



At Home With Minted Artist Jen Wink Hays

By Anna Kocharian

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Hailing from a small town in Maine, Jen Wink Hays barely touched a paintbrush before moving to New York City for college. She began painting while studying at Barnard College, where she completed a dual major in Visual Arts and Art History. Following graduation, Hays went on to establish Utility Design, a NYC-based design firm, and Blue School, a progressive, independent school in lower Manhattan.

With a passion for exploring naturally occurring patterns, and finding the commonalities and contrasts between the natural and the man-made, Hays' unique perspective is quite evident in her works. Today, the artist spends her days painting, full-time, and raising her three little ones (plus two dogs!) along with her husband, Tyler. Here, Hays, touches on her inspirations and the two things she simply can't live without.

WHERE DO YOU FEEL MOST INSPIRED?

I am most inspired in my art studio – in the presence of great raw materials, light, and music.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL STYLE?

My style is relatively laid-back. I love simplicity with hints of personal touches.

WHAT MAKES A HOME BEAUTIFUL?

Active and thoughtful spaces filled with personality – without piles of clutter. Natural light also has a pretty powerful effect on a home.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT BEING AN ARTIST?

Working directly with materials and not having to sit in on meetings all day. I love the complete freedom of being an artist.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION?

The engagement ring that my husband made for me, and my kids' art. Assuming we are talking about non-living things.

ON WHAT ITEMS DO YOU SCRIMP?

I ride around on a scooter a lot and am a little less likely to call an Uber (than other city-dwellers I know!).

ON WHAT ITEMS DO YOU SPLURGE?

Very weird or unique antiques and objects, progressive education, and organic food.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TRAVEL DESTINATION?

The Willowa Lake region of Oregon (where my husband is from) is the most beautiful and replenishing place I've ever been. I'm from Maine, so that is saying something.