

AMERICAN
art
COLLECTOR



*Now Showcasing Glass,
Ceramics & Wood*



TO BE ANNOUNCED

Editor's Note: I'm honored to introduce a new column into *American Art Collector*—*To Be Announced*, written by Sarah Abramson. In this space each month, Sarah will scour the country for the best and brightest emerging artists on the scene and then interview them about their work. Sarah has a wonderful eye, and I'm sure you will enjoy what she is able to discover each month.

The first time we message it's 2013, and I'm trying to find the best and most original work to feature in the first issue of the independent art magazine I put out. Mr. Basic is kind but coy. He/she agrees to the work being featured but brusquely declines answering any



Mr. Basic By Sarah Elise Abramson

interview questions and informs me that he/she prefers to stay anonymous. The feeling quickly sinks in that I have stumbled upon something idiosyncratic and significant. We stay in touch and Mr. Basic keeps his/her identity a secret. The next time we message about a feature and an interview the tone is very different—he/she agrees to be interviewed and sends me images of some work that's entirely different in appearance from the denture work I'd been privy to previously.

After studying this neoteric work for a period of time, it becomes apparent that the idea of the art precedes the actual objects. They are defiant to decay. Life is fleeting and ephemeral, the body breaks down we age and inevitably die but, in this work, mortality and degeneration is confronted, defied and made permanent. The exploding candy apple shows the lifecycle, but rests suspended in time before it completely disappears. The worn down tennis balls collected from the bottom of walkers to then be displayed similarly to the candy apple reiterate the underlying theme. There is an unsettling feeling about these objects. Although they are beautiful in color and arrangement, they tap into our mortal fear as we are forced to contemplate our fading time.

Where were you born?

Baltimore, Maryland.

In a few words describe your childhood.

Fueled by mischief.

How long have you been arting?

I have been active for the last 23 years.

Why stay anonymous? What prompted you to do so in the first place?

I publish work under several aliases and have done so for over 16 years. Aside from being a private person, it's a way of categorizing the different work that I do...It is a constant struggle to keep these techniques and styles from bleeding into each other unless it fits. For example, I will create a music score for a film that I made and credit two different names. Ultimately, the goal is to erase myself and find new approaches. Having people pat me on the back or associate me with any of my work is of little importance.

Do you have a degree in anything?

No.

Tell me about your process.

I'm constantly trying to get my opinion and taste out of the way. I'm more interested in surprising myself than pleasing an audience. I only guide what's happening.

A sense of time is present in the candy apple piece and the worn down tennis balls. Is time something that's important to you or something you ponder often?

Some of the works are reminders to myself to slow down and be present in the present instead of falling for the trap that lies in looking forward or backward too much.

What would you call your modus operandi?

My methods vary from project to project, I constantly try to approach things from new conceptual angles while adapting and utilizing my past experience using industrial materials and techniques.



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3



4

1 & 2
Candy Apple, apple,
urethane resin, epoxy
resin, 9 x 26 x 6"

3
A bracelet by Mr. Basic.

4
immaculate degeneration,
window, walker-worn
tennis balls, urethane
resin, 36 x 28"

Do you show ever and, if so, do you do it anonymously?

I have and wish I never did. I have shown as myself and anonymously...unrewarding. I just want to be at home in my studio, not clinking glasses, eating cheese.

Are the people you know in real life aware of the fact that you make art?

Yes and no.

What kind of artist do you call yourself?

Conceptual.

What kind of person do you call yourself?

Misanthropic Humanitarian.

Is there anything else you'd like to talk about?

I have developed a beneficial health technique for males that involves the simulating of a menstrual cycle. In short, women live longer than men and start to age rapidly after menopause. Studies have shown that the loss of iron due to menstrual blood/tissue loss aids in retaining youth. I found myself a nurse friend who removes a certain amount of blood over the course of a week each month (an estimated equivalent to average menstrual blood/tissue loss). Donating blood was an option but I'm uncomfortable with the idea of strangers storing my DNA filled bodily fluid. I'm not a person who is fearful of old age, not in any way. But maintaining my health while becoming older is of great interest to me.

The last question is just for me. I won't put it in the interview, obviously. Are you a man or a woman?

Something like that.

Sarah Elise Abramson is a contemporary fine art photographer based in San Pedro, California—a mysterious post-industrial enclave whose offbeat countercultural history and proliferation of unusual sights, sounds and citizens is tailor-made for Abramson's obsession with everyday surrealism. In both her own photography and in her curatorial and editorial approach to exhibition projects and independent publications, her emphasis is on discovering the eccentric beauty in the things most people overlook. Found objects, hidden messages, secrets of the universe that hide in plain sight—throughout her studies at Parsons and Brooks Institute of Photography, and later at LaChapelle Studios, her work has evolved from finding to intuitively creating original daydreams shared cosmologies.

