

WHIT MCCLURE

Whit Hazen
Los Angeles, California

Whit McClure's aesthetic is whimsical, bold and seasonally-inspired. Owner of Los Angeles-based Whit Hazen, a floral design studio, she often mixes more common botanical elements with those that are unexpected and quirky, with elegant results.

Whit's education in flower farming and floral design is rooted in connections she made through food justice and the local culinary community in Washington, D.C., where she landed after studying sociology at the University of Louisville.

Whit has charted a personal path, drawn from influences outside of the mainstream. She worked on a farm in Maine and for a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit, where she taught others how to create and maintain community gardens, inspiring people of all ages and walks of life to grow their own food.

Eventually she found floral design as the perfect vehicle for working with plants, crafting beauty, and collaborating with others, while remaining committed to social justice causes. Ever inspired by nature's abundant beauty and driven to respect and protect its resources, Whit Hazen is motivated to create more beauty in the world for others.

Her flower-filled life was awakened through a freelance gig working for Sidra Forman, a chef and floral designer in Washington, D.C. "Even though Sidra's style is more classic than mine, I was drawn to the fact that she made it a priority to design with local

products and never use flower foam," Whit says. "At the time, I was asking questions about where flowers are sourced. I found it interesting that there had been such a large movement in the last decade around local foods, but it hadn't shifted to flowers as much."

After moving to Los Angeles in 2015, Whit began working with Felisa Funes, owner of Of the Flowers. "From her, I've drawn understanding around recreating things that are in nature and how to manipulate flowers in a different way."

With a penchant for visually arresting floral palettes -- coral pink and buttercup yellow; lavender and orange; red and caramel -- she is also clearly influenced by graphic design and the "funky color combinations" of Southern California architecture.

Whit's personal project, "Petals and Politics," is expressed through her Instagram feed. She uses floral messages as a social justice platform, drawing attention to causes and issues through her art. "It's important that I can merge my passions of art, flowers and politics," Whit explains. "I often think about how flowers bring so much joy to people's lives; and yet, there's still so much work to be done in order that more people can experience that joy (like access to economic opportunity, education or healthcare). I create beauty, while at the same time I express my strong opinions, using my voice and resources to speak truth to power. My hope is that my artwork encourages others to do more of both in their lives."

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