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Renegade x Design Milk Spotlight: Deoria Made

06.29.17 || Posted by Jaime Derringer || Home Furnishings Main



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We are excited to share the news that we've teamed up with [Renegade Craft Fair!](#) At select Renegade events, we've selected one emerging designer, maker, or artist for the Design Milk Spotlight. Each Spotlight maker will receive a sizable booth at a local Renegade event and be highlighted here on Design Milk and on Instagram. In addition, Renegade will be sharing each Spotlight maker with their own community. It's our mission here at Design Milk to share people making awesome stuff, and we think Kyle D'Auria, Founder of [Deoria Made](#) in Portland is doing exactly that. He'll be showing his products at [Renegade Craft Fair Los Angeles](#) next weekend: July 8th and 9th at Los Angeles State Historic Park. If you're planning to be there, definitely check him out and give him a high five! Kyle designs and makes wood products, primarily cutting boards, coasters and kitchen-related items. Each piece is handmade and therefore unique. I spoke to Kyle a bit about his background and how he started his creative business:



POPULAR IN HOME FURNISHINGS



From Classic Shaker to Modern Maker: Meet Jason Burhop of Kastella

We speak to Jason Burhop of Montreal-based company Kastella, a made-to-order shop that's taking part in IDS Toronto's Maker section.



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We chose 10 unique handmade designs anyone would be lucky to receive.



The Winners of Wilsonart's 13th Annual Student Chair Design Competition

During ICFF 2017, the SDSU student winners of the Wilsonart Challenges Student Chair Design Competition were revealed.



How did you get started woodworking?

I've always felt a strong tie to wood, especially relating to its use in home construction. I grew up in Tucson, sort-of on my Dad's job sites. In my earliest years he was a fireman, but on his days off he built homes. I spent a lot of time alongside him those days, seeing his visions go from blueprint to house. It was a formative part of growing up, and in hindsight it instilled in me this understanding of the creative process – of bringing ideas to physical form. Later, in high school I became enamored with visual art, and later attended art school in college. When my work became more sculptural, I found myself drawn to the use of building materials, especially 2x4 studs; there was something about how they represent that process of bringing ideas to fruition, and could be use as metaphor for "home." When I moved to Portland after graduating from college, I learned about the strong roots this Stumptown has in the timber industry, and basically felt a strong pull to just take a deeper dive into the material that seemed so emblematic of the city. I dabbled with the material the way most novices do – making projects for my home, thinking that I would take those skills back to my visual art practice. But, as time progressed, my vision of myself as an artist changed; my definition of visual art broadened; and since then my business and the work I make there has become my art.

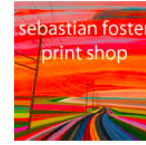
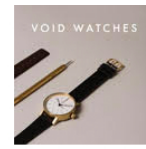


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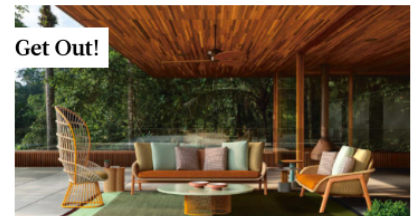
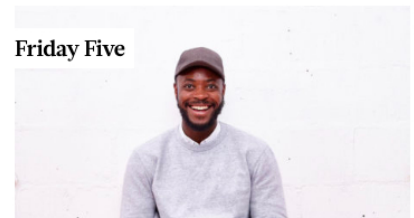
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How does your background in sculpture help you in making functional objects?

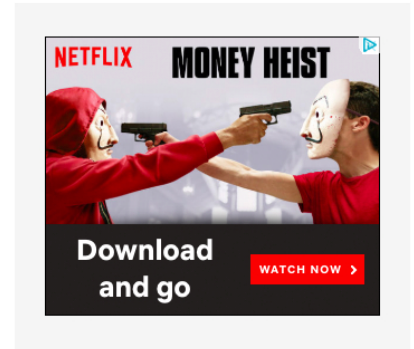
The BFA program I attended at the University of Arizona had a 3-D, or sculpture emphasis, but it was really more of a mixed media program that was very conceptually driven. The focus was less on design or fabrication, and more on the development of ideas, and their implementation into visual artworks. The program was very critical, or at least I took it very seriously, and there were constant considerations given to the weightiness of how art-choices helped or hindered the idea being conveyed. This set me up well to ask similarly critical questions about every little aspect as I began to create my business. I continue to ask myself those critical questions as I hone my craft and build new collections, but I am also asking those critical questions as I develop my business.





What do you like about living and working in Portland? What's the design scene like?

