

NEIGHBORS OF *Wailea & Makena*

An exclusive magazine serving the residents of the Wailea, Mākena, Maui Meadows and Keoheka Heights' Neighborhoods



Hermine Harman & Andy Grabow Art Becomes Them

Photography by Cassie Pali

October 2019



Best Version Media

Hermine Harman & Andy Grabow

Art Becomes Them



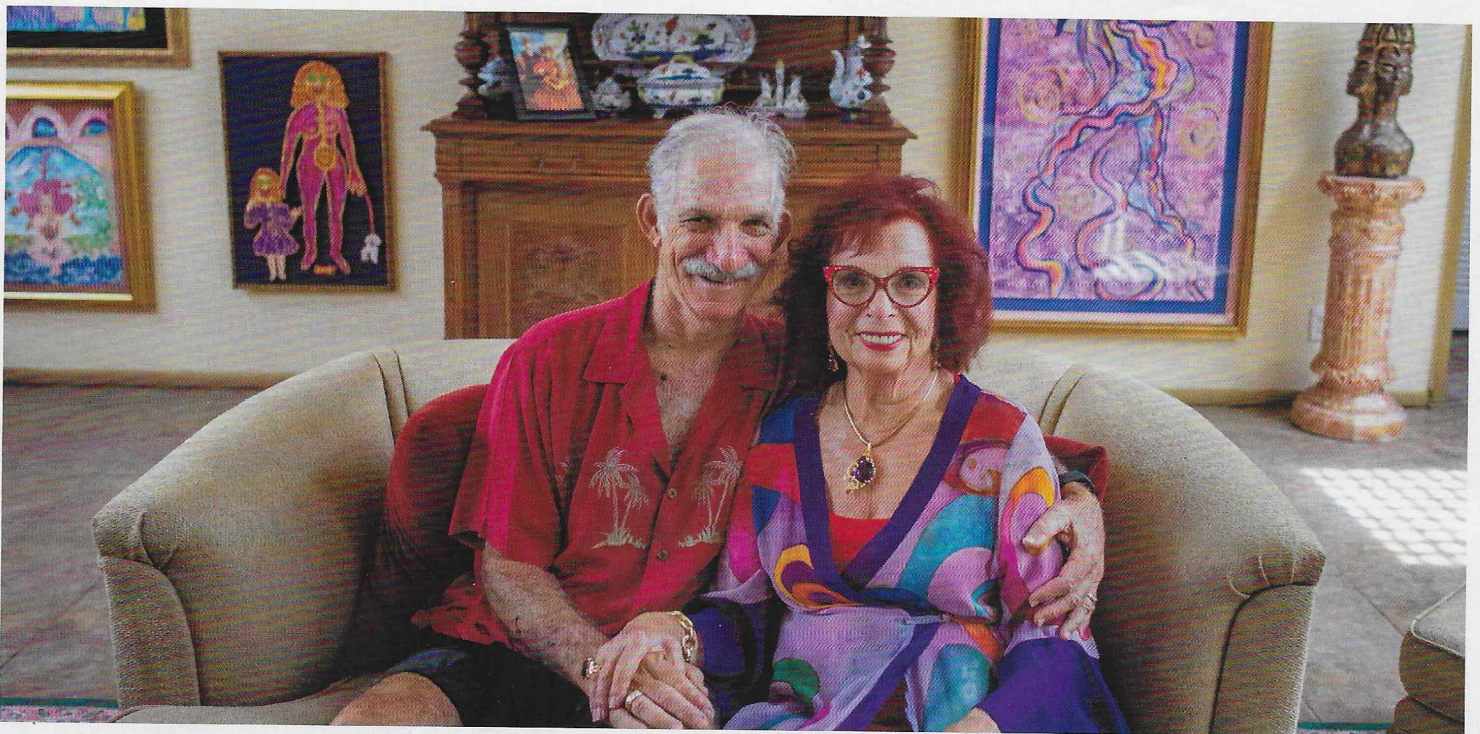
By Amorah St. John
Photography by Cassie Pali

When you walk through the front door of Hermine and Andy's Maui Meadows home, it feels a little like entering a 21st century palace, mostly red, pink and purple. The first thing you encounter is a beautiful Grecian fountain and long walls filled with Hermine's awesome art—glittering, playful and poignant. Next, you notice the marvelous, cushy love seats and couch, across from a glorious wood-paneled bar, a centerpiece for Hermine and Andy's fabulous parties. Even the dining room is an art piece, fit for some fun-loving royalty. The fabric covering the long table and eight chairs is entirely custom and illustrated with the colorful patterns of Hermine's hand-painted silk.

