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Why artist Christine Flynn likes to unwind in her breakfast room

By Deirdre Kelly

The bright, relaxing space opens up to a back deck and is flooded with natural light

Recently back from Florida, where the Manhattan-based FitzRoy Knox Gallery presented her high-gloss resined photography at the latest edition of Context Art Miami, artist Christine Flynn is now busily preparing for Christmas in the downtown Toronto semi she shares with her Web-designer husband, Niall Flynn, and their two school-aged boys. Many of the holiday decorations Flynn uses to brighten the home at this time of year come from Love the Design, the vintage-meets-industrial design store she has owned since 2010 and recently relocated to the Summerhill neighbourhood from its original Leslieville home. Flynn displays her various ornaments mostly in the breakfast room, a bright, relaxing space she cites as her favourite. "I love that the whole family comes together in this room, which opens up to a back deck and is flooded with natural light," Flynn says. "I often unwind here on a Sunday morning, reading the newspaper next to the fireplace."

1. The photograph

"It is called *The Ace*, after the same-named hotel in Palm Springs. I shot the image myself, then added my signature resin finish. I love it because the Ace is one of my favourite places in the world. It is where I go to relax and unwind; it's my happy place. I have been there many times with my husband, my girlfriends and my family. I like to think of it as my home away from home."

2. The work table

"This was once a communion altar in a church in Dundas, Ont. I got it from [Toronto's] Queen West Antiques, painted it and added the Carrara marble top."

3. The Christmas tree

"I love a good, spare-looking Charlie Brown tree, which is better for showcasing the unique ornaments we have collected over the years, from brushy stags to sparkling vintage bulbs. You can see them better through the openings in the branches."

4. The ornaments

"These raffia animal ornaments are bestsellers at the store. I love the penguins and the polar bears, especially when they're hanging in unexpected places, like under the chandelier."

5. The ice bucket

"My husband gave me this amazing piece on our 10th wedding anniversary. I think 10 years is supposed to be tin or aluminum. Close enough."

6. The table

This classic Knoll table, topped with white Carrara marble, is the site of family dinner most nights. It's sturdy and has held up against numerous tough trials inflicted on it by my two boys."

7. The mirror

"This is a reclaimed-baseboard mirror that I had made. It's by Scott Townson, one of the artisans I carry at my store."

8. The stuffed pheasant

"We got this on a buying trip to Brimfield, Mass., home of the largest outdoor antique show in New England. It satisfies my weird love of taxidermy."

9. The signage-inspired work

"This is my first-ever resin piece. It hangs here to remind me of where I started and how far I've come. It also includes the name of my oldest son [Hudson] and reminds me of time spent in New York, which I visit often."

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