

# SUNDAY ARTS & STYLE

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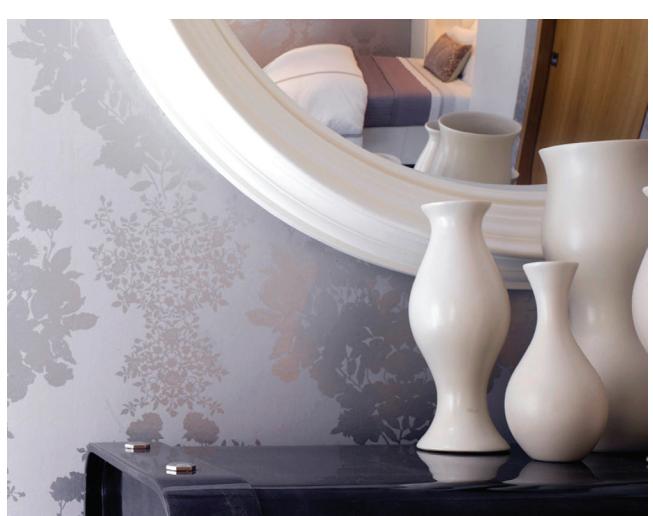
AND OTHER KITCHEN SKILLS  
HOME COOKS SHOULD KNOW

By JOEL LANG / PAGE 5



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A designer's  
daring pairings



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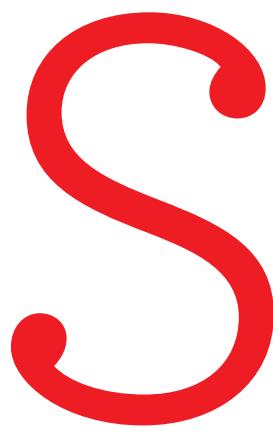
Secret love of  
Eleanor Roosevelt



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The compassionate  
composer





SUNDAY  
ARTS &  
STYLE

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**JIM SHEA**

# Birds' return and other signs of spring

**M**y favorite sign of spring is St. Patrick's Day.

Once St. Patrick's Day rolls around, winter — except for the occasional blizzard — is over. Here's to St. Patrick and here's to putting another New England winter in the rear view mirror.

Slainte!

While I love St. Patrick's Day, I am not a big fan of the morning after. So if you could tread quietly this morning, I'd appreciate it.

Speaking of keeping it down, another sure sign of spring is the return of the birds. The feathery variety are, of course, early risers, and after several months of awakening to the howl of frigid winds, it is pleasant to drift back into consciousness on the wings of their chorus.

That said, if you folks could also put a sock in it this morning, I'll not forget the courtesy when it comes time to refill the bird feeder.

The other variety of birds beginning to return is

the snowbird. Snowbirds are probably the most fragile of all birds, and tend to flee these parts at the first sign of flurries. Most of them head to "God's waiting room" (Florida), where they spend much of their time following the weather back home and thinking of things to do to combat the boredom.

Snowbirds don't make a lot of noise in the morning, but they are nonetheless annoying when they do come back. I think it's their tans.

A third species signaling the arrival of spring (this year) are fans of the New York Yankees. Ever since the team acquired slugger Giancarlo Stanton in the off-season, Yankee fans have been chirping morning, noon and night. As a Red Sox fan, this constant warbling does ruffle my feathers a bit, although you would think I'd be used to it by now.

Not all signs of spring are welcome. Daylight saving time, which began just a week ago, is a prime

example. How can one embrace a sign of spring that robs you of an hour's sleep? The only thing worse than waking up deprived of a full night's sleep would be waking up deprived of a full night's sleep on the morning after St. Patrick's Day. If this were ever to occur, I'd have to spend the night before in an ICU to have any chance of surviving.

The other issue with daylight saving time is it begins too early in the season. We end up having to go back to dragging ourselves out of bed in the dark, so we can have an extra hour of light at the end of the day. Let me ask you this, what are you going to do with an extra hour of light after supper in New England in March? Sit outside on the deck? Mow the snow? Turn over the soil in the garden with a jackhammer?

A much more positive sign of spring, in fact, arguably the most predictive sign is the phenomenon, or more accurately the condi-

**HERE'S TO  
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REAR VIEW  
MIRROR.**

tion, known as March Madness. When otherwise intelligent humans start sounding like Dick Vitale "baby," and otherwise normal people begin obsessing about such things as seedings and brackets, then spring has sprung.

It is important to point this out because one of the major symptoms of March Madness is being oblivious to such things as weather, family, work, food and water.

