

Michael Bruno talks personal style: Part Two

Tuxedo Park, The Wind in the Willows and Cary Grant round off the 1stdibs founder's list of likes



NOVEMBER 07 2013
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My style icons are Cary Grant, for his classic sense of style, and my boyfriend Alexander, who can put together a T-shirt and a pair of shorts in a way that nobody else can.

A recent “find” is the antiques district in the North Sea area of Southampton [New York]. I have lived nearby for over 10 years, but I have never really shopped there. It’s a little bit off the radar and in the making; it has kind of popped up in the past year. When I first visited I must have bought more than 60 items. I found lots of small things I loved between \$100 and \$500, from gorgeous sterling-silver cocktail shakers to a little 19th-century marble bust – and the parrot doorstop. Particularly good dealers are Morgan Macwhinnie and East End Antiques. *East End Antiques, 675 North Sea Road, Southampton, NY 11968 (+1631-353 3434). Morgan Macwhinnie, 520 North Sea Road, Southampton, New York, NY 11968 (+1631-283 3366).*

The last items of clothing I added to my wardrobe were a dozen white Tom Ford shirts. I love white shirts and these fit me just right, without having to have them custom-made. www.tomford.com.

The last meal that truly impressed me was at Sant Ambroeus in Southampton. I had a perfect piece of sea bass, but every meal I have there is my best last meal. It’s proper Italian food that’s beyond delicious. I eat there all summer long, and it’s always amazing and wildly busy. *30 Main St, Southampton, New York, NY 11968 (+1631-283 1233; www.santambroeus.com).*

The book on my bedside table is *The Wind in the Willows*, which was given to me for a recent birthday by Matt Cohler [the former vice president of product management at Facebook]. I didn’t have time for much reading this summer; because of the two puppies I’ve just bought, I fall into bed exhausted.

An object I would never part with is not a concept that ever crosses my mind. I consider myself more of a steward of objects – you bring them into your life for a period and then pass them on. Although, that said, I would be very hard pressed to sell my 10ft-tall display cabinet of colourful 1920s fish samples from Hawaii and Mexico. *Waldman Jewelry & Antiques, 25 Main Street, Southampton, New York, NY 11968 (+1631-287 0904).*

The one artist whose work I would collect if I could is Gerhard Richter. His work has an organic quality to it, and I like things that feel like they are part of nature. And I think his art is an appreciating asset. www.gerhard-richter.com.

The best gift I’ve given recently is a donation to the ASPCA [the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals]. I have been a member for a number of years and it is one of the causes that I give to regularly. www.aspca.org.

And the best one I’ve received recently is time with my mother; she visited me for three weeks from Arizona. I hope that’s not too corny, but it’s true. She’s in her late seventies and has just had full mastectomies because she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

The site that inspires me is Tuxedo Park [in New York State], where I live. It’s a gated 5,000-acre site between 60,000 acres of two state parks. There are gorgeous 19th-century mansions by the important architects of the day such as Stanford White and John Russell Pope, who built my home. The landscape is rugged but simple. I have 20 acres on the lake with huge meadows, forests and giant boulders. I bought a house within a week of going there – it’s 14,000sq ft, which is considered medium sized there.

My favourite room in my house is my main entry hall in Tuxedo Park. From it you can see into the black glass vestibule, through an old Dutch door that’s probably 5ft wide, down a hill, through a meadow and to a prehistoric boulder that’s as big as the house, left there from the Ice Age. I just stand there and say, “Wow”.

The grooming staple I'm never without is Tom Ford Tobacco Vanille Eau de Parfum. I'm not really a big cologne wearer, but my friend Patricia Dobashi [managing editor of 1stdibs] gave it to me and I love it. It has a deep, rich, musky tobacco scent and it's very masculine and fresh at the same time. *£140 for 50ml; www.tomford.com.*

If I didn't live in New York, the city I would live in is Rome. I can't think of anything better than spending time indulging in Italian culture – their art, food and fashion. I love the street life and being surrounded by monuments. When I go, I stay at the Hotel de Russie, shop at Brunello Cucinelli, especially for cashmere and loose, casual clothing, and eat at the Ristorante Nico near the Spanish steps. *Brunello Cucinelli, 33 Via Borgognona, 00187 Rome (+3906-678 7680; www.brunellocucinelli.com). Hotel de Russie, 9 Via del Babuino, 00187 Rome (+3906-328 881; www.hotelderussie.it). Ristorante Nico, 6 Viale Angelico, 00197 Rome (+3906-370 0456).*

If I weren't doing what I do, I would be an inventor. When I see a problem, I like to find a solution. For example, I am now building an app for managing house staff. It's called *The House Pad* and does translations, has an image library of how I like the rooms to look, so things can be put back properly, and allows me to send notes throughout the week, such as “throw away the chicken in the fridge”.