



COWBOYS

INDIANS

# AT HOME WITH KATHERINE SNEDEKER

THE WESTERN STYLE SETTER INVITES US  
INSIDE HER CUSTOM-BUILT WORLD.

By Emily C. Laskowski

SOMEWHERE IN MEXICO, KATHERINE Snedeker is texting a photo to her associate back in Dallas. On the other end, Cheryl Davis thinks she's looking at a picture of a pile of rocks with a skinny stray dog in the background. To Snedeker, this is simply the before image of what will become an exquisite stone table (no canine included). Days later, she'll start the process of polishing that pile of rocks into something custom that can't be found anywhere else but at The Arrangement, the Texas-based purveyor of Western furnishings that Snedeker has owned since 2003.

"She found the diamond in the rough that no one else could see," says Davis, Snedeker's text recipient and the marketing director at The Arrangement. "I didn't get anything about why she sent me that picture. All this just came to her. Who can do that? No one can do that."

Inside the Dallas-based showroom of The Arrangement, Snedeker's imprint is thoughtfully threaded into every cowhide rug, reclaimed coffee table, and custom-covered chair that fills the 15,000-square-foot space—and the same goes for the company's 10,000-square-foot sister location in Hous-

ton. Davis points out an industrial chandelier hanging in a corner—it's adorned with antique black railway lanterns that Snedeker collected from one of her worldwide sourcing expeditions. One of only four that The Arrangement offers, it won't be reproduced for the masses or photographed for a catalog mailing. One-of-a-kind designs don't work that way, and Snedeker's clients know this.

"We are different. We are doing different things. There is innovation to what we're doing," she says. "If we do this right, we're stewards of history. We're honoring the past and respecting it, but interpreting it in a new way so that it can function in your home."

At The Arrangement, there's nothing cookie-cutter about this interpretation, which Snedeker brands as "the best of the new West." Despite the proliferation of inexpensive imitation pieces like faux-antler accents or replica Mason jars that trickle into big-box chains throughout the country, The Arrangement firmly believes in finding what's new, what's novel, what's next, and what nobody else has. "I think people want fewer pieces, but more statement pieces, so that they're unique and reflective and balancing whatever it is they have in their homes,"

Snedeker says. "What's inside counts, so how do we help you have a remarkable home?"

Approaching interior design from a sartorial angle is one answer to that question. "Furniture is fashion," Snedeker says. And in fashion, there's always another collection, "another show." That insight is the reason clients have sought Snedeker's advice since she started working the floor at The Arrangement's original store in southern Dallas more than 30 years ago. Back then, it was more of an antiques shop, and Snedeker didn't even have a job there—but she happened to work across the street. Eventually, she befriended the

owner, who, she remembers, ultimately handed her an irresistible offer: "If you see anything in the store that you like, and you want it, why don't you work one Saturday, and I'll give it to you," he cajoled. "I like that lamp," she responded. "My desk could use a lamp. I'll work Saturday for that lamp."

After that Saturday, the store owner asked Snedeker if she had fun. "I had the best time of my life," she declares, emphatically, all these years later. She worked for him for the next four years, until he passed away, and then for his son for 11 years after that. In 2003, she bought out the son and took full ownership of The Arrangement.

"It's not a job, it's a  
VOCATION.  
I love it," says Katherine  
Snedeker, who has owned  
The Arrangement for a decade  
and a half and worked its  
floors for more than 30 years.  
"I decided at some point, I am  
a creative person and that's why  
nothing fit—so I need to go  
and be creative."



In that time, the owner and her taste have become synonymous with The Arrangement. It is her store, and it is her singular vision for innovative, sustainable, and rustic-modern design that her staff fully embraces. Snedeker—adorned in strands of turquoise necklaces with her face framed

The Arrangement's two showrooms in Dallas and Houston total more than 25,000 square feet and employ a team of interior designers and decorators that consider themselves more **FAMILY** than firm. "It doesn't matter what age you are," Snedeker says, "put together the team and you can accomplish anything."

by blond, blunt-cut bangs—seems as permanently planted inside its walls as a saguaro in the Sonoran Desert. However, born in Virginia and raised in New Jersey, Snedeker spent a youthful chunk of her professional years in New York before ever stepping into a pair of cowboy boots—or the West.

