



## STW Long Read: Interview with Auriea Harvey



Scan the World (<https://www.myminifactory.com/scantheworld/>) was thrilled to sit down with 3D artist Auriea Harvey to talk about her work, her process and the difference between conservation and creation.

Auriea Harvey is a visual artist and sculptor. She started out designing video games with her husband Michael under the label *Tale of Tales*, which was known for its distinct visual style and unusual gameplay, like a game where you play as an old woman walking around a graveyard! The pair stepped back from game design to focus on their art and Auriea now creates beautiful 3D prints and stunning virtual scans.

holding it up for inspection, the joy she derives from 3D printing is palpable.

"I'm interested in technology that still feels like magic," she told me. For Harvey, the most entrancing thing is the way that photogrammetry allows you to access the model contained within a photograph: "It's like Michaelangelo finding the Angel in a block of marble."

I asked her how she got started in 3D sculptures, and she said:

"I started making sculptures from my 3D work when I stopped making 3D exclusively for video games in 2015. There was a local fab lab which gave workshops in 3D printing for beginners, I joined in and found it completely mind-blowing to hold one of my 3d scanned objects in my hand. The first thing I printed was a scan I made in the Louvre. From there it was only a matter of time til I bought my own 3d printer. Once I was printing regularly I started to think more about the forms and materiality of the pieces. This has led me to the processes I use today with 3D sculpting, printing and hand finishing of my pieces."

We then bonded over greed. Here at Scan the World, we pride ourselves on our greedy acquisition of every piece of art we can get our hands on. Auriea is much the same, when she sees a statue she likes, she wants to own it. That way, she can take it back to her studio and work her magic on it.

Auriea's approach to creating art is fascinating. Less about capturing and preserving something in a 3D scan, she's more interested in "bringing this object into a real-time world." The scans, statues and models that Auriea appreciates are not simply depicted in 3D printed form, but rather used to create elaborate scenes.

Auriea does most of her photography on her iPhone, then makes small versions of the scan on one of her three printers. She has a Form 2, a Ultimaker 3, and a Prusa i3 mk 3. Creating smaller prints allows her to handle the sculptures, get a feel for them and decide what she wants to do next. This is all part of her process, which focuses on unlocking the fantasy potential from the culture and memories a photograph of something can represent.



The artist feels that, when you have scanned something, you have not just taken an image of it. It becomes available to you, malleable and usable. You can take the parts you are interested in, combine them with other materials and draw out the elements you find most fascinating.

“It isn’t so much that these scans feel like memories of moments, in the way a photograph might. It’s more that through scanning I am bringing the forms I see into virtual time, a realtime simulated eternal moment from which I choose the forms that move me and sculpt from that foundation. Once they are brought into the real world I feel they now have their own story to tell and it is separate from whatever scan they may have started from. Their materiality becomes a part of that narrative.

The process becomes very important. From a digital sculpture to a small maquette which I might live with and look at for a long time before taking it further. There is a whole process, which involves time, before I can finalise the story I feel each sculpture is telling.”

Many of Auriea’s sculptures are not just plastic. She uses filaments with a whole host of additives, from tomato waste from processing plants to brass, hemp and bronze.



“Once [a sculpture] lives in the real world it needs organic as well as synthetic things...whatever it takes to make it feel the way I want it to feel.” She said, firm in the belief that “sculpture needs to embrace the fact that you’re touching it.”

This has led to some fantastic pieces. There’s a tiny bronze statue made by a jeweller from a wax mould that Auriea herself printed. There’s a 3D model of Auriea’s niece and her young child, a miniature prototype for a planned, larger project. The one I found most intriguing, however, was a

character.

The fascination with breaking free and creating something new really seems to have defined Auriea's career as an artist. She enjoys using scans to create virtual pieces because they are free from physical constraints. In a concerted effort to capture the essence and spirit of an object, she gives it three lives, the original object, its virtual counterpart and the 3D print through which the object is rewritten and turned into something entirely new.



Given this, it was hard not to turn the conversation to the raging debates about preserving statues with questionable historical implications. (Check out our interview with Pablo, who feels that 3D printing allows us to do essential work preserving these statues for future generations). I asked Auriea whether she thought it was important to preserve these statues, and what role 3D printing had to play in this.

Auriea saw the value of conservation, using photographs and photogrammetry to ensure there is a record of the objects, giving us something we can reference and share. Obviously, she appreciates museums and thinks that 3D rendering would help in their mission. As she says, a photograph isn't enough. When you see something flattened in 2D, you can't spin it around and get a real sense of the proportions.

But, to Auriea, 3D scanning isn't conserving something. Scans are nowhere near as high resolution as real life. As Auriea said "Materiality has an aspect you just can't get back. An object is made of something and when you change that you add or remove a whole dimension." The context is simply being erased.

We ended the interview on the point that 3D scanning carries no context. It becomes the thing itself suspended in a "forever now" but it doesn't have any of the context that one might need. In 3D printing, you are not capturing a moment, you are creating something by capturing a certain aspect of the form. This may be beautiful to have, but it is interesting for being what it is, rather than a copy of something else.

We hope you enjoyed this interview as much as we enjoyed conducting it. All the Scantheworld scans Auriea has used can be found on our [website](https://www.myminifactory.com/scantheworld/) (<https://www.myminifactory.com/scantheworld/>), and more of Auriea's work can be checked out at