



THE ART OF CARDBOARD

BIG IDEAS FOR CREATIVITY,
COLLABORATION, STORYTELLING,
AND REUSE



LORI ZIMMER





THE ART OF CARDBOARD

Maika'i Tubbs
The Comforts of Home
2014





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For my parents Cindy and Gil,
who supported me no matter what
in all of my weird art adventures.

CONTENTS

WHY CARDBOARD? 8

INTRODUCTION

01 UPCYCLING INTO ART 12

Andy Barrett: Carton Marquetry

Cardboard Box Office: The Family Movie Life

James Grashow: Cardboard Till Death

02 REDEFINING THE EVERYDAY 26

Chris Gilmour: Cultural Weight and Cardboard

Don Lucho/Luis Valdes: El Puesto de Don Lucho

Evol: Visions of the Working Class

Kiel Johnson: The City and the Lens

03 FROM MUNDANE TO LUXURIOUS 44

Ann Weber: Woven

Jillian Salik: Becoming Baroque

Józef Sumichrast: As Fine as Velvet

Lacy Barry: Trompe L'Oeil Luxury

04 LARGER THAN LIFE 62

Joseph DeLappe: From Second Life to Three Dimensions

Laurence Vallières: Monkeying Around

Mykl Wells: The Wow Factor

Taro Hattori: Cardboard and Conceptual Lightness

05 SWEET SWEET FANTASY 80

Dosshaus: A Beautiful World in Black and White

Muffinhead: The Living Sculpture

Wayne White: Puppet Land

06 THE TECHNICAL AND THE ABSTRACT 94

Daniel Agdag: Industrial Imaginings

Under the Bell Jar

Maika'i Tubbs: Pulp Fiction

Mark Langan: Delicate Corrugation

07 DIYS BY ARTISTS 108

Sailing Ship: Beau Stanton

Geometric Wall Storage: Ian Kualii

Stacked Table: James Heffron

Polygon Sculpture: Jud Bergeron

Cardboard Balloon with Bow: Lacy Barry

Stenciled Wrapping Paper: Logan Hicks

Pineapple Grenade: James Cerasani

Cardboard Fish: Rebecca Paul

and Jeronimo Zancaner

Multi-Use Geodesic Dome: Robin Redd

154 INDEX

159 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

159 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

160 ALSO AVAILABLE

WHY CARDBOARD?

INTRODUCTION

Cardboard. We use it in our day-to-day lives, to ship our packages, to move our belongings to a new home, or to store our old stuff in the garage. As children, cardboard becomes the bare bones for our fantasies—turning leftover corrugated boxes into play houses, time machines, and spaceships. It is in this spirit that a roster of artists are using cardboard as their chosen medium today, treating the mundane material as if it were the element needed for a fine work of art. From crafting to furniture-making to fine art, a new cast of creatives have redefined cardboard as a viable material of the future, in both art and design.

Many factors have attracted artists to the allure of cardboard, with the foremost being the obvious—accessibility. We can all relate to utilizing cardboard around the house to whip up a Halloween costume or school project. Because it seems essentially free, it also gives the impression of being more forgiving. Without the fear of ruining a precious material, we delve into our greatest creative notions, unafraid of messing up the results. Although we are proud of our cardboard craft creations, fine artists take the material to the next level, using their skills and creativity to transform the mundane material into a luxurious and versatile medium.





ABOVE
Daniel Agdag
The Second Decline
2013

OPPOSITE
James Grashow
Corrugated Fountain
2012

Some artists have turned to cardboard in the spirit of the trend toward sustainability and eco-consciousness. Sourcing cardboard from recycling bins, trash piles, or from their own consumer use, these eco-artists use cardboard as a way to convey their message, tying in commentary about environmentalism with their pieces by making the viewer aware of the material in the artwork, sometimes by leaving labels and printing unaltered. Artists such as Andy Barrett and the couple behind Cardboard Box Office leave their materials as is, integrating the texture and former life of cardboard into their pieces.

Another allure of cardboard is its malleability and easily manipulated surface. Rather than chiseling away at marble or working with a tougher material, artists can bend, contort, cut, and glue

cardboard at will using simpler tools like X-Acto blades, scissors, and glue. With an artist's touch, the material can be rendered sleek and smooth, appearing like a more expensive or rigid medium. This transformative property itself inspires, opening up possibilities that other materials may prevent. With cardboard, artists have found they can let their imaginations run wild. Ornate Baroque frames take on a new meaning of modernity and conceptuality with the work of Jillian Salik, transcending from design object to work of art by sheer choice of material. Chris Gilmour, one of the more prominent users of cardboard in art, has taken inspiration from the everyday material to recreate life-size

versions of everyday things, like cars, typewriters, and dentist chairs, all made with meticulous detail and accuracy.

While these artists use their magic to transform cardboard into smooth and taut surfaces, others can leave the medium entirely unrecognizable. Ann Weber's process for her sculptural installations leaves the cardboard looking like woven bamboo or fine wood, yet much less heavy. Chicago-based artist Józef Sumichrast uses a sander on his cardboard sculptures to give a velvety surface that fools the eye into thinking it is

a much heavier material. Daniel Agdag's work uses the flexibility of cardboard to make intricate mechanical-inspired models with delicate tiny parts. Agdag emphasizes his imposed value on the material by placing the sculptures under bell jars—which were used to house curiosities and treasures in the Victorian era.

The versatility and easy to use quality of cardboard also allows artists to dream big—and make enormous installations with greater ease than working with heavier materials like marble, metal, and wood. Taro Hattori creates oversized

Taro Hattori
Obscenity Version 1
2010



models of planes and tanks that skew the viewers' perspective as they are jammed into an interior, while Laurence Vallières takes advantage of the material to make giant scenes of the animal kingdom with a scale that makes them hauntingly real. Cardboard is also the perfect material to create fantastical versions of reality, like Dosshaus's black and white distortions that transform daily life into a life-size children's book.

The affordability, availability, sustainability, and forgiving nature of the medium of cardboard have influenced a new genre of artists to not only experiment, but to spark their imaginations and render a utilitarian material sometimes unrecognizable. The accessible medium inspires the inner artist in all of us and has that rare quality that beckons the viewer to go home and try their hand at making something creative themselves.

In that spirit, professional artists have shared their favorite DIY projects at the end of this book, inviting you to make your own creation from cardboard.

LEFT
Andy Barrett
Bonfire
2012

BELOW
Laurence Vallières
IncorporApe
2012



01

UPCYCLING INTO ART

ANDY BARRETT
CARTON MARQUETRY
CARDBOARD BOX OFFICE
THE FAMILY MOVIE LIFE
JAMES GRASHOW
CARDBOARD TILL DEATH

Whether they like it or not, artists working in cardboard are often lumped into the upcycling/sustainability initiative that encompasses media, design, and of course blogs. Internet sites like Inhabitat, Treehugger, and Green Prophet are geared toward all things eco-conscious, including art. In that same vein, many artists working in cardboard have an underlying message of transforming trash into treasure, expressing their visions while also reusing materials discarded both by themselves and the general public. All the artists in this section have highlighted reuse in their work, using creativity to give cardboard new life in fine art. Whether it is Andy Barrett's colorful cut collages using cardboard packaging's printed logos and lettering, Cardboard Box Office's inventive transformation of moving boxes into movie sets, or James Grashow's pristine sculptural works that have nabbed him the nickname of the Cardboard Bernini, these artists make work that makes the viewer acutely aware of their material's origins, while wowing their audience with their artistic fervor.

CARTON MARQUETRY

From early childhood, Andy Barrett and his father had a garbage-night ritual of driving around the streets of Akron, Ohio, collecting treasures like spare parts, scrap metal, partially broken furniture, and other remnants deemed unusable by their original owners. Together, they would survey their findings and make new things, from chairs and electrical appliances to toys and lawn decorations. Barrett looks back at this process of scavenging the street for usable materials and reassembling them with his father fondly, not only for the bonding experience, but because it launched his habit of experimenting with materials deemed trash by other people.

Barrett's father never thought of the sculptures or decorations they made together from their trash-picked finds as "art." But the experience inspired the young mind of his son, who translated these days spent building together into an artistic development that gained him a scholarship to get his M.F.A. at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Here, he expanded his trash assemblage into drawing, collage, sculpture, and installation and became a creative jack of all trades—working as a carpenter, furniture designer, prop maker, and prototyper in addition to his fine art endeavors. His multifaceted skills are reflexive, enriching his fine art work and pushing it to other levels. As an adult, his trash-picking



www.andybarrettstudio.com

ANDY BARRETT



ABOVE
Nuke Mandala
2010
Detail

TOP/RIGHT
Brawny Man
2009



focus turned to cardboard, for its accessibility but also because he could collect it without the need of a car. Having moved to New York, he could easily collect stacks and stacks of new materials from the streets and bring them back to his studio on the subway or bus.

Barrett has become an expert on cardboard collection in New York City. He initially reached out to the city's Sanitation Department, attempting to form an alliance, and more importantly to learn the recycling trucks' routes and schedules. But the city wanted none of it, so he had to turn to his own observations. With much research, his process is down to a science. Through careful studying of the recycling collection habits of city trucks, Barrett has written down a schedule of his own collection, recording the best scouring moments that fall between the time a business puts their cardboard out to the curb and when the big trucks come by to scoop it up. The best part? The cardboard has already been bundled and sorted for the recycling trucks, making getting it from the curbside as simple as checking what has been soiled and what hasn't. Aside from clean cardboard, Barrett also searches for colors, images, and logos to become inspired by, sometimes turning to friends in other countries for unfamiliar boxes and logos in foreign languages.

AS IF PAYING TRIBUTE to trash, Barrett's multicolored creations are exclusively made from found cardboard, leftover from consumer packaging. From afar, many of these pieces look like mosaics, organized fragments of color and shape. Instead of the familiar brown of the cardboard, he focuses on the rich colors printed from their utilitarian use, conveying what was once held, stored, or transported in the boxes. These logos, or indication of a former life, are then used in his collage process, which he has called "Carton Marquetry." Barrett looks at the colors, logos, and images found on cardboard boxes like tubes of paint, using the existing hues to illustrate the pictures in his mind.

THIS PAGE
Arab Spring Mandala
2011
Detail

OPPOSITE/MIDDLE
Tough Life
2013

OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
Ethiopian Life
2008



A TRAINED ARTIST AND DESIGNER, Barrett has developed his cardboard work in both the two-dimensional and three-dimensional realms. His sculptural works stay true to his oeuvre, paying heavy attention to color and using varying shades of found hues to create dimensionality. Using cardboard to make sculptures that are part cartoonish, part realism, Barrett has layered slivers of yellows, reds, and oranges to make a life-size campfire sculpture. Hundreds of cardboard shards emanate from carefully constructed cardboard logs, the colors intermingling to form flames, but revealing bits and pieces of chopped up text that give away the material's origins. Barrett also takes advantage of the building qualities of cardboard and has transformed printed storage boxes into functional items, such as a series of geometric lamps. But creating functional pieces as well as sculptures can blur the lines between art and design, a comparison the artist prefers to avoid as design does not carry the same message that art can.

Barrett's colorful two-dimensional pieces stretch to XXL scale, constructed like jigsaw puzzles with each cardboard fragment fitting into the next without overlapping. All of the picture-building cuttings—text, font, logos, colors, figures, architectural drawings, and graphics—start out by being catalogued and organized, fully considered before starting a project. Armed with these pieces, he can use repetition to create familiar patterns, evidence that a particular garbage pick yielded a stack of boxes



of the same origin. Advertising icons, like the Brawny man, Little Debbie, or the black lines of IKEA furniture, are cast as characters in narratives that emphasize consumer culture, set amidst a cardboard-cum-batik patterned tableau.

REPEATED IMAGERY FROM multiples of the same cardboard boxes inspired a mandala series, which appear as an intricate serenity of colored patterns. But these mandalas are a glimpse of more than just the spiritual universe, the patterns made up of slogans and advertising text that mar its spiritual guidance, instead showing the evidence of greed and material demand. Zooming in to examine details, the fragments making up each piece also tell a backstory about the consumer habits of the different neighborhoods and ethnicities where the boxes were sourced from.

Barrett's beautifully colorful work is laced with lessons, for both the artist and the viewer. Throughout the process, the artist is able to quench his inquisitive thirst for the habits and contrasts of economics in his adopted city of New York, studying the varying anthropology street by street, to better understand the place he has chosen to live. For the viewer, the message is multifaceted. Recycling, sustainability, and reuse are thrust into awareness by the sheer use of cardboard, while the visible logos and icons bring an awareness of overt consumerism. Barrett provides a spoonful of sugar with these important lessons of greed and conservation, allowing the viewer to fall back on the complex beauty of his detailed collages, while being told to become a better person.



THE FAMILY MOVIE LIFE

Lilly and Leon Mackie stumbled into the world of cardboard art almost by accident. Moving a house full of belongings from New Zealand to new digs in Australia left the young couple with a new life—and a garage full of cardboard boxes of every size. A new addition to the family, Orson, added even more changes, and the Mackies found themselves with the lifestyle of new parents—housebound. With parental responsibilities keeping them home, the Mackies decided to cook up a creative project that would wet their artistic whistle, while also involving their new son. Their creativity budded when the couple decided to recreate a scene from *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* with things they found around the house, casting themselves as characters, then taking a photo. With Lilly's background in photography, they thought it would be a fun and memorable project to show Orson when he got older. While constructing the set, they remembered the loads of cardboard stacked in the garage, and it was then that the Cardboard Box Office project was born.

Taking a heaping portion of inspiration from the films of Michel Gondry, Lilly and Leon were driven to create similar special effects out of everyday objects, creating a laugh and chuckle from the viewer with their hodge-podge simplicity. Leon's experience designing children's books also fueled the quirky aesthetic that Cardboard Box Office has become known for. The seemingly unlimited supply of cardboard gave the Mackies a lot to work with, fueling their experimentation of turning boxes into recognizable props from



www.cardboardboxoffice.com

CARDBOARD BOX OFFICE

their favorite movies. Since the initial *Life Aquatic* shoot, the Mackies have been an unstoppable cardboard movie set making machine. Each project inspires the next, enabling the cinephiles to recreate their favorite movies, while spending quality family time together. Along with their makeshift cardboard sets, the family casts themselves as each film's main characters, acting up a storm along with baby Orson.

Dubbing their style “home-made Hollywood,” their cardboard creations show off their DIY aesthetic, embracing the exposed handmade qualities of their constructions. “We embrace the DIY element in every scene we create and never try to hide how anything was created,” the Mackies explain. “Our method could be described as last-minute and slapped-together.”

RATHER THAN SHOWING OFF their carefully controlled craft or fine art skills, Cardboard Box Office is meant to encourage others to use their imaginations and inspire their own inventive projects at home, regardless of artistic training or history. Elements of each set are recycled into the next, reusing the flattened cardboard until they are too worn to use anymore. With their stockpile of moving boxes, the couple has been able to construct around fifty re-creations, developing skills and tricks along the way. With each experience, they've fine-tuned their building process and reduced set building to about half the time as their first projects, learning the limits of cardboard through old-fashioned trial and error. What is most fun is that for each movie Lilly, Leon, and Orson (and sometimes Orson's teddy bears) impose themselves in the scene as the characters, adding an element of make-believe that proves no one is too old to have fun with little else but their imaginations.

Captured in photos, Cardboard Box Office has expanded to include a bevy of cult classic films, with sets that were built with the same child-like fun that was brought with building a fort out of a refrigerator box as a kid. After *Life Aquatic* (the least “cardboard” of their sets), which cast baby Orson as Steve Zissou, *Star Wars* got its tribute, complete with cardboard buns for Princess Leia and a cardboard light saber, the boxes cut with patterned perforations and backlit to emulate the interior of the Death Star. Jack's iconic typewriter from *The Shining* was made from a small package box, a cardboard chandelier representing the grandeur of The Overlook while Orson's twin teddy bears stop him in the hall as he rides a tricycle—made from his potty



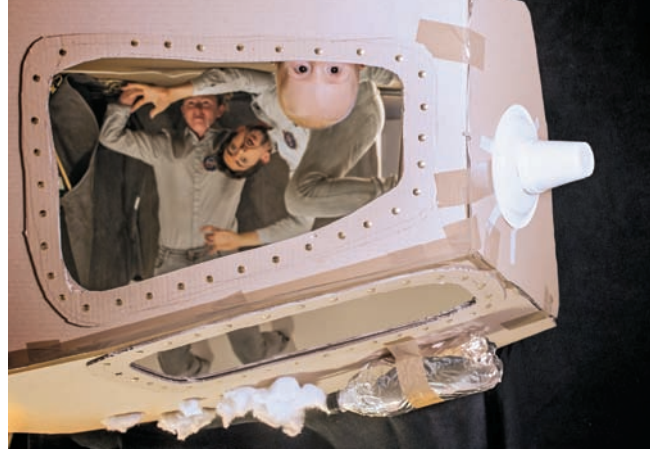
ABOVE
The Playtrix (The Matrix)
2014

OPPOSITE
The Life Domestic
(The Life Aquatic with
Steve Zissou)
2013

and cardboard wheels. Keanu would be proud of Cardboard Box Office's re-creation of *The Matrix*, the boxes taking their original shapes to make the rooftop and cityscape where Orson takes Keanu's role and battles his dad as Agent Smith. The charm of the Mackies' self-described "slapped-together" working style is paired adorably with the title "Houston, We Have a Poopy . . ." for *Apollo 13*. The spacecraft, made from cut-out cardboard boxes with visible packing tape and a paper plate and Styrofoam cup transmitter, captures the unpretentious fun that Lilly and Leon intend with their ongoing Cardboard Box Office Project. "It's really about celebrating the use of cardboard rather than masking it with decoration," say the Mackies.

EACH OF THE ZANY cardboard projects is captured on camera, making not only a unique family photo album of memories, but fueling the Mackies' extremely popular Cardboard Box Office Blog. Their photos and story have been picked up by countless design, sustainability, and art blogs, spreading their creativity and reach to inspire others. Taking their success in stride, they are happy to push out the eco-message of Cardboard Box Office. "We never went into the blog with the message of recycling or sustainability in mind, but we're obviously pleased that our creations can be associated with those practices. The main idea of the blog is that you can create really fun environments in the home using very basic materials. I think recycling is automatically part of that idea."

Cardboard Box Office was created with the altruistic messages of the importance of recycling and of family fun in mind. Their whimsical projects have inspired a following of fans to take creativity into their own hands, undaunted under their guidance by a lack of artistic training or materials. The box office plans to stay open and is aiming high to one day create a life-size pop-up book made entirely from cardboard.





OPPOSITE/TOP TO BOTTOM
"Houston, We Have a
Poopy..." (Apollo 13)
2013

Parents of the Caribbean
(Pirates of the Caribbean)
2014

The Whining (The Shining)
2014

Wah Wars (Star Wars)
2013

E.TED
(E.T.: The Extraterrestrial)
2014

CARDBOARD TILL DEATH

Trading marble for cardboard, artist James Grashow is now known around the world as the “Cardboard Bernini.” Carrying the same mastery as his Renaissance counterpart, Grashow’s ornamental cardboard sculpture has gained him global recognition, partially due to a documentary (aptly entitled *The Cardboard Bernini*) that focuses on the artist’s unique process and philosophy behind working with cardboard as a sculptural medium. While the real Bernini carved masterpieces that will last through the ages, Grashow actively embraces the drawbacks of the medium, dramatically pushing his work into cardboard’s worst enemy: the elements.

Nicola Salvi’s world famous Trevi Fountain and Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s marble Baroque masterpieces have inspired for centuries with their incredibly ornate detail and their station as permanent cultural symbols. In true Italian Baroque fashion, Grashow has followed in the ornate footsteps of these masters. His incredible *Corrugated Fountain* (page 9) was comparable down to the detail to the grandeur of the Trevi. Sure, his chosen material may be paltry to the scrutinizing eye of the art history connoisseur, but his execution is impressive and his pieces are monumental and outright decadent. Grashow called his sculptural conglomeration a fountain—even though its functionality would destroy his handiwork.

The gorgeous *Corrugated Fountain* toured galleries and museums for two solid years, delighting diverse audiences with its quirky realism. Centered on a



www.jamesgrashow.com

JAMES GRASHOW

ABOVE/LEFT
Rooster
2009

OPPOSITE
The Corrugated Dance
2010



muscle-bound bearded cardboard Poseidon, trident in hand, the piece depicted noble characters from the mystical sea. Flanked by two angry fish jumping out of curly waves, the sculpture was a tangle of sea horses, mermaids, and trumpet-playing sea nymphs. Stretching 25 feet (7.6 m) wide and rising 17 feet (5.2 m) in the air, Grashow's piece was comparable to any functional fountain masterpiece, in both grandiose scale and exacting detail. During its museum tour, visitors could even throw coins into its cardboard waters—using handmade wooden coins carved by Grashow of course.

BUT UNLIKE OTHER ARTISTS working in cardboard, Grashow's piece entered a performative, dramatic, and conceptual realm when he decided to end the whirlwind museum tour by displaying the fountain outside. Signifying a circle of life, the piece, which took four years to construct, was given up to the elements. Like the marble masterpieces that adorn the world, the *Corrugated Fountain* was put to the test of Mother Nature—and failed beautifully. As Poseidon and his fleet crumbled under his beloved water, bending and melting in the oncoming rain, Grashow felt complete. The piece's final act felt liberated, allowing him to see his artwork succumb to the Earth, rather than being plagued with the legacy of wondering if the work would be taken care of after his time. "Ashes to ashes, mush to mush," Grashow says. "Everything dissolves into eternity, I like to speak to that."



Grashow has used cardboard to add a layer of depth to his work. He has been carving wood and creating sculpture since the 1960s, famously designing the cover art for Jethro Tull's 1969 record, *Stand Up*. But the character of cardboard, considered playful and quirky in craft, has given Grashow the chance to address both the passage of time—and mortality. Artists generally spend the time not creating trying to preserve what they've created. Acid-free papers and sealants, climate-control storage, chemical-free polish that won't tarnish surfaces, UV protectors that keep colors from fading—all art comes with a projected timeline, and artists must consider how to prevent the inevitable. Work is created with the underlying thought of preservation and conservation and the hope that each piece will survive way beyond the life of the artist. Conservation goes hand in hand with ego; through maintained artworks, these artists can in a way live forever.

BUCKING THIS SYSTEM was Grashow's vision of the future as a means to an end. Shirking the possibility of a legacy, he chose to give himself up to a higher power, a nod to conceptual art. In his purposeful destruction, once again the artist's choice of cardboard is of vital importance. If a piece is made from another material—wood, metal or marble—Mother Nature alone may not be enough to destroy it. Cardboard, with its drawbacks, also created the perfect metaphor. In life, it is rigid and durable, able to tour from place to place and maintain its strength and aesthetic. But with one false move, the introduction of rain, the cardboard shows its vulnerability and impending demise. Wilted and melting, the ruined *Corrugated Fountain* created as powerful a piece in death as it did in life.

Although not all of his pieces are as metaphorical, Grashow continues to utilize cardboard as a sculptural medium, exploring themes of architecture and biology often in large scale. From a room full of monkeys to Corinthian columns, he extends his masterful sculptural skills to cardboard—both in and out of the rain.



OPPOSITE
A City
2010
Detail

ABOVE
Sea Serpent
2009
Installation

BELOW
Cardbirds
2009



02

REDEFINING
THE EVERYDAY

CHRIS GILMOUR
CULTURAL WEIGHT AND
CARDBOARD

DON LUCHO/LUIS VALDES
EL PUESTO DE DON LUCHO

EVOL
VISIONS OF THE
WORKING CLASS

KIEL JOHNSON
THE CITY AND THE LENS

Using a democratic material like cardboard brings with it a language of its own. Reimagining everyday objects into cardboard counterparts creates a new way to think about the familiar. Cardboard creates a level playing field, allowing artists to comment on the importance of context, material, and cultural significance with the distraction of reality. Artists use the forgiving and familiar qualities of cardboard to convey social, political, and cultural issues. Full-size cars made from cardboard often trick artist Chris Gilmour's viewers, who expect his sculptures to carry the same weight as their true-to-life counterparts, while Kiel Johnson goes for the smaller scale, translating usable objects like cameras and instruments into cardboard. Luis Valdes uses cardboard as a way of introducing art to the general public, by sculpting objects like fruits and vegetables out of cardboard and presenting them in farmers' markets, while Berlin-based Evol uses tattered boxes as the canvas for the mundane working class public housing buildings that pepper East Berlin.

CULTURAL WEIGHT AND CARDBOARD

Chris Gilmour could be considered a cardboard role model, with many of the artists featured in this book calling him a source of inspiration. Gilmour has made a name for himself recreating the machines from our day-to-day lives in glorious life-size sculptures, made from recycled cardboard and packing material. With only glue and used cardboard boxes, Gilmour has spent his career hand-making realistic iterations of household items like typewriters, as well as completing more over-the-top feats, such as a true-to-size Fiat 500 and Lambretta. His painstaking hyperrealism can be appreciated in two ways: first, for his exquisite building skills, but secondly for the illusionary experience of the physical presence of well-known objects with a material that most people think of as light, weak, and only meant to be used as a container and then thrown away. These two facets have made Gilmour a favorite in the recycling/eco art world, as well as among conceptual art fanatics who enjoy the artist's jab at consumerism and materialism.

"The use of these found materials is a way of re-appropriating or taking control of the things around us, which if you live in a city are pretty much all man-made," Gilmour says. "It's not so much recycling as interrupting the way materials are disposed of—catching them before they are recycled."

Wheelchair
2003



www.chrisgilmour.com

CHRIS GILMOUR



THIS PAGE
Aston Martin
2006
Details below

Gilmour sees his appropriation of cardboard as an interruption in the consumer process, instead of an implicit message of sustainability or recycling/environmental sensitivity. Like many artists, he does source the material from the streets, picking up the used boxes from his town center on recycling night. Although the material is actually recycled by Gilmour, he prefers to think of it as having a past function, as a cog in the commercial consumer process that envelops modern life. Most of his work uses cardboard boxes that are unsoiled, showing only the familiar brown, but he has now started working with damaged cardboard, its wears, tears, and labels divulging more of its former life in the consumer field.

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN the medium of cardboard, a democratic material used for packaging and often little else, and Gilmour's subjects, often luxury items, is a purposeful statement. By using the mundane to create items of leisure, culture, and society in a hyper-realistic fashion, Gilmour is casting a net of conceptual interpretations that would lose their message if made from a different material. Constructing sculptures like his cars, wheelchair, or bicycles at actual size gives viewers a slightly disorienting sensation, allowing a flicker of a moment for the piece to be perceived as real before its material is registered. This millisecond of disorientation allows viewers to look at objects they are familiar with in a different way, the ubiquity of cardboard providing a conduit to see outside of the materialistic allure of an expensive car. The glitzy appeal of a finely polished hood is replaced with utilitarian cardboard, leaving only the object without its consumerist cachet and societal status.





Gilmour's interest in cardboard stemmed from his work with classic materials. Trained in traditional sculptural techniques, he worked in stone carving, metal work, and bronze casting while in university. These sculptural tactics and methods enabled the artist to sculpt how he wanted, but the materials lacked conceptual weight. He found his prototypes and models, made from cardboard, to be more immediate and more interesting than his finished, polished pieces. By applying these skills to cardboard, he has created his own methods of cardboard sculpting, in which he uses only glue, relying on the rigidity of the cardboard to build frames and armatures rather than metal or wood support systems. With these techniques combined with his own, he has perfected his ability to make smooth, realistic sculpture from cardboard, left unpainted in cardboard brown to throw viewers' immediate perception off. "I like the illusion of reality that is created by my sculptures; they are like the ghosts of objects and without knowing they bring the viewer to a relation with the object which in the end is not there," Gilmour notes. "I also like the juxtaposition of real/not real and the contrast which making very realistic objects in a simple and normally fragile material creates."



BECAUSE HIS PIECES ARE SO REALISTIC, viewers have had the impulse to open the car doors, type on typewriters, or believe his cardboard classical sculptures are oppressively heavy and solid. The pieces beckon touch, but once that sense is satisfied and the hand touches the cardboard surface, the illusion is broken. One unfortunate elderly viewer could not resist temptation and sat in Gilmour's cardboard sculpture of a wheelchair, only to find himself crashing to the ground, the sculpture broken into pieces, and the illusion shattered for everyone in the gallery.

Gilmour uses cardboard as a language tool to create a dialogue between our consumer habits and our relationship to objects and products that culture associates with stature and status. By removing the (literal) weight of the object, all we are left with is the projected lifestyle that the object represents, which Gilmour is proving is nothing more than a shell of an idea. "I am fascinated with the objects we use to define our lives, the relationship we have with the things we own or dream of owning," Gilmour notes. "I find that investigating this aspect of life, and using a material which is left over after our purchases, is an endless source of possibilities."

