots of seat cushions in summer colors, including bright yellow," she said.

You may also find outdoor nylon-woven rope lounge chairs with metal bases and wooden accents that she describes as "super comfortable and very modern."

Also on her list of sustainably-made items are bamboo shelves and benches, furnishings with rough, or reclaimed wood that is "more rustic looking," and metals that include cast aluminum, which she describes as "a step up" from iron. "It won't rust, and it lasts forever."

Another fun accent piece is the customizable wooden planter bench with space for sitting and showing off flowers or greenery – a great way to fill an empty outdoor corner or as a side piece.

On any given day, you may also find metal benches in red, green, dark blue, or other colors at her shop.

Madison Fireplace and Patio carries an abundance of reclaimed teak from the Philippines often starting as "recycled old carts," Stallings said, and becoming beautiful dining pieces.

Today's chaise lounge chairs sport woven vinyl made from recycled plastic. And with frames made of aluminum or steel, you can skip the rust and just get out the hose for easy cleaning, Stallings said.

"That means no wrought iron, no maintenance, no painting," with tones in darker, bronze colors being the most popular now.

Woven rope is trending now for sofas, chairs of all sizes, and other substantial pieces for comfortable seating.

And lastly, Stallings calls the recycled Adirondack chairs he carries "the best product we have," proven by its quality and a warranty that last two decades.

## STYLE

With the pandemic winding down, many have come to make the most of spending more time in their homes and have found their own ways of bringing more of the outdoors into their living space.

What does this blurring of indoor/outdoor space look like? Exterior and interior flooring may blend into a new "outdoor room" accented with playful industrial-grade rugs to allow more space for outdoor dining and entertaining.

Additions like outdoor kitchens are all the rage, along with larger meal tables, seating for lounging, dining, or fireside time, bar areas or modular "deep seating" for conversation.

Another trending touch will mean live greenery will likely find its way into these areas – either in large colorful pots or even as vertical gardens.

Whether you already know what kind of outdoor space you'd like to create or you just want to see what's out there, it's always smart to discuss your ideas and questions with reputable local sources.

Stallings' shop is filled with prominent lines of furnishings for dining, poolside, bar time, lounging, conversational seating and fireside warmth, along with accent pieces, outdoor grills and more.

He offers one suggestion for shoppers: "The best thing I can say is to look for quality," he said. "Spend your money on good products and you'll keep them a very long time. If it's made of quality materials, it can always be updated with pillows and accent pieces. Purchase things you love, and that will last."

Martinson's approach is a bit unconventional, but clearcut. "I don't do the typical outdoor stuff," she said. "I call our things 'outdoor patio and porch living,' or just 'porch furniture,' like benches, rocking chairs, mid-century modern styles – things that will take the elements.

"This also includes rugs, firepits, benches, smaller tables and high-end teak tables. And no table and chair matching.

"I'm always changing things," she said, "and our items are across the board so you can find things that fit your own style."



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# Debra Wingo

## STYLIST TO THE STARS

By Jana Hoops

With a decades-long career as a hair stylist, image builder and make-up artist to celebrities from all over America, Debra Wingo and her husband J.W. Williams, a music producer and manager, were faced last year with the difficult decision of staying in Nashville, their home base for more than 30 years, or leaving for a new start, as COVID took its toll on their livelihoods.

It's been nearly a year now since they put down roots in Madison near her daughter and grandchildren, and she describes the move as "a breath of fresh air. Everyone is so nice and unpretentious, and we love it here!"

Looking back on her fast-paced, exciting career adventures, Wingo is thrilled to have achieved success in the one job she believes was meant for her.

As a child growing up in the small Tennessee town of Cookeville, Wingo always knew what she wanted to do.

At age 12, she had already developed a fascination for makeup.

By age 14, she started cutting hair – and she made the announcement. "I told my family that I was going to tour the world with rock stars and do their hair," she said. "They all looked at me with pity in their eyes. . . pity that soon turned to laughter."

Still, her mom, two brothers, boyfriend and "anyone who would sit still long enough" took her up on her offers for free haircuts that gained her "zero mad customers. They didn't expect a professional job, and fortunately, I didn't mess up anybody's hair," she said.

By the time she finished high school, Wingo was on a mission. She immediately enrolled in cosmetology school.

At 19, she owned her own salon in Cookeville. It wouldn't be long before she realized that if she was ever going to achieve her career goal, she had to be proactive. It

was time to make a change.

"I knew that if my dream of being a celebrity stylist was going to come true, I needed to move where the celebrities lived, so I moved to Nashville," she said. "I got a job as a stylist in a salon that catered to country stars, and by the time I was 26 I owned my own salon in Nashville."

She quickly made an impression on her co-workers and clients. "I was always fearless with hair cutting, and my co-workers soon began to refer to me as the 'kamikaze hair stylist.' I was willing to take risks. I realized that I had a knack for talking with clients and understanding what they wanted. It was like it became intuitive to me. No matter what they tried to describe, I would tell them 'I can do that,' and I did."

She would soon begin working with clients on music videos, television commercials and record cover photo sessions.

"The first music video that I keyed, or was the key makeup artist for, was a rock video in Memphis for the band Red Rider, which was a precursor for the success of Tom Cochrane, who was famous for his song 'Life is a Highway.' I had to start work that day at 5 a.m. and it concluded the next morning at 5 a.m. It involved river scenes and helicopter shots - crazy!"

For her hectic, rising career, this was just the beginning.

She went on to work on hundreds of music videos and celebrity photo shoots all over America and around the world, including Spain, the UK, Australia, Germany, Switzerland, Canada, Grand Cayman, Mexico and others.

"I've seen amazing vistas of our beautiful country that I had only seen in books and magazines, and I have so many good memories," she said.





From the excitement of attending the 2006 wedding of Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban (both have been her longtime clients) in Sydney, Australia, to the “sweating bullets moment” when she had to shave off Dirks Bentley’s head of curly locks for a prison shot in Mexico, she has loved every moment that her career has made possible.

Among the many other big-name clients she has served through the years are Trisha Yearwood, Garth Brooks, Eric Church, Steve Winwood, Patty Loveless, Luke Bryan, Pam Tillis, Michael McDonald, Vince Gill, Lionel Richie, Waylon Jennings, Hank Williams, Jr., Trace Adkins, super model Niki Taylor and more.

Wingo emphasizes that keeping her skills current in a business that sees trends and styles change rapidly has been a key to her success. “I have constantly sought out continuing education to keep my skills sharp,” she said. “I have studied in New York, Los Angeles, Toronto and Miami. But the greatest education of all is doing, and I love doing!”

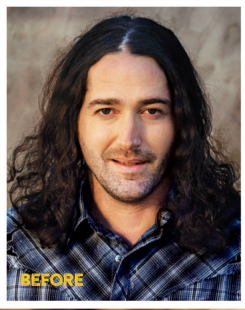
Along the way, she was always “Mom” at home, raising two daughters she describes today as “smart, educated young women.”

With their move to Madison, Wingo said she realized she would need to adjust what her business would look like.

“What I focus on now is special event hair and makeup for brides, proms, family and business photo shoots, special appearances and even romantic dates,” she said. “I have always loved styling hair and doing beauty and glamour makeup. I’m looking so forward to working with local men and women who are truly seeking that exceptional care for some of life’s most distinguished occasions – people who I can transform into stars. They can be assured they will receive the same care and respect as my celebrity clients.

“I am an artist, and I love the creativity it requires. I have spoken things into my life that have gone directly to God’s ears and, coming from humble beginnings, I’m so thankful for the experiences and opportunities I’ve enjoyed. I made my own dream a reality with sheer will and tenacity.”

Wingo may be reached at (615) 566-1670 or [derawingo.com](http://derawingo.com).



