

Shack Up

STORY KEN MILLER / PHOTOGRAPHY EMILY NATHAN

California creative Mike Shine has turned his home away from home into a personalized work of art.

Viking runes were some of the earliest graffiti tags," Mike Shine muses. You could argue that those same Vikings serve as an early example of successful branding, a topic that Shine understands well as a partner in advertising firm Butler, Shine, Stern & Partners. Yet recently, it's Shine's weekend hobby (and that interest in Viking runes) that has been earning him public recognition.

A few years back, Shine bought a cabin a little bit north of San Francisco along the California coast. It was (by Shine's description) bland, cheap, and available. He immediately set about converting it. "We started by collecting '70s stuff, like a turntable, 8-track player, etc., partly 'cause the stuff looks cool, and partly because it's a break from the modern world," he recalls. "Then we painted the outside orange, and that just seemed to pave the way for us to go off. Once the renovation stuff was done, my artwork seemed to drift off the table and onto the walls, both inside and out. It just seemed natural to do that. I paint a lot on found objects, and I guess it was easy to switch to wall surfaces."

Friends started stopping by, both to hang out and to add their own artwork to the walls. Still, the "shack," as Shine affectionately calls it, remained a labor of love, hidden away from public attention and very far removed from his day job. It was a complete shock when San Francisco's Museum of Craft and Folk Art came calling, asking if the building could be exhibited as an artwork. "The moment they asked, I knew it would be a cool project to pull off," Shine says. Since the shack couldn't be moved, the trick was to replicate the entire building within the museum's walls. "The challenge of it seemed almost ridiculous, and that was really appealing to me." Now that his secret hideaway has gone very public—*Dogtown* and *Z-Boys* director Stacy Peralta just shot a short doc on the cabin—we're all able to stop by.

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