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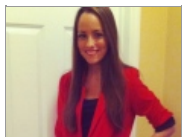
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Wit & whim opens in Port Washington offering retail therapy

Friday September 28, 2012 12:15 PM By [Anne Bratskeir](#)

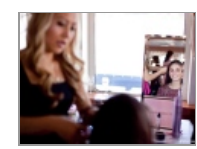


Photo credit: Anne Bratskeir

Laurie Scheinman, a veteran family therapist, opened an eclectic boutique in Port Washington on Thursday, where she hopes shoppers can make "connections" with her quirky and wide-ranging inventory that includes jewelry, home goods and fashion accessories that run the gamut from vintage collectibles to modern day goodies.

Housed in a top-to-bottom renovated 1885 historical building where late fashion doyenne Janet Brown once sold uber-expensive, designer clothes to the carriage trade, Scheinman's cleverly edited collection of goods

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On opening night, one Port Washington woman purchased a low-slung midcentury leather chair with studded detail for \$575. Her strapping husband came later, noting, "It's a little low." She said, "It's exactly what I

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wanted. A chair to sit and read in, that when you try to get up you can't so you just stay there."

Monika Wolfe of Manhasset bought a modern ring designed by Selda Okutan that featured a sterling silver band with intricate carvings of people and a sparkling Tourmaline stone in the middle for \$350. "It's very me," she said.

And "very me" is what Scheinman is going for. "I've spent my career connecting with people," Scheinman said. "Wit & whim takes that connection to a new level – one that is visual, tactile and hopefully fun. In a way, it's all about feeling good – and finding yourself or someone you're buying a gift for in one item or another."

Like any good therapist, Scheinman knows that "finding yourself" isn't always instantaneous so she encourages leisurely browsing at the shop and is happy to provide background information on any piece.

Some items are just plain fun, like rubberized change purses – some with kitten ears – that run from \$12 – \$16. We fell for funky necklaces made of outdoor faucet heads on industrial chains (\$35). "Whoever thought a plumbing supply necklace would be so nice?," asked one shopper. Interesting iPad cases in slim, supple suede with leather buckles boast American Indian tribal patterns and sell for \$75. Leather belts and bags from buzz-worthy LA designer Mara Carrizo range from \$155 - \$430. For the home there is sleek stainless steel barware and cookware by Stelton – some pieces done in collaboration with Paul Smith along with colorful, carved antique shot glasses.

Along with the good stuff, Scheinman hopes to do good deeds with rotating art collaborations from which all profits go to organizations to benefit, she says, "individuals, communities and our world."

The first of these celebrates Port Washington with a limited-edition series of photographs and goods created by local artist Barbara Spivak from which the profits go to "Hearts," a community organization dedicated to helping enrich the arts in Port Washington's public schools.

Marcia Kaufman, from Old Westbury, who shopped on opening day said, "There are very few stores like this. It reflects the arts, is diverse and interesting. And I like that there's a story behind every item." She was feeling pretty good about the place, and Scheinman, always the therapist, is all about feeling good.

Whit & whim is located at six Carlton Avenue in Port Washington. For hours call: 516-944-9200.

Below: Quirky, fun necklaces made of outdoor faucet heads sell for \$25 - \$35 at whit & whim, a new store in Port Washington.

Tags: wit & whim , Laurie Scheinman , Port Washington , Selda Okutan , Paul Smith , Mara Carrizo

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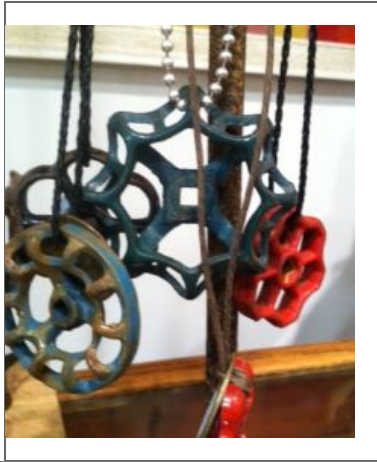
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