OPPOSITE/TOP
Bikes
2003

OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
Churches
2004

RIGHT
Equestrian Statue
2007



EL PUESTO DE DON LUCHO

The streets of Santiago, Chile, are often the stage for Luis Valdes's incredibly realistic cardboard interventions. The pieces, entirely staged cardboard scenes, interact with the everyday, taking onlookers by surprise as they travel along their daily routine. Valdes's artworks are not typical of "street art"; he does not place sculptures or stencils atop the architecture of his city. Instead, his pieces betray reality, forcing onlookers to question what is real and what isn't. With the plentiful cardboard he finds on the streets of Santiago, Valdes (a.k.a. Don Lucho) has an unlimited supply of both material and inspiration, sharing his to-scale real-life scenarios alongside day-to-day scenes, causing people to rethink their own reality.

These streets are also the artist's inspiration. Spending hours walking the streets of Santiago, or sitting in a cafe watching the world pass him by, Valdes watches how the city moves as inspiration for his sculptures. As the city's movements inspire new pieces, it also provides his medium, leaving an endless bounty of used cardboard on its streets every day.

Valdes's work lives almost entirely in the public realm, and his art is made to be contemplated by the general populace, rather than by art enthusiasts in a gallery setting, bringing art side by side with everyday things. Recreating reality into a hyper-detailed cardboard world is Valdes's way of forcing viewers to question the world around them, using art as a tool to catalyze reflection. The artist targets an audience that may not be familiar or comfortable with art, using his pieces as a way to relate, but also to expose new audiences to the power of art.



DON LUCHO/
LUIS VALDES

ABOVE/LEFT
Car-Toon Crash
2009

OPPOSITE
Casa de Cardboard
2010



During a typical Santiago street fair, the artist set up *El Puesto de Don Lucho*, a stand selling what appeared to be brightly colored fresh fruits and vegetables, only his were of course made from cardboard. Colorful bananas, oranges, apples, leafy cabbage, and bunches of cardboard kale were spread across the stand with identical pricing to the real vegetables and fruits being sold around him. Sandwiched between other vendors selling meats, nuts, produce, and other fresh foods, his stand seemed right at home. Buyers were confused, accustomed to seeing produce at the street fair, but not art. For five and a half hours, Valdes sold his cardboard fruits (priced like real fruits) to largely bewildered customers. Most had questions, some thought it was a joke or a hidden camera TV show, but for many, the stand opened

up a dialogue about the visual (and monetary) value of objects. In a gallery setting, the detailed, handcrafted cardboard fruits and vegetables would be treated as fine sculpture, placed on pedestals or shelves out of arm's reach. But in the venue of the market, Valdes gives an audience that may not be familiar with art an opportunity to engage. In this setting, fair visitors are invited to touch, to examine, and to scrutinize fine art, creating a bond that they otherwise might not be exposed to.

VALDES HAS ALSO TAKEN ON larger-scale projects, which have been possible due to the flexible nature of cardboard. Like a kid making a fort in an old refrigerator box, he recreated an entire apartment called *Casa de Cardboard* using only cardboard, white paint, and marker. Boxes of all sizes were flattened out to create walls, their folds and scores appearing like clapboards through the white paint. An entire bathroom, complete with wet cardboard towels and cardboard porcelain sink in need of a scrub, looks eerily realistic. The cardboard kitchen

is stocked with pots, pans, hanging calendar, and even a table and chair, “lit” by a naked dangling cardboard lightbulb. The monochromatic nature of the room makes the apartment seem surreal, as do the details of each cardboard piece, scrawled in plain black marker. In the cardboard bedroom, Valdes has created details that are down to the nitty gritty—including cardboard dirty socks and underwear. With these realistic effects, the apartment feels familiar, taking a cue from reality, but also feeling a bit like a scene from a cartoon.

Other pieces take on a larger scale, surprising passersby who discover them because of their sheer size alone. The artist has left an actual-size cardboard hatchback crashed into a sign on the street, as well as a one-passenger plane, “crashed” into a tree, awaiting viewers. Both pieces were made from recycled pizza boxes and were placed in parks to encourage interaction from locals with one another and with art. “I grew up playing with it and having fun, and if you mess up, it’s only cardboard,” Valdes says. “I try to represent moments, situations that only take a certain time; the same is with the material. The art itself does not need to last any longer.”



OPPOSITE/TOP
Casa de Cardboard
2010
Detail

OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
Satellite
2012

THIS PAGE
El Puesto de Don Lucho:
Lettuce and Oranges (top)
Oranges (bottom)
2011

IN ANY OTHER MEDIUM, Valdes's world of oversized sculptural interventions would either not be possible—or cost the artist a pretty penny in art supplies. Being able to gather cardboard from the street allures Valdes to the medium, but using a recycled material that is also common coincides with the artist's plight to bring art to the average person. Being able to run to a supermarket or recycling bin inspired Valdes to try his hand at making large-scale projects, experimenting using tape and glue until he mastered the three-dimensional process. The sculptures and projects are often painted, but Valdes loves the point when the cardboard reveals itself to the viewer, sending a message of possibility and eco-consciousness. The fleeting, impermanent quality of cardboard also adds to the romanticism of his projects, coupled with the whimsical imprecision of being handmade.

Cardboard has enabled Valdes to form a unique and reflexive connection with his city of Santiago, in an unending creative cycle. His city gives him both artistic inspiration and materials to work with, which through his intelligent and creative eyes are translated into cardboard interventions that in turn inspire the city's inhabitants.



VISIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS

Constantly on the hunt for the perfect piece of used cardboard, the artist known as Evol relishes wear, tear, and evidence of life in the materials he scavenges from the streets. Found boxes and cardboard pieces are transformed into his own version of portraits. But rather than depicting the interesting faces of friends, family, or models, Evol's portraits personify the richly historical city he lives in: Berlin, Germany. Evol has decided to tell the tale of the once divided city's controversial past with the elements that have remained since the wall came down, the hard edges of the working class buildings of East Berlin. The artist sees his obsession with finding beauty in damaged pieces of cardboard as an appropriate translation of the beauty he finds in the DDR-era apartment buildings in his neighborhood of Friedrichshain, using the everyday material as a canvas to represent the everyday working class man.

East Berlin has a very specific design aesthetic. Row after row of unornate apartment buildings, echoing the era of the Berlin Wall and built to accommodate working class Germans, still stand although the Wall has fallen and the East has become a modern artistic hub. Weathered and worn, these buildings have borne witness to sweeping changes, from times of war and bombs, to times of fear and paranoia, to newly tasted freedom and the current air of bohemia attempting to stay alive in an increasingly commercialized city. With hard architectural lines, the buildings are not necessarily ugly, but instead practical, utilitarian, created to serve a purpose, but also reminders of a not so distant past. In a building that is impersonal on the outside, Evol gives a different psycho-

Kickern & Saufen
2011



www.evoltaste.com

EVOL

Charlottenstrasse
2010
Complete (top) /
Close detail (bottom)

logical weight to these structures by referring to them as “shelters” people live in, rather than using the word “homes,” which evokes much warmer feelings. Much like these buildings in East Berlin, he also sees cardboard boxes as shelters for something of value, with little attention paid to the exterior. This relationship fuels Evol’s ongoing fascination with the understorey of architecture, conveyed with his stenciled cardboard artworks that subtly comment on social issues.



37



Evol does not just collect cardboard from the streets; he carefully hand picks the best of what is thrown out. But his version of best does not mean unsoiled or perfectly pressed cardboard. Instead, he searches for pieces with evidence of a previous life, especially homing in on pieces with surface tears that reveal the textured corrugation of the middle layer. He is always on the alert for perfectly damaged cardboard and has been known to follow mailmen or package delivery men carrying crushed or torn boxes until their intended destinations, waiting outside before approaching the package’s receiver and asking to have the box once the contents have been unpacked. Evol explains: “I love damaged cardboard because it conveys a ‘visual memory’—it’s rather fragile, and it tells by traces what happened to it (by water, force, tape, writings), a language that can be read by the viewer through its markings and damage.”

CARDBOARD BOXES DO NOT BECOME a medium to cut apart to make something new, but instead become part of the works themselves. Unlike other artists, Evol does not use cardboard as a building block of a sculptural installation, but instead as (sometimes three-dimensional) canvases, incorporating the existing charms of a piece into his overall visual presentation. While he shares with



other artists his interest in cardboard's easy access and availability, his true interest lies in the subtle aesthetics of the medium itself, finding beauty in the incredibly flawed and used. Each used cardboard box tells its own story; rather than transform the piece entirely for his own use, he meshes the box's story with his own historical and social narrative message. Used cardboard becomes not just a material for Evol, but also an equal partner in his creations.

Often, he'll find a piece he deems inspiring but then saves it until the perfect stencil comes to mind—even if a year has passed. After selecting a piece of tattered cardboard, the material's flaws and shape provide inspiration for how the artist's architectural additions will come to fruition. Although he prefers to use the cardboard as-is, he has also learned to create his own wear, using tape or

ABOVE
Neighborhood Watch
2011

OPPOSITE/TOP TO BOTTOM
Amongst the Shades
2013

Rauhe Schale (Harter Kern)
2009

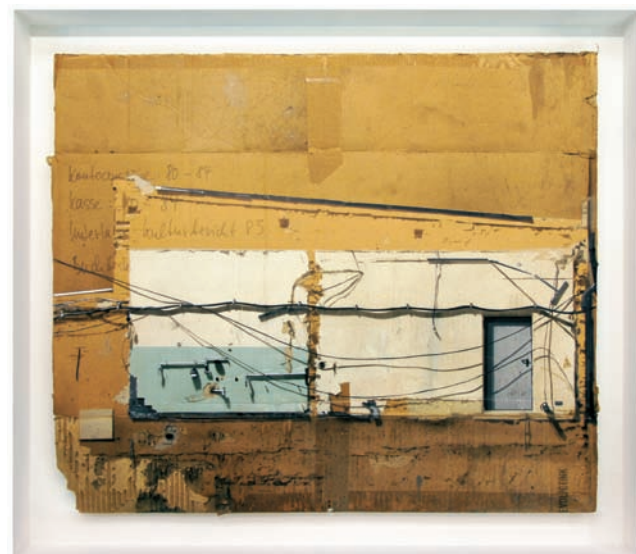
A&O
2011

sharp objects, in case the cardboard is too clean. Visually referencing the dilapidated architecture around him in Berlin, Evol's revival of the discarded pieces of material creates a commonality between subject and medium that would not be as effective if pristine canvas was used. The meticulously detailed and dimensional architectural imagery is created by using a series of finely cut stencils, which Evol layers to create an interplay between light and shadow. These stencils are then applied to his flawed, recycled materials.

BLOCKS OF ANTIQUATED-LOOKING apartment windows are flanked by the modernity of satellite dishes and air conditioning units. Fine details of brickwork and shadow are carefully painted in with meticulously detailed stencils. No detail is spared, down to tiny crafted drainpipes, exhaust and ventilation ducts, and gutters. The realistic apartment buildings seem to emerge from the tattered cardboard, creating a presence amongst the elements of the box's former use. Contrasting to the precise architectural stencils are evidence of the box's "soul", such as mailing labels, addresses scrawled in handwriting, stamps, and printed lettering, that ties in an actual cog of urbanity with his metaphorical pieces.

Each piece becomes a photorealistic representation of a stark urban life. Evol's buildings feel desolate and lonely, despite the many windows that suggest a large pool of residents, hinting at East Berlin's cold past. Cardboard furthers this message, functioning as utilitarian and getting the job done, despite flaws and markings of time.

Aside from his incredible cardboard works, Evol is known as an installation and street artist. Using the same stencil principles that he applies to his chosen pieces of cardboard, he transforms utility and electrical boxes found (and often ignored) on city streets into the same brand of working class apartment buildings for the public to enjoy. He continues his cardboard series in three-dimensional materials as well, including wood and cardboard, making a well-rounded body of work that represents the changing urban landscape of Berlin.



THE CITY AND THE LENS

In the gallery world, Kiel Johnson is known mostly for his large-scale drawings of fantastical cityscapes with tangles of unending highways and power lines. These detailed drawings are given new life in the third dimension with the introduction of cardboard. Johnson's cardboard sculptures are an extension of his works on paper and canvas, each having the same intricate details that his drawings do—only in real, tactile life. Congested cities, multilensed cameras on vintage-looking straps, and retro-electronics are lifted from his drawings and breathed into life with built-up strips of cardboard. Johnson's whimsical and chaotic world exists from paper to sculpture, giving viewers more to chew on in the third dimension with cardboard.

To Johnson, jumping to cardboard and three-dimensional pieces was a no-brainer. After having fun as a kid making forts out of refrigerator boxes, he began experimenting with it during art school. As a poor college student, he would collect the chipboard on the backs of drawing pads when other students were finished with the paper in drawing class and take them back to his studio to experiment with. Here, he began to create his own visual language and world that extends beyond the page into his sculpture.

Working in both drawing and cardboard sculpture creates a dialogue between both types of works and helps to define Johnson's artistic oeuvre to the viewer by inviting them into an all-encompassing world. Rather than getting lost in a drawing, Johnson's variations



www.kieljohnson.com

KIEL JOHNSON

OPPOSITE
File of Instruments
2010

THIS PAGE
Polaroid Camera (top)
2009
Camera with Green Strap
(bottom)
2009



reveal a snippet of his artistic mind, letting the viewer understand his creative process more than just one medium would. With cardboard, he has allowed us to stand in the shoes of the artist, by comparing and contrasting his pieces from page to sculpture. "Cardboard allows me to build things in a way that seems to relate very well to my drawings," he says. "I can also work fast and almost think of it as 3D drawing. I simply substitute the eraser for the carpet knife."

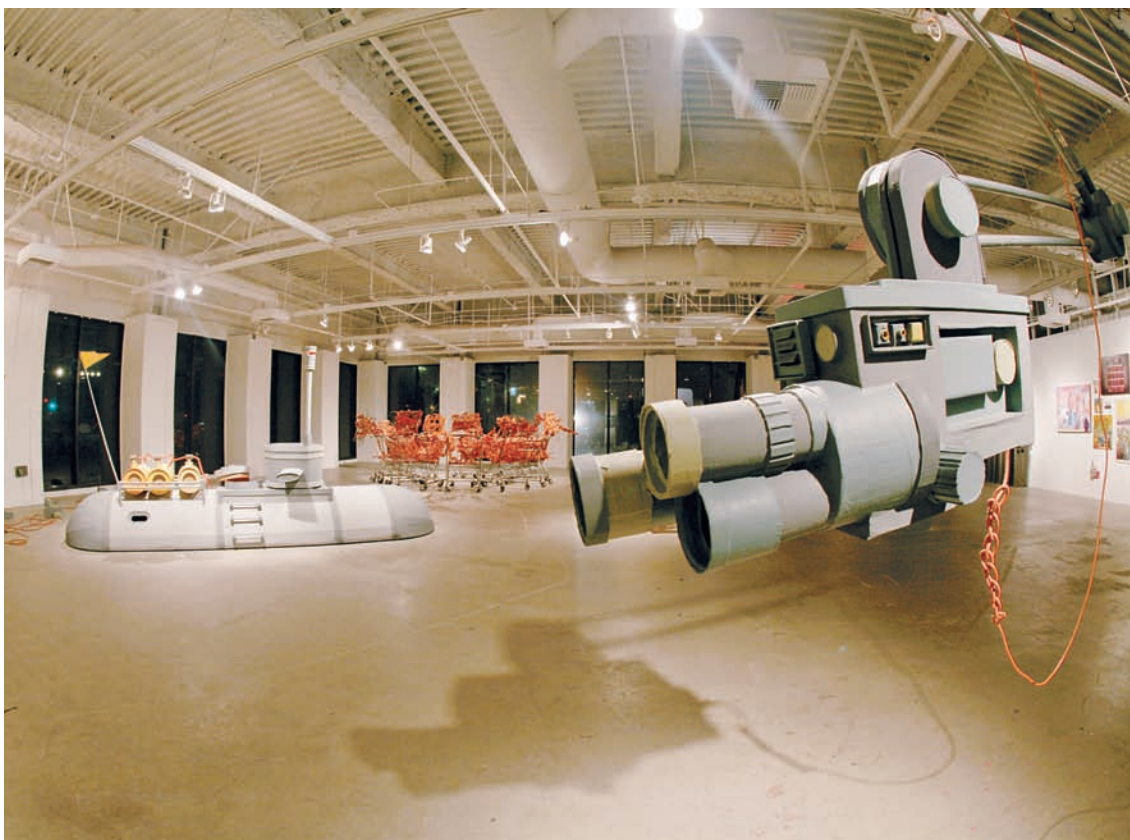
ALTHOUGH HIS DRAWINGS AND SCULPTURES read well together, their style does tend to be different. Johnson's drawings have a tendency to be overly exaggerated, inspired by real life. In his drawings, skyscrapers jam next to each other while satellites hover dangerously low to the ground, over winding highways that swirl in loop-de-loops. His sculptures, fragments of these drawn worlds, are more photorealistic, but convey the same fantastical quality by being uber-intricate, yet made from cardboard instead of their usual fine materials and mediums. His collection of vintage cameras looks hauntingly real, down to every (cardboard) gear and crank. Held next to a real camera, the similarity is uncanny; they are built to the same scale and even have detailed lenses. But Johnson breaks the illusion and the fantasy by leaving his sculptures with the bland uniform palette of cardboard. Rather than being read as a camera, the pieces are read as something else, bringing the viewer out of their comfort zone by rendering something so familiar in an almost generic palette. "I work organically, moving from one project to the next," Johnson explains.

"I believe a good idea only comes to you while working on a bad idea. I try not to censor myself too much and just keep making. I can honestly tell you that I can build you anything you want out of this stuff."

His overcrowded city drawings are translated into massive city grids with soaring skyscrapers of all sizes and cardboard hues. The cardboard metropolises, also in the classic light brown, evoke the chaos of living vertically, but also have an undertone of uniformity. Made from material found on the city street, the monochromatic nature of the sculptures captures the feeling of anonymity that living in a dense urban area can provoke—being one of the cogs in the intensely complicated machine that makes up a metropolis.



Video Camera
2010
Gallery view



43

JOHNSON CONSTANTLY PUSHES himself and the limits of cardboard; with every project, he tries to make the material thinner, stronger, or with more compound curves. He's branched out and tried every cardboard out there: discarded boxes, collected tubes, leftover chipboard, and even purchased professional grade cardboard, using each to convey different hues, textures, and properties in his work. Feeling as though he has mastered the material, Johnson as of late is taking the next step with cardboard. Instead of using the material as the end-all, he is exploring translating his cardboard sculptures into a new medium to extend his world to the next level. Using cardboard as his basis, he has been casting the pieces in plastic and metal, creating new dialogue among the different materials.

OPPOSITE
Aerial City
2012
Complete (far left)
and Detail

03

FROM MUNDANE
TO LUXURIOUS

ANN WEBER
WOVEN

JILLIAN SALIK
BECOMING BAROQUE

JÖZEF SUMICHRAST
AS FINE AS VELVET

LACY BARRY
TROMPE L'OEIL LUXURY

Rough, ragged, and corrugated, cardboard has a utilitarian reputation that is not often associated with luxury or fine materials. Despite its association with being disposable, some artists are able to transform the brown and pulpy into pristine and glossy sculptures, looking so luxe that its original properties are betrayed. Through glosses, paints, tools, and techniques, cardboard is elevated to a new level of appreciation, as an element of beauty. Ann Weber's enormous sculptures are woven from strips of cardboard, then coated in paint or gloss, looking like fine reeds or even ceramic. Jillian Salik uses museum-quality cardboard to carve away Baroque interiors, while Lacy Barry relies on building geometric sculptures to create frilly and flowery high-fashion pieces. Józef Sumichrast puts his cardboard through the ultimate process, finely sanding surfaces to make smooth sculptures that are as fine as marble.

Big Strange
2007



WOVEN

Ann Weber's sculptures, some reaching heights of 16 feet (4.9 m), can be described as abstract, polished, and even sensual, with their glistening curves and textured surfaces that beckon just one touch. Non-descript organic shapes intertwine with one another, balance capriciously, or undulate as if defying gravity. In muted hues of browns and whites, the sculptures entice viewers with their tactile surfaces and bulbous curves, allowing contemplation of both their shapes and negative space. The fact that the sculptures are made from cardboard is only secondary. Weber's transformative process has left her with a body of beautifully abstract sculpture that just happen to be made from cardboard, transforming the mundane into something precious, where form wins over medium.

After years of working in ceramics, Weber turned her back on traditional materials and toward sustainable cardboard. Using the material gleaned from Dumpsters and recycling bins opened up a world of possibility in her work. Gone were the days of needing welding equipment, assistants, or even forklifts to construct large sculptures in heavier, more expensive materials. With the lightweight flexibility of cardboard, Weber's totemic sculptures were able to soar to new heights. Weber couples her experience manipulating finer materials with traditional sculptural techniques, using a coating of shellac or polyurethane to create organic abstract shapes that appear polished and refined—and not obviously made from cardboard.

Like many artists, Weber started experimenting in cardboard due to money constraints and its availability. Weber started her career in ceramics, throwing pots while in school at Purdue University, then opening a

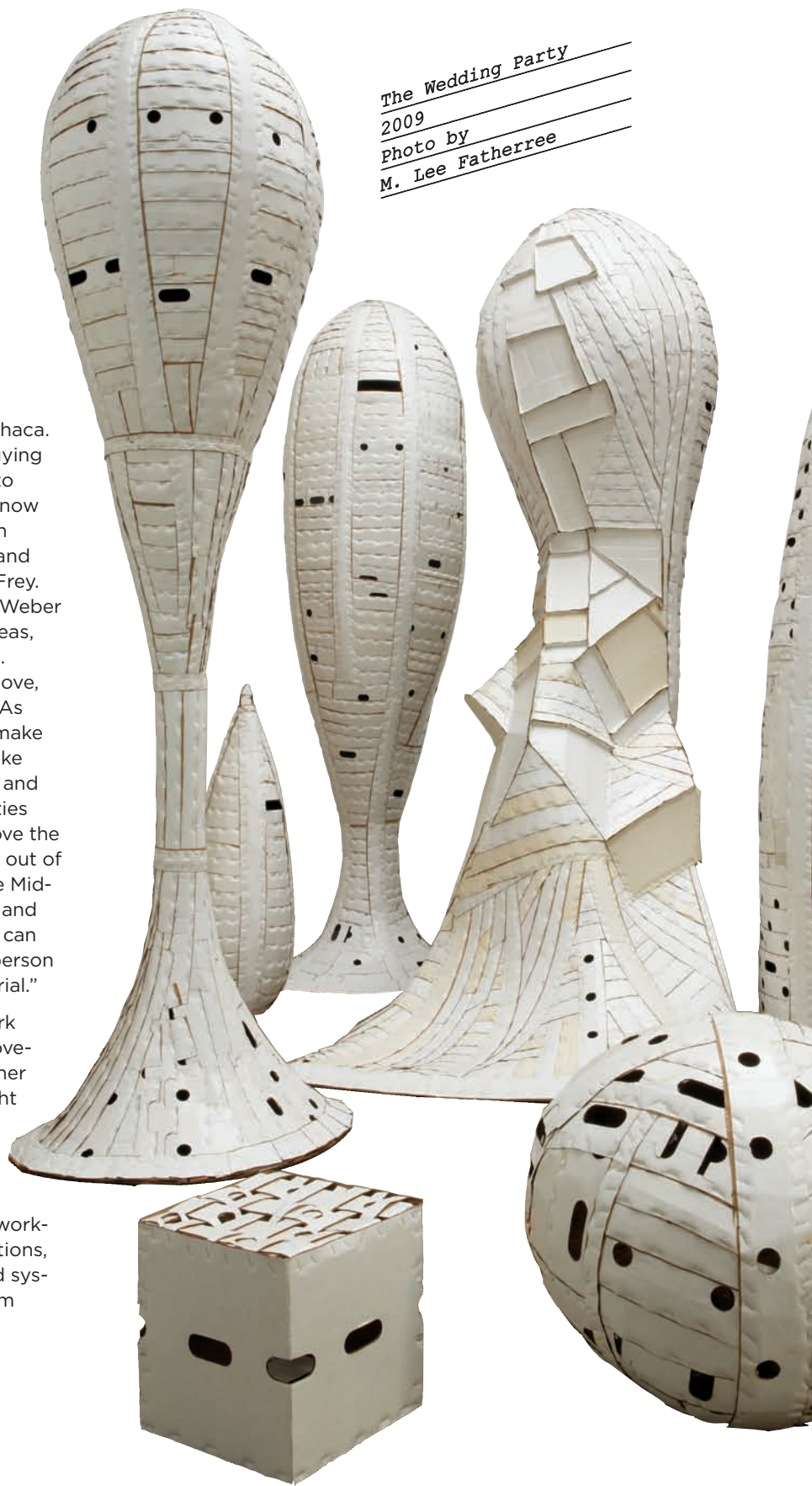
www.annwebersculpture.com

ANN WEBER

The Wedding Party
2009
Photo by
M. Lee Fatherree

pottery business with her husband at the time in Ithaca. But soon, Pottery Barn changed her customers' buying habits, her marriage dissolved, and so she moved to California and started taking art classes at what is now the California College of Art. Her work continued in experiments with plaster, papier-mâché, painting, and printmaking, while studying ceramics under Viola Frey. In 1991, after moving to a bigger place in Oakland, Weber was faced with a brand new studio and loads of ideas, but no money to outfit the studio with art supplies. Looking at the pile of cardboard boxes from the move, she thought of Frank Gehry's cardboard furniture. As an artist and creative thinker, she knew she could make work out of anything and challenged herself to make a body of work out of solely cardboard. Successful and inspired, she found cardboard had infinite possibilities and continued to create beautiful work from it. "I love the simplicity of it, the possibility of making something out of nothing," Weber says. "Being born and raised in the Midwest, I like to be resourceful. Cardboard is plentiful and strong because of its tubular construction. Anyone can make beauty out of silver and gold. It's the clever person that can create beauty from such a mundane material."

AN ARTIST'S ARTIST, Weber does not see her work with cardboard as part of the eco art/recycling movement. She lists artists rather than sustainability as her inspiration, inserting herself in the school of thought of artists like Louise Bourgeois, Louise Nevelson, Eva Hesse, and Constantin Brancusi. Instead, when asked to categorize herself, she resonates with the *Arte Povera* movement in Italy from the early 70s, which literally means "poor art." Artists working in *Arte Povera* bucked the system of art institutions, industry, and culture and questioned their imposed system of value on artworks by making visual arts from





unconventional materials. Like one of her sources of inspiration, *Arte Povera* artist Michelangelo Pistoletto, Weber creates work that is partially based on the unification of art with elements of everyday life. Aside from material, her pieces are also inspired by real-life experiences. An ornate angle noticed on a tour of a Frank Lloyd Wright house in Wisconsin or a visit to a foreign city like Rome is translated into Weber's language of form. With cardboard, Weber plays with positive and negative spaces, often creating two sculptures that respond to one another, meshing together without touching, but also holding up as successful sculpture on their own. Each life experience inspires a sculpture, which Weber begins from literally nothing, building loops of cardboard armature until the form in her mind is accomplished.

"HOW FAR CAN I BUILD THIS before it collapses?" is the thought that runs a thread through each of her pieces, pushing her to build larger and more outlandish, the limits expanded exponentially by using cardboard. Her forms often look soft and rounded, with an undercurrent of being something organic or alive, possibly an influence from the work of Eva Hesse. But Weber accomplishes with rigid cardboard what Hesse did with fabrics and felts, a transformative feat that makes her sculptures even more special and engaging. Her sculptures range from abstractions to representative of form. Shapes from nature like seeds, pods, and plants can be seen in her work, as well as human forms. The works in the *Personages* series are anthropomorphic sculptures seen through a Cubist's eye, suggesting human life and mannerisms through abstraction. A knobby thin tower can be read as a skinny spine or an ample piece can be read as a plump figure, gathered together to make a grouping of friends or family.

Over the years, Weber has paired down her arsenal of tools to just three items: an Arrow P-22 stapler, a box cutter, and a gallon of shellac. Still sourcing cardboard from the trash, she cuts her found boxes into strips, which are used to create cylindrical and spherical bases, as well as woven together to make the surfaces of her sculptures. Because the pieces are secured with staples, her surface patterns can extend beyond traditional weaving, allowing for random indentations or systematic patterns, built up with the edges of her cardboard strips. Her last step puts the viewer's focus onto the form, rather than the material, with a coating of polyurethane or shellac and sometimes a thin coat of paint that unifies the surfaces. By sealing off her sculptures, Weber is not only protecting them, but bringing them into a new realm, allowing the viewer to focus on the sculptures as a whole.

Ann Weber could easily make a body of beautiful work out of any artistic medium, yet by focusing on cardboard she has created a harmony that lets her vision supersede her material.

