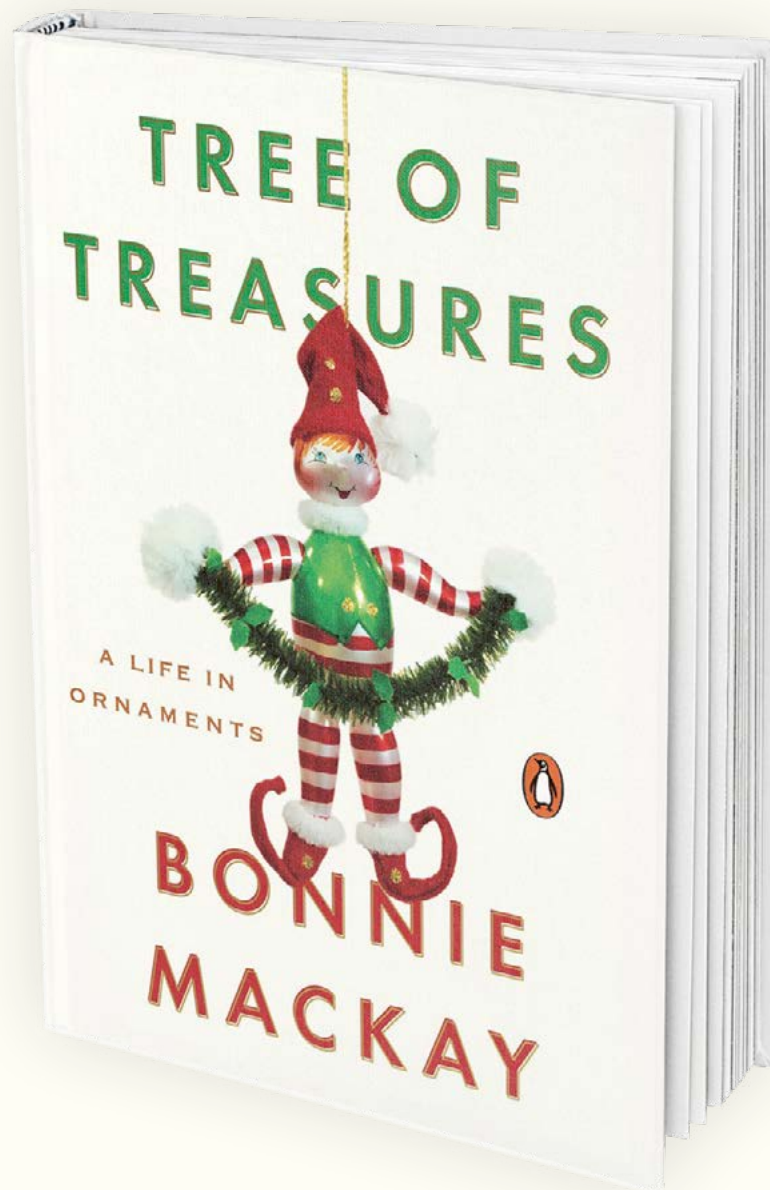


A BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED LOOK AT CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS  
AND THE MEMORIES THEY HOLD ON OUR TREES



# *Holiday Toolkit*

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PENGUIN BOOKS • ON SALE SEPTEMBER 27, 2016

9780143107842 • \$20.00 • 5-1/8" x 7-1/2"

Created by Bonnie Mackay, Meredith Burks, and Jessica Fitzpatrick | Designed by Lauren Acampora

# DESIGNERS TO KNOW

We asked Bonnie to pick some of her favorite ornament designers:

“EACH MAKER AND DESIGNER HAS A SPECIAL QUALITY AND EXPERTISE THAT MAKES THEM DISTINCTIVE IN THE WORLD OF ORNAMENTS AND TO EVERYONE’S TREASURED COLLECTION. I DECIDED TO PROFILE EACH ONE SO THE READER AND PARTY GUEST WILL UNDERSTAND THEIR STORY AND HOW UNIQUE EACH ONE IS.”

