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Elf Trapping with Susan Oppelt

By Amanda Kuehn



Storyteller and artist Susan Oppelt with one of her wool felt elves. Photo Amanda Kuehn

creative officer of LUMIN Studios, LLC, the company that formed "Trap the Elf."

"This project was something I was initially working on for my son and my nieces and nephews," said Oppelt. "We were in our backyard in the spring and I started telling my son the story of this elf." It is a story that Oppelt's Irish father used to tell to her and her sister. After explaining the tale, Oppelt's 3-and-a-half-year-old, was full of questions, "Did you ever get him? Do you think we could get him in Tahoe? In Hawaii? Could we build a trap?"

That was enough to spark Oppelt's innovative hopes. She recorded the story in rhyme and set to work dreaming of images, which took shape in the form of wool felt creatures photographed against real life backgrounds. Using iBooks Author, Oppelt incorporated photographs, sounds and descriptions, making the story accessible to a wide audience.

"I'd like parents to read it to their child or have conversations afterward, creating activity time together," said Oppelt. Her ultimate hope is that the story will move off the page and into the lives of readers, encouraging them to activate and imagine, building their own favorite memories together.

Plans for the future include a translation into Spanish, a print format, and a DIY elf trap. "Trap the Elf" is available for download on your iPad with iBooks or on your computer with iTunes. Check out a preview at: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/trap-the-elf/id701133117?ls=1>

<https://www.facebook.com/traptheelf>.

For more information on "Trap the Elf" and other Susan Oppelt creations, check out: traptheelf.com, <https://www.facebook.com/hello.luminstudio> and luminstudio.com.

"Have you ever wondered, how to trap an elf? Or what might happen if you did?" With these magical questions, Lafayette storyteller and artist Susan Oppelt introduces her iBook "Trap the Elf - Anytime of Year," which invites readers on a multi-dimensional interactive adventure. Based on a childhood memory, "Trap the Elf" engages the imaginations of parents and children alike, organically creating an environment for family interaction.

"I was interested in art from a really young age," said Oppelt, who grew up in New Jersey and began attending weekend art classes as a teenager. She majored in fashion illustration and received her BFA from Moore College of Art and Design, launching her into a multi-faceted creative career. "Fashion design was well-rounded for artistic direction," she explained. "It incorporated graphic design, photography, illustration and branding."

Oppelt started in branding and design in New Jersey, then moved on to illustration, print advertising and interactive in San Francisco. "I liked technology," she recalled. "It was fun. [Lot 21 Interactive] was an exciting test bed of people excited about technology and taking it further."

Oppelt has switched coasts and companies several times. "I did things I thought were dreams of mine," she said, recalling her work with Polo, Ralph Lauren, Yahoo and Comcast. She and her husband currently live in Lafayette with their 5-year-old son.

"It's been a really interesting path," Oppelt reflected. "I couldn't say when I was 15 or 18 'I'm going to do this thing,' because it didn't exist." Oppelt is currently the chief

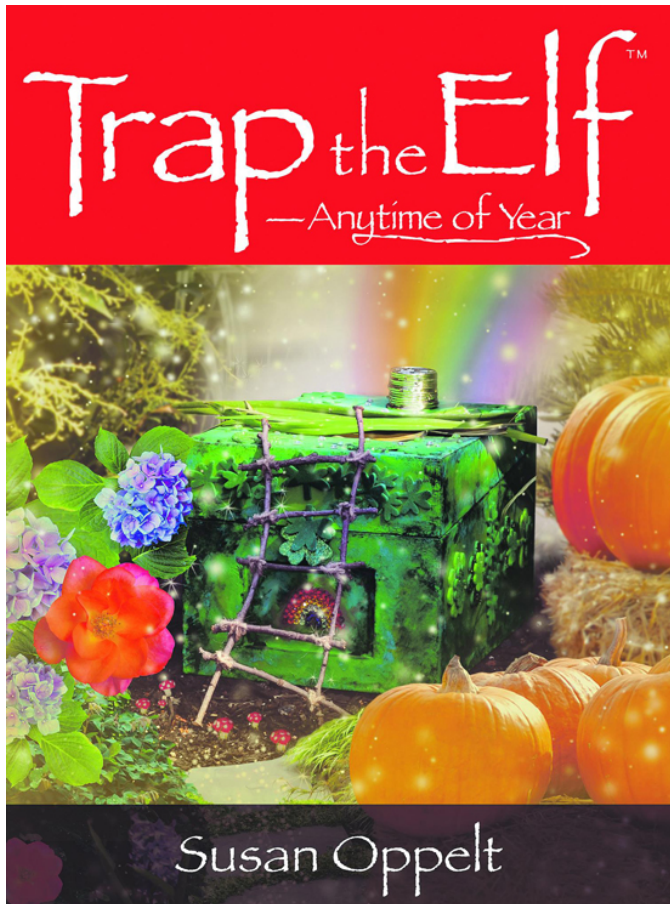


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