



# MOTHER

## MEET THE OTHER COOL MAMA BEHIND ACE & JIG: CARY VAUGHAN

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY [MAIA\\_HARMS](#)

After bringing you our first-ever Mother profile, on *Ace & Jig*'s Jenna Wilson, we've been dying to deliver the same on her partner in (fashion) crime. And now, without further ado, meet Cary Vaughan, the *other* talented designer and business woman behind the cult-followed label. She's also a mother of two—Alice, age 6, and Paul, almost 2—and an incredibly fun, funny, and stylish woman. Here, she invites us into her inspiring Brooklyn home and gives us her take on motherhood and all that comes with it. Click through our slideshow below, and enjoy!



## HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE AESTHETIC OF YOUR HOME?

"Lived in. Lots of color, antiques, and family heirlooms. I love the stories behind them. I could never say no to an antique piece from my family. My husband, Herb, and I would love to have a big old rambling farmhouse (like every other Brooklyn couple), so we have these things that don't really have a place in our home, but we like them, so they are here. It is not curated—I have no time to curate my home. I don't have new cool things, except for Paul's highchair, which is wonderful."



*Cary is wearing a vintage top, B Sides jeans, and an Ace & Jig Royal Duster from her upcoming fall collection. Alice is wearing Cary's vintage shirt with buttons as a dress and Paul is wearing Ace & Jig Indigo Twist pants.*



**WHAT'S YOUR PHILOSOPHY WHEN IT COMES TO DECORATING?**

"I'm terrible at decorating. I can't say I really even do that. I have all these ideas in my head, but at the end of the day I am usually too tired to follow through with them."



**DID THE AESTHETIC OF YOUR HOME CHANGE AFTER YOU HAD KIDS?**

"No, not really. Kids tear shit up, so you don't want to invest in anything too precious that maybe I would have bought prior. Our 'child proofing' consisted of putting rubberbands on our lower kitchen cabinets."



**WHAT ROOMS IN YOUR HOUSE SEEM TO GET THE MOST USE?**

"The kitchen and living area. It's an open floor plan, which is great. Unfortunately, the kitchen is my least favorite place. We bought this house 2 years ago and can't afford to redo anything. One day I want a white kitchen with white wood floors."





**TELL US ABOUT YOUR DAUGHTER ALICE.**

"Alice (Ace) is my passionate first born. She is full of mischief and drama. A total creative, wild spirit who has a magnetic presence. She is so smart and strong willed, nothing gets past her. She is six going on sixteen."



**TELL US ABOUT YOUR SON PAUL.**

"Paul is 20 months. He is a total lover. He is a sweet and peaceful soul who loves all things that move. He can dribble a ball down the field. It's crazy! I can dangle a bouncy ball in front of him and get him to do whatever I want. Terrible but true! The carwash and autobody shop are Paul's favorite pastimes. We literally just go and watch the cars go through the wash process. The guys at The Golden Touch are like 'Oh yeah, it's that lady and her kid again.' Both my children love to draw and dance, which are our daily rituals around here. Music does wonders for redirection and lifting spirits."





**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL STYLE?**

"A mish-mash of colorful *Ace & Jig* and some eclectic vintage pieces. As effortless as possible, unless I'm going bodycon. Ha!"





### **HAS IT CHANGED SINCE YOU'VE BECOME A PARENT?**

"I think your style evolves as you get older. There is a natural editing process. So, not necessarily because I am a parent, but more because I don't have the room for things. I already have my clothes in my son's closet, a hall closet, and my bedroom closet."







**WHAT PIECES WOULD YOU CONSIDER YOUR STAPLES?**

"This summer, it's our Ace & Jig Onesie and Caravan pants. I can't wait for July for the duster, which I will live in. Besides what I create, it's vintage denim and tees. I also have the perfect black wool blazer from A Piece Apart that I adore."



**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ROOM IN YOUR HOUSE AND WHY?**

"My bedroom. It just feels good to be in my bed. I want more time in my bed, surrounded by lots of blues and indigo! They remind me of the ocean. I grew up on the beach and miss it."





**WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND YOUR CHILDREN'S NAMES?**

"Alice is my grandmother's name. Paul is my great grandfather's name and also my Husband's late uncle's name."



