

FEBRUARY 2021

TEXAS

in Bloom





Making Texas Floral Education Possible

PLATINUM



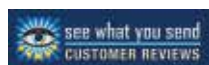
GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



please visit tsfa.org for the most up-to-date list of underwriters and their links

Texas in Bloom

FEBRUARY 2021 | VOLUME XXXVII | NUMBER 2

FROM THE President



TSFA President
Gina Waters AAF TMFA

The time is NOW! Sell Flowers! Through flowers, our industry makes a difference in so many lives.

It is a true blessing to me to spend my days doing what I love. Arranging flowers and making people happy makes a difference in my life. Our arrangements can sometimes express what words cannot. Several studies have revealed enjoying flowers and plants can help heal the common cold, reduce stress, improve your mood, your memory, aid in relaxation and increase your energy. This is exactly what the world needs, and we have the power at our fingertips to make a difference. In this crazy world today, we need to stay focused on who and what we love and share the joy of our profession.

We need to face each day with a positive attitude and a desire to make each day better. We all have our own beliefs and opinions, but anything that is destructive or painful should not be our focus. In retail and wholesale, welcoming the phone ringing with orders is contagious and can encourage all. Spreading excitement to the customer, confirming "I know they will love the flowers" is a great way to make someone's day. Sales are good in the flower business now and I look forward to a successful Valentines Day.

I encourage you to continue to check tsfa.org for dates and events. We are scheduling classes with social distancing in the office as well as conducting High School testings. Some dates may change and we will continue to update. The Texas Floral Expo, scheduled June 25-27, in Houston is well underway with planning and preparation.

Remember TSFA *on Demand!* Take time to check out this virtual learning for continued education and perhaps a little needed motivation. Do all possible to stay connected and encourage others to do the same!

"Everyone has inside of them a piece of good news. The good news is you don't know how great you can be! How much you can love! What you can accomplish! And what your potential is." – Anne Frank



Enchanted Sisters for *Elegant* magazine as shared by TSFA on Social Media
Photography Credit | Deux Boheme, Leslie Castro
Models | Jalyn Casarez and Jennifer Jackson
Floral Design Credit | Iuliia Prokhorova, Wild Veggie Bouquet

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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS STATE FLORISTS' ASSOCIATION

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MEET IULIIA PROKHOROVA

TSFA member, since 2019, Iuliia Prokhorova has quite the story to tell. A story of reaching out, looking forward and making the most of each and every experience. Having recently captured our attention on social media we wanted to know more about this talented designer who started a new life in this country bringing a creative exploration to her work. Take a moment to meet her. I have no doubt that you will be glad that you did.

By Iuliia Prokhorova

I was born in a small northern Russian town. My mom moved there from a tiny village. A self-made woman, my mother recently retired due to the pandemic, serving the last ten years as Dean of the post-graduate education department at St Petersburg Institute of Art and Culture. Despite my mother's achievements in art and culture, she was truly a woman of science. If truth be told, the real artist is my dad. A rather small family, I have one sister, who lives in Russia who visits!

Insecure as a child, I never believed in myself and tried my best to over achieve, hoping to make my parents happy. I had an early passion for nature. I went to my mom's motherland to spend my summer months in a meadow. The northern nature can be brutal, but in July, we had gorgeous fields of daisies, bluebells and a flower that looks similar to Queen Anne's Lace. The forests were full of wild berries and mushrooms and to forage these was my favorite chore. My Grandma made jams for a long winter. This was not a hobby but provisions for the family. I still, today, make jams every fall season. I think it's deep within my genes.

I was a good student and during my school years participated in science fairs every year. I had a deep knowledge of biology and won the Regional Science Olympics in high school. This opened the door to study Biology at the local university. The last two years required that I state a specialization. I chose marine biology, only because no one else wanted to explore this field of study and with my insecurity, I felt it would give me the best chance to continue my education. I soon realized that the illness that I felt at sea would prohibit this as a career so I pressed pause



Photography Credit | Rachel Benavides

and returned to middle school and high school, but this time as a science teacher.

