

THE EVOLUTION OF ART
ISSUE N° 4

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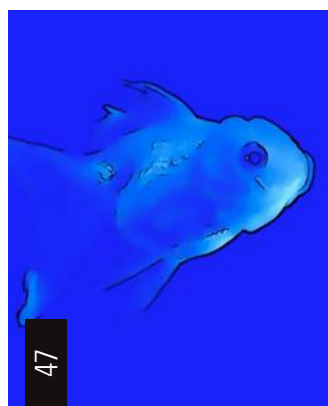


THE AVANT GARDE ISSUE:
VOLUME 2
JULY 2016



Ian Compton's Ode To Jackson

C O N T R I B U T O R S



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Emboss Magazine is a submission-based, quarterly digital and on-demand print publication that chronicles the evolution of art in the global creative sphere. We are committed to providing a curated and cinematic platform for vanguard artists to showcase their modern and progressive points of view.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



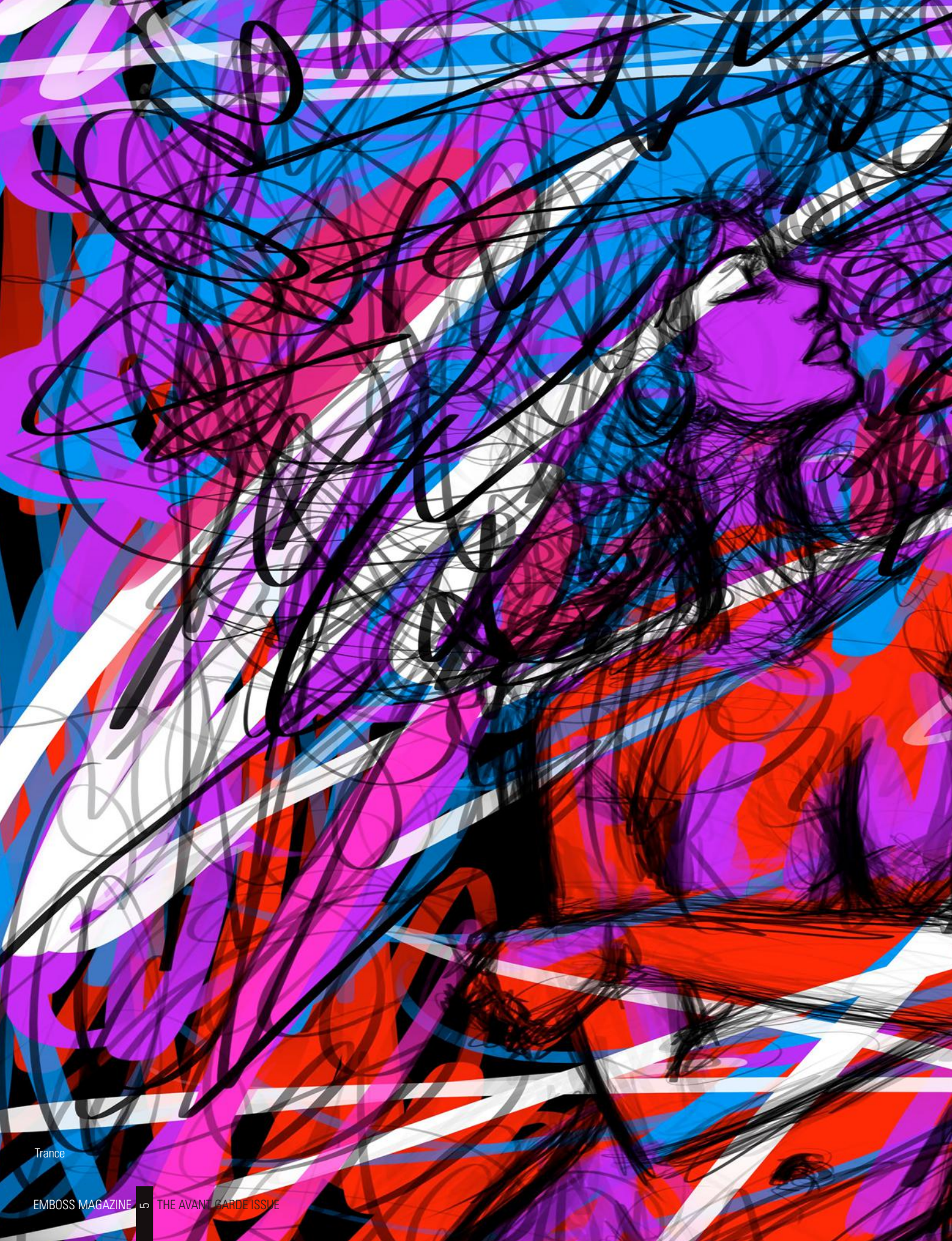
Darlene Sargeant
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The term Avant-Garde has historically been applied to innovative approaches to art-making; solidifying itself through artistic movements during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Abstract Expressionism, Dadaism, Cubism, Bauhaus, Fluxus, Futurism, Surrealism, Constructivism (and so on), all pushed the boundaries of ideas, creativity and the artistic conventions of their times. In recent decades, the Avant-Garde has been labelled elitist, unnecessary and unfashionable, criticized as “innovation for the sake of competitiveness and profitability,” and been declared dead repeatedly -- only to be resurrected like a conceptual vampire, by radical contemporary artists testing the limits of new technology, digital resources, materiality, and the institution of art.


Characterized by a feverish pursuit of the nascent and original, the art of the Avant-Garde is often influenced by the social and political forces of the age in which it was created; with goals of challenging conventions, artistic invention, and exposing clandestine truths. The internet -- the steam engine of our digital age of enlightenment -- has revolutionized the way we consume visual culture, the resources by which we understand it, and the ways in which we produce and disperse it. Artists are being born into an age where social media platforms and file-sharing websites are creating a space for everyone with an internet connection to access information. Timelines stack advertisements and porn over recently shared photos of babies and trips to the Vatican, causing visual overstimulation and desensitization. Art which took hours to fabricate goes unnoticed, while reposted cat memes garner thousands of likes.

So what does our world of ever-evolving technology mean for art and the Avant-Garde? We believe it's the harbinger of a new beginning; a contemporary avant-garde. A movement that blurs the boundaries between physical and digital mediums. One that pushes the use of data-mining and social media to its limits. One that creates cutting-edge artists who are forced to compete on a global scale for recognition; a motivational catalyst for further innovation and artistic development. In an age where general trends in contemporary art are often conceived and dictated by critics, rather than by artists themselves, we believe the resurgence of the Avant-Garde is integral to the preservation of the artist's voice.

The evolution of art depends on the evolution of the artist and their tools. In this issue of Emboss we celebrate the trailblazers who create the inconceivable, push boundaries, and inevitably turn yesterday's pioneers into today's classics. In the spirit of the Modernist Manifestos of the past, this volume serves as a discursive vehicle for contemporary artists to discuss their art and ideologies. We hope that you find that, through the focused reconfiguration of their work, we have stoked the fires that fuel the passions underpinning the theme of Avant-Garde.



Trance

An abstract artwork featuring a dense, chaotic composition of overlapping, vibrant colors (red, blue, purple, white, and black) and thick, expressive black lines. The lines are dynamic and gestural, creating a sense of movement and energy. The background is a solid black, which makes the bright colors and white lines stand out prominently. The overall effect is one of intense, vibrant abstraction.

JUSTIN GOPEL AND

Artist Statement

My work explores the beauty in difference and individuality. I believe that beauty is to be confident and unique, and I exhibit that belief in my work. I create my subjects using bold and unapologetic line work. I work with color and fuse it with my musical influence of Hip-Hop. I freestyle to achieve depth and eye-catching vivid abstraction.





The Heat



Justin Copeland
USA

Social Media

Instagram: @justincopeland_art

Biography

I really try to focus on creating art that is imperfect, unique, and somewhat mysterious, because that is what's beautiful to me. That's what's real to me. When I'm creating a lot of my works, the process is almost effortless. I'm so grateful to have been given this gift. To be able to drift to a place where I can minimize the use of my mind. Art is a meditative process that brings balance into my life.

How did you get your start?

I've been making art all my life, and recently I finally decided to start sharing my work.

How would you describe your style?

My style now is very free and abstract. I used to draw a lot of Japanese anime related things when I was younger so my art has definitely evolved over the years but you can still see some anime influence in my works.

Can you talk about your unique approach to the creative process?

First, I turn on some music. Then, I start by questioning myself. I ask myself. How am I feeling? Where do I want to be? What or who do I want to see? After assessing myself, I get an idea of what I want to draw. Once the drawing is complete, I give it color. I believe the most unique thing about my process of painting is that I don't think. I just do. I don't ever think about the colors I choose. I just choose them. I love how art makes me feel so confident about my choices.

What themes occur/reoccur in your work?

The idea of freedom seems to reoccur in my work. Most of the time my work is very random to express the need to be different and unique.

Where do you find inspiration?

My life is my biggest inspiration. My relationships, the people I meet, the things I experience -- they all inspire me. I listen to a lot of Hip-Hop and contemporary R&B when I work. I often feel like the music chooses the colors for me.

What mediums do you work with?

Most of my work is produced digitally in Photoshop. If I'm out and about, I use the typical pencil or pen to sketch any ideas that come to me.

Where do you create your art?

I work in a pretty small space on an average size computer desk, nothing great really. I just recently started using candles to create a somewhat chill atmosphere.

Have you ever experienced a creative rut?

Yes. To overcome it I usually just do something else that interests me like video games or writing in my journal. After a couple of days I'm refreshed and I'm ready to create again.

Is there a piece you are most proud of?

The piece I'm proudest of would probably be my piece titled "Lifted." I really love how it turned out. The colors work so well together and they create this really cool feel.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the arts today?

In my experience, through education and people who I had close relationships with, the support was very limited. As an artist, people seem to look down on you, and a lot of people just give up on art because of the lack of support from their family, peers and mentors. People who we see almost every day. It's hard to hear discouragement all the time.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned throughout your career?

