

July 18 - September 6, 2015

WHAT ARE DESIGNER TOYS?

From *Clutter Magazine*: "Designer Toys 101; What are Designer Toys?"

By Nick Curtis

We're going to start extremely simply: What are Designer Toys? The two words, separately, surely are recognizable: A "designer" being any person who takes artistic inspiration and applies it to practical subjects, such as producing the cover image for a book, outlining the structure of a piece of furniture, or sketching the appearance of a piece of clothing, while "toys" are those things we played with as children, whether it was G.I. Joe action figures or Barbie dolls. So, in the most broad strokes, "Designer Toys" are toy-like pieces created with modern art sensibilities; think of them as utilitarian art sculptures, if you will.

"Designer Toys" can be confusing because it is a term used to define an entire industry rather than one specific product. Typically "Designer Toys" are limited in the amount made, anywhere from a couple of thousand copies all the way down to only one piece produced. The term doesn't even denote a specific material that the piece is crafted in, as "Designer Toys" can be made out of just about anything, though the most common materials are: plastic, known as vinyl, and resin, a synthetic liquid that hardens once set. What compounds the problem of understanding "Designer Toys" is that these are the same materials commonly used in making "traditional toys."

This immediately begs a singular question: What makes "Designer Toys" art while normal toys are not? The short and sweet answer would be emphasis on the artist. Most people would be pressed to remember that Hasbro released G.I. Joe, let alone that Don Levine was the original driving force behind the concept or that Mattel released Barbie and that Ruth Handler is commonly

credited with their creation. But, in the world of "Designer Toys", the artist's name can be as much — if not more — of a selling point than the actual toy itself.

By comparing and contrasting the "traditional fine art" world with that of "Designer Toys," perhaps the similarities will become more clear. We'll start with a fine art piece, maybe Edward Munch's *The Scream*, something so iconic everyone can relate; an original painting that has such broad appeal that it has been reproduced in a variety of formats. Now that single piece of art, as I said before can be placed on a variety of things though they aren't all "art."

Functional Items

You can easily find images of *The Scream* on just about anything, including coffee mugs, cooking aprons and other functional items. And I mean functional in the sense that being viewed as art is not their primary purpose. No one mistakes a coffee mug with a painting printed on it as a piece of art, right? Most of the items in this category are relatively inexpensive and meant for mass consumption and use.

Display Items

This would be your poster or desktop display reproduction of *The Scream*. While still mass-produced and available readily at an affordable price, these items start to blur the lines regarding whether they are art or not. While you'd certainly laugh at someone that invited you over to view their art collection when all they had was a series of ten dollar posters on their walls, those displayed images serve no purpose other than to be looked at and enjoyed for the art they reproduce.

Limited Edition Items

These items with *The Scream* on them have a higher production value, and thus, have a higher perceived resale value. Things in this category could be giclee (a very specific form of inkjet printing technology) posters or screenprints, though these are usually produced in set limited quantities and are sometimes even signed by the artist. While they are not art in the sense that they are an original painting, they are considered high-end display items and they have historically even been resold at art auctions.





THE ART OF TOYS

A LEFT COAST RETROSPECTIVE OF DESIGNER TOYS

GUEST CURATED BY JULIE B. & HEIDI JOHNSON

They are colorful, whimsical and a bit off-kilter. Their creators have fertile, if somewhat warped imaginations and they have found a real following among both cosplayers and cosmopolitans alike. Throughout the

last 20 years, toys as works of art have gone from a small niche to a

significant movement worthy of serious exploration. And so, Lancaster's Museum of Art and History (MOAH) has mounted the very first west coast museum exhibit of designer toys running now through early September which features west coast artists, stores and fabricators. Having opened just after

Main Gallery

Comic-Con, the remarkable fan fest which draws more than 100,000 to San Diego each year, MOAH's Exhibition, *The Art of Toys: A Left Coast Retrospective of Designer Toys*, captures the imagination and provokes serious discussions of when playthings become collectors' items.

Co-curated by noted artist/designer/fabricator Julie B. of Pretty in Plastic and Heidi Johnson of Hijinx Artists Management, *The Art of Toys* brings together the works of more than 100 artists, makers, toy shops and galleries.