The product that Deoria Made was initially built around, and continues to be a mascot for the brand, is the butcher block – this enduring thing that takes a beating, and travels with you through life. It is the centerpiece of the kitchen, the modern hearth of the home. I like that quality, and strive for the same sort of reliability and dependability in my own life. My woodworking is a practice, and an escape from the cacophony of modern life. It allows me to step away from technology, from social media, from the hustle and bustle of the world outside, and sort of focus my energy on a daily practice. I think that all of that is a reflection of part of Portland's culture. Many people here are living idealistically, believing in quality over quantity, and choosing their own way over the way of others, essentially choosing their version of happiness. So, that sort of openness to counter-culture thinking is very much an undertone for Deoria Made.

Coincidentally, as I'm writing this, I'm taking my final steps to move the business to Tucson later this summer. The Portland culture and the values I described are ubiquitous here, but not so much in Tucson. I'm looking forward to a return to my native Southwest as I've always found great inspiration in the desert and the history of the land. I think it will be interesting to marry my roots with what I've come to love about Portland – taking the pieces of Portland that have influenced me and bringing them with me back to Tucson.



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As a small business owner, what are some of the challenges that you face?

Branding and identity. I think the vastness of the internet and digital communication make it very difficult to be authentic, because there's a sort of arms race to set yourself apart on it, which is foolhardy because the landscape of the internet is comparative. It's about comparing yourself to others, and that's not great for personal identity, nor for those trying to understand you. The whole rat race is a headache and I really prefer simply meeting people in person.

How does modern technology play a role in your business?

Using Squarespace for my website has made things so easy. It's perfect for someone like me who likes to have my hands in everything, and to change things on a whim. I've been able to build the site; take my own photos; add and remove products, with most of those actions taking just moments. So, as a landing page for who I am and what I do, it has made a huge difference that it is so easy.



Do cutting boards need any special tools, finishes or attention as opposed to other home decor wood products, like tables or chairs?

I always tell people that cutting boards, especially the more heirloom quality goods like butcher blocks, are like a fine pair of leather boots, or a hand-me-down cast iron pan. They require maintenance to thrive. They're something that you build a relationship with. If you take care of them, they take care of you right back. With cutting boards in particular, it means seasoning them with oil,

and maintaining them with regular re-conditioning over time.



Tell me a bit more about why it's important to condition wood?


Even after a tree has been cut down, in a sense the wood is still alive and breathing. You can think of the fibers that make up wood as a bundle of straws. These straws expand and contract, depending on how damp or dry the environmental conditions. Expansion and contraction lead to wood movement, which can result in warping or cracking. Seasoning and re-conditioning cutting boards with oil fills those straws with oil that is impervious to moisture, lessening the woods' vulnerability to wet or dry changes. In short, it limits the movement of the wood. Regularly oiled wood also results in minimizing the appearance of knife scars and wear, or completely eliminating some of them, as in the case with end-grain butcher blocks.


Any plans to make other products? If so, what else do you have in the pipeline?

New for summer 2017 is the Atellia Collection, which is a real departure from the style of goods I've made in the past. You can see it all on deoriamade.com.

As I get settled into my new studio workshop in Tucson, I'm excited to begin exploring materials and processes native to the Southwest, just as I've done in Portland with the Northwest. I'm not sure yet what that will look like, but I'm stoked to begin the process.

Thanks, Kyle and good luck with the move to Tucson! For more of Kyle's work, check out deoriamade.com and to find a Renegade Craft Fair near you, visit renegadecraft.com.

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Jaime Derringer, Founder + Executive Editor of Design Milk, is a Jersey girl living the laid back life in SoCal. She dreams about [architectural jewelry](#) + having enough free time to enjoy some of her favorite things—running, reading, and [drawing](#).

You can follow Jaime Derringer on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Google](#). Read [all of Jaime Derringer's posts](#).

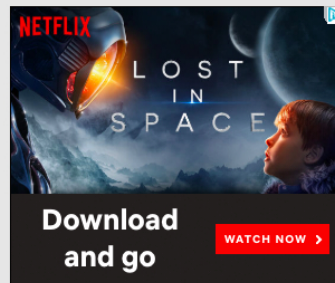
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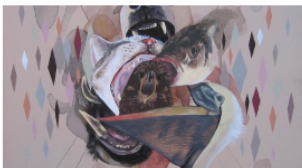
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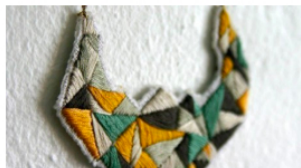
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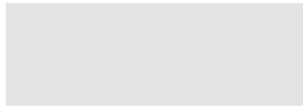
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