My first born son had health issues. Trying to find solutions for his condition, I enrolled in a PHD program in molecular biology and cytology at St Petersburg State University. The program required that research be conducted in the field of interest and thus I began my work as a biologist in a medical laboratory at the University. My work led to conducting cytometry testing for patients with hematological disorders. Cytometry testing measures the properties of cells to determine the number, size, and nucleic acid content of cells using a flow cytometer.

While working on my PhD I realized my son was diagnosed incorrectly. This led to a lack of motivation in my work and a dissolved first marriage. This was in 2014. By this time, politics had turned in a way that I never expected.

I speak of the war in Ukraine. With this change, I decided to look to the future with the hope to find myself again. I bought tickets to the United States for me and my son to visit my best friend in Atlanta, Georgia.

While in the United States, I met my amazing Southern gentleman and moved to South Texas. Today we have a big family, with five children ranging from two years old to twenty two years old! The two oldest children have begun their service in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard. We manage horse stables providing horses for Corpus Christi visitors to enjoy a ride on the beach.

So with all of these experiences, you must be asking yourself, when and where does design come in? Let me explain. When the USSR fell apart, people found themselves in a new reality where your old diploma and skills no longer paid your bills. My mother was working several jobs, despite having a PHD, and still had to sell Turkish cloths to provide a living for me and my sister. At that time, I thought flowers were a waste. If you were to see the combination of flowers, available in the marketplace, you might better understand my thought.

Personally, I always preferred a more practical gift and that is what led me to designing with fruits and vegetables. The lack of available produce, due to a harsh climate and trade regulations, provided little to create an appealing design. So you can just imagine my response to Texas fruits and vegetables! Each is an endless source of inspiration! With everything so fresh and vibrant, once settled I decided to design a couple of bouquets for myself. I loved doing this and was quite pleased with the finished designs. I posted on my social media accounts for the world to see...and so it begins.



At that time I had little understanding of the principles and elements of design. I simply created arrangements that I would like to receive. People began to notice. With each, I got better. I went to the farmers market bringing only a passion for design and the willingness to learn.

I began to learn step by step the American way of doing business. I soon discovered that I needed a license from the health department to work with produce. The official position is strict, even when we use fruits or vegetables as decorative elements, in that we can not control the end use of the product. The client may consume the product. The only way to keep doing what I loved was to obtain a food manager license and get a small food truck.

My original intention was to work with whole fruits and vegetables in that no one seemed to be taking this approach. I did not set out to become a florist. Once I mastered the skill of designing fruit and vegetable bouquets I began to add flowers into my arrangements. Stem by stem, I fell in love with flowers. I developed a deep respect for the people in this industry. I soon realized that behind every impressive floral installation is a great deal of skill and physical labor. I continued to find beauty in simple things. I continued to look for the ideas that would set my work apart. I collaborated with local chef Dean Sprague, the 2019 Texas Chef Association's Chef of the Year, to create recipes for my most popular fruit and vegetable combinations. This was a hit! Clients had so much fun sending arrangements to each other, trying the recipe, as well as sharing other dishes made from the arrangement.

With the decision to add flowers, I knew that another license would be needed and so I applied for a floral resale license. It was now official! I was a florist! I had a presence on social media. I was diligent to share my everyday work so people would know what I was doing. Becoming a part of my daily routine, those that followed me truly became my friends. You will find in social media a different level of loyalty to your brand. It is a lot of work, but for me, this work had great reward. It is important to understand that posting is not only business but entertainment. No one is coming to Instagram to buy something. They are there because their friends are there. I like to create fun activities offering opportunities for my friends to get involved. Voting for their favorite design, contest participation, Do It Yourself tips, to name a few. Posting is so much more than pretty flowers. Success requires interactive participation.

This led me to collaborate with local photographers. Flower crowns opened a lot of doors. I began to see my designs in fashion publications. I find this work very rewarding and promised myself to seek at least one styled shoot per month. The opportunity adds to my portfolio and develops my networking skills. No one limits my ideas. I have absolute freedom to design what I like. The experience adds joy to my everyday work for sure!