ARTISTS

Aztec), Jim Woodring, Jim Mahfood, Joe Ledbetter, John Stokes (Spanky Stokes), Josh "Shag" Agle, Juan Muniz, Julie West, Junko Mizuno, Kano, Kathie Olivas, Kathy Staico Schorr, Kii Arens (LaLa Land), Kozyndan, Lee 'Leecifer" Gajda, Luke Chueh, Mario "MARS-1" Martinez, Mark Ryden, Mark Nagata (Max Toy Company), Mark Dean Veca, Martin Osuna, Martin Hsu, Mike Leavitt, Muntiki, Nathan Cabrera, Nathan Ota, Nathan Hamill, Paul Frank, Phil Ramirez, Phu!, Plastic God, Robert Williams, Ron English, Ryan Callanan (RYCA), Sam Flores, Scott Musgrove, Scott Tolleson, Shane Geil, Shane Jessup, Shepard Fairey (Obey Giant), Slick, Simone Legno (TokiDoki), SSUR, Steve "Sketchbot" Talkowski, The Pizz, Thomas Hahn, Tim Biskup, Tim Burton, Todd Schorr, Tony Millionaire, Tristan Eaton, Warren "Skinner" Davis III, Yoskay Yamamoto

Aaron "Woes" Martin, Alex Pardee, Alex "Dril One" Dril, Amanda Visell, Andrew Brandou, Andrew "Sket One" Yasgar, Anthony Ausgang, Attaboy, Big Daddy Roth, Bigfoot, Bob Dob, Bob Self (Babytattooville), Bootleggers, Brandi Milne, Brant Peters (Circus Posterus/Stranger Factory), Brian "Nice Bunny" Castleforte, Brian Flynn, Bruce "Doktor A" Whistlecraft, Buff Monster, Bwana Spoons, Cameron Tiede, Camile Rose Garcia, Carlos and Ernesto East (Beast Brothers), Christopher Cooper (COOP), Clay "FERG" Ferguson (Jamungo and Playge), Dabs Myla, Dan Clowes, Dan Goodsell (Mr. Toast), Dave Bondi, Dave Pressler, David Choe, David Horvath and Sun-Min Kim (Uglydoll), David Flores, David Chung, Elizabeth McGrath, Eric Joyner, Femke Hiemstra, Frank Kozik (Kidrobot), Gary Baseman, Gary Ham, George and Ayleen Gaspar (October Toys/ Toy Break), Glenn Bar, Greg "Craola" Simkins, Heidi Kenney, Huck Gee, Jai & Jai, Jaime "Germs" Zacarias, Jason Freeny (Moist Production), Jason "Jay222" Sawyer, Jeff Soto, Jeremy Fish, Jeremy Madl (MAD Toy Design/"MAD*L"), Jermaine Rogers, J-Ryu, Jesse

PRODUCERS

3D Retro, Dark Horse, DKE, Giant Robot, Kid Robot, Loyal Subjects, Meltdown Comics, Mighty Fine, Munky King, Necessaries Toy Foundation, Pretty in Plastic, Strange Co, Super 7, Tag, Wacko



Community Engagement: Film Screening
The Treasures of Long Gone John
JULY 18 @ 11 AM & 1 PM | \$5

BLVD Cinemas | 742 W. Lancaster BLVD

Special Q&A at 2:30 PM with the Film's Producers and Artists

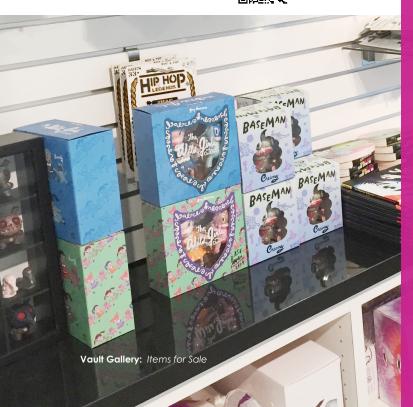
COLLECT ART TOYS & PRINTS

Available for Sale CURATED BY COLLECTOR JON HALPERIN Vault Gallery

I am honored to curate the store for this show. I started collecting vinyl toys in 2001 while visiting Hong Kong. On that trip, I discovered Bearbrick, Michael Lau, Eric So, BountyXHunter and Jason Siu. I ended up mailing back my clothes and bought a second suitcase to bring back all of these gems. I was already collecting art, so this was a natural progression. Since that trip 15 years ago, I became increasingly interested in U.S. based artists doing vinyl toys and Kid Robot was my guru.

