



Epicurean Hotel
Artist Bios: Rooms & Suites

Lou Wackes /

Newnan, Georgia

Lou Wackes of Messy Heart Studio is a self-taught watercolor and ink artist. From the time she was ten years old, Lou knew she had a passion for visual art, however life led her in a different direction initially. She graduated top of her class and went on to pursue a degree in psychology and eventually to become a middle school English teacher. All the while, art played a huge role in her teaching process and in every aspect of her life. Aware of her increasing longing to create art professionally, Lou's husband Robb and their three children, then in middle school themselves, encouraged Lou to focus on her art full time. This coincided with the family's decision to relocate to Newnan, Georgia, just south of Atlanta, home of all things art and culture.

As a child, Lou experienced the warmth of growing up in a diverse multicultural South Florida community where food almost always played a part in bringing people together. These memories have led her to treasure the city of Atlanta, especially when it comes to food choices. According to Lou, Atlanta offers the perfect blend of options from classic American hot dogs at the Varsity to the freshly baked bread, local brews, and exotic fare of Ponce City Market's Central Food Hall. Much of Lou's artwork reflects her passion for memorializing dearly loved landmarks, not least of which are those that give people reason to come together around a table of comfort, laughter, and delicious food.

These three watercolor and ink sketches are custom pieces created specifically for the Epicurean Hotel and celebrate several of Atlanta's iconic eateries and markets.



The Varsity:

Family-owned and operated since 1928, The Varsity is a downtown Atlanta institution, and The World's Largest Drive-in Restaurant. Everyone is still greeted with the Varsity's signature welcome, "What'll ya have?"

Television and movie star Nipsy Russell got his start at the Varsity as car hop #46.



Ponce City Market:

The Ponce City Market building has been around since 1925, formerly as the southern headquarters of Sears Roebuck later repurposed as Atlanta's City Hall East. The building was built on Ponce de Leon Springs and the former site of an amusement park. Now, Ponce City Market is home to retail shops, business offices, and a large food hall.



Municipal Market:

In 1924 the Atlanta's Women's Club and local activists raised money to build a much-needed market with affordable produce after the great fire of 1917. During this time segregation was still in place, regulating Black vendors to sell on the curb. However, these vendors drew large crowds, popularizing the market and bestowing it a new name – The Sweet Auburn Curb Market.



Alda Lee /

Atlanta, Georgia

Alda Lee is a surreal collage artist from Atlanta, Ga. She uses traditional style hand-cut paper & glue to craft her pieces, using mediums such as magazines and photographs to stylize her work. She enjoys traveling, photography, savory food, pattern prints, postcards, and thrift store finds. Exploring the city is one of her favorite things to do, capturing moments through the lens of her camera. She also likes to indulge herself in Atlanta's food scene – exploring new flavors/menus and enjoying a nice cocktail, all the while taking in the atmosphere and seeing different architectural and design spaces.

These three collages are custom pieces created specifically for the Epicurean Hotel and resonate with Atlanta's food culture, showcasing the little pleasures of indulging and being surrounded by what life has to offer.

Christina Kwan /

Atlanta, Georgia

Christina Kwan is a local Atlanta artist best known for her abstract works on paper as well as large scale murals. She was born and raised in Florida and moved to Atlanta after graduating from University of Florida with a BFA in Drawing. Christina is known for having a delicate yet bold hand using acrylic ink, whether she's painting an oyster or a large stroke of color. Having lived in Atlanta for over a decade, she has also explored her creativity through a variety other forms including blog writing and food photography. In addition to her own work, Christina is passionate about advocating for and supporting fellow women artists of color and small local businesses.

These three watercolors are custom pieces created specifically for the Epicurean Hotel and celebrate regional dishes and southern fare.



Lemon Icebox Pie:

Named because this pie was chilled in the “icebox” rather than baked, the Lemon Icebox Pie has been a southern dessert tradition. The Silver Skillet in Atlanta has been serving this famous pie for over 40 years.



Shrimp and Grits:

Shrimp and grits, started out as “shrimp and hominy” and has origin stories dating back to Native Americans and Black Americans. Shrimp and grits has long been a quintessential dish in Georgia.



