

APATHY

by

Jonathan Dinkins

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in

Ceramics

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Jonathan Dinkins

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Chairperson, Graduate Committee Michael Peed April 18, 2005

Approved for the School of Art

Head, Major Department Richard Helzer April 18, 2005

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies

Graduate Dean Dr. Bruce McLeod April 18, 2005

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Johnathan Dinkins

April 18, 2005

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In this show, I'm commenting on the apathetic attitudes of our society that I find appalling. Our culture has become a thoughtless throw-away society with an unhealthy consumer drive. We are fixated on fast-everything along with its 'disposable' packaging. The willing and un-willing deterioration of the environment; seen through thoughtless (inhumane) killing for pleasure, unmanaged pest-control, littering, oil spills, and the desire to drill in refuge areas (ANWAR and East Front Glacier National Park); has created a consumer culture that relies on ignorance to excuse itself from environmental degradation. I believe abuses of the environment are indicators of our society's more wide spread apathetic attitudes. The environment can also be thought of as a metaphor, the destruction of ecosystems on the premise of development and modernization will bring about the destruction of our species, because we are dependent on the environment for our existence. We are just as dependent on each other for the survival of our species; yet, our consumer culture and lack of understanding and tolerance have provided avenues for the proliferation of destructive behaviors against each other for monetary ends (war, Enron scandal, prejudice, etc.). The big business driven, oil industry and material consumption seem to control our country's social and political systems, which not only destroy the environment but our social relationships with other citizens of this planet.

As a sculptor, figurative objects are my means of exploring and communicating ideas that represent my reaction and digestion of social behaviors. Apathy toward the environment and the world in general is found all around us in political, social, and cultural contexts. My comments are based on my education, observation, and perception of the attitudes of a large portion of individuals within our society. The environmental theme acts as metaphor and indicator of the ill effects of the consumer culture that we are surrounded by. Deeper meaning can be searched out

and interpreted in these monumental sculptural forms presented as large scale human and animal figures. Monumental size places significance on the issues presented by each piece, while the intriguing forms emphasized by flowing monochromatic color persuade viewer into looking at them. I purposefully give no solutions to the direct or indirect issues presented within these sculptures, because I feel there may not be a black or white solution. I only give illusions to my opinions through my translation of environmental problems into contemptuous, cynical, or sarcastic monuments to highlight the apparent absurdity of society's treatment of the problems around us.

Of my many influences Robert Arneson, Charles Ray, and Juan Munõz are three artists that I've been gravitating toward for the past couple of years. These influences and my work are a completion of ideas from various social situations. I strongly relate to Robert Arneson's sarcastic response to the political world and how the finished look of his ceramic sculptures seems to reinforce his message. Charles Ray and Juan Munõz have been influences with their mundane sculptures of people or ideas that make viewers try to comprehend their meaning. These artists have produced figurative sculptures that force an audience to wonder about the intentions behind the artwork.

My contemptuous manner of presentation intends to show viewers how easily we disregard and overlook serious social issues, because these issues do not seem to directly affect them. Hopefully, these monuments to our apathy force viewers to realize how important seemingly small and distant environmental and social problems can affect them. Sarcasm simplifies an issue by focusing on the main points or take-home message of a topic; it is also dependent on the emotions or feelings behind a social issue, which encourages viewers to go

away contemplating social problems. Emphasizing emotional reactions to the main points and forgetting the details of an issue, forces viewers to assign judgment to an issue without thinking of the repercussions of the details. My objects are intended to give a slight uneasiness or a false feeling of security, because the figures are sculpted in a mostly innocent looking style. My way of communicating my views on social issues consists of putting a sarcastic twist on issues to provoke emotions. So look at these cynical monuments to our consumption of the environment and formulate your own opinion about what the consumer culture means to you.



Image 1 – Paper Bag



Image 2 – Paper Bag, side view



Image 3 – Paper Bag, detail



Image 4 – Big Fish



Image 5 – Big Fish, side view



Image 6 – Big Fish, detail



Image 7 – Plastic



Image 8 – Plastic, side view



Image 9 – Plastic, back view



Image 10 – Reintroduction



Image 11 – Reintroduction, back view



Image 12 – Reintroduction, detail



Image 13 – Reintroduction, detail



Image 14 – Pesticide



Image 15 – Pesticide, side view



Image 16 – Pesticide, detail



Image 17 – Oily Bird



Image 18 – Oil Bird, side view



Image 19 – Prairie Dog Hunt



Image 20 – Prairie Dog Hunt, detail



Image 21 – Prairie Dog Hunt, side view



Image 22 – Prairie Dog Hunt, detail



Image 23 – Poacher



Image 24 – Poacher, side view



Image 25 – Gallery View #1



Image 26 – Gallery View #2



Image 27 – Gallery View #3