OPPOSITE
You My Butterfly
2012
Photo by
Sibilia Savage

BELOW
Almost 16 and 15 1/2
2006



BECOMING BAROQUE

Brooklyn-based artist Jillian Salik has mastered the process of transforming the ordinary into the frivolously luxurious. Jillian's work recreates the intricate ornate qualities of the Baroque design in painstaking detail. But rather than render her pieces in the traditional fine hard woods and gilded surfaces common during the Baroque period, the artist adds a layer of irony to her pieces by exclusively using cardboard. The contrast of opulence with a material associated with utilitarianism gives Jillian's work an element of magic, its fusion creating a wow factor that would be lost if finer mediums were used. Instead, when viewers discover that the artist's exquisite frame installations are made from layers of cardboard, they move beyond experiencing someone else's artwork, the familiar material pulling at the viewer's inner muse.

Jillian works in artwork conservation, building archival storage solutions and custom boxes for museums and art galleries. As she started to work with cardboard regularly at her day job, she first began considering it as not only a solution for keeping artworks safe, but also as a medium for fine art itself. Initially, she began working with mat board, which worked beautifully but became increasingly pricey. Jillian became inspired to turn the tables on the medium and indulge in its affordability. Transforming the container into the artwork itself, she incorporated her plotting machine to render flourishes rather than utility. With the malleability of the material and ease in making delicate cuts, the cardboard allows Jillian to master each step of her work process in ways that wood or plaster may be limiting in large-scale projects.



www.jilliansalik.com

JILLIAN SALIK



THIS PAGE
Tiled Nut
2013
Detail

OPPOSITE
Details in Construction
2013

MOST PEOPLE THINK OF CARDBOARD as a cheap material, but not all artists working in the medium take on the consumer-grade sheets that are used for boxes found at grocery stores. Because of her relationship with archival storage, Jillian's foray into cardboard was not of the supermarket/corrugated brown variety. Instead, her pieces are made from the crème de la crème of cardboard. Contrary to the cardboard stereotype, Heritage Corrugated boards are incredibly sleek, archival, durable, and can be pricey. It was also created to last, has pH neutrality, and is lignin free, lightweight, and durable. It was designed to protect precious pieces of artwork, so why not make it into art? She loved the contrast; Jillian was immediately attracted to Heritage Corrugated cardboard as a high-quality material that was perceived as nonpretentious and commonplace.

Baroque style is both ornate and romantic, bringing to mind a fancier era that incorporated its style into art, furniture, literature, dance, and music. Exaggerated motion, grandeur, and over-the-top dramatic style characterized the Baroque period, which is what allured wealthy families to its flair. Aristocrats would use its exuberance in design to flex their riches to visitors, bragging about their wealth and power with architecture, art, and interior design. Brass, gold, gilded surfaces, brocades, marble, and onyx are only some of the opulent materials used to define the language of Baroque design—quite the opposite of using a fibrous and recyclable material like cardboard. Because of this utilitarian quality of cardboard, Jillian's pieces take on more meaning than simply beautifully constructed ornamentation. Instead, her choice of a democratic material elevates her decorative frames

TOP RIGHT
Tiled Nut
2013

BELOW
Works in Process
2013

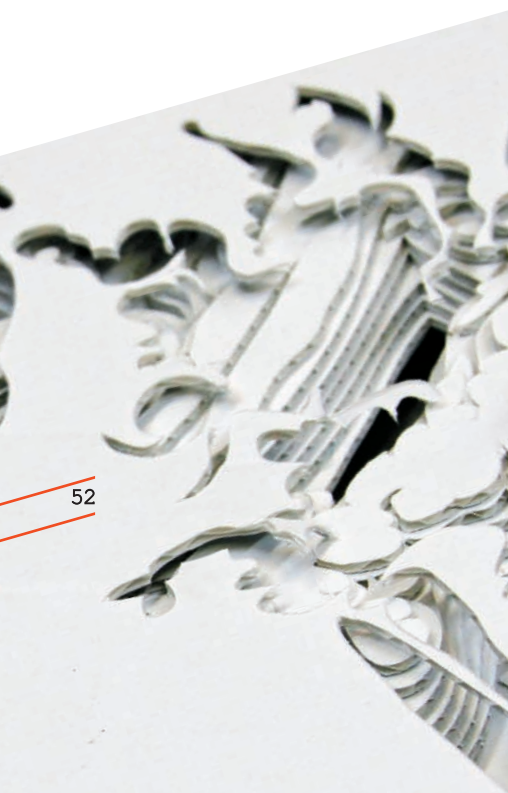
MIDDLE
Details in Construction
2013

into conceptual pieces of art, which poke fun at the perceptions of grandeur, proving that fantastical luxury need not necessarily be made from a luxurious material.

When assembled in exhibition, Jillian's installations play off the white gallery space of the traditional gallery cube, while also implying the traditional techniques of decorative plastering. The pieces, complicated, feminine, and full of furls and swirls, are also meant to hang unobtrusively and seamlessly within their settings. Although many gallery settings are austere and warehouse-like, Jillian's pristine Baroque installations create a dialogue between architecture of the past and present, decadence and pragmatism, and the working class and the rich.

ALSO UNLIKE THE BAROQUE STYLE, the frames are not filled with allegorical paintings of rich tones and figures or mirrors, but instead are left unfilled. The viewer, usually taken aback, is instead forced to examine Jillian's meticulous handiwork and feel the loss of expectation, experiencing the space in which they are set in a different way—another way her cardboard work is conceptual. Yet despite her knack for tying in conceptuality with the familiarity of cardboard, she loves how the material can bring in the art-shy. "Much art these days relies heavily on its conceptual nature and as a result becomes seemingly unobtainable to a mass audience. For me, cardboard is an approachable and relatable material."

While studying printmaking at Cornell University, Jillian began her penchant for layering with plates in her prints. Learning to use a laser cutter while in college changed everything for the artist, influencing the way she looked at art and creating the catalyst to jump from 2D to 3D works. Jillian's approach to using cardboard is also conceptually modern, shirking the crafting stereotype of the medium. Instead, the artist has turned to technology to elevate her work to the next level with a modern edge. Continuing her tendency to embrace duality, Jillian combines using machinery with working by hand to make epically layered frame installations. Her process, which



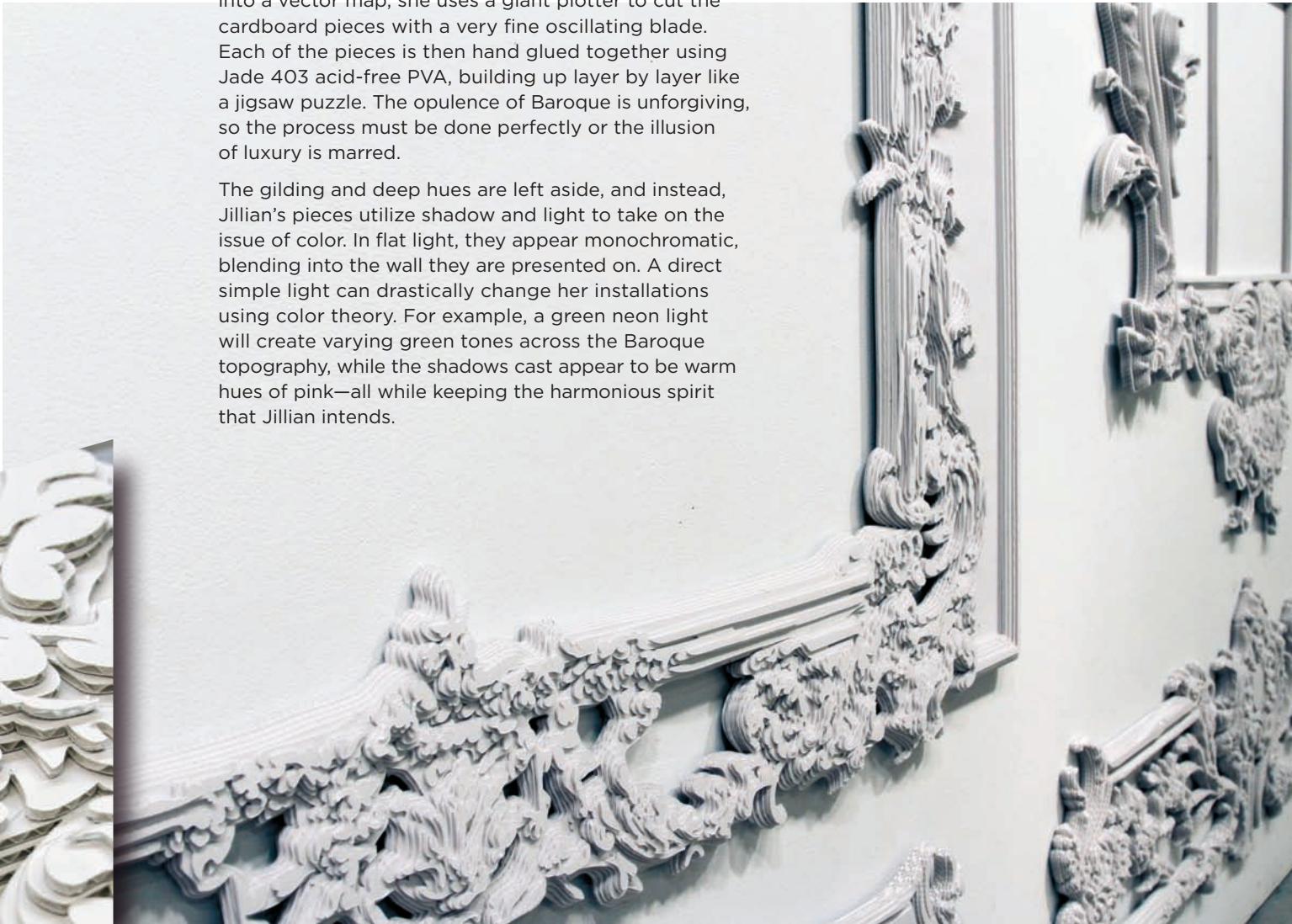
she describes as simultaneously painstaking and meditative, starts with a vector-driven software program. The pieces are designed layer by layer, gradually building up like a topographical map of Baroque design, sometimes pulling directly from existing historical pieces from the 1600s as models. Once the design is translated into a vector map, she uses a giant plotter to cut the cardboard pieces with a very fine oscillating blade. Each of the pieces is then hand glued together using Jade 403 acid-free PVA, building up layer by layer like a jigsaw puzzle. The opulence of Baroque is unforgiving, so the process must be done perfectly or the illusion of luxury is marred.

The gilding and deep hues are left aside, and instead, Jillian's pieces utilize shadow and light to take on the issue of color. In flat light, they appear monochromatic, blending into the wall they are presented on. A direct simple light can drastically change her installations using color theory. For example, a green neon light will create varying green tones across the Baroque topography, while the shadows cast appear to be warm hues of pink—all while keeping the harmonious spirit that Jillian intends.

MOST OF ALL, Jillian loves the unexpected surprise that comes when viewers find out her pieces are made from cardboard. "The idea of challenging our perceptions of art and how the gallery functions is always of utmost importance to me and my work," she says. Time and time again, her works encourage viewers to take a closer look and discover something new once the illusion of grandeur in material is revealed.

She dreams of one day recreating the entire ornate decadence of Versailles entirely out of cardboard....

Dream big.



Duel Tint
2013

AS FINE AS VELVET

Turning cardboard into velvet could be up there with the medieval belief in alchemy—that mixing together base metals could somehow transform them into valuable gold. Artist Józef Sumichrast has been conquering cardboard wizardry alone for years. Using a process he painstakingly developed himself, Sumichrast's cardboard becomes otherworldly and polished, into a substance he refers to as “plasters.” With layer upon layer of treated cardboard, Sumichrast translates his blueprint drawings into three-dimensional sculpture, fusing abstract with figurative. The resulting sculptures have weight, betraying their cardboard origin, and in fact, appearing very much as if they are covered with a layer of velvet.

Using layer upon layer of industrial-grade cardboard, Sumichrast has created his own language of compressed volume that toes the line between two-dimensional and three-dimensional. The artist treats the extensive layers of cardboard sourced from building supply stores with glue and laminate, which transforms its physical properties into a dense and glossy material that can be carved like wood. “Some sculptors work in clay, wood, stone, or metal,” he says. “To create an entirely new look, I have developed an entirely new process. I work with dense forms of thin industrial cardboards. I saturate them with water-soluble glue and then laminate them. By using a flat two-dimensional material, I can capture what I see in my two-dimensional drawings. The laminated layers



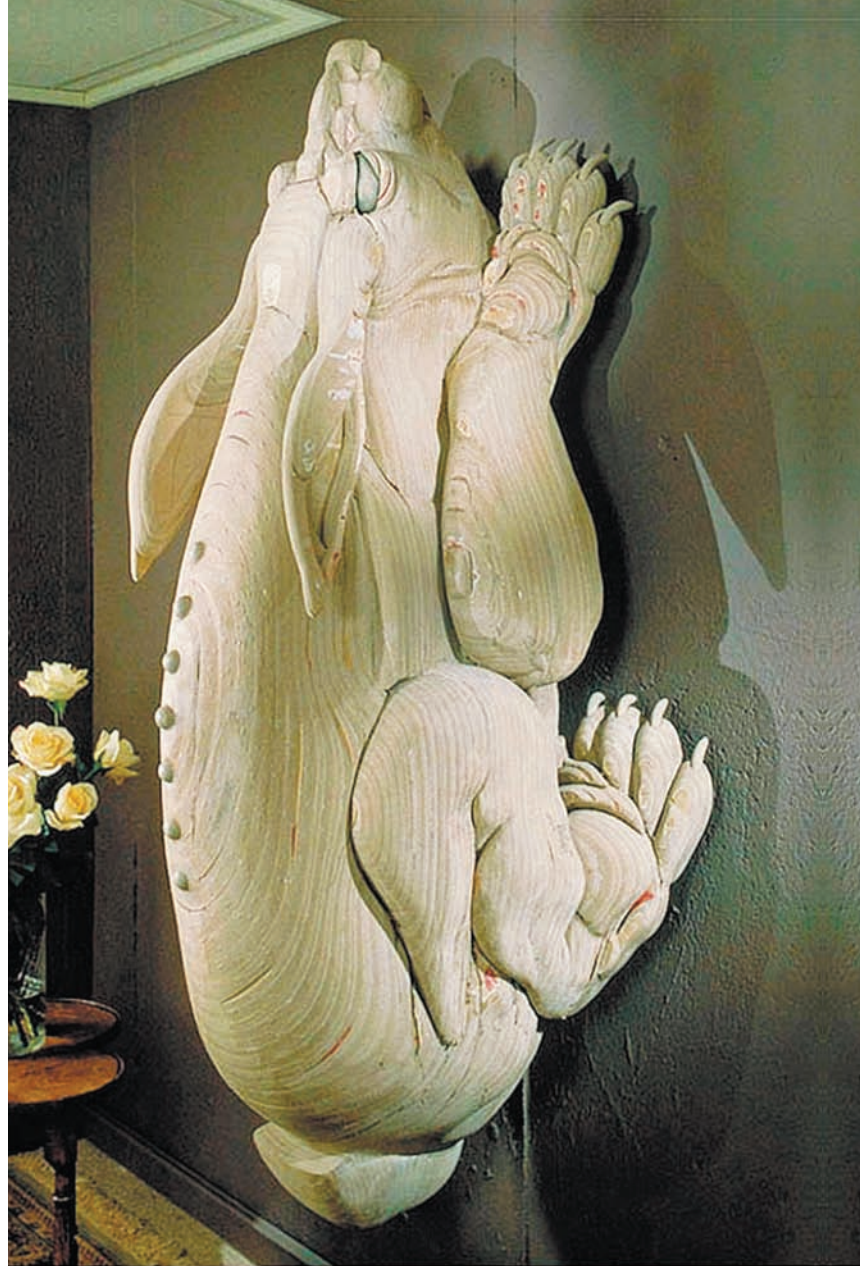
www.jozef.com

JÓZEF SUMICHRAST

of cardboard are cut to the desired shape and then bent. The simple act of bending something that is flat or two-dimensional transforms it into a three-dimensional form. My bent or curved forms are refined and covered with an automotive Bondo. The bonded forms are then further refined as the sculpture continues. I developed this process so that I would be able to work two-dimensionally and three-dimensionally simultaneously."

ONCE THESE PIECES of cardboard are adhered together, bent, and glossed, the real magic begins. The transformation of cardboard to velvet is almost complete with the introduction of an electric sander. The laminated blocks are first carved away into figures lifted from Sumichrast's drawings: bulbous faces, elongated bodies, elegant horses, and rabbits. Then, with the finishing touches of a sander, the compressed cardboard surfaces are left with a lush surface, which looks soft to the touch with a rich texture. "Because of my lamination and glue saturation process my cardboard is very durable," Sumichrast explains. "The glue soaks into the cardboard and turns it into a plastic-like material. There are numerous staples and screws in the cardboard during my clamping process. Cardboard may be thought of as a humble medium, but when I sand the surface of my sculptures I think of it as velvet!"

Automotive coating, layers of polyurethane, water-soluble glue, and varnish also elevate cardboard's properties by extending its life substantially. Untreated, the material is durable, but with Sumichrast's coating, the pieces can last hundreds of years if not longer, able to withstand



TOP/RIGHT
Wall Rabbit
1997

BOTTOM/RIGHT
Hair
2007

OPPOSITE
String Theory
2008/Detail





ABOVE
Susan's Dance
2012

OPPOSITE/TOP
M Theory
2010

OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
M Theory
2010

water damage, sun bleaching, and other elemental issues that plague artwork. With this durability and his treatment of the surface, he has created an incredibly original medium for his body of work.

THE VELVETEEN PROCESS IS TRULY transformative. Sumichrast's sculptures look like polished wood, rather than layer upon layer of cardboard. But unlike wood, the cardboard conglomeration he has created maintains its lightweight property, allowing his massive pieces to be easily hung and transported. Working in a lightweight material like cardboard also allows Sumichrast to communicate his leap between two- and three-dimensionality with more ease. His figures are at once both flat and full. The figure in *Backstroke Illusion* is a mesh of dimensions, almost flowing from line to soft and full curve, back into hard line again. His series of horses are no different: from one angle they are robust, the animal's musculature firm



and flexed. But turning the sculpture reveals a paper-thin waist, a tail only a few sheets of cardboard thick, or a bent flattened ear that skews the viewer's perspective and requires considering the sculptural form all over again.

THIS INTERPLAY BETWEEN FLAT AND CURVE is accentuated and heightened by Sumichrast's reciprocation of the material itself, from flat cardboard to a more luxe, finer material. In both material and form, the artist communicates the duality he's after, interchanging between drawing and sculpture.

Until recently, Sumichrast thought he was alone in his plight of using and manipulating cardboard in his body of dimension-twisting works. This unawareness helped to create his unique combination of process and progress to communicate his dance of dimensionality. "I painted for many years before becoming a sculptor. Some of my thought process has carried over from that two-dimensional world. I have never met another sculptor who works in cardboard. Until this book, I wasn't even aware that there were other artists working in cardboard."

TROMPE L'OEIL LUXURY

Cutting edge, luxury fashion brings a myriad of exquisite colors and textures to mind: rich smooth silks, intricately beaded fabrics, sleek leathers, bolts of gauzy barège, bright chiffons, and soft cashmere swirl in anticipation of becoming the latest look. The sustainable trend of eco-luxury brings ethical cottons, recycled plastic, and reused vintage fabrics into the limelight. But could a material as utilitarian and rigid as cardboard be used for high-fashion frocks? In the able hands of Berlin-based artist Lacy Barry, cardboard becomes just this—an element of high fashion and art, treated with the same care as the finest materials.

Even Barry's arsenal of materials sounds more like a kindergarten craft closet than an art and fashion studio. The pristine studio is lined with flat files of varying kinds of cardboard, foil, paint, and colored paper, all waiting to be transformed by Barry into another project of decadence. Using the delicacy of a papercraft master on stiff cardboard, Barry's creations appear both sturdy and delicate, combining shapes like flowers, plants, crystals, and abstracted geometry into wearable art, fantastical sets, and fine-art wall pieces.

From music video sets to avant-garde couture accessories, Barry manipulates the medium to make 3D geometric forms that betray their mundane origins with trompe l'oeil luxury. Coupled with Barry's expert crafting, the crisp quality of cardboard appears sleek, with precise lines that convey fine materials.



www.lacybarry.com

LACY BARRY

LEFT
Yellow Canary Headdress/
Face Protector
2014

OPPOSITE/TOP
Unicorn Wing
2014

OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
Winged Self Portrait
2013
Photo by Richard Lam



With expert hands, Barry has created a process of delicate manipulation that leaves cardboard looking dainty, meticulous, and even fragile. She gradually perfected her working method through trial and error, eventually reaching a harmony between artist and material that gave cardboard the visual qualities of plastic, plants, and thin paper. Under her skilled expertise, simple cuts and folds turn compressed pulp cardboard into glitzy diamond-cut jewels, wispy feathered wings, and soft-petaled flowers.

BARRY'S WEARABLE FASHIONS are not for the meek; she has not set out to replace ready-to-wear materials with stiff cardboard. Instead, her pieces are for the bold, the fashion-savvy willing to transform themselves into a walking work of art. Her pieces are often inspired by elements of art history or ancient costume design, resurrecting forgotten references into modernity, amplified by her use of a recycled material. Myths, legends, fables, vikings, and armor make appearances in her headpieces, which take the form of abstract tiaras, crowns, and head-dresses, each in bold candy colors. The less adventurous fashion plate can opt for a more minimal cardboard flower or bauble over the ear, guaranteed to stay fresh and crisp.

Much of Barry's work recalls classical sculpture. Common themes for ancient marble carvers were flowers, fabric, and mythology. Barry borrows from these influences and gives these themes a modern twist with both easily moldable material and bold color. Her series of flower plates evoke marble adornments found in architecture.





Each piece radiates from the center, with geometric cardboard cuts gracefully folded into delicate petals. The cardboard flowers are either covered with layers of Pantone paper or hand embellished with paint for heightened realism. Arranged together, they appear thin and fresh, mistaken for real flowers or delicate silk fake ones. The cardboard arrangements are then photographed on a bold graphic background designed by Barry, creating harmonious multimedia pieces. These floral pieces also appear in Barry's line of wearables, the flowers transposed to headpieces, barrettes, and pins, worn to make a statement that is only silenced by the rain.

Barry also uses cardboard to explore her interest in mythology, while pushing the medium to its limit by making it appear soft. The *Little Wings* series shows off the artist's cutting skills. Based on a background of bold graphics like in the floral series, the wing pieces unfurl as if made from feathers themselves, gleaming with multifaceted color hues. To create a flowing, movable piece, the artist relies on dozens of tiny cut pieces, affixed together on a cardboard and metal frame. Each cardboard "feather" is cut with realistic notches that when layered together give the illusion of real feathers. These *Little Wings* have also made appearances in fashion shows and editorial shoots, sized perfectly for the living angel's back.

IT SEEMS A LIFE OF EXPERIENCE has led to Barry's mastering of the medium of cardboard. She explains: "I grew up in quite an artistic family, my dad's a sign-writer/western muralist and my mum a textile artist, but though some may think I could accredit my talent to directly link with my parents, we make quite different work. I feel fortunate to go on to apprentice under both my parents, either draping a dress with my mum or filling in sign-written letters on my dad's hand-painted signs. After years of study, I decided to travel the world, living in four major cities in Europe and North America before my thirtieth birthday. I drifted into many variations of creative positions, doing any role that seemed to whet my appetite for art and design: From window decorating in London to costume making for tv/movies in Los Angeles, set designing in New York, and eventually exploring paper and cardboard-based materials for their versatility in my varying jobs and of course accessibility."

Growing up near the picturesque mountain resort town of Banff, Alberta, Barry has traveled extensively while occasionally setting an anchor in cities around the world, allowing for an influx of influences that can be seen in her work. With studios in London, Los Angeles,



Purple Fire Floral
2014
Close detail

New York, Montreal, and (now) Berlin, moving has created an accidental kinship for working with cardboard, for its ever-presence found in any new city or culture.

Cardboard has allowed Barry to evolve from her work with papercraft. Attracted to the clean and surreal quality of paper, she plunged into using cardboard when finding larger and complicated paper structures did not retain their shapes. Cardboard still held the clean qualities of paper, but allowed more versatility and durability. To get her desired tactile quality, she uses a mix of found and store-bought cardboard, using art supply store cardboard for minute details and recycled packing cardboard for larger pieces.

Barry's pieces can be described as "pretty." There is an overt feeling of the feminine touch, be it the bright hues she chooses, the presence of flowers, or the ethereal quality suggested by the shape of wings, but this undeniable beauty is what has lured the fashion world to covet her details for their shoots, shows, or presentations. In a world of impermanence like fashion, where a style or trend has a short shelf life, Barry thinks her cardboard creations coexist perfectly. Her pieces may be durable enough to wear or decorate with, but one drop of rain or overexposure of sun can render her beautiful pieces back to their origin—scrap cardboard. Barry finds the nature of her materials as beautiful as the pieces she makes with them. "I think it beautiful to watch something decompose and be given back to nature, much like an abandoned building or decaying flowers; there's a tragedy that goes beyond saving, but knowing it's partaking in some sort of cycle can be beautiful."

OPPOSITE/TOP TO BOTTOM
Gold Fire Floral
2014
Purple Fire Floral
2014
Woodland Creature Floral
2014

04

LARGER THAN LIFE

JOSEPH DELAPPE
FROM SECOND LIFE TO
THREE DIMENSIONS

LAURENCE VALLIÈRES
MONKEYING AROUND

MYKL WELLS
THE WOW FACTOR

TARO HATTORI
CARDBOARD AND
CONCEPTUAL LIGHTNESS

Lightweight and plentiful, cardboard allows artists to dream big. Easily built up with just tape or glue, cardboard boxes can become oversized sculptures, without the weight or muscle needed to build up metal or stone. Going big with cardboard also means a level of transportability that other materials cannot provide—a 10-foot (3 m) cardboard sculpture can be brought from place to place by one person, instead of three art handlers.

FROM SECOND LIFE TO THREE DIMENSIONS

Joseph DeLappe's exploration into cardboard sculpture is all Mahatma Gandhi's fault. A 17-foot (5.2 m) cardboard replica of the spiritual leader first derived from a Second Life avatar is just one example of how DeLappe incorporates virtual reality with the physical and considered analog material of cardboard. Often creating a self-imposed two-step process, DeLappe executes complex performance art that is later translated into larger-than-life cardboard sculptures. His artistic exploration and resulting commentary examines concepts and issues relevant in modern day society including memory, politics, history, physicality, and the virtual world—using cardboard as a vehicle for this intense contemplation. "I seek to find a synthesis between conflicting processes and ideas: analog and digital, concept and happenstance, physical and virtual, politics and art—all with a dedicated consideration and questioning of contemporary technologies and artistic practice," said the artist when speaking about his work.

DeLappe's interest in cardboard started in 2008 with his Gandhi project *Reenactment: The Salt Satyagraha Online: Gandhi's March to Dandhi in Second Life*. In the first phase of this project, the artist used a custom-designed treadmill, connected to Second Life, to reenact Gandhi's famous salt march—first completed by Gandhi in

The artist
2009
Cardboard Gandhi
partially visible



www.delappe.net

JOSEPH DELAPPE

OPPOSITE
Cardboard Gandhi
2009



1930 as a means of protesting the British salt tax. With each step DeLappe took on the treadmill, his Second Life avatar, appropriately named MGandhi Chakrabarti, moved forward in the Second Life version of the terrain the actual distance Gandhi traveled. It took DeLappe twenty-six days to finish the 240-mile (386 km) journey.

After the reenactment, DeLappe took the data from the digital platform to make sculptures of Gandhi varying in both size and medium. When planning the larger 17-foot (5.2 m) statue, the artist found that most Gandhi statues throughout the world were made from bronze, a permanent material that is both expensive, difficult to work with, and seemingly contradictory to Gandhi's message. Instead, he decided to use cardboard to account for a simple, inexpensive, and none-too-precious material more appropriate to the work and Gandhi's mantra.

The soft yet angular shapes used for the Gandhi sculptures are aesthetically both futuristic and classic—a contrasting dualism reflective of the processes and ideas the artist explores from a conceptual perspective. Inspired by the Gandhi avatar, these sculptures have a playful nature reminding the viewer of the “virtual self” that modern day technology has made easily accessible to the masses. Clad in smooth cardboard, the angles and edges of the figure retain the pixelated look of the Second Life version, creating a continuity between the digital and the analog. DeLappe continued the project with a third version, using 3D design technology. Using a 3D printer, DeLappe can create infinite multiples any time, adding technology as another facet to the project. DeLappe's Gandhi character also conjures religious undertones meshed with the aesthetics of the Cubist movement, looking hauntingly similar to the Cubist crucifixion facade of Gaudi's *La Sagrada Família*—adding historical design as the final facet of the project.

