



Interview: Kay Adams of Anthill Antiques

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Vintage "Jools"

By Paisley Hibou

QuailBellMagazine.com



Kay Adams, owner of Anthill Antiques in Richmond, Virginia's Carytown shopping district, carries baubles with vintage and Old World flair. She also takes history seriously: For the past 17 years, Anthill has inhabited an historic building in an historic neighborhood and specializes in historic pieces and one of the kind couture that, let's face it, will probably one day make fashion history. The entrepreneur even makes her own jewelry and sells the collections at Anthill. I decided to pick her brain about the work that she does as a curator and creator of pretty, shiny things. Our quick Q&A over Facebook yielded this brief back and forth:

Why did you start Anthill and how did you come up with the name?

There was a genuine passion in my and my mother's blood—if it's there, and it's real, you can't escape the vintage bug—and it only gets more entrenched the older I get.

Like little ants, we work hard at our vintage "jOoLed" hill, just like those tireless creatures that stay dedicated 24/7.

How would you describe the shop in one word?

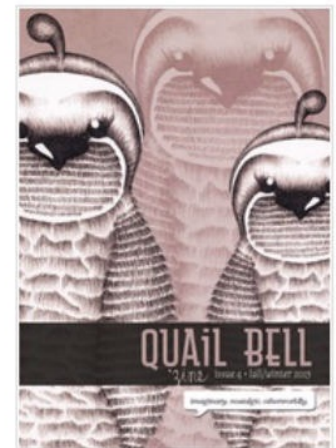
OVERWHELMING-JoYFuLLY-jOoLiCIous! (Is that cheating?). We'll just call that urban slang for VINTAGE JEWELRY NIRVANA! (Uh-oh—I must think in 3, not 1's.)

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* Kay Adams interview continued below . . .

What's one of your favorite pieces you've recently sold?

I made a necklace called Rhapsody in Rapture. It had a crucifix with lightning striking it which was being held by two arch angels and a silver ascending bird flying away from it, among many other allegories. It's moving to Texas. Just seeing how the lady responded to it made me happy. She saw the journey of it.

What do you love about antique and estate jewelry?

The quality, the history, the craftsmanship, the pride taken to create it, the innovation given the era, the nostalgia, the fact that someone else once cared for it, the fact that its legacy can continue. There isn't anything about it I DON'T love.

How do you choose pieces for the store?

Gut. It's always a gut reaction, and being open-minded enough to realize that people's tastes and desires are all different and all over the board. I would never curate in a vacuum. A hand-painted celluloid bird pin could be as cherished to one person, as a fabergé egg to the next, and I completely respect that.

What's your quick tip for telling if something's authentic or not?

Look for signs of good craftsmanship. In vintage brooches, look for thickness of the cast pieces, uniqueness, and detail of the design, and often prong-set stones and/or riveted and multi-part construction.

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