

Conveying the most important messages between the DIY, fashion and independent arts communities and yours

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A CHAT WITH MARK MONTANO

FROM BIG ASS CRAFTS TO TELEVISION AND FROM THE FASHION RUNWAY TO HOME IMPROVEMENT— WE CHAT WITH MARK ABOUT THE STUFF YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO

CM: Can you tell us what attracted you to crafting and design?

MM: My mom was a painter and decorator while my dad studied architecture, so I had these artistic parents who allowed us to draw on the walls. It was amazing. My mom was always painting furniture and doing decoupage, so I was the little helper.

CM: As small business owners we at the NPCM are very interested in hearing success stories. Please share some of your memories of making it and some of the highs and lows along the way.

MM: I will tell you that I've failed more than I've succeeded but I've never given up. I wrote at least 6 book proposals that were all refused before my last book got accepted. It was tough! Hearing "NO" is never fun. But, all it took was one "YES." If I had given up, it would not have happened. I can only give you the advice I've always followed and that is that "failure is essential to success." 9 out of every 10 things I try, I fail. Once I learned how to accept that things don't always work out, I felt much better about my career. The real lesson was that I needed to keep trying and trying.

CM: Many of your shows feature the idea of remaking yourself and your environment as manageable tasks. Do you believe that everyone is capable of changing their lives and surroundings through imagination and crafty inspiration?

MM: I believe in people and their

abilities to accomplish whatever their hearts desire. I have to believe that we are capable of changing our lives and our

Mark Montano is an interior designer, artist, writer and TV personality. Born in La Junta, Colorado, Montano is known for three series on the Style Network and The Learning Channel's Ten Years Younger, which he hosted, While You Were Out, on which he frequently appears as a designer, and My Celebrity Home where he had been both host and designer. More information on Mark and his projects can be found by visiting:



www.mystyle.com

www.tlc.com

www.markmontano.com

www.bigasscrafts.com

environment. It takes commitment and dedication and willingness. It's the only way anything happens, don't you think?

CM: What is the single most important piece of advice you would give to someone wanting to do that?

MM: I can say this, if someone else can do it then so can you! It's been done which means it's doable.

CM: I read in one of your bios

that you started crafting and designing at age 14 by making clothing for your mother. Over the years, has anyone been added to the list? Who do you consider your muses now?

MM: Yes, sewing when I was 14, but before that I was painting and drawing and doing tons of traditional Sioux Indian beadwork. I'm not really sure if I have a muse. I love nature and the natural color schemes that occur in the world. They are amazing! I've always loved Coco Chanel, Picasso and Andy Warhol. I think they were artists who changed the world and how we see things.

CM: We love when you get to design on While You Were Out. How do you go about pulling such great looks together in such a short time? Also, what do you do if the family doesn't react to the change as you anticipated?

MM: Well, behind the scenes there are a few people helping us out. We DO work almost 48 hours straight though, and often times the paint isn't dry when they come home. Only once in my 100 episodes did someone not like the room. I thought, "Oh well, you win some, you lose some." In the end, they got some terrific furniture and had some new paint on the walls.

*Want to know more about Mark including an extensive list of favorites including word, craft tools and clothing? See this and more in Part 2 of this interview coming in October's newsletter.

Hello Crafty Cara Mias! Ma has decided to do something a little unusual this month. Instead of answering one or two requests for counsel, she has decided to address what she considers a resounding theme in the requests she has gotten over the tenure of her job as consigliere.

As you can pretty easily guess, Ma dedicated lots of time and energy to getting and addressing some of the most complicated craft needs of our time. What she has seen in this process is this— people seem to want to find a way to use things that they already have on hand by either repurposing or refurbishing them. Because Ma loves the environment as much as she loves a Mark Montano book, she encourages that concept by presenting a way to use something you are likely to have on hand. This instruction comes from Mark Montano's *Big Ass Book of Crafts*.

Here is what Mark suggests you do with the seemingly endless supply of subscription cards that fall from magazines each time you read one.

SUBSCRIPTION CARD ARTWORK

Mark: You know how annoying it is to open a magazine and have to rip out all of the subscription post cards? It drives me nuts. I also hate when they fall out and make a mess. I decided to use them for this art project and now when I open a magazine, I'm always happy to see them. It's so simple, but if you can make just a few things that annoy you work for you in some way, you'll be a lot happier. Trust me on this.