**DE CARLINI:** The company “Soffieria De Carlini” was created in 1947 by Mr. Enrico De Carlini, who inherited his artistic sense from his father, a sculptor. With his wife and family, he manufactured delicate mouth-blown, hand-decorated ornaments in spheres, ovals, drops and figures made by completely by hand in Macerio, Italy. His daughter Rosa and her husband Giulio and their son Luca have continued his legacy in the same village.

Each piece is blown individually without the help of any mold by an artisan with at least three-years of experience in creating ornaments. A glass tube is heated up to a temperature of about 800°C. The artisan blows and models each shape by hand by soldering on glass arms, hands, legs, feet, and tails to the main body. Every piece is sprayed or dipped by hand in paint before being individually decorated and its face painted to give a special character. Some are specially dressed in feathers, ribbons and fabrics. Every ornament is a unique piece of art and is cherished by collectors.



**SAVA:** Since they were both 15 years old, Ermengildo Brambilla, a glass blower, and his wife Renata Brogioni, a glass painter, both natives of Como, Italy, have been blowing and decorating glass Christmas ornaments. In 1966, they moved to Bellagio on Lake Como to begin their own business. In 1973 it became S.A.V.A., which means “Artistic Glass Made by Artisans”. Today, their daughter, Annalisa Brambilla, is Sales Manager.

S.A.V.A.’s ornaments are very collectible due to their artistic detail and creativity. Every piece of S.A.V.A.’s collection is hand-blown, hand-painted and trimmed with hand-applied glitter. Each ornament begins as a glass bubble and is slowly shaped by paddles into a glass tube. It is quickly heated and blown by the



artisan to create the ornament shape. Since no molds are used, each piece is unique. Skilled artisans then apply both the paint and glitter. Both the painters and blowers are trained for six months before becoming part of the team. The blowers must be able to roll the glass on the flame by hand into a glass tube then into either a ball or shape. It takes five to six minutes to blow a glass ball and ten to fifteen minutes to blow snowman, Santas and other different figurines. The painters take years to master S.A.V.A.'s level of painting on all ornament shapes. Depending on the intricacy of the design, painting one ornament can take from fifteen minutes to more than an hour. Italian materials are used, except the famous German Christmas glass colors from Kaiser Lacke.

**BRANDYWINE MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS:** Early in the Brandywine River Museum of Arts history, volunteers were asked to decorate a tree as part of "A Brandywine Christmas," the museum's annual holiday exhibition. To emphasize the museum's role as part of the Brandywine Conservancy, it was suggested that the tree be decorated using natural materials. Those first ornaments were simple, unadorned pinecones, teasel, milkweed pods, and dried flowers.



Through the years, using their imagination and talent, the volunteers have created thousands of unique and whimsical critters using materials from nature. The proceeds from the sale of critters benefit the Volunteers' Art Purchase Fund and Art Education and Programming. Brandywine critters have gained renown, decorating the White House Christmas tree in 1984 and trees at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History as well as the annual display at the Brandywine River Museum of Art in Chadds Ford, PA.

**HARRY ALLEN:** Harry Allen established his design consultancy, Harry Allen Design, in 1993. Since he has designed furniture, lighting, products, packaging and interiors for an illustrious roster of clients. Every year since 2013, Harry Allen has designed a different holiday ornament, and gifted the digital file necessary to print the ornament. Recipients can either download the file and print it on their own printer or order it at cost from a 3-D printing service, like Shapeways, in a variety of materials. Each ornament is based on a larger design project—2014's Radiant Tangent is based on his residency at the Haystack Mountain School of Craft. The Holiday Ornament Project was a response to the yearly obligation to produce a studio gift for clients and friends of the studio. There was buzz about 3-D Printing in the press, and many of his colleagues have their own 3-D printers, so Harry decided a digital file was a nice gift in and of itself. The project draws on Harry's love of new technology.



**MATT MCGHEE:** Established in 1976 on Christopher Street in Greenwich Village, Matt McGhee relocated to a historic 19 century building in Hudson, New York in 2014. For 40 years this store has been THE store to find distinctive Christmas ornaments from glass to pewter flats selected by the very astute selector and designer, Matt McGhee.

