

New England HOME

CT

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building



A SEASON
OF STYLE

Inspiring Ideas to Refresh and Renew



Design Destination

100 Main is a new reason to visit the northwest corner of Connecticut. Bunny Williams's latest project transformed a vacant building, with help from Lakeville builder and craftsman Seth Churchill, into a bright, engaging, shopper-friendly marketplace of art and fine crafts. The waffle-textured stoneware lamps on the table are by Connecticut potters Dumais Made.

The Main Event

Bunny Williams brings her signature style to a new shop featuring the works of local artisans.

The hamlet of Falls Village is as understated as it is enchanting. The enclave of nineteenth-century charm, part of the town of Canaan, is so tiny, they say if you blink, you'll miss it—and that would be a shame. Especially now that it's home to **100 Main**, a new collective of local artisans' wares and works of art curated by designer (and Falls Village resident) Bunny Williams, whose name and reputation are legendary in the design world. She launched her own business in 1988, and Bunny Williams Home, a line of furnishings and home accessories, in 2008. Hundreds of magazine articles have featured her work over the years, and she's written seven books, including the 2005 paean to her Falls Village home, *An Affair with a House*.

| TEXT BY MARIA LAPIANA |
| PHOTOGRAPHY BY
JOHN GRUEN |

Design Destination



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: At the center of this grouping are modern plywood chairs from FN Furniture. Embellished jackets by Petria Lenehan, an Irish designer living in upstate New York. Christina van Hengel and Bunny Williams.

Pieces by more than fifty artisans are displayed in the capacious space—from hand-blown glass and hand-thrown pots to hand-knit sweaters and hand-crafted furniture (hand being the operative word here). A shop on this grand scale wasn't really on Bunny's radar; she was just always saddened and a little intrigued by a rundown former grocery store in town. "I always felt it needed some love," she says, "I envisioned a wide porch and rocking chairs. I wanted to do something with it—but what?"

She says the idea of a collective just came to her, and with it, the idea of refurbishing Main Street's only eyesore. Her plan crystallized when she met Christina van Hengel, who lives in nearby Great Barrington, Massachusetts. They share a passion for beautiful things, so Christina, who has a background in finance, fashion, retail, and editorial styling, was the perfect partner. She and Bunny reached out to locals (in Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts) they knew, and many they didn't. "In the end it came down to choosing



things we both wanted to own," Christina says.

In the meantime, the renovation uncovered the building's long-lost industrial beauty. The acoustical tile ceiling hid incredible steel beams, and ripping up the old wood floors revealed a solid concrete floor begging to be polished to a sheen. "It was then I knew this was absolutely the thing to do," says Bunny.

Since its opening in early August, 100 Main has made a name for itself—and for many of the gifted artisans represented there. Not surprisingly, the



Design Destination



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The ceramic pieces displayed on the sawhorse-inspired wood shelf are by the Berkshires-based Ben Evans Ceramics; the baskets on the bottom shelf come from Willow Vale Farm in nearby Stanfordville, New York. A painting by Berkshires artist Tom O'Neill hangs above a table holding Christopher Spitzmiller lamps. Ceramic pieces by Frances Palmer, of Weston, adorn a table. Sculptural wood pieces by Connecticut artist Frank Grusauskas partner with baskets by Massachusetts weaver Wendy Jensen.

100 Main
100 Main St.,
Falls Village,
100mainst.com

inventory changes a lot; a sampling: fine woodworking (both utilitarian and fanciful), ceramics (dishes, lamps, and pots), glassware, baskets, paintings, knitwear, embellished clothing, leather belts, garden ornaments, jewelry, marbled papers, linens, kitchen textiles, and yes...more.

We visited on a late summer afternoon, as Bunny and Christina were preparing for the shop's official grand-opening party. Bunny was friendly and focused

as she moved seamlessly from one display to the next, clearly wanting the place to look its best. The sun dipped a little lower, and the golden light that spilled in through the wide-open garage-style doors made her movements seem a little ethereal. She tweaked already lovely vignettes, plumping a pillow, restacking stacked plates, moving a bowl this way and a set of napkins that, until everything was styled to perfection, because, well...Bunny. ■■■