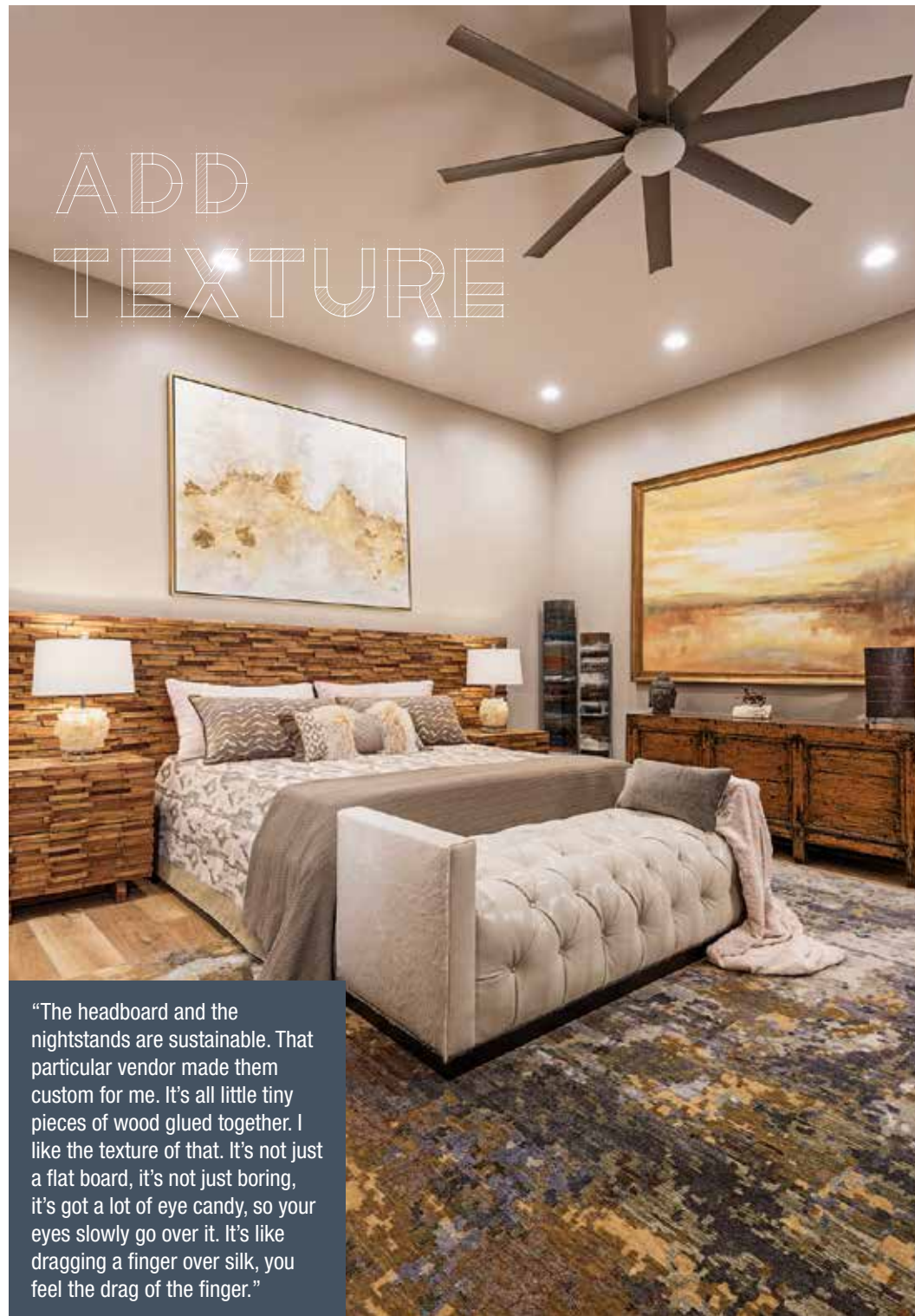
She discovered artistic outlets early on, but like many creatives, couldn't carve out a clear career path. By the time she was in the sixth grade in New Jersey, she was writing, directing, and costuming school plays, keeping track of the minutiae in a "director's notebook" that she distinguished by covering it in aluminum foil—her first form of bling, she realizes now. However, when it came time to graduate from high school, there wasn't a next step. "All of my friends had goals and directions, and I did not," she recalls. "I didn't feel like I had run across anything that fit my profile."



## GET THE LOOK

KATHERINE SNEDEKER DETAILS THE RUSTIC-MODERN STYLE SHE FASHIONED INSIDE HER OWN HOME.

## ADD TEXTURE



"The headboard and the nightstands are sustainable. That particular vendor made them custom for me. It's all little tiny pieces of wood glued together. I like the texture of that. It's not just a flat board, it's not just boring, it's got a lot of eye candy, so your eyes slowly go over it. It's like dragging a finger over silk, you feel the drag of the finger."

## CONSIDER SCALE



"It really started with a rug. The rug was the inspiration for the size and scale. It's very hard to get size and scale right in big open spaces. We have a lot of clients that have 30-foot ceilings, 22-foot ceilings, and they don't really understand how big things have to be when you put it in place so that they become statements in their environments."