DELAPPE CONTINUED USING cardboard as a material because it is inexpensive, recyclable, and simple. The everyday material allows him to be more experimental and innovative than with other “precious” materials that are often costly and require a more arduous process to manipulate. He continues to build cardboard sculptures with the technique he first developed when making Gandhi, using Pepakura Designer, a papercraft software. With his penchant for technology and 3D printing, it is no surprise that he sources his material from paper suppliers, rather than the trash. He chooses to use new sheets of cardboard over found material since the perfect surfaces and smooth planes provide the structural integrity he needs for his larger forms. Aside from cutting, he leaves the surfaces unaltered as a means of preserving the integrity of the material itself, as well as relating it to the perfect image that digital images present.

DELAPPE'S INSPIRATION COMES from two very different places—from the DIY aesthetic of Instructables.com, a how-to depot from tech geniuses and mechanical types (and where he is currently working as a resident artist), and then on the other side of the spectrum, the 1980s punk rock movement.

DeLappe's next project also was derived from his interest in electronics and digital media. He first became involved with *dead-in-iraq*, an interventionist online protest and memorial that invaded the Army's online recruiting game by entering the data of America's military casualties from the war in Iraq, rather than information from hopeful recruits. Their stats would then be used in the first person shooter online recruiting game, which would engage with other users in real time. During his involvement in the game, his avatar was killed, and his virtual body became the inspiration for the next cardboard piece. Extracting data from the game, DeLappe was able to translate his soldier avatar into a 15-foot (4.6 m) cardboard sculpture. Although he used the same techniques first developed when making Gandhi, this figure conjures a far different, less peaceful message to say the least. The beloved cardboard Gandhi stands tall, facing forward and proud. Yet, the soldier is downtrodden, face down with his gun still in hand, inviting the viewer to step closer and hover over the form, taking in the scene from the same vantage point that is used in the game when one's player is killed. The digital protest DeLappe participated in by invading the recruiting game was pushed to the next limit, coming to three-dimensional fruition with the cardboard figure. The combination of his avatar soldier's digital

OPPOSITE
Cardboard Gandhi
(head and hands)
2009

BELOW
Paper Soldier
2008





death and the physical oversized cardboard sculpture allowed DeLappe the opportunity to further express the complexity of these concepts through the juxtaposition of physical and virtual medium in one body of work. *Paper Soldier* was created on-site in Beijing as part of the 789 Beijing Biennale and was later shown in 2010 at the Beijing Contemporary Art Fair before being destroyed and recycled.

DeLappe's work in cardboard ties two very different ends of the spectrum of technology, creating a successful relationship between the analog and the virtual. Cardboard has enabled DeLappe to push his message past the technological crowd and create a better understanding of the political issues he feels strongly about.

MONKEYING AROUND

Giant angry apes wreak havoc on traffic, overturning cars before smashing them to bits. Three baboons take over a boardroom, sitting in office chairs and on desks shrieking. A monkey crouches over a McDonald's hamburger, fries spilling to the floor, while an elephant attempts to inch its too-big head out of a too-tight cube truck. These are all typical scenes in the work of Montreal artist Laurence Vallières, who uses cardboard to make larger-than-life sculptures that make metaphorical comments on social and political issues dear to her heart. Lightweight and readily available, cardboard fuels Vallières's penchant for the oversized, making big statements with even bigger sizes that would otherwise be cumbersome in another material and less effective at a smaller scale.

Vallières uses cardboard as a fine art medium not just for its ability to easily contort into massive figural sculptures, but because the use of cardboard itself sends a message. The artist links the utilitarian medium with our economy as infrastructure. Cardboard is ever present in the inner-workings of industry and consumer commerce, used to help make the world go around: in transport, shipping, and storage of goods from one place to another. The elements of power are often inside of these unnoticed or unacknowledged boxes. Weapons, technology,



www.laurencevallieres.com

LAURENCE VALLIÈRES



luxury goods, food—you name it; it probably moves from point A to point B inside of a cardboard container. It is this origin that continues to inspire Vallières to transform the casings used by society into powerful sculptures that appeal to both art enthusiasts and the masses with their relatable tactile nature. Vallières sees cardboard, a material used in everyday commerce, as a medium of the people, which when used in the art context can be a pleasant and unexpected surprise.

DABBLING IN ART SINCE CHILDHOOD, Vallières earned a degree in ceramics from Concordia University in Montreal, focusing on sculpture. After college, she found herself looking to cardboard when she was offered a large abandoned building in downtown Montreal as a venue for an art exhibition she was curating. In order to have an effective impact amongst the high ceilings and cavernous rooms, Vallières knew she had to go big. With the limiting scale of her ceramic work, she turned to cardboard as a cheap and plentiful substitute. To source her materials, she didn't have to look very far; her studio is in a building with offices and businesses that regularly throw away stacks and stacks of cardboard into the



OPPOSITE
Ape Mask
2014

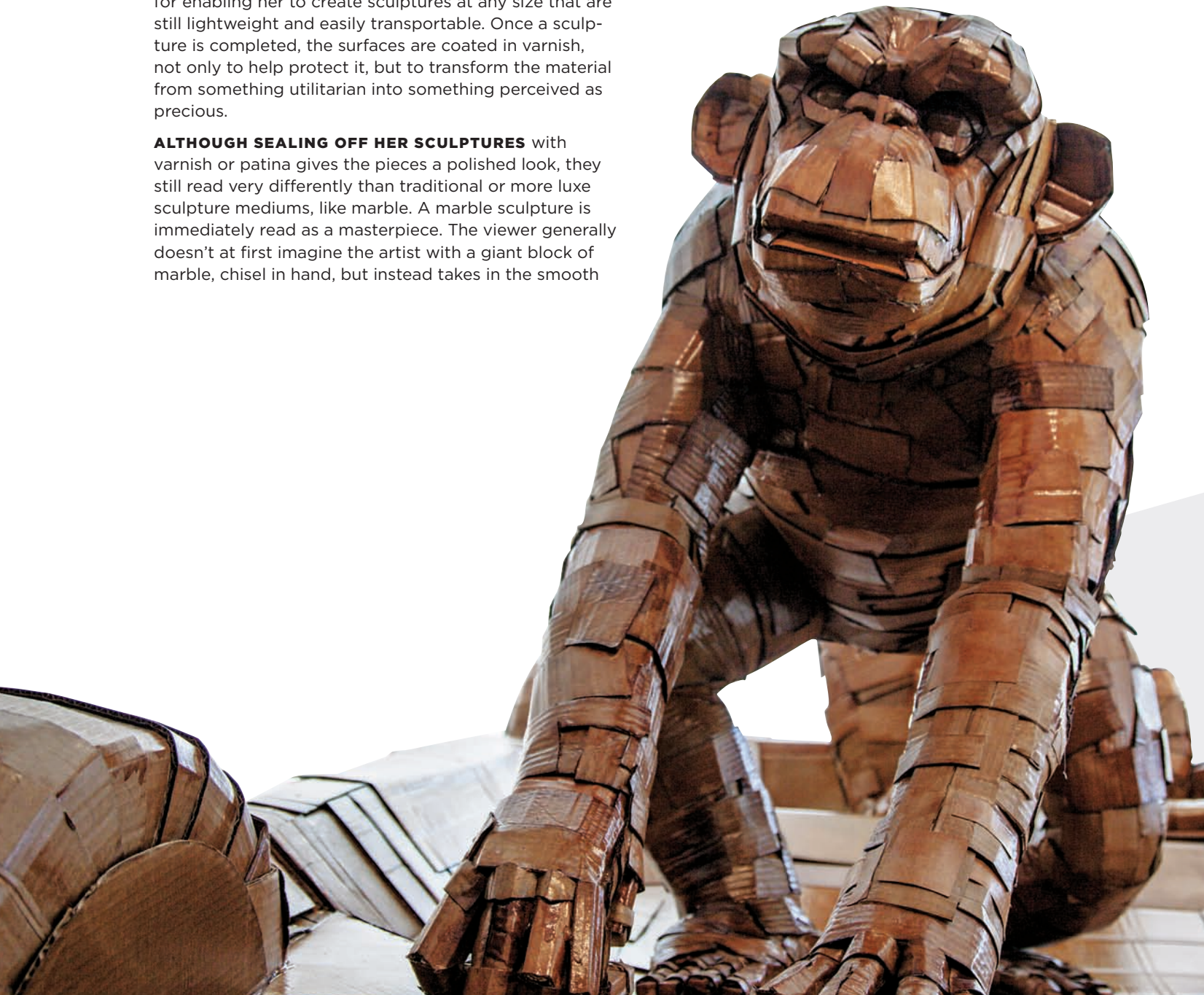
THIS PAGE/TOP
Business boonz
2013

THIS PAGE/ABOVE
Reese Monkey
2013

building's recycling bins. Her first cardboard sculptures were larger versions of her ceramic work, with a menacing 9-foot (2.7 m) gorilla as her initial piece. Upon the success of the exhibition, she never turned back and began to explore the more versatile (and less expensive) world of working in cardboard.

Since that accidental foray into cardboard, Vallières has perfected her craft, learning by experimentation rather than from a cardboard mentor. Her working method is somewhat simple: She gets the idea of the final product into her head, then manipulates the cardboard strips by gluing them together until her masterpiece comes to fruition, using cardboard for everything from the surface to interior supports. Throughout her learning process, the artist has come to love using cardboard above all, not just for its availability around her studio, but also for enabling her to create sculptures at any size that are still lightweight and easily transportable. Once a sculpture is completed, the surfaces are coated in varnish, not only to help protect it, but to transform the material from something utilitarian into something perceived as precious.

ALTHOUGH SEALING OFF HER SCULPTURES with varnish or patina gives the pieces a polished look, they still read very differently than traditional or more luxe sculpture mediums, like marble. A marble sculpture is immediately read as a masterpiece. The viewer generally doesn't at first imagine the artist with a giant block of marble, chisel in hand, but instead takes in the smooth



lines and realism of a marble sculpture, and even so, hacking away at a block of marble isn't a task most can say they've tried. With a material like cardboard, the artist's hand is more apparent in the work, and process is as apparent as the piece itself. Viewers can at first take in the sculpture as a whole, but then familiarity sets in. The strips and layers reveal themselves as cardboard, pulling at memories of our own crafts from childhood, or even referencing breaking down cardboard at our own houses. With this personal reference, the viewer can put themselves into Vallières's shoes, imagining cutting up boxes and painstakingly gluing them together. This simple relatability can appeal to a broader audience, welcoming in viewers who may be otherwise intimidated by fine art by presenting something familiar to them.

VALLIÈRES USES THE FACT THAT she has accessible, cheap materials with a democratic, relatable medium to her advantage. Her pieces are inspired by newspaper headlines; she pores over world news, political scandals, screw-ups by the Canadian prime minister, and other-wise socio-political shame, using it as fuel for her pieces. Taking a cue from the history of political cartoons, her visions are often embodied in animal forms, representing the crude, the crass, and the savage characteristics of humans, taking the form of monkeys, gorillas, and apes. The closest relation to humans but still very much wild, monkeys and apes represent politicians and corruption, portraying scandal with a heavy sarcastic edge, hoping to inspire a smile along with an acknowledgement of the issues of the world.

Although her subjects poke into politics, architecture plays a huge role in Vallières's inspirations. Her role models and greatest influences are architects like Frank Gehry and Zaha Hadid, who push their projects beyond just buildings, into what Vallières calls "functional sculptures you can walk into." Following the architects' lead, Vallières plans to push her pieces and her medium to the next level, fusing architecture and art to create even bigger sculptures that her viewers can become a part of, walk into, and wander around in.

TOP
Skull
2014
Laurence Vallières
in collaboration with
Logan Hicks

BOTTOM
There is an Elephant
in the Truck
2013



OPPOSITE
IncorporApe
2012
Complete (top)
and detail (bottom)

THE WOW FACTOR

Cardboard in art should not be a gimmick. Although artist Mykl Wells embraces cardboard and has worked with the medium seriously since 1985, he'd prefer not to be called a "cardboard artist." In Wells's mind, his sculpture should speak for itself, regardless if it is made from cardboard, carved from marble, or cast from bronze. His curvaceous oversized sculptures bear impeccable detail and vision, just as his paintings, drawings, and paper and wire sculpture do. In his body of work, cardboard allows Wells to go big, creating show-stopping works without the expense or temperamental characteristics of other materials. It's true, Wells's works are read as cardboard, but their often oversized scale catches the attention of viewers first. "If anything, the shock of encountering the material can detract from form," Wells says. "I strive to create work that is powerful enough to leave an impression, to be worthy of a remark three days after it was first seen. There's a lot of ways to make an impact but there needs to be substance; art should speak beyond its wow factor."

Like many artists, Wells was intrigued by the accessibility of cardboard for his own work. Having come from a family with limited funds, he turned to found objects to fuel his art-making needs. While cardboard's availability, found easily in garbage or recycling piles, fed Wells's material requirements, he also understood its power to bring people together. Because of cardboard, Wells has been able to build a vibrant creative community around him. Aside from creating art, Wells's love lies in sharing art and creativity with other people. Collecting cardboard has enabled Wells to supply his workshops and classes, which teach sculpture and art-making to



www.myklwells.com

MYKL WELLS

LEFT
Prince de Sots
2014
Detail

OPPOSITE
Bust
2014



community members of all ages. Using cardboard in these classes keeps costs low, but Wells has found it also unlocks the doors of creativity to the artistically resistant. Many of his students have no art training, confronting their creative sides for the first time in his workshop. Cardboard allows Wells's initially timid students to be wonderfully, creatively careless. Overcoming the fear of potentially ruining an expensive sheet of watercolor paper, the nerve-wracking question of "what if I mess it up?" is cast away, with an ample supply of cardboard and the psychology attached to knowing it was attained for free.

WELLS FIRST CAME UPON WORKING WITH cardboard while bumming around Europe during his early twenties. Couch surfing, traveling, and doing odd jobs, he had no money for art supplies, but his urge to create remained. Wells let out his artistic steam by drawing on cardboard pieces he found in the trash, before starting to make masks out of the medium. Cardboard fueled his ideas, and soon he was leaving cardboard menageries on the streets of Europe for passersby to find or making a quirky cardboard nose to leave on a statue in the park. These street art habits eventually found their way into Wells's art-making once he settled back in the United States and continued to explore the medium on his own. "I am an obsessive autodidact, I'm always playing, testing new waters, trying to learn new things. When I started doing this stuff there really wasn't an Internet and so I developed my own toolkit. My first assemblages were rather geometric, lots of flat surfaces and angles."

After years of what he refers to as "fabricating" sculptures with flat surfaces and sharp angles, Wells began experimenting with new ways to use cardboard. In 2008, his geometric cardboard sculptures shifted, when he made a personal breakthrough with a method he calls "strip and fill." His new system made way for curved and rounded sculptures, allowing the artist more flexibility to build realistic figures, shapes, and heads.

One of his most massive pieces, *Snowdrop*, was made on-site in the town of Lucca, Italy, for the 2012 Cartasia Biennale. Basing his design on the perennial bulb of the same name, Wells sculpted an overturned head, with the floral bloom growing out of its neck, together reaching 18 feet (5.5 m). Because the piece was to be displayed outdoors, a lightweight wooden structural frame was built to ensure durability while in the elements. Wells then cut a myriad of cardboard pieces that seem to fit together like pieces of a puzzle, building out the smooth features of the face, left in the neutral color of natural cardboard. Snaking out of the neck are the growing green leaves and stem of the flower, which curls its white-petaled head out to coincide with the sculpture's mouth. The bloom was painted in realistic colors of greens and white, and then the entire sculpture was covered in waterproof coating, which not only protects, but gives the piece a sheen that makes the cardboard looked polished and complete.

More recently, Wells has expanded beyond just brown cardboard and explored the colors that come in printed consumer boxes. *Prince de Sots* is another realistic-looking head, this time resting on its side. The piece, made for the Tucson Sculpture Festival 2014, pokes fun at Wells's nickname of the "king of cardboard," instead translating literally to "king of fools." Wearing a realistic regal crown, Wells now takes the cardboard's colors into consideration, cutting purposely to create color splotches and shapes.

PERHAPS WELLS'S MOST LOVED PROJECT is a departure from his large scale or figurative work, but involves his love of community. The *Lantern Project* was a community effort in which Wells designed an easy to make cardboard lantern that could be customized, allowing each community member to make a unique piece. The project was simple, but with incredibly beautiful results that unified people from different scenes, age groups, and social strata across Arizona. "I went to prisons and high schools, firemen and retirees, people from all walks

of life made cardboard lanterns and then we hung them along a mile (1.6 km)-long dirt road out in the desert, illuminated with color-changing LEDs from the dollar store. There were over a hundred lanterns, some bigger than a man, some as small as a fist. Against the deep Arizona sky it was truly breathtaking. I loved the community, sharing my love of creativity, and making something that was much much bigger than the sum of its parts."

Wells has happily seen the legacy of his *Lantern Project* continue and spread. The durable cardboard lanterns have popped up in other festivals and parades, some original but many created by people taught by Wells's students. Because of cardboard's accessibility and availability, Wells has been able to inspire and invigorate members of his community that might otherwise be afraid to delve into art-making.





OPPOSITE
Prince de Sots
2014

THIS PAGE
Lantern Project
2008
Two views



CARDBOARD AND CONCEPTUAL LIGHTNESS

To Taro Hattori, the weight of cardboard is integral when building his sculpture—both literally and conceptually. His works, often oversized installations that disrupt architectural interiors, can be viewed as stages where psychological experiences are provoked. Using cardboard, he creates sculptures that arouse a sense of the vulnerability of human life, stressing the impossibility of exercising control over fate. Often with militaristic undertones, his pieces show elements of social and political tragedy. Sculptures of crashed planes and massive tanks take on a different tone when made from cardboard, allowing the artist to show a calculated distance between the viewer and things he deems unacceptable. By using cardboard, these tragic scenes take on an emptiness and conceptual lightness, which contrasts with the destructive nature of the objects. Stripped down to the basics, the conceptual framework of a fighter jet or tank is separated from its potentially disastrous nature, allowing the viewer to contemplate the object's connotations when made from neutral cardboard.

Hattori has fused his experience in psychology, theater, and music to create the voice of his psychologically rich cardboard sculptural scenes, which evoke childhood stage sets. By using cardboard as opposed to a heavier material to sculpt, Hattori is purposely taking away some of the conceptual and emotional weight, giving his



www.tarohattori.com

TARO HATTORI



ABOVE
...till that morning
2008

OPPOSITE
Obscenity Version 1
2010
Detail

message of injustice room to breathe and making it easier for the viewer to digest. “Cardboard has many physical and conceptual properties,” Hattori explains, “and any other materials do not have those all together, like ‘lightness.’ Obviously it is physically light, but also it is conceptually light. Conceptual lightness comes from the way it has been used, its omnipresence in our everyday life, and the way we discard and/or recycle. One of the qualities I can achieve with this material is ‘accessibility’ which is related to ‘lightness.’ My work often deals with historically and politically heavy motifs, so it is very important to have something that brings such motifs closer to the viewers’ everyday life.”

CARDBOARD SEEMED A NATURAL PROGRESSION of Hattori’s work when he was asked to be in an exhibition in Opole, Poland. As a Japanese American, he struggled with the “voice” of displaying an artwork in Eastern Europe. The show coincided with protests against the United States’s proposal to install a missile defense complex in Poland, so Hattori decided to draw a comparison with U.S. military occupation of the Pacific Rim during World War II. He decided to sculpt the Enola Gay, the plane that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima, but struggled with a material that could make the piece more accessible to the viewer. Cardboard was the



perfect fit, not only because it was practical and light-weight, but also because it created tension between an everyday material and the weight of history and politics. The Enola Gay piece, called . . . *til that morning*, was created as a perfect structural replica and hung as if in flight. Since this piece, Hattori has continued sculpting airplanes, but with more of a grim undertone. The works in his *Obscenity* series were modeled after the Ohka planes, which were best known as suicide bombers. His sculptures dwarf the rooms they are exhibited in, sometimes hanging from a rafter, or sometimes crashed forcefully into the floor, with bent cardboard nose and fragments of cardboard debris scattered around the installation. His pieces often challenge the perspective of a room, attainable by using a flexible material like cardboard. *Oh, the Humanity*, his sculptural tribute to the Nazi-designed blimp the Hindenburg (which spontaneously exploded), seems to squeeze in between the banisters down three levels of the Headlands Center for the Arts in California. Stretching 23 feet (7 m) long, the sculpture looks as if it was launched into the small space with force, which was an illusion created by the flexibility of the cardboard sheets. Students would see the sculpture bit by bit as they walked up or down the stairways, revealing its entirety as they went on with their day.



ALTHOUGH CARDBOARD IS very durable, Hattori also loves its ability to be easily destroyed. In the same vein of cardboard's conceptual lightness, the medium's fragility, being easily ruined with water, knives, or heavy objects, coincides with Hattori's exploration into themes relating the fragility of life. Using a combination of found cardboard and untarnished pieces from moving box suppliers, the surfaces are left as is, to show a neutral palette for contemplation, but also to let the viewer associate the piece with properties of cardboard. And why not? He sees cardboard as a medium of our time, visible in every home and every street around the world. "Everything we buy from Amazon comes in a cardboard box. It represents unbearable lightness of our contemporary life"

Unlike other artists, Hattori wants his pieces to fade away, or more dramatically, be destroyed, in the spirit of their subjects. While some are coating their pieces with polyurethane, he leaves his raw and unfinished, yet another metaphor for what they represent. Ideally, he'd like to take his fascination with the conceptual connotations of his work all the way to the buyer level, requiring potential collectors to sign a contract allowing Hattori to create multiple installments of the purchased sculpture, rather than treating it as an object they are trying to preserve. While some artists strive to become immortal through their art, Hattori's focus relies more on the awareness of the historical and political issues he is exploring, using the action of destruction as almost a performative part of his sculptures.

HAVING PUSHED CARDBOARD TO illustrate his political views, Hattori plans to expand the conceptual facet of his work in other directions. When asked what his dream project would be, a myriad of ideas came spilling out—from a cardboard factory made of cardboard, to using his music background to create a cardboard orchestra that he would then conduct, to an actual peacemaking campaign that would replace citizens' real guns with cardboard ones. For Taro Hattori, cardboard may not be the focus, but with it he has created a vehicle to express his views on historical political issues that the general public can relate to.



ABOVE
Penetration—the first
iteration
2012

OPPOSITE/TOP
V
2009

OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
Penetration—the second
iteration
2012

05

SWEET SWEET FANTASY

DOSSHAUS
A BEAUTIFUL WORLD IN
BLACK AND WHITE

MUFFINHEAD
THE LIVING SCULPTURE

WAYNE WHITE
PUPPET LAND

As children, most of us have lived out our fantasies in make-believe, transforming a cardboard refrigerator box into the palace/time machine/fort of our dreams. With this inspiration in mind, many artists retrofit the old refrigerator box, using cardboard to create over-the-top fantasies and daydreams in adult life. With the skills they honed as children, these artists are using found boxes to create escapist worlds for lucky viewers to immerse themselves in.

The pair known as Dosshaus invite viewers into their cardboard black and white tableau, taking the cardboard fort to the next level with an entire *House of Cardboard* world. New York City performance artist Muffinhead turns the fantasy tables onto himself, using cardboard to make epic wearable creations that make him a living, moving, and breathing work of art. Wayne White amplifies the beloved childhood puppet show into an abstraction of fantasy, using cardboard to make enormous puppet characters that can be puppeteered or enjoyed as a crazy installation. To these artists, cardboard is the fuel to bring their fantasies to life.

A BEAUTIFUL WORLD IN BLACK AND WHITE

They say “if you can dream it, believe it.” With this simplistic adage, Zoey Taylor and David Connelly, collectively known as Dosshaus, built the abode of their dreams, entirely out of cardboard. *The House of Cardboard* is a real-life, full-size fantasy home that is one part classic black and white movie and one part giant dollhouse. With cardboard and a muted palette of blacks, whites, and grays, Dosshaus combine elements of painting, papercraft, performance art, sculpture, and photography to give a peek into the creative world inside their heads. Each project for *House of Cardboard* is centered on a specific room of the house and slowly filled with cardboard furniture and objects until the pair feels it has come to life.

Taylor and Connelly then plan out a photographic narrative and capture themselves in a photo series that shares the quirky fantasy land with their viewers. *House of Cardboard* resurrects the excitement of childhood make-believe, pushed further with every kid’s favorite medium of imagination—the versatile cardboard box. “In our experience, there is an intense viewer interest in objects made completely of cardboard,” Connelly says. “Perhaps this stems from the common experience of playing in empty boxes as a child, or maybe it’s because we’ve all seen a lifetime’s worth of cardboard in trash-cans and recycle bins.”

Most of us can relate to childhood days spent transforming an empty refrigerator box into anything from our wildest dreams: a play house, a time machine, a spaceship, you name it. Dosshaus has given us a taste of this long-missed wistful imagination. Their cardboard props that blend a child-like painting style with realism allow



www.dosshaus.com

DOSSHAUS

LEFT
The Camera
2014

OPPOSITE/LEFT
The Cardboard Violin—
the neck
2014

OPPOSITE/TOP RIGHT
House of Cardboard,
Sunday Lunch
2014



the viewer to revisit what it was once like to have the magic of a child's imagination. Looking back to that medium we considered precious as children, Dosshaus uses (and reuses) cardboard that combines a message of the past and present, paying tribute to childhood while also acknowledging the need for sustainability, recycling, and eco-consciousness in the present. "In our approach, the medium of cardboard also creates the message," Connelly explains. "We create scenes that could be called 'fantastic' or 'whimsical' out of a material most people associate with post-consumer waste."

Taylor and Connelly, who have been collaborating in art, photography, and film projects since 2011, turned to cardboard one day when Taylor simply ran out of canvas and wanted to paint. It was then that she realized cardboard could be used beyond the limitations that canvas had. A flat painting on cardboard could be transformed into a three-dimensional object, opening up the possibility for narrative, multimedia projects, while bringing a new level to experiencing a two-dimensional painting. Since this discovery, the pair has begun collecting around 70 percent of their cardboard work materials from trash and recycling piles behind retail stores and the other 30 percent from the consumer products they purchase, like paper towel rolls and shipping boxes. After crafting each cardboard piece, they are placed in a tableau depicting a new room in the *House of Cardboard*, then photographed by Connelly, with Taylor often cast as a character living inside this cardboard world.

DOSSHAUS DESCRIBES THE ELEMENTS inside the *House of Cardboard* as a child's pen-and-ink drawing of a room, brought to the third dimension. The grayscale color scheme is used to further connect the viewer to



the feeling of somehow being transported inside a drawing. The house always grows; Dosshaus continually adds new “rooms,” inspired and excited to start the next after one is completed and photographed.

WITH AN INSPIRED CHILDLIKE FERVOR, the pieces in the *House of Cardboard* are made with the quirky imperfection that makes the project feel so dream-like. Everything inside is made from cardboard, down to Taylor’s black and white laced shoes. Clad in black and white, the furniture and décor take on a retro feel, emphasized with props like an antiquated cardboard typewriter, record player complete with cardboard records and headphones, and cardboard SLR camera. Larger objects, such as ornate desks, tables and chairs, are stocked with tiny details—old-fashioned fountain pens, hardbound books, and coffee cups, all fashioned from cardboard, of course. The house even has a music room, with an impressively realistic cardboard Stradivarius violin, as well as a game room, hung with tennis rackets, trophies, and fencing equipment. A one-person propeller plane hangs next to a cardboard instructional diagram, and the pair have even paid tribute to famous artworks, re-creating Picasso’s cardboard *Guitar*, as well as a Jean-Michel Basquiat painting on cardboard. These art re-creations are also the only pieces in the *House of Cardboard* that are not painted.

“Pablo’s *Guitar* was modeled after Picasso’s sculpture, *Guitar*, from 1912,” Connelly says. “Picasso’s first version of the piece was actually created in cardboard before switching to sheet metal for the famous version that everyone is familiar with. We felt that painting our



version would be akin to signing a work of art that was not ours, and we chose to leave the cardboard naked. Likewise, in the piece *After Basquiat*, we framed the painting in the style of Jean-Michel Basquiat in untreated corrugated for the same reason. These pieces stand out in the photographs in which they appear.”

Dosshaus has embraced using cardboard, using its ability to enable lots of mistakes through trial and error without losing an expensive material as a driving force. Taking the risk out of messing up is an exciting and inspiring privilege that artists working in a finer material like marble can never experience. By removing this worry, creativity can flow without restrictions and bring fantasies to life. Connelly sums up Dosshaus’s feelings about cardboard: “With cardboard, there’s an empty canvas in every alleyway. That is enormously freeing to an artist.”