**AFTER**  
 "I like it," says Thompson, who planned to donate his hair to Locks of Love. "My old hair had a mind of its own, depending on the weather!"

**S**itting in a stylist's chair in Nashville's hip Green Pea Salon, singer Josh Thompson is staring at his reflection in the mirror. He's just chopped off the signature long locks that he'd been growing since 2008, and he's taking it all in. "It's a little bit of a surprise when I see myself," says Thompson, 36. "But it was a long time coming. I was literally just going to take my old clippers and shave it. This is a lot cooler!"

It's a fresh start for the "Cold Beer with Your Name on It" singer, who parted ways with his record label in 2012 and will release *Turn It Up*, his first album in four years with new label Show Dog-Universal Music, on April 1. "It's been a while since I've had new music out, so this is all exciting," says Thompson. As for how his fans will embrace his drastic new look, he's not worried. "Audiences might be a little surprised," says Thompson, "but they'll know it's me as soon as I start singing!"

Perhaps the real test will be how wife Angie will like it. "She's only known me with long hair," says Thompson of his new bride. (The couple married last year and have a daughter, Josie, 9 months.) "She gets a brand-new man tonight. She'll be cheating on me with me!"

# JOSH THOMPSON'S New Look!

BYE-BYE, LONG HAIR! THE SINGER TURNS HEADS WITH A NEW DO TO GO ALONG WITH HIS NEW ALBUM  
 by DANIELLE ANDERSON & KAY WEST  
 Photographs by VICTORIA WILL



"I even went a little shorter than I thought I would go," says Thompson (with stylist Debra Wingo). "We were at what could have been a stopping point, but we decided to take a little more off."



A man with a beard and dark hair, wearing a dark jacket and pants, is sitting on a set of stone stairs. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The stairs are made of light-colored stone and lead upwards. To the left of the stairs is a white wall with a vintage-style lantern hanging on it. To the right, there is a concrete wall and a dark metal railing. The background shows a dark sky and some trees. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative.

# Painter Chad Mars

---

## Curator of Happy Accidents of Abstract Art

By Mark H. Stowers

Chad Mars has been painting seriously for a decade, but he doesn't use a brush. Instead, he finds his artistic tools at places like Lowe's. His talents are "organizing the accidents into something that makes sense," he says.

Even with his art degree, Mars didn't think he could make a go of it as a painter. He even wandered to the West Coast and entered film school to learn that medium. But after spending time working in an office atmosphere, he came to a realization.

"I had no intention of painting after college. I wanted to but I didn't know anybody who did it. There was no realistic path to becoming the kind of painter I wanted to be," Mars said. "It took working and being in situations where I was just miserable for a long time. I just thought, 'well, nothing could be worse than being a painter.'"

He took that inspiration and went back to his first love. But all he knew was that painters needed an art gallery to show their

work and he needed to sell his work to make a living.

Along came social media and through the magic of Facebook and then Instagram, Mars was able to show the world his artwork and the DMs rolled in with requests to buy his abstract work.

"I've been lucky," he said. "Facebook made it possible to circumvent the galleries and get it out there myself. Then Instagram made that easier. The Jackson Academy alumnus always wanted to be an abstract painter but wanted to have his own look.

"The only way to do that is flail away for a really long time and what you learned from that and what you want to keep. But I hadn't done that," he said.

Born in Laurel, he grew up in Laurel and Ridgeland and received a bachelor of fine art with an emphasis in painting from Ole Miss.

He first spent a year at Mississippi State as an art student but admitted he hated it. He tried other majors but found himself at Ole

Miss back in the art curriculum. He never even picked up a paintbrush until his third year in school.

"I took beginning painting and was immediately in love with that. After three more years of painting, I just hadn't done it enough to feel like I was evolved into someone who could put paintings in galleries," he said. "I didn't know anyone who did it. Then eight years go by and it felt like it all happened overnight in 2012. It helped me make that leap from 'I don't have anything for a gallery' to creating a full series of paintings."

Inspired by Gerhard Richter and his squeegees to paint, Mars actually took digital pictures of the TV screen and the tools Richter used to paint. He then made a trip to Lowe's and picked up his own new arsenal of painting tools to render his art.

"I found plexiglass and bolted wood to it and used it like a giant palette knife. That's how I applied the paint. I painted with these really big strokes and was scared to waste paint and how costly but the end result would be something you've never seen. It excited me and I figured out within a few months how to make things that were interesting and really pleasing with those tools. Then I decided this was my thing and I was never going to use a paintbrush again."

Mars feels his talents are "organizing the accidents into something that makes sense. The plastic palette knives and tools create a lot of interestingness in just a few strokes of paint. Then you whittle away at what doesn't need to stay. I trust the tools to make things interesting. In the past 10 years I've only worked with things like paint scrapers and palette knives and squeegees and pushed the paint around to see what was created."

He describes his paintings as three-dimensional with a sculptural quality.

"What bothered me early as a painter is that you can't see the paint. I thought it would really benefit if you could see the paint standing off the surface," he said.

His artwork is normally finished in a day as the acrylic paint dries quickly and his idea may fade in his mind if he doesn't finish it.

"I paint from the back to the front. In the background, I'll use my brightest colors or my darkest colors. Then I'll do a middle layer where I use the colors of medium value and then on top of that I use the lightest colors so it's kind of sandwiched," he said.

Watching Bob Ross early on in his career, he capitalized on the "happy mistakes."

He's also been influenced by the music he listens to such as Bryan Eno who also paints.

"I remember listening to his music in college and thinking I want to make a painting but I didn't know how to talk about painting but I could talk about music," he said. "My paintings are made up of strokes that cross





each other and cut into each other. They make a floral motif. It's all abstract and all about enjoying the paint stroke and the work."

Mars describes his early attempts as trying to be in control and even planning his canvas in quadrants and planning what paint to go in each one. But those turned out "terrible." Now he has a different mindset that has brought him much success.

"I try to find ways to surrender and in a way that's peaceful and not chaotic. I'll work on a painting in layers and the second and third layers are far removed from the first. You just surrender to chance and improvise in the moment."

Each day he starts a painting, he admits that "he's a curator of good accidents" and finds a way out of the corners he paints himself into in his Ridgeland studio. He has plans to build a studio in his Madison home so he can work from home.

"I don't work in the morning and then go start painting about noon and paint as long as I can. I get lost and feel like I don't know what I'm doing but then it's hours and hours of hundreds of strokes that are taxing on the brain. I somehow find my way out of whatever I've done. At the end of the day, you're wiped. It's like being in a sports game."

His older brother, successful singer/songwriter Charlie Mars, inspires him somewhat but it was his mother who truly believed in his art. His dad, David, is a private pilot and participates in barnstorming. His mother, Sylvia, has a marketing company.

"She's been my number one person who encouraged me and pushed me to pursue art. She came into my studio early on and couldn't believe some of the stuff I was painting. I had been there all semester trying to become a good painter. She walked in and said, 'wow, you're actually really talented.' And that meant a lot and you just need people who are in your corner."





These days, Mars does a few commission pieces a month and sells his art through Instagram. He also has the Jackson Street Gallery displaying his work along with Oxford Floral. He also participates in art festivals to show his work.

He recently did a “live painting” at a Children’s Hospital fundraiser. But those he goes in with a few ideas beforehand. Outside of his abstract art endeavors, Mars has gotten into getting his hands dirty in a different manner. As a homeowner, he’s gotten into gardening and landscaping.

“I’ve tore up the old yard and rented heavy machinery and graded all the dirt and

planted the yard. I read online how to do everything. I like doing things outside with my hands. I’m going to grow roses this year. I like making the outside a little more beautiful,” he said.