Oysters:

Georgia once led the nation in oyster production. In the early 1900s, the state harvested as many as eight million pounds of the shellfish annually. Georgia oysters are said to have a salty, meaty taste with undertones of lemongrass.



Don't Mind If I Do:

This piece is a reference to southern hospitality and entertaining.



Meet Me At Mary Mac's:

Referencing the iconic Atlanta restaurant, Mary Mac's Tea Room. Mary MacKenzie opened the Tea Room in 1945, which was quite an accomplishment as it was frowned upon for women to own restaurants, so it was therefore called a "Tea Room."

The original Tea Room is still open for business.



House Wine Of The South:

"House wine of the South" references the quintessential drink of the south, sweet tea. To underscore how serious southerners can get about sweet tea, in 2003, the Georgia State Legislature (albeit jokingly) considered criminalizing the act of serving unsweetened tea at any restaurant operating within its border.

Diane Speight / Winder, Georgia

Diane Donaldson Speight is a collage and assemblage artist who creates work using found materials and objects. Her imagery often centers on family ties and memory. Diane's work has appeared in Aqua Art - Miami, Callanwolde Fine Arts Center, ArtFields and City Gallery of Charleston. In addition, she was named best emerging artist at the Gasparilla Fine Arts Festival in Tampa, Florida in 2016. Diane is an active member of the Atlanta Collage Society and holds an MFA in graphic design from Georgia State University.

"The Epicurean Hotel project was especially heartfelt for me since I explore memory in my work, and food often evokes our strongest memories. I grew up hearing stories of my parents dating in Atlanta during the 1940s, and many of those stories involved local culinary landmarks, such as Mary Mac's Tea Room, the Varsity and the Magnolia Tea Room on the top floor of the downtown Rich's department store. Even though I live in a small town on the far outskirts, Atlanta will always be home."

These three collages are custom pieces created specifically for the Epicurean Hotel and celebrate southern culture and iconic Atlanta eateries.

Alex Wolf /

Atlanta, Georgia

Alex Wolf is an Atlanta based paper artist with a focus on the use of organic one-line depictions of historical figures and sculptures. Alex Wolf has participated in multiple regional art shows and events. At the moment she is primarily works with ABV Gallery producing works pieces for exhibitions and live auction events.

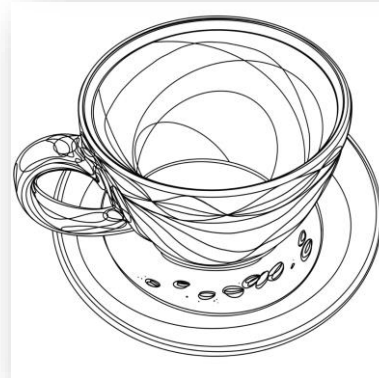
When working on these pieces for the Epicurean Hotel I wanted to bring focus to personal and local experiences as an Atlanta resident.

These three-line drawings are custom pieces created specifically for the Epicurean Hotel.



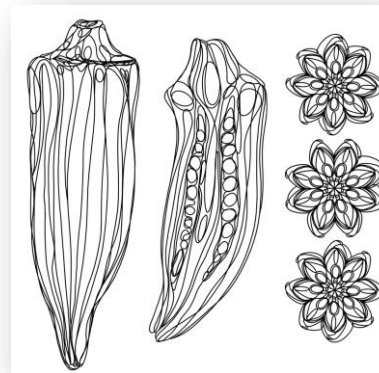
Sliced Peaches:

"The sliced peaches and okra are inspired by my families regular weekend trips to the Grant Park Farmers market. In the summer my husband insists on purchasing as many peaches as possible. I always enjoy the watercolor like textures of the peaches color both inside and out."



Coffee and Beans:

"The beans and grounds were placed on the saucer to remind the viewer of the sound and smell that grinding coffee makes. The mug drawn here is one of my favorites purchased from a local potter who frequents most of Atlanta's craft fairs through the spring and summer. "



Okra:

"As a Montessori teacher I regularly bring nature into the classroom to foster their passion to care for their environment. When sliced the okra can be used as a stamp to create beautiful flower and star like shapes on paper. The kids and I absolutely enjoy it, and the parents are always amazed by the intricacies of the interior of the vegetable."