Outside of this world, I spent the last 15 years booking bands at several music venues, working for prominent music festivals and collecting art from around the world.

You can see my collection (as of a few years ago) by scanning this QR code.



HOW TO START YOUR TOY COLLECTION

From Clutter Magazine:

Check your bank balance: Disposable income, check! No children to drain your funds or break your toys, check!

Look for artists you already admire and start small. Your collection will grow very rapidly to start with so make sure you don't go too crazy. If you are going to spend \$100 on a toy on eBay, or in a store, make sure you like it, don't just buy it because it's popular! As your collection grows your tastes will become more refined.

Don't collect toys because you think it makes you look cool. It isn't going to get you any more dates! In fact, it may get you less dates, but more online admirers!

You need to come to terms with the fact that your house is going to be full of toys. As a grown adult this may be frowned upon by your non-toy collecting peers! Be prepared to be asked about your fascination with "adult toys" before it leads to embarrassing confusion. Oh, and make sure you keep the boxes!

You don't need to collect everything! It's an easy thing to do and a slippery slope to being broke, obsessive and having no friends. Buy what you like; you have to live with it!

Make sure you know the RRP (Recommended Retail Price) of an item before you go hunting one down on eBay, it may not be sold out but already inflated on auction sites. eBay is both a toy collector's friend and foe.

Do your research: more limited pieces will cost more and certain artists command a premium, i.e. KAWS, Ledbetter, Michael Lau.

Avoid buying fakes. As a novice you aren't going to be able to spot them in a lineup, so go with the simple rule; if it seems cheaper than all the others of the same ilk, then it's probably a fake. Do some research to make sure, or create a collection of bootleas.

Try to see the toys in the flesh. Photos don't do them justice! They are tactile objects, go and pick them up and don't be frightened. You may like something in a photo and really dislike it in the flesh!

Don't buy thinking of the value or with the intention of "flipping" on eBay to make a quick dollar. This will only lead to you being shunned by other collectors.

DAVIS DAVIS

Planet X
Wells Fargo Gallery

"The search for Planet X began in 1841 as the search for the eighth planet in our solar system and continues today as the search for the eleventh. Planet X was first renamed Neptune, then Vulcan (Urbain Le Verrier's intra-Mercurial planet), then Pluto, then Niburu (Zecharia Sitchin's "12th planet") and now Xena (the recently discovered tenth planet). Planet X is not a real planet, but rather a placeholder for planets yet to be found. In a mathematical sense, it is a variable: X = n + 1,

where n is the number of the last discovered planet. Planet X, in its role as the perpetually undiscovered sphere located at an ever-greater distance from the Earth, embodies both our hopes and our fears for the future.

Toy spacemen of the late 40s and early 50s combine a pre-Sputnik naiveté about space travel with a cold war paranoia about all things alien. Their art deco space suits feature bell jar helmets and back-slung, oxygen tanks; their elaborate ray guns bulge with

deadly, high technology. Because they appeared before the dawn of the Space Age, they do not look like the astronauts we know today and seem to recall a future yet to come. For this series, we photograph these spacemen as they struggle with robots and other technology, with monsters and aliens, and with themselves in the barren, cratered landscape of Planet X." -Davis & Davis



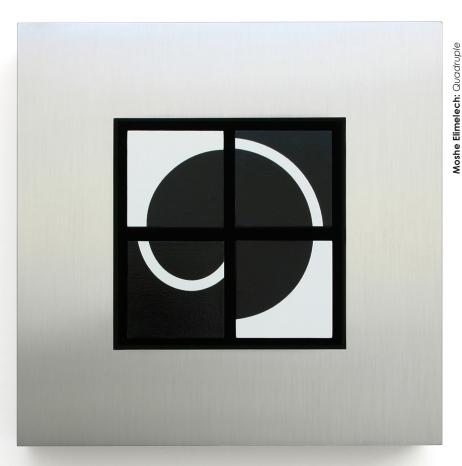
MOSHE ELIMELECH

Arrangements

East Gallery

Moshe Elimelech's exhibition Arrangements showcases colorful and interactive modular acrylic cube paintings. Rectangular cradles house gridded cubes that invite viewers to turn, move and rearrange each piece. Influenced by a background in design and by the modernist art movements of optical and kinetic art, Moshe fuses formal elements of art with play.