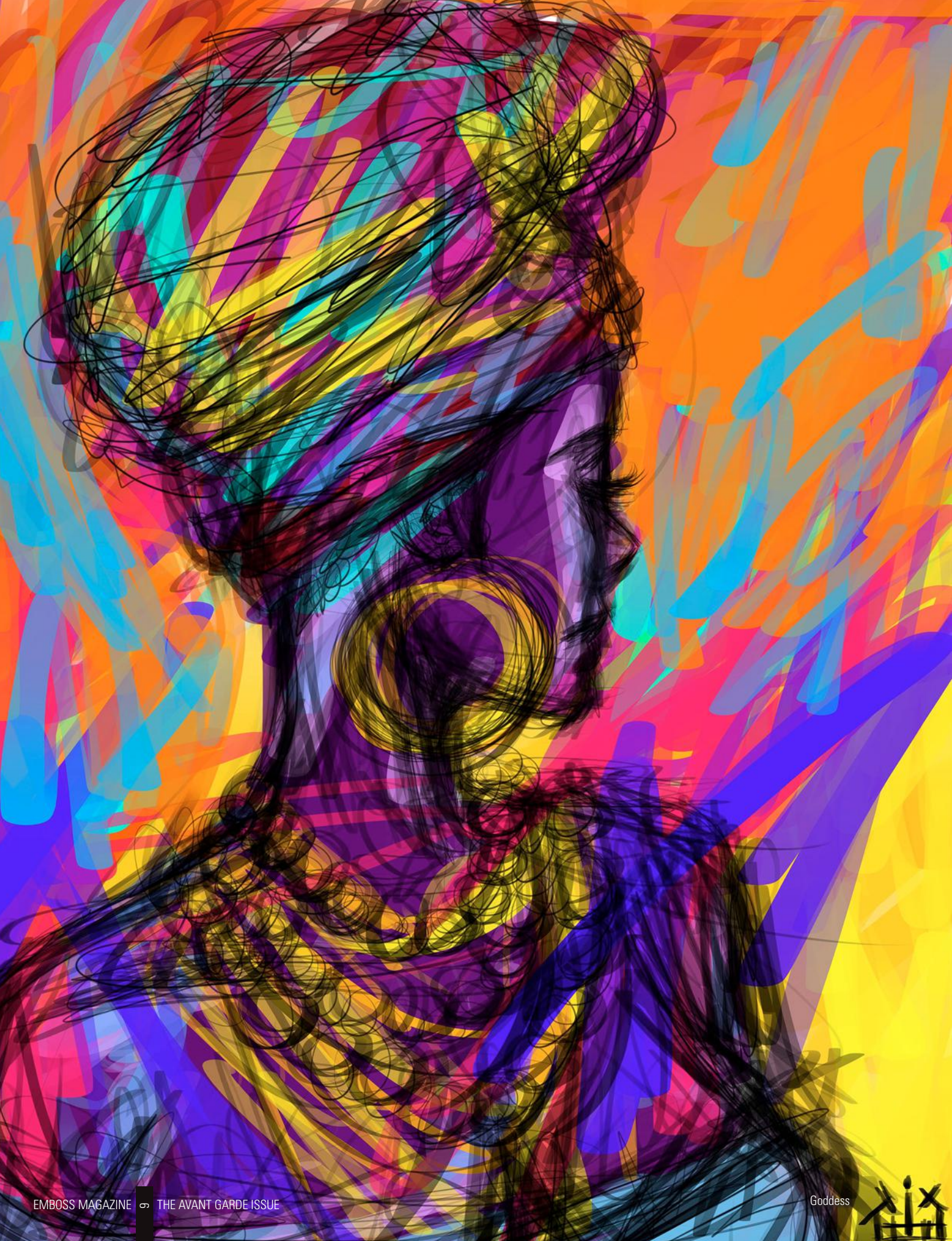
I've learned that you have to be yourself. Once you do that, you can never run out of ideas and your art will always be exciting and unique.

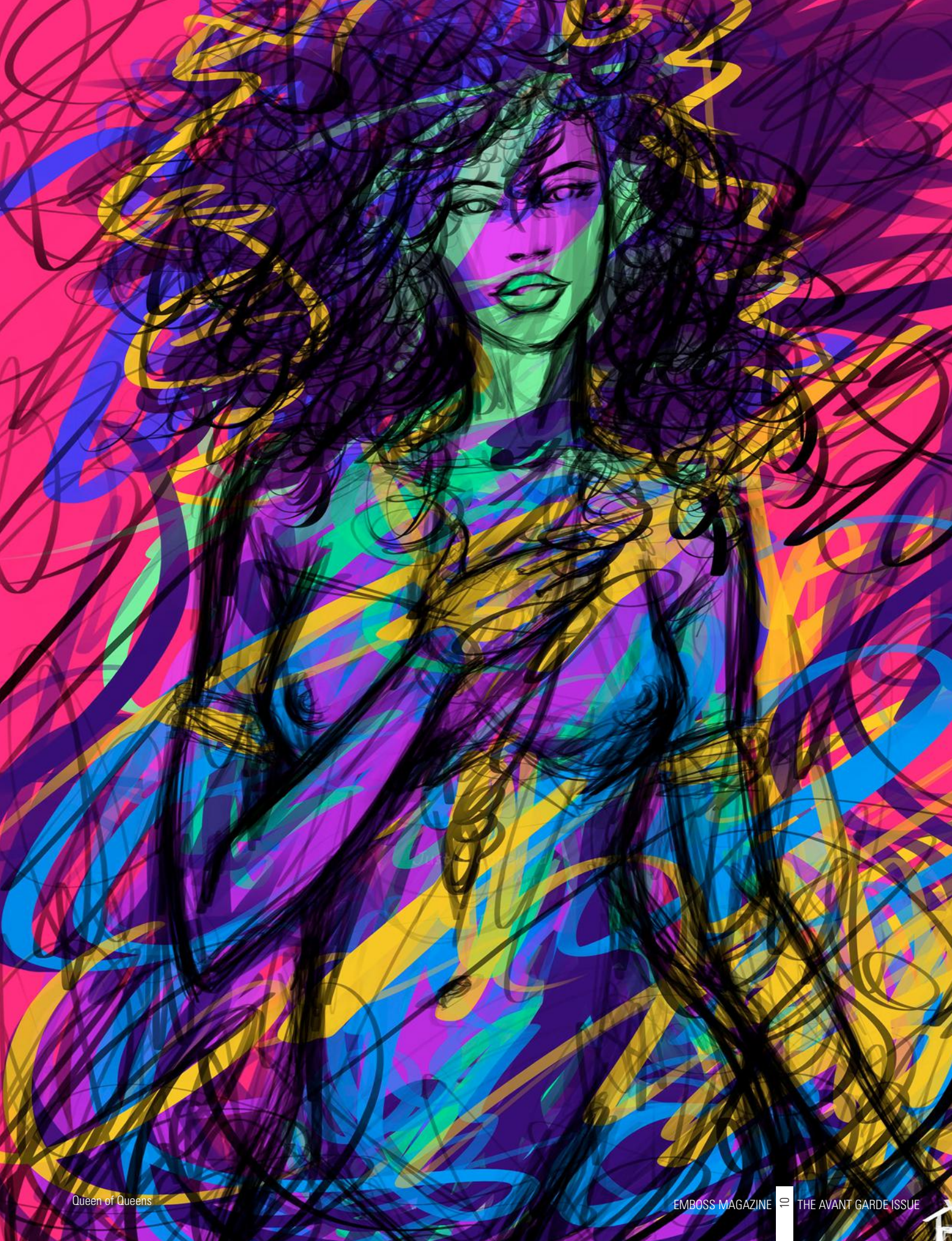
What song is your current obsession or what music do you listen to when you're creating your art?

The song I keep on replay right now is *Green Mile* by SZA. I listen to a lot of Jhene Aiko, the Hics, Doja Cat... anything that's super chill really.

Do you have a favourite quote?

"I was created to create" by unknown.







Would You Want My Soul/
(Haverias de querer minha alma), 2014
edition 1/3 - sculpture and photography,
archival pigment print
27.55 x 39.37in (66x99cm)

MONICA PILONI



Artist Statement

My artistic production is linked mainly to one or more of the following aspects: triggering emotional responses as disturbing the sense of pleasure or beauty, inducing a state of fear (even if the presentation is some kind of order, default or aesthetic harmony); or transmitting a sense of novelty and originality -- really challenging tasks at a moment in history when it seems that everything has been done.



Odd (Ímpar), 2008
fiberglass, hair, bronze finished crutches
70.9 x 37.8 x 37.8in (180x96x96cm)
MAC Niterói, Contemporary Art Museum



Monica Piloni
Brazil

Website
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facebook.com/monica.piloni.7,
guyhepner.com/artists/monica-piloni

Biography

Principal solo shows:
Ilegais (Illegals), 2014 – Urban Art Intervention
produced to show @Larger Criators at Work,
Red Bull TV – Recife/Pernambuco, Brazil
No meu quarto (In my room), 2014 – (solo
exhibition of photo) - Fass Gallery, São Paulo,
Brazil
Ímpar Ambas (Odd Both), 2013 – Laura
Marsiaj Gallery, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Principal group shows:
Clairvoyance, 2016 - Guy Hepner Gallery,
New York, NY, USA
TRIO Bienal, 2015 – MNBA, Museu Nacional
de Belas Artes (National Museum of Fine
Arts), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Nova escultura brasileira (The New Brazilian
Sculpture), 2011 - Caixa Cultural, Rio de
Janeiro, Brazil
O Colecionador de Sonhos (The Collector of
Dreams), 2011 - Figueiredo Ferraz Institute,
Ribeirão Preto/São Paulo, Brazil

Principal Collections:
Inhotim Institute, Bernardo Paz Collection –
Brumadinho/Minas Gerais, Brazil
MAC (Contemporary Art Museum), João
Sattamini Collection - Niterói/Rio de Janeiro,
Brazil
Figueiredo Ferraz Institute – Ribeirão Preto/
São Paulo, Brazil

How did you get your start?

The first exhibition I was part of was through an open-call organized by the Faculty of Fine Arts in the city of Curitiba in 1997. I was a first-year student of sculpture, and this edict opened in the first months of the year, and without any pretension, I submitted my first works with pieces of rusted iron and glass balls. To my surprise my works were selected. To seize the opportunity of the exhibition and the exposure my work would have, I decided to present surprise pieces in the exhibition. So I started to produce new works that were closer to what I wanted to express.

On the day of assembly -- the eve of the opening of the exhibition -- I took my 3 new sculptures, they were reproductions of gigantic condoms, with a variety of contents inside them: in the first one was a rubber duck with a black blindfold

covering his eyes floating in water with living tadpoles swimming vigorously, in the second and in the third, a hundred life-sized penises made from resin, looking like candies, this piece I called Candy Machine (Baleiro). They were very well executed; I think that rigorous attention-to-detail has haunted me ever since. I'm still very proud of this work despite the fact that the conceptual approach was typical of a person of 18, a little obvious, overly pretentious and naïve.

Unfortunately, I was taken by surprise with the cultural space's censorship of the Candy Machine sculpture (Baleiro). I had to choose between two equally abominable options: to show this work, I would either present it covered up between the other two, or I would remove it. I preferred to leave it in the technical area right beside the exhibition room. On the opening day, a queue formed of people interested in seeing my work that could be seen only by people over 18 years (thankfully I had already turned 18 the previous year). That's how I got my start.

How would you describe your style?