Kate Blohm /

Atlanta, Georgia

Blohm, a graduate of SCAD, is a food photographer well-known in the local food scene; she has worked with chefs and farmers across the state, is a board member of Georgia Organics' Cast Iron & Collards Society (an organization involved in supporting local farmers and agriculture), and was on the Host Committee for Foodwell Alliance's Soil Festival 2018 and 2019.

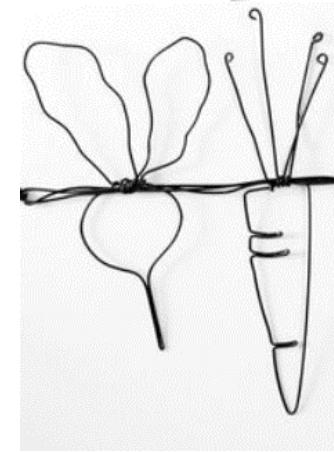
Blohm's work has been featured in The New York Times, Architectural Digest, Elle DECOR, Atlanta Magazine HOME, Forbes, New York Observer, Gravy and more.

Duncan Sherwood-Forbes /

Los Angeles, California

Duncan Sherwood-Forbes is a Los Angeles-based artist specializing in linear metal sculpture. Duncan studied sculpture at the Sam Fox school of Art and Design at Washington University in St. Louis and has been featured in galleries in St. Louis, Boston, New York, and Los Angeles. Duncan uses sinuous curving line to animate his abstract portraits and figurative work, pulling inspiration from modern and contemporary art as well as graffiti, future funk, and more.

These three 3D wire wall sculptures are custom pieces created specifically for the Epicurean Hotel and relate to the local food scene and agriculture.



Brett Miotti /

Atlanta, Georgia

Brett Miotti is an art director and designer living in Atlanta, GA. He first became interested in printmaking processes while working as a volunteer at historic Hatch Show Print in Nashville, TN. Since 2011, he has been operating a small screen-printing business and has taught several classes at Atlanta Printmaker's Studio. His work explores different textures that result from overprinting and layering colors and shapes in each composition and often often incorporates his love of music, typography and design.

"Food and beverage are synonymous with Atlanta. The city has a rich history with both and continues to foster the best in southern cuisine. The pieces composed attempt to honor both past and present while also representing some of the physical structures of Atlanta and how these elements influence culture in Atlanta. While comprised of abstracted shapes and bright colors, they speak to a very tactile and real city made of many layers."

These two screen prints are custom pieces created specifically for the Epicurean Hotel.

Epicurean:

This piece was created by abstracting iconic Atlanta elements including the Epicurean Atlanta building façade, cocktail glass silhouettes, typography from the Colonnade Restaurant sign (2nd oldest restaurant in Atlanta), and drink menu text from Ticonderoga Club (symbolizing a more contemporary fair).



Ferris Wheel:

This piece was created by abstracting iconic Atlanta elements including the Coca-Cola disc and typography, Big Chicken, The Civil Rights Center, the SkyView ferris wheel, and menu text from Mary Mac's Tea Room.



Angela Faustina /

Atlanta, Georgia

Angela Faustina's sticky-sweet oil paintings transform glistening fruit into its own unique world. Capturing juicy, perfectly ripe pulp in each brushstroke, her artwork focuses on the beauty and vibrancy of life. The magnified imagery can echo other natural forms and textures, attesting to the interconnection of organic life. Although it's presented in an original way, the common subject matter represents a shared experience that spans borders, religion, and culture. Faustina's contemporary paintings are bright, lively, intimate, and bold as hell. Walking the line between realism and idealism, these are *not* your traditional still life paintings.

Due to her fresh take on the genre and the universal appeal of her subject matter, Faustina's artwork has been internationally collected and exhibited for 14 years. In 2019 alone her vibrant oil paintings were shown in Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, the UK, and the eastern USA. Her mouth-watering murals are on view in some of America's most vibrant southeastern cities, including Atlanta and Marietta, GA, and St. Petersburg, FL. She has also worked with brands including Atlanta United, Heineken, and PeachDish.

Faustina grew up in South Florida but started calling the Atlanta area home in 2015. She graduated summa cum laude with concentrations in Studio Art and History from New College of Florida in Sarasota, FL, while completing additional coursework at Ringling College of Art & Design in Sarasota and Parsons: The New School for Design in New York, NY.





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