Mars enjoys the beach but not when others normally do. In the new year and in the fall, he takes in the wonder of sand and sea along 30A on the Florida Gulf Coast.

“I like to go when it’s freezing and camp. You can enjoy the beach. I go at the beginning of the year and hit the reset button. In the fall, I like to go up to the Smokies.”

He also spends a large amount of time reading about and listening to music of David

Bowie, Prince and other “glamorous rock stars” from the 1970s and 1980s.

“David Bowie is really inspiring to me. He represents outsiders and the weirdos but then to be so massively popular is cool,” he said.

Mars does play a bit of guitar but that’s where his musical endeavors end. “I like to do one thing really well,” he said. And that he does, as the curator of happy accidents on canvas.

Mars art can be found on Facebook, through his Instagram account – Chad\_Mars and he’ll be at the Double Decker Festival in Oxford this year.



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# MADISON'S TORCEDOR

by Duncan Dent

photos by D'Artagnan. instagram is @d'artagnanportrait



Anu Amen-Ra has perfected the art of hand-rolling fine cigars, including nearly half a decade of trips to Cuba and working in the famous Trinidad factory in Havana, and turned it into a luxury service.

Amen-Ra is ready to make your next event classic, he says, especially with the \$4,000 “Mecca of cigar experiences,” the Dreamer Luxury Cigar Experience designed for the quintessential gentleman or gentlewoman and a few close friends.

The service includes onsite cigar rolling and a custom private blend created for the client, including proper pairing, cutting and lighting.

He boasts weddings, socials, and company events as part of his cigar rolling repertoire.

Rolling tobacco into a cigar and smoking it is believed to go back to at least the Mayans. Those who roll cigars are known as torcedors.

“I enjoy helping the customer find their way,” said Amen-Ra. “I want to throw a monkey wrench into the situation and educate the consumer.”

Jon David Cole is the owner of the Country Squire in the Quarter on Lakeland. Easily one of the oldest, if not the oldest, continually running cigar and pipe tobacco shops in the state, Cole has turned the old pipe shop into a destination for tobacco lovers from all over, sending orders of the house blend tobacco worldwide. The shop recently celebrated its 50th anniversary in August of 2020.

In addition to being a good friend of Amen-Ra and the godfather to his two sons, Cole has seen Amen-Ra go from a first time smoker to one of his shop’s knowledgeable tobacconists.

“Anu has been a central figure in the Mississippi cigar community for the last 10 years,” Cole said. “One of his talents is bringing people together and creating energy but most of all he is a good person and people are excited to support him. He has been an important part of building our clientele here at the Squire.”

Amen-Ra learned the art of *tabacalera* straight from the source. Between 2016 and 2019 he took 27 trips to Cuba to learn how to hand-roll cigars. In that time he says he estimated plowed through \$64,000 worth of tobacco before he could consistently produce a sellable product.

Amen-Ra grew up in the Presidential Hills neighborhood of Jackson and attended high school at Callaway. He graduated in 2010 and joined the military where he was on active duty from 2010 to 2013. He received his honorable discharge in 2019 as a Captain and received a degree from Jackson State University in 2016 in speech and communication.

“The military is where I first experienced cigars,” Amen-Ra said. “I saw the officers smoke and I had the ambition to be where they were. It was an environment I wanted to partake in.”

His now brother-in-law gave him his first cigar in 2014 at Churchill Cigar Shoppe in Jackson in a retail space on the west side of Smith Wills Stadium. Amen-Ra was hooked.





After graduation, he moved to Dallas and would travel between there and Belle Chasse, Louisiana, where he was stationed. In Dallas, he discovered D and B Cigar Corner run by Tim Davison, a Moss Point native.

The first time Amen-Ra entered the store he said Davison immediately saw his outfit and declared “I know this man is from the South.” It was not long before Amen-Ra started working in the shop. He was struck by the diverse clientele, free-flowing conversation and ready access to fine tobacco products.

Amen-Ra began keeping a tobacco journal — a practice he still maintains today — learning all the nuances of the cigars in the shop and noting the favorites of regulars. He soon

decided he wanted to learn more and prepared for his first trip to Cuba.

“It reminded me of Back to The Future or Motown in the fifties,” Amen-Ra said of his time in Cuba.

On one trip he said he got a ride in an old Chevrolet Bel Air. Because of the United States embargo, many cars in Cuba are old pre-embargo cars that their owners have kept running through years of home brewed engineering.

He said another car pulled up beside them and the driver revved the engine. Before Amen-Ra knew it he was in the winning car of a Cuban street race.

During his time in Cuba, he rolled cigars at the Trinidad factory in Havana and spent his

after hours under the tutelage of Ronaldo de la Cruz, who has since moved to the U.S.

In Cuba, he learned the fine touch required to hand roll dozens of cigars at a time. He said it is like an old family recipe that only a few people know how to make from years of making the same recipe over and over again.

“My mom makes a broccoli and crawfish casserole that I have tried to make,” Amen-Ra said. “I have tried and failed miserably.”

He had to save and borrow for these trips and even had to dip into his military retirement but on May 31, 2019, it paid off. He released his first cigar line Dream Catcher.

Currently, Amen-Ra works at the Country Squire and does cigar rollings for weddings and other private events.

In April of 2021 he did a Kentucky Derby pre-party for event for Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton.

“My favorite part, my absolute favorite part, is sitting down to show someone this cool craft,” Amen-Ra said.

At the rolling table, Amen-Ra’s light touch and deft fingers can kick a fresh rolled cigar out in no time ready to cut and lit and enjoyed. Onlookers’ eyes move between his handiwork and his smiling face as he explains each step in the process and what each piece brings to the cigar.

Building his brand, Amen-Ra has been able to mix his many interests from fashion to music. Future cigar releases he hopes to include a card in each cigar box that features drink recipes and music playlists to enhance the specific cigars in each box.

“It is a way to put my experience in a box,” he said.

This is a reflection of his own journals. He said the communal nature means he attaches cigars to the experience he had when they smoked them. Some log entries include details of his day or get into the specific meals he ate before enjoying the cigar. His favorite is an H. Upmann The Banker, a cigar he first enjoyed with a friend in the military, his battle buddy, after a parachute jump in Texas.

Amen-Ra lives in Madison with his wife Latasha. They have three children that include his step-daughter Serenity, who at 11 years old can already roll a fine cigar, and his Irish twin sons Saint-Ermias, 2, and Chief-Kwamne, who will be two in July.

“He is an otherwise unlikely person for me to have connected with,” Cole said. “But he is one of my dear friends and our families are close and I am thankful for that.”

Future plans include a functional hand rolled cigar factory, a follow up location in the metro area and space for education.

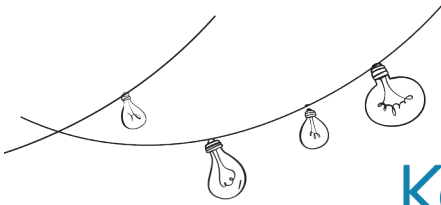
Archaeologists place the human use and consumption of tobacco as far back as 12,300 years ago in Mesoamerica and spread to the rest of the world by European explorers. By 1542, the substance reached Asia when the Portuguese introduced the substance to Japan.

Throughout history, tobacco has been used for purposes that range from recreation to medicine to religious rites.