The entire home is truly a work of art, created by one of Maui's cherished and wildly creative artisans, Hermine Harman. She is the whole package, often dressing in colorful, dazzling costumes, mirroring her art. Hermine purchased the house and lush grounds in 1997, before marrying Andy, the perfect complement to his talented partner. Him, with his smooth carefree ways and natural charm, and her, with her flair for the dramatic and boundless creativity. At 73 and

68, this colorful couple is still going strong. For years, they've enjoyed throwing gala parties for friends, neighbors, and various charities that are near and dear to them. Halloween was always a time they liked to throw a party when dressing up is the name of the game. These days, Thanksgiving is their main yearly event, with abundant food, friends, family, and that all-important ingredient—fun.

Hermine and Andy met in 1994 on a beach in Makena, and later got married on a nearby beach along with two other couples at the very same time, all waiting for the picture-perfect sunset. "I asked everyone to come wearing purple," exclaims Hermine, although now her signature color is bright red. Maui's own Minister of Fun, LiLi Townsend, conducted the ceremony, which included her famed credo: "If it's not fun, don't do it. If you have to do it, make it fun." It was the launch of a long and happy marriage playing out in their ocean paradise. "We love the same entertainment, like movies, TV and all the great theater available on Maui," says Andy. "We go to bed every night with a comedy," chimes in Hermine. "Right now, we're watching all 13 seasons of 'Fraser.' Sometimes, we enjoy seeing shows over again since neither of us can remember the show anyway," smiles Hermine, casting a





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knowing look at her husband. “This keeps everything fresh and new,” adds Andy.

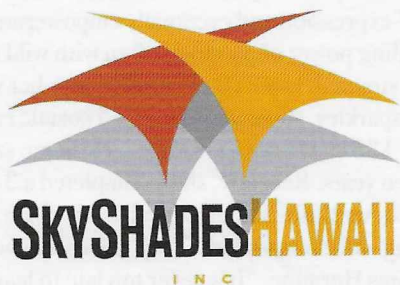
It’s clear that Hermine met her match in Andy, an engaging guy who loves to join her costume parties and, quite miraculously, morphs into a new persona. While Hermine is painting in her art studio, which includes an eclectic array of works in progress, Andy can often be found on South Kihei Road, feeding the homeless at St. Theresa’s Hale KauKau, which he has been doing faithfully (three times a week) for ten years. Andy loves to tell the story of Diane Keaton coming to the soup kitchen whenever she visits Maui or anywhere else she may travel to with her children. “She wants her kids to be with the less fortunate and be of service,” states Andy, who knows a thing or two about that himself.

Andy is a true blue island boy, living here on Maui for 38 sun-filled years. “It’s a far cry from Elkhorn, Wisconsin, growing up in the cold and snow every winter,” says Andy, who takes a beach walk nearly every day with their adorable bichon-frise, Lola, who has enjoyed life in Hermine and Andy’s amazing home for eight years. For most of Andy’s time on Maui, he worked as “captain of the luau” at the Hyatt Regency



in Ka’anapali. Hermine says his retirement party, after 25 years at the Hyatt was great fun. The friendly “roast” that the staff performed was a tribute to her husband’s dedication to his work and the island community.

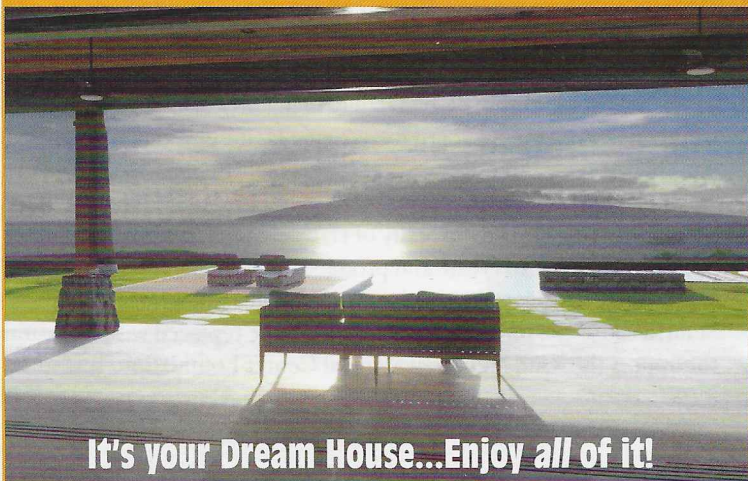
They both love the excitement of traveling abroad but are always happy to return to Mama Maui. Andy acknowledges his wife for being a great travel partner. “Hermine speaks three languages and makes



