



CUT. CHEW. EAT. REPEAT

by Jacquelyn De Longe As a writer, busy mother of two toddlers and Pilates Instructor at P.U.L.S.E., Jacquelyn De Longe finds her fast-paced life often keeps her out of the kitchen and frequenting area restaurants. New to Santa Barbara, she explores treasures of the local culinary scene with a fresh, honest and entertaining perspective.

Passion, Politics, and Paintings



Penelope Gottlieb in her home studio

Known for making a statement, painter **Penelope Gottlieb** departed from her anything-but-formal paintings by leaping off the canvas, and creating an all-encompassing environment at the Santa Barbara Museum of Contemporary Art's (MCA) special event, CRAVE: Penelope Gottlieb, The Night the Forest Spoke.

First created last year by **Miki Garcia**, executive director of the MCA, this sold-out project creates a participatory, sensory-based, one-night artistic endeavor. When first approached, Gottlieb felt honored and delighted at the challenge to bring her work and its environmental message into an even greater conceptual installation.

Garcia states, "As with Maria Rendon, Nathan Hayden, Hannah Vanstein, and Diana Puntar, our previous Crave artists, we are so indebted to the artistic vision put forth for our audience. They truly are one-of-a-kind, unforgettable art experiences."

For CRAVE, Gottlieb's first choice was chef **Justin West** of her favorite local restaurant, *Julienne*. With an intention to indulge all five senses; sight, taste, touch, sound, and smell, she contacted West to see if he would be interested in participating and was pleasantly surprised by his excitement. Gottlieb beams of her creative partner, "He was over-the-top, super-enthusiastic about the idea. It was a lovefest once we started working on the menu."



Convallaria majalis



Campomanesia lundiana

Together, the two have created an impeccable evening yet they are keeping the many courses and environment quiet until the night of the event. The only clue she gave me was that the participant will be introduced to the experience with an edible blossom prosecco as they walk through the door. Nice way to start the evening. I can't wait to indulge my other senses!

The idea of mixing and matching is not uncommon here in Santa Barbara. The meal concept is similar to the upcoming Local Treasures Dinner at the Lark happening on Sunday, June 29, (tickets still available), where a gourmet five-course meal of seasonal ingredients is paired with local wines. There is also the experience of indulging in multiple senses like the Flavors of the Season Beer and Live Music Pairing, a quarterly event held at the Bourbon Room where live music and craft beer blend. Both are private events and require tickets to be purchased in advance.

I visited with Gottlieb, a fellow Los Angeles transplant (like myself), at her home studio perched above the Pacific and was awestruck by the beauty of the manicured grounds and vast ocean view. Just as striking and put together as her surroundings, Gottlieb greeted me warmly, and over a cup of coffee we chatted of her experience as an artist and our six degrees of separation. With a BFA from Art Center College of Design (yep, I did that, too) she started out as a professional illustrator and worked her way up to some of the biggest well-known clients around, perfecting her skill of rendering with life-like precision, but in her late 30s she began to burn out.

Always with aspirations of becoming a fine artist, Gottlieb distinctly remembered her tipping point. It was while she was drawing a hamburger for a major chain such as Wendy's or McDonald's, and the notes from the client read: too many sesame seeds on the bun, only one tomato slice not two, and with each revision came more pointless changes. She found herself consumed by a project she had no investment in. This is when she realized

that her talents might be able to serve a greater good, so she took the risk and left her commercial artist career, crossing over to fine art and pursuing her MFA at UCSB. (I, too, had a similar moment, as a GFX producer on a cellphone commercial and changed careers.)

"Had I known how gratifying this transition was going to be, I would have done it years before," said Gottlieb. Getting to paint what she wants and not what she has to, makes it easy for her to dedicate herself to her studio. She is no Sunday painter; just like any full-time employee, she starts in the morning and works through until the late afternoon Monday through Friday and even on an inspired weekend. When she is not painting in her studio, you can find her in her garden of course, or cooking, playing the harp, or spicing it up with a tango.

The biggest surprise Gottlieb has come across working for herself is how slow it can seem things move, from the work being made, seen, and then finally responded to takes great patience. I have always been inspired by the confidence an artist must have in themselves and their work. It's an unwavering belief that they are an artist and what they are doing is important, and in Penelope's case it is. Her paintings lure the viewer with their beauty, and then like vines wrap around them, holding them tight with their message of environmental extinction.

Gottlieb is currently represented by Edward Cella Art + Architecture in Los Angeles and will participate in its upcoming group show celebrating the opening of the new gallery space. She has had solo exhibitions at Michael Kohn Gallery and Kim Light/Lightbox Los Angeles (where I was once employed years ago) among many others group shows. Her paintings are in numerous Public Collections including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Chicago Art Institute.

Boldly pushing the boundaries of their abilities, Gottlieb and West are two creatives whose talents I look forward to experiencing on multiple levels.

Cafe Stella

Breakfast
Lunch
Dinner

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