For more information on Amen-Ra, his cigar line or to book him for an event visit his website [sartorialtobacconist.com](http://sartorialtobacconist.com)







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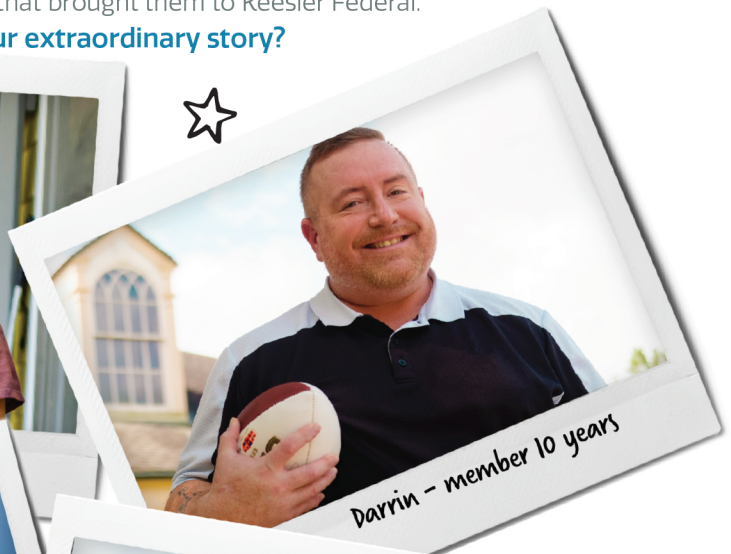
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# TIM HUTSON

## MISSISSIPPI'S MASTER DUCK CALL & BURL BOWL MAKER

By Joseph Dera

During a recent unseasonably warm afternoon, I decided to explore the backroads surrounding the thriving little town of Flora in Madison County. These trips are always a success that finds me weighed down with farm fresh eggs and sweet raw honey from roadside stands and farms throughout the area. The bonus on this particular outing was a chance meet-

ing with Tim Hutson, a retired Mississippi attorney and avid sportsman who has reinvented himself as a local artisan of considerable note and talent.

Traveling down a narrow dusty lane lined with 100 foot pines, just off Livingston-Vernon Road, you'll find the Hutson workshop where you can order everything from custom-made antler chandeliers to recycled



oil cans made into birdhouses. While these creations will catch your eye because of their uniqueness and whimsical nature, it has been Tim's hand-turned bowls and duck calls that have given him his statewide following.

"They're simply the best and most beautifully made duck calls in the country," said Mason Mahaffey, and avid local hunter.

Hutson has always been interested in restoring and repairing things, an avocation that had its beginnings when he offered to restore a family member's wooden boat (that boat sits proudly in the center of his workshop today).

His more creative side began to blossom at light speed after a chance encounter with an Amish craftsman in Iowa.

"Anyone can throw a decent bowl on a lathe," said Hutson, "the real challenge comes by doing it by hand with a mallet and chisel. Those skill sets were handed down to me by my Amish mentor."

Tim's labor intensive style is made even more difficult by his use of Burl wood, a parasitic protrusion often seen on the side of a tree as a large round growth. Hutson scours the Mississippi and Alaskan forests in search of the perfect specimens. Interestingly, these growths can be cut off without harming the tree itself. The burls are extremely dense and often take up to a year to dry. When the wood is ready it is fashioned into small and large bowls, duck calls, pens and wine stoppers. His wife Cindy calls him multitalented and we agree.

Should you venture out to Tim's workshop, don't be surprised if you see him working on scrimshaw being applied to 9-25 million-year-old piece of mastodon bone. Hutson spends his summers in Alaska trout fishing and often happens upon bone fragments.

"Mastodon bones are only found within the permafrost of Russia and Alaska," he explained. It's a lost art form that has inspired him to learn more and make it his next creative quest.

Hutson's creations can be had exclusively at The Flora Butcher in Flora. Or you can visit him at his workshop at 201 Horse-shoe Lane in Flora. Drop him an email at: [timothyshutson@gmail.com](mailto:timothyshutson@gmail.com).





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## IN THE KITCHEN



*With International Chef David Raines*  
The Flora Butcher & Dave's Triple B Restaurant

One of my favorite foods of springtime has always been lamb. It's delicious, it's festive and it makes great leftovers to boot. I am lucky enough, at The Flora Butcher, to have great sources for locally raised lamb. The farmers I have met in Mississippi take a lot of pride in their products and it shows in their quality. In general, it is my opinion that domestic lamb is far superior to imported lamb but take the effort to find Mississippi grown lamb this year. I promise you that it will be well worth it.

There are endless ways to cook it but people still seem intimidated by it or only want to deal with the racks. We will concentrate on the other parts of these wonderful local animals.



## BRAISED LAMB SHANKS

I doubt it would be visually appealing but I wish lamb had two or three times the number of legs. I just never get tired of lamb shanks and anytime I use a longer cooking method, like a braise, I like to do as many as will fit in the pot. For this recipe, we will keep it down to a manageable number

- 4 Lamb Shanks, frenched
- 1/2 cup Lamb Tallow
- 1 Carrots, peeled and split
- 1 Yellow Onion, chopped
- 1 stalk Celery, chopped
- 2 bulbs Fennel, sliced(save the tops for the next recipe!)
- 1 large Tomato, diced
- 8 cloves Garlic, peeled and crushed
- 2 cups Sweet Reisling
- Lamb Stock to cover
- 2 Bay Leaves
- 1 sprig Rosemary
- Zest of 1 Lemon
- 1/2 teaspoon Chili Flake
- Salt and Pepper

Season the shanks liberally with Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper. In a heavy pot melt the lamb tallow over medium high heat. Brown the shanks on all sides and set to the side. Reduce the heat to medium and add the carrot, onion, celery and fennel. Using a wooden spoon, stir often and scrape the bottom of the pan as the juices come out of the vegetables. Once softened, add the garlic and tomato and continue to cook until all of the liquid has cooked away. Still stirring often, add the wine and cook until the wine has evaporated.

At this point, return the lamb shanks to the pot and add the stock until the shanks are submerged. Add the bay leaves, rosemary, lemon zest and chili flake. Cover and gently simmer for about 2 1/2 hours or until tender but not falling off the bone. Remove from the heat and allow to cool in the liquid. Once cool enough to handle. Remove the shanks and cover with foil to keep warm. Strain the sauce, discarding the vegetables. In another pot, reduce the sauce by half and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper.

At mealtime, put a bed of your preferred side in the middle of the plate and place 1 shank on each. glaze each shank with your sauce and add a little extra so that it pools on the plate. I like to go with comforting sides that work well with a sauce. Farro, risotto, lemony grits and even just a bed of pappardelle.



# ROASTED LAMB SHOULDER

Lamb shoulder is not as popular as a roast but I think that has more to do with the lack of real butcher shops in today's world. Most grocery stores just cut "blade chops" out of the shoulder instead of using their knife skills. I personally enjoy the process and it's one of the reasons that I often eat shoulder roasts at home. That and the fact that it is a smaller roast that doesn't leave many leftovers.

This recipe is also a super tasty way to use up the fennel tops and it really increases the visual appeal of the roast when slicing.

- 1 whole Lamb Shoulder, boneless
- 1/2 cup Olive Oil
- 1/2 cup Fennel Fronds, chopped
- 1 sprig Rosemary, stemmed and leaves minced
- 1/4 cup Rubbed Sage
- 6 cloves Garlic, peeled and ground to a paste
- 1 lemon, zested with a microplane
- a pinch of Chili Flake
- 1/4 cup Lamb Tallow
- Salt and Pepper
- Extra Rosemary sprigs for roasting
- 2 cups Lamb Stock

Lay lamb shoulder out, skin side down and pat dry. In a bowl, combine all for the ingredients and mix together until everything is evenly distributed. Taste your mix and adjust the salt and pepper. You want it to be a little salty by itself. Spread your mix out over the inside of the shoulder. Roll the shoulder up and tie it with butcher's twine. You want to get it as snug as possible so that you can get nice slices later.