OPPOSITE/TOP
House of Cardboard,
Lunch!
2014

OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
The Typewriter
2014

House of Cardboard,
Zoey and Plane
2014



THE LIVING SCULPTURE

Nightlife impresario, sculptor, painter, living work of art, muse—the artist known as Muffinhead has been called many things. On any given New York night, the artist can be found wearing one of his livable sculptures at an arts event or arty nightclub, infecting the crowd with his unique brand of creativity. With the demands of new creations from night to night, Muffinhead turns to cardboard for one-off creations that can be worn and remain durable throughout a night of movement and can endure the humidity that comes with hundreds of clubgoers having a good time. Easy to source materials like cardboard let Muffinhead bring a wild idea to reality quickly and affordably. Giant clock headpieces, side-skewed violins used as headbands, balloon body suits, protruding wings, fetish face masks, rubber wigs, and unicorn horns are all typical elements of creations by Muffinhead.

Artists are inspired by cardboard's ability to easily manipulate into detailed sculpture and quick-use canvases, but most don't think to push it to a wearable level. Inability to bend to the extreme curves of the body, or rough corrugated edges, can deter costumers and sculptural artists from using the inexpensive material to create pieces that incorporate themselves into their artistic visions. Undaunted, Muffinhead has found equilibrium with cardboard, making his own techniques to make wearable works that are an extension of his fine art on canvas and installation. By transforming himself into an element of his art, he engages viewers on an entirely new level that



www.muffinheadland.com

MUFFINHEAD

OPPOSITE
Muffinhead by
Adrian Buckmaster
2014

THIS PAGE
Muffinhead at SCOPE/NY
2014



a painting or sculpture cannot. As a breathing piece of art, he creates a relationship between the body and artistic expression that viewers can relate to themselves.

By day, Muffinhead (who chooses to withhold his real name so as to separate his working life and his artist life) works in an average New York City office, which feels worlds away from his artwork. Days off are spent designing, painting, and drawing. Heavily influenced by the Surrealist movement, his works mesh fantastical ideas from all of history—from Hieronymus Bosch in the sixteenth century to Star Wars to psychedelia. This imagery is conveyed with bright colors and swirling images, lifted directly from his imagination. “I think that both my work and the techniques I use to make the work are just really performing to make the visions that I have come to life,” Muffinhead says. “I’m basically just translating the postcards from my imagination which have a language all their own.”

ADDING A PERFORMATIVE ASPECT to an artwork also unfortunately tags on an expiration date, whether artists like it or not. A gallery exhibition remains for weeks on end, inviting visitors to experience stoic artworks at their leisure. Instead, performative pieces tend to be treated like fancy dresses on the red carpet—once they are shown, they very rarely can be repeated without a certain faux pas attached. This helps Muffinhead to realize his unending ideas, but also can weigh heavily on his supply budget.

That is where cardboard comes into play. Affordable, lightweight, and rigid, cardboard can mean introducing new ideas and sculptural accessories without breaking the bank. Originally attracted to the rainbow of colors available in cardstock, Muffinhead began making headpieces and other accessories out of the stiff paper. Needing something a little more durable, he turned to cardboard when a cardstock headpiece would not defy gravity. To combat the gruff nature of corrugated edges,



and to create a sleek look akin to fashion design, the artist turns to laser cutting to create precise and smooth elements. “I’ve been using printed cardstock for years actually but used corrugated cardboard for the first time late last year. I was desperate to make a clock headpiece for a performance on New Year’s Eve and was running out of time (no pun intended). I happened to come across a very large shipping box and it occurred to me that this was a possibility as a material. I wasn’t sure if it could be laser cut so went on to experiment with it and favorably as it turned out.”

The simple introduction of a laser cutter transforms cardboard into a higher-quality material. Hand cutting has its limitations, and humans are apt to err. Laser cutting gives the material a quality of total perfection, with smooth lines that make cardboard look like a more sleek or expensive material. Coated with a thick glossy paint, the cardboard can appear as if it were lasered plastic or vinyl. Knowing his own limitations of both skill but most importantly time, Muffinhead turns to a professional cutter to help him realize his visions. “I’m mostly self taught but have learned a lot from the fabricators that I work with in terms of technical skill and modeling. Unfortunately for me, whimsy comes easy but reason does not so I learn the hard way a lot of times . . . also, there are no instruction manuals for making any of these things so one has to plot along as best they can and take their bumps and scratches along the way.”

DESPITE THE INTENTION OF using these pieces as virtual one-offs, Muffinhead has found that cardboard is quite durable and resilient. His headpieces and accessories do tend to make reappearances, disguised with other costuming and themes of course, with their only enemy being water from a dropped drink or rain. “When it comes to wearing a gigantic sculpture on my head for a performance there really isn’t a better option. Also, if I accidentally plow into a light fixture with the thing while running down a hall it won’t make me cry if a piece snaps off as I can just as easily glue it right back on.”

Inspired by the durability and flexibility of cardboard, Muffinhead’s next project is a plan to create an entire three-dimensional origami dress that can stand up on its own.



OPPOSITE AND ABOVE
Muffinhead by
Adrian Buckmaster
2014
Two views

PUPPET LAND

Children of the 1980s will recognize artist Wayne White's work, even if they are unfamiliar with his fine art career. From 1986 to 1991, White's world of wacky aesthetics took residence on the set of the Saturday morning television show, *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, starring Pee-wee Herman. Since his early experience in set design, White has continued his vision in a thorough visual arts career that now includes painting, illustration, art direction, and a penchant for making oversized puppets out of cardboard. These enormous cardboard puppet installations have the same flavor and complete fantastical fun as the Pee-wee days, but have evolved to incorporate a world that combines White's interest in history with the power of public art.

White's art career has not focused solely on one medium; cardboard is just another material in which he can make his creative world come to life—at a large scale. Aside from *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, he is probably best known for his “word paintings” in which he reappropriates vintage lithographs of stoic landscapes, painting sculpture-like words amidst the rolling hills and tall trees of these found images. His outlandish aesthetics are also found in his beautiful set design, for videos like the Smashing Pumpkins' *Tonight, Tonight* and Peter Gabriel's *Big Time*. His lifetime of versatile work, from young student to multifaceted artist, is also the topic of the film *Beauty Is Embarrassing*, which delves into White's eclectic creative mind.



WAYNE WHITE

OPPOSITE
FOE, York College
2014
Detail

BELOW
FOE, York College
2014
Detail

WHITE'S CARDBOARD PUPPETS push way beyond the traditional children's puppet show and become a sophisticated and complicated tableau that tie in a chosen narrative with his expert construction skills. With every public installation, White researches the history of the region or venue, bringing influence from local stories, facts, and legends into the sculptural work. Growing up in Chattanooga, Tennessee, he was surrounded by Civil War ephemera and stories, which has led to a lifelong interest in exploring history along with artwork.

In March of 2014, White was invited to York College in Pennsylvania as an artist in residence. Rather than come to the college with a preconceived project plan, he turned to local history. Research revealed the story of the invasion of York by General Jubal Early, who led the Confederate Army into the area during the Civil War. White's enormous installation was inspired both by this story and by a stained glass window bearing the words "Fraternal Order of Eagles" that hangs in the college's Marketview Arts building. These two elements inspired the installation name, *FOE*, which plays on the words in the stained glass, as well as the notion of the enemy encroaching onto protected territory, as Early invaded York with the Confederates.

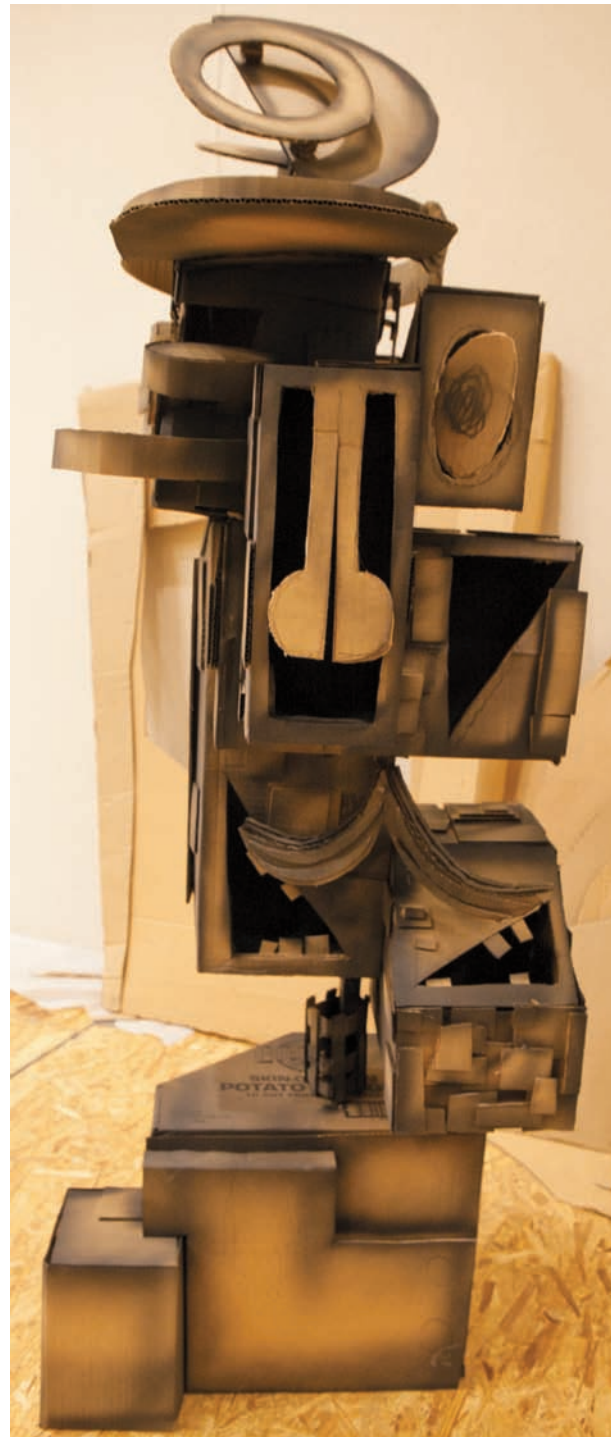
White uses cardboard as a way to bring these narratives to life, with kinetic sculptures that double as puppets (and evoke the "Billy" character from the Pee-wee days). Cardboard enables White to go big. For the *FOE* project,



a giant General Early rises almost to the height of the ceiling and is flanked by cardboard sculptures, all of which tower over visitors. White loves the way oversized scale dominates a room, making a bold statement that lets his vision take over and makes visitors feel as if they are part of something. The lightweight quality of cardboard lets these big sculptures have mobility with ease, letting them fluctuate between puppetry and fine art installation whenever the artist, or master puppeteer, is present.

Although White works in fine art materials in his other works, he relies on cardboard for his installation and puppet-making, shirking more expensive materials for the easy-to-get commodity. "It's cheap and there's plenty of it. I like it because you can work with it fast. You can improvise as you're building things."

Working with cardboard is also a statement on White's part. Many artists use fine materials as a way to convey importance and to define their work as "fine art." Just as some photographers have a tendency to blow their work



OPPOSITE/TOP
FOE, York College
2014
Detail

OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
The artist with
FOE, York College
2014

BELOW
FOE, York College
2014
Installation view

up big as a crutch to guarantee impact, others use fine marble or cast bronze to prove their craft. But White lets his creative visions speak for themselves, telling the fine art world that his ideas matter, whether they are made from marble or a material that most throw away. Using cardboard lets White's design take center stage, as the main focus beyond the glitz or glamour of fine materials. "I work with cardboard and hot glue because it's the fastest and cheapest way to make sculpture," White explains. "With a good blade and hot glue gun you can build something in space about as fast as you can draw it. It moves at a pace that captures your line and gesture. And it is easily ripped apart and changed so there is no anxiety about decisions—things can improve through trial and error. I use it in month-long residency projects because, again, it's fast and cheap. It's an old friend from way back. I'm corrugated cardboard. As are you—non-archival, but full of everyday love and ready to make some cool shit."



06

THE TECHNICAL
AND THE ABSTRACT

DANIEL AGDAG
INDUSTRIAL IMAGININGS
UNDER THE BELL JAR

MAIKA'I TUBBS
PULP FICTION

MARK LANGAN
DELICATE CORRUGATION

Inspired by cardboard's corrugated lines, tactile manipulation, and even its paper-based contents, artists are pushing the material to explore two ends of the spectrum: fine technical design inspired by industrialization and abstractions inspired by craft techniques. Because of cardboard's versatility, it can meet the needs of creators on both sides of this aesthetic, bending to the whim of the artist's hand.

Daniel Agdag's cardboard world is one of fine furls and cardboard gears, evoking a steampunk aesthetic in an incredibly tiny and detailed scale. Artist Maika'i Tubbs deconstructs the box, taking cardboard back to its roots by shredding sheets and making them into a pulp to sculpt with. Inspired by the quirks and corrugated kinks of cardboard itself, Mark Langan has built a body of work of tightly packed abstract shapes that play up the material's natural shapes and design. From the technical to the abstract, cardboard fills the needs of the creative.

INDUSTRIAL IMAGININGS UNDER THE BELL JAR

With the versatility of cardboard, artists can go ridiculously big, without breaking their budgets, or bodies, with a heavier material. But what the easily manipulatable material also inspires is the ability to work in an incredibly small scale. Bending, furling, and rolling tiny pieces of cardboard, artist Daniel Agdag builds up his tiny sculptures in a method akin to freehand drawing. The artist lets his imagined narrative act as a blueprint, moving his hands to create elements that relate to one another and fulfill the wishes of the story in his mind. Like a compass, the narrative dictates every component in the sculpture, focused most importantly on proportion. As in drawing, Agdag builds up the work piece by piece, section by section, always assessing it in relation to the entirety of its parts. At the will of the narrative, fantastical mechanical worlds that feel both retro and futuristic appear, complete with cardboard gears, pulleys, and pipes, all at a minuscule size.

Presented under the antiquated protection of a glass bell jar, Agdag's sculptures feel like captured worlds, transported from science fiction novels about futuristic life, written by a myriad of imaginative authors in the early half of the twentieth century. Protected under glass, Agdag's fantastical cardboard worlds are from another time, objects of fascination that amused,

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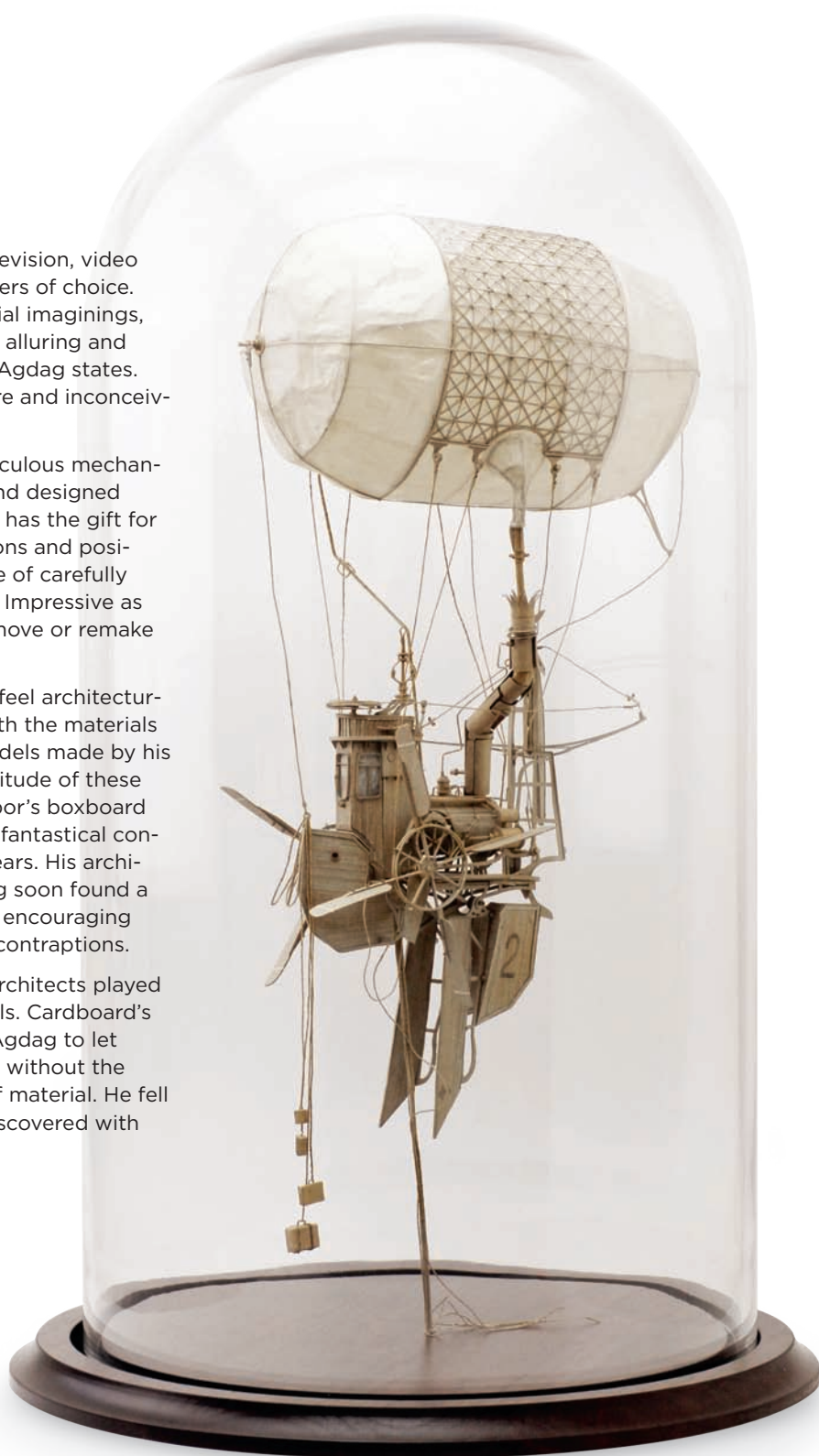
DANIEL AGDAG

inspired, and entertained long before television, video games, and iPhones became our distracters of choice. "My work has been described as industrial imaginings, meticulously executed, forming delicate, alluring and often hypnotically complex sculptures," Agdag states. "Architectural in form, whimsical in nature and inconceivably intricate."

ONE WOULD THINK THAT Agdag's meticulous mechanical structures are heavily thought out and designed down to the precise detail. But the artist has the gift for precision and builds intuitively. Proportions and positions are all done by eye, without the use of carefully penciled sketches or measuring devices. Impressive as his method is, he is also not afraid to remove or remake a component if it is deemed unsuitable.

It is no surprise that Agdag's sculptures feel architecturally informed, as his first experiments with the materials came after examining the cardboard models made by his architect neighbor. Inspired by the exactitude of these models, he borrowed some of his neighbor's boxboard and tried his hand at constructing some fantastical contraptions he'd been doodling over the years. His architect neighbor was impressed, and Agdag soon found a group of his neighbor's architect friends encouraging him to continue his boxboard sculpture contraptions.

This introduction to boxboard used by architects played a huge role in Agdag's choice of materials. Cardboard's lack of color and limited texture allows Agdag to let his stream of consciousness take control without the distraction of overpowering attributes of material. He fell in love with the specific sepia tone he discovered with

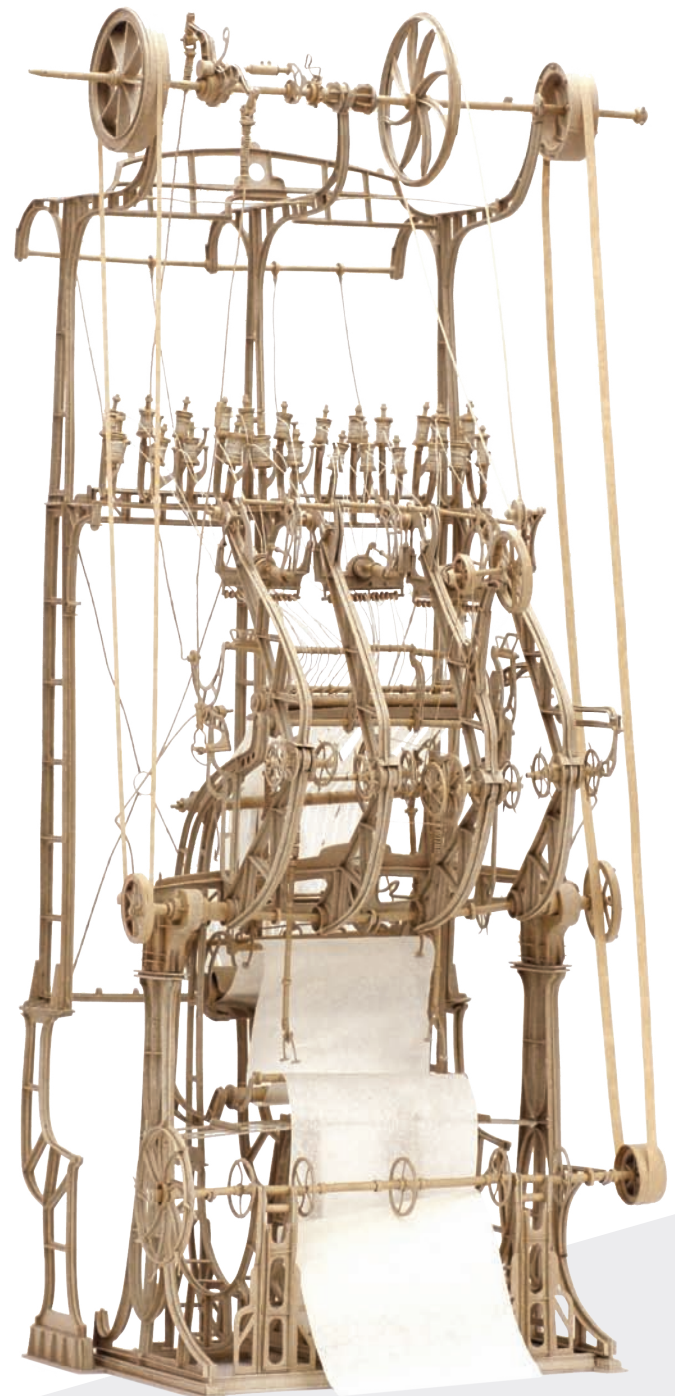


The 2nd Wait
2012



boxboard, and that exact color and texture became a necessity to his work. After much experimentation, Agdag primarily works in three specific gauges of boxboard, which each have a subtly different tone that adds depth and texture to his pieces. Finding this specific cardboard became an issue not just of brand, but of the exact paper mill it is sourced from, creating more of an ordeal than simply visiting the art supply store or scavenging cardboard from recycling bins. "After my first exhibition, I went back to the merchant; the product they supplied had changed, it was a little more gray in tone instead of the brown which I preferred," Agdag explains. "After a few months of researching the supplier and where their material was sourced, I located the paper mill, which was the Petrie Paper Mill in Queensland, Australia. So whenever I require more boxboard, I have to find which paper merchant the mill is supplying to and what thickness they produce it in before finding a supplier who is willing to sell me the product in the small volumes I need."

Although getting his boxboard supply may seem like an overly complicated matter, his toolbox is refined. The most vital tool he uses is a surgical scalpel with a





LEFT TO RIGHT
The 4th Fatality
 2013
The Relic
 2014
The Exodus
 2013
The Windup
 2012

number 11 blade, which gets replaced often as his cuts must be precise. Along with the scalpel, his only other requirement is PVA wood glue, for its strong adhesion and clear drying properties.

LOOKING AT AGDAG'S FINE SCULPTURES, which appear more precious under the glass of a bell jar, influences of the past and industrialization are conjured. But astonishingly, Agdag is influenced by the present. The world is his muse, with his observations while wandering cities becoming his next ideas. Pipe work on buildings, junction boxes, hydraulic systems on heavy machinery and lightweight planes, each hold complex systems of mechanics in common that fascinate Agdag. "I'm in awe of complex mechanics hidden behind sleek or unremarkable facades that aid in the running of our modern world and of machines that aided the running of the ancient world."

The sculptures may be taken from influences from the present, but the smooth and continuous brown hue of cardboard evokes curiosities of the past, amplified by the presence of outdated machines like blimps and propellers. Like the paintings of Jeffrey Smart or Edward

Hopper, Agdag's sculptures command a certain silence that suggests an underlying feeling either that something has happened or is about to. Perhaps because of each sculpture's intricacy, they command narratives, whether Agdag's original story is conveyed, or if viewers use their own artistic license to let their imaginations run wild. What's more, each mini mechanical masterpiece inspires the next story, narrative, and sculpture.

"This might sound corny, but for me every project in cardboard is a dream project," says Agdag. "I can truly say I enjoy nothing more than having an idea pop into my head and then going to my studio to create it. It's a process I cherish, it allows me to bring into the world something I would love to see, the way I see it. Nothing else is quite so pleasing."

PULP FICTION

Before moving to New York, Hawaiian artist Maika'i Tubbs worked primarily in plastic. Disposable forks, spoons, knives, and plates were his medium, transformed into intricately woven soft sculptures, delicate melted flowers, and bulbous organic forms. With these everyday objects, Tubbs became known in the art community of Hawaii, developing a unique process that rendered these everyday objects into something delicate and exquisite. His ability to create beauty from the mundane gained him a spot in the Parsons The New School for Design M.F.A. program in New York, a long way from Hawaii.

New York itself is what turned Tubbs onto working with cardboard. Settling into his studio in Union Square, he noticed the city systems that were in place: the grid work of streets, each night lined with mountains of gleaming black bags and rows of neatly stacked cardboard, tied with strips of plastic as if a decorated present. "When I first moved to New York, one of the first things I noticed about the city was the trash that lined the street. Everything was bagged up and on the curb, including stacks of cardboard. After dinnertime, I would see how the new cardboard stacks interacted with the environment. Combined with clear and black garbage bags, they became still life settings, a new type of urban landscape that would take over the streets at night and then disappear by morning once the recycling trucks had carted them away. So I picked up a few boxes and started playing with them in my studio."



MAIKA'I TUBBS

100

LEFT
The Collectibles-Box
2014
Detail

OPPOSITE/TOP
The Collectibles-
Corner Landscape
2014

OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
The Collectibles-
Video Cassette
2014



With the studio so close to one of New York's heavy consumerist centers, Tubbs began to explore this nightly tableau, pulling both inspiration and materials from the New York City streets. Since he had already mastered manipulating materials into new tactile qualities, Tubbs approached cardboard not with knife and glue, but as a ceramicist would. Most artists use cardboard as a building material, layering, taping, and adhering to make objects, yet Tubbs looked to alter the properties of the material before creating his sculpture. Water is usually the nemesis of any artist using cardboard, associated with damage rather than process. But mixed with grinded down cardboard, he found it made a malleable pulp with limitless possibilities. The wet pulp opened up new doors and allowed the artist to form different shapes and forms not possible with the limiting stoic stiffness of plain cardboard. Once dried, the pulp takes on cardboard's rigidity, allowing the artist to then cut or glue the newly shaped pieces.

DEVELOPING THIS PROCESS IS part of Tubbs's interest in creating a relationship between himself and the materials he works with. "My work explores the relationships I have with objects and the energy that resides within them. By playing with the object, figuring out what it can do, seeing how it reacts to different things, it inevitably teaches me something new. Often times, what I learn from the material helps me to realize what it really wants to say. The end results are a reflection of our interactions and the time we spent together."

With his unique wet and dry process, Tubbs is able to create cardboard pieces that defy the usual properties of the medium. Using wet pulp, his pieces can be formed to bend and drape elegantly as if made from fabric. Yet once dried, the pieces retain cardboard's rigidity, making the sculptures durable. When working in marble, a true master sculptor historically showed off his skill to a

potential patron by carving draped fabric, transforming a block of rock to the appearance of something soft. The same could be said for cardboard; Tubbs's ability to soften a stiff material that is also trash sets him apart from other artists.

UNLIKE THE WORK OF OTHER ARTISTS who use cardboard, Tubbs's pieces have a succinct organic feeling—many of his forms do delve into botanical and biological shapes. An almost lifelike apple made from cardboard scraps fools the eye, its brown color from its cardboard origins deceiving the viewer to think it has simply turned from age. Angular autumnal leaves are formed from pulp, their veins protruding, while texturized sheets evoke layers of moss and lichen. Other methods use the pulp in handmade molds, casting the ground up cardboard into chunky forms like VHS cassettes and even his own arm, the shredded cardboard making the sculptures artistically imperfect. Larger pieces are intermingled with the pulp to create bowls and other vessels that would normally be sold in protected cardboard boxes, relating the container to its contents.

But possibly most interesting are Tubbs's sculptures that use cardboard as both medium and subject. These pieces visually conflict with themselves, showing cardboard in simultaneous order and disorder. Using his masterful process of applying water to manipulate the surface, the pieces seem to stretch the reality of the medium. Folds of cardboard hang over a stool, appearing like a thick fabric or throw draped across the furniture in haste. *Comforts of Home* bears the colorful labels and designs of the boxes it is derived from, showing their former use as a UPS package, or Chiquita banana box, which have been "stitched" together to form a multicolored cardboard quilt. Stretched over a cardboard frame that suggests a bed form, the cardboard quilt wrinkles and folds like an unmade bed, evoking the comforts of home, but also brings to mind the less fortunate who sleep in cardboard boxes on our streets, where the artist also sources his materials. But for Tubbs, the piece is more



about how colonization and consumerism has affected and changed life in Hawaii. Missionaries who first came to Hawaii taught natives to sew patchwork quilts from the scraps of fabric they collected on their travels. These blankets were not part of Hawaii's cultural heritage, but became a symbol of the influence of other cultures that changed the island as it was colonized. Tubbs shows off his control of the medium in more abstract pieces, curving and bending the cardboard edges to appear like soft boxes, which are once again hard to the touch. With the layers of corrugation exposed, he proves his control over the medium.

