

Brooke Noel Morgan's craft-inspired refuge

— Multi-media artist Brooke Noel Morgan worked with local craftsmen to create a peaceful, authentic and inspirational place to live with her five-year-old son. Located in Nashville, Tennessee, “The Abode” is both a home and her studio, and so much more besides. Created with a spirit of sharing in mind, it is also a gallery and a gathering place where artists can come and stay. —

Text: Karine Monié – Photos: Nicola Harger





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Brooke Noel Morgan likes to remind people that The Abode found her and not the contrary. *“I was driving through the neighbourhood one day and I turned into a road by chance. There was a for sale sign in the garden of a property that ticked all the boxes. It was everything I had been dreaming of for years. I knew right away that it was the place”*. The 130m2 house in question dates back to the 1940s and is located in East Nashville, an area that has become a hub for all kinds of artists and hipsters. It may have been the right place, but it took a lot of work before it looked anything like it does today. Partition walls were knocked down to open up the space and two bedrooms and a bathroom were added at the back of the house for Brooke and her five-year-old son August James, whereas the basement became her studio. Brooke started from scratch inside, but fortunately she knew exactly what she wanted. More than just her own private sanctuary, the idea was above all to create a meeting place open both to artists from all over the world and the local community. As

Brooke says herself: *“The Abode is home to everyone who steps through the door”*. Every nook and cranny of the house exudes a raw and subtle beauty that goes hand in hand with its owner’s artistic sensibilities. Like a painter choosing which colours to put on the palette, Brooke followed her intuition in choosing an array of neutral colours that convey an impression of calm. Natural materials foster an atmosphere that’s both warm and welcoming and the soft white textured walls set off the selection of new and old furniture and accessories to perfection. Inspiration came essentially from Mother Nature and the creative community around Nomad Collective, a lifestyle brand that Brooke founded in 2014 as a way to connect artists and artisans from all over the world to the modern market. Inside, her aesthetic choices are influenced by Axel Vervoordt, Ilse Crawford and the principles of Wabi Sabi. *“These different voices guided my choices towards simplicity and serenity, an interior where story and patina have pride of place. Once the*

Black pottery by August Etta and Handmade Studio TN. Clay amphora and vintage art from Nomad Collective.

On the wall: painting by Julie Henry.



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Antique Japanese rain wear from Nomad Collective.

Right-hand page (at the top): vase by Ashlee Settles and small dish by Wren Ceramics. At the bottom: black pottery by August Etta. Clay containers by Handmade Studio TN. Basket from Nomad Collective.

project was underway however, I focused on working with the craftsmen and concentrated on the notion of authenticity to create something unique". Amongst Brooke's favourite pieces are two mid-century leather chairs from Spain, a Moroccan Beni Ourain rug, an old Japanese tea ceremony table, lamps by Isamu Noguchi, ceramics by August Etta and Amy Dov, as well as artworks by different artists such as Rosemarie Auberson and Rebekka Seale. "In a world that is completely disconnected more often than not, I wanted to encourage meaningful connections. The Abode is a place where people from all walks of life can come as they are and just be; a place where they can rest, be together and nourish their minds." The different events held in this multifunctional space include tea ceremonies, dinners, art

exhibitions, photoshoots and concerts. As part of the artist in residence programme launched a year ago, artists, writers and creatives can come and stay for three to five days and share their work with the local community. Brooke is also about to launch Atman (a curated interiors service), planning her first exhibition and working on a book of poetry. "Nomad Collective and The Abode are an invitation to find your home from home within yourself", Brooke concludes.

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On the left: Moroccan mirror from Nomad Collective. Washbasin by Abstrakt Concrete. Towel from Creative Women Textiles. Soap holder by Wren Ceramics.

On the right: vase by Charlene Reyes. Right-hand page: a Brooke Noel Morgan creation. Moroccan rug and Japanese textile from Nomad Collective.



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