Preheat your oven to 325 degrees. In a heavy pan on medium high heat, melt the lamb tallow and sear the outside of your roast. In a small roasting pan, make a "bed" for the roast with the rosemary and place the roast on top. Pour the stock into the pan and cover tightly. Place in the oven for 2/12-3 hours. Add water if necessary if the stock evaporates.

When fork tender, remove the lid and turn your oven to broil for about 5 minutes or until crispy.

# ITALIAN LAMB STEW

Everyone thinks of the Irish for lamb stew but this dish is a variation of one I used to make in Italy. My fellow chefs and I had a week off one winter and we went to a Calabrian resort outside of Tropea. I knew the owner so we got to stay on the cheap and we spent all of our money on groceries and wine and just cooked for ourselves every night. On a particularly cold night I tried this dish to use up some lamb stew meat with the only other ingredients in the house: cheese, garlic, onions, potatoes and wine.

It was a hit and I have recreated it in a number of ways but always with those core ingredients

- 1/4 cup Lamb Tallow
- 2 pounds Lamb Stew Meat, cubed
- 3 Spanish Onions, julienned
- 1/4 cup Pancetta, diced
- 6 cloves Garlic, minced
- 2 cup Aglianico (or similar red wine)

- Lamb Stock to cover
- 1 pound Fingerling Potatoes
- 3 ounces Pecorino, small dice
- 4 ounces Caciocavallo, grated
- Salt and Pepper
- Chopped Parsley for garnish

Season the lamb liberally with pepper and kosher salt. In a large pot over medium high heat, melt the lamb tallow and brown the stew meat all the way around and set it to the side. Reduce heat to medium and add the onions and pancetta. When the pancetta is rendered and the onions are caramelized, add the garlic and cook for an additional 2 or 3 minutes. Stir often. Then add the red wine and cook until it's reduced by half. Place the lamb in the pot and pour in enough stock to cover. Put the lid on and reduce to a simmer. After 20 minutes, add the potatoes. After another 30 minutes, check the lamb and see if it's tender. Add more stock if necessary and keep cooking until it is. Adjust the salt and pepper as this point but remember you are adding cheese next. This will increase the salt content as well.

Once tender, stir in the pecorino and let simmer until it has melted. Add the caciocavallo and let simmer until it has melted over the top. Serve with crusty bread and garnish with parsley.







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# MISSISSIPPI METROPOLITAN BALLET STAGES NEW PRODUCTION

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## “WIZARD OF OZ”





Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet (MMB) presents a new production of Charles Maple's "Wizard of Oz" on April 2 and 3 at Jackson Academy Performing Arts Center. Featuring Maple's inventive choreography, exquisite costumes and dynamic sets, this presentation of the classic story is sure to please audience members of all ages.

Maple is a former soloist with American Ballet Theater and principal dancer with Basel Ballet in Switzerland. During his performing career he worked with such choreographers as George Balanchine, Antony Tudor and Jerome Robbins. He has danced with and been coached by such greats as Baryshnikov, Fernando Bujones and Rudolf Nureyev among others. Students of Maple have competed as finalists in prestigious competitions including the Prix de Lausanne, The Jackson International Ballet Competition and Youth America Grand Prix. In 1992 Maple began creating his own works and has created over 75 ballets, including "Alice in Wonderland," which MMB produced in 2018.

MMB artistic director Jennifer Beasley is pleased to be working with Maple again. "Charles's choreography represents a diversity of dance styles, yet it is rooted in the traditions of classical ballet," says Beasley. "It is an excellent fit for our company. There are strong roles that challenge our principal dancers and soloists. The roles created for younger dancers offer significant stage time and provide them with the opportunity to hone their performance skills."

Over 80 members of Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet will perform in the production that follows Dorothy from Kansas to Munchkinland and along the Yellow Brick Road to Oz, where she meets the Wizard. Accompanied by her smart, loyal and brave companions, and assisted by Glinda the Good Witch, Dorothy defeats the Wicked Witch and learns there is no place like home.

MMB soloist Rebecca Trowbridge will dance the role of the Lion, one of Dorothy's companions. Trowbridge is the 16-year-old daughter of Toby and Morgan Trowbridge of Ridgeland. "It's been wonderful working with Mr. Maple again," says Trowbridge,





who performed the role of Tweedle Dum in 2018. “He’s been involved in every aspect from auditions to zooming with us during practice. The choreography is fresh and challenging. I’ve enjoyed the opportunity to strengthen my technique, and we are working hard to bring his vision to life.”

Trowbridge is excited about dancing the role of the Lion in part because her character’s development through the ballet is analogous to dancing with MMB. “The Lion starts out being timid and worried about making mistakes. As the ballet progresses he gets more confident; he relies on his friends to give him courage. We all start off unsure when we are first learning a dance, but through hard work and support from fellow dancers, we persevere and create a performance for everyone to enjoy.”

Hart Maley, another MMB soloist and 15-year-old daughter of Brad and Olivia Maley of Jackson, comments that MMB real-life friendships strengthen the on-stage friendships between Dorothy, the Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion. Maley dances the role of the Scarecrow. “This cast is very tightly knit. The four dancers playing these roles are all very good friends. So, it makes it easy to act and to really engage the audience in the performance.”

The role of Dorothy will be danced by MMB soloist Hallie Young of Brandon. MMB principal dancers Madeline Page of Madison and Brelyn Binkley of Brandon will appear as Glinda and the Wicked Witch, respectively. Eleanora Ellis of Brandon will fill the role of the Tin Man.

Other soloists and senior company members in the cast are Annalee LeDuff, South-



ern Callahan, Mari Finseth, Grace Gardner, Emily Garner, Sophia Huang, Amelia McCaughan and Emma Raush all of Madison County and Annalyse Binkley and Laurel Larsen of Brandon.

Following the performance, young audience members may step into Dorothy's red shoes and travel to the Land of Oz. Young visitors to Oz will meet Dorothy, Glinda and other ballet characters for on-stage photo ops. Each young visitor will also receive a souvenir and light refreshments. Land of Oz tickets are sold separately from performance tickets. Accompanying adults receive complimentary admission to the Land of Oz.

Tickets for the ballet "Wizard of Oz" are \$30-35. Land of Oz event tickets are \$15. On Saturday, April 2, the ballet performance will begin at 3 p.m. followed by the

Land of Oz at 5 p.m. On Sunday, April 3, the ballet performance will begin at 2 p.m. with the Land of Oz following at 4 p.m. For tickets and more information, visit [msmetroballet.com](http://msmetroballet.com).

MMB is a pre-professional ballet company based in Madison. Members of the company are selected through audition from the over 500 students of Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy, the official school of MMB. Season sponsors for 2021-2022 include the Mississippi Arts Commission; Jackson Optimist Club; Gertrude C. Ford Foundation; Ergon; Eventful; Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi; Larry and Michael Johnson Family Foundation; Harper, Rains, Knight, and Company; The Pig & Pint; and Hilton Garden Inn Madison/Jackson.



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## HAL'S ST. PADDY'S PARADE AND FESTIVAL

March 26

Central Mississippi's annual celebration of Spring has been described as a "green Mardi Gras" and as a "lighthearted homecoming where everyone is king-and-queen-for-a-day." It is also a celebration of the rebirth of Mississippi's capital city, a joyous observance of what is "good and encouraging" about the heart of our state. It is a time to honor the good work of the UMMC's Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children. This rambling, outrageous, hilarious ride, starting and ending at Jackson's favorite gathering place—Hal & Mal's—will from this day forward be known as "Hal's St. Paddy's Parade" in honor of Hal White.

## STARRY NIGHT/ ARTS ON THE GREEN

April 8-9

Starry Night, held at the St. Andrew's North Campus in Ridgeland, celebrates the diverse traditions and cultural experiences of St. Andrew's families and the world-class educators entrusted with teaching their children. Friday, April 8, 7-10 p.m. Starry Night is a ticketed, adults-only party.