I never know what to say when this question comes up and it always appears. I did a google search and found on the website "artsy" the following tags on my profile: "(related categories): Brazil, Nude, Contemporary Surrealistic, Provocative, Unsettling, Erotic, Sculpture, Mutated Bodies, Human Figure, Animals, Film/Video". I believe that if there is a category about the artists who portray themselves, I would put myself in this place, where I would find Cindy Sherman, Antony Gormley and Matthew Barney. More than half of all artists have done some form of self-portrait, but in this category would be those who do it frequently.

My Soul Under the Bed (Minha alma sob a cama), 2014
edition 1/3 - sculpture and photography, archival pigment print
27.55 x 39.37in (66x99cm)



Can you talk about your unique approach to the creative process?

I use a large list of materials, some more frequently, such as resin, glass fiber, hair, marble, bronze, and others less so like: leather, wood and wax. The material itself can sometimes be a source of inspiration. Visualizing its possibilities inside the creation, adapting the creation to the material, and changing one material for another allows the creation be realized. Or a previous work may inspire a new one. When I think of creating I refer to a pre-production stage, the stage of the drawing, the model, the photography as a reference to the three-dimensional. During production, the first step comes from the paper, and it adjusts to the idealized dimension, the construction engineering, the balance, and the chosen material. A model can serve as a rough sketch, but the resulting sculpture may not look anything like it. The final three-dimensional product may also be included in a series of staged photographs, or in my art videos; altered with some kind of editing or visual effects.

When I'm in the middle of the process of construction of my sculptures, as it is very dynamic, I do many tasks at the same time. As resin catalyzes, I run to finish another work with the electric sander, or I might finalize another sculpture by painting it with the airbrush.

What themes occur/reoccur in your work?

I discuss issues such as sexuality/repression and appearance/alienation; creating new versions of characters or objects commonly used in art history or in the advertising market. I repurpose symbols of the banal and classic.

Where do you find inspiration?

Anguish is my source of inspiration. My individual relationship with my own body and consciousness of being tied up and stuck to the fibers of meat in metabolic steady action, "the loveliest of the prisons", a brain connected to a digestive tract that is able to reflect, to believe or deny God, are my anguish, and my rant through art. I feel lucky to be able to turn to my anguish in inspiration.

What mediums do you work with?

I work almost exclusively in sculpture, but recently, I have started to incorporate photography and video. But even in these last two medias, my sculpture work is present because I use it as a character. The main difference with photography and video is that -

as the material is two dimensional - I can direct the viewer's attention to what I specifically want them to see. This gives me a sensation of power that I had not experienced before. With sculpture, one is exposed to the viewers' scrutiny from all angles, plus the artwork "shares" the space with whatever backdrop is there and that is out of the artist's control.

Where do you create your art?

My studio is located in a refurbished industrial warehouse. This was the place where my very good friend, architect Pedro Useche, used to craft his exclusive furniture line. The warehouse went through a full refurbishing and under Pedro's design was transformed into an incredible space to live and work. Since Pedro and his family moved to Florida, I work alone in this fantastic place.

What has been your biggest art faux-pas?

I went through a disappointing and embarrassing situation linked to a very important event for me: my first-ever solo exhibition in Rio de Janeiro in 2013. Before the opening, I gave an interview to a very serious local newspaper that was presented to me as an opportunity to discuss my artwork.

The main artwork I presented in the exhibition was the Odd (Ímpar), Golden Odd (Ímpar Dourada) and the video art (Ímpar), a hyper realistic sculpture of three feminine bodies with -- obviously -- 3 vaginas. Since I used myself as model, the reporter insisted on asking irrelevant questions regarding the life-casting process instead of the ideas behind the artwork. The resulting interview was reduced to the banal description of my naked body and my vagina in contact with the materials for the life-casting.

The exhibition was everything that I had expected. But the newspaper article was utterly disappointing.

Have you ever experienced a creative rut?

Sometimes a creative block may happen, but I think is a mostly a warning from my brain asking for something new. On those occasions, I stop immediately and visit other artists.

Is there a piece you are most proud of?

IdEgoSuperego 2011, bronze

These are three self-portrait sculptures with contorted bodies. This creates voids between the sculptures that allows the interconnection among them.

The title, "IdEgoSuperego", is a reference to Freud's concept of the conscious/unconscious where the ego, which represents reason and rationality, is confronted by the id (libido). The three bronze sculptures support each other with opposing forces that ultimately provide equilibrium to the set. The hands are in a position inspired by oriental religion/symbolism that in Sanskrit is called Tarjani Mudra or Karana Mudra. This is also a hand-gesture that we see in images of Afro-Brazilian religious images and is also similar to what heavy-metal culture uses.





What risks have you taken with your work or for your work?

Since I use and mix different materials, the first time applying a new technique is always a risk. I take care of most of the process myself, and for example, when casting I sometimes forget all of the dangers involved in the process. And, as much as I try to keep alert, I always end up burning my hands a bit. I also do this when cooking in the kitchen!

But aside from the physical risks involved in the process, I guess the greatest risk is always to expose yourself in your artwork... once a piece is out in the world, I feel that somehow my work is a "window" to my thoughts, allowing anyone to see in and pass judgement; yet I continue, like some sort of masochist.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the arts today?

To me, the purpose of art is to expose and discuss human issues and problems...the media or "style" of the artwork is therefore irrelevant. In my work, I decided to show bodies that can't be real... they are manipulated and in total disarray. The perfect finish of almost-industrial manufacturing shifts the viewers' perception from the twisted to the beautiful. My two cents: our alienated society is avid for aesthetics to rapidly fulfill its desires and needs, and that tendency ends up allowing the world to be viewed as a big garbage can.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned throughout your career?

To belong. I started thinking that there was no place in the world for weirdos like me, but now I know there is. Organization and discipline are a big part to keeping on-track. I also learned to

be less self-centered, which seems to be the nature of the artist class. I had the opportunity to interact with, get to know, to be helped by, and to help, many wonderful people who have contributed to my idea of what the world is, and that transpires in my work.

Is there something you are currently working on that you can share with us?

I am working on a new series of sculptures, photography, video and sounds. Currently I am revamping the industrial warehouse where I live and work, and which I rarely leave. In this place I have built a universe of artwork from other artists, some known, others totally unknown, all interacting in the space. I have also left dark, dusty and empty spaces invaded by the local fauna (street cats) that have found unexplored places to hide and protect themselves in the warehouse. It is the essence of this environment that is driving my work these days.

What song is your current obsession or what music do you listen to when you're creating your art?

While working I rarely listen to music, but it is a very stimulating source of inspiration. And it doesn't have to be in the environment, sometimes it plays in my memory.

My playlist (it's always changing):

1. Bitches Brew (Miles Davis)
2. Persian Surgery Dervishes (Terry Riley)
3. Your body (Psychic Tv)
4. Nothing (René Halkett & David J)
5. A Cold Cell (Coil)

Do you have a favourite quote?

"We have art in order not to die of the truth."
Nietzsche

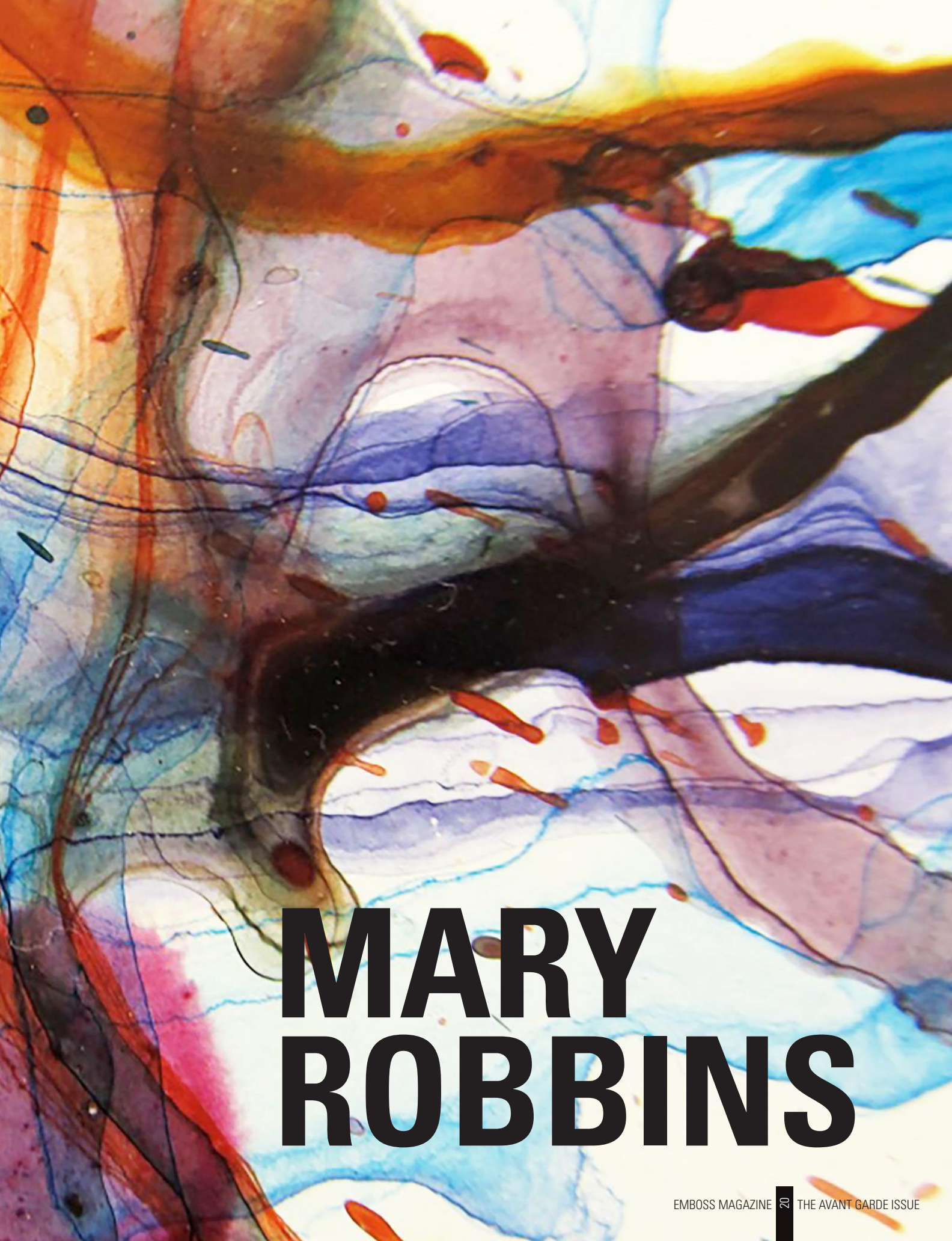
IdEgoSuperego, 2011 – bronze
50 x 67 x 29in (127x170x74cm)
(Inhotim Institute Collection)







In Progress Work 1

An abstract watercolor painting featuring a complex interplay of colors including deep blues, purples, pinks, oranges, and browns. The composition is dominated by thick, expressive brushstrokes and fine, dark lines that crisscross the canvas, creating a sense of movement and depth. The colors are layered and blended, with some areas appearing more saturated than others. The overall effect is one of dynamic energy and artistic spontaneity.