I joined TSFA in 2019. I would like to support the professional community as much as I can. I attended the Texas Floral Showcase, hosted by the Association, in Corpus Christi in 2019 and enjoyed Jenny Thomasson's presentation. I had the pleasure to watch the Jim Johnson AIFD Cup Competition which was the first time I experienced floral competition. I would love to compete some day. I only have the three in person classes to complete my certification in the Texas Master Florist. I am most grateful to the Texas Floral Endowment. The Sheri Montgomery White AAF TMFA Scholarship will make all the difference. I plan to use these funds to complete my Texas Master Florist certification in the spring.

I am most appreciative of the recognition recently received by *Florists' Review* magazine and by TSFA. One of my designs was reposted by *Florists' Review*. TSFA most recently shared my project, published with *Elegant* magazine, on social media and this was huge. I am uncertain as to whether I ever truly felt like I was a florist until that day! I most often work alone and it is alright, but the feeling of belonging to a professional community expands opportunities to give back and share at a level that I never knew was possible.

In this world where we can be anything, be kind. This professional society, TSFA, was incredibly kind to me. I am beyond thankful for the amazing opportunities that I have been granted by people who simply wanted to help me. I feel so lucky and blessed. Please remember that I just moved to this country a few years ago and started my life one more time. I have learned to believe in myself and to do what I love. What's next for me!! Only time will tell!! Thank you for the opportunity to tell my story! I can hardly wait to read yours!



SIMPLY *Social*

How To Get Noticed on Instagram

By Ashley DeFranco | ashley@simplifiedsocialmedia.com

Whether you are just starting out on Instagram or have reached a plateau in growth and engagement, these four tips will help give your content a boost and your work a refresh!

1. Use Only Your Best Photos - I list this tip first because it is the most important. When people land on your Instagram account, you'll want them to be blown away by your smartphone photography skills. This will not happen unless you're only posting your best shots to your profile. This doesn't mean stop posting all of the great impromptu selfies and less-polished photos. Save those for stories (more on this below) and use your feed as the place to showcase your best work and more beautiful photos.

2. Create Your Own Aesthetic - People follow Instagram accounts because they love the aesthetic and they love the style of the photos being uploaded. You can't have this appeal if you're constantly changing filters and continually playing around with different styles. As creatives, we already have an advantage of understanding how to create an aesthetic and doing so on your page will create a mood for your brand and increase the growth of your page.

3. Choose Hashtags Wisely - Using hashtags is one of the most powerful ways to get your work noticed on Instagram. However, it is important to avoid popular hashtags that are broad in scope. Instead, keep your chosen hashtags highly relevant to your interests and industry. Customize them to the subjects of your photos rather than using the same hashtags over and over to reach far more people.

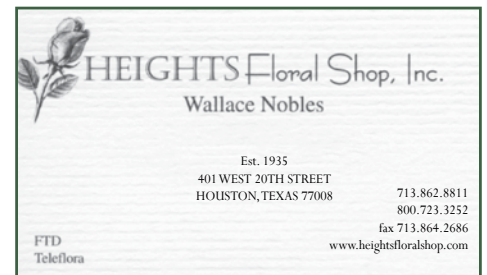
4. Use Instagram Stories - Stories are an ideal way to share more dynamic, un-polished content (both videos and images) that can offer a "behind the scenes" look at your brand and the content in your feed. An additional benefit is that individual stories can contain links to your website. This is something you cannot do on your main Instagram posts and this is one of the only ways to drive your Instagram followers elsewhere.



DENTON



AUSTIN



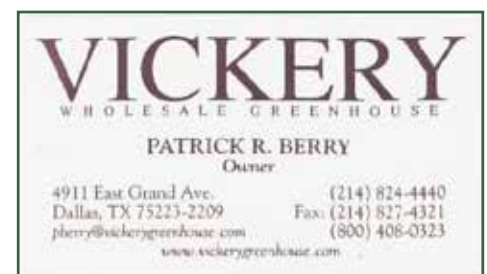
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AUSTIN



MIAMI



DALLAS

THE CREATIVITY BEHIND THE COVER



Photography Credit | Abba Color Photography | Maricela Wilson



newborn with an image, oftentimes swaddled lovingly. When a child has a parent as creative as Tiffany Albrecht TMF, well, one might expect the extraordinary.