In Connecticut, March Madness manifests itself as March Expectations for the UConn women. For the UConn men, March Madness has morphed into March Anger and brought out the boo birds. Unfortunately, for Kevin Ollie, boo birds are not migratory.

*Jim Shea is a lifelong Connecticut resident and journalist who believes the keys to life include the avoidance of physical labor and I-95. He can be reached at [jimboshea@gmail.com](mailto:jimboshea@gmail.com) and on Twitter @jimboshea.*



## Home MODERN TRADITIONAL

### Teaming sophistication with nostalgia

By Christina Hennessy

**A**s a child, Christina Sullivan Roughan would often join her mother on antique treasure hunts at the markets near her Massachusetts home. At first, it was a rough go — her mother's intent gaze lingered from table to table as she sought out finds. It made for a long day.

"As I grew older, I appreciated it more and more," Roughan says, who years later helped her mother and grandmother, when they set up shop with their discoveries at the Brimfield Flea Markets in Brimfield, Mass.

Roughan (pronounced Rowan), an award-winning designer who runs Roughan Interior Design, cultivates her own antique and collectible treasures that offer a distinct personality to a room. Her intent is to find objects that evoke emotions and conjure up memories. They are the pieces of a larger, eclectic puzzle — one that incorporates elements from different eras and styles in a way that all fits.

"If you walk around my house, it is very curated," the award-winning designer says of the Weston home she shares with her husband and daughters. "It really is all the things that I love."

Among her finds are glassware from the late Dorothy Thorpe — those silver-banded tumblers that were the rage in the "Mad Men" era, as well as the Norwegian bright enamel Cathrineholm bowls, with their lotus and stripe designs, that evoke kitchens of the 1960s.

"When you go into a house and it looks like a kitchen you remember growing up in ... it brings back nostalgia," Roughan says. "I love to evoke that feeling and integrate it into the design. It's about recapturing that feeling and redesigning it into the modern lifestyle."

It is an intersection she has planted herself at since the start of her interior design career in the early 1990s, after designing stores for Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger. With offices in Greenwich, New York City and Weston, her aesthetic is adaptable to sophisticated city lofts and studios, as well as classic country homes. She calls her approach modern traditional — a trend that has grown in popularity since she first started out in New York City in her early 20s.

"It's timeless and approachable," she says of a perspective that teams sophistication with simplicity.

One could trade in the words classic and comfortable, too. It's tailor-made for those looking to

soften the lines of modern and traditional furniture and bring a touch of whimsy and coziness to a space.

It allows Roughan to place two modern Saarinen chairs into a play space in a traditional Darien home. The room pops with color — deep blues and apple greens — and possibility. It can double as a place to play and a place to entertain once the toys are tucked away.

For a dining room in a 1800s Georgian home, she might suggest a traditional table, but surround it with modern chairs. Classic drapes are put on sleek, polished nickel poles and the wallpaper boasts bold floral graphics.

"I love modern furniture," she says of Bauhaus and mid-century-modern pieces. "I like to integrate that into a more traditional space. The combination can be amazing when pulled together well."

Nothing is too fussy or layered or staid in these looks. Even those with clean, simple lines have a softness and accessibility to them that reveals the personality and character of the family or person living in the space. Roughan works with clients to gather accessories and art they love and will give each project its own look.

Early in her career, such flexibility was key to designing the retail shops for Ralph Lauren.

"We had to do a lot of different looks for the experience," she says, noting that each store required a distinct feel and personality. At any moment, she was looking for elements that would broadcast a chic New York City penthouse, an Irish cottage, an opulent English estate, a polo club or a cottage by the sea.

"I had an eye for fashion ... and I never thought I was going to be an interior designer," Roughan says. "It just evolved. ... I had been trained very well by the best people."

In the 24 years since she began working in homes and commercial spaces as an interior designer, she has attracted celebrity clients, including Donna Karan and Japanese retailer Takashimaya. She has transformed homes throughout the tri-state area and beyond, with projects in Greenwich and Darien, and those in New York City, Florida and California. Last month, she was tapped by the Fairfield County Antique and Design Center to show off her design style with a vignette she created from pieces within the center.

She suspects this approach to home design is not going to fade anytime soon, given the flexibility and function it affords the mod-



This West Village townhouse in New York City, above, features wallpaper with a classic pattern that provides a backdrop for a modern mirror and sleek ceramic pieces. Below, a classic Georgian estate in Greenwich features contemporary wallpaper and art in an otherwise traditional dining room.



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