

# LUXE

INTERIORS + DESIGN





## IN THE STUDIO

NATASHA ALPHONSE

For ceramicist Natasha Alphonse, the environment is her greatest muse. Crafting functional pottery and large-scale vessels, Alphonse has long been inspired by the rugged Pacific Northwest landscape and its moody climate. Recently, her creative context experienced a major upgrade as she moved into a new backyard studio designed by local architecture firm GO'C. LUXE checked in with Alphonse to learn more. [alphonsestudio.com](http://alphonsestudio.com)

**Why did you decide to build your own studio?** I rented studio space for many years and slowly daydreamed about the things that would be important in my own creative space, natural light being a big one. We built the studio behind our home in West Seattle. The space is very open with large windows and feels like I am making pots outside, which is my favorite part.

**What are the inspirations behind your work?**

The landscape and nature are my main inspirations. I love

living here in the Pacific Northwest; the ocean and mossy rainforests are just insanely beautiful. It gets me really excited to get into the studio after being surrounded by beauty like that.

**Can you share your process with us?** My favorite clays are sandy stoneware clay bodies, and I make some simple neutral glazes that are usually just on the interiors of my pieces. I want them to feel stony and earthy, so I like to leave the outsides bare and sand them smooth at the very end. I use an atmospheric firing process, and sometimes I fire in a wood kiln, which creates a wide range of surfaces. This method feels more like a collaboration with the fire.

**What's next?** I'm developing a new line of work using white slips and glazes made from wood ash. It's a long process of testing, and the work is always evolving, with so many possibilities to explore. That's the best part of ceramics: There are endless paths to wander down.

## RETAIL THERAPY

MARIANNE SIMON

For as long as she can remember, interior designer Marianne Simon has loved European antiques. After spending years sourcing these one-of-a-kind pieces for projects through her studio, Marianne Simon Design, the venerable interior designer decided to open her collection to the public. Located in her Seattle studio in the city's Madison Park neighborhood, the shop is a veritable treasure trove of objects collected from Simon's frequent travels to Paris, Provence and beyond. "Most are pieces from France that I hand-sourced," Simon explains. "We have 18<sup>th</sup>-century Louis Philippe mirrors, hand-poured candles from Provence, Delft plates from the Netherlands, hand-pressed herbariums from Sweden, and beautiful antique linens from France and Ireland, to name a few." Many of the pieces have a unique story, which Simon delights in sharing with clients, as she only sources objects that strike a chord with her personally. "The pieces are hard for me to part with, but I'm always excited to see what homes they go to," she admits. "I hope visitors to my store walk away with the feeling that living with beautiful things is attainable, and you can start with one piece at a time." [mariannesimondesign.com](http://mariannesimondesign.com)



IN THE STUDIO PHOTOS: TOP, KYLE JOHNSON; BOTTOM, REVA KELLER. RETAIL THERAPY PHOTO: KARA MERCER.