

All Things Renewed: A Passion for Reimagined Things

By Karen Beman



Reeves Stump '12 poses with items from her Senior Capstone Project in 2012.

Reeves Stump '12 never imagined that her senior project would set in motion something BIG. What began as a simple idea of redecorating her bedroom has now flourished into a highly successful blog with design spreads appearing in *Well Styled Home* magazine and a possible feature in an upcoming *Better Homes and Gardens* DIY special event.

As many success stories go, Reeves tells of her humble beginning. "The summer before my junior year of high school I wanted to redo my room. Not only was I on a budget, but I was also looking for furniture that was better quality and had more style than any newer piece I could find. I wasn't looking for the cookie cutter style we see so often. I chose to use an old, weathered door as my headboard, paint an antique dresser, and convert a record cabinet into a functional piece for storage. Shortly after that, I discovered a few DIY, home improvement, and upcycling blogs where I found inspiration."

"I really jumped into upcycling when I had to choose what I wanted to do for my senior project. I chose to upcycle and refinish 5 items, all found secondhand or on the side of the road," she says with a savvy wink. "I then documented them with pictures and tutorials on a blog I created called theweathereddoor.blogspot.com.

"After I graduated from Bear Creek, I sold some of the pieces from my projects and continued to do a few more pieces here and

there. Over time I increased the number of pieces I did and began to mainly focus on painting and refinishing furniture with an upcycling project thrown in every so often. I slowly developed my style, turned The Weathered Door into a business, and began selling some of my pieces in a shop located in Tacoma."

"The Do It Yourself (DIY) movement has grown so much in the last few years and I would say a lot of that is due to the fact that people were being more careful with their money and how they spent it. I also think that people know older pieces are well made and the quality is far better than new things available today. The green movement has also prompted people to reuse as well as keep things local. They want old pieces updated with a new look without giving up the charm and character they have, and that's just what I do."

The enormous popularity of the DIY movement actually began in the early 1900s as a practical necessity for homeowners who were cash strapped and needed resource solutions for home repair. The creative expression and artistic trending of many DIY projects emerged much later. The proliferation of discarded antiques and a renewed interest in sustainability fostered a climate for the emerging upcycling niche art genre. In many ways, the movement has fostered a recommitment to responsible consumerism, creative expression, and an

interest in recapturing classic design styles of an earlier age. Marrying old and new has taken on a whole new light in today's design circles and Reeves Stump is emerging as one of the up and coming in the DIY world.

Her business venture is quickly taking Reeves to a whole new level, drawing fans far and wide. "I have had the opportunity to meet people locally as well as collaborate and share ideas with people across the country because of my blog. It's interesting looking back. I originally started the blog to document all of the projects I completed and share them with the few people who viewed the posts, but almost all the opportunities I've had have come as a result of blogging. I've been able to work with companies to promote and test their products and contribute submissions to magazines for Beckett Media including *Make It Over*, *Make It Vintage*, and *Flea Market Décor*."

One signature piece recently caught the eye of *Better Homes and Gardens* (BHG) magazine. The "Suitcase Side Table" was selected as one of 16 favorite blogger projects from across the web and will be featured in a spring BHG Makeover Madness Tournament.

"Upcycling is a fun and creative way to get people thinking outside the box on how to repurpose items into something that is new and functional. Each piece has a story. Turning something old into something new gives it a second chance and at the same time creates a new piece in a new light."



Visit Reeves' blog theweathereddoor.blogspot.com for tutorials, more photos of her DIY projects, and other amazing features. You can't help but be inspired.