Arts on the Green is the biggest fundraiser each year. The family festival boasts something for everyone with activities for kids of all ages; a student fashion show; online silent auction and so much more. Saturday, April 9, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Arts on the Green is open to everyone.

## TOWNSHIP JAZZ FESTIVAL

April 9

After going virtual in 2020 and moving the 2021 event to the fall, the 14th Annual Township Jazz Festival returns once again this spring. The event has gained a reputation as one of the best family-friendly music events in the state.





## ART, WINE AND WHEELS

May 6-8

Art, Wine and Wheels brings together three of Ridgeland's signature events to create one epic weekend of cultural and outdoor experiences. Visitors can partake in the Ridgeland Fine Arts Festival, Sante South Wine Festival and the Natchez Trace Century Ride, Mississippi's premier cycling event.

## MISSISSIPPI MAKERS FEST

May 7

Join the Mississippi Department of Archives and History at the first Mississippi Makers Fest on Entergy Plaza of the Two Mississippi Museums on Saturday, May 7, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. This free festival will feature Mississippi artisans, live music, make-and-take activities, food trucks, and more. North Mississippi Allstars is headlining the event.

## MISSISSIPPI'S SNAPPY SYNC FIREFLIES

May 19-22

Come see Mississippi's Snappy Sync Fireflies at the Bill Waller Craft Center. This annual event offers guests the opportunity to see Mississippi's incredible synchronous fireflies (snappy syncs) during the peak of their yearly display along the Historic Natchez Trace Parkway. A viewing party will be held on May 19 followed by three nights of ticketed tours led by Mississippi Master Naturalists.

# BOOKS



## MOON WITCH SPIDER KING

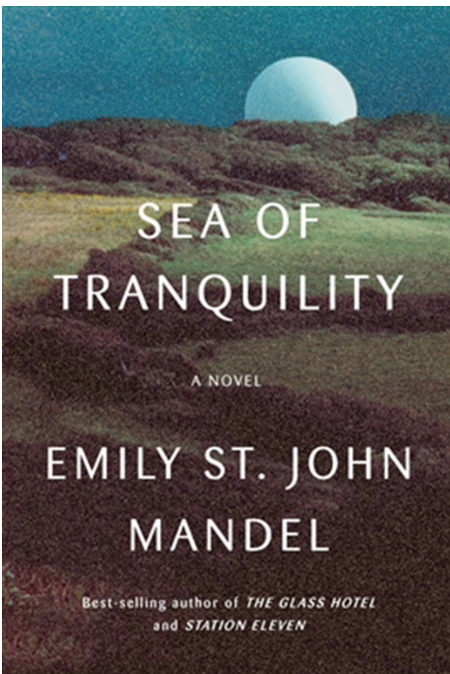
From Marlon James, author of the bestselling National Book Award finalist *Black Leopard, Red Wolf*, the second book in the Dark Star trilogy, his African Game of Thrones.

In *Black Leopard, Red Wolf*, Sogolon the Moon Witch proved a worthy adversary to Tracker as they clashed across a mythical African landscape in search of a mysterious boy who disappeared. In *Moon Witch, Spider King*, Sogolon takes center stage and gives her own account of what happened to the boy, and how she plotted and fought, triumphed and failed as she looked for him. It's also the story of a century-long feud—seen through the eyes of a 177-year-old witch—that Sogolon had with the Aesi, chancellor to the king. It is said that Aesi works so closely with the king that together they are like the eight limbs of one spider. Aesi's power is considerable—and deadly. It takes brains and courage to challenge him, which Sogolon does for reasons of her own.

Both a brilliant narrative device—seeing the

story told in *Black Leopard, Red Wolf* from the perspective of an adversary and a woman—as well as a fascinating battle between different versions of empire, *Moon Witch, Spider King* delves into Sogolon's world as she fights to tell her own story. Part adventure tale, part chronicle of an indomitable woman who bows to no man, it is a fascinating novel that explores power, personality, and the places where they overlap.

MARLON JAMES is the author of the New York Times bestselling National Book Award finalist *Black Leopard, Red Wolf*, the Booker Prize-winning *A Brief History of Seven Killings*, and *The Book of Night Women* and *John Crow's Devil*. In addition to the Booker Prize, his novels have won the American Book Award, the Los Angeles Times' Ray Bradbury Prize for Science Fiction, the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award, and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize. Born in Jamaica, James lives in New York City



## SEA OF TRANQUILITY

The award-winning, best-selling author of *Station Eleven* and *The Glass Hotel* returns with a novel of art, time, love, and plague that takes the reader from Vancouver Island in 1912 to a dark colony on the moon five hundred years later, unfurling a story of humanity across centuries and space.

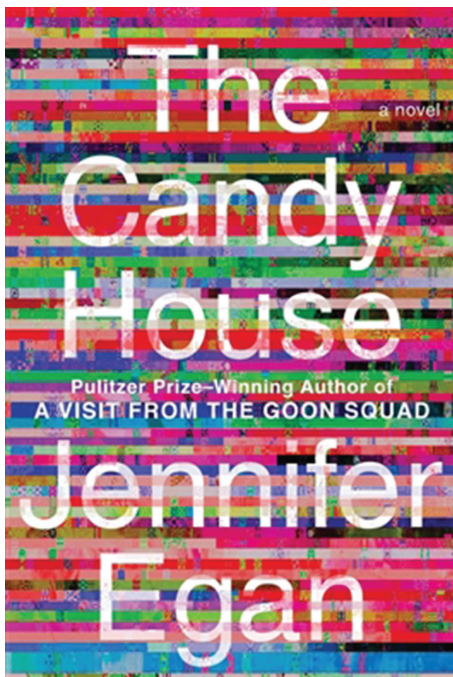
Edwin St. Andrew is eighteen years old when he crosses the Atlantic by steamship, exiled from polite society following an ill-conceived diatribe at a dinner party. He enters the forest, spellbound by the beauty of the Canadian wilderness, and suddenly hears the notes of a violin echoing in an airship terminal—an experience that shocks him to his core.

Two centuries later a famous writer named Olive Llewellyn is on a book tour. She's traveling all over Earth, but her home is the second moon colony, a place of white stone, spired towers, and artificial beauty. Within the text of Olive's best-selling pandemic novel lies a strange passage: a man plays his violin for change in the echoing corridor of an airship terminal as the trees of a forest rise around him.

When Gaspéry-Jacques Roberts, a detective in the black-skied Night City, is hired to investigate an anomaly in the North American wilderness, he uncovers a series of lives upended: The exiled son of an earl driven to madness, a writer trapped far from home as a pandemic ravages Earth, and a childhood friend from the Night City who, like Gaspéry himself, has glimpsed the chance to do something extraordinary that will disrupt the timeline of the universe.

A virtuoso performance that is as human and tender as it is intellectually playful, *Sea of Tranquility* is a novel of time travel and metaphysics that precisely captures the reality of our current moment.

EMILY ST. JOHN MANDEL's five previous novels include *The Glass Hotel* and *Station Eleven*, which was a finalist for a National Book Award and the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, has been translated into thirty-two languages, and is the basis for the HBO Max series by the same name. She lives in New York City with her husband and daughter.



## THE CANDY HOUSE

Named a Most Anticipated Book of the Year by Time, Entertainment Weekly, Vogue, Good Housekeeping, Oprah Daily, Glamour, USA Today, Parade, Bustle, San Francisco Chronicle, Seattle Times, The Boston Globe, Tampa Bay Times, BuzzFeed, Vulture and many more!

