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OCTOBER 2022

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TRENDING

A showstopper in her breakfast room, this six-by-five-foot moss piece was commissioned by athlete and active mom Emily Breeze Watson. Created by moss artist Ashley Schewzyk, it features two species of moss and nine different types of preserved ferns or foliage.





SAVAGE NATURE

THE OWNERS OF THE SAVAGE WAY ARE FUSING ART, INTERIOR DESIGN, AND NATURE TO CREATE ONE-OF-A-KIND INSTALLATIONS FOR THEIR CLIENTS.

PRODUCED BY ANNE MARIE ASHLEY

Among the many lessons society has gained from the past few years, one has been discovering our homes as our sanctuaries. And for many people, learning to care for, arrange, and incorporate plants inside the home has proven to be both a challenging and rewarding part of that process. The peace and calm that nature brings to humans is scientifically proven, yet the realization that plants and flowers not only color our surroundings but also enhance our existence by creating clean air, oxygen, companionship, and sheer joy has only just come into vogue.

Torrie Savage and Paula Bartlett, owners of The Savage Way, have always known that nature and art are powerful tools that humans have at their disposal to express, evoke, and heal, which is what propelled them into the thriving business they created a decade

ago. As a marketing and branding consultancy, the pair were already turning heads with their Clean Graffiti campaigns—an innovative approach to marketing that uses custom-designed stencils and a power washer to brand dirty sidewalks with bright, clean client logos and slogans. With clients like Coca-Cola, The Rolling Stones, and the Carolina Hurricanes, The Savage Way has put its stamp on cities across America, from Austin to the Big Apple.

When a local client asked them to innovate yet again using natural materials, the team jumped at the chance, and their second passion was born: moss art. “A client came to us looking for a logo that incorporated plants and moss into the design,” explains Savage. “Even though we hadn’t done anything like it before, we were confident we could create something exciting



This Pop Art piece of rapper Biggie Smalls is a collaboration between The Savage Way and artist Jen Hill. Commissioned by NFL Probowler Jonathan Stewart and his wife, Hill painted the portrait and Savage's moss artists filled in the pop icon's textural sweater with dyed moss. Over fifteen shades of reindeer moss were used to create the Coogi sweater.

and completely unique. We discovered something we really wanted to pour love and energy into.”

Each piece commissioned is tailored to the client and their interior space, integrated into the design plan from inception. From Pop Art pieces like Biggie Smalls and Jimmy Hendrix to intricate pieces that include neon lights, or oversized panels pieced together to custom words and letters, the variations are endless.

The artists at The Savage Way work with over forty different colors of reindeer moss, as well as mood, sheet, and pole moss; forty-three types of foliage; and twenty-three types of preserved flowers, mushrooms, sticks, and leaves in their creations. Plus, by partnering with other local artists, projects can shift into mixed media pieces that combine colorful moss with custom artwork, giving a whole new dimension to customizability. “No two pieces are ever alike, which is one of the reasons our clients love this medium. It’s unlike anything in anyone else’s home,” Savage explains. “The range of colors and topography that moss art provides really takes these installations to the next level.” Bartlett adds that the styles can range from funky and colorful to neutral and calming, and anything in between. “We really work closely with clients and interior designers to explore what will work best with the aesthetic they’re creating, and it’s important to let it be a fluid process,” she says. And while the maintenance-free nature of preserved moss is a primary selling point, it’s the artistry that really speaks when you see a completed piece.

Most custom projects can be completed in about eight weeks, but some of their most popular and smaller designs are ready to ship from their online shop at thesavageway.com. “We really wanted to create natural, eco-friendly pieces that were low maintenance but high design,” says Savage. “I love that we have made these pieces accessible to everyone.” ♦



This inset moss art installation created by The Savage Way artists features color-changing LED lighting and was installed in partnership with Freespace Design and Custom Cabinet Studio in a residence in the Trust Building.