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Friday Five with Jill Bokor of Salon: Art + Design

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For over thirty years, Jill Bokor has combined her love of art, design, and philanthropy with her entrepreneurial skills. Her publishing experience began at NEW YORK Magazine, where she served as publisher and editorial director of Art + Auction from 1984-1999. Once the company acquired I.D. Magazine, it was added to her portfolio as well. Jill was also Group Publisher of the Design Group at VNU (now Nielsen), responsible for such titles as Architecture and Interiors magazines, as well as publisher at Art + Antiques Magazine, and consulted on an art and design boutique for Louise Blouin Medi. From 2004-2015, Jill co-owned a gallery in Great Barrington, MA showcasing 20th century works on paper and contemporary regional art, along with fine contemporary jewelry. Currently, she serves as the Executive Director of Salon: Art + Design, New York's most exciting and prestigious art and design event, a position that she's held for the past 8 years. This year's event will take place November 14-18. Salon gives Jill the opportunity to combine all the skills acquired in her curatorial, philanthropic, and business lives. Today she's sharing five of the most influential things in her own life.

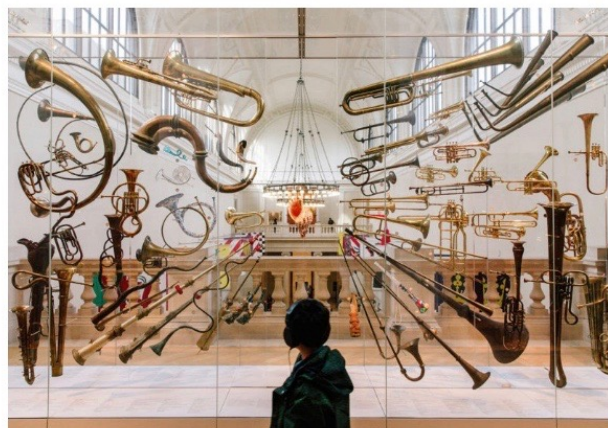


Photo: Rickey Rhodes for the New York Times

1. Shazam

When I first started listening to music, in the late 60s/early 70s, FM radio was becoming a thing. It was great because unlike AM radio it was virtually commercial free, but the DJ's played long strands of songs without revealing the name of the artist, band, or piece. It was a misery to be captivated by a song and be unable to identify it and maybe never find it again; I had fantasies of something that could identify all this amazing music at the drop of a hat. If I could have even imagined that an app like Shazam could identify almost any piece of music, I would have been in heaven! I wish I had invented it!



The Peggy Guggenheim collection in Venice by Claire Falkenstein

2. Venice

When I was a child, my mother had a set of placemats with images of European cities. I always chose the one depicting Venice – it was the Salute and it captured my imagination unalterably. It took 30 years, but I finally got there on that momentous birthday. It was a dream then and it is a dream now, some 50 trips later. Most thrilling was – and still is – the magical ride from the airport in a vaporetto in the early morning. On each pylon along the way stood a sentinel pigeon, and as the mists lifted, a tower, a spire, a basilica would emerge from the mists. Immersing myself in the Venetian life from a perch in Campo San Polo or spending a warm September afternoon in the old ghetto square are annual pilgrimages, indelibly imprinted in my imagination and heart.



Courtesy of Galerie Chastel Marechal

3. Arches

I grew up in Manhattan and have always lived in a linear world. In New York, the grid defines our sense of space and our skyscrapers frame our thoughts, so softened lines are appealing. My first sight of the graceful ruin of a Roman aqueduct, its arches framing the world in a way I was unused to – a gentler frame – created another way of seeing. It's also true of the colonnades along the rue de Rivoli, each arch framing a perfect little shop or cafe. Or maybe it's the cathedral arching of the branches of gnarly old trees reaching out to meet each other, forming a perfectly peaceful oasis on a country road. For me, the softening of the visual field provides the most graceful lens on the world.



Photo: Jill Bokor

4. Farmer's Markets

The austere old town in Maastricht on market day. Silvered skins of newly caught fish adjoin the buttery yellow cheeses of the region, contrasted by color pops of tomatoes, white asparagus, and purple artichokes. The riotous stalls behind the Rialto teem with split coconuts and fresh pineapple. In a quiet New England town on Saturday, the square is flooded with lush berries that stain your skin and sunflowers that fill your vision. At midsummer there are armies of blueberries marching across the table tops to meet the honeyed apricots, accented by the fragrance of the local coffee brewing nearby. In the fall, the first cider and the apples from which they're pressed enliven the stalls. There's nothing more wonderful than a farmers market! These were the original still lifes; an important reminder that some things really don't change.



Photo courtesy of [Tuscookany](#)

5. Ice Cream

Is there any sight more perfect than small child first tasting ice cream? Or an elderly person sitting in the sun, lost in memory, dreamily contemplating an ice cream cone? We don't have to be too specific about the pleasure of the texture of the soft serve (or frozen custard as it used to be called) or the flavor (although it was puzzling when our local Chinese restaurant started putting black cherries in what was supposed to be pistachio). From the richly creamy and barely flavored dessert that was served in Russia when it was the Soviet Union to the perfection of a granular Positano gelato or a plain old ice cream sundae in a diner. Call it comfort food, call it a guilty pleasure, it is an almost universal truth that ice cream is the best treat in the world!