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— he was an avid hunter and fisherman, and knew a thing or two about taxidermy. Bones, animal skins and owl pellets were as normal around her house as anything else. She also nurtured a love of flowers.

“I’ve always been interested in botanicals and the beauty of flowers — how quickly they are alive and then wilt,” she says. “I try to preserve that in a photograph. I want to capture what nature can create.”

A wedding and portrait photographer by day, Kari says her still life work came about purely to satisfy her own interests. “I didn’t need to rely on anyone else, and I could do this in my own time,” she says.

Kari touches every part of the process, from the original illustrations she creates to the final print, meticulous about every step. She was

Call of the Bloom

The natural world through Kari Herer’s budding still lifes **BY STEPHANIE BOOZER**

WHEN KARI HERER makes the hour and a half drive from her home studio in Yarmouth, Maine to the wholesale flower market in Boston, she already has a firm idea in mind for her next still life series. Though, she’s not adverse to shifting slightly off course if an inspiring bloom catches her roving eye. Peonies are a perennial favorite of hers, as are the endless varieties of roses.

“Did you know that ants have to open peonies?” asks Kari. “They push the petals open. You can force them to open if they come in a tight ball, but it’s never the same effect as one opened by ants and the sun.”

The daughter of a middle school biology teacher, Kari’s childhood was filled with the flora and fauna of her father’s natural curiosities



almost surprised at how quickly her prints grew in popularity on Etsy, drawing in big retailers like Land of Nod and Anthropologie, among others, who commissioned exclusive, limited editions for their catalogs. “Etsy has been such a helpful and generous community,” she says. “I really have to thank them for giving me the exposure.”

Those are the perks, she says, but her biggest joy comes from acting on her inspirations. Like the woodpecker that pounded on her gutter every morning at 5 a.m., which she photographed and worked into a still life. Or her young daughter’s infatuation with bunnies. She also recently built a small studio behind her house, and is itching to surround it with blooming flower gardens. “I can’t wait to be able to use my own flowers,” she says. “It’s been a dream of mine.”

See Kari’s work online at kariherer.com, and find her on Etsy at etsy.com/shop/kariherer

KARI’S GEAR

Cameras: 2 Canon EOS 5D Mark III, Mamiya RZ67 Pro II medium format film **Lenses:** Mamiya RZ 50mm f/4.5, Mamiya RZ 110mm f/2.8 Sekor, Canon 85mm f/1.2L II USM EF, Canon 35mm f/1.4L USM EF, Sigma 105mm f/2.8 EX DG

Printers: 2 Canon PIXMA Pro9000 Mark II

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