Elimelech employs elements such as line, color, pattern, texture and tone to create varied designs on each cube that goes into Arrangements. Those cubes in turn, when placed beside others create new designs that could essentially be limitless, when placed at random by each individual that interacts with the artwork. Arrangements allows for viewers to express their unique vision of design aesthetics while at the same time enlivening their experience of paintings that are historically expected to be static.



THUMPERDOME History of the Pinball Machine

South Gallery

The modern pinball machine is a direct descendant of the French bagatelle games of the 1700s, which featured a playfield with wooden pegs and balls that were introduced into the playfield with a pool cue. Here in America, the game further evolved using metal pins instead of dowels and the revolutionary introduction of the shooter rod in the early 1800s.

The game resonated with people in the U.S. wanting inexpensive entertainment through the Great Depression-era economy. At that time, most drugstores and taverns in the U.S. operated pinball machines, with many locations quickly recovering the cost of the game. The entire machine was designed to be as eyecatching as possible, in order to attract players and their money; every possible space is filled with colorful graphics, blinking lights and themed objects, and the backglass is usually the first artwork the players see from a distance. As time went on video games replaced Pinball in the market, and manufactures were forced to enhance the technology within the Pinball machines to be competitive.



Thumperdome: Olympic Flyer 1932

MARIN MARIN

Main Gallery

Aaron "Angry Woebots" Martin aka "Woes Martin" grew up between the Hawaiian island Oahu and the western United States. He was greatly influenced by the Saturday morning cartoon Kung Fu and comic book cultures, which led him to be involved in the process of creation in some form. His strong passion for toys provided the avenue to design his own resin sculpture with partner Palmetto of Silent Stage Gallery, and through Kid Robots Dunny

platform. His focal medium remains acrylic paintings on wood and canvas. Using minimal colors with detailed character design, these paintings are usually composed of aggravated pandas or bears conveying extreme emotions. The pandas tend to represent the story of struggle, humble beginnings and rolling with the punches. From Hawaii to the mainland U.S. and across the globe he continues to leave his mark, connecting with other artists and other cultures.



TEDDY KELLY

Entry Atrium

Teddy Kelly is an artist and illustrator whose life and designs are the product of converging cultural influences. He grew up in Mazatlan, Mexico. He has been creating art since he could pick up a pen, drawing influence from both the Disney characters he would see during childhood visits to the United States and his perspective of the immigrantinfluenced culture of his hometown. Kelly grew up immersed in the subculture of surfing and skateboarding, inspired from a young age by the skateboard art that defined this culture. He moved to the United States after high school in search of an education, and fortunately also found a mentor and friend who taught him how to conceptualize his ideas. Teddy was awarded an honorable mention for Illustration by the American Institute of Graphic Arts while attending San Diego City College.

ALLISON "HUEMAN" TORN

Second Floor

Hailing from northern California, Hueman is a Los Angeles based graffiti artist whose work can be found on common walls and in galleries worldwide. She works between the delicacy of canvas and massive city walls, playing with ideas of abstraction and figurative art mashed up with grotesque subjects. Playing is part of her creations, just as it is with her name. She brings movement portrayed through various two-dimensional, flat surfaces and places them on the domineering walls of cityscapes. She states, "I am constantly seeking balance: between the beautiful and the grotesque, the abstract

and the figurative, and that golden moment between being asleep and awake." This balance can be found in the way Hueman creates, she is known for beginning a piece by energetically throwing paint and then conjuring up the composition through the stream of consciousness that follows.

