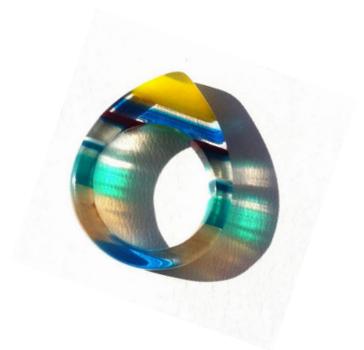




# Eco Art

These five artists aren't just making beach art—  
they're making a difference on our beaches.





## BETTY BELTS

The beautiful, bright colors of resin-coated surfboards are the inspiration for a line of jewelry from ocean lovers Donna von Hoesslin Pu'u and David Pu'u from Ventura, California. Together they are the Designer and CEO of Ocean Ohana and Betty Belts, where they have created the Surfite Upcycled Surfboard Resin Project.

Before coming to Ventura, Donna was immersed in the arts world in Berlin. She worked as an extra at the opera, created a bespoke fashion line, translated screenplays, performed in jazz clubs, and toured as a supporting vocalist for pop star Sin With Sebastian. David is an editorial and commercial photographer and filmmaker. He was previously a touring professional surfer, board designer, and manufacturer of more than 40,000 surfboards and other synthetic polymer plastic projects.

David and Donna met when Donna was a new surfer and coastal tourist, visiting California from Germany. Donna moved back to California and started her company, Betty Belts. Six years later, she and David fell in love.

“As surfers, both Donna and I feel a deep connection to the Ocean, and see our responsibility as one of stewardship with a goal of sustainability in the things we design and use in our daily lives,” says David. “We endeavor to leave a shallow footprint and maybe even help a little in creating a healthier world-ocean.”

Donna conceived of the idea of upcycling surfboard resin waste into jewelry in 2008 when

speaking with board builder Dennis Ryder, who was looking for a use for the waste resin piling up in his shop. After a year of research and development, Donna and David built a production team and group of collaborators in the surf industry to move the product forward. “It’s been quite a journey transforming this waste byproduct from our local board builders into jewelry,” Donna says.

When coating surfboards with protective resin, some of the plastic drips onto the floor.



With each successive board that is coated, a new colorful layer is added to the waste. David and Donna slice and shape this multihued stack of colorful plastic to use in jewelry.

“It took quite a bit of creativity, ingenuity and hard work, but in time Donna worked out the process and we had Surfite at last,” David



Above: The process of coating surfboards with resin, pigment pots, waste resin, surfboard, and Surfite

Left: Donna von Hoesslin Pu'u and David Pu'u



explains. “She created her brilliant multi-hued Surfite design line, where every color stripe represents the actual manufacture of a custom board someone is riding in the ocean today.”

Donna has been beachcombing for over 20 years and loves to collect sea glass, heart rocks, shells, and trash. David brings his camera along to the beach. “David collects pixels!” laughs Donna. Together, they have devoted their lives to helping people stay connected to the ocean.

Donna says that your best bet for sea glass in Ventura is a river mouth at low tide. She loves downtown Ventura, one of the last Southern California coastal communities that still has a small beach town vibe, with lots of small local businesses, along with thrift and antique stores. She recommends surf lessons with Mary Osborne Surf and a Channel Islands excursion for some whale watching. If you’re a little hungry or thirsty, they’ll take care of you at Paradise Pantry, VenTiki, and Fluid State. And, don’t miss Sea Things, a legitimate mermaid’s lair right across from the Ventura Visitor Center.



No sea glass lover’s visit to Ventura is complete without a visit to the Betty Belts shop and Ocean Room Gallery. You can view the entire Surfite and sea glass jewelry collections in person, see some of David’s gorgeous photos in the gallery, and hang out in this sweet beach boutique, where you’ll feel like more like you’ve dropped in at a friend’s beach house than a shop.



### Clean your beach and you could win a Cayden Surfite Cabochon Necklace!

Share a photo of some marine debris you picked up on the beach with the hashtags #showusyourbeachtrash and #beachcombingmagazine and you’ll be entered to win one of three Cayden Surfite necklaces donated by Betty Belts!

Post your photos on Facebook or Instagram, or email to [info@beachcombingmagazine.com](mailto:info@beachcombingmagazine.com) by June 1, 2019, to enter.

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