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I am an Artist: Joe Dimino

Art is Moving Questions / Joe Dimino Answers

Alright, this is AIM's first **I am an Artist** virtual interview in the state of Missouri. We are beginning with a bang! Thanks Joe for your poetic insights and for your Art. We really love that your wife and your children are your Muses! **Art is Life!**

Why are you an artist?



Art has always made sense to me. The message, the brushes, the texture of paint, a camera, the interpretive dance one gets to create and that entire process of becoming a permanent part of people's lives. I find that it makes me keep this life and reality in focus. It's the mouse inside the machinery of my wheels and I would be relatively lost if I couldn't have some kind of creative reaction to my daily living. My art is my reaction to living and how each conscious choice and event out of my control becomes a part of my artistic output.

What is your inspiration? Favorite medium?

My muses are my wife and children. Also, I draw nectar from the entire landscape of life that passes before me daily. From an interesting question or gesture from a family member, to an 18-wheeler of pigs being carted at 70 mph on a highway. All the bees mingling with the sunflower and the kids flying faster on a playground merry-go-round; all of it is fair game and becomes the bit of inspiration that makes me dig interpreting this big world of ours. For a long while, my favorite medium was oils on canvass. That has changed over time and I now have a tendency towards the paper and watercolor spread.



Can you talk about your recycled art project?

One morning while walking back from putting my 5-year old, Miles, on the bus I noticed a smashed beer can in my front yard. A regular occurrence in my yard and I typically kick them into the trash and was wondering how I could put a clever spin on a small annoyance in my yard. So, I was thinking about a shot of a screw coming out of a light pole and all the excess wood in my back yard not being used as excess from a construction project. Three lights went off simultaneously and I thought it would be cool to do a recycled approach to art. Not only would it save a landfill, it would give people pause and ultimately reside in someone's home as art. If someone got curious enough, it is their right to pluck that off the pole and let it adorn their walls. Win – win. Multiple items get saved from entering a landfill and littering the ground, while becoming artwork someone can dig on their walls for years to come. Or, it can stay on the poles that it hangs on and give someone a smile if they notice it at a stop sign.

What is your philosophy of Art?

My philosophy comes from the way I create art and view the world around me. I want folks to get a smile, feel good or want to hang an extra moment in front of what I create. Whether it's the color, subject or message within, I want people to feel good in the interim and to feel validated if they buy a piece and hang it in their homes to dig for years to come. I do pieces that convey messages that may counteract a bad thing going down in the news, like war and such, but overall it's a colorful celebration of this human dance we all waltz about in.



.Any thoughts about this article?

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2010/jul/02/bp-arts-sponsorship-tate-protests>

Should patron's monies be refused if their dealings are causing harm to society?

I find BP as a microcosm of a more mass problem with the arts teaming up with corporate entities to smile along with the program to get funding. Many corporations exist for pure profit and are blind to the damage they do to both the environment and public health. McDonald's, for instance, gives millions to causes all over the globe so that they can proffer a clean image while shoveling enough dangerous food to contribute to a host of obesity issues and diseases in people around the globe. So, the march of corporate money is collectively something that art organizations like the Tate should refuse and rethink. If they adopted progressive money making ideals, like Radiohead letting consumers name their own price for a product, they may survive. If United Way funding or other progressive/non-profits could weave supporting the arts into their philosophical plans of survival, a cold shoulder could be turned towards corporate donors and in turn art entities could have a clear conscious as to where the money came from.

How does nature, the land, landscape, the environment affect our creativity? Does it form it?

I absolutely think the artistic and creative landscape is formed by the lands, skies and texture Mother Nature creates. It varies from region to region, nation to nation and country to country, but each has their own unique flair and flavor to influence us all. The run of Ansell Adams gave folks a way to see Yosemite that would have never made it that way. Thus, the course of creativity was imbued by the coolness of that collection of mountains and landscape. I find being a Midwestern artist gives me a unique perspective to capture and show people what it's like to be here in the middle of America. I think the relationship is a symbiosis. We create the environment and the environment creates us. If we embrace it, we can have a healthy two-way canal to living in decadent creative expression.



What is the role of the artist in our society?

Art should be akin to a mention of 'love' in a Beatles lyric. It is one of the final bastions of hope and decency that people can give each other. Out of something driven by ego and ambition, we get a selfless look into how we all interpret this reality. I find each gallery, grassroots piece on a light pole or the grandiose of homespun art behind a musician at an awards ceremony on TV a part of a collective whole to keep art central into the vitality and survival of our society. Does a person need art in their home or office? No. Does it make their vitality and sustainability as a healthy, well-rounded person? Yes. There have been countless studies as to the overridingly positive nature of art on the mind and it's a simple science to figure out. Art is central to society and society should make it central to its overall focus.

Where do you see yourself as an artist in 5 years?

I have always thought I would like to see myself grow as an artist in new and cool ways. Coming up with new ways to present my work, like the window pane series I started several years back. Or new ways of portraying subjects in my work. My strong suit has never been the human figure or facial features, but that is something I would like to work on. I really dig the recycled kind of sculpture, as well. If I could do that within 5 years, I would dig it. Mainly I am into growing as a person, thus art is a part of that. Gallery showings and new venues of getting my work out to the people are fine, but my healthy growth as an artist and person is much more. I will always find a way to get my work to the people. Whether it's my recycled art on a light pole in a busy part of the Kansas City Crossroads art district, or giving my art to a grade school kid to drop on a travel trip to Costa Rica, I will find a way for the art to get out there.

What are your ultimate goals as an artist?

Ultimately I want to create art for as long as my mind and body will allow and to give my love of the craft to my two boys. Also, if I can continue to make my wife happy with a large trove of artistic design options around the house. The goal here is not to get huge and famous. It's about loving art as long as a do it and to give folks reason to pause, think, smile and move on enjoying art more than they did before they saw my stuff. I have never shied away from recognition with any of my work, buy the ultimate goal is to dig it for the rest of my life and imbue that gift firmly in my wife and boys. If that can happen somehow through the haze of living's uncertainty, I will be a very happy kind of man.

What does art mean to you?

I'm going to use another Beatles reference in this. I find the epitome of my art in the following lyrical line:

the 'love you take/ is equal to the love you make.' That's what it's all about for me. If I can validate or celebrate all those things in life that lend themselves to all of us, I am happy. There are so many things about life to me that are about art. All the moments I capture and create with my wife and boys are all about creativity and art. Whether it's a picture, video, moment on canvass or the unpredictable melding of watercolors, it's just a huge part of the artistic mix for me. At the end of the day, art equals life. Living means that art and creating art are essential to my sustainability. I require at least nine cups of liquid art a day.

To check out more of Joe's art work please go to

<http://www.joedimino.com/>

<http://joedimino.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/jdphotopaint>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/93914211@N00/>



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