

Arrangement...

A small painted bird. Set her next to this other one. Both figurines fabricated from different material – one metal, one porcelain – and born in different places. Still they should reside together. Both are yellow, the surfaces shine and both fit in the palm of a hand. Push the books back, just an inch, making enough room for them to sit. They don't face each other, but instead march in a line and the bigger one leads the way. Placed offset from the center of the shelf is more comfortable, but not too close to the right. The smallest adjustment makes the difference. Positioned in front of *Rivertown*, *Road to Oxiana*, and *A Oaxaca Journal* – not Mead or Ensler – perhaps these two like to travel? Theme orders these books, not author or alphabet.

Century-aged redwood plank planed to a sturdy shelf, and for mid-century glass becomes a delicate resting place. Farthest to the right, a triptych set of smoky German glass. Comfortably near to the edge a short but wide container half filled with dried aspen leaves from four years ago. Nudged very close but a step behind a slightly taller piece with narrow rim, home to three chestnuts collected last fall. A third vase rounds out the set; this one is the most tall and thin. Next, a small space is provided before moving further left to find a clear and curving shape containing this winter's berries dried deep red. Even space is considered on both sides of this piece before reaching the slenderest neck, elevated and thin. Transparent orange hue is complemented next to the pale yellow, gathering dust to its left. So delicate and the tallest yet, anchored in the middle of the shelf with a cascade of shape, color and height on either side. Spacing adjusted, until just so – tight and loose, tight, tight and loose. Next to it and overlapping somewhat in front sits a pleasant round shape with little beak. This lavender shade reflects so perfectly next to dried petals from years ago. This rose bud is found tucked inside a glass, both square and gold. Another larger space of shelf and then resides a tall cylinder barely blue, or is it gray? The shape is so soft and curved to match its Scandinavian sister – shallow and indigo. Light reflects, colors overlay, a rhythm is created low and high, high and low.

Below the window a place for watching, for light, for perching cats. To the farthest right find a small TV, practically placed at the right height for viewing. Antenna neatly disguised behind canvas curtain. Just to the left and centered on the bench two thin pillows there for sitting. Deep purple and brown hand-stitched silk shines. Further down at the opposite end, a cluster of paper and wood, colored cream and ginger – the purpose to illuminate. A pair of Danish candlesticks – teak and old – rise even higher with white candles inside. One is pushed slightly behind and to the left. Symmetry is not found, but the unevenness provides a perfect balance with the other objects. A small candleholder, shaped like a bird, matches the brown tones and is a reminder of the desert. Pushed to the far edge yet still close to the bird – not too near for fear of flames – sits a Japanese paper lamp poised on three legs, organic and curving shape that emits a soft glow.

A large square case, four squares by four squares. Perfect home for books and a few collected artful crafts. Sitting on top and near the far right find an antique fan, big and black. Practically placed and centrally

aimed for cooling summer heat. Behind the fan, not hung but leaning on the wall, a large metal G, formally of Goodyear fame. Nothing else is arranged this high except the row of three prints borrowed from Haeckel. Inside the case, the top row of four is home to pottery both black and white. Farthest left a small black pot with white raku rim. The twig plucked from a tree nearby rests gentle inside, tilting to the right and guiding the eye to a small white bird-like shape; this one is Finnish showing its age with a chip, almost undetected. Evenly spaced from the other, the beaded rim matches the dimpled pot so well. The next space over lives a turned wood form, color exploding yellows and reds, perfectly centered this one is too special to share a space with another. One more square over before the books begin. Pushed slightly back shines black pottery carved with a flower pattern reflective of its Mexican maker. Nearby are two orange alebrijes. Mama pig and baby painted bright with flowers and dots. Each additional nook houses a series of books loosely sorted by topic – but sometimes just by height. The second row to the ground in one square sits an assortment of type – wood and metal. From Tschichold to Triggs, push those books back to provide just enough shelf for these letters, which are resting or standing or stacked to make room. Rhythm created with space and height, just like the books – short, short, tall, short, tall, tall, short. Just inches off the floor a small red stool of Middle Eastern decent, practically positioned for selecting the next read or holding new acquisitions still to be placed.