



THE DEER GUY

AS A FRESHMAN AT THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF Design in 1999, David Wiseman was desperate for inspiration. He found it hunting around the local Salvation Army store—in the form of a ceramic deer. “It represented the idea of a magical forest and a way to see the world in an innocent way,” says the 23-year-old artist. As a furniture major, Wiseman quickly became “the deer guy” to his classmates because of his affectionate if obsessive studies of the woody creature. The imaginary habitats he created for his pet turned into home decorations that are now sold at some of the hippest boutiques in New York (I Heart) and Los Angeles (Plastica).

“The deer became a portal to how I saw things,” recalls Wiseman, who recently moved to Williamsburg. “I wanted to give it a world to live in.” That world includes an enchanted “Wall Forest” of water-based resin castings of fallen branches. Craggy mountains have become carefully etched porcelain vases. And what deer can be comfortable without an ergonomic lounge chair? The mounted deer head (pictured here) is as much a playful modern object as a place to hang your hat. Wiseman’s work quickly caught the eye of Todd Oldham, who bought a flock of hooks and offered him a job when he was straight out of college. But, says the still wide-eyed Wiseman, “I don’t think of myself as an artist or designer. I’m just someone who makes things.” ★ KRISTINA DECHTER • PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN B. RAGLE



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