MARY ROBBINS



Mary Robbins
USA

Website
maryrobbins.com

Social Media
instagram.com/maryrobbins/
facebook.com/maryrobbinsartist
twitter.com/maryj_robbins
pinterest.com/maryrobbins/

Biography

Mary Robbins is a mixed media artist who works primarily with abstract painting and sculpture. Her artwork is influenced and inspired by the cycles of nature and organic life forms. She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau in 2015. Mary has had solo exhibitions at The Wright Group and Cateye Glasses Studio in Cape Girardeau. She has participated in group exhibitions at Gallery 109, Catapult Creative House, Rosemary Birkell and Harry L. Crisp II Museum, and the River Campus Art Gallery in Cape Girardeau. Her artwork is part of private collections both nationally and internationally, including Charles R. Stamp Jr., Vice President of Public Affairs Worldwide for Deere & Company. Mary lives and works in Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

Why did you decide to become a creative artist?

The ultimate reason for my decision to become a creative artist was, and continues to be, that I feel a sense of deep emotional and spiritual fulfillment when creating artwork. Being a creative artist is also an opportunity to exercise my talent and strengthen my skills. I also value having the ability to experiment in an infinite number of ways and explore different media and methods of working creatively.

How did you get your start?

I started out doing artwork as a way of relaxing. I would create small pen and ink drawings on sticky notes, doodles in my journals, and very simple watercolor paintings. I was more concerned with personal expression at that time. Over time, the more I created, the more I came to realize that I felt that I needed to pursue being an artist as a career. At that point I enrolled in a Bachelor of Fine Arts program at Missouri State University in order to learn the foundational skills necessary to be a well-rounded artist.

How would you describe your style?

My painting style can be described as non-representational and highly influenced by nature, organic and microscopic forms, texture, color, and emotion. My artistic style is often influenced by the other artwork (sculpture, drawing, digital art, etc.) that I am working on when I am not painting.

My painting style has evolved during my career in relation to appearance, size, and surfaces used. In earlier paintings, I used one or two colors, less than three collaged pieces, and incorporated drawing to a large degree. The paintings were often created on heavy paper or illustration board and were often 18 inches by 24 inches in size or smaller.

More recent paintings use three or more colors, often five or more collaged pieces, with fewer drawn areas. They are created on canvas or hardboard instead of paper and have a wide range of sizes from 8 inches by 10 inches to 30 inches by 40 inches.

Where do you find inspiration?

I find inspiration first and foremost within the many aspects of the natural world such as undersea life, microscopic and cellular organisms, land masses, bodies of water, and chemical reactions. I also find inspiration by going to local art events, talking with other artists to both give and receive feedback and insights, and through social media.

Who are some of your favourite artists?

Some of my favorite artists include Wassily Kandinsky, Mark Rothko, Rikke Darling, Chris Kahler, Crystal Wagner, Ellen Jewett and Mandy Blaney. Each of these artists have influenced me in multiple ways. I was especially influenced by Kandinsky's book *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*.

Can you explain your creative process?

My creative process begins with prepping my studio space and canvases or other surfaces that I am planning to use. Any materials that may be needed are gathered near the work area. Each painting starts with putting down the initial layer. This layer can be a variety

of different materials. Then once it is dry additional layers are added to that layer, allowing the composition to change and grow. Some layers are manipulated before leaving them to dry. The entire painting is re-evaluated with each additional layer and additions or changes are made as needed. The final part of my creative process involves adding any details and a final evaluation of the painting. In some instances, I need to live with the painting for a while in order to find what it needs to be complete in my mind.

What mediums do you work with?

To create my paintings, I most often work with ink, acrylic ink, acrylic paint, gesso, acrylic sealer, varnish, clear plastic, adhesives, canvas, board, and paper.

Where do you create your art?

I create my art in my home studio. I like to create in a calm and comfortable environment. Organization of materials is important to me and helps to keep the creativity flowing. I decide on a music selection that connects to my current mood and then I take a moment to focus my thoughts and intention on the artwork I am about to work on. I try to open my mind to new possibilities.

What has been your biggest art faux-pas?

My biggest mishap/mistake relating to art would have to be unknown allergies to materials. While experimenting, I had several instances when I did not know that I was allergic to a material until I was in contact with it for a long period of time while creating artwork. Some of these materials include sawdust, plaster, wool, raffia, liquin and turpentine. On a few occasions I have had rather severe side effects from those materials and have to avoid them completely. These allergies have a huge impact on what materials I can and do use.

Is there a piece you are most proud of?

I am most proud of my painting, "Change". This painting was a huge leap in terms of my painting style and creating it pushed my artwork into a new place. It was also the first painting that I had completed that was larger in size. This painting helped me to see that there is value in letting go of expectations within the art making process and not being in control of every outcome.

What risks have you taken with your work or for your work?

Taking risks with my artwork is something that I do on a regular basis. These risks typically involve working with my usual materials in a completely different way than normal. Alternately, I take risks by working with new materials in many different ways.

Artist Statement

Communication is essential to every function of the natural world. The inspiration for my paintings comes primarily from the ways in which organisms relay information with one another. I have been especially influenced by the less visible modes of communication in nature such as with plant life, undersea creatures, and microscopic organisms. The mixed-media used incorporates indirect painting with direct painting and collage. Using experimental methods of color application pushes past the established boundaries of more traditional ways of painting.



Aquatic

I think that creative risk-taking is the best way to find new and better ways of working and to uncover new aspects of my artistic voice. It can be great fun to break out of what I have been doing creatively for a while and discover something new.

Is there something you are currently working on that you can share with us?

Yes, I am working on a new series of paintings for an upcoming solo exhibition later in 2016, and will include a few in-progress images of those paintings.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing art today?

I feel that the most important issue facing art today is the need to increase understanding, support, and respect, for those who chose to pursue careers as artists. This is especially needed within the population not already associated with or knowledgeable about art.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned throughout your career?

The most valuable lesson that I have learned is to be open to new possibilities and along with this to experiment as much as possible. Experiment with things that may not seem to make sense. Find new ways of using the mediums already being used.

Are you involved in any upcoming events or shows?

One of my sculptures will be included in an upcoming group exhibition Subliminal: Hidden Messages, a National Juried Exhibition. It will be held at the Arts Council of Southeast Missouri, in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, from June 3, 2016 - July 30, 2016. I also have a solo exhibition of paintings scheduled for November 14, 2016 - December 12, 2016 at the Cape Public Library.

Tell us your best joke.

Q. Why did the artist cross the road?

A. To see from the other side.

What song is your current obsession or what music do you listen to when you're creating your art?

The music genres I listen to most commonly includes: Alt-Rock from the late 90s through today, Post-Rock/Ambient Music, Electronic Pop and Pop Rock.

Do you have a favourite quote?

"When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be." - Lao Tzu



Change



Make Up: Marija Radovanovic
Hair Styling: Kristina Dolovac
Assistant: Ivica Djokic Lazar Stanojevic
Model: Jana Knezevic
Photographer: Marko Stamatovic



Marija Djokic
Serbia

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twitter.com/DarmaraHandmade

Biography

Marija Djokic was born in Jagodina, Serbia. She graduated in 2010 from the faculty of Philology and Arts in the department of Graphic Design. After graduation she started to explore design, and manufactured leather jewelry and accessories. In 2012 she started her own label, Darmara.

How did you get your start?

Actually, I don't remember when I started with all this. I was always making some sort of jewelry -- in high school I learned some manufacturing skills, then in college everything got much more serious. Although I studied graphic design, my love of making jewelry and stage costumes was always present.

How would you describe your style?

At first my jewelry was more ethnic. I combined different semi-precious stones, glass, pearls which were sewn to leather... everything was colorful and cheerful. As time went on I developed new rules of the game. I often play with shapes, design, and modes of production. I relax and allow my imagination to wander.

Can you talk about your unique approach to the creative process?

It often happens that I get an idea during other activities, and when it happens I have a sketchbook near me to draw a very first, fast capture of the idea. When I begin production later, I open that sketchbook look at that first sketch. Usually I just choose one element to focus on in the future accessory. When I fully realize the idea, I make a paper-pattern then transfer it to leather. Other times I will freehand the design onto the leather. After I cut into the leather I begin the process of attaching stones or metal elements by rivets, glue and stitching.

TRANSFORMATION WITHIN OURSELVES

Depending on what I'm doing, the whole process of development can last from a few hours up to a few weeks.

Where do you find inspiration?

In everything and everywhere. Art itself is such a wide field full of very talented artists, painters, sculptors, as well as and designers from all art spheres... they all inevitably affect my creation.

What mediums do you work with?

Mostly with genuine leather.

Where do you create your art?

Everything I produce and/or work on, I do at home. My husband and I have a common room for work. He is a musician, and most of the time we spend together is in that room. I have my desk at one end and he practices at his keyboard on the opposite end. Music is always around us, and almost always creates a higher quality of work, but there are moments when silence is desirable or necessary.

What has been your biggest art faux-pas?

I think that people should never regret anything in their lives, even current failures.

I think that every mistake or failure makes us stronger, and we learn from those moments.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the arts today?

The fact that art is not respected... in my country at least.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned throughout your career?

I have not had a long career, but I know that patience is the most important thing, and that an artist must be dedicated to be successful.

Are you involved in any upcoming events/shows?

Yeah, my work is a part of an advertising campaign for upcoming "Balkan Art Fashion Event"

Do you have a favourite quote?

"The road is straight; your legs are bendy."





Artist Statement

Everything we see, hear, feel, and touch, stays in us. It reacts, forms a certain shape: it makes us the way we are. I strive to explore our inner emotions, passions and wishes. Humane and inhumane. Past and future. I turn to primitive things which are within every one of us. We carry them, fight them more or less successfully, and give in to them. Those are the things which rule our lives, make us laugh, cry, love or hate until we become the reflection of our inner content. We hide and repress some of that content. At times we defend ourselves, at other times, we attack. Oh, the temptations! All around us and in us! We are loved and hated because of all these things. They provoke us or bring us to our senses; conceal or hide... play with us and transform us. That's how I came up with the name for this collection – *Transformation within Ourselves*.

The whole collection of jewelry represents the reflection of our inner world. As a whole, this collection hides us and defends us; it makes us stronger. This collection is a reflection of the spiritual and mental condition of every one of us. It changes with us and our consciousness.

Make Up: Marija Radovanovic
Hair Styling: Kristina Dolovac
Assistant: Ivica Djokic Lazar Stanojevic
Model: Jana Knezevic
Photographer: Marko Stamatovic







ODE TO JACKSON

Ian Compton
Canada

Website
ian-compton.com

Social Media
instagram: @icfototez
twitter: @iancfoto

Biography
I love anything to do with fashion. It's like air to me. I'm obsessed with creating more!

