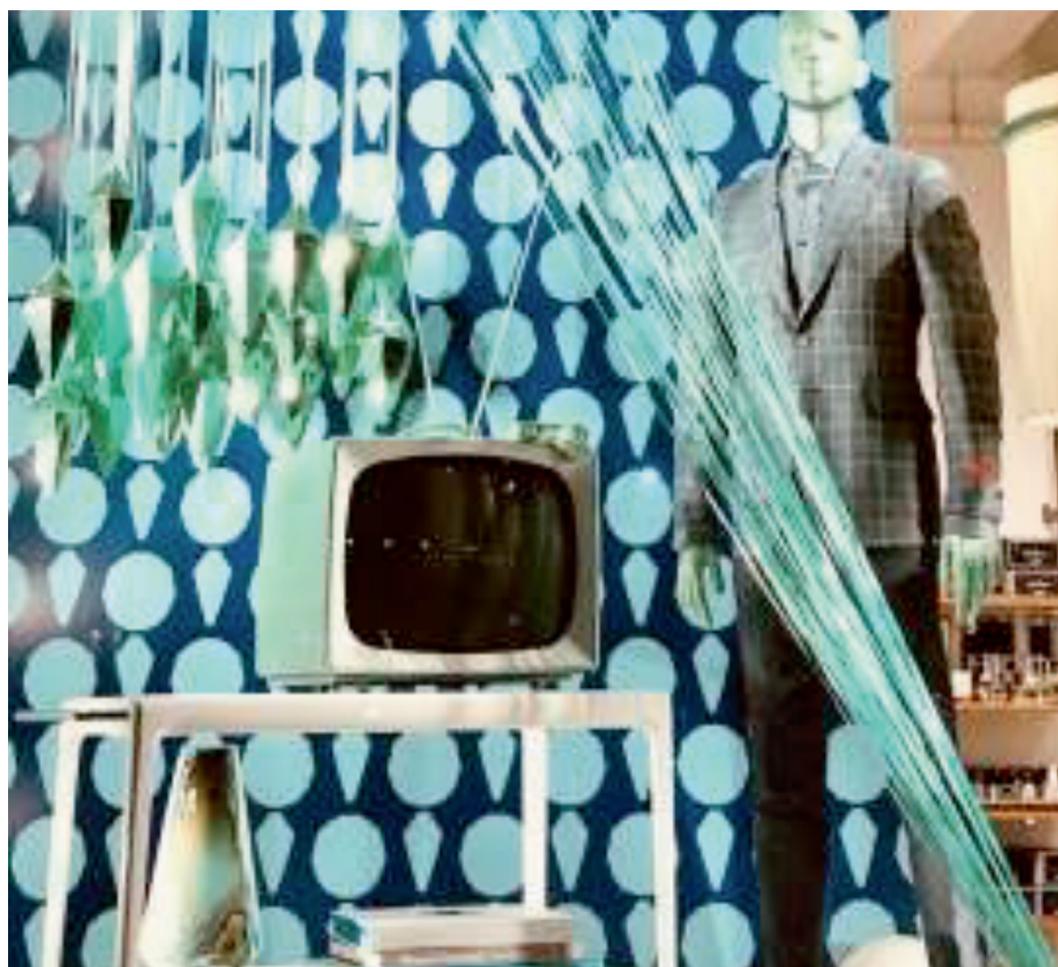


## She judged NYC's best holiday store windows, and casts an eye on the Twin Cities



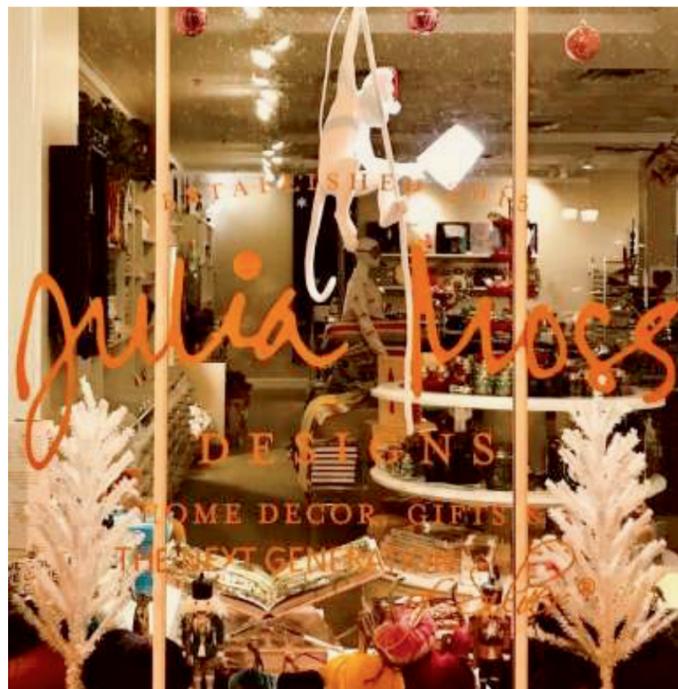
Martin Patrick 3 in the North Loop of Minneapolis

By John Ewoldt, *Star Tribune*  
12/23/2019

Judy Bell thinks retail stores should greet holiday shoppers before they even pass through its doors.