YOU'LL NEED:

ASK MA FIOSA

Mamma Fiosa, known more widely as Ma Fiosa, has served as consigliere to the North Park Craft Mafia in all our crafty needs. Lucky for you, now you don't have to be made to get counsel.

- Subscription cards from a magazine
- Tempera paints in dark colors like blue, gray, green, red and deep orange
- Blue painters tape
- 1" wide flat art brush
- Rubber stamps: things like birds, leaves, trees and faces
- Embossing powder in gold and silver
- Embossing heat gun or crazy hot hair dryer
- Embossing stamp pad

HERE'S HOW:

*Working on some newspaper, tape around your subscription card 1/4 inch all the way around.

*Fill in the area with your tempera paint.

DON'T WORRY: If you can see the printing underneath, that's part of the art.

*When it dries, remove the tape and with your rubber stamp, press the embossing ink onto the painted area making sure to artfully center it.

*Sprinkle the embossing powder on the wet ink and you will see the particles stick to the design of the stamp

*Set the embossing dust with your heat gun

DON'T WORRY: if your paper warps, just press it overnight in between some books.

*Frame it in a simple frame and you've got some great art.

No question is too stupid or too complicated— Ma loves giving crafty counsel. Write her today at AskMa@sandiegonthparkcraftmafia.com or see the back of this newsletter for further methods of contact.

MADAME CRAFTINA

Dragons, Monkeys, Tigers and Rats...Oh, My!

Madame Craftina continues last month's well documented fascination with the Olympics and the amazing culture of China. This has naturally lead MC to an exploration of Chinese Astrology, and you are going to love what she found! Note: if the year you were born is not listed, simply add 12 to your birth year until it matches one of the numbers listed.

Rat: 1996, 1984, 1972, 1960, 1948

It's a good time to invite that friend over, the one who has been so eager to learn one of your great crafty secrets. You have a real knack for helping others to catch on quickly! So, you know what you need to do— put on that smile, send that invitation and have fun!

Ox: 1997, 1985, 1973, 1961, 1949

Come on Oxen! I know you are enjoying your private time at home but it's a wonderful time to get out and share your beautiful self with a community garden project or a knitting circle. Crafting with others makes it more fun!

Tiger: 1998, 1986, 1974, 1962, 1950

Go ahead tigers and take on that project—you know which one. The one you would normally dismiss due to its redundancy. Do this project in stages to take that edge off the monotony. You can use the activity to get you through those restless nights!

Rabbit: 1999, 1987, 1975, 1963, 1951

Take some time the month to yourself and your scrapbook-

ing ambitions. Those pictures aren't going to mount themselves and it's the perfect craft for you gentle, sentimental rabbits. Be creative and enjoy!

Dragon: 2000, 1988, 1976, 1964, 1952

Pouring a candle is a great way for you dragons to practice spending time in and enjoying the moment. Use your imagination and your sense of smell— add scents so that the aroma too will be therapeutic. Now, put that fire breath to good use enjoying the fruits of your labor!

Snake: 2001, 1989, 1977, 1965, 1953

With all the changes going on this month it is good to remember to address some of your unfinished projects. Or perhaps try oil painting. Either approach will help you to craft and meditate at the same time. Can't beat that!

Horse: 2002, 1990, 1978, 1966, 1954

Horse, its time to start that big project this month. You know you've been putting it off for too long and you know you can do it. So get into that craft closet and have confidence that you'll make it a success!

Sheep: 2003, 1991, 1979, 1967, 1955

Sheep enjoy working with others and are lovers of both the arts and nature. This month, gather some friends together to help you work on tending to and decorating your garden. San Diego weather makes it worth it, as you can spend plenty of time year-round enjoying the fruits of your labor.

Monkey: 2004, 1992, 1980, 1968, 1956

You monkeys are so crafty and end up doing a great job at whatever task you take on. A great craft for you this month is the creation of useful and beautiful magnets. It's quick and easy so you can move on to the next idea in a jiffy!

Rooster: 2005, 1993, 1981, 1969, 1957

Because of your love of advanced planning, roosters are better at accomplishing more tedious crafts than other signs. Give yourself a treat this month by making something for yourself. You deserve it and it will be efficient, MC is sure.

