

Excerpt from Houston Press Article “Culture Scouts”

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If there is a focus point in Beth Madison's wooded one-story home, it is the dining room, where an oil painting of a voluptuous Gauguin-like woman welcomes you. On her head is a large bowl overflowing with food of scumbled fall colors that glow with gentle invitation. Madison, a single insurance executive, was so captured by the painting when she first saw it in New Orleans that she brought it home with her — so captured that she had her entire house repainted to match the color scheme of that artwork.

Now if she could only finish redoing the rest of her house. Between the lighting expert, decorator, landscape artist and tree specialists working on her home, not to mention her own job, Madison doesn't have the time to look for art. So she has someone else do it: art adviser Jacqueline Hamilton.

Hamilton, who has been art advising for two decades, knows Madison's house and, hence, her tastes. When Hamilton viewed a show of artist David Bierk's work, she knew that Madison would enjoy it and took her to see his landscape paintings. Madison fell for two still lifes of peaches instead. The gibbous pair now hang in her dining room, too. While Hamilton admires the works for their high quality, Madison connects to them on an emotional level. "There's an old kind of romance about them, like they've been there for a long time," she says with the care of whispering a secret. "It's very vibrant, and it makes me feel vibrant, like it's going to be an exciting dinner party."

Hamilton says she knows she has done her job when she matches clients with artworks that "speak to them." "I'm turning professional cartwheels," she says. "It gives me as much pleasure that she owns them as if I owned them myself." ...

..."I have a real bone to pick with galleries who call their sales representatives art consultants, because their priority is to sell their inventory," Hamilton says. "A true art consultant is not tied into inventory in any way."