

ARTSLANT

JONATHAN MONAGHAN ANSWERS 5 QUESTIONS BY THE ARTSLANT TEAM

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This is 5 Questions. Each week, we send five questions to an artist featured in Under the Radar, our weekly email highlighting the best art on the ArtSlant network. This week we seek answers from Jonathan Monaghan.

What are you trying to communicate with your work?

I think my films, sculptures, and prints offer an experience in which a range of familiar imagery interact in unexpected ways. The imagery I use comes from mass consumerism and pop culture, but also the history of western power and wealth. The absurd confluences I make with this imagery, like a unicorn in a Starbucks or a DirectTV dish on a Faberge Egg, is an attempt to uncover what is suppressed or hidden within these things.

What is an artist's responsibility?

As an individual, an artist must be honest with themselves. It is easy to make work that falls into fads or is easily marketable, but then where is the true value really? Art can confront the status quo, it can expand one's perceptions of the world and reality, it can change the way people think and it can even change lives. But to do that, an artist must make the work that they themselves feel truly passionate about, and not what they think others want.

Show us the greatest thing you ever made (art or not)?



Escape Pod, 2015, Video (color, sound), media player, screen or projector, 20 min loop. Music by Furniteur. Courtesy of bitforms gallery, NY

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Escape Pod for me was a very successful work. It was really the first cinematic piece I made that was a seamless loop, with no defined start or stop, no cuts or edits. So it is a format that creates a really unique narrative structure and visual experience.

Tell us about a work you want to make but never will:

I really want to make live-action feature length films, but I never used a real camera in my life and nobody is offering me million dollar budgets just yet. I have long been interested in Celtic mythology and Druid society and have a film planned out about it in my head. Perhaps one day.

Who are three artists we should know but probably don't?

You may know them, but just in case: Rachel MacLean is perhaps my favorite artist working today. You should also know of E. Jane and Addie Wagenknecht if you don't already. They have all been consistently producing exciting work taking on issues of the digital age in multi-faceted and perceptive ways.

—The ArtSlant Team