The distinctive mix includes his own designs which are blown in Germany from his molds and some he individually hand-paints. Many of the glass ornament's finishes and colors are specified by Matt McGhee.

The store has been part of so many people's holiday ornament shopping for gifts for their own their friends and family's tree. Many of his shoppers have become collectors of his selections. When he moved from NYC, many people (my husband included) panicked since his ornaments were so much a part of their Christmas. Luckily, he is online and for his fans accessible by train and car from NYC.



**VITA MUSACCHIA:** Vita Musacchia pinpoints her creative career to a chronological succession of arts and design. She is a proficient fine artist who works in the mediums of water-color, acrylic and oils and is a member of The Art Guild. She has created fashion accessories for Christian Dior and Bottega Veneta and now designs for Lenox Inc. Vita developed her true passion for illustrating and designing Christmas Ornaments for the Bloomingdales Home Furnishings Fashion office. Vita's creations were also highly successful and loved by the Bloomingdales shopper for the character's charm and humor. Many of these ornaments are now very collectible. Her talent is not only to create unique, colorful designs, but in developing of each piece, she understands the maker's expertise. One of her greatest pleasures is decorating her 5 Christmas trees each year!

**ROBERT SABUDA:** Is one of the most innovative and inventive children's book creators and is known worldwide for his amazing pop-up paper engineering. To name few his books which include Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Peter Pan have received numerous awards. Each one lets children and adults discover a paper masterpiece together without the temptation of the digital world. As the readers delicately turn the pages, each section pops up creating excitement as it celebrates the story.

Robert has also always loved Christmas. The Christmas Alphabet, Twelve Days of Christmas, The Night Before Christmas and his new The Christmas Story plus his wonderful holiday cards show his true passion for this special holiday.



**OBERFRAENKISCHE-GLAS:** The Christmas ornament company, Oberfraenkische-Glas was founded in 1948 by Fritz Rempel to create and sell mouth blown Christmas tree decorations. One of his first stores in the United States to sell his ornaments was Woolworths. Right before the division of Germany, Mr. Rempel urged his glassblowers and glass painters to join him in the west where he guaranteed both employment and housing for their families as well. Soon after, he created a housing estate for them.

The ornaments are made from German glass, but first an original plaster mold is made and porcelain or metal mold is then made for the blower. After being blown from the mold, the ornament is heated again, silvered which gives each piece its brilliance. Each one is then carefully individually painted with solvent and additive free paint. Rempel's son Ralf and his wife Gabrielle took over the business. Her creativity and great sense of color along with his excellent vision for his father's business inspired its growth. The lucent and silvered ornaments became available in 220 colors with the opportunity for stores and clients to now create their own custom molds from birds to a Volkswagen bug.



# REFRESHMENTS TO SERVE

Save valuable holiday time and ditch the cooking. Carefully selected Wine & Cheese pairings will wow your guests. Bonnie's friend Linda Lawry, Director of the International Wine Center, offers her suggestions.

## WINE AND CHEESE SUGGESTIONS

VINTAGE	PRODUCER & CHEESE	RETAIL
2015	THE CROSSINGS Sauvignon Blanc, New Zealand <i>FRENCH GRUYERE</i>	\$15.00
2015	WENTE "Morning Fog" Chardonnay, California <i>FRENCH BRIE</i>	\$15.00
2015	STONE PINE Rosé, Provence, France <i>CALIFORNIA GOAT CHEESE</i>	\$15.00
2013	WATER WHEEL Shiraz, Australia <i>FRENCH ROQUEFORT</i>	\$15.00
2013	ANTINORI Sangiovese, Tuscany <i>ITALIAN PECORINO</i>	\$14.00
2013	BONTERRA Zinfandel, California <i>ENGLISH CHEDDAR</i>	\$15.00

# PLAYLIST

Bonnie compiled a special playlist from some of her favorite albums to help you get in the festive spirit.