By Lynn Lary McLean AIFD

During this time of year when we, as florists, help the world celebrate love with a variety of expressions through flowers, that we are reminded of the importance of our profession. We may be asked to express friendship through flowers or a budding romance. Calls come in from husbands requesting flowers to celebrate the love of their life, dads call to celebrate daughters and granddads call to celebrate the brightness that brings the best of days.

What better time than this to celebrate a love that notes a beginning, one that will grow into a life of celebrated moments and a book filled with memories. To celebrate such a love, parents often commemorate the birth of their

As with most anything creative, the idea for these newborn images started with a thought. Tiffany has long highlighted moments with flowers for the customers who sought her counsel. She wanted the same to capture this moment in time, thinking to surround her little one with her love expressed through flowers. To celebrate the love for her husband and acknowledge his chosen field of medicine, she had another thought that would bring dad's world into the picture.

Bringing these creative thoughts to photographer Maricela Wilson, Ms. Wilson professionally applied her incredible skills to create a digital setting to capture Tiffany's vision.

Through this, we are reminded of all that creativity brings to life. Take time to be still, to think, to dream, to collaborate. Unlimited possibilities are waiting to be discovered. These possibilities will provide untold opportunities to express love and experience life through flowers. A special thank you to Dr. and Mrs. Andrew Albrecht for sharing your "little love" with all of us. Welcome to the world Austin Patrick Albrecht!



THE BUSINESS OF *Flowers*

Jodi McShan AAF AIFD PFCI TMF

THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

I know that you have heard it before: “it’s not what you know, it’s who you know.” Whether we agree or like it or not, it proves to be true. Relationships are key in building and maintaining a strong business presence. Undercutting and winning at all costs may help you “win” in the short term, but in the end, it is all about standing by your word, working with others in the industry, and building strong relationships.

This need for relationships is not just up and down the supply chain; it applies to others who you may view as competitors. I am not saying you have to be best friends, but a working relationship and friendly competition can go a long way. During the past year, this proved to be more true than ever. As many florists were shut down temporarily due to COVID-19, communication between businesses became central to getting the industry back up and running. Who did florists reach out to? To those they had relationships with - growers, wholesalers, suppliers and retailers. We truly are in this together.

These relationships do not come out of nowhere. Like any relationship, business relationships take time and communication. Organizations, such as TSFA, help foster these relationships and provide an opportunity for you to find mentors, support, and education. When major occurrences happen, from hurricanes to coronavirus, we generally think of the relationships we discover up and down the supply chain.

Open communication is always the best policy. You are, by no means, required to give away a strategic advantage that you may have. It is important to know that the conversations with suppliers and buyers can help you both. You learn what is needed, how you can help, and how you can benefit.

These relationships help us have each other’s backs. It’s not a quid pro quo ordeal, but it is understanding the realities of business and human nature. Some of these conversations will not be fun, but open communication helps strengthen relationships. You want to know why you do not have a customer - whether it is something you can control or not. Understanding and communication strengthens both business and personal relationships.

How do you help build these relationships, especially during these unprecedented times?

1. Know your customers and suppliers.
2. Take the time to ask how their families are doing, how you can help them, and understand what they can do for you.
3. Make connections. Perhaps you cannot use a service at this time, but pass on the information to help a supplier or buyer grow their business.
4. Take the time to network. Again, it has changed this year, but get out when you can, from local shows to planning now to attend the Texas Floral Expo in Houston, June 25-27. By showing your dedication and interest in the industry, others will want to see you succeed since they see you investing in them and their success.

Remember, relationships are a two-way street! Take the time to foster relationships. You will see very quickly how relationships will help both parties succeed!

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Here's what you need to know to complete the all NEW Professional Certified Florist Curriculum and achieve your Texas Master Florist



Plan ahead to schedule the needed time to successfully complete the online classes to enable your enrollment in the In Person Classes to successfully complete the Professional Certified Florist Curriculum to achieve your Texas Master Florist Certification! There's plenty of time if you plan now!

