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THE REAL CAUSE OF GLOBAL WARMING

3Qs with ...

MONTINE BLANK

With shops like Tease, Bang-On and (soon) American Apparel populating the local retail landscape, it wouldn't be far-fetched to say that Atlantans love T-shirts. A new addition to the scene is Inman Park's T-Shirt Construction Co. (www.t-shirtconstructionco.com). But according to owner Montine Blank, the store is on a mission to do more than just sell clothing.

What should people expect when they walk through your shop doors?

There are at least four different things people can do when they walk in the store: They can customize their own T-shirt (i.e., bring in their own graphic design), they can literally paint their own shirts and host a painting party, take screen-printing classes, or they can choose to decorate shirts with local art designs that we have here.

Why use work by local and sometimes little-known artists?

I really admire people who strive to find their way in the art scene. It takes so much soul searching and guts to put yourself out there. I should know — I used to work in corporate America and I knew that I was not living my dream. Atlanta, unfortunately, loses a lot of its talent to bigger cities, so if we would celebrate what's here we might have a more stable community where artists can be exposed more.

Is the T-shirt the new canvas?

There's this whole definition of and establishment around what art is and what art has to be. Shirts don't have that. You can still be as creative and fun and witty and political, sarcastic or sweet with a T-shirt. People are more willing to express on a T-shirt and it's more accepted.

— CARLTON HARGRO



JIM STANNIAK