

**FAUX**  
LIKE A PRO

119 BRAINTREE STREET  
ALLSTON, MA 02134

PHONE:  
617-254-8898  
FAX:  
617-254-8899

**13 Spiritual Retreats to Soothe Body & Soul** p. 102

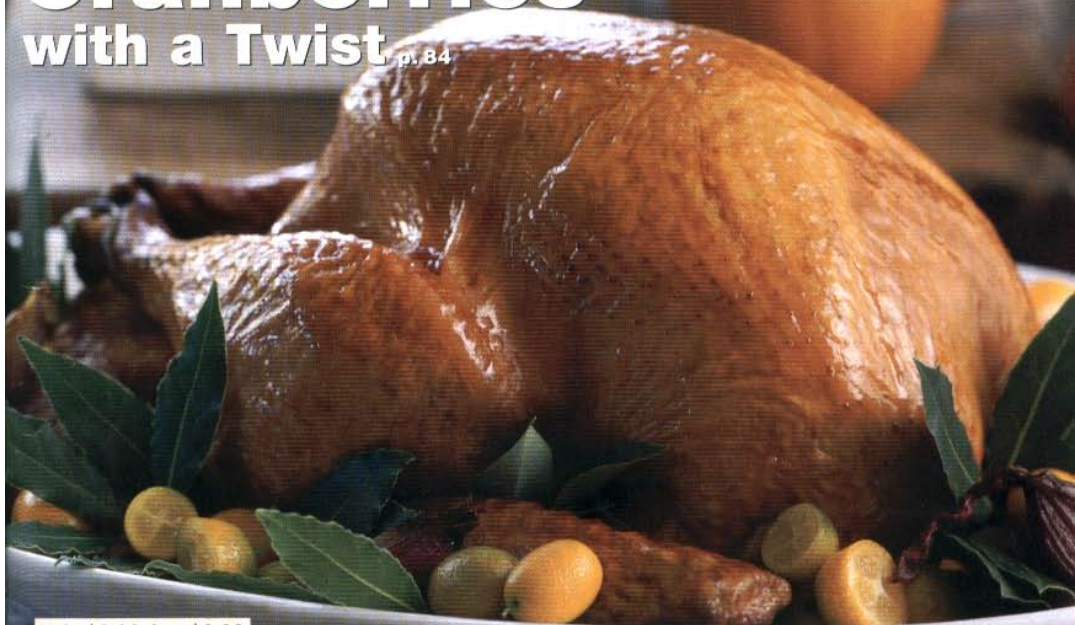
The Magazine of New England Living

# YANKEE

November 2006

**5 NEW**  
**Turkey**  
**Recipes** p. 68

**Cranberries**  
**with a Twist** p. 84



U.S. \$2.99 Can \$3.99  
YankeeMagazine.com



**Why the**  
**Pilgrims**  
**Still Matter** p. 124

November 2006

PLEASE VISIT US ONLINE AT:  
[WWW.FAUXLIKEAPRO.COM](http://WWW.FAUXLIKEAPRO.COM)

OR CALL TOLL FREE:  
1-888-765-4950

*at*HOME

A ladder leads to a loft created when part of the original ceiling was removed. The dining table's top was built from old attic floorboards.



November 2006



Lisa Nelthropp's first attempt at mural painting covered the entire entry hall to her home. The painting depicts the boats of her ancestors, who were rum distillers on St. Croix and owned Cruzan Rum.

## The Mural of the Story

*A creative do-it-yourselfer saves a ramshackle house and uses it to test her dream of becoming a painter.*

**I**T TAKES A CREATIVE PERSON TO MAKE A HOUSE A HOME. Artist Lisa Nelthropp did more than that when she purchased a property near New Hampshire's Lake Winnepesaukee seven years ago.

After evicting families of squirrels and bats who'd been in residence for years, Lisa realized maybe the former inhabitants didn't really have it so good. No heat or insulation existed in the summer home that was built in the 1780s and added onto in the 1830s. Floors, windows, and the

*written and styled by* STACY KUNSTEL  
*photography* JOHN GRUEN



Lisa painted the kitchen cabinets black to give the 1780s room an old tavern feel. The kitchen island came out of the science classroom of an old school that was being torn down.

roof needed to be replaced, and wastewater ran out of a hose into the backyard. "When I moved in, the whole thing was rotted," says Lisa. "It was horrendous."

