

History for the MODERN HOME

BY ANNA DUPAS PHOTOS BY JASON HENDERSON

Antiques in architecture can bring **historic significance** to even the most modern home.

NOT MANY RETAIL STORES OFFER CUSTOMERS THE CHANCE TO OWN A LIVING PART OF HISTORY. But that's the specialty of Archetique Architectural Antique Company, a Lower Mainland-based antique shop that sources, refurbishes and sells 19th century furniture, fixtures and collectibles from across North America.

"I'm a next-generation antique dealer," explains Scott Landon, the young visionary who founded the company in 1988. "We salvage quality pieces from buildings and elsewhere that would have been bulldozed or junk-piled. There are a lot of great things that are being torn down. Somebody has to let people know this stuff is important."

But don't think for a moment that the items on display at the company's branches in South Granville and Cloverdale are just so much deluxe *junque*. Landon and his business partner Rob Thomson regularly travel both sides of the border to collect some of the finest examples of Canadiana and Americana pieces, each of which boasts a unique history.

"This one was from a church refectory in PEI," Landon explains, fondly running a hand along the surface of a 19th century pine sideboard. "It has the original 1858 newspaper tacked underneath. It could've easily ended up smashed up and thrown in the garbage and nobody would've ever known."

Whether it's PEI sideboards, Quebec armoires or Chicago pier mirrors, Landon says these elements make a timeless addition to the home. He bustles to the back of the Kitsilano store to point out a 1907 craftsman door salvaged from a now-demolished New

Westminster hotel. "This would make a great wine cellar entrance!" he says enthusiastically, admiring the richly carved relic.

Indeed, Landon emphasizes that these artifacts aren't just for antique buffs. "They're bits of history that can be easily incorporated into a modern environment. You don't need a lot; you can mix and match, and you've got yourself a unique, classy-looking place."

So why does the company sell items only from the 1810 to 1910 timeframe?

"That's when some of the best stuff was built," he says. "It wasn't mass-produced. Everything was made by hand, and made to last. We live in a time when you just keep replacing the same pieces over and over."

That idea doesn't sit well with Landon, who asks, "Why cut down more trees to make a new table or sideboard; let's recycle one that's already been made." He adds, "It's an art form that's gone by the wayside, so there's a respect and appreciation we need to have for these things."

And appreciation of these historic finds takes two forms. Landon says the pieces tend to gain value over time. "History has dictated that if you buy quality antique furniture, there's no downside. Aside from the look and the historical fact and the recycling aspect, the bonus is you've got an asset as well."

It seems his customers – which include such luminaries as Diana Krall, Kim Basinger and NHL hockey players – would agree. "I've never had anyone say 'Gee, I really wish I never bought that thing.' I've always heard, 'Thanks so much for talking me into it!'" he laughs. **DH**

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