WATERM .RK: Woes Martin: Mural in Progress



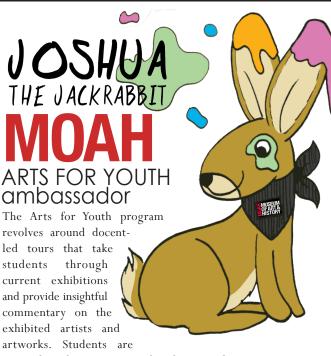


HCA Presents: MUNNY ON MY MIND

Hernando & Fran Marroquin Family Classroom

Munny on my Mind is a unique, inter-disciplinary art class that blends design, sculpture, painting and conceptual art into one project. Youth from Arbor at Palmdale and Village Pointe in Lancaster were tasked with creating an art piece of their choosing by carefully establishing a theme and applying their concept to a Munny. Students used templates provided by Kid Robot to design their creations before moving on to customizing their Munny by using a wide range of materials including clay, markers, paint and yarn.





engaged in discussion, introduced to significant contemporary artwork and encouraged to interact with the space through social media tools. Teachers and schools may download the application and transportation grant forms, as well as access further information through MOAH's website, lancastermoah.org, or by calling MOAH at 661.723.6250. Arts for Youth tours are generously funded in part by Hernando and Fran Marroquin, as well as the Lancaster Museum and Public Art Foundation.

YOUNG ARTIST WORKSHOPS

MOAH:CEDAR

 AUGUST
 08.27.15
 3 - 7 PM

 SEPTEMBER
 09.24.15
 3 - 7 PM

 OCTOBER
 10.29.15
 3 - 7 PM

The free Young Artist Workshops are a great introduction to the creative concepts behind the exhibitions on display at our museums. Projects explore skills such as assemblage, weaving and collage while introducing the participants to artistic terms. The last Thursday of each month, youth 17 years old and younger are invited to participate in the free drop-in workshops.





The Boeing Company and the Lancaster Museum and Public Art Foundation in conjunction with MOAH:

Offers a variety of educational trunks designed for students and lifelong learners. Educators can request FREE VISITS from an Education Specialist. Program activities feature interactive discussion, hands-on discovery objects and role play.

To schedule your trunk please visit lancastermoah.org/education.php.



FORUM NIGHT Rooftop Terrace Lantern Room AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER TBD Portfolio Review Sarah Perry Demo 08.20.15 6 - 8 PM

09.17.15 6 - 8 PM 10.15.15 6 - 8 PM

Forum Night returns this season with new and exciting opportunities to learn, inspire and share art, culture, design, writing, poetry and music. Join us the third Thursday of each month from 6 - 8 PM.



JOIN FRIENDS OF MOAH

The Lancaster Museum of Art and History is dedicated to strengthening awareness, enhancing accessibility and igniting the appreciation of art, history and culture in the Antelope Valley through dynamic exhibitions, innovative educational programs, creative community engagement and a vibrant collection that celebrates the richness of the region.

By joining friends of MOAH you help support the programs listed on this page, as well as receive exclusive member benefits. Pick up a brochure at MOAH, located at 665 W. Lancaster BLVD, Lancaster, CA 93534 or call 661.723.6250 for more information.

MUSEUM OF ART & MISTORY

HOURS OF OPERATION

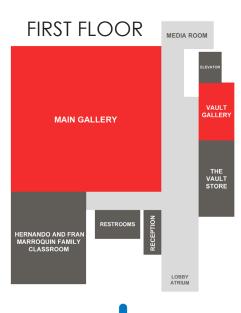
Tuesday-Sunday: 11 AM - 6 PM Extended Hours:

Monday & Holidays:

Thursday 11 AM - 8 PM

Closed

665 W. Lancaster BLVD Lancaster, CA 93534 661.723.6250 lancastermoah.org





OTHER MOAH FACILITIES BELOW

lancaster

it's positively clear.



REGARDING US chain letter project

July 11 - August 22

HOURS OF OPERATION:
2 - 8 PM Thursday - Sunday

The Regarding Us Chain Letter Project is a self-curated group exhibition celebrating creativity in the Antelope Valley. The process began with a small group of artists

initially invited to show their work by community engagement artist Rebecca Niederlander. This group then each invited five artists to also participate. Those five invited five more artists, and so forth. The result is an exponentially massive, community-curated project filled with work by an extraordinary array of Antelope Valley creatives.



Built in the late 1800s, the Western Hotel Museum is downtown Lancaster's oldest surviving structure. The Western Hotel Museum plays host to permanent displays of historical artifacts from the Museum of Art and History's collection.

HOURS OF OPERATION: 11 AM - 4 PM on the second and fourth Saturday and accompanying Friday of each month.

557 W. Lancaster BLVD, Lancaster, CA 93534 661.723.6250