Dog: 2006, 1994, 1982, 1970, 1958

A wonderful activity for all you cheerful, loving dogs is barking. Just kidding, (MC is funny, no?) she means baking! Your family and friends always appreciate your sharing of your homemade goodies created with love. Sharing is caring, they say!

Pig: 2007, 1995, 1983, 1971, 1959

Pigs excel at organizing and also appreciate the occasional indulgent pleasure. So this is what you're going to do— call up your friends for a yummy dessert potluck! Have your guest supply their recipes and, once everyone is settled in and enjoying the treats, collect the recipes and create a dessert cookbook! It will be fun and indulgent. Feel free to share them with MC by contacting the CM. Contact info is on page 4.

CRAFTY BLACK BOOK:

SOUTH PARK WALKABOUT AND CRAFTABOUT

The South Park Walkabout provides opportunities to explore the great shops, enjoy lively entertainment and special treats from South Park, one of San Diego's oldest & coolest neighborhoods. Great food, art, music, unique gifts and interesting services provide a flavor to the neighborhood that is unlike any other. South Park is located just east of Balboa Park and is known for its beautifully restored craftsman homes. Join members of the Mafia on **October 4th** from **4-9 PM** at and around the **Whistle Stop Bar** at 2236 Fern Street.

THE SMITHSONIAN FREE MUSEUM DAY

We at the CM firmly believe that art, science and history shape us all in vital ways. That is why we are excited by Smithsonian Magazine's Free Museum Admission Day. Take advantage of the opportunity to learn something for free by visiting the museum that interests you most on **September 27**. More information on this event, participating museums and other facts can be found at www.smithsonianmag.com/freemuseum.

OH, CRAFTY NIGHT

Consider yourself crafty or want to learn to be? Join the NPCM at **Filter Coffee House** on **Tuesday, September 22 from 7 to 9 PM** for an interactive, **how-to craft night**. Bring your own supplies or purchase one of our prepared kits. Our project will be inspired by our cover story subject, Mark Montano. Check our website for a supplies list and more information on this exciting interactive event. August's OCN was great fun and we plan to keep the fun coming in September.

HOLIDAY HIT LIST

Santa and other thoughtful and creative gift givers will LOVE this opportunity. This year's **San Diego North Park Craft Mafia's Holiday Hit List** will take place on **December 7** and feature close to 65 vendors, live music, demos, raffle items and much more. The success of the Mafia's Spring Line-Up prompted the need for a larger venue. We heard your pleas, so the HHL will take place at the **NTC Promenade located at 2640 Historic Decatur Road** in Point Loma. Vendor apps. will be posted on our website in early September.



SUNDAY, CRAFTY SUNDAY

Join the San Diego North Park Craft Mafia from noon to 5PM on the first Sunday of each month. SCS events feature both Mafia members and other local artists and designers offering their DIY wares for sale. Upcoming SCS events will

take place at **Filter Coffee House** on **September 7, October 5, and November 2**. The November event will have a Day of the Dead theme, so calaveras and marigolds are encouraged.

MORE SUPER SUNDAYS

On the second Sunday of the coming months—**September 14 and October 2**—local artists, including many members of your very own NPCM, will come together from **2 to 8 PM** to offer the public an opportunity to stroll, shop, eat and enjoy much of what University Avenue has to offer. **Look for our booth on University and Richmond in Hillcrest—near the Alibi.**



MA MANGIA

ZUPPA DI POLLO FOR THE SOUL

As fall approaches, so do the pangs for food that comforts us on chilly nights and makes us feel better during the first dreaded cold of the season. As she tends to do when she wants good food, Ma Mangia has gone straight to the Famiglia De Palo for the most delicious of comfort food recipes. Like all De Palo recipes, this one has been passed down from generation to generation of De Palos, making stops along the way on tables from southern Italy to Brooklyn to North Park. Now that is a road-tested recipe that is sure to warm your heart *and* your tummy.

