



Hampton House

Fine Art, Custom Framing, Interior Design

Monday, September 12, 2011



Jackie Pittman, Hampton House:

We had just stepped on the Virginia Creeper Trail when I noticed the lone swallowtail perched on a leaf by the path. We both knew the relationship was ending and had gone for a hike that day to clear our heads. He was up ahead about 20 feet. "Look" I said, pointing. And then, I held my breath as about one hundred butterflies started circling me...around and around. I stood

there, perfectly still, with my arms held up knowing how wonderfully special this was. That year for my birthday, he gave me a framed print of four swallowtails. The final breakup came just before Christmas, but he gave me another print of two swallowtails on a butterfly bush. This one was unframed and because of the heartache, I stuck it in a drawer. The event of that day on the trail was too closely related to him and I didn't want the reminder.

Some months later I started working here at Hampton House. On my first day I was admiring the work of Susanna Pantas. We have several of Susanna's pieces and it was her style that I found fascinating. Whether the painting is of a tortoise shell, sand dollars, a conch shell, a moth or a bird's nest, they are all realistic, close up, and with minimal background and framing. And then I saw it, her painting of a swallowtail - but not just any swallowtail, but one whose wings are torn and tattered. Pantas has titled the piece, "Remembering the Wind". This butterfly has come out on the other side of his storm, very much worse for the wear, but even still, a thing of beauty. I then saw Susanna's theme; an empty tortoise shell, an empty bird's nest. The sand dollars are bleached from the sun, not the gray of live ones from the ocean floor. All of these things were once a home...had given refuge and warmth. Even the remains of the tattered butterfly had once sheltered a soul on the wing.

I realized then that what happened on the trail that day was mine. It was my time when the universe had asked me to be still, to calm my heart and mind and just watch. I may be a little worse for the wear - a little torn and tattered but I've learned to look for those moments that are mine. I took the print out of the drawer and brought it in to be framed. It hangs in my house and every time I look at it, I can still feel that faint breeze of butterfly wings.

This is my first blog. Susanna is our featured artist this month and I wanted to share with you the reason I have a particular work of art hanging in my home. I hope you'll share with us your stories of why you chose a certain piece for your own home - the ones that

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touched your heart, that spoke to you and you knew it was meant for just you.

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