



BORN February 26, 1958, in New York City

FIRST COLLECTION
Military campaign ribbons

MOST RECENT FIND
1917 phoropter (optometric device)

FAVORITE HAUNT
Antiques shows in Brimfield, Mass.

PRIZE POSSESSION
19th-century cast-bronze industrial table base

SIZE OF COLLECTION
400 to 500 items

LATEST VENTURE
Lost Found Art, in Stamford, Conn.

DAY JOB
Sales, marketing, and merchandising vice president for a women's apparel manufacturer in New York City

a numbers game

There's an art to knowing when to stop, and when to share the fun by Elizabeth Roberts

MARK INDURSKY is a born hunter-gatherer. The son of a coin collector, he amassed Second World War military campaign ribbons, baseball cards, and bottle caps when he was a boy. In his 20s, after graduating from art school, he acquired a stash of antique edged weapons whose sculptural character pleased him. Then marriage and fatherhood redirected Mark's collecting toward objects with a strictly aesthetic edge: folk art and 19th-century industrial-design, vintage radio microphones and toy ray guns.

While Mark's range of interests expanded, he channeled his artistic energy into creating assemblages of prize finds inside his home in Stamford, Conn. Take the row of five antique cast-iron pulleys, each hung from its own one-foot-tall custom steel stand, set atop a dining room side table. Mechanically inclined or not, visitors comment on subtle variations in the pulleys' shapes and finishes. Indeed, so many noncollector guests have asked for similar arrangements that, two years ago, Mark and



“It starts with one piece and, all of a sudden, I get caught up”

MARK SAYS:



ODD NUMBERS of items—five, seven, nine—work well for small groupings. You don't want viewers' attention drawn to one spot right away. You want them to take in the whole composition.



NEUTRAL BACKDROPS and discreet mountings (color-matched to the background or unobtrusive parts of objects) let display pieces stand out.

BREATHING ROOM is important. Leave enough space around clustered objects so that they stand on their own as an assemblage, apart from the room's furnishings.



EYE-LEVEL DISPLAY—geared toward people who are standing or sitting in a given room—invites viewers to notice every detail.

NEW ARRANGEMENT IDEAS can come from anywhere—displays in stores and museums, restaurant décor, magazine layouts, and posters.

Be a design sponge!

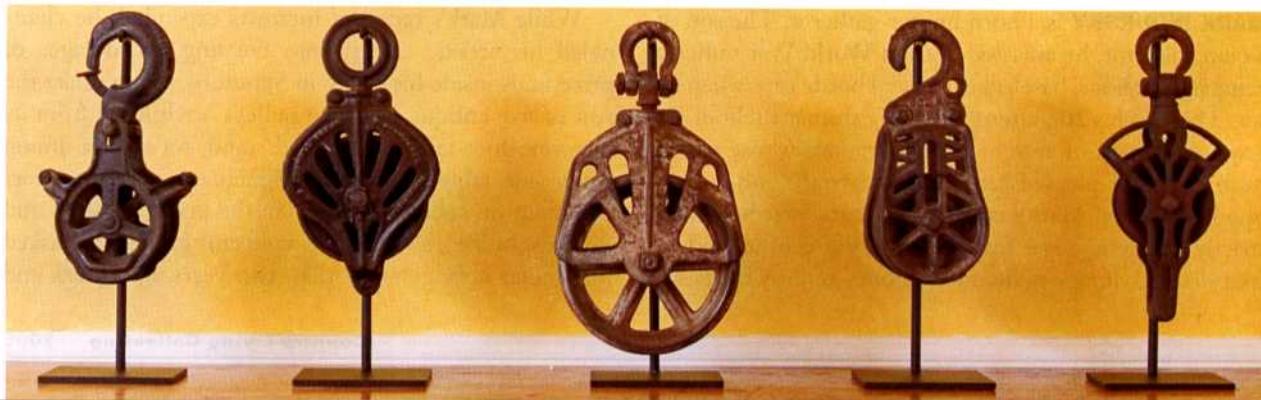
his wife, Joy, started a business, Lost Found Art (203-595-0575, lostfoundart.com), to accumulate, design, and mount groupings of antique and collectible objects as one-of-a-kind installations.

“When Mark first brings something in, I often wonder, ‘What is this?’” says Joy. “But he cleans it and finds complementary pieces, and suddenly it’s art.” Some commissions begin with consultation about the client’s space (a tabletop, a wall, a room), thematic preferences (maritime, equestrian, aeronautical), taste in décor, or budget. Others start with just a request for “something fun.” Once a goal has been set, Mark typically needs four to six months to ferret out pieces that work together. “My biggest challenge is not what I have to pay for pieces,” he says. “It’s finding them.” A client may pay eight hundred to several thousand dollars for a complete installation, or up to \$50,000 when rare antiques are involved. The price includes information about the materials, ages, and original functions of all components; a template for positioning every piece; and instructions for care and cleaning.

Using his home as studio and showroom, Mark tinkers with compositions to achieve an intriguing balance. “I don’t want a single, static focus. I want the pieces to enhance one another, not compete—to draw people in.” And, depending on whether objects are freestanding, wall-mounted, or “shelf sitters,” he builds wooden frames or has armatures fabricated. His workroom contains piles of inventory for specific clients—toy abaci for an accountant, stainless-steel veterinary syringes for a physician—alongside not-yet-assigned raw material, such as wire dog muzzles and ophthalmologic instruments. Finished works stand, hang, or sit in almost every room of the house.

A pop-art installation of brightly colored 1960s and '70s lunchboxes covers one kitchen wall. A school of fish decoys, most carved by Great Lakes ice fishermen, float

TOP LEFT: An unknown Great Lakes ice fisherman whittled and painted this half-foot-long wooden decoy in the 1950s. **TOP RIGHT:** A quartet of microphones brings back the glamour of early broadcasting. They are (from left) a steel and aluminum mike from the 1940s, an early model from the '20s, a Jazz Age bronze and steel Amperite, and a steel “ring” mike and table-stand from the '30s. **ABOVE:** Three handmade carnival gaming wheels, each about three feet in diameter, date (from top) to the 1920s, '50s, and '30s. **BELOW:** The cutout patterns of 19th-century cast-iron pulleys economized on costly metal and reduced weight, for easier lifting. Mark admires their aesthetic power.



at eye level around the interior of a bathroom. In the upstairs hall, nine child-size baseball gloves, dating from the 1920s to the '60s, each about six inches wide, occupy a white wooden grid. Vintage gaming wheels adorn the basement game room.

Nearly every weekend, except during the winter, Mark browses at tag sales, flea markets, and antiques shows, and stays in touch with a network of dealers. He also admits to another source for inventory: "When I see a dumpster, I'm

right in there. A suit and tie don't faze me." During a foray into a trash receptacle outside New York's Grand Central Terminal, he rescued the ornate cast-iron vent cover he considers a souvenir of his weekday commute into the city.

At the moment, Mark is particularly fond of old wire-work that's reminiscent of Alexander Calder's sculpture. But, he adds, "More affections are coming down the road. It could be a toolbox or a typewriter or a garden rake. I look at it and see another great starting point." ■



Kids' baseball mitts are rare because they are usually thrown away when outgrown. It took Mark 14 months to gather this lineup.