From one of the most celebrated writers of our time, a literary figure with cult status, a “sibling novel” to her Pulitzer Prize- and NBCC Award-winning *A Visit from the Goon Squad*—an electrifying, deeply moving novel about the quest for authenticity and meaning in a world where memories and identities are no longer private.

*The Candy House* opens with the staggeringly brilliant Bix Bouton, whose company, Mandala, is so successful that he is “one of those tech demi-gods with whom we’re all on a first name basis.” Bix is 40, with four kids, restless, desperate for a new idea, when he stumbles into a conversation group, mostly Columbia professors, one of whom is experimenting with downloading or “externalizing” memory. It’s 2010. Within a decade, Bix’s new technology, “Own Your Unconscious”—that allows you access to every memory you’ve ever had, and to share every memory in exchange for access to the memories of others—has seduced multitudes. But not everyone.

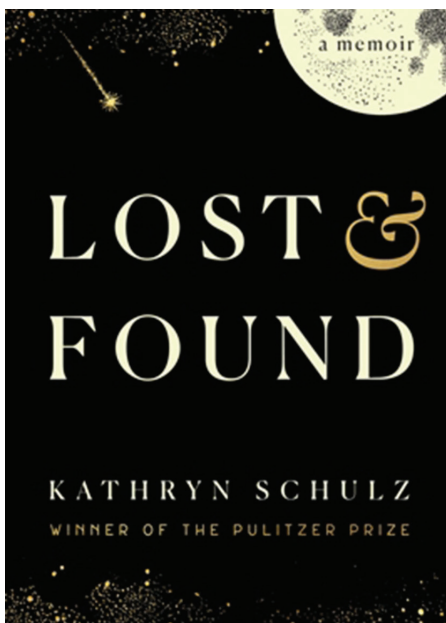
In spellbinding interlocking narratives, Egan spins out the consequences of Own Your Unconscious through the lives of multiple characters whose paths intersect over several decades. Intellectually dazzling, *The Candy House* is also extraordinarily moving, a testament to the tenacity and transcendence of human longing for real connection, love, family, privacy and redemption. In the world of Egan’s spectacular

imagination, there are “counters” who track and exploit desires and there are “eluders,” those who understand the price of taking a bite of the Candy House. Egan introduces these characters in an astonishing array of narrative styles—from omniscient to first person plural to a duet of voices, an epistolary chapter and a chapter of tweets.

If *Goon Squad* was organized like a concept album, *The Candy House* incorporates Electronic Dance Music’s more disjunctive approach. The parts are titled: Build, Break, Drop. With an emphasis on gaming, portals, and alternate worlds, its structure also suggests the experience of moving among dimensions in a role-playing game.

*The Candy House* is a bold, brilliant imagining of a world that is moments away. Egan takes to stunning new heights her “deeply intuitive forays into the darker aspects of our technology-driven, image-saturated culture” (Vogue). *The Candy House* delivers an absolutely extraordinary combination of fierce, exhilarating intelligence and heart.

JENNIFER EGAN is the author of six previous books of fiction: *Manhattan Beach*, winner of the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction; *A Visit from the Goon Squad*, which won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award; *The Keep*; the story collection *Emerald City*; *Look at Me*, a National Book Award Finalist; and *The Invisible Circus*. Her work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Harper’s Magazine*, *Granta*, *McSweeney’s*, and *The New York Times Magazine*. Her website is [JenniferEgan.com](http://JenniferEgan.com).



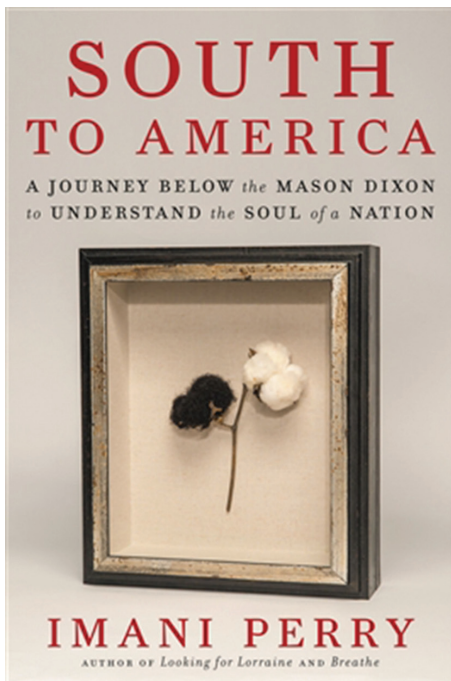
## LOST & FOUND

“An extraordinary gift of a book, a tender, searching meditation on love and loss and what it means to be human. I wept at it, laughed with it, was entirely fascinated by it. I emerged feeling as if the world around me had been made anew.”—Helen Macdonald, author of *H Is for Hawk* and *Vesper Flights*

Eighteen months before Kathryn Schulz’s father died, she met the woman she would marry. In *Lost & Found*, she weaves the story of those relationships into a brilliant exploration of the role that loss and discovery play in all of our lives. The resulting book is part memoir, part guidebook to living in a world that is simultaneously full of wonder and joy and wretchedness and suffering—a world that always demands both our gratitude and our grief. A staff writer at *The New Yorker* and winner of the Pulitzer Prize, Schulz writes with curiosity, tenderness,

erudition, and wit about our finite yet infinitely complicated lives. *Lost & Found* is an enduring account of love in all its many forms from one of the great writers of our time.

KATHRYN SCHULZ is a staff writer at *The New Yorker* and the author of *Being Wrong*. She won a National Magazine Award and a Pulitzer Prize for “The Really Big One,” her article about seismic risk in the Pacific Northwest. *Lost & Found* grew out of “Losing Streak,” a *New Yorker* story that was anthologized in *The Best American Essays*. Her other essays and reporting have appeared in *The Best American Science and Nature Writing*, *The Best American Travel Writing*, and *The Best American Food Writing*. A native of Ohio, she now lives on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.



## SOUTH TO AMERICA

An essential, surprising journey through the history, rituals, and landscapes of the American South—and a revelatory argument for why you must understand the South in order to understand America.

We all think we know the South. Even those who have never lived there can rattle off a list of signifiers: the Civil War, *Gone with the Wind*, the Ku Klux Klan, plantations, football, Jim Crow, slavery. But the idiosyncrasies, dispositions, and habits of the region are stranger and more complex than much of the country tends to acknowledge. In *South to America*, Imani Perry shows that the meaning of American is inextricably linked with the South, and that our understanding of its history and culture is the key to understanding the nation as a whole.

This is the story of a Black woman and native Alabamian returning to the region she has always called home and considering it with fresh eyes. Her journey is full of detours, deep dives, and surprising encounters with places and people. She renders Southerners from all walks of life with sensitivity and honesty, sharing her thoughts about a troubling history and the ritual humiliations and joys that characterize so much of Southern life.

Weaving together stories of immigrant communities, contemporary artists, exploitative opportunists, enslaved peoples, unsung heroes, her own ancestors, and her lived experiences, Imani Perry crafts a tapestry unlike any other. With uncommon insight and breathtaking clarity, *South to America* offers an assertion that if we want to build a more humane future for the United States, we must center our concern below the Mason-Dixon Line.

IMANI PERRY is the Hughes-Rogers Professor of African American Studies at Princeton University. Perry is the author of *Looking for Lorraine: The Radiant and Radical Life of Lorraine Hansberry*, winner of the 2019 Bograd-Weld Biography Prize from the Pen America Foundation. She is also the author of *Breathe: A Letter to My Sons*; *Vexy Thing: On Gender and Liberation*; and *May We Forever Stand: A History of the Black National Anthem*. Perry, a native of Birmingham, Alabama, who grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Chicago, lives outside Philadelphia with her two sons.