You Will Need

To Make Chicken Stock

- 1 chicken, @ 4 lbs**
- 2 tomatoes**
- 2 carrots**
- 2 stalks of celery**
- 1 onion**
- Pinch of parsley**
- Salt & Pepper to Taste**

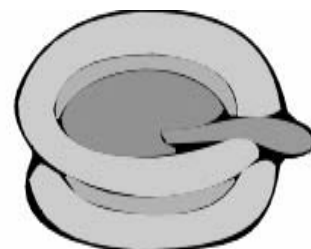
To Make Malenbando

- 4 eggs**
- 1/2 cup grated romano or parmesan**
- 2 cup of semolina flour**
- Parsley**
- Salt & Pepper**

What to Do

In a large stock pot, simmer the above ingredients together for two hours in 4 quarts of water. Strain liquid and reserve. ***Ma Mangia will not tell anyone if you pick up a pre-made broth. She understands you are busy. :)

Mix all ingredients well until firm. Grate mixture on the large side of a cheese grater. Boil in 4 quarts of salted water for approximately 8 minutes or until malenbando becomes tender. Strain and add to the chicken stock you put aside earlier.



Tiny meatballs or pieces of chicken can be added to the soup if you wish. Sprinkle with parmesan or romano cheese before serving. This recipe serves 8.



WHO IS KEEPING SAN DIEGO CRAFTY?

Teresa Salazar of *Velvet Klaw*
www.velvetklaw.com

Svea Komori-Ang of *Belle Pepper Couture*
www.bellepeppercouture.com

Penni Hawkins of *p-starr products*
www.p-starr.com

Sarah Sweeney of *PYP Arts and Designs*
www.pydesigns.com

Amy Smock of *Designs de Luna*
www.designsdeluna.com

Stefanie Histed of *Made with Luv*
www.madewithluv.com

Karen Jorgensen of *Altered Provisions*
www.alteredprovisions.com

Meagan Rae Longtin of *Meagan Rae Designs*
www.meaganraedesigns.com

THE SAN DIEGO NORTH PARK CRAFT MAFIA WAS FOUNDED IN SEPTEMBER 2007 AND IS DEDICATED TO CRAFTING, FASHIONING, STYLING AND CREATING THEIR SAN DIEGO.

www.SanDiegoNorthParkCraftMafia.com
info@sandiegonoorthparkcraftmafia.com
P.O.Box 711464
San Diego, CA 92171

MAFIOSA OF THE MONTH

PENNI HAWKINS of *p-starr products*

What would you like us to know about your business?

I make guitar straps and vinyl accessories, as well as, crocheted hats and scarves. My specialty is glitter vinyl, which is a very unforgiving fabric, but well worth the effort as it looks so cool! I plan on expanding my inventory to include items of clothing, so keep checking back to see what's new at p-starr!

Why handmade?

Hand crafted items are much better constructed than mass-produced. I also take custom orders, so my customers can get something special that no one else has. Small businesses can provide far superior customer service as well.

What was your first craft?

My grandmother taught me how to crochet when I was a preschooler. I also learned how to hand stitch fabric around the same time. My mother did not let me anywhere near her sewing machine until I was an adult. Now that machine sits in my sewing room.



Ever had stitches?

Almost! One night, I cut my finger badly enough to have to go to the ER to stop the bleeding. The incident was non-craft related but did involve scissors. I was scheduled to film an episode for the show *Uncommon Threads* the next day. Needless to say, I had to do some creative camouflaging when the camera did a close up on my hand!

Who is your style inspiration?

I think that rock stars have the best style. They take more risks than others and their attire reflects their unabashed flair for the theatrical. I am inspired by the classics: Marianne Faithful, Stevie Nicks, Siouxsie Sioux, Chrissie Hynde, Mick Jagger, David Bowie, Exene Cervenka, Marc Bolan... I wish contemporary artists would be more outrageous in their presentation.

What is on your I-Pod?

Everything from local folk sensation Gregory Page to Pantera and a great deal in between. Brand New Heavies, Dan Sartain, Chic, The Cars, Deftones, Radiohead, Burning Brides... I have very eclectic musical taste. I am not a huge fan of the majority of music that is "popular" today. FM radio stations in San Diego are worthless. With the exception of the college jazz station and one that bills itself as "independent", it's all talk radio for me.

Favorite craft tool?

My seam ripper. I spend as much time taking out stitches as I do putting them in.

Favorite film?

I have two: *Velvet Goldmine* and *Miller's Crossing*. It's the perfect blend of flamboyant sex and campy ultra-violence.

Favorite cocktail?

I will drink anything that has alcohol in it. But most of the time, I will order a glass of Jameson, straight up. Whiskey is not considered to be a girl's drink, so it is often unexpected.