

DESIGN + TRAVEL



TO-DIE-FOR DECORATIVE OBJECTS

November 07, 2011

E. Rhett Butler—of Manhattan high-end-hardware emporium E.R. Butler & Co.—has dabbled in set design for Sofia Coppola and Roman Polanski. Here, in the first of an occasional series, he reveals a few of his favorite things.

"Most of what I like isn't something you purchase in a store—it's something I just find, and it's usually something old. But **Ted Muehling** in New York is truly a national treasure. Of course, I'm taken with the Biedermeier-inspired egg and dart candlesticks my company makes for Ted, but if I had to choose something we didn't make, it would be his simple **tea strainer**."



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"**Nymphenburg**, a 260-year-old manufacturer in Munich, turns out the finest handmade, handpainted porcelain in the world—it's still creating the kind of originals one might have purchased in the 1700s. I'm particularly fond of its series of animals—preferably an unmounted, full-figure example without a base, for a more naturalistic approach. This **rhinoceros** is one of my favorites."



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"Pieces by [Lobmeyr](#), a crystal manufacturer in Vienna, Austria, work nicely as a synergistic complement to Nymphenburg porcelain. From the chandeliers at New York's Metropolitan Opera to the drinking sets one finds at the nearby [Neue Galerie](#), Lobmeyr's handiwork is the definition of perfection. I have the Patrician [series](#) on my holiday wish list —so no one in my family needs to ask me what I want anymore!"



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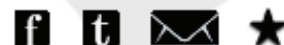
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"There's a small framing shop on West 26th Street in Manhattan called [White Mule Picture Frames](#) that does exquisite work. The owner, Anne Gibbs, also displays and sells antique and restored framed prints, which make for one-of-a-kind, impossible-to-find gifts."



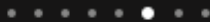
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"Anything by **Betony Vernon**—a jewelry and objet designer and manufacturer in Paris—is bound to add a little spice to your life. One could create a mobile for one's bedroom with a few of these amazing **ostrich feathers**."



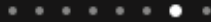
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"If fragrance is fantasy, then **Santa Maria Novella**—a pharmacy and perfumery based out of Florence—is its spiritual home. I'm not a perfume kind of guy—I don't even wear cologne—but I really like the way its **potpourri** makes my house smell."



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"Georg Laue's **Kunstammer** in Munich is the very definition of a modern-day "cabinet of curiosities"—in particular I love the circa-1700s double-solar ring dial by Henry or **René Macquart** of Paris. I'd also pick almost anything relating to astrolabes—early tools for navigators and astrologers."



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Jewelry



OBJECTS



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"**De Vera New York** is simply mind-blowing and almost too much to try to explain. Get a sense of the place from these two **books**, then head back to the store on Crosby Street again and again and again."