How did you get your start?
Studied Media Arts and Photography at Humber College in Toronto, have been working across Canada since 1996. Once I was in Media Arts I realized that the photography part was the only one I really loved. Through my part-time job at a photo lab, I was getting work long before I went through the photography program.

Can you talk about your unique approach to the creative process?
I feel I excel best when the themes are off the wall or a bit crazy, I need my work to really grab my attention and obsess me.

All the planning in the world means nothing when you get there. My shoots are discussed with the whole team, weeks and days before we look at inspirational ideas for styling, lighting, make up and hair. We try and include the model in the discussion as well. Once we're all on set we look at what we've got and make small adjustments to all the plans so it works better all around with what we have.

What themes occur/reoccur in your work?
Throwing paint at people.

Where do you find inspiration?
Sometimes I see other photographers work and I get inspired to mix a few ideas together. Sometimes I have ideas come to me while I'm doing the dishes. Sometimes I'll spend a day just thinking about shoots and writing down what inspirations come to me.

What mediums do you work with?
I love digital, but I also like to dabble in Polaroids.

Where do you create your art?
I have a live/work studio near High Park in Toronto. It's all vintage furniture with a cat and a bunny.

What has been your biggest art faux-pas?
I've ripped my pants on a few shoots! Fell off a rock into Lake Ontario, camera in hand, during a shoot with a male model.





Have you ever experienced a creative rut?

I have clinical depression. I am unmedicated because I don't believe drugs are the first or second answer to depression. I use photography to pull myself out of it. I make myself scour the internet, looking at fashion images, until the drive to keep moving comes back.

Is there a piece you are most proud of?

I have a series I call "The War Between Light and Dark." It's my friend Cassandra Love painted both black and white and fighting herself. Love that shoot.

What risks have you taken with your work or for your work?

Broken ladders, blocking traffic, break and entering, defacing public property, and public indecency, apparently.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the arts today?

Copyright infringement and the fact that no one wants to pay for anything. Also, no one seems to be able to realize when a photographer/some-douche-with-a-camera is pure shit.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned throughout your career?

Always feed your team. Fed people are happy people, and it shows that you value them.

Are you involved in any upcoming events/shows?

RAW Natural Born Artists (<https://www.rawartists.org/toronto>) July 7 & 8 and August 26 at the MOD Club.

What song is your current obsession or what music do you listen to when you're creating your art?

88.1 Indie 88 Toronto, most of my Photoshop work is done accompanied by Die Antwoord.

Do you have a favourite quote?

"We're all talking monkeys living on a ball that's spinning through the fucking galaxy, and it never comes up in conversation" — Joe Rogan



Hair & Make-Up: Lisa Arsenault, www.pinchcosmetics.com
Wardrobe: Bunni Empire & Lisa Arsenault
(all wardrobe vintage from Value Village,
Mrs. Huizenga, Toronto local vintage shops)
Model: Katrina Rose, Seven Models, www.sevenmodels.ca
Photographer: Ian Compton, www.ian-compton.com



ANNA
TSVELL

Artist Statement

Art. Champagne. Rock`n`Roll.
It is my motto,
my state of mind,
and the main dimension
of my works.





Anna Tsvell
Russia

Website/Portfolio
annatsvell.com

Social Media

facebook.com/annatsvell/
instagram.com/anna_tsvell/
twitter.com/AnnaTsvell

Biography

My name is Anna, a painter and illustrator. I was born and raised in Russia, then lived in England and Gibraltar. I am currently based back in Russia, but I'm planning to have a studio with an ocean view.

Why did you decide to become a creative artist?

I've had a strong desire to draw since childhood. I had several jobs before I decided to become a painter and illustrator, but one day (it was 2012, as far as I remember) I made one of the most important decisions in my life – I became a full-time artist.

How did you get your start?

We are living in a Social Media Era so that helped me a lot. I drew and posted my works on my Facebook page, and received lots of positive feedback. Then I was asked to draw my first illustration for money. It was a children's book cover about Iceland. I call that my serious start.

How would you describe your style?

I draw girls' portraits. My girls are sad and bad; a kind of bohemian melancholy and some bad rock n' rolla behaviour. I can see incredible progress while comparing works I made even a year ago... I think that's pretty natural.

Where do you find inspiration?

I am always listening to music while I'm drawing. Movies and travelling are my greatest inspirations.

Who are some of your favourite artists? Do they influence your work?

Modern ones: Brian M. Viveros, Dustin Bailard, Barnaby Whitfield, Matthew Gaulke, Dilkabear, Charmaine Olivia, Chiara Bautista and many others. And of course Frida Kahlo, Amedeo Modigliani, Vincent Van Gogh, etc. They are inspiring me to be better, and to evolve my own style as much as possible.

Can you explain your creative process?

If I'm working on a commissioned work, I'll start with the development of the patron's ideas and adapting it into my personal style. If it is a personal painting or illustration, I just begin by drawing the eyes, and then everything else creates itself.

What mediums do you work with?

Acrylics, watercolours, ink, graphite, and professional markers on canvases, and tight watercolour paper.

Where do you create your art?

I work in my small but cozy studio, which is situated in my apartment. It is messy there. The floor and walls are covered in small paint splatters. I am always listening to music while drawing and looking out the window (I live on a high floor so the view is really great). My mood depends on the music I'm listening to. My orange cat Mr. Fox is always near me; sleeping or playing with my pencils.

Is there a piece you are most proud of? Why that particular piece?

Yes. In 2013 I drew a girl with dark bob hairstyle and a cigarette in her lips. Now I understand that the painting would start my serious art career. Jim Jarmusch, an outstanding modern filmmaker whom I adore, owns this painting now and I don't think it could have a better owner.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing art today?

You can call me a strange artist but I really don't understand why art needs to address any important issues. Art is Art.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned throughout your career?

Just draw. Draw every day, every hour. Only by constantly drawing will you find your style.

What song is your current obsession or what music do you listen to when you're creating your art?

I've been addicted to Rock music since my childhood, thanks to my parents. And the song I love right now is *SQÜRL* by Francine Says... That's my addition to your playlist.



Inner Demons Feeding



Pink Satin



Night Rider







It's All Your Fault Mary

PVC - foil sculpture - height 60 cm. The material is very interesting to me because it allows for the possibility to create a husk of a sculpture. When a snake sheds its skin, it leaves it behind. I guess the process happens at a secure place because it is very vulnerable and intimate. We leave behind our PVC skin with all the products we use in our daily life.



HANNES SEEBACHER

Hannes Seebacher

Austria

Website

hannesseebacher.at

Social Media

Instagram: Seebacherh

Facebook: facebook.com/hannesseebacher

Biography

Hannes Seebacher was born in Kufstein in 1969, and was employed as a dental technician until 1996. He has been working as a self-employed autodidact artist in fine arts since 1997. Seebacher lived between Berlin and Tyrol from 1998 to 2002, and permanently moved to Berlin in 2003. He was featured in the 2003 opening of the gallery OPEN along with Mrs. Alexandra Rockelmann. He was awarded the *Neptun* award for working within the theme of water for three years in Germany, in 2006. In 2009 and 2010 he made a trip through Asia, which inspired his current project, *Child of Play*.

How did you get your start?

I've been drawing since childhood. Art has always been important to me.

How would you describe your style?

My style is very experimental - I never wanted to be just a painter, sculptor, photographer, or whatever. To explore human nature and nature in itself through different media, was, and still is, my goal.

Can you talk about your unique approach to the creative process?

I could say I kept my inner child alive, which to me means being curious about everything in front of me. I love the divine moment of losing myself in time and space in my workflow.

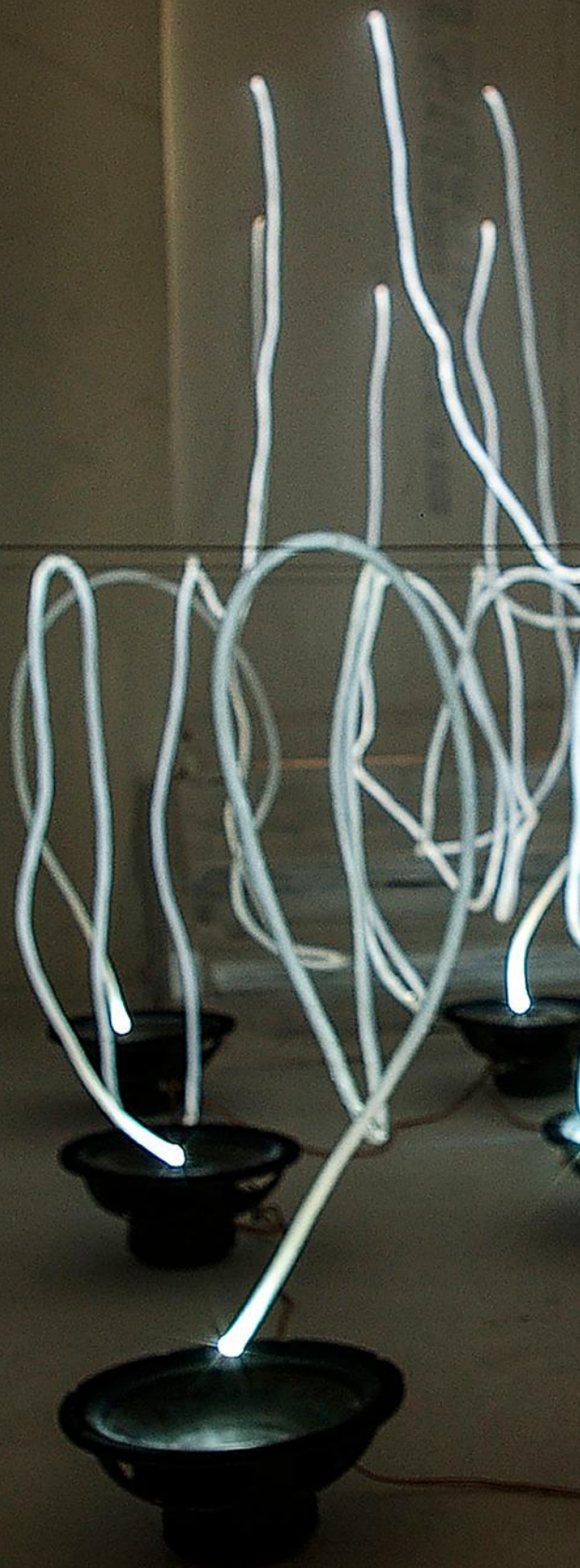
What themes occur/reoccur in your work?


I started with typical questions like: Who I am? Why do I live? What happens after I die? Mythology and psychology were the tools guiding me through these themes. Psychological translations of fairy tales together by Dr. Dorothea Matthews based on the work of Joseph Campbell or Verena Cast gave me a foundation to work off of.

Where do you find inspiration?