### **WHAT'S THE IDEA BEHIND YOUR CHILDREN'S ROOMS?**

"Paul got all of Alice's stuff as hand-me-downs, like her crib and rug. They both had their great grandfather's wooden rocking chair, as well, until it broke. We even saved part of the chair to make a sculpture out of it. I nursed both my kids in that chair. It was so uncomfortable, but I loved it. I had it piled with pillows. I'm so sad that it's gone now. I like a lot of blank walls for the kids to decorate as they wish. Pretty simple. Storage for lots of books. Alice is sort of at that age where she can do what she likes with her space."



*Cary is wearing the Ace & Jig Bonfire Stillwater dress, from her fall 2014 collection. Alice is wearing the Mango Ace & Jig Boardwalk dress and Paul is wearing the Natural Dot Ace & Jig Balloon pants.*



**WHAT PIECES IN THE KIDS' ROOM DO THEY LOVE MOST?**

"Maybe the dress up trunk? It's antique horse hair and was my mother-in-law's. It's a total health hazard as the hardware clamps down kind of quickly on your fingers (not great for playdates), but we go with it."



**CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS MASTERPIECE?**

"Alice made it when she was four. Paint, pastel, and pencil. Self-portrait, of course."





## **HOW HAS LIFE CHANGED FOR YOU SINCE BECOMING A MOTHER?**

"I look at people who don't have children and judge them. I am like no, we can't be friends because you just have no idea. You get to do late brunch and lounge in bed and read! Ha. Usually, I am slightly envious of those without kids. But the truth is, I love my family. Being a mother is really the best. Everyone says that, but you don't know it until you become a mother. I grew up in a huge extended family. I always wanted lots of kids, and then I had one and was like whoa, two is perfect. I have an amazing daughter and a darling son. They are healthy. Life is good. Kids are really a gift. They show you your true colors. They make you slow down and just really live. I try hard not to mess them up."



**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A WOMAN GOING FROM ONE CHILD TO TWO?**

"Alice tells me she is going to marry Paul and yes, she knows you are not supposed to marry your brother, but she is going to break the rules. The first word Paul says when he wakes up is 'Alah.' They love each other so much. My advice is do it! Your kids will have a live-in playdate and a life-long friend."





**WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING YOUR CHILDREN'S MOTHER?**

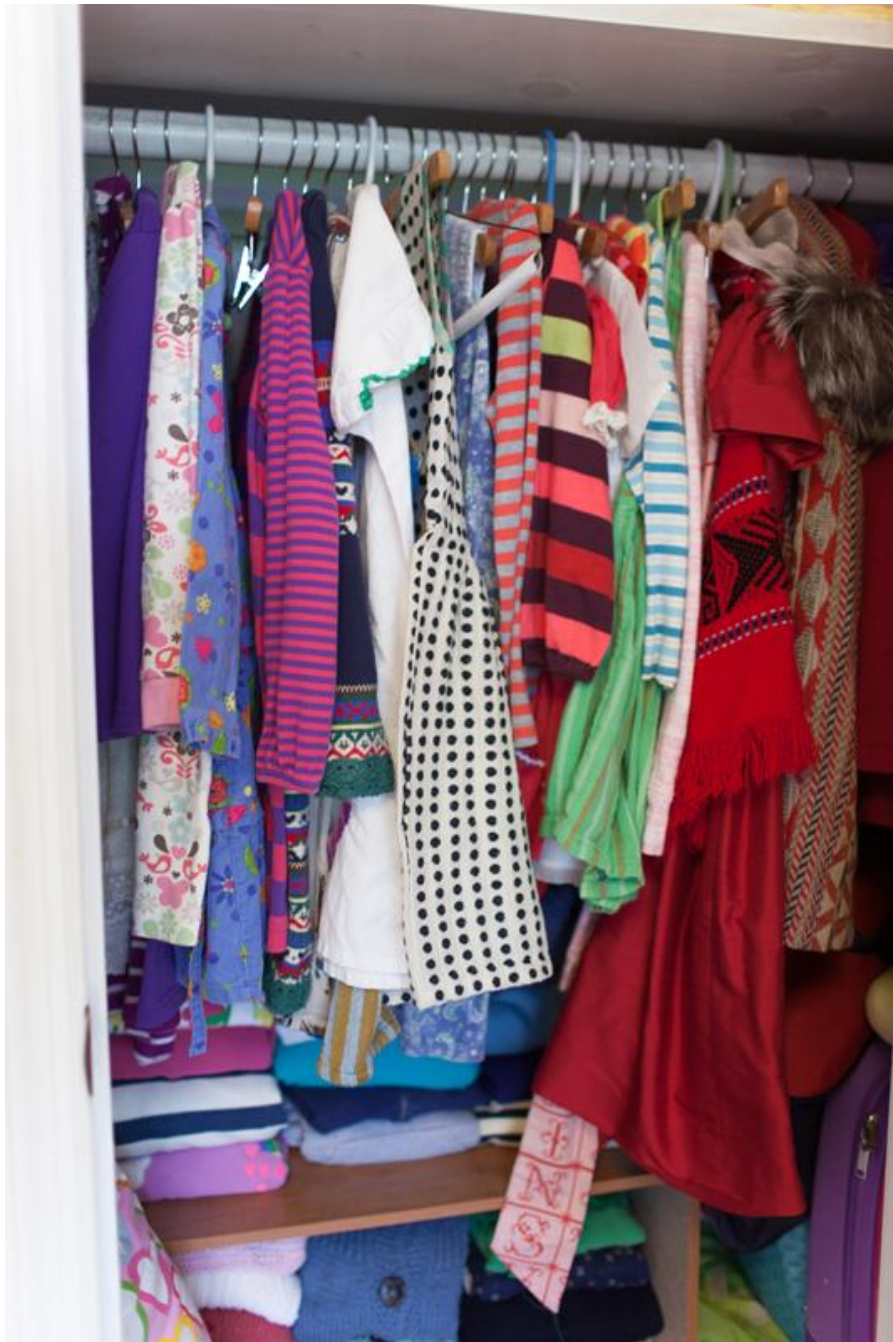
"For me, I now know the depth of my love. I love them fiercely. Watching them grow and process the world around them. Helping shape these two to be kind, empathetic, compassionate people.



**WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT BOTH OF YOUR CHILDREN?**

"Alice's humor and vivacious spirit, and Paul's endless curiosity."





**HOW AND WHERE DO YOU SHOP? IN PERSON AND/OR ONLINE?**

"I like to supplement my Ace & Jig personal collection with good vintage pieces. Online, I like eBay. There's a place I like called Housing Works near our house. I usually buy new shoes and shades, too, but have to try those on in person."



**HAVE YOUR SHOPPING HABITS CHANGED SINCE BECOMING A MOTHER?**

"Yes. I don't have those days of scouring flea markets or just meandering into little boutiques, unless I am not with the kids (which pretty much never happens on the weekends). Whenever Jenna and I travel to India, a few times a year, we always stop over in London or Paris to get our all-day shopping/inspiration fix."

*Paul is wearing a white vintage Sunday one-piece.*





**WHY DO YOU LOVE LIVING IN BROOKLYN?**

"I do love Brooklyn. I really can't imagine living anywhere else. The energy, the people, the food, the conveniences. I walk everywhere, even to the studio."



**WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY LIKE, SPENDING TIME WITH YOUR CHILDREN IN THE CITY?**

"A typical weekend day might consist of walking to the farmers market, Prospect Park, or JJ Byrne Playground. Maybe an art exhibit or festival (we're always celebrating something in Brooklyn!), followed by dinner out or backyard entertaining."



**WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE DECOR ITEMS AND WHERE DID YOU GET THEM?**

"This papier-mâché girl figurine. I bought her when I was pregnant with Alice and living in Barcelona. The little hand broke in transit, but it still reminds me of the overwhelming excitement that I felt when I was going to have my own little girl."





**IF YOU COULDN'T LIVE IN BK, WHERE ELSE WOULD YOU LIVE?**

"In my dreams, I would spend the summers in a big saltbox farmhouse in the woods on the Maine coast."

*Alice is wearing a vintage dress.*



**WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST SURPRISE TO YOU ABOUT HAVING A CHILD?**

"The endless nursing. *Endless!* I was a La Leche League mama and nursed Alice until she was two. She never took a bottle. I tried, but all she wanted was me. Paul had a bottle at like four weeks, because I can tell you, that was not happening again. I didn't have the freedom with Paul that I did with Alice, and really needed him to be able to take a bottle from someone else. I loved nursing and just stopped nursing Paul (very bittersweet). Do not underestimate the physical exhaustion one can get from nursing."





