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C.J. Hurley created and hand-applied this Art Nouveau-influenced stencil in his Portland living room. **BELOW:** A detail from a gesso panel.



Slowly but surely, **C.J. HURLEY's** Symbolist Aesthetic environment is taking over his entire 1913 Arts and Crafts home in Portland, Oregon. Freehand stencils in the bedroom are a perfect counterpoint for an Art Nouveau wallpaper for

which no frieze border exists. Arthurian-themed, tapestry-like gesso panels in various media hang in arched, Tudor Revival niches in the living room. Even the watercolors hanging on the walls are hand-painted Hurley originals. Trained in fine art, Hurley is clearly channeling the spirit of Margaret Macdonald, Charles Rennie Mackintosh's less-famous wife, in his Arthurian gesso panels. Where Macdonald tube-lined designs on her panels by squeezing gesso (a sort of plaster slurry) out of a pastry tube, Hurley creates similar effects with twine. Other elements of the panel are created in paint, glass, ceramics, and hand-hammered metalwork. "Like Charles and like Margaret, I want the raised line to integrate the entire design sensibility of the interior space, so I get the same wispy, free-flowing lines

that I would get when stenciling a wall or leading a glass window," he says. Custom panels cost \$3,000 to \$7,000, a relative bargain considering the time involved in creating these one-of-a-kind works of art. C.J. can create a total environment in your home, too.

**HURLEY CENTURY ARTS,**  
(503) 234-4167, [cjhurley.com](http://cjhurley.com) —MEP



### Talking Quilts

With their strong, graphic patterns and bountiful fabrics, quilts are colorful expressions of Americana, a functional form of home decoration. A new show at the American Folk Art Museum challenges visitors to consider quilts in terms that go far beyond the concepts of drunkard's path or tumbling blocks. "Talking Quilts" features coverlets that incorporate words into the design. The show is selective, with only 20 pieces. Although many of the quilts are highly graphic, it's impossible to miss the message, whether the text is buried in the design or

more obvious, like Lena Moore's quilt from 1930, which spells out the 23rd Psalm in block letters. Through Sept. 5 at the American Folk Art Museum, 45 West 53rd St., New York, NY, 10019, (212) 265-1040, [folkartmuseum.org](http://folkartmuseum.org)

### Four to a Bed

Public television's version of reality TV has sent 21st-century families back to Edwardian England in "The 1900 House" and to 1880s Montana in "Frontier House." If you thought living in the recent past was tough, wait 'til you see what "Colonial House" has in store. The eight-part series, set in 1628 and filmed in coastal Maine, is a production of Thirteen/WNET New York. The 26 participants endure rustic living conditions, disagreeable weather, and back-breaking labor as they grapple with rigid class and gender roles—not to mention bi-monthly baths. The series debuts May 17 on PBS channels throughout the country. Check local listings, or visit [pbs.org/wnet/colonialhouse](http://pbs.org/wnet/colonialhouse)

“**“** Nobody ever seems to have lamented the monotony or uniformity of a tree, but our neighborhoods are found needing to be ... 'relieved of monotony.' ... so each house in new suburbs [gets] its own particular skin-deep style.” **”** —Richard Neutra, quoted in *Neutra: Complete Works* by Barbara Mac Lamprocht (Taschen, 2000)