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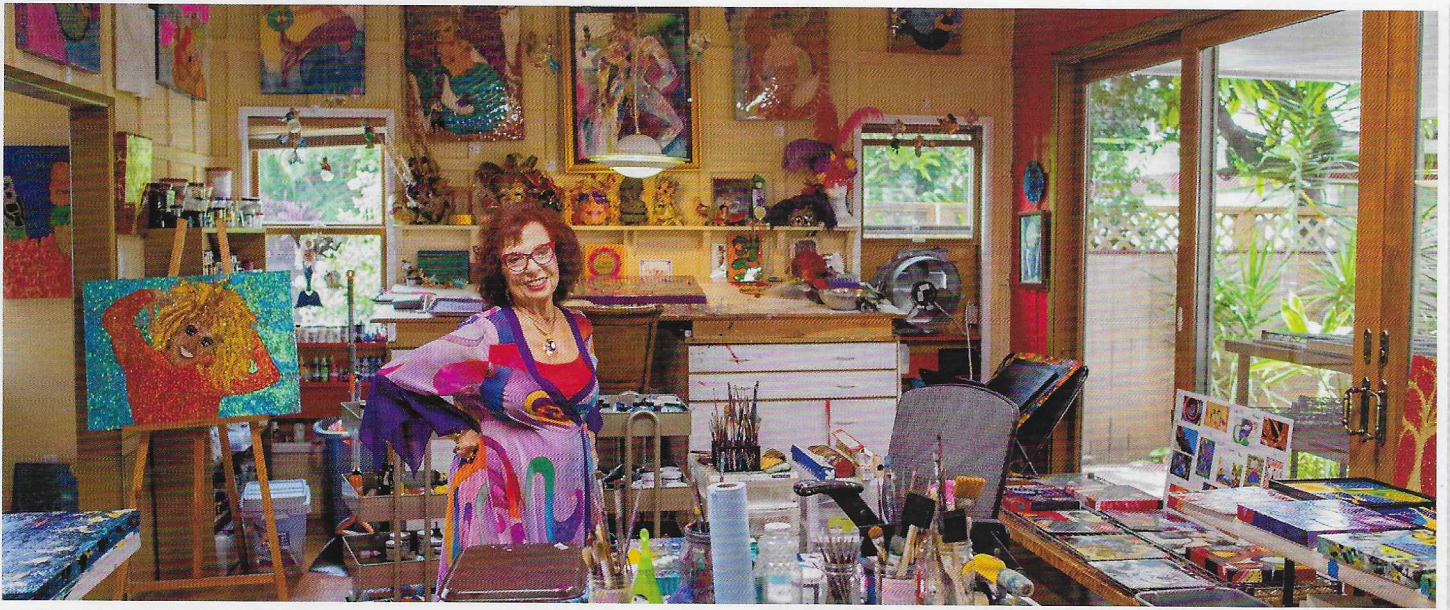
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Over 70 paintings adorn her walls, ablaze with golden sparkles, silver sprinkles and cosmic caricatures.

the best tour guide,” exclaims Andy. “My dream now is to get back to Italy” muses Hermine. “This is where artists go for fresh inspiration and to gaze at the art of the Great Masters.” Andy, of course, will be the man on her arm and they’ll probably be wearing red.

Shortly after her 20-year-old son died of a drug overdose, Hermine was urged by a dear friend to go to The Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California. It was at that time that she discovered Art as Healer. “I went for 5 days and stayed for 4 years,” remembers Hermine. The surreal quality of her paintings, images of long green snakes and red-tongued dragons, depict her journey from despair and depression to creative self-expression and eventually empowerment. After discovering the healing power of painting, often with wild abandon, Hermine has never stopped. Over 70 paintings adorn her walls, ablaze with golden sparkles, silver sprinkles, and cosmic caricatures. “There are another 135 canvasses in storage,” Hermine says, still prolific in her golden years. Recently, she’s completed a 3-month intensive course called Art2Life: A Creative, Visionary Path. “It’s been hard and challenging with so many workshop videos and homework but I love it,” exclaims Hermine. “It’s never too late to learn and grow.”

Hermine’s contributions to the Maui community are varied and extensive. She has served on many boards, including Imua Family Services, Women Helping Women, and even the University of Hawaii Culinary Academy. Volunteering at Imua Family Services annual summer camp, Camp Imua for the “differently-abled” has been a highlight of her community service. Hermine is interested to see how her different “jobs” reflect in her artwork. For instance, while she served on the board for Women Helping Women, her paintings reflected the pain of domestic violence. She was thrilled to be able to blend her love of cooking with her love of helping people by volunteering at the University of Hawaii, Maui Campus’ Culinary Academy, helping to create and produce their annual fundraiser, The Noble Chef. For many years, she worked to get a new hospital on Maui, a cause she finally had to let go of, to be replaced with a passion to support the Maui Memorial Medical Center Foundation. It is such

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an important cause to her, that she orchestrated a beautiful fundraiser in her home earlier this year.

