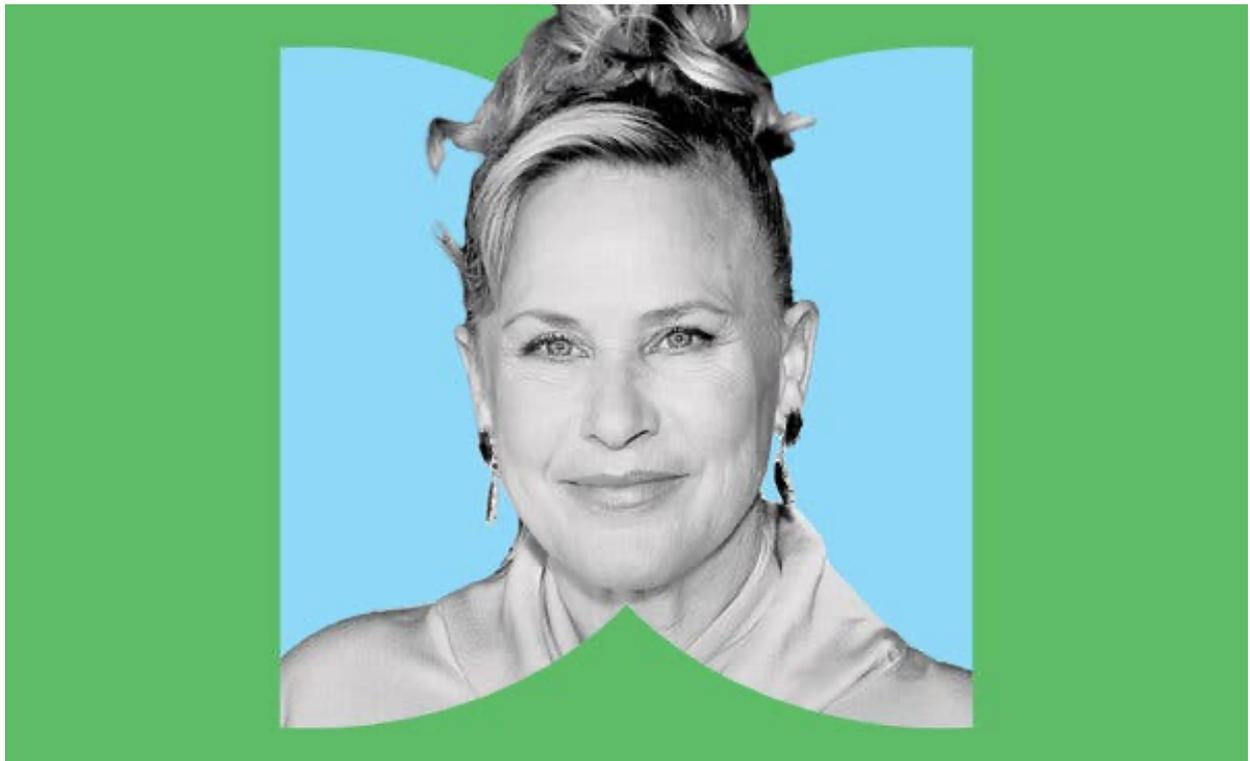


<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/18/arts/television/patricia-arquette-murdaugh-death-family.html>

MY TEN

# Patricia Arquette Likes to Get Dirty When She Makes Art

“It’s part of the process to me,” said the Oscar and Emmy winner, now starring in the true-crime drama “Murdaugh: Death in the Family.”



Credit...Dominik Bintl/Getty Images

By [Kathryn Shattuck](#)

Oct. 18, 2025

The longer Patricia Arquette followed the trials of the former South Carolina lawyer Alex Murdaugh for the 2021 murder of his wife, Maggie, and their son Paul, the more intrigued she became — by Maggie.

Now Arquette is portraying her in the Hulu series “Murdaugh: Death in the Family.”

“I was really interested in that dynamic of how beguiling relationships like this can be when you’re so young and don’t really realize who you’re with,” she said. “They’re charming and they’re naughty, and you make excuses for them.”

The role of Maggie also allowed the Oscar- and Emmy-winning Arquette, most recently seen on TV as Harmony Cobel on “Severance,” the chance to play a normal person.

“This will be my crescendo, I think, to diabolical women,” she said. “I don’t know, maybe I’ll keep playing them, like Medea. She was a real serial killer. She is the one who is more like Alex.”

Calling from Los Angeles, Arquette elaborated on some of her artistic passions (baroque music, ceramics) and some of her guilty pleasures (candy, faraway real estate listings). These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

## Making Ceramics

When I was pregnant with my son, like 37 years ago, I took ceramics and, with my teacher, made some side tables, some stools. I’m not great at throwing at all, but I love the dirt. I love the way it feels in your hands. I love that it has memory. And all kinds of tragedies could happen — your glazes not coming out, the kiln breaking things — so it’s always a bit of a mystery.

## Embroidery and Tapestry

I love textiles from all over the world. Historically, to look at a piece like a wedding headdress or a wedding apron, it’s like this was part of being a woman learning this craft. It was part of her love story. So much intention went into each of these pieces of expression, I feel like every time I touch one of these things, I’m honoring the woman that made it.

## Baroque Music

I’ve started to dig baroque music. There’s something very calming about it. I also like electronic baroque, like Wendy Carlos’s “Switched-On Bach” and Gershon Kingsley’s “Popcorn.” I guess I have eclectic taste.

## Decorating

I collect things that touch my eye. I feel like people used to make things so beautifully, and I like to mix that. So maybe a leather Italian couch from 1972 with some embroidered pillows and a Sézane throw with a big stack of books, and then an Art Nouveau lamp. Growing up so poor and moving around so much, I think there was a real little dream to have your own space and to make it look your way.

## Arts and Crafts

I do it whenever I have time in between projects. It might be some crazy costume or it could be some strange furniture. I'm always happiest when I'm making something. I've worked on a couple of little things in dressing rooms over the years, but not really because I'm such a messy maker. I like to get dirty when I make art. It's part of the process to me.

## Research

I've done parts from different time periods, so I get to look up: What kind of music were they listening to? What kind of books were popular? And if it's a rural area, how was the yield that year? Or, in this circumstance, diving deep into this codependent pathological personality thing.

## Real Estate Porn

That's probably my biggest time sucker. If I don't want to be stressed, I'll be like, "I wonder how much riads cost in Morocco." I never buy any of this real estate, but I love to daydream about all the different lives we could live. I look at places and I'm decorating in my head.

## Candy

Am I not human? I haven't been eating a lot of candy lately, to be honest, but I still am going to tell you I love it. There were times where I told people that I wanted to be buried in my overalls holding a caramel apple.

## Traveling

Travel really turns me on. Hearing different languages or seeing the architecture of different cities and the way they're laid out. I have incredible girlfriends all over the world, and I get to go visit them and hang out with them, and we move each other through the hard things in our lives.

## Coming of Age

I went from being somebody's daughter to somebody's mom at 20. There's something unexpectedly beautiful about this age for me as a woman and being single and being able to learn for the first time, "Oh, what do I want to do?"