

Aljunied, Alia, *Artist of the Week: Drew Conrad*, ArtSnobbing, June 13, 2012



ARTIST OF THE WEEK: DREW CONRAD



Drew Conrad is awesome and ArtSnobbing thinks you should meet him! This wonderful sculptor is a Brooklyn based artist by way of Atlanta, Georgia and New York is surely blessed to have him. His work is compelling in all the right ways. When in the presence of one of his works, one becomes entranced with the setting; the art is incredibly cerebral while maintaining strong tactile interest. He brings a lot to the plate as an artist as he was formally trained in various forms of art with a BFA in Printmaking and a MFA in Studio Art. His thesis was based on the idea of "Art Star 2000" and a celebrity can be simply created through photographs and image branding.



Drew's studio is neatly arranged with the main area displaying many of his sculptures. There is not much out of place and the main focus of his studio is the work he displays in the center. The clean white walls reflect a gallery type setting and graciously highlight his sculptures.



Dwelling No. 1, 2011, 10.5 x 8 x 8 feet



Dwelling No. 1, 2011, 10.5 x 8 x 8 feet

Currently, Drew is working on a series called "Dwelling" which is a double entendre - a dwelling as a home and the act of dwelling on an idea. These sculptures are based on fragments of memories. Each wall represents a separate moment in time. The sculptures try to connect the dots through the fragments that make up these sculptures. Started in 2009, the first pieces in this series do not exist anymore as they were templates for his newer works. Thus the pieces you see now are sculptures that were created from 2010 onwards. The series was inspired by Mike Nelson's *Pyshand* Richard Serra. At this point in time Drew was really starting to contemplate his career in the arts and wanted to build a piece that was really larger than himself - in size and ideas. The larger pieces in the "Dwelling" series came out of the idea of the swan song and if he had to shut down the studio, he wanted to shut down his studio after making

a piece he knew that was made to the best of his abilities. "Dwelling" is a truly captivating series and we hope to see more of it around New York city.



Dwelling No. 2, 2011, 8 x 8.5 x 1 feet



Dwelling No. 2, 2011, 8 x 8.5 x 1 feet

Drew very eloquently stated that he hopes his art as a whole represents "our longing for the past and our personal need not to forget it but the inevitability that we eventually will." His work shows how Drew himself is afraid of nostalgia but at the same time is in love with it. Through his work one can see Drew's passion for his art and his need to create art to better understand the world and his surroundings. In a sense, his passion is his longing for a deeper understanding of the world.



Dwelling No. 3, 2012, 9 x 8 x 3 feet - detail



Dwelling No. 3, 2012, 9 x 8 x 3 feet - detail

When creating his works, Drew does not draw or sketch his sculptures but building them on a whim. There are no plans - just ideas and these ideas manifest as he creates his works of art. As he builds his pieces, each step informs the next and thus Drew's work can be considered methodical yet sporadic. It can be said that his concept of

fragments would not be as apparent if he had a complete idea of what he wanted to create beforehand and thus his “unplanned” art maintains the full idea of fragment. The authenticity of the idea of fragment is maintained through the lack of a complete idea.



Older Work (Thesis piece)

Top Three Favorite Artists:



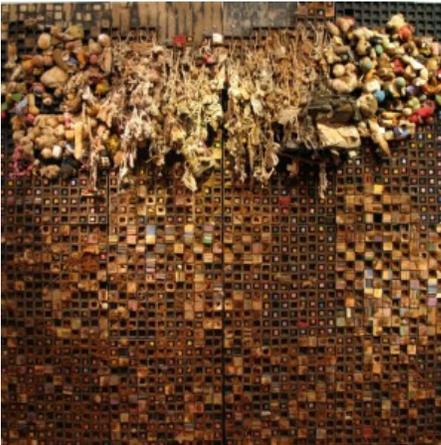
Mike Nelson "Quiver of Arrows" 2010 - *image taken from ArtObserved*

1) Mike Nelson – because Mike Nelson inspired his current series “Dwelling after seeing the Psychic Vacuum at Creative Time. Also, after seeing Nelson’s “Quiver of Arrows” Drew wanted to create pieces bigger than himself. Mike Nelson shows at 303 Gallery.



Christian Boltanski "Lessons in Darkness" 1998

2) Christian Boltanski - his "Lessons of Darkness" really inspired Drew, he was impressed by Boltanski's use of lighting. Drew draws from the idea of lighting and how it relates to life and death and how this is shown through Boltanski's work.



Leonardo Drew, Number 74, 1999

3) Leonardo Drew because of his large scale abstract sculpture using many organic materials. The rough debris has influenced the "raw" feel of Drew's work. Drew finds the idea of dirt and debris very inspiring and enjoys including such materials into his work.

If you weren't an artist what would you be?

I would be an archaeologist or in a rock band.

You can see more of Drew's work at the following places:

www.drew-conrad.com

Fitzroy Gallery

Get This Gallery

<http://www.artseenwithsusi.com/drew-conrad>



Drew Conrad in Studio

Upcoming Exhibitions:

Fitzroy 2013

Upcoming Residencies:

MacDowell Art Colony, Peterborough, NH