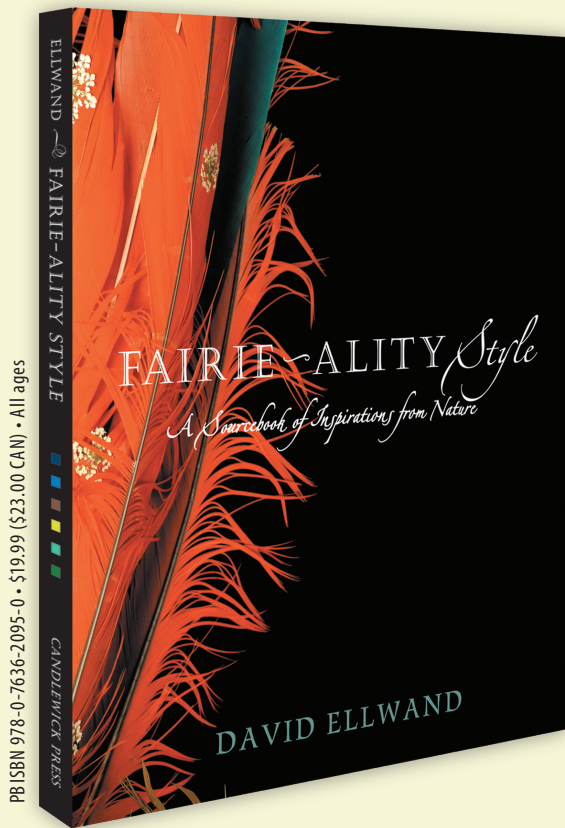


A conversation with David Ellwand, the creator of

Fairie-ality Style

A Sourcebook of Inspirations from Nature



Q. Your designs take their inspiration from the natural world. What elements of nature do you find most inspiring?

A. The whole of the natural world inspires me, but nothing quite as much as the rain cycle from the clouds to the ground and back up again. A few other things: shooting stars, insect wings through a microscope, the smell of buddleia, cracking open a stone and finding a fossil, the flames of a fire, the way a waterfall erodes the stone it falls over, standing on a pebble beach in a storm and being deafened by the crashing waves and the magical noise of the stones rolling back and forth, or standing under a sweet chestnut tree in a heavy storm listening to the raindrops falling through the tree canopy. The natural world is full of inspiration, and most of its complexity is beyond my comprehension.

Q. Previously, you created couture fairy fashions in Fairie-ality. What was similar or different about creating the designs for Fairie-ality Style?

A. As with the first book, I made things up as I went along, without any plan. I always work this way. The new book does contain some miniature fashion, but at a more complex level. For example, a few years after the first collection was made, I opened a box of petals and feathers I had stored away. The contents of the box had faded to subtle hues, and I used them to create a dress I have included in *Fairie-ality Style* called “vintage.” I like this dress more than any I have ever made. Like wine, the petals had matured to a greater beauty.

The main theme for the new book is color, and in particular the way colors exist and interact with one another in nature. The new book includes a lot of my personal photography taken over the past six or seven years — images like the jackdaw, skylark, and Tuscan toad. I decided to examine the color within these images: the yellow of a skylark’s beak, for example, or the blue of a jackdaw’s eye and the orange of a toad’s wart.







The new book is more serious and less whimsical than the first, and I hope fans of the original *Fairie-ality* will appreciate that. I always like to try something a bit different. A book with hardly any words and no page numbers or index is certainly different! If you want to remember a page, fold down a corner or use a paper bookmark. I really hope that in a few years there will be lots of tatty, well-thumbed copies around that people have put to good use. I describe the book in the introduction as a printed folly that people can use as a point of reference and hopefully a type of visual meditation.

Q. Your designs for fairies are all organic — the ultimate in eco-friendly chic. What are your thoughts on “going green” in the human world?

A. Leave space in your garden for nature — a nettle patch for the butterflies or a few old rotting logs for beetles to munch on. Find a few acorns or chestnuts — in fact any tree seed — and plant them in a pot. When they have grown a little, transplant onto any available land. The more trees we can have, the better. After all, they are the lungs of the earth.

Q. What does your own home look like? Have you incorporated any organic colors or elements into it? Did the process of creating *Fairie-ality Style* inspire you to make changes in your home?

A. Along with my wife and daughter, I am currently restoring a new home. We plan to paint all the walls in the *Fairie-ality Style* colors. I am also thinking about covering an entire wall with pressed flower petals, then covering it with water-based varnish. I hope that over time it will fade to a beautiful neutral tone, and I can ponder where the color has gone.

 www.fairie-ality.com 

Also by DAVID ELLWAND



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“If only the coats and dresses created for *Fairie-ality* were life-size.” — *Elle*

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