

LIVINGOUT



- INTERNATIONAL NEWS
- NATIONAL NEWS
- OUT ON LI
- OUT AND ABOUT
- OUT FRONT
- LIVING HEALTHY
- LIVING SMART
- POV
- OUT SPOKEN

Whit & Whim: Quality Goods with a Philanthropic Twist

Meryl Lumba

Wit & Whim, located in the heart of Port Washington, is a boutique housing fair-trade goods and vintage items, many of which are one-of-a-kind. While its products are a collection of everything from trinkets to jewelry to clothing to house goods, the store's success in the year since its opening has been its dedication to supporting charities and non-profits in the Long Island area and beyond.



The store's creator, Laurie Scheinman, a long-time supporter of the GLBT community and founding co-president of the Long Island Gay PTSA, said that the idea for creating a Brooklyn-inspired gift shop stemmed from one, large philanthropic fundraiser she once hosted in her home years prior called "Tea & Flea." The event was set up like a flea market and people shopped for goods while learning about and donating to a non-profit.

"It sort of planted a seed somewhere deep in my psyche, and I started thinking about how I could

educate the community and let people know about organizations that need support – and how to have an outlet for my creative zests. This is sort of an art creation with a philanthropic twist," Scheinman shares.

That philanthropic twist is what is most remarkable about Wit & Whim. Each month, the store donates all of its profits to a different non-profit organization, thus supporting a wide variety of different projects and initiatives. More importantly, Scheinman believes that what she and her small paid staff of two have created is a community hub – a place where people can come in and learn about organizations that need help, in addition to fair trade groups and local artists.

Last year following Hurricane Sandy's destruction on Long Island, Wit & Whim originally channeled its profits to the Red Cross but was unhappy with the lack of impact locally. The boutique switched their cause mid-month to support Fill My Wagon, an initiative of just two women who went from home-to-home purchasing much-needed goods for victims of the storm and hand-delivering those products to affected families.

"I really want Wit & Whim to be a collaboration between our shop, the community, and the recipients of the profits. I feel like it's sort of a nice circle where everybody learns and helps toward a better world," Scheinman says.

For November, Wit & Whim is donating proceeds to Give Me Shelter, a Long Island organization that rescues animals and places them with permanent homes. This past May, the store supported Long Island Gay and Lesbian Youth (LIGALY) in commemoration of the organization's 20th anniversary.

While the store's support of charities and non-profits has been a huge draw for customers, the products for sale are equally interesting. The enthusiastic staff shares the stories behind each item as customers

ISSUE 11, VOLUME 1: NOVEMBER 2013

Launch the Digital Version

Click here to find locations to pick up your copy



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

LIVING OUT Living Out Like

290 people like Living Out.

CONNECT WITH LIVING OUT

Follow us on Twitter

Like us on Facebook

browse, and with a variety of different goods and gifts at all different price points, it seems that every shopper can find a unique and special gift and support a good cause, too.



Hand-poured candles, duffle bags made from upcycled firefighter gear, old records turned into clocks, fine art prints, ornate cufflinks and jewelry, lotions and balms – the variety of items, many of which have such memorable backstories or origins, make Wit & Whim’s shopping experience a delight. Even the setup, a collection of bold colors and stacked vintage boxes and luggage as display stands, reinforces the eclectic goods.

“People are so used to shopping in malls where everything sort of looks the same. I really wanted to

test our imagination and present the goods in a unique and special way. The fixtures, the items, the goods – it has this curated, vintage touch,” Scheinman says.

For folks that cannot get to the shop, Wit & Whim offers a very hands-on, personal concierge service. Customers can call and still “shop around” as their sales team takes pictures of items they recommend. Wit & Whim will then ship the items to any destination.

Since its opening, the venture has taught Scheinman much about what it means to manage a small business but also, more importantly, through Wit & Whim’s support of local groups, what it means to truly be part of a community: “I learned how things can start with one person – and if one person asks for help, it becomes two and grows exponentially. I lived my life more in a vacuum, and this has sort of brought me out in the world in a very different way.”

[Contact us](#)

THIS MONTH'S LIVING OUT PLAYLIST

Tags: [Issue 11](#)

Leave a Reply

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Name *

E-mail *

Website

[Post Comment](#)

LONG ISLAND LIFE, GLBT CULTURE

Living Out is Long Island's newest GLBT publication, with over 10,000 copies distributed to 240 locations monthly.

POPULAR CATEGORIES

[Out on LI](#)

[Living Smart](#)

[Out and About](#)

[Living Healthy](#)

[POV](#)

RECENT POSTS

[Keep Your Furry Friend Warm for the Winter](#)

[Protect Your Skin](#)

[International News: November 2013](#)

[Animal Planet Roundup](#)

[Yellow Journalism Trumps Trans Truths](#)

Living Out | Long Island Life, GLBT Culture

Living Out is brought to you by The Long Island GLBT Services Network