Yet the common thread in this series is that each sculpture is about the material, about being cardboard. The materials are not trying to be something they are not. Tubbs wants the viewer to know that he is using cardboard, and that cardboard can become all of these things. The process may be unclear, but the intention of showing the limits of cardboard is evident, defying preconceived notions of the medium's abilities. The message of the medium's potential is also coupled with the material as a reflection of our times. Tubbs's purposely exposed edges and recognizable corrugated elements are meant to be recognized and be seen as a way of reusing the natural resources we have, literally making something out of nothing—that is then recyclable in itself.



ABOVE
The Collectibles—
Bowl Remains
2014

LEFT
The Collectibles—Bowl
2014

OPPOSITE/TOP
The Collectibles—Stool
2014

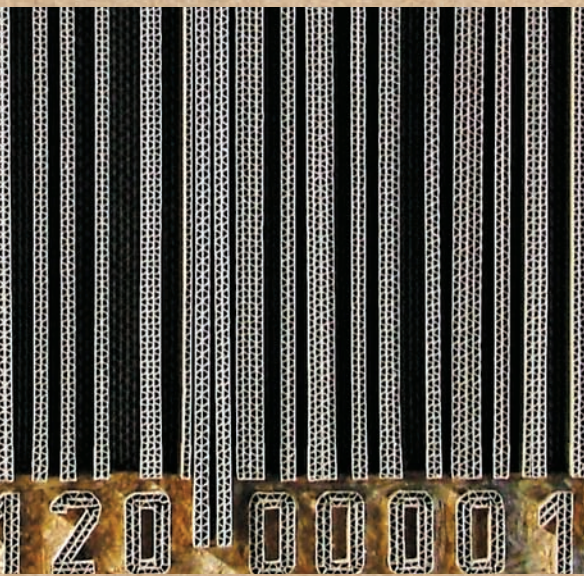
OPPOSITE/BOTTOM
The artist in the studio
2014

DELICATE CORRUGATION

Beneath the smooth surface of brown cardboard lies what artist Mark Langan finds truly beautiful—the textured, corrugated insides. His intricate pieces work with corrugated cardboard's natural kinks and curves, making highly texturized surfaces that appear like fine weaving or beading. Each shape in Langan's geometric abstractions and characters is packed with tightly wound and shredded corrugated bits, adding depth and color to an otherwise monochromatic medium. Held together with nontoxic glue, Langan's complicated designs often have messages advocating the green lifestyle, paired with pro-recycling and conservation messages.

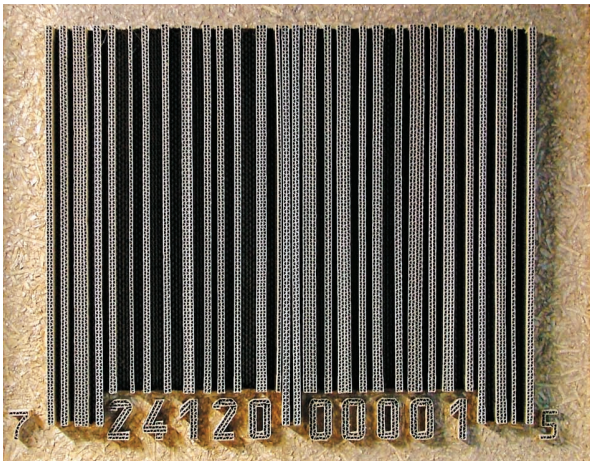
Embracing the eco-conscious message that cardboard art brings to the table, Langan's pieces often double as promotional tools to encourage recycling in an artful way. His rendition of cardboard Uncle Sam points like the iconic original, stating "I Want YOU to Recycle," rather than to join the army. Made from layers of varying cardboard textures, the impressive recycled artwork does compel the viewer to think about reuse when admiring Langan's handiwork.

Boasting a minimal carbon footprint, his pieces use every last bit of cardboard with no waste, running odd-sized bits through a paper shredder to ensure they can be used. The scraps get mixed with a liberal amount of glue and then used to fill in corrugated shapes and swirls



www.langanart.com

MARK LANGAN



ABOVE
Universal Bar Code
2012

RIGHT/OVERLEAF
Homage to Munch's
"The Scream"
2012
Detail

OPPOSITE
Universal Bar Code
2012
Close detail

on the image. The shredded cardboard is given different textures, creating diversity within his pieces, built up to create three-dimensional faces, organic shapes, letters, architectural elements, and mechanisms.

LANGAN APPROACHES the corrugated cardboard picture plane as if constructing a well-composed black and white photograph. Because of the monochromatic nature of cardboard, the artist focuses on techniques and spatial planning to create a multifaceted image that is invariably flat. "I prefer to work with corrugated in its natural form," Langan says. "Sure it is monochromatic, but in lieu of color I focus on different thickness of board, using open faced flute, flats, shredded material, adjusting height of board placement and spatial gaps. These all add contrast that replaces color."

Each of Langan's finished works generally has a whopping 1,500 individually cut pieces that are conformed together to make one continuous bas relief sculpture. Unlike a drawing or painting, mistakes can't be erased or painted over, as once the glue sets, the pieces can't be moved. This capricious characteristic poses as a challenge, but pushes Langan to strive for perfection and to make well-thought decisions before laying down the glue. The intricate designs are not created using CAD software or other digital imaging programs, but instead the old-fashioned way. Langan begins with paper and pencil, sketching his ideas that are transferred with graphite paper, before setting to work armed with only a razor knife, cutting mat, steel cutting rail, and a bottle of nontoxic glue. Working flat on a table, each piece can take one hundred or more hours of uncomfortable labor, as the artist hovers above the piece, gluing in tiny components. The pieces are contained within a custom hardwood oak frame Langan builds himself before each piece is started, complete with eco-friendly plywood





back that he scavenges from home building sites. Plywood is chosen not only for its sustainable properties, but also because it protects the piece without adding weight.

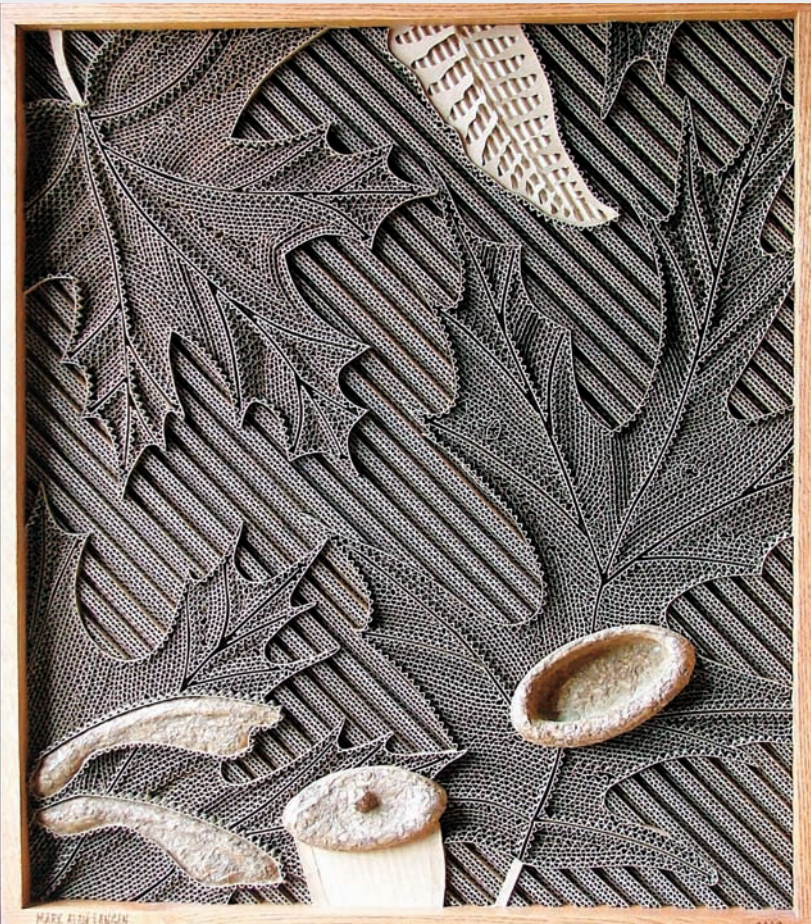
AFTER WORKING FOR TWENTY YEARS in transportation, Langan decided to throw caution to the wind and pursue his artistic career. Following the footsteps of generations of artists in his family, he indulged in his creative tendencies and followed his self-taught artist heart. Completing a day in the studio, he began to break down some corrugated boxes to haul to the curb for trash day, when one ripped down its side. The rip exposed the wavy medium—called the flute—in the central layer of the cardboard. Langan was struck by the design beauty revealed within the box's layer and was inspired to create something sculptural with it. Because cardboard was essentially free, he collected boxes from his own personal consumption and began to experiment until his style was discovered.

Since, Langan has made a living not only selling his own artwork, but also by creating commissions for clients. Ironically, many clients who use cardboard as part of their packaging have commissioned Langan to create one of a kind cardboard creations of their own logos, allowing the artist to think outside the “box” so to speak and utilize elements of packaging for the commissions. “I just recently created an artwork for Domino’s as part of a rebranding strategy campaign,” notes Langan. “Key areas from the pizza boxes were incorporated into the sculpture to further enhance the art with colors and personalization.”

The companies are left with a unique piece that literally incorporates an element of their own business, infused with an artistic edge. Langan has since translated his unique form of cardboard art for companies such as

Ripley's Believe It Or Not, Propr Clothing, and Kellogg's—as well as a slew of recycling companies that want to jump on board with Langan's superior recycled aesthetic. He also attributes his commercial success to the recycling angle, finding many corporate commissions seeking a way to portray a message of sustainability. By using recycled cardboard, these companies get the imagery they want, with the added benefit of a highly designed, recyclable material that can be perceived as fine art by the visiting viewer.

Cardboard has enabled Langan to follow his dream of being an artist without having to invest in expensive materials before his career took off. With his personal style of highly compressed, graphic imagery, he has found success through a combination of corporate and private clients that give him a well-rounded, diverse career. Corrugated cardboard inspires his sculptural side, while also setting him apart from other creators to his corporate clients.



LEFT
Bas-Releaf
2011

ABOVE
Homage to Warhol's
"Campbell's Tomato Soup"
2011

OPPOSITE
Homage to Munch's
"The Scream"
2012

07

DIYS BY ARTISTS

Now that you're entirely inspired, it's time to transform your own leftover boxes into a creative vision! Take cardboard into your own hands and try one of these fun DIY projects, designed by a roster of talented artists from around the globe.

SAILING SHIP Beau Stanton

GEOMETRIC WALL STORAGE Ian Kualii

STACKED TABLE James Heffron

POLYGON SCULPTURE Jud Bergeron

CARDBOARD BALLOON WITH BOW Lacy Barry

STENCILLED WRAPPING PAPER Logan Hicks

PINEAPPLE GRENADE James Cerasani

CARDBOARD FISH Rebecca Paul
and Jeronimo Zancaner

MULTI-USE GEODESIC DOME Robin Redd

Planes, trains, automobiles, and boats! Artist Beau Stanton has created this DIY that makes it easy for everybody to become a novice boat builder. This step-by-step guide leads you through the construction of a miniature cardboard boat, perfect for your seaside mantle or as décor for a kid's room.



Beau Stanton

SAILING SHIP

MATERIALS

Cardboard in a variety of shapes and sizes

Masking tape

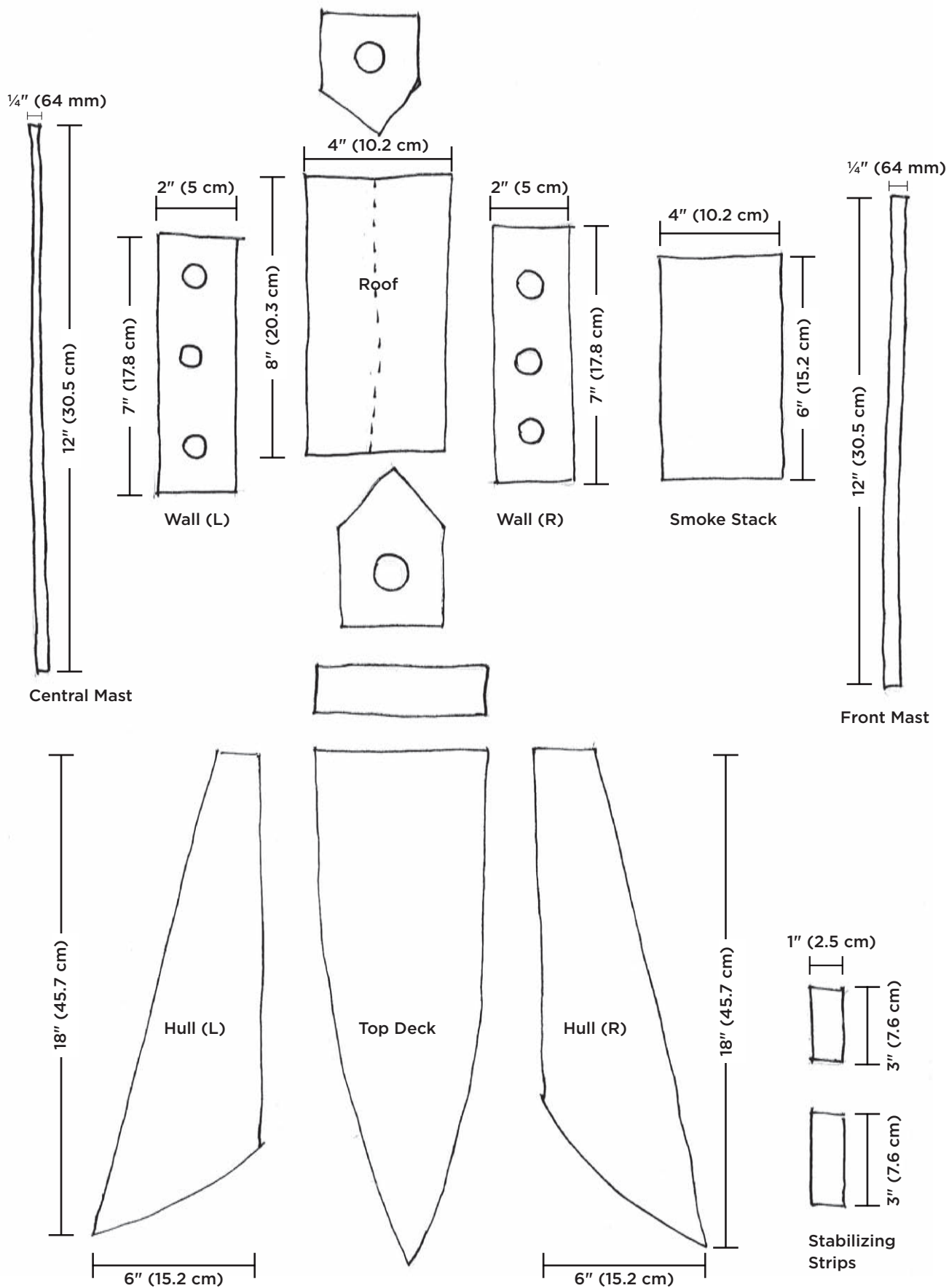
Metal ruler

X-Acto knife

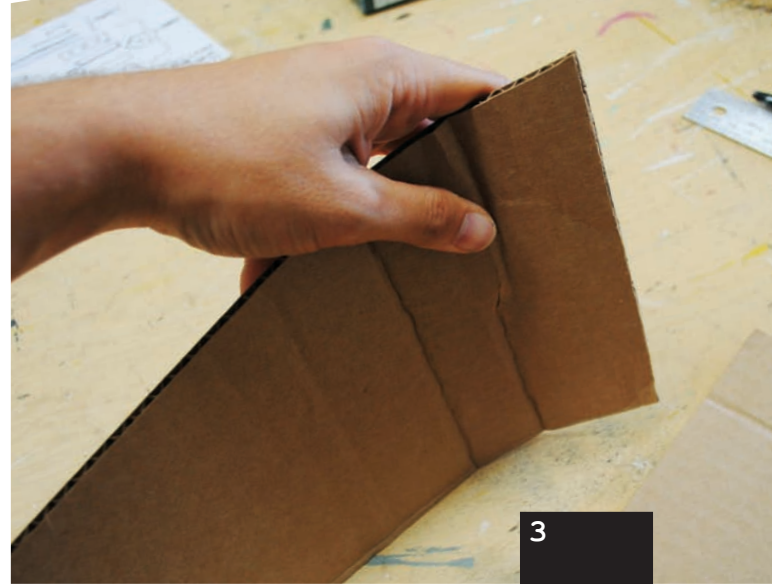
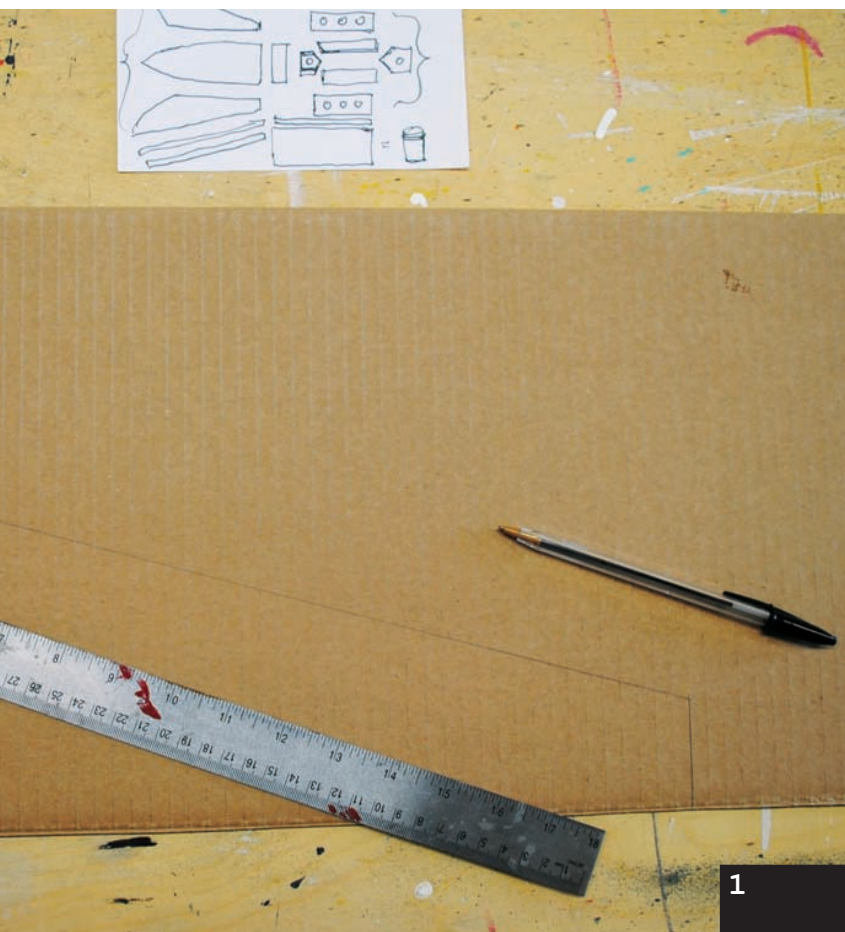
Pen

Spray paint

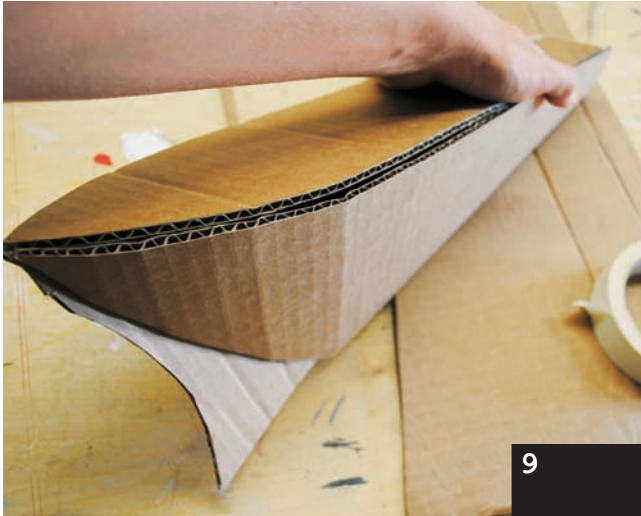
String



- 1** Gather all the materials. Use the metal ruler to draw out one side of the ship's hull measuring about 18 inches (45.7 cm) long and about 6 inches (15.2 cm) tall. Make sure the lines of the corrugated cardboard are running bottom to top lengthwise—they should be shorter rather than taller.
- 2** Use the first side of the mast as a stencil to trace the same shape onto a new piece of cardboard, again making sure the lines are running top to bottom along the shorter side of your hull.
- 3** At the wider end of each piece of your hull cutout, start to bend the cardboard so that it becomes flexible along the corrugated cardboard lines.



- 4** Lay both sides of the hull on the table so that they mirror each other. Then use tape to attach them together at the seam. The tape will run along the interior of your ship.
- 5** Pull both sides toward each other and bend the front ends together where the cardboard has been bent so that the sides meet. You may need to trim the edge of the cardboard so that the two sides connect consistently along the seam.
- 6** Tape together the rest of the inner seam.



7 Lay the open end of the hull upside down on another piece of cardboard to trace out the shape you will use for the top deck. One of the discarded shapes from cutting out the hull can be added to the front as the prow; tape from the inside and out if necessary.

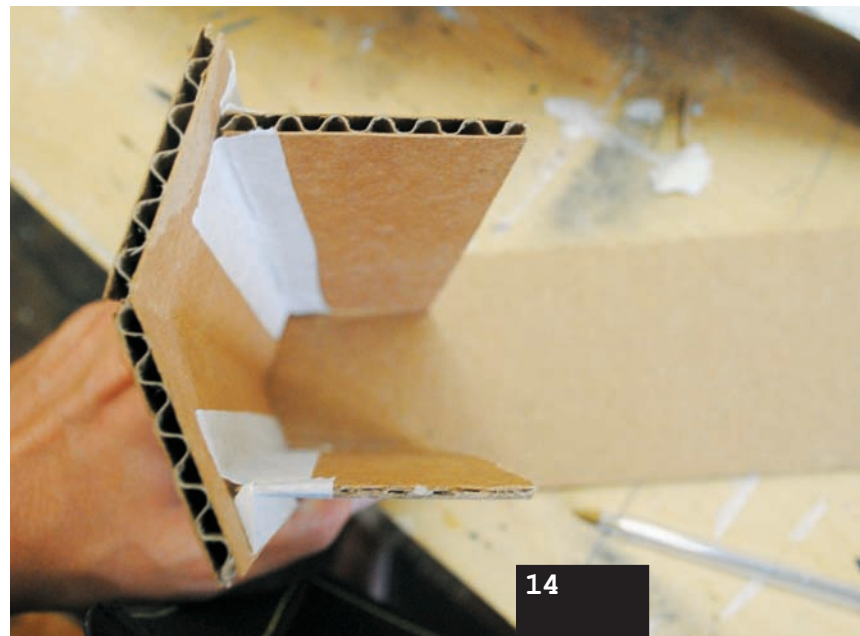
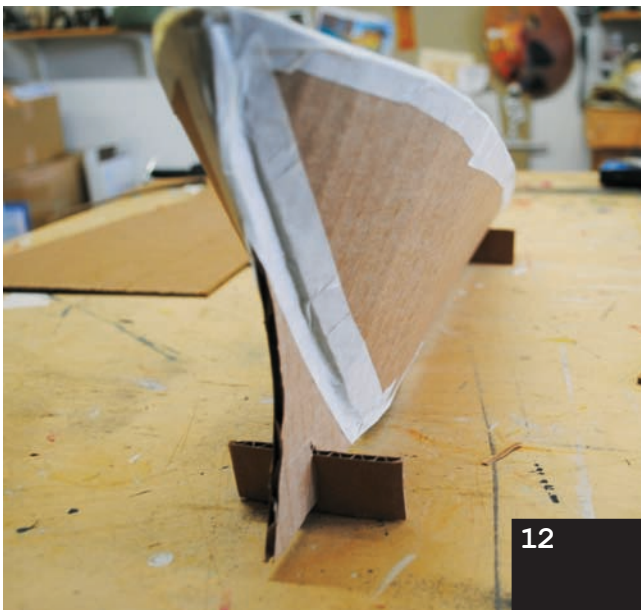
8 Cut out the top deck shape.

9 Align the top deck shape to the hull and tape it in place. Add additional tape to the bottom of the hull if necessary.

10 While it is upside down, cut a small slit near the aft of the ship coming from the bottom of the hull for about 1 inch (2.5 cm).

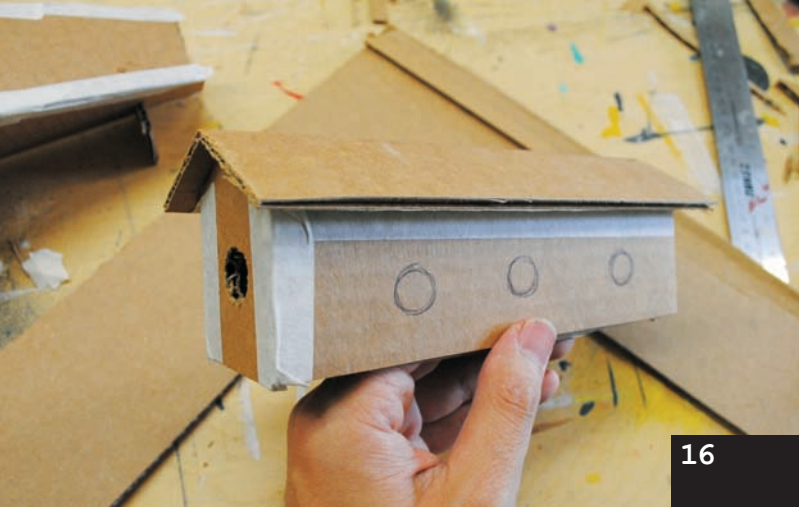
11 Cut a 1 x 3 inch (2.5 x 7.6 cm)-wide piece of cardboard and slide it into the slit as a stabilizing device so the ship can stand up.

12 Repeat steps 10 and 11 at the other end of the ship, also referred to as the prow.



13 Cut a 4 x 8 inch (10.2 x 20.3 cm) piece of cardboard and then score it going lengthwise at the 2 inch (5 cm) center mark so that it can be folded in half. This piece will later be used as the roof for the cabin of your boat.

14 Cut two 2 x 7 inch (5 x 17.8 cm) pieces for walls and then tape them onto each side of the bottom of the roof piece.



16



17

15 Take your three-sided cabin and place the open side down on a different piece of cardboard. Use the opening on the front and back as a stencil for the two missing sides of your structure. After you have traced both the front and back, cut them out with the X-Acto knife and tape them to the existing cabin structure.

16 Draw and cut out circles on all sides of your cabin for portholes.

17 Position the cabin on the top deck and tape it in place.

18 Cut a strip of cardboard 10 x ¼ inch (25.4 x 0.6 cm) and tape it to the top deck at the bow.

19 Cut a 6 x 4 inch (15.2 x 10.2 cm) piece of cardboard and then bend it along the corrugated cardboard lines. Tape the cardboard together at the seam, creating a tall cylinder that will be used as the boat's smokestack.

20 Trace out the circumference of the smokestack on the back of the boat deck and cut it out.

21 Wrap a small piece of cardboard around the top of the smokestack for added detail and insert the smokestack into the opening of the boat's deck.

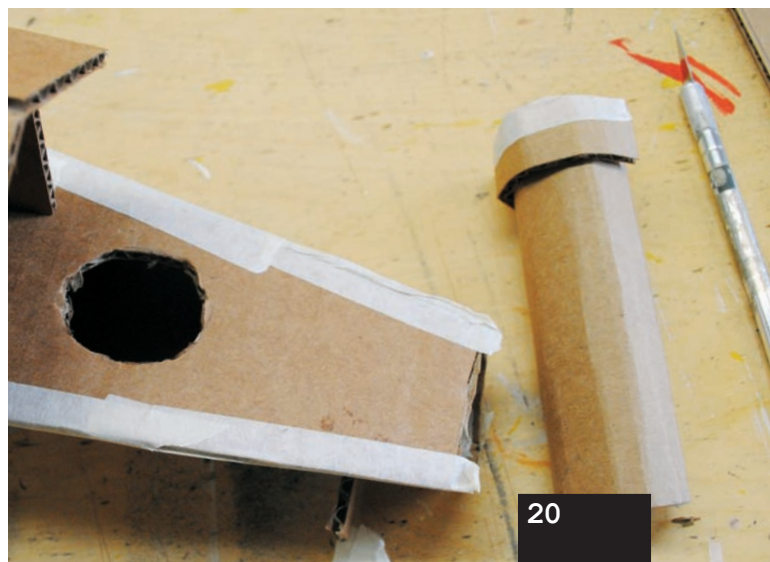
22 Cut out a strip of cardboard that measures 12 x ¼ inch (30.5 x 0.6 cm) and secure it between the cabin and smokestack with a piece of tape.

