

shelter

SPECIAL ISSUE THE TASTEMAKER



12
\$5.25 US \$7.25 CAN
0 71486 02699 0



DECADENT *Découpage*

Meticulous is the way of *découpage*. Delicately cut and arranged papers applied to a chosen form, a lustrous lacquered finish—it is a simple concept, exquisitely rendered on tableware, vases, furniture and objets d'art. From prestigious Venetian workshops to the noble court of Louis XVI to the cheerful parlors of Victorian homes, this art has been practiced for centuries. And for more than a decade in his Portland, Maine, studio, Scott Potter has been creating an array of sumptuous and sophisticated *découpage* pieces, modern tributes following on historic precedence.

Lush botanicals, florals and other elements from the natural world suffuse his vases, serving pieces, bowls and screens, yet a range of motifs—both traditional and contemporary—find their way into the work. The imagery is frequently based on the classical European prints and engravings Potter collects in antique shops or during fortuitous wanderings. From these selections, the images are carefully reproduced, allowing Potter to augment colors and fine-tune each one based on his artistic vision.

It is the sensuality and exactitude of Potter's approach that distinguishes it from gleeful weekend craft: Luminous, often jewel-toned backgrounds imbue these pieces with a quiet radiance, and so delicate and scrupulous is the process of cutting individual paper elements that it is done by hand with scissors used for eye surgery. His technique articulates a simultaneous blend of tradition and ingenuity, achieved by expertly layering gilt or hand-dyed silver leaf to the chosen vessel or surface and by then exploring the negative space between.

When seeking something exceptional, royal families and celebrities visit high-end purveyors, such as Bergdorf Goodman, Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue, or for custom pieces, like those shown, turn to the artist himself. For truly special, one-of-a-kind commissions, Potter applies exquisite Japanese hand-made silk papers, crafted by only one family in Japan, which are so fine they stand as art themselves ■ *Arianne Nardo~Scott Potter Designs, 142 High Street, Suite 222, Portland, ME 207.775.3630*