DECORATING A TREE BONNIE'S SIZE TAKES DAYS. TO KEEP UP THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT HER HUSBAND BOB ACTS AS THE DJ. SHE SAYS, "HE KNOWS WHAT TO PLAY TO KEEP ME MOVING FOR FOUR DAYS."

[Listen to our TREE OF TREASURES playlist on Spotify.](#)

1. SANTA CLAUS IS BACK IN TOWN by Elvis Presley
2. JINGLE BELLS by The Ventures
3. BOOGIE WOOGIE Santa Claus by Mabel Scott
4. GO POWER AT CHRISTMAS by James Brown
5. DIG THAT CRAZY SANTA CLAUS by Oscar McLollie
6. JINGLE JANGLE by The Penguins
7. UNDER A BLANKET OF BLUE by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong
8. EVERYBODY IS A STAR by Sly and the Family Stone
9. YOU CAN'T HURRY LOVE by Diana Ross & The Supremes
10. RESPECT by Aretha Franklin
11. KNOCK ON WOOD by Eddie Floyd and Steve Cropper
12. SIMPLY THE BEST by Tina Turner
13. EVERYDAY I HAVE THE BLUES by Memphis Slim
14. ROCK ME BABY by B.B. King
15. CHEEK TO CHEEK by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong
16. I WANT TO TAKE YOU HIGHER by Sly and The Family Stone

# CREATE YOUR OWN MEMORIES

“BEAUTIFUL AND MEANINGFUL HOLIDAY RITUALS FOR PEOPLE OF ALL RELIGIONS  
DON'T HAVE TO BE EXPENSIVE, OR EVEN ARTFUL.”

## INSPIRATION:



- Purchase a set (24 in a set) of small plush animal magnets, a box of fine point black Sharpies and a package of bright colored assorted 9"x12" paper.
- Invite friends, family and children to gather at your house. Sit around a table. Assign a few people to cut it into 9" x 1/2" strips of paper from the selection.
- Everyone select a color or two from the strips. Open up the bag of animal magnets, and select your favorite.
- Sit back for a moment, who will your little treasure be given to? Think about the message the animal will share. Write it down on a sheet of white lined paper, measure it against the 9" strip, then cut the color paper to the length of the message. Write your message with a Sharpie on the strip. I suggest dating it. My bear was given to me in 1985!
- Put your message between the little treasures paws then clasp them together.
- Your message is secure and ready to be given as a gift to that special someone.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## FOR HOLIDAY BOOK CLUB GROUP

1. What is your favorite ornament?
2. What was your most treasured ornament gifted to someone?
3. When did you set up your very own tree?
4. What was your first ornament that you bought yourself? Which was the first one you were given?
5. Which is your oldest ornament? Do you remember who gave it to you?
6. Do you have a collection of one particular type of ornament? What is it? How did it begin?
7. Which do you decorate first, your tree or your home?
8. How long do you keep your tree up?
9. Is there a special ornament tradition that you do every year with your family and/or friends? Are there traditions in decorating your tree or your family's tree every year?
10. What is the funniest story you remember about yours or your family's Christmas tree?

# A CONVERSATION WITH BONNIE MACKAY

Author of **TREE OF TREASURES: A LIFE IN ORNAMENTS**

**Q:** *TREE OF TREASURES* is really a visual memoir. How did you decide to tell your story through ornaments?

**A:** To me each one of my ornaments represents a passage of my life, the story of a family member, the history of my friends, my pets, and my personal adventures throughout my life. When my tree is decorated I see everyone and every experience in my ornaments. The longer I look at the tree the more the stories and my history reveals itself. My ornaments are so much more than decoration.

**Q:** *You were the OVP Fashion Director for Bloomingdale's and Director of Creative, Marketing and Merchandising at the Museum of Modern Art. When did you know you wanted to have a career in design? How did you get started?*

**A:** When I was at Pratt, our professor told the class that to become a Fashion Director was impossible. That is when I decided to be one. When people say it is impossible to achieve something that is when I must achieve it.

My parents were my true design educators. They taught me to constantly observe, touch, build and the world around me was my inspiration.