Bell, a locally-based retail consultant and author of a merchandising book called “Silent Selling,” joined a panel that picked the best shop windows in New York City this holiday season.

The windows at Macy’s flagship store won the competition with the theme “Believe in Wonder.” Each window had an interactive element, including an animatronic dog whose leg thumped with pleasure as people scratched its nose through a window opening and a video game that maneuvered shoppers through a field of falling gifts.



A white monkey dangles behind the window at Julia Moss Designs in Wayzata

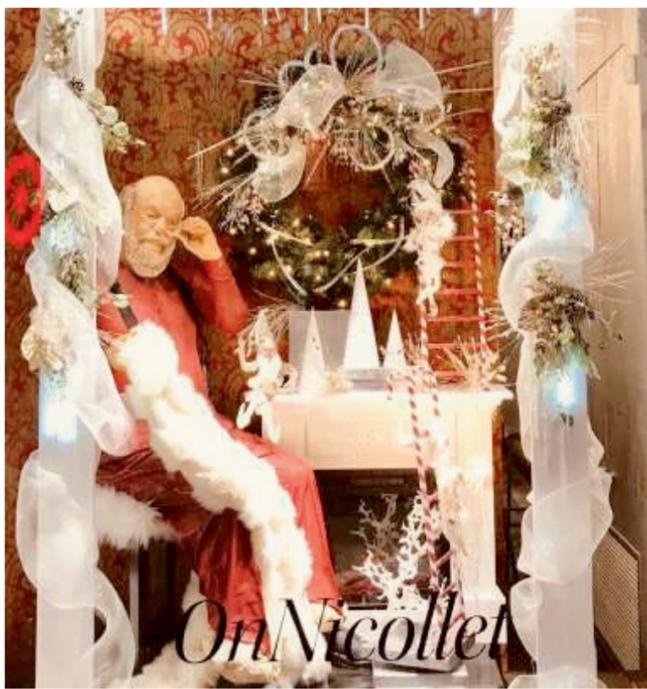
A bit of animation helps too, according to Larry Gerow of 18 Marais Designs in Minneapolis, which created J.B. Hudson’s windows. “An elf holding pearls is spinning upside down on a ladder, while a dog’s head moves up and down with a snowball in his mouth,” he said. “It makes you laugh.”

J.B Hudson deliberately adds playfulness in its windows to make it less of a barrier to enter. “A jewelry store can be intimidating, especially for a guy,” said Hudson’s marketing manager Kelly Sawyer.

Bell said the mixture of movement and play made it a winner. She also gave thumbs up to windows at Martin Patrick 3 in North Loop, Brightwater Clothing in Excelsior, L’More Chocolat and Julia Moss Designs in Wayzata, Grethen House in Edina, Anthropologie in St. Paul and Canada Goose in Mall of America.

L’More Chocolat impressed because it brought the window scene onto the sidewalk with a bike, flowers and a lit tree. “I felt like I stepped onto a Paris Street when I saw it,” she said. “Small but impactful.”

Luxury retailers such as Tiffany’s, Saks Fifth Avenue, Nordstrom and Martin Patrick 3 are known for inviting windows to showcase their wares.



J.B. Hudson Jewelers in downtown Minneapolis

Bell — who has consulted for Dayton’s, Target, Herberger’s and J.C. Penney — said she thinks every retailer should attempt window displays.

They don’t have to be expensive, she said. Tiffany, for example, won third place in New York City’s competition with a simple diorama that wasn’t expensive.

“It was two mice cuddled up in a Tiffany box under a moon,” Bell said. “There was nothing electronic about it, and it touched people’s hearts.”

Many shoppers found warmth and nostalgia in the two windows that the Dayton’s Project unveiled recently on Nicollet Mall filled simply with an iconic memory for many Minnesotans — one person’s Santa Bear collection.

“Successful retailers of today are doing what Dayton’s did well — build relationships with clients,” Bell said. “And the first way to do that is with a visually stimulating entry that says to your customer, ‘Hello, we care.’”

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