

“A Pre-Splash Gala Chat With Artist Andy Dixon”
by Lise Boullard / October 4, 2018



Photo by Trevor Brady

Arts Umbrella’s annual Splash Art Auction and Gala, taking place at Fairmont Hotel Vancouver Oct. 13, 2018, showcases some of the most exciting local, national and international artists of our day, with proceeds supporting young people in the arts. In its 36th year, the 2018 auction features pieces from North Van-bred L.A.-based art star Andy Dixon whose colourful Renaissance-inspired tableaux have been featured in international solo exhibitions in such metropolises as London, New York and Hong Kong. Here, the talented artist, who was once a punk rock singer and guitarist, talks inspiration, L.A- life and what he’d do for a living if it wasn’t painting (hint: it’s not exactly legal).

Tell me about the painting you’ve donated to the Splash gala this year.

The piece is called *Lumbermen*, 2018. It is a reinterpretation of an antique photo of lumbermen in the in the Pacific Northwest.

What inspires your art?

I, as is the case with most artists, are inspired by almost everything that crosses my path, from the colours of nature, to the design of a sneaker, I’m constantly cataloguing things in my brain.



Photo by Jennilee Marigomen

Who are your artistic mentors?

I am not sure I have ever had an artistic mentor, as in a trusted advisor, in any official sense. I am blessed to have an amazing group of creative friends with whom I can bounce ideas off of.

How do you feel Vancouver's local art community has evolved since you stepped foot on the scene?

That is such a tough thing to gage. As Vancouver's scene develops, I am developing as well and it can be tough to separate the two. Has Vancouver's art community grown, or have I just been exposed to more levels of it through my continued involvement? Vancouver has always been such a creative city, in my opinion, with institutions like Emily Carr and Arts Umbrella, who continue to develop and foster the arts community.

What can Canada/BC/Vancouver do to better support young emerging artists?

I think it would be great to see institutions like Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) exhibiting and financially supporting more local artists. There are so many talented people here, like Kim Dorland, Attila Richard Lukacs, Brent Wadden, etc., and I would love to see them all in a VAG permanent collection.

You live and work in California. How often do you get back to Vancouver?

I return to Vancouver a couple times a year for family and friends.

Tell me about the art scene in L.A. How does it compare to Vancouver's? How does it inspire your work?

The L.A. art scene is amazing, honestly. It has certain energy to it, especially right now. As opposed to a city steeped in institutionalized learning like New York, Los Angeles feels like the Wild West—people are making things up as they go along and there is excitement in that. I think both ethoses are really important to the art world but since I grew up in the DIY punk scene, the L.A. frame of mind appeals more to me personally.



Narcissus, 2018

Which personal and professional projects are you most excited about working on over the next year?

The next event I have coming up is a show in February with Joshua Liner in New York. The show will consist of a large-scale sculpture that I'm really excited about. I also have limited edition signature eyewear being released with Dutil Eyewear sometime soon. But what I'm most excited about is a vacation with my girlfriend to Positano next month.

If you weren't an artist, what would you do for a living?

Art Thief.

What do you do on your downtime?

What is downtime?

What is your favourite coffee shop, restaurant and grooming spot in Vancouver?

Every time I come back, I try to visit Federal Store for a coffee, Savio Volpe for dinner, The Boxcar for a beer, and get a haircut at Big Joy.

Where do you head for a weekend getaway?

I'm not exactly a rugged guy so if I'm going to travel for a weekend from Vancouver, it'll most likely be a wine tour in Naramata, B.C.