Now the boat is ready for paint!

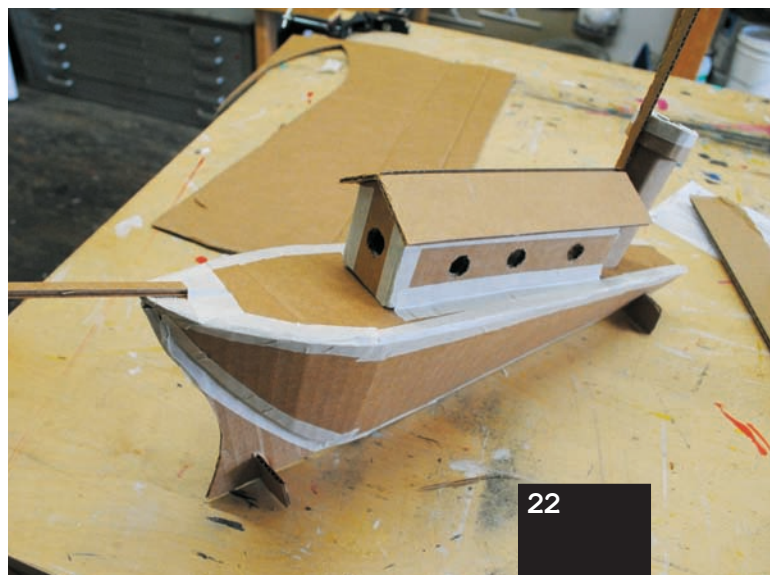
23 Use off-white for the boat's first coat of paint.

24 After the off-white paint has dried, add additional coats of rusty oranges, browns, and blacks.

25 Secure string between the masts and then you are done!



20

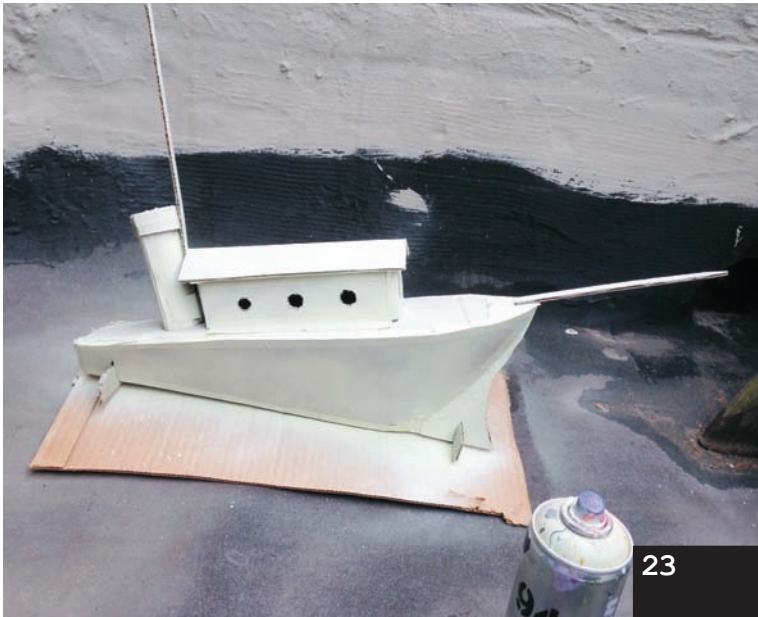


22

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Beau Stanton is a Brooklyn-based muralist, oil painter, and installation artist. With a penchant for maritime imagery, Victorian letterpress, and the Illuminati, Stanton's works often incorporate rich patterns inspired by these three elements. In 2014, Stanton began working in stained glass, which has been exhibited at a twelfth-century crypt in Bristol, England, as well as Stolen Space Gallery in London. Stanton is largely known as a studio artist, but his murals can also be found around the world.

www.beaustanton.com



23



25



MATERIALS

Corrugated cardboard or old cardboard
record cover with cool artwork

Utility Knife

Metal ruler

Pencil

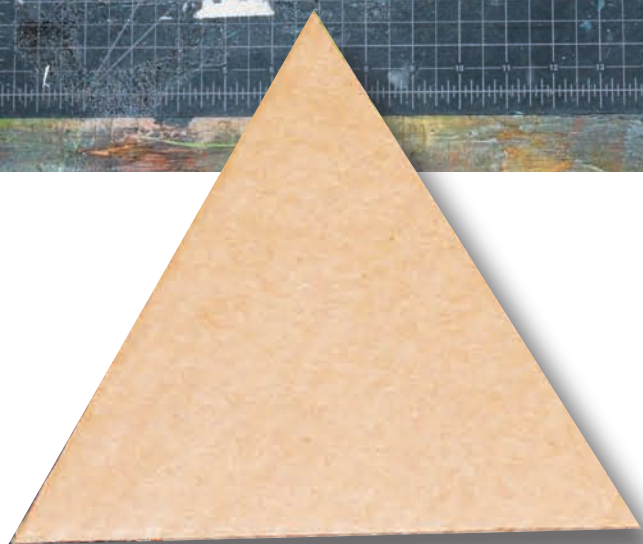
Bookbinding PVA or standard craft glue

One screw

Ian Kuali'i

GEOMETRIC WALL STORAGE

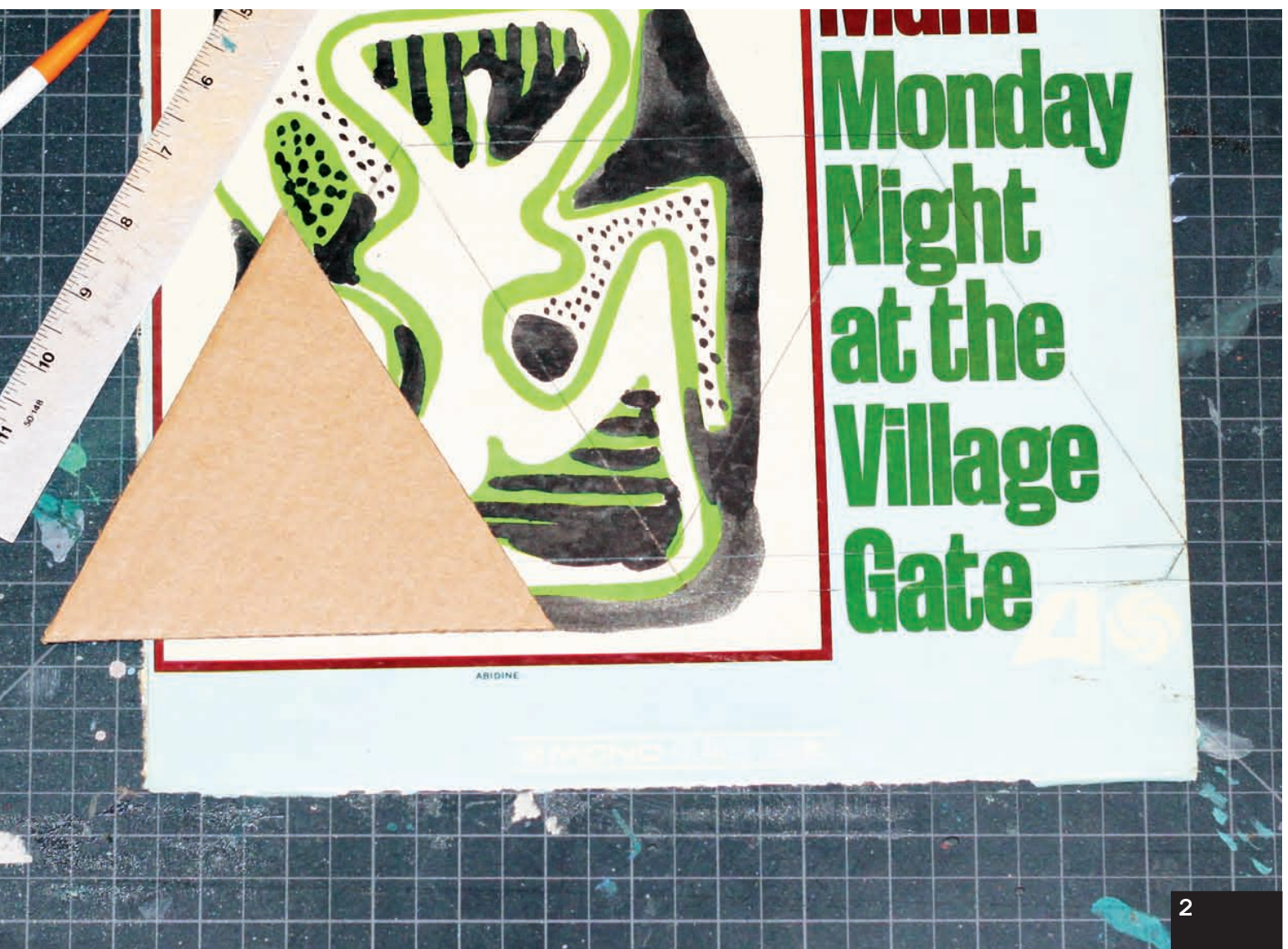
This design lets you recycle an old album cover or corrugated cardboard painted however you please into an easy but awesome piece for storing art supplies, flowers, or knick-knacks.

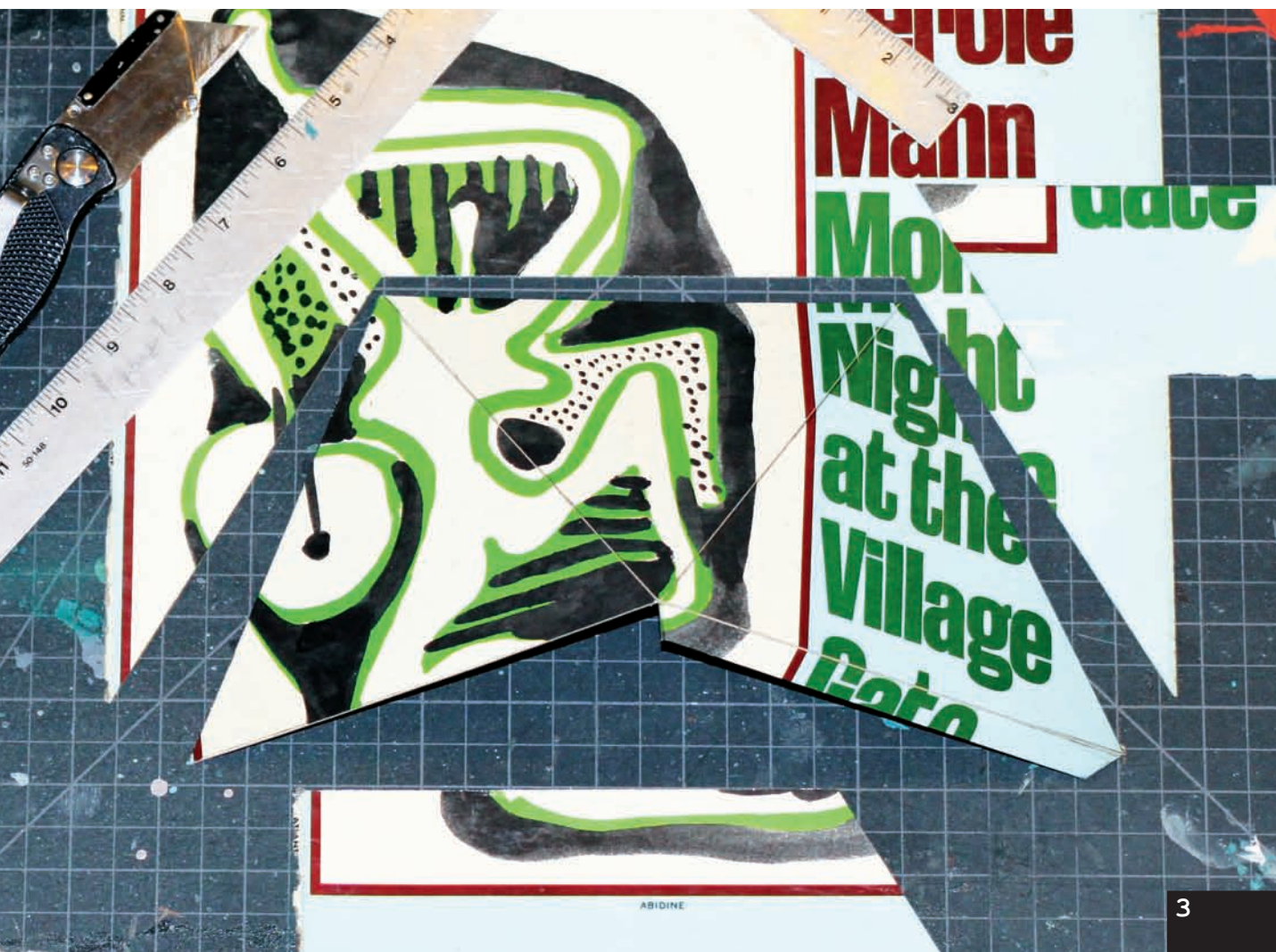


- 1 Cut a triangle template. For this Geometric Wall Storage, we're making a pyramid shape. Cut a 6-inch (15.2 cm) triangle equal on all sides from a scrap piece of corrugated cardboard using the metal ruler and pencil to draft out the measurements properly. Using the metal ruler and utility knife, cut the triangle out.

- 2** Place your corrugated cardboard triangle template over the record cover and use your pencil to sketch out three triangles, leaving at least a ½ inch (1.3 cm) on the bottom for a fold-in tab. The first triangle should be upright, the second should be flush with the first inverted, and the third flush with the second upright.

Add the fold-in tab to the bottom of the third triangle, measuring ½ an inch (1.3 cm) from the base line of the triangle. Clean up your lines with the metal ruler and pencil.





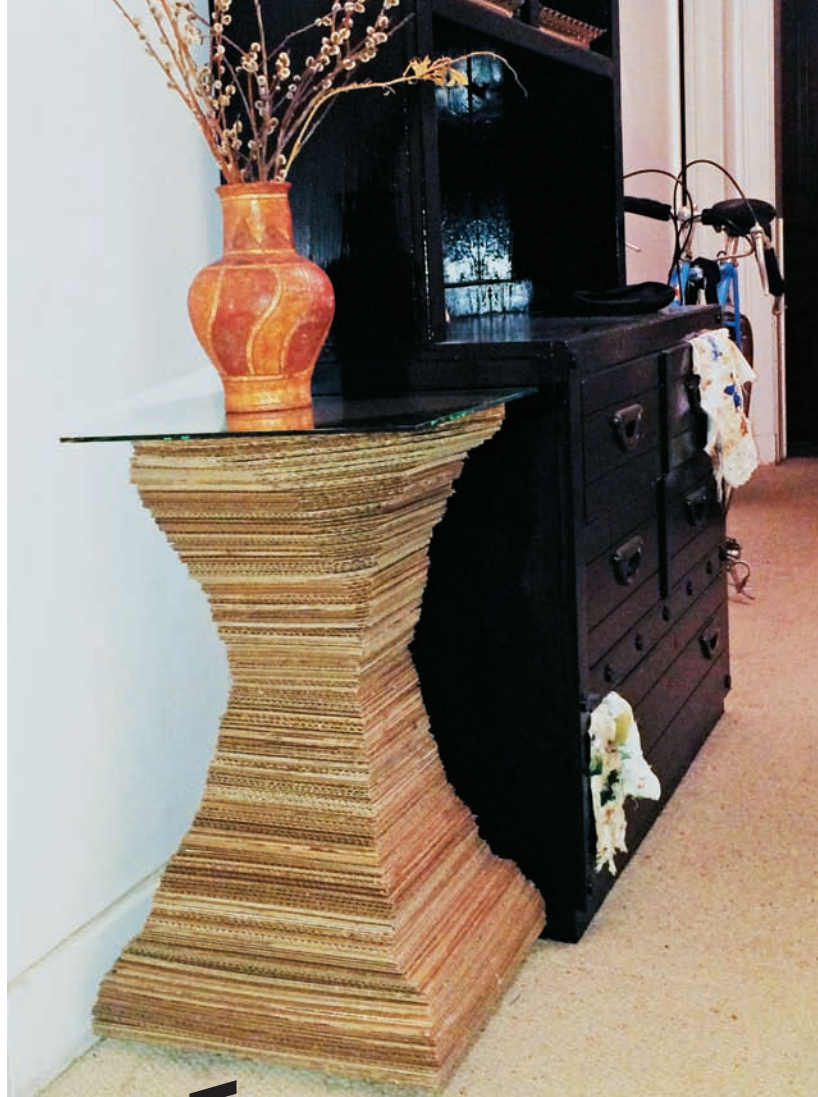
- 3** Cut out, scoring your edges, and glue the fold-in tab. Using the metal ruler and utility knife, cut the three triangles and the fold-in tab from the rest of the record cover, leaving them intact. Then use the same tools to line up and gently score the remaining pencil lines on the intact piece, making sure not to cut all the way through. After they are scored, fold triangles one and three downward and put a small amount of glue on the fold-in tab, attaching it to the inside of the bottom of the first triangle. Apply pressure to the glued seam till dry.
- 4** Screw it on the wall. With the single screw, drill it on your wall through the inside middle of the second triangle and load it up!

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Based in Jersey City, New Jersey, Hawaiian-born Kualii cut his teeth working with mentor Doze Green. Inspired by the curvature of Green's graffiti style and Hawaiian culture, Kualii has created a body of work of cut paper works in both large-scale installations and on canvas. In 2014, he was an artist in residence at the de Young Museum in San Francisco, where he took his cut paper to its largest scale yet.

www.iankualii.com

Piles and piles of cardboard become a column-like table fit for any room! All you need is to order a glass tabletop to cap off your sleek home-made side table.



James Heffron

STACKED TABLE

MATERIALS

Undamaged used boxes
Box cutter with several blades
Durable glue (like Elmer's Wood Glue)
Wide glue brush
Weights or cinderblocks
L-shaped beam

1 Begin cutting boxes into perfect right-angled squares and rectangles using the L-shaped beam to ensure precise edges. The number of pieces can vary depending on how tall you want your table to be. For this piece, Heffron cut 157 pieces, ranging from 16 x 16 inches (40.6 x 40.6 cm) (for top and bases) to 5 x 5 inches (12.7 x 12.7 cm) in the center. Be sure to measure the pieces so that the sizes change gradually. Number each piece in pencil as you go.

2 After all of the pieces are cut, sort from biggest to smallest. Stand the pieces in two piles—one for the bottom half and one for the top half.



- 3** Begin gluing. Attacking stacks of 6 to 7 layers at a time, brush glue all over the pieces, being careful to make sure the layers are adhered before moving on to the next.

To quicken the process, you can make several conglomerate stacks and place them under something heavy and then glue the larger pieces together later. (Just make sure you keep their order straight!)



Alternative

For this version, Heffron glued the bottom half with the corners aligned, but treated the top half with a slight spin to create a wave-like movement, varying corners instead of aligning them, and using an oval shape for the top.

- 4** Once all glued together, let the table dry overnight, adding extra weights to the top (bricks, cinder-blocks, or exercise weights work great) to ensure added support.
- 5** Place your preordered glass tabletop on the column and enjoy your table!

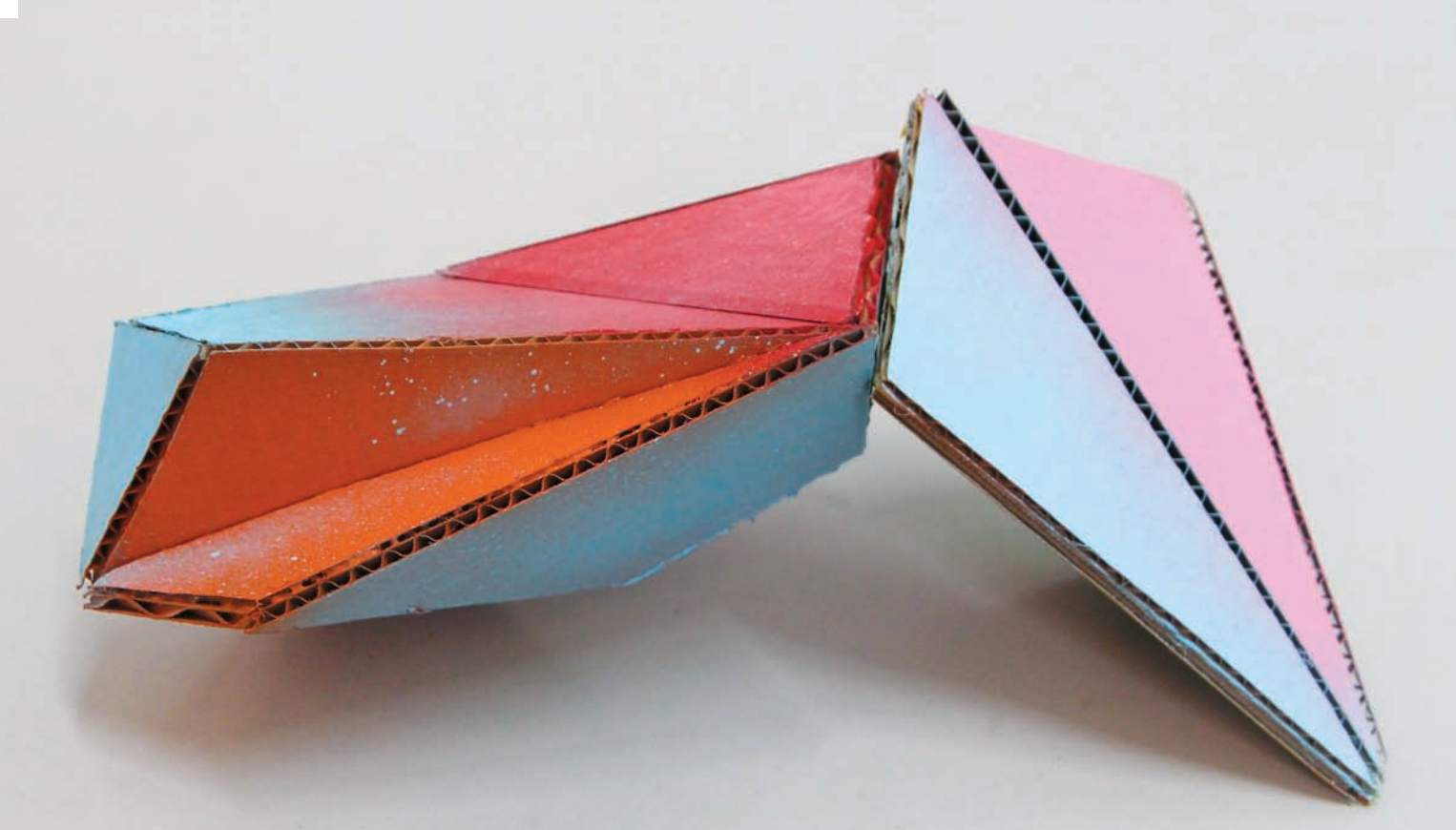


ABOUT THE ARTIST

Trained as an actor, James Heffron often incorporates visual arts within his theater engagements. Based in Buffalo, New York, Heffron splits his time between acting, oil painting, and working on his first novel. Versions of the table can be found at the artist's site.

www.jamesaheffron.com





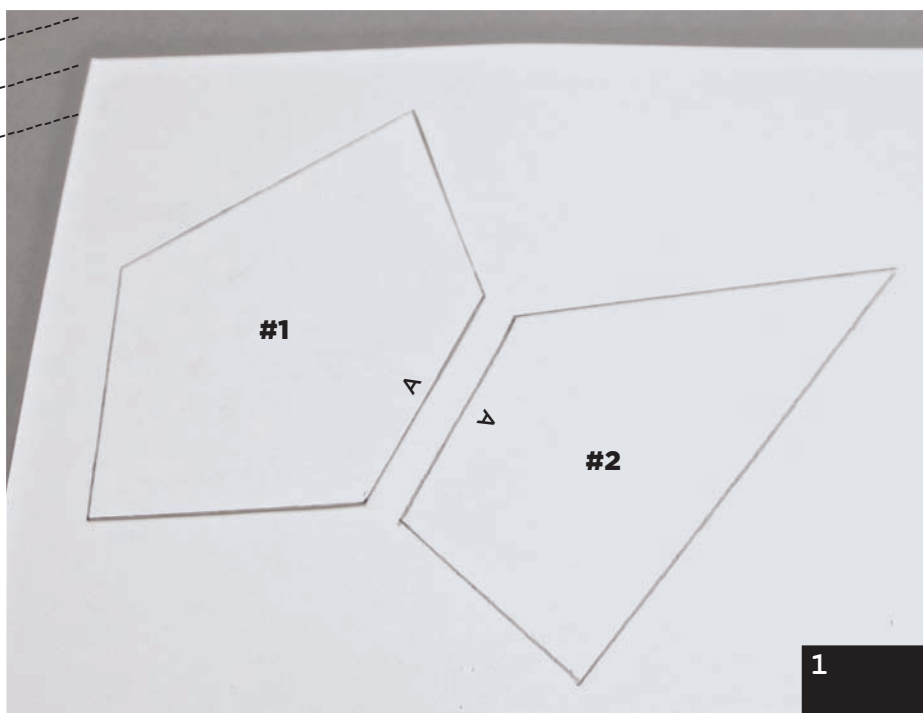
Jud Bergeron

POLYGON SCULPTURE

Sculptor Jud Bergeron wants you to channel your abstract side with this easy to make polygon sculpture that can be painted in whatever color tickles you pink.

MATERIALS

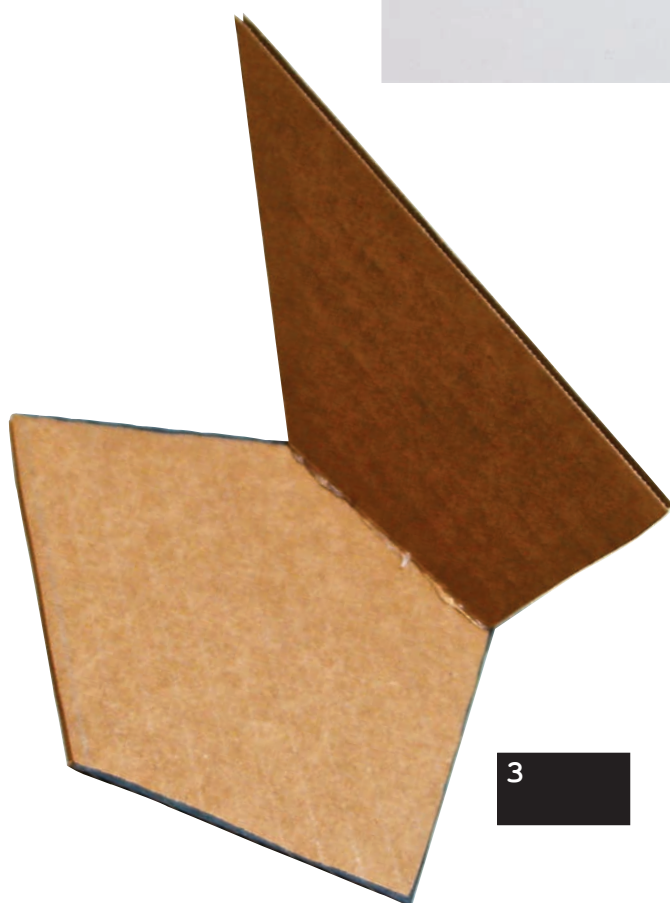
Cardboard
X-Acto knife
Hot glue gun
Straight edge
Pencil
Paper

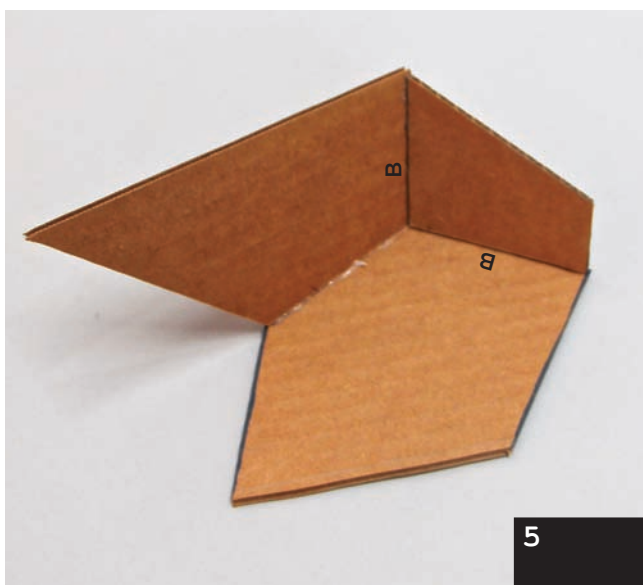
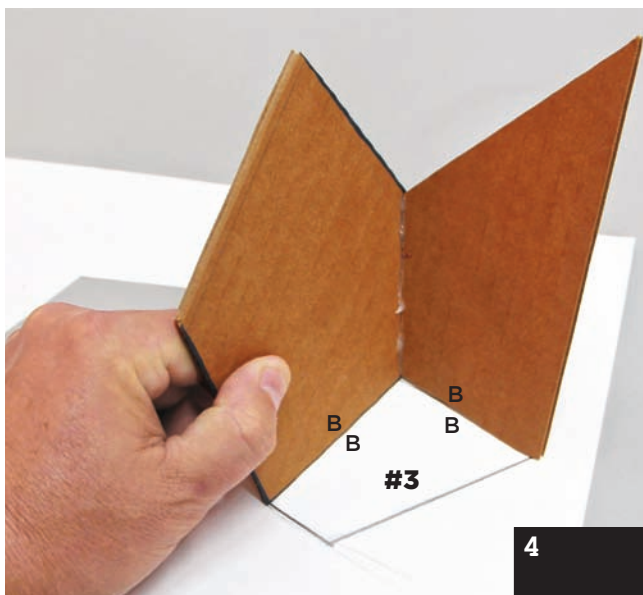


1 Using your pencil and straight edge, draw a five-sided shape on your paper. Cut out the shape with your X-Acto knife. Trace the shape onto your cardboard and cut it out. Mark your paper template #1 and set it aside.