## MOUTH TO MOUTH

A successful art dealer confesses the story of his meteoric rise in this “sleek, swift, and graceful” novel “with unexpectedly sharp teeth” (Lauren Groff, *New York Times* bestselling author).

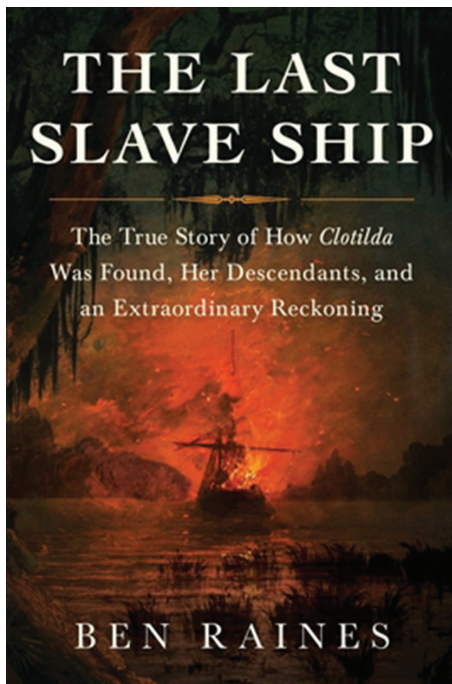
In a first-class lounge at JFK airport, our narrator listens as Jeff Cook, a former classmate he only vaguely remembers, shares the uncanny story of his adult life—a life that changed course years before, the moment he resuscitated a drowning man.

Jeff reveals that after that traumatic, galvanizing morning on the beach, he was compelled to learn more about the man whose life he had saved, convinced that their fates were now entwined. But are we agents of our fate—or are we its pawns? Upon discovering that the man is renowned art dealer Francis Arsenault, Jeff begins to surreptitiously visit his Beverly Hills gallery. Although Francis does not seem to recognize him as the man who saved his life, he nevertheless casts his legendary eye on Jeff and sees something worthy. He takes the younger man under his wing, initiating him into his world, where knowledge, taste, and access are currency; a world where value is constantly shifting and calling into question what is real,

and what matters. The paths of the two men come together and diverge in dizzying ways until the novel’s staggering ending.

Sly, suspenseful, and engrossing, *Mouth to Mouth* masterfully blurs the line between opportunity and exploitation, self-respect and self-delusion, fact and fiction—exposing the myriad ways we deceive each other, and ourselves.

ANTOINE WILSON is the author of the novels *Panorama City* and *The Interloper*. His work has appeared in *The Paris Review*, *StoryQuarterly*, *Best New American Voices*, and *The Los Angeles Times*, among other publications, and he is a contributing editor of *A Public Space*. A graduate of the Iowa Writers’ Workshop and recipient of a Carol Houck Smith Fiction Fellowship from the University of Wisconsin, he lives in Los Angeles. His website is: [AntoineWilson.com](http://AntoineWilson.com)



## THE LAST SLAVE SHIP

The incredible true story of the last ship to carry enslaved people to America, the remarkable town its survivors founded after emancipation, and the complicated legacy their descendants carry with them to this day—by the journalist who discovered the ship’s remains.

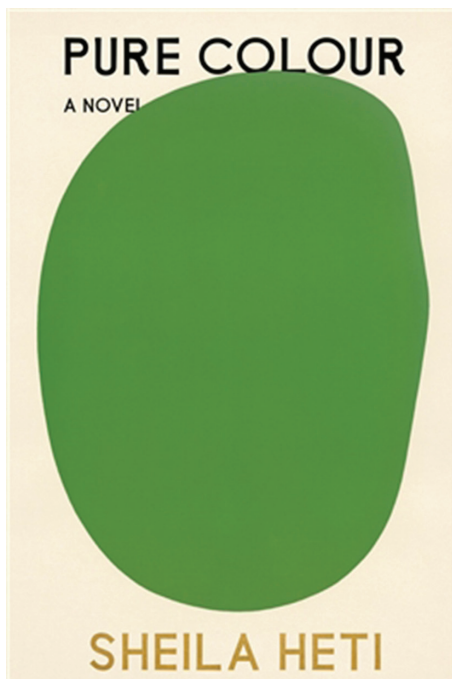
Fifty years after the Atlantic slave trade was outlawed, the *Clotilda* became the last ship in history to bring enslaved Africans to the United States. The ship was scuttled and burned on arrival to hide evidence of the crime, allowing the wealthy perpetrators to escape prosecution. Despite numerous efforts to find the sunken wreck, *Clotilda* remained hidden for the next 160 years. But in 2019, journalist Ben Raines made international news when he successfully concluded his obsessive quest through the swamps of Alabama to uncover one of our nation’s most important historical artifacts.

Traveling from Alabama to the ancient African kingdom of Dahomey in modern-day Benin, Raines recounts the ship’s perilous journey, the story of its rediscovery, and its complex legacy. Against all odds, Africatown, the Alabama community founded by the captives of the *Clotilda*, prospered in the Jim Crow South. Zora Neale Hurston visited in 1927 to interview Cudjo Lewis, telling the story of his enslavement in the *New York Times* bestseller *Barracoon*. And yet the haunting memory of

bondage has been passed on through generations. *Clotilda* is a ghost haunting three communities—the descendants of those transported into slavery, the descendants of their fellow Africans who sold them, and the descendants of their American enslavers. This connection binds these groups together to this day. At the turn of the century, descendants of the captain who financed the *Clotilda*’s journey lived nearby—where, as significant players in the local real estate market, they disenfranchised and impoverished residents of Africatown.

From these parallel stories emerges a profound depiction of America as it struggles to grapple with the traumatic past of slavery and the ways in which racial oppression continue to this day. And yet, at its heart, *The Last Slave Ship* remains optimistic – an epic tale of one community’s triumphs over great adversity and a celebration of the power of human curiosity to uncover the truth about our past and heal its wounds.

BEN RAINES is an award-winning environmental journalist, filmmaker, and charter captain. He lives with his wife in Fairhope, Alabama.



## PURE COLOUR

The world is failing to remain a world. It is coming apart. The ice cubes are melting. Species are dying. People, too—of different things. But what if this world is just a first draft, made by some great artist in order to be destroyed?

In this first draft of the world, a woman named Mira leaves home to study. There, she meets Annie, whose tremendous power opens Mira’s chest like a portal—to what, she doesn’t know. When Mira is older, her beloved father dies, and his spirit passes into her. Together, they become a leaf on a tree. But photosynthesis gets boring, and being alive is a problem that cannot be solved, even by a leaf. Eventually, Mira must remember the human world she’s left behind, including Annie, and choose whether or not to return.

*Pure Colour* is a galaxy of a novel: explosive, celestially bright, huge, and streaked with beau-

ty. It is a contemporary bible, an atlas of feeling, and an absurdly funny guide to the great (and terrible) things about being alive. Sheila Heti is a philosopher of modern experience, and she has reimaged what a book can hold.

SHEILA HETI is the author of several books of fiction and nonfiction, including *Motherhood* and *How Should a Person Be?*, which *New York* magazine called one of the “New Classics of the 21st Century.” She was named one of “The New Vanguard” by the book critics of *The New York Times*, who, along with a dozen other magazines and newspapers, chose *Motherhood* as a top book of 2018. Her books have been translated into twenty-one languages.



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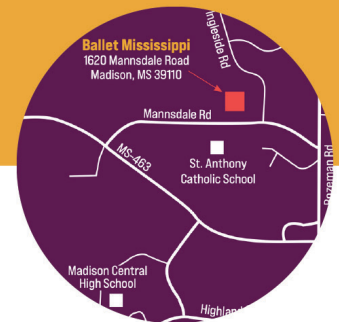
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