Most of my time I spend in nature is next to the water. Water is my master! I've visited most of the European Water Congresses with speakers like Joan Davis, Johannes Lauterwasser, Masaru Emoto, etc.

In my youth I was influenced by the paintings of Egon Schiele. When I started with art, my heroes were Nam June Paik, Joseph Beuys, Nietzsche, Goethe, Schiller, and Novalis.





The biggest impact for me and my art came from Viktor Schauberg, who was an Austrian forester who spent most of his life exploring water.

What mediums do you work with?

Generally, I work with every material, there is nothing I'm afraid of.

Have you ever experienced a creative rut?

For me, it was always about having the right balance between "doing nothing" and being patient. I need time to materialize a work.

Is there a piece you are most proud of?

Why that particular piece?

For me, it is difficult to be proud of myself, but I love the work *fishcity*. The idea was very simple. I remember it was spawned from washing glasses in a sink filled with water when I was a boy. If you turn a glass upside down below the water and you pull it out backwards, the vacuum will hold the water inside. This was somehow a magical experience for me. One of my first questions I had was: "Would a fish swim into that on his own free will if he could?"

What risks have you taken with your work or for your work?

The installation *black mesa* was a tower built out of 6 tons of brown coal briquettes without any cement or glue and was visited by more than 2500 people. There were lots of difficulties to get security permissions for it, to be sure that it was structurally stable, and with all the technical equipment, installing became a safety risk for myself.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the arts today?

Artists not being true to themselves and their vision. Too much art is being produced just to be put on the market.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned throughout your career?

When I won the water sculpture competition from the city of Austria and SPAR. I was so happy at the beginning and so frustrated at the end. Things which were not in the contract, but officially promised by handshake, never came true, so we ended up in court. I lost and had to pay, even though I finished my work. But the water sculpture is still there, and it still works!

Are you involved in any upcoming events/shows?

I will probably take part in an upcoming group show curated by my friend Nick Treadwell, at his gallery, in September, here in Vienna. The theme will be superhumanism meets Hieronymus Bosch.

Is there something you are currently working on that you can share with us?

After finishing my next project, *Child at Play*, in Düsseldorf, I will begin work on a PVC sculpture.

What song is your current obsession or what music do you listen to when you're creating your art?

I love all sounds that come from water: raindrops, bubbling springs, small rivers... The last three songs played in my studio were: Madrugada - *Strange Color Blue*
Anja Lechner - *Sayyid Chant / Hymn No 7 / Dance No. 3*
Radiohead - *A Moon Shaped Pool*

Do you have a favourite quote?

"Only dead fishes swim with the stream."

The Dancing Sugar Cubes

6 x 8m light guiding hose. 6 loudspeakers, each with 3 sugarcubes frequenzgenerator coupled with light sensor and amplifier. It is sunlight which is caught by the light guiding hoses outside the house. The sunlight flows through the hoses to the sugar cubes in the speakers and illuminates the whole room. The intensity of the sugar cubes' movement depends on the changing light.



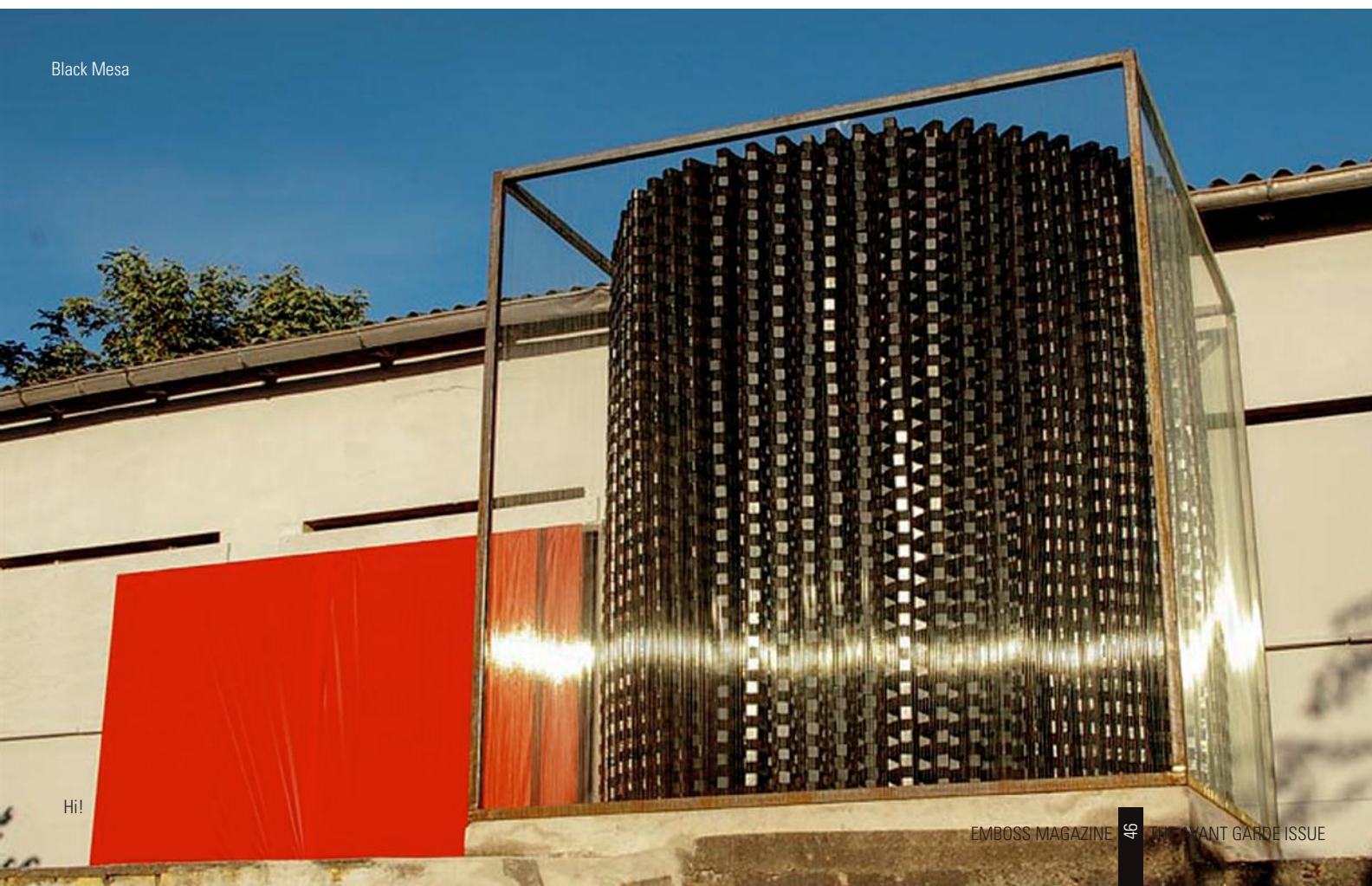
Fishcity

An aquarium mounted in a pond.



OATTAO

Acrylglas sculpture 200 x 180 x 3 cm
GS Acrylglas grinded and polished



Black Mesa

Hi!

A close-up photograph of a vintage green cassette tape. The tape is oriented horizontally. A white rectangular label is affixed to the top half of the tape's body. On this label, the name "Greg Reitman" is handwritten in black ink. The label also features horizontal lines for additional text. To the left of the label, on the green plastic of the tape, the words "Made in France" are printed vertically. Below the label, the words "cassette hi-fi low noise" are printed in a light green, sans-serif font. The tape's reels and clear window are visible in the center. The background is a solid, light blue color.

Greg Reitman

cassette hi-fi low noise



Greg Reitman

USA

Website

reitman.la

Social Media

[instagram.com/flyingblynd/](https://www.instagram.com/flyingblynd/)

[facebook.com/flyingblynd](https://www.facebook.com/flyingblynd)

twitter.com/flyingblynd

Biography

Greg Reitman is a video artist living in Los Angeles. He has a ridiculous obsession with public access TV, academic films, drive-in movie ads & 1980's computer art. This has fueled Greg's desire to find these gems online and create video art that inspires. These clips are then disassembled, distorted and manipulated until a new story is born. His eye for unique visual content combined with vivid colors and eclectic music gives new meaning to each and every piece Greg creates.

How did you get your start?

Flying Blynd is my Instagram account where I create 15 second video art installations. The project started as a collaboration between myself and Alejandro Nieto, a close friend and incredible NYC musician. I had just moved to Los Angeles in 2013 after living in NYC/Brooklyn for 15 years. We wanted to start a project together from opposite coasts as a way to stay in touch and start creating. I was brand new to LA trying to find my way with a lot of downtime those first few months while looking for editing work. I've always loved Instagram and they had just enabled the 15 second video upload feature. Alejandro was totally on board and was the first music contributor to the project. I had never created video art before but I did have a pretty strong vision of the aesthetic I wanted to go for. I named it Flying Blynd mostly because I had no clue what I was doing though I was pretty confident it was going to be a unique project.

How would you describe your style?

I love using bold and heavily saturated colors in all of my work.

When I first started creating video art, I used mostly red, yellow and blue colors. Lately, I've been experimenting with various shades of primary colors by trying to find some subtle differences. Lots of my work has been based around a certain era of time so I love trying to convey that through the use of color. As an example, for art I create with a theme of the 1980's, I'll use a lot of neon green to create that sort of vibe.

Can you talk about your unique approach to the creative process?

My videos are free-form and never really adhere to a strict narrative. There are plenty of movies, reality shows (debatable) and stuff on TV if you want a real linear story. Frankly, not everything you watch needs a beginning, middle and end. My videos tend to be thematically based -- it's all pretty subjective. My approach to creating my video art starts with music. The first thing I do is listen. Once I get a certain vibe combined with how I'm feeling that day, I start pulling together an idea for a theme. I then find public domain and stock video footage on various websites. I'm totally into anything related to early academic films, public access TV, drive-in movie ads and 80's computer art.

What themes occur/reoccur in your work?

Themes in my work correlate with what's happening in the world around us and how I'm feeling. I love exploring themes of greed, fulfillment, rage and compassion.

Where do you create your art?

Having recently moved from a 650 square foot apartment in Brooklyn to a home in LA, I don't even know what to do with all this space! It's by no means a big house, but I do have a man cave -- I mean... home office -- where I create all my videos.

Where do you find inspiration?

I'm a recent transplant to LA from Brooklyn. Needless to say, I'm totally digging this weather, being outside and exploring new neighborhoods. I find inspiration when I'm immersed in a totally new environments and experiencing unique things.

Are you involved in any upcoming events/shows?

I just did a video installation at the Eclectic Music Festival in LA. This summer I'm exhibiting at an Art show in El Segundo and a few galleries around Los Angeles and Europe.

Have you ever experienced a creative rut?

My version of writer's block is trying to stay focused. Doing that for an extended period of time is really hard for me sometimes. Unless I'm in edit mode. When I'm actually cutting the footage and deep into the project, I can go for hours. It's the initial finding and download footage from the web that's sometimes challenging. When this happens, I tend to just get up and change up my surroundings. I need to get away from the computer and Internet for a bit.