## UTILIZE SPACE



“Most people don’t want to put things in front of windows. We’re a little revolutionary in that respect, where we say, ‘Every room gets dark.’ So when we have clients that say, ‘I have this great view,’ well, it goes away at night. So when you’re left with just the lights on in your home and you have these big black windows, what do you have in front of them? That is sort of window dressing where we address that. So it doesn’t feel like the energy leaks out of a room—you’re entertained by the room.”

## MIX MATERIALS



“The sofa is something that I designed—I felt I needed something new. Those are 12 feet long, and they have Cor-Ten steel backs that I had painted black. I felt like I needed something else besides just a sofa. I wanted something else. I felt it tied in with my antique doors and tied in with the wood pieces. So it was, again, sustainable, recycled woods.”

She went to junior college to appease her parents, and eventually took an administrative position, making sales calls. Snedeker worked hard, though, and when she decided she wanted to go to art school, that company paid her first year’s tuition. Then, while studying at the School of Visual Arts in New York, she landed a part-time gig mending shearling coats for

a company from Scotland. When she wasn’t in class, she would repair busted seams and sew back lost buttons for an hourly wage. She graduated after three and a half years and took a night job doing word processing for legal firms to support what was now her primary ambition during the day. “I loved fashion,” she says. “Fashion was my passion, and I started making clothes.”





# NEW AND NOW

HERE'S HOW THE ARRANGEMENT DEFINES ITS LATEST COLLECTIONS.



### ICE TRIBAL

Tribal patterns are mixed with calm, cool colors. It's a unified presence that's simple and intriguing, capturing the imagination of possibilities.

### OPEN RANGE

This is where the untamed and unlimited meet unexpected possibilities—in a new way. It features a fusion of historical, reclaimed, and modern, with a bold dash of red.



### PRIMITIVE TIMBER

Rich, elegant, rough-hewn wood combines with durable, hand-tumbled leathers, creating a bespoke interior that defines casual luxury.

Clothes weren't her only handiwork. Snedeker made connections. Talking to people came easily to her, and she found herself mixing with emerging and established fashion artists on the scene. It was during this period that she was exposed to her first sense of the West. "It started in New York because we had Ralph Lauren there, and he was into his Southwest period," Snedeker says. "So that's where I loved and thought the originality of the Western fashion interpretation, everything about it, was totally unique. So I was totally absorbed with it."

Snedeker showcased her newfound aesthetic on a trip to Dallas for a wedding, only to realize that Western style hadn't quite influenced that particular Southern social set yet. "I have my Ralph Lauren outfit on, and the other guests are like, 'You're not from around here, are you?' I had the Southwestern outfit on, so I had my fringes and my ruffles, but their houses were marble, brass, and glass."

For Snedeker, Texas presented an opportunity. She started noticing belts and buckles and cowboy boots that had come from the Lone Star State on her fellow New Yorkers. Yet, from her experience in Dallas, she knew parts of Texas hadn't fully embraced the beauty of the West. So she followed the bling—and her passion—to Dallas, and, like she had before, found herself a job that would support her next step—in this case, a few steps across the street to that small antiques shop called The Arrangement.

Like the pile of rocks she photographed in Mexico, The Arrangement back then was just the before image, the foundation for what Snedeker would refine into something rare, something only she could see. What Snedeker sees on the horizon—though she is often unable to describe it herself—is the world that Western aficionados, homeowners, and her clients desire. "They want a vision," she says. "They want to have a home, they don't want to have a place that they just visit. And how do you make a house a home? That is an art."



## QUICK DRAW

KATHERINE SNEDEKER TALKS MADELINE KAHN, *LONESOME DOVE*, AND HER OTHER WESTERN INSPIRATIONS.



### WESTERN MOVIE

#### *Blazing Saddles*

"I just love Mel Brooks and I quote Madeline Kahn. She's just hilarious in the movie: You know, how she goes, 'I'm so tired of being tired.'"

### WESTERN FOOD

#### Seafood Tacos With Slaw and Chipotle Sauce

"I like all the stuff where it's just the right scale of proportion of things, and you get transported, and you go, 'Oh my God, that's so delicious.'"

### WESTERN BOOK

#### *Lonesome Dove*

"I read that to my husband. He had been shot at a carwash in Highland Park [Dallas]. He was in the hospital recovering, and I read him that book. So it's sort of our, you know, it's like our book."

### WESTERN ICON

#### Madeline Kahn

"Yes. She just—she is my Miss Kitty."

### WESTERN DESTINATION

#### Cibolo Creek Ranch

"It's remote, it's majestic. When the cottonwood leaves blow in the wind, it's just an astounding sound."

### WESTERN SONG

#### "Home on the Range"

"What we do is home. So we just sort of—that's just our go-to well of singing, and we sing it badly."

### WESTERN ACCESSORY

#### Boots

"When I first became aware of the cowboy boot, I was like, This is truly American, it's truly unique, it exists nowhere else, and everyone else copies it."

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