

## From art of enamel to leather

### A Bend dentist tries her hand at high-end handbags

By Anna Sowa / *The Bulletin*

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Patients might not realize it, but dentistry carries a lot of creativity, which Bend dentist Anne Scott has transferred to the art of designer handbags.

“There is an artistic side to it,” said Scott, who works at Awbrey Dental Group with her husband, Peter Yonan, the business owner. “You have to be a perfectionist and use your artistic eye to create something.”

After 12 years in the dental industry, Scott has honed her artistic eye and hand skills and is now using them to design and make high-end handbags for women.

Her side business is called Mari Lassa, named after her great grandmother, who grew up in France’s Basque country. Scott said her grandmother was an inspiration to her.

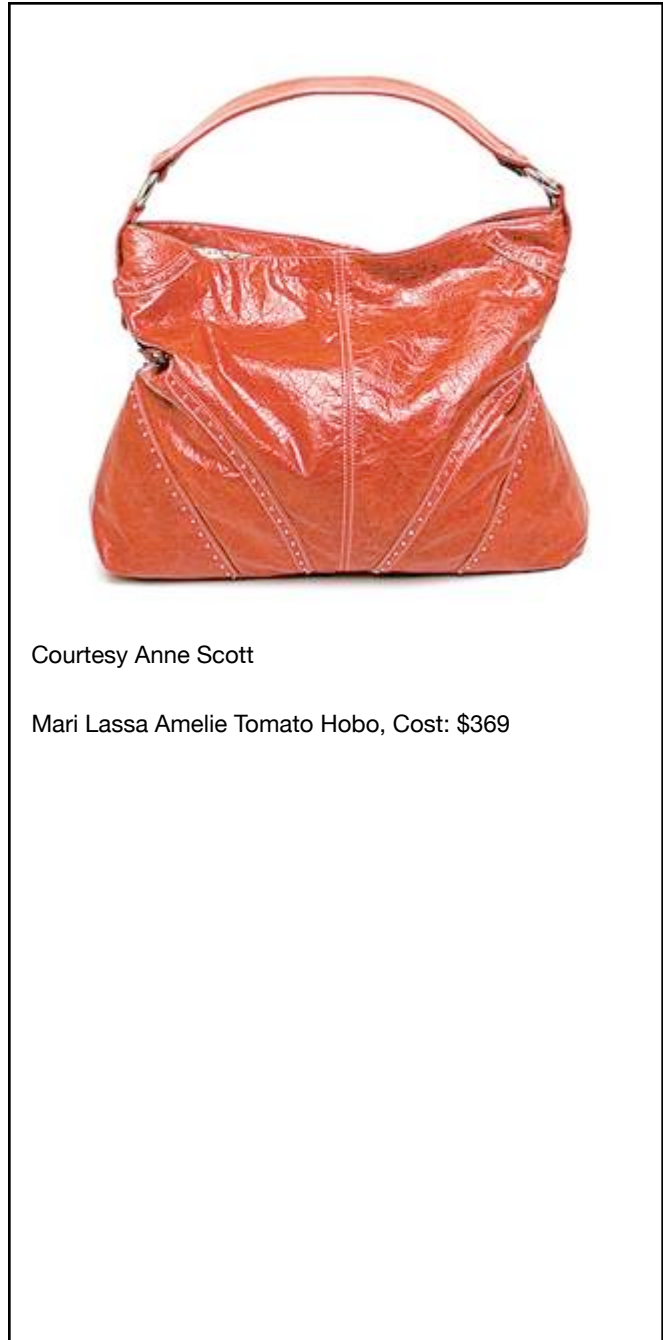
Scott started selling her purses in September 2006. She makes multiple styles of bags in six basic categories: hobo bags, shoulder bags, tote bags, bowlers, satchels and clutches. They retail for \$50 to \$450 and are sold locally at LuLu and North Soles in downtown Bend and O Mo Mo! in The Old Mill District.

She also sells her bags in a boutique in Portland and one in Chicago. Custom orders are available.

Scott makes the bags in her home on the weekends and advertises them largely through word-of-mouth marketing.

“I go around to the stores to see if they want to carry the bags,” she said, adding that simply wearing them attracts free advertising.

Scott says she taught herself how to design and make



Courtesy Anne Scott

Mari Lassa Amelie Tomato Hobo, Cost: \$369

the purses without any official instruction.

“I’ve always loved creating things and had a passion for leather handbags,” she said. “I loved the idea of creating a bag that was stylish and functional, and the challenge of making something that is one-of-a-kind.”

She started collecting different colors and textures of leather and bought a leather sewing machine. She used newspaper to make the patterns and peppered other leather workers and vendors with questions about the art.

Then, she practiced until she made something that made her proud.

“It evolved from me making little coin purses to being able to make a beautiful bag,” she said. “It’s just something that I really love doing ... I put my heart and soul into each bag and I’m excited when I see somebody carrying (one) who loves it as much as I do.”

Anna Sowa can be reached at 541-383-0304 or at [asowa@bendbulletin.com](mailto:asowa@bendbulletin.com).



Courtesy Anne Scott

Mari Lassa Justine Midnight Blue Shoulder, Cost: \$295



Mari Lassa Marie Small Platinum Clutch, Cost: \$120

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## Get your hands on these handbags

Mari Lassa handbags and clutches are available at Bend's LuLu, North Soles and O Mo Mo!  
For more information on Mari Lassa, visit [www.marilassa.com](http://www.marilassa.com).