Hermine was curated into a show in Los Angeles, and thoroughly relished the experience. Her hope is to return when the right connections are made and the time is right and perfect. She plans a show on Oahu in the not too distant future. And, Hermine still holds the vision of art shows in other countries, if it's in the cards. So far, she's holding a pretty good hand!

Currently, Hermine's fun, fantastical art can be viewed at the

Enchantress Gallery by Bootzie at the Shops at Wailea, up on the second floor. Several summers ago, Hermine staged a "mermaid show" (mermaids are one of Hermine's specialties), which was attended, with great enthusiasm, by the many ocean lovers and artists beguiled by sea creatures. Currently, Hermine is planning a show called "Welcome to My Abstract World" which will showcase many of the new techniques she has been learning over the summer. The show opens on Friday, November 22, 2019.

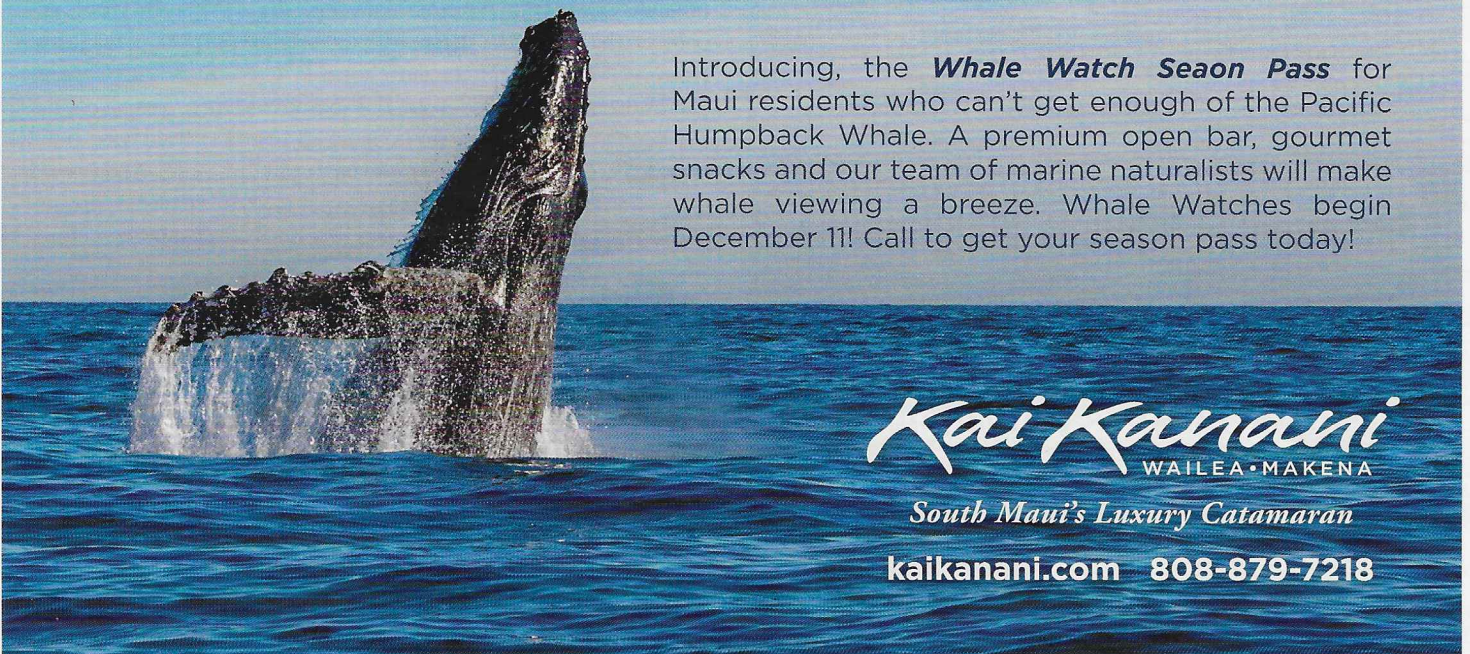
The Shops at Wailea and the Enchantress Gallery by Bootzie provide an ideal venue for artists, both known and little known. Visitors to South Maui can go home with some local art as well as enjoy all the many big and little pleasures our island paradise has to offer.

Art truly does become this special couple as they continue their journey through the cycles of life. "Andy is the kindest, most gentle man I have ever known," beams Hermine. Andy takes his wife's hand as they share the love seat against a backdrop of painted ladies, shimmering angels, and luminous trees. Now it's teatime at this magical palace of beauty and art, where life is good and love prevails. *

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