She removed a set of stairs and the ceiling in the living room to expose the beams and give the room height. She took out a wall that separated the living area from the kitchen and added the ladder that provides access to a loft above. The kitchen island was salvaged from an old high school chemistry room.

After making the home livable, she didn't have a lot of money for decorating, but Lisa, who at the time owned a cake-decorating business, scoured flea markets and garage sales looking for pieces that would work. She took bottles of Rit dye to a \$10 wingback chair, turning the piece into something that looks like it came off the showroom floor. Another \$9 went to a coffee table from a garage sale. Lisa made new Sheetrock walls look like old plaster by covering them as messily as she could with wax. A hand-me-down cabinet received



Always a bargain hunter, Lisa found the coffee table for \$9 at a garage sale. The cabinet was nailed to a living room wall. A little paint and trim molding turned it into a decorative armoire that hides the television.

### How to Paint Like a Master

Like Lisa, you can learn decorative painting techniques from professionals. In a 1,000-square-foot studio in Boston, the Institute of Surface Design offers classes in areas ranging from wood graining and marbling to creating traditional Venetian mosaics and designer plaster. To help you concentrate exclusively on developing your new skills, classes include full breakfast and lunch, all supplies, and instructors who have five to 20 years' experience in their specialties.

JOSH WINER

Six classes are being offered this month, including two taught by master artist Josh Winer. In addition to teaching mural techniques, he will also present a class in trompe l'oeil. Literally meaning "to fool the eye," trompe l'oeil relies on a painting technique called grisaille, which uses subtle gradations of color to transform a flat surface into a three-dimensional illusion.

For more information on classes and techniques, visit [fauxlikeapro.com](http://fauxlikeapro.com) or call 888-765-4950 or 617-254-8898. — Polly Bannister



The home's original front door is adorned with an old metal star and opens to Lisa's mural inside.

a paint job, and Lisa had the good sense to add molding to the top and bottom, turning an eyesore into a beautiful display piece in the living room. "I found pieces in the trash, repurposed old furniture, bought things at a garage sales," she says.

#### Who Was Rufus Porter?

Most people think of Rufus Porter as the itinerant muralist who traveled New England from the early 1820s to about 1845. His vivid landscapes are characterized by rural and coastal images and the open brushstrokes used to achieve his signature feathery trees. Porter's art is so closely identified with the region that he has achieved the iconic status of Norman Rockwell.

Few realize that Rufus Porter was much more than a folk artist. A chronology of his accomplishments depicts him as nomad, genius inventor (he held some 100 patents), adventurer (joined a trading voyage to Hawaii), soldier (joined the Maine Militia in the War of 1812), author (founded *Scientific American*), teacher, visionary (designed an airship 70 years before the Wright Brothers' first flight), and, of course, artist.

Porter spent his childhood years in the Bridgton, Maine, area, where a museum devoted to him has recently opened. The museum, located in a home containing murals that Porter painted circa 1828, plans to move an antique barn to the site to display 15 more murals, some of which were exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York in a 1968 show. The museum hopes to continue Porter's tradition of teaching the arts by offering classes and workshops.

The Rufus Porter Museum and Cultural Heritage Center (207-647-2828; rufusportermuseum.org) is located at 67 North High Street in Bridgton, Maine. Open in winter by appointment. — Polly Bannister

Lisa has no lack of creativity. She's not sure where it even comes from. On a chilly October night six years ago, while she was making her last cake of the season, an idea came to her. She had just closed her business and had no plans for what she would tackle next. As she applied layers of icing and sugared flowers to the cake, she slammed her palms down on the table and declared out loud, "I'm going to paint in the style of Rufus Porter!" Lisa looked around and thought, *Where did that come from?* Lisa had never even seen an original painting by the famed early-19th-century muralist. Two months later, she completed a mural in the complex space that runs from her front door, up a steep staircase, and onto the landing above. A sea of water dotted with islands depicts the Caribbean and the ships sailed by her ancestors around St. Croix.

Lisa's first commission came five months later. Soon after that, she did a



Pumpkins and gourds add seasonal decoration and are the subject of some of Lisa's still life paintings.