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UK Professor, Alumni Featured in Kentucky Homes & Gardens

By Lauren Conrad (/authors/lauren-conrad) and Whitney Hale (/authors/whitney-hale) March 30, 2012



LEXINGTON, Ky. (Aug. 17, 2011) – University of Kentucky architecture faculty member Mark O'Bryan (<http://markobryan.com/>) and alumni Mary Lee O'Bryan, Helene Steene (<http://helenesteene.com/>) and Mark Alan Gerwing (<http://mgerwingarch.com/>) are all featured in the July/August issue (<http://virtual.angstromgraphics.com/publication/?i=74853>) of Kentucky Homes & Gardens. In addition, the issue's cover showcases the work the O'Bryans have done updating their own residence.

Mark O'Bryan, associate professor in the School of Architecture (<http://www.uky.edu/design/index.php/info/category/architecture/>) and associate dean of administration for the UK College of Design (<http://www.uky.edu/design>), and his wife Mary Lee O'Bryan, interior design (http://www.uky.edu/design/index.php/info/category/interior_design/) alumna and experienced professional interior designer, work together out of their Louisville-based company The Design Studio (<http://markobryan.com/>).

The magazine article, "Naturally Modern," highlights the work the O'Bryans have done giving their 1960s Louisville home a modern touch.

"Having our house on the cover of Kentucky Homes & Gardens magazine was an honor and a surprise," says Mary Lee O'Bryan. "We knew the magazine was featuring several architects' homes but we didn't expect to see ours on the cover. We have had wonderful feedback and comments. It's been a lot of fun!"

As part of the renovations to their house, the O'Bryans revamped their patio and demolished a carport to make space for a new great room. The couple also added an art studio where Mark can work on pieces for regional art shows as well as art pieces for the home.

Aside from being a platform for the work he and his wife created together, Mark O'Bryan is glad the article articulated his passion for architecture.

"For a building to be architecture the building must go beyond common everyday construction," says Mark O'Bryan, who received his bachelor's degree in architecture from UK and a master's degree in architecture from Cornell University. "These are the concepts that I teach my students. Being an architect and a professor of architecture, it is important for me to practice what I preach. The publication gave me a wonderful opportunity to share my ideas to my students, colleagues and to the general public."

Kentuckians have several chances to see Mark O'Bryan's artwork in the next few months. He currently has an exhibit (<http://base163.com/galleryhop/>) on display through Sept. 1, at Base 163 (<http://base163.com/>) in Lexington. In Louisville, his art can also be seen through Nov. 1 at the Westport Village location of the Heine Brothers Coffee Shop (<http://www.heinebroscoffee.com/61/HBCWestportVillage>). An upcoming show, will bring his art to the UK campus. "Art and Architecture" will run Oct. 24 through Nov. 9, at Rasdall Gallery (<http://www.uky.edu/StudentCenter/Facilities/rasdall.html>) in the UK Student Center. Prior to the debut of his exhibit at the Rasdall Gallery, Mark O'Bryan will give a lecture titled, "The World Dwelling," at 6 p.m. Monday, Oct. 24, at Pence Hall (<http://ukcc.uky.edu/cgi-bin/dynamo?maps.391+campus+0041>).

Alumna and artist Helene Steene's work is also featured in the magazine. She says she fell in love with Lexington when she moved to the city, where she obtained her master's degree in art (<http://www.uky.edu/finearts/art>) from the UK College of Fine Arts (<http://www.uky.edu/FineArts/>). Upon graduating in 2004, Steene stayed in the city and currently works out of her studio at the Lexington Art League (<http://www.lexingtonartleague.org/>) in Castlewood Park, and during summer visits to Asklepion, on the Greek island of Paros. With its ties to the ancient Greek god of health, Asklepios, Steene says she enjoys visiting there to recharge, and hopes that the work the island inspires, can act as a way for her audience to recharge themselves as well.

Steene's Kentucky Home and Gardens' article, "Cosmopolitan Art," features several of her abstract mixed media pieces, using layers of translucent oils over marble dust, including metal on wood panels, creating novel works of art.

"I thought the magazine did a great job, and it was very nice to be included with all these wonderful architects," says the artist. "I have already received calls and emails from readers who like the work and want to commission pieces."

University audiences can see Steene's artwork on UK's medical campus, as she just completed a 6 x 9 foot piece in the spring for the Markey Cancer Center (<http://www.ukhealthcare.uky.edu/Markey/>). Outside of Lexington, she recently had a one person exhibit (<http://www.taubmanmuseum.org/main/exhibitions/helene-steene-abstract-impressions>), "Abstract Impressions," at the Taubman Museum (<http://www.taubmanmuseum.org/main/>) of Art in Roanoke, Va. Steene's next one person exhibit will open Sept. 2 at the new Galerie Francois II, in Roanoke. Visit www.helenesteene.com (<http://www.helenesteene.com/>) to see more works.

Architecture alumnus Mark Alan Gerwing, founder and principal at M. Gerwing Architects (<http://mgerwingarch.com/>) in Boulder, Colo., also was interviewed by Kentucky Homes & Gardens. He credits his childhood memories of Louisville architecture, backpacking through the Red River Gorge, and the sites of white brick homes and black barns to the design aesthetic he applies to his clients' requests today.

Gerwing's article, "One of the Crew," talks not only about Gerwing's roots in the Commonwealth, but also his education at UK and Yale University and his professional experience that spans outside of Boulder into such major metropolitan areas as Boston, Chicago and New York City. The architect's portfolio includes new construction and partial renovations for homes, restaurants and retail spaces. Two of his designs are pictured in the magazine article.

Kentucky Homes & Gardens (<http://kentuckyhomesandgardens.com/>) is a bi-monthly magazine that features homes across the state of Kentucky. The full publication of each issue can now be read online at <http://virtual.angstromgraphics.com/publication/?i=74853> (<http://virtual.angstromgraphics.com/publication/?i=74853>).

MEDIA CONTACT: Whitney Hale, (859) 257-8716 or whitney.hale@uky.edu (<https://mail.google.com/mail/?view=cm&fs=1&tf=1&to=whitney.hale@uky.edu>).