2 Place your cardboard shape onto your paper and trace one side. Using that line, make a four-sided shape and cut it out (be sure to mark your paper templates with corresponding numbers or letters along the matching edges). Mark this shape #2, transfer it to the cardboard, and cut it out with your X-Acto knife.

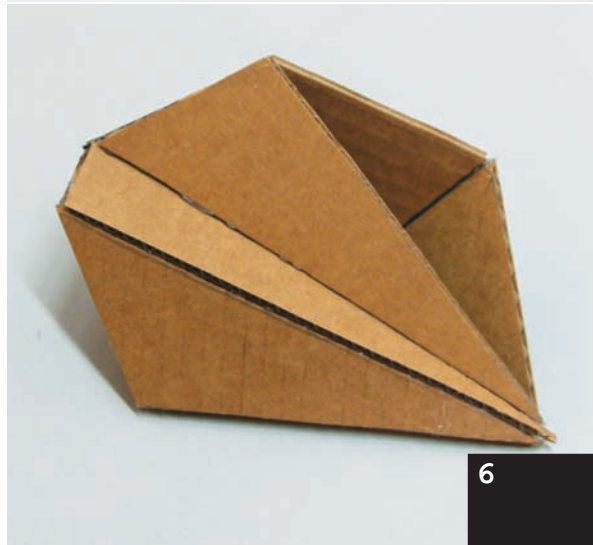
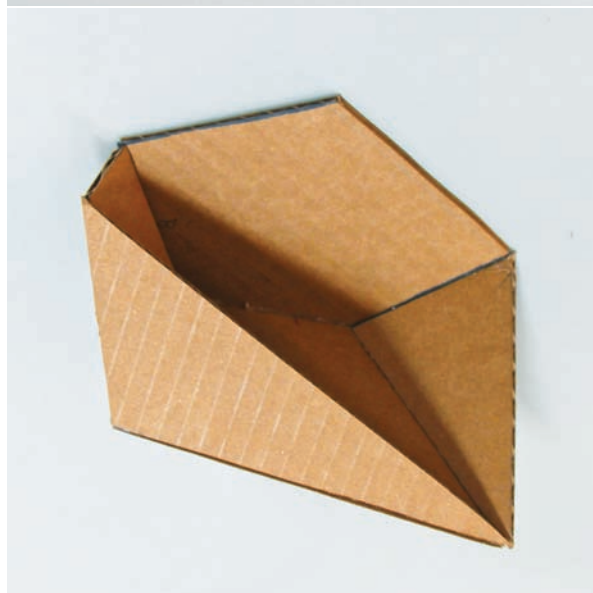
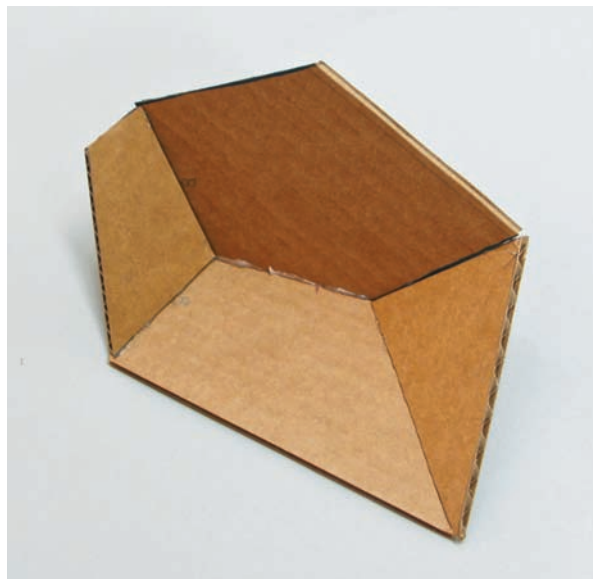
3 Now you have two shapes with one corresponding side; glue those edges together at any angle you wish.



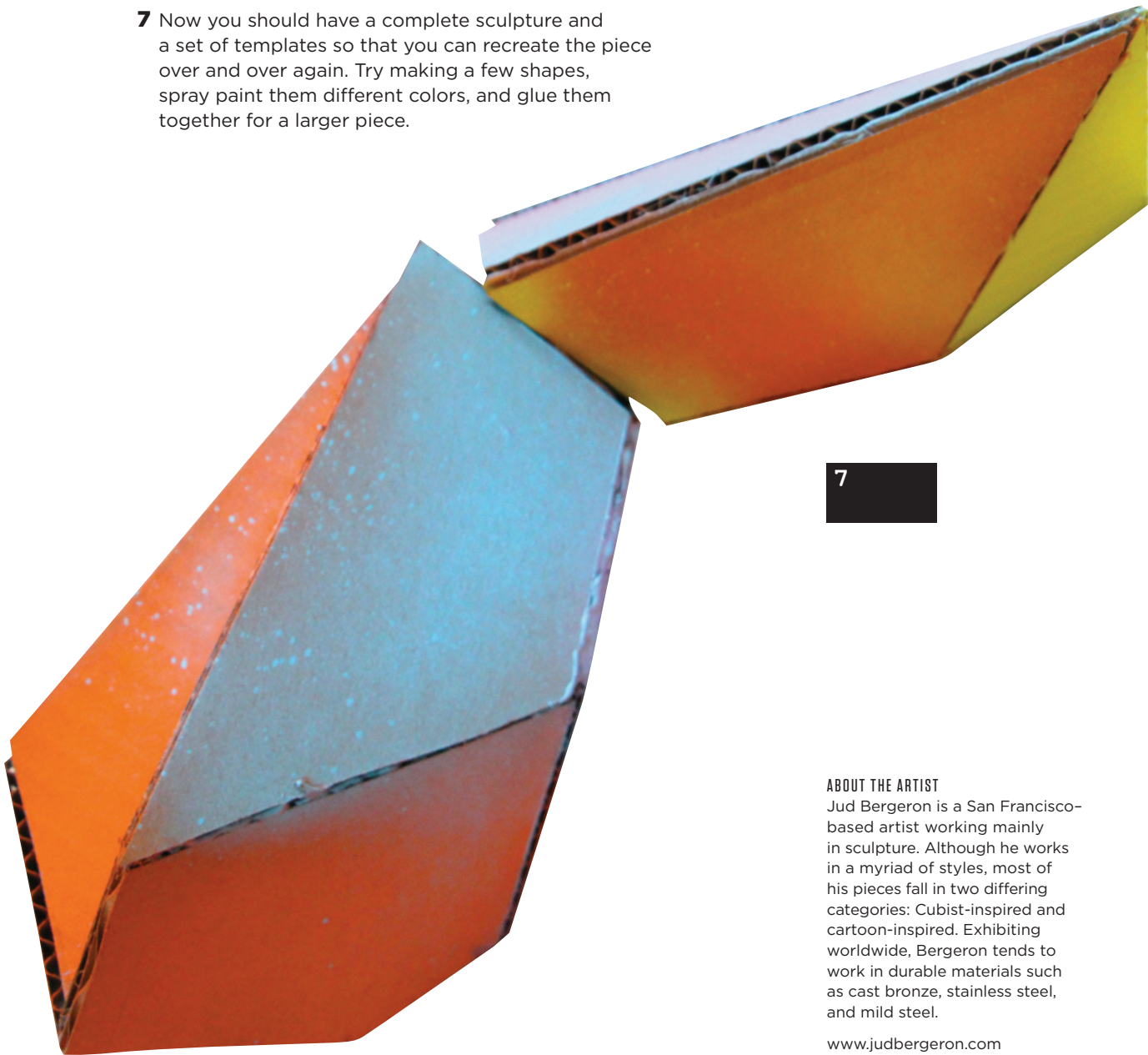


4 Once your glue joint is solid, place your piece vertically onto your paper and trace along the inside of each shape. You should have a V shape that matches the negative space created by gluing the first two shapes together. Complete the V into a triangle by drawing a line and cut out the shape. Transfer your shape to the cardboard and cut it out.

5 Fit and glue your triangle to your first two shapes. At this point, you should start to have something that resembles a three-dimensional object.



- 6** Continue tracing, fitting, transferring, cutting, and gluing until you are able to close your shape on all sides, all the while keeping track of your templates and marking which sides go together.
- 7** Now you should have a complete sculpture and a set of templates so that you can recreate the piece over and over again. Try making a few shapes, spray paint them different colors, and glue them together for a larger piece.



7

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jud Bergeron is a San Francisco-based artist working mainly in sculpture. Although he works in a myriad of styles, most of his pieces fall in two differing categories: Cubist-inspired and cartoon-inspired. Exhibiting worldwide, Bergeron tends to work in durable materials such as cast bronze, stainless steel, and mild steel.

www.judbergeron.com

Up, up, and away! Make yourself or a friend a fleet of adorable cardboard balloons! Create a balloon bouquet or hang them from a ceiling in a cluster of nearly floating sculpture. Artist Lacy Barry shows us how it's done.

Lacy Barry

CARDBOARD BALLOON WITH BOW



MATERIALS

Tracing paper

Balloon and bow patterns (shown)

Sheet of 0.1" (2.5 mm) width cardboard,
7 x 12" (17.8 x 30.5 cm) in size

1 wooden dowel, 0.13" ($\frac{1}{8}$ cm) in
diameter and 11" (28 cm) long

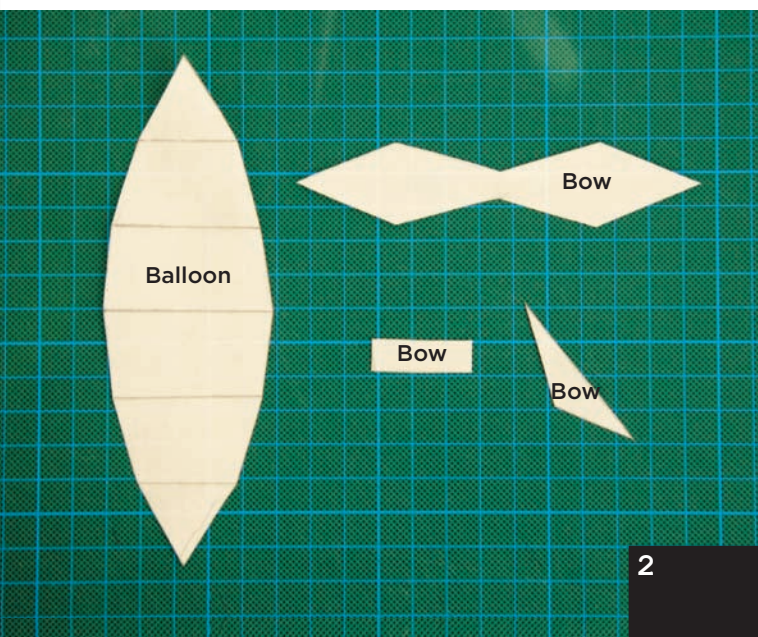
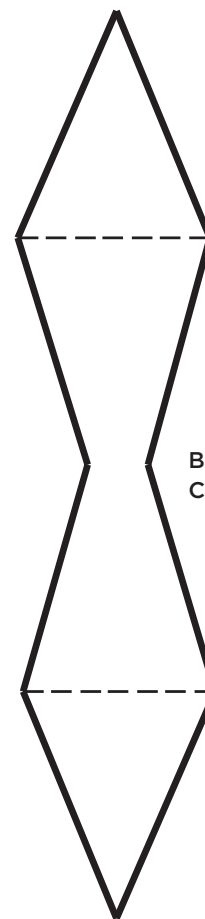
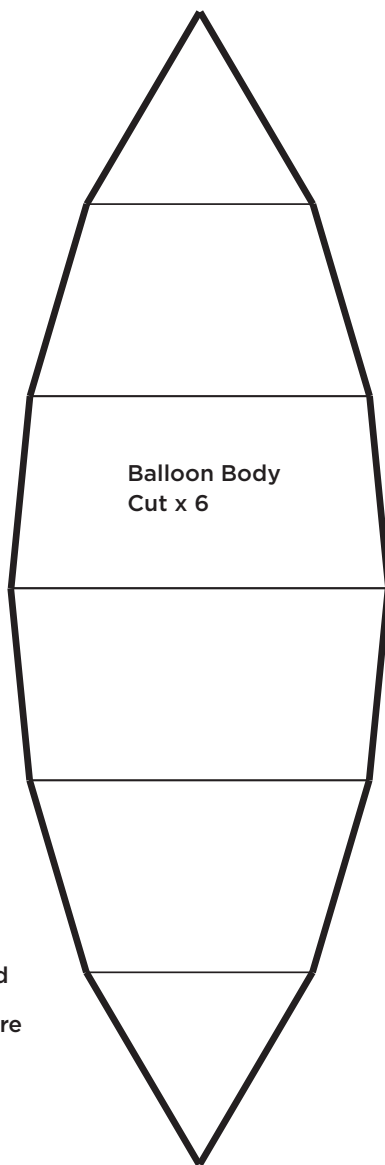
Glue gun and glue stick

Fine tip felt marker

Small ruler with cork grip backing

Box cutter with new blade

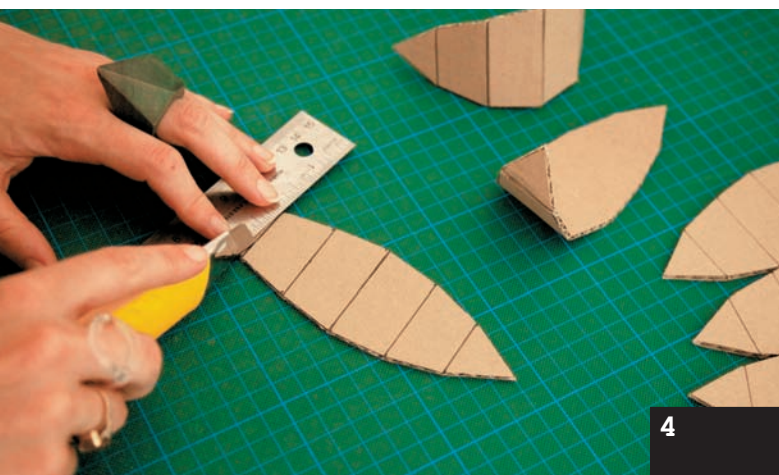
0.8" (2 cm)-width masking tape



The Balloon

1 Place tracing paper over the balloon and bow patterns and trace once with the marker, using the ruler for precision.

2 Trace all lines from the pattern and label each piece. Cut out each piece.



3 Trace the pattern onto the cardboard and cut out each piece using the box cutter. The total number of pieces to cut are as follows:

Balloon Body 6 pieces

Bow Body 1 piece

Bow Middle 1 piece

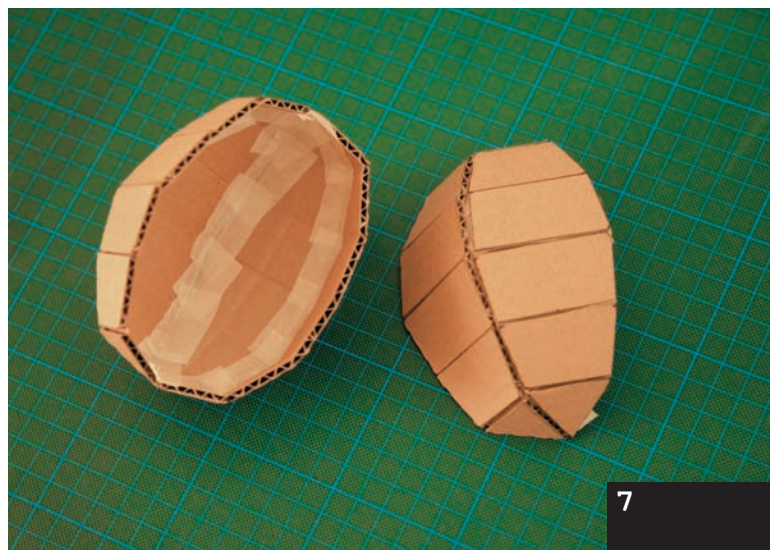
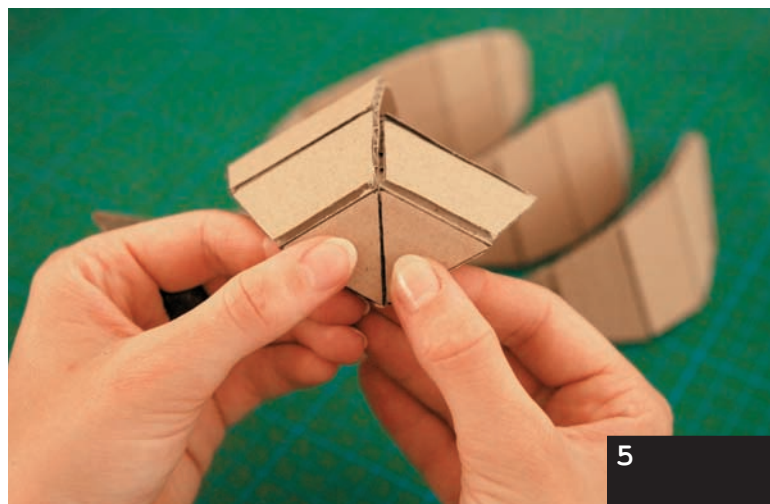
Bow Tail 2 pieces

4 To make the balloon body piece curve, lightly score halfway through the cardboard on each horizon line with the box cutter. Fold the score lines inward.

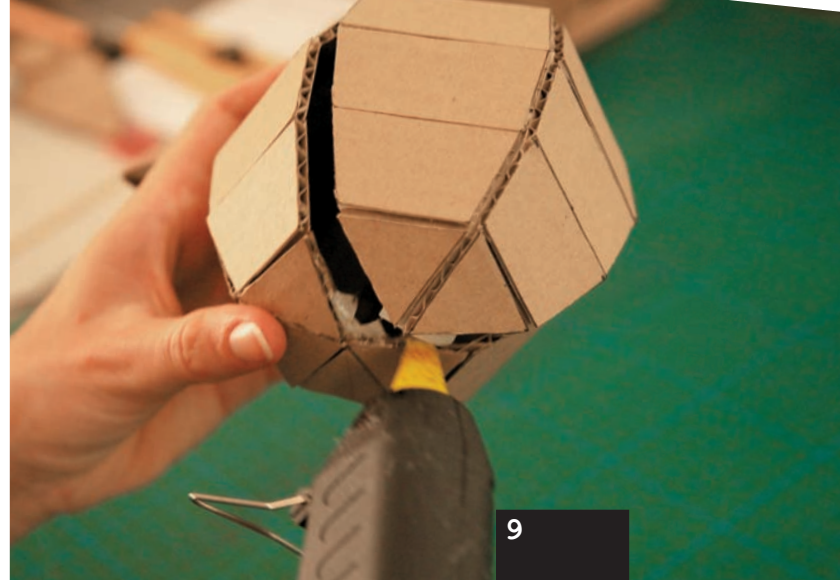
5 Take two balloon body pieces and join them together at the top point with a small piece of masking tape, joining them behind from the interior of the balloon.

6 Join the bottom point the same way and then add three more pieces of tape to each horizon point from the inside to bring the seams together.

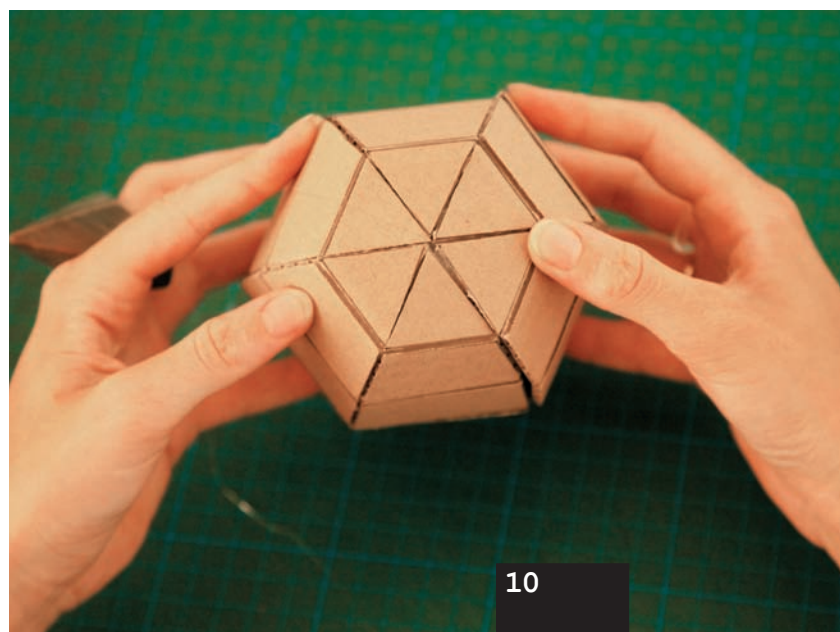
7 Repeat steps 5 and 6, making two more thirds of the balloon.



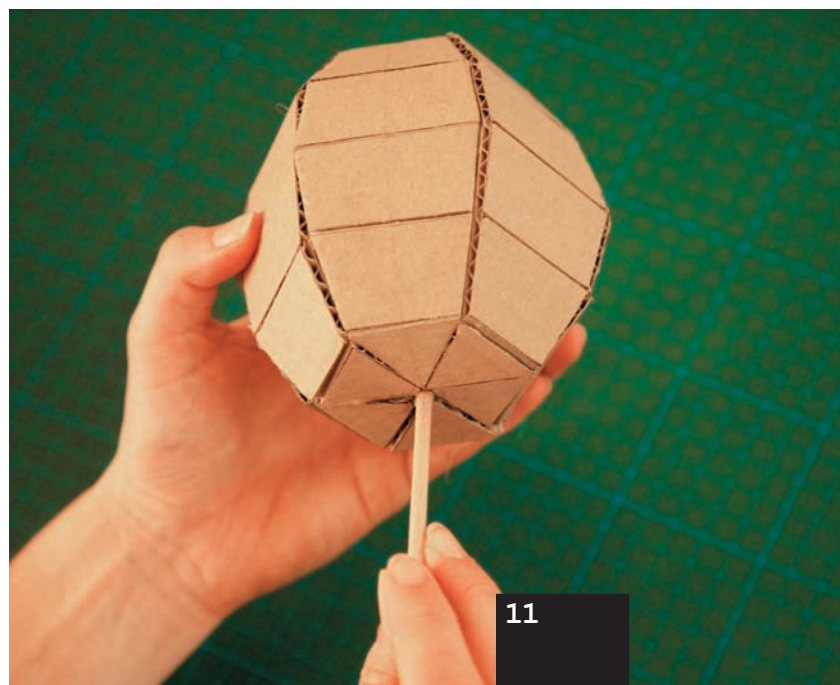
- 8** Take two finished pieces and join them at the top point so all the angles meet evenly. Repeat for the bottom point and join at the horizon lines to bring the seams together until you have one-third of a balloon body.
- 9** Preheat the glue gun and add a thin strip of glue along one horizon edge on the top point of the balloon body segment. Attach both edges of the remaining piece to the balloon body at the top point only and hold for a few seconds until the glue sets. Repeat for the bottom point.
- 10** Join the open seams with a thin strip of glue and hold them together for 30 seconds until the glue is completely dry.
- 11** Put a bead of glue at the bottom point and attach the wooden dowel. Squeeze inside the point to get leverage and hold for 30 seconds until dry.



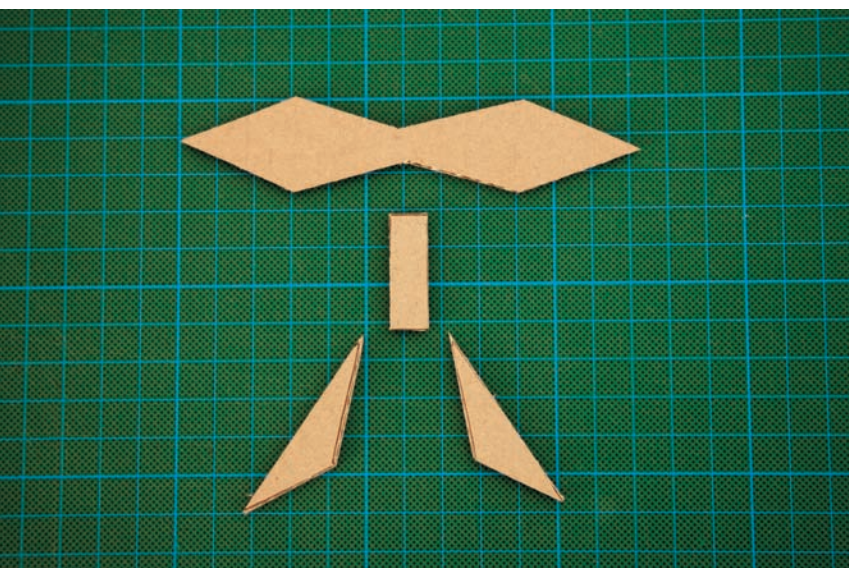
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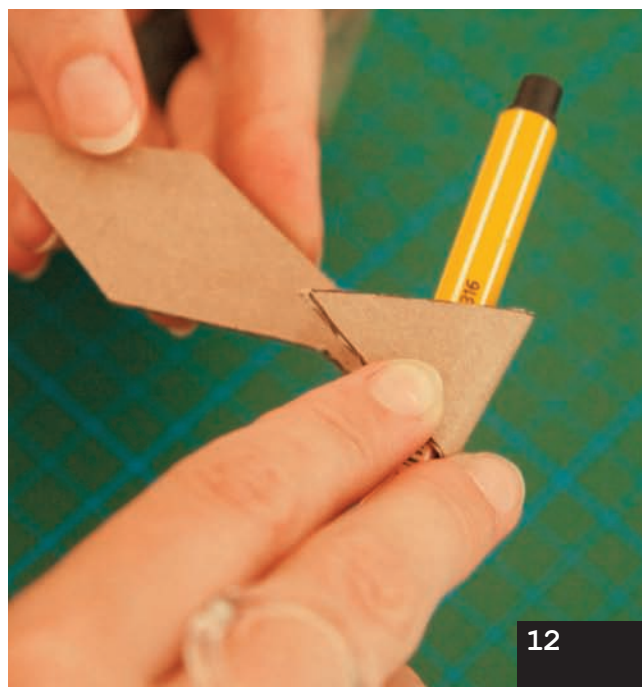


11

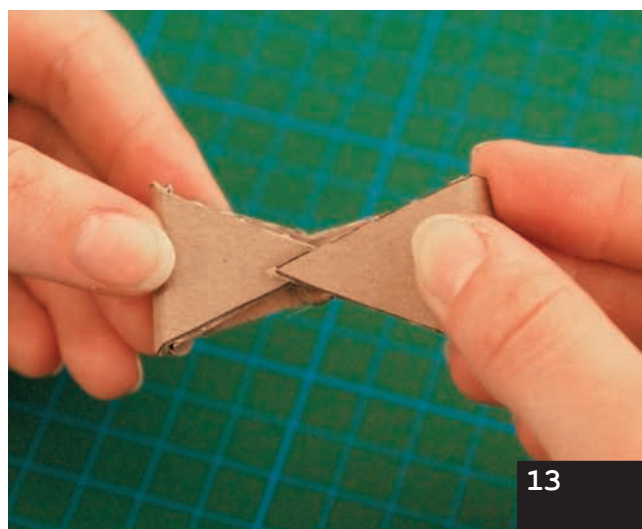


The Bow