## **HOW ARE YOU DIFFERENT AND SIMILAR TO YOUR OWN MOTHER?**

"My mother is an amazing, strong woman who has boundless energy and is an inspiration to everyone she meets. She went back to medical school when I turned ten and graduated when I graduated high school. *We had a joint party.* My mom had me when she was 23 and banged out her kids one after the other, but it was her dream to be a doctor. She succeeded and is a true healer. She has stamina. I hope that I am as passionate as she is! My husband loves when my mother comes to visit because she is literally a workhorse and will have done four loads of laundry, walked five miles, and have dinner planned by 8 a.m.



Sometimes Polly Vaughan comes out in me! She is definitely my hero, my wonder woman."

*Cary is wearing an antique linen gown.*



**TELL US ABOUT YOUR AMAZING DRESS.**

"I found this dress while shopping with Jenna in Paris. One of the places that we always visit when we are there is Clignancourt Antiques Market. It has amazing trims and beautiful bits and pieces. Anyways, this turn-of-the-century white linen gown was hanging from the ceiling and I promptly took it home with me."



**WHAT ABOUT PAUL'S OUTFIT?**

"I bought these vintage boy outfits when I was pregnant with Paul. Poor Paul."





**DO YOU GUYS SPEND A LOT OF TIME IN THE BACKYARD?**

"Yes! We just realized we have honeysuckle, so we taught the kids how to suck the honey out of the stem and they love it. Paul and Alice go out and play together a lot, which almost always consists of Alice blasting Paul with the sprinkler. He loves it, though. Our bluestone wall is perfect for kids performances and spying in between the wooden fence at our make-believe friends and foes."





### **WHAT'S THIS LITTLE DETAIL?**

"Alice made us all mailboxes that she taped to the door. She regularly drops off little love notes, I'm Sorry condolences, or handmade tickets. Paul tore hers down, unfortunately, so she needs a replacement. But Herb's and mine is standing strong nine months later."



**DO YOU TRY TO GET ONE-ON-ONE TIME WITH EACH OF THEM?**

"I do. We tag team on the weekends. I notice a big improvement in my daughter's behavior when she has had some one-on-one time with me or Herb. She is a child that needs a lot of attention, whereas Paul self entertains a lot more."

*Alice is wearing a hand-painted t-shirt and Mango Ace & Jig Balloon pants. Paul is wearing vintage OshKosh overalls.*



**WHAT IS THE MOST USEFUL PIECE OF ADVICE YOU HAVE RECEIVED ABOUT MOTHERHOOD?**

"One mother teaches more than a hundred teachers, which I believe is a Jewish proverb. And, teach your children through your actions, not by what you say."





**BESIDES YOUR WORK AS A MOTHER, DESCRIBE WHAT YOU DO.**

I founded *Ace & Jig* with my partner and best friend, Jenna Wilson, about 5 years ago. We make our own textiles and clothes and always have another side project going on. It's a true labor of love. You have to have the support of those around you when you dedicate yourself to a passion. I have that and I am grateful."

*Cary is wearing an Ace & Jig Railroad Sorbet top and Ace & Jig x B Sides jeans from their upcoming collaboration, which launches in July.*



## **HOW HAS YOUR VIEW OF WORK CHANGED AFTER BECOMING A MOTHER?**

"I realize I was too hard on my own mother. She worked a lot. (She delivers babies!) What an amazing way to spend your life, yet she would fall asleep at the dinner table or be on call a lot. But she was always there when I really needed her and that is what counts. Be there when your kids need you, but don't be afraid to work hard, because that passion and dedication are traits you are teaching your children."



**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT RAISING KIDS IN THE CITY?**

"You learn about all different kinds of people and beliefs living here. It truly is a cultural Mecca. The energy is inspiring and can be very beautiful. It's what dreams are made of. Just make sure they get some air, land, and sea, and they will be alright.





**ANY EXCITING CAREER-RELATED EVENTS COMING UP THAT YOU CAN SHARE?**

"We are finally starting a home collection called Bazaar! Jenna and I have been wanting to create this for some time and we're very excited that it is happening. And in July, we are doing a denim collab with B Sides, which will be exclusive to Beautiful Dreamers in Brooklyn."