FIVE STEPS TO BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL CERTIFIED FLORIST

1. Complete the Professional Certified Florist Program Application available at www.tsfa.org or by calling the TSFA office at 512.528.0806. Email the completed application to txsfa@sbcglobal.net.
2. Upon approval of the application, you will be eligible to register online for seven of the ten courses in the Professional Certified Florist Program. Proceed with the seven online courses, successfully completing the online exam for each class.
3. Register online for the three hands-on courses that are offered in person.
4. Once you have successfully completed all ten courses, you may register for the Professional Certified Florist Program Final Exam.
5. Upon successful completion of the Professional Certified Florist Program and receipt of State Certification, you are eligible to test for Certified Floral Designer certification (CFD®) through the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD®). An additional preparatory course, to support the creative process, is also offered through TSFA.

2021 HANDS-ON COURSE SCHEDULE

Friday April, 23, 2021
The Elements and Principles of Floral Design

Saturday April 24, 2021
Celebration of Life: Sympathy Design

Sunday April 25, 2021
Wedding Florals from Consultation to Completion

In Memoriam of Patsy Dismuke Hopkins



Patsy Dismuke Hopkins was born December 6, 1936, in Hearne, Texas, to parents Ogle Tidwell and Susie Stegall Connor and passed away peacefully at her home in Houston, Texas on December 26, 2020, surrounded by family. She married Joseph Theodore Dismuke on June 7, 1957, and had two beautiful boys Michael Joseph and Richard Keith. Her husband Joseph passed away in 1993 and their son Michael passed away in 1994. She later met Steve Hopkins and he instantly swept her off her feet. They were married soon after. Patsy and Steve were inseparable, traveling the roads, visiting friends and family and always looking for their next adventure. Steve passed away in 1999, but Patsy enjoyed many more years with her son, Richard and his family, by her side.

Patsy was the biggest Elvis fan of all time. She had accumulated many collectibles and pictures of the late singer over the years. She enjoyed dressing up for a night out on the town, attending a party or a family get together. She always made sure her outfits matched perfectly and loved adding stylish hats on occasion. Patsy loved to have fun and dance, dance, dance. She delighted in spending many years in the floral business, where she worked side by side with her sister LaVon Bankhead and niece Cindy Bankhead Millis. Later she worked for Mabel Fisher at Fisher Florist in Houston.

Always with a smile, Patsy would help wherever it was needed. She served many years on the Board of the Allied Florists of Houston. Her service was recognized when Allied Florists of Houston awarded her the prestigious Buddy Benz Award for her numerous contributions to the organization. Patsy was a member of the Texas State Florists' Association.

Patsy made lasting friendships spanning her years at Jefferson Davis High School to the times she spent chasing her love of the water down in San Leon. Passing down stories of her childhood were very important to Patsy. She also loved traveling and reading, but her favorite thing of all was spending time with family. Patsy is survived by her son Richard Keith Dismuke and wife Sarah, and three grandchildren; Kaitlyn Marie, Madison Danielle and John Michael.

Her services were held Saturday, January 9, 2021 at Brookside Funeral Home with internment in Brookside Memorial Park. The family asks that any donations be made to the American Cancer Society. Remembrances may be sent to her son and family at this address: Mr. and Mrs Richard Dismuke and family
31436 Kingston Village
Spring, Texas 77386

TSFA Calendar of Events

Floral Design Credit | Iuliia Prokhorova
Wild Veggie Bouquet #wildvegiebouquet



FEBRUARY

- 7 Super Bowl Sunday
- 14 Groundhog Day
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 17 Ash Wednesday
- 23 Texas Floral Endowment
Annual Meeting
TSFA Headquarters

MARCH

- 14 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 27 Level 1 & Level 2 High School Testing
V.R. Eaton High School
Haslet, Texas
*Date is tentative and subject to change
- 31 Level 1 & Level 2 High School Testing
Region 17 Education Service Center
Lubbock, Texas
*Date is tentative and subject to change
- 28 Palm Sunday

APRIL

- 1 April Fool's Day
- 2 Good Friday
- 4 Easter
- 15 Level 1 & Level 2 High School Testing
Klein ISD Multipurpose Facility
Spring, Texas
*Date is tentative and subject to change
- 23-25 Professional Certified Florist Classes
Texas School of Floral Design
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