Is there a piece you are most proud of?

I'm really proud of my latest work, *Nourishment for the Mind*, a video art piece inspired by Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator*. The 13-minute video explores themes of greed, status and the pursuit of a fulfilled life. The installation includes original music soundtracks from independent artists spanning the globe.

What risks have you taken with your work or for your work?

I tend to be pretty risk-averse in my day to day life, but when it comes to my art, I'm the complete opposite. If it's weird and unique, bring it on. I'm constantly challenging myself to improve each and every day. If I'm not changing it up, the videos will start feeling stale and I'll lose the creative momentum I strive for.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the arts today?

Outside of the art world, video art is still a relatively new medium despite being around for quite some time. It's not as tangible as a physical piece of art so it's a new concept for many people. I'm confident that when more traditional galleries, museums and public art spaces start to embrace this medium, people will have a better understanding of what it is and why it matters.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned throughout your career?

I think Woody Allen said it best. "80% of success is showing up." It's totally true. Hard work, persistence and of course talent, goes a long way.

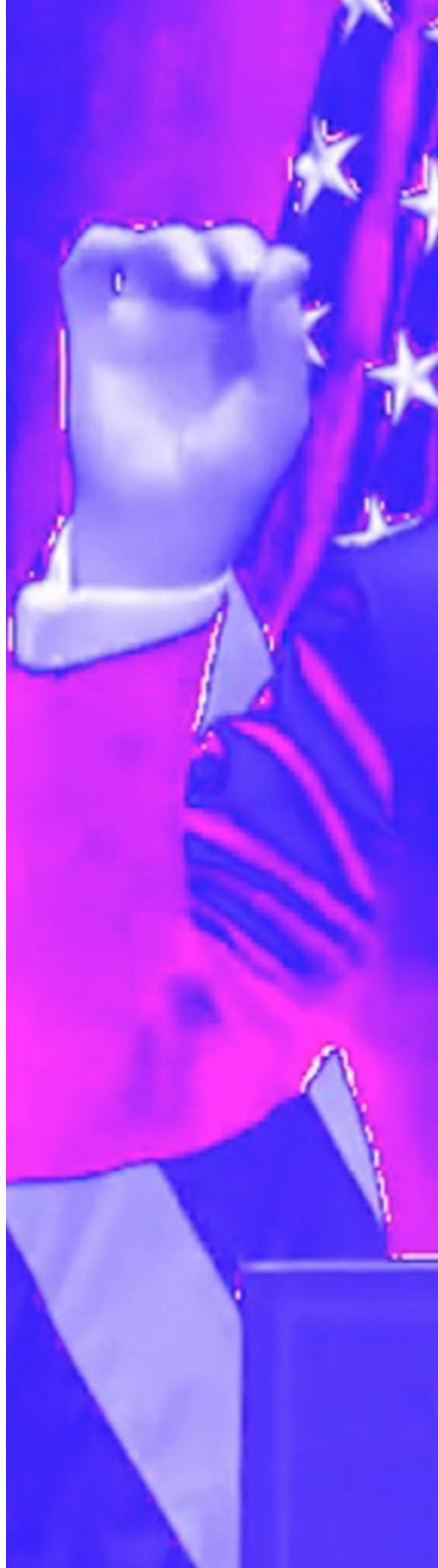
Tell us your best joke.

A horse walks into a bar and the bartender politely asks "Hey, why the long face?"

Do you have a favourite quote?

"Long you live and high you fly
And smiles you'll give and tears you'll cry
And all you touch and all you see
Is all your life will ever be."

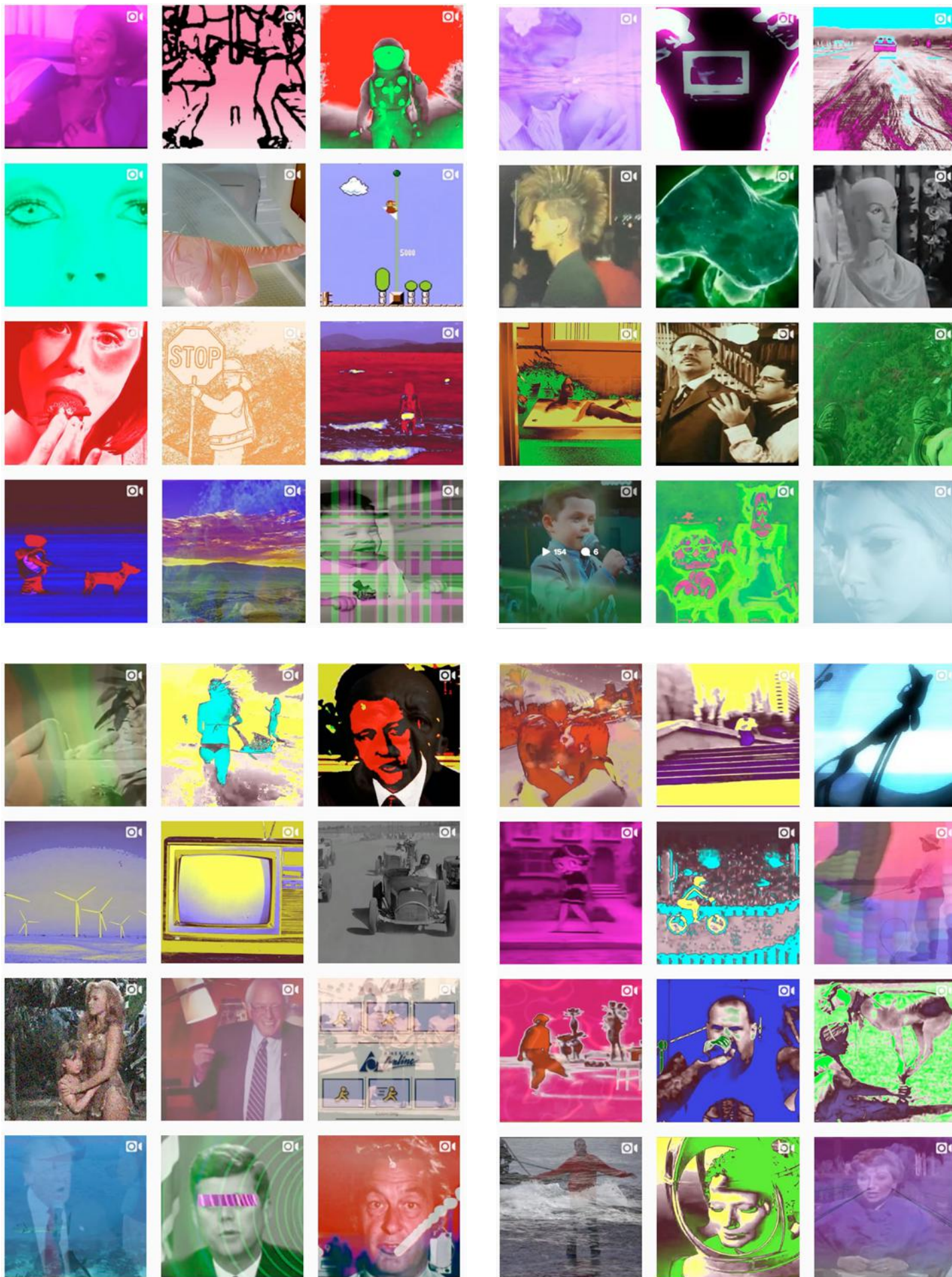
— Pink Floyd





TRUMP







Photographer: Michelle Beck at Objektiv Photography (@objektiv.ca, www.objektiv.ca)

Models: Rae & Zahara at Iland Models (@ilandmodels, www.ilandmodels.com);
and Steffi Kay (@steffi_kay, www.thesentimentalistsmagic.com)

Wardrobe Styling: Steffi Kay (@steffi_kay, www.thesentimentalistsmagic.com)

Make Up & Hair: Emma Hughes (@emmahughesmakeup, www.emmahughesmakeup.com);

Caudia Coelho (@claudiacoelhoartistry, www.claudiacoelho.com), Steffi Kay

Location: Metropolis Living (@metropolisliving, www.metropolis-living.com)



WELCOME TO METROPOLIS



Make Up, Hair and Styling: Steffi Kay



Make Up & Hair: Claudia Coelho; Styling: Steffi Kay



Make Up & Hair: Emma Hughes; Styling: Steffi Kay



Make Up & Hair: Emma Hughes, Claudia Coelho; Styling: Steffi Kay







SUMO BUNNI

Artist Statement

My work focuses on unveiling the multiple levels of human and humanness. My goal is to create visuals that push thought into new realm and transcend obvious assumptions. As a species, we are evolving at an intriguingly fast pace with a limitless trajectory. I am passionately interested in quantum mechanics, the psyche, theatre, animal nature, technology, communication and ancient history. Illusion and truth travel in unison – as an artist, it is essential to reveal some of those intertwining moments.





Table Of Content
14x20in Watercolor on Yupo



On Two Legs
14x9 Watercolor Yupo



Shari Weschler Rubeck
USA

Website
artinmind.org

Social Media
facebook.com/SumoBunni/
instagram.com/sumobunni/?hl=en
twitter.com/SumoBunni
twitter.com/artinmindusa

Biography
American Artist, Shari Weschler Rubeck (aka Sumo Bunni) holds a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art, with a concentration in painting and art history. She currently resides in Rhode Island where she operates a gallery and curates over twelve exhibits a year. She administrates for a real-estate brokerage, managing: marketing, website development, social platforms and event planning. Recent solo exhibitions include Woodman Shimko, Carver Hill, Candita Clayton & Alexey Von Schlippe Galleries. Group exhibits include Bunnycutlet, Skylight & Dacia Galleries and Call For Bushwick in NYC, Nave in Boston MA, Love Art Fair in Toronto, Canada and AAF Stockholm, Sweden. Publications include Visual Overture Magazine, Fresh Paint Magazine 2015, 6YL Magazine 2014 and 2015 which were both accompanied by pop up exhibitions in Australia. Rubeck's Professional experience also includes studio assistant, Artist-In-Residence and elementary arts education through her company Artrageous Adventures.

How did you get your start?
At ten years old, I was unable to dance for about a year. During that down time, I was given the opportunity to study privately with several local & internationally established visual artists in New York. I returned to ballet, but knew that visual art had become my seat in life and attended The Maryland Institute College of Art; graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. In Baltimore, I continued to exhibit,

but accepted a position as a studio assistant for a year and then as an administrator for an aerospace engineering firm for seven. Eventually, that wore thin and I launched myself into teaching art to children, and poured my whole self into advancing my personal career.

How would you describe your style?

My style tends to be figural narrative, whimsical with tones of cynicism and surrealism. I used to create layered, textural pieces with tremendous time spent pushing paint – covering and uncovering, starting and restarting. Out of a necessity to save time, money and sanity, my process evolved and became much more direct and meticulous.

Can you talk about your unique approach to the creative process?

I am always looking, listening, jotting, snapping images; sketchbooks do not contain beautiful finished results – they are a wild storm of ideas and connections. Lines, quick renderings, future projects, paint colors, poems, dreams, visions and notes are sprawled throughout. I assemble, conduct model shoots, collect, research and rearrange objects and parts. Occasionally I utilize Photoshop as a tool to tweak color and placement. I never can work on one painting or drawing at a time. The more that's in-process, the better I feel about overall progress. There is a substantial amount of time spent looking & 'mentally painting'. When preparing for solo exhibitions, my studio fills with close-

to-completion imagery and then all wraps up quickly but with great intensity, towards the end.

What themes occur/reoccur in your work?

The psyche, the ego, theatre and the Bunni – my storyteller. My art is most often about deep rooted human issues and peculiar undercurrents of this world. The Bunnies are visually more light-hearted, but stem from cynical places. My intense focus is based upon our current place in history; where we began versus where we are heading – particularly considering our forms of communication, ancient messages and technology.

Where do you find inspiration?

Visiting galleries, museums, social media, reading, music, hikes in nature, life, family, work, strange connections that naturally occur in life, yet often are overlooked. Inspiration is a constant for me.

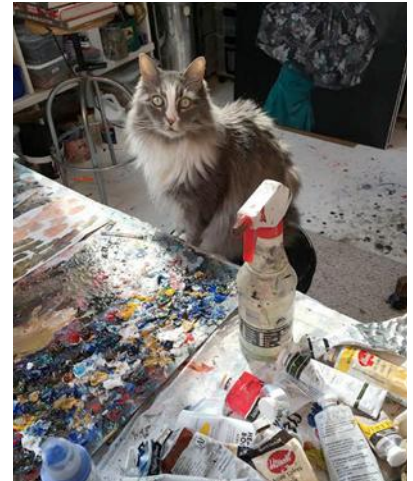
What mediums do you work with?

After years of over-saturation, I am no longer able to use oil based product. The default is water based. Acrylic, watercolor, graphite, charcoal are my staples. Graphite has always been my most favored medium.

Where do you create your art?

I work in an above-garage, loft-style, sky-lit studio, with my devoted Studio Cat, relatively loud music & a strong cappuccino. Having two

teenaged children, interruptions are inevitable. But I've learned to save the most intense work for when alone on designated studio days.



What has been your biggest art faux-pas?

I made the mistake of sending subpar prints to a gallery that was interested in my work after receiving slides. It was the year that Internet went main stream and before imagery was accepted digitally. I installed a high end slide scanner into my computer, but had not learned how best to translate the imagery onto paper.

Have you ever experienced a creative rut?

Not really ever a rut, just life getting in the way. If possible, I'll take a short breather after

CopyCopy
Watercolor on Yupo 14x20



preparing for solos - getting the ball rolling again may take a few days.

Is there a piece you are most proud of?

Alter Ego #1. It snuck up on me in the early hours one winter morning of 2009, turned my world upside down and took me into new directions.

What risks have you taken with your work or for your work?

Just the process of producing art can feel risky and dangerous. That moment where I am about to go into the most tedious part of a painting and the fear of making a fatal mistake can be harrowing. Launching art into the world is always invigorating but any time an artist submits or exhibits, we are putting ourselves at risk; our insides are out - exposed for everyone to see.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the arts today?

That is an absolutely loaded question. Big money, over-materialism, social media & technology, I believe, are front-runners. On a

minute-to-minute basis our footing is shifting. I question some of what is now considered Art. Even just the act of pretending to be an artist is Art. It is a movement of course (for the history books) but to me, there is a considerable amount of shallowness.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned throughout your career?

Rejection happens, get over it. You cannot make everyone happy – that's a good thing. Encourage other people's successes; positivity circles back. Be cautious but take chances, they always lead somewhere. Be selective, persistent and professional. Stay in touch with your galleries, clients, and on top of social media.

Are you involved in any upcoming events/shows?

I will be exhibiting a solo show at Woodman Shimko Gallery this summer in Provincetown, MA and I'm just finishing up a solo show at Candita Clayton Gallery in Providence, RI.

What song is your current obsession or what music do you listen to when you're creating your art?

I listen to mix of EDM, dubstep, Indian dubstep, rock, rock/rap, alternative, eighties, seventies, club/house, hip hop, pop, funk... Pandora and Spotify are trusty companions. Alex Clare, Alt-J, Beastie Boys, The Blow, Borns, Brooks, Cake, Coldplay, Coleman Hell, Dan Croll, David Bowie, Prince, Death Cab For Cutie, Depeche Mode, Duran Duran, Foals, Halsey, Jack White, Lily Allen, The Knife, Marilyn Manson, Nine Inch Nails, Young The Giant, Melanie Martinez, Moby, Miike Snow, Rolling Stones, Daya, She Wants Revenge, Sia, Simple Minds, Soul Coughing, Twenty One Pilots, Walk The Moon, White Stripes, Willy Moon, Spoon, Robert DeLong...

Do you have a favourite quote?


"I hope the exit is joyful and hope never to return" - Frida Kahlo





As We Leave
60inx48in Acrylic on Linen





Juliana Merino

Artist Statement

Through my work, I am creating a world which is predominantly female in all forms. Society uses the female figure as a transparent slide to project onto it its strongest desires and revulsions. My work creates a stark contrast between the idea of feminine fragility and the unpolished views of subculture. Juxtaposing bold tattoo flash against ethereal forms and figures, I exploit exaggerations of gender and beauty standards. Bringing awareness of what it means to be a “marked” female, my subject matter blurs the line between lowbrow and fine art. My palette and process are strongly influenced by my upbringing: Latin and New Orleans culture and traditional tattoo aesthetic. My color choices signify the separation of gender — baby pinks and muted blues — paired with bold flat color and outlines that speak to a history of tattoos; fire red, heavy black and stark whites. I create spaces where old world masters and religious icons are sharply contrasted by tattoo culture and strong female imagery, creating talismanic characters existing in transcendental environments. I combine disparate images with tattoo elements, transforming popular culture into bizarre studies of beauty, gender, transience, sexual decadence, issues of separatism, and of biological determinism, individual and collective identity.



Caught My Hands in the Death Machine



Organ



Sacred Lamb



Death Before Us



Julianne Merino
USA

Website
JulianneMerino.com

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Biography

Julianne Merino was born in Hickory, North Carolina in 1991. She attended Pioneer Valley Performing Arts High School in South Hadley, Massachusetts with a concentration in Visual Arts, and graduated from Massachusetts College of Art & Design with a BFA in Printmaking. She currently lives in New Orleans where she teaches printmaking at the New Orleans Glassworks & Printmaking Studio. She also writes for ART+DESIGN Magazine.

How did you get your start?

Ever since I was a child, I've known I wanted to be an artist. My father is a designer and my mother is a photographer, so I was lucky enough to be raised in a creative household. I was also fortunate enough to go through schools dedicated to the arts at a young age, which really influenced my creativity and process.

How would you describe your style?

With my style, I really love to incorporate playful juxtapositions. It's a heavy combination of tattoo imagery, references to old masters, and a mix of the ethereal. It's dark and it's feminine, it's fluid and it's constructed line work. I used to have a really heavy hand within my line work – it left little to the imagination. Once I started defining my process and materials more and more, it allowed me to loosen up and work more with layering and transparency. I've grown to evoke more than to explain.

Can you talk about your unique approach to the creative process?

My work is therapy for me. It really starts with emotions. It's the only way I can really convey what I am thinking. Most of the time, I have

no idea what the end result will look like; I just know how I'm feeling in that present moment. Iconography has a lot to do with the images and characters I create. I use imagery as stand-ins for emotions and situations. I just start drawing and slowly start layering and piecing together paint and collage through playing with vellum.

What themes occur/reoccur in your work?

Themes of hierarchy related to sexuality, gender norms, personal identity, lowbrow and fine art, beauty and disgust.

Where do you find inspiration?

Besides my personal relationships and political views, I'm inspired by old films like Santa Sangre and Suspiria, and old masters - especially Hieronymus Bosch, Bruegel and Durer. Contemporarily speaking, I look up to Wangechi Mutu, as well as Dr. Lakra and Raqib Shaw. I travel as much as possible to feed my creativity; I'm constantly trying to look at the world with new eyes.

What mediums do you work with?

I was trained as a printmaker, but lately have been combining printmaking with painting. I can't choose one process, which is why most of my work combines at least 3 different mediums. I work predominately on translucent vellum, which I then layer and paint from both sides to create depth and softness. I work mostly with watercolor, silk-screening, and spray paint. I love over-the-top, baroque styles, so I play with gold leaf and Swarovski crystals every chance I get. I collage anything and everything, from fashion magazines to old art books and science textbooks.

Where do you create your art?

I am extremely particular about the setting in which I create. Even when I have a studio, I always end up on the floor of my room because I like to be surrounded by little relics from my personal life. I collect matadors, crystals, old tattoo flash, Virgin Mary statues, medieval tapestries and velvet Victorian lounge seats. You'll usually find me sprawled out on my rug with magazine cutouts and watercolors.



Have you ever experienced a creative rut?

I go through waves of creativity and "writer's block" so to speak, sometimes for months at a time and it always parallels whatever I'm going through emotionally. The best way for me to overcome it is to just get to work. As Stephen King said, "Don't wait for the muse." Most of the time, no matter if I like the drawing or not, it will inspire me to make something else that I will end up liking. Red wine also helps.

Is there a piece you are most proud of?

"Organ" is one that will always be important to me, because that was the defining piece that helped me solidify my process and materials. I made "Organ" at a very low point in my life and I remember taking a huge sigh of relief after I took a step back from the piece.

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the arts today?

Overstimulation from marketing guising itself as art under capitalism. We live in a time of over-stimulation and instant gratification; it makes it harder to sift through what is valuable and what is branding.

What is the most important lesson you have learned throughout your career?

To be as genuine with yourself as possible, regardless of how you think others will perceive it. And that self-motivation is vital.

Are you involved in any upcoming events/shows?

I will be exhibiting new work this October at The Foundation Gallery in New Orleans for their show "Immortelle".

Is there something you are currently working on that you can share with us?

I will be creating lapel pins, patches and shirts in the next coming months for my brand *Painted Baby*.

What song is your current obsession or what music do you listen to when you're creating your art?

I have a series of playlists for different moods, but currently: *Goodbye Horses* by Q Lazarus, *Demon Host* by Timber Timbre, and *Pink Matter* by Frank Ocean.

Do you have a favourite quote?

A Tibetan Monk once told me that "In order to love your product, you must love your process" in regards to a sand mandala he had created and then deconstructed. I think that's the most important lesson when it comes to creating art.



Licking the Blade