I was brought to the Frick Museum every birthday from the age of 5 to 12. They walked me through each room asking me about the subjects of the paintings, what they were wearing, what was going on in the painting. My father was a cartoonist. I sat by his desk watching him draw and paint in ink and watercolor. People were his subjects. We would sit together on a park bench observing everyone walking by. Everybody was research.

My mother loved fashion. We went to stores to look at clothes. I was allowed to gently touch and observe the "look." We also sat together on the couch looking at Vogue and art books. I loved to look at the ladies in paintings. I am convinced that their guidance was the key to understanding people and design.



**Q:** *What were some of the challenges when writing the book? How did you choose the ornaments to include in TREE OF TREASURES?*

**A:** My biggest hurdle was I am not a writer, but I had stories to share. So I decided to write as I spoke. Pat, my copy editor, helped so much in structuring my content. My husband is a documentary film editor. Watching him make his films, I learned to compose my stories with engaging pictures (which he photographed) and content. I felt my readers would then connect my stories with their friends, family, tree, and their treasured collection.

The ornaments selection was so difficult, I thought I picked the ones with the best stories and history, but there were so many decisions they were hard to make! The year after the selection process, it was so difficult to open up my boxes to see who had been missed. When I finished putting everyone on the tree, they still seemed to call out. . ."What about me?"

**Q:** *You mention in the book your grandfather was a vaudevillian performer, and your father was an impersonator, ventriloquist, and mimic. Did you inherit any of those skills? Do any of your ornaments inhabit the voices of those who you associate with them?*

**A:** I am told I am a good impersonator, voice mimic, plus I make up cartoon voices. Though I don't speak another language, when visiting a country, I can decipher dialect by voice and body language. I can also mimic foreign accents when responding to questions. Sometimes I am so good that people respond in their language.

On Christmas when I was a little girl my ornaments spoke to me. I did not know it was my father. Until he passed away then there was silence. And yes, I have what I call a "cartoon brain" absolutely nurtured by my father. Each ornament has a voice and something to say if asked.

**Q:** *How many ornaments do you own? When did you start collecting them?*

**A:** I own just under 3,000 ornaments. In 1973, My husband (then boyfriend) gave me my first collection of seventy-eight red, white and gold silk balls. And from that year the collection expanded rapidly.

**Q:** *What draws you to an ornament? Style? Originality?*

**A:** Truthfully, my choices are spontaneous. I do have 66 classifications so it must fit into one of those. However, I don't like copies and respect the true country of origin of the makers.

**Q:** *Do you have favorite designers, or manufactures of ornaments?*

**A:** Designers: Mrs. De Carlini, Mr. and Mrs. Bermene from SAVA, Brandywine Museum volunteers, Harry Allen, Matt McGhee, Vita Mussachia, Mrs. Rempel from Oberfraenkische-Glass, Robert Sabuda.

**Q:** *How do you organize your ornaments? On the tree? For storage?*

**A:** I organize both my boxes and tree by classifications like Birds, Scandinavia and Rabbits and Royals. I have so many ornaments it would be time consuming to store without some sort of system. When I open up the classification box, it is easy for me to then place the entire group together on the tree. Some classifications are very small, like Alpacas. They will share a box with bears and pigs. Taking the tree down, it is easy to pack and box to store for the next year.

**Q:** *Do you have a favorite ornament, or favorite story behind an ornament?*

**A:** All my ornaments are my favorites. When anything happens to any one i.e. total unsalvageable breakage, it is a tragedy. My favorite person associated with my ornaments is my husband, Bob, who gave me my first tree.

**Q:** *How important is the choice of tree? What are some of must haves for a tree?*

**A:** This is the my most important part of my Christmas. Starting in the spring as Bob drives by my favorite tree nursery, I look to see how trees are growing and who may be a possibility to come home with us. A healthy 8' spruce is my choice. It can be a White or Blue Spruce. Unfortunately, people consider the trees prickly. So there are not as many to choose from. But I love them especially the colors. The branches are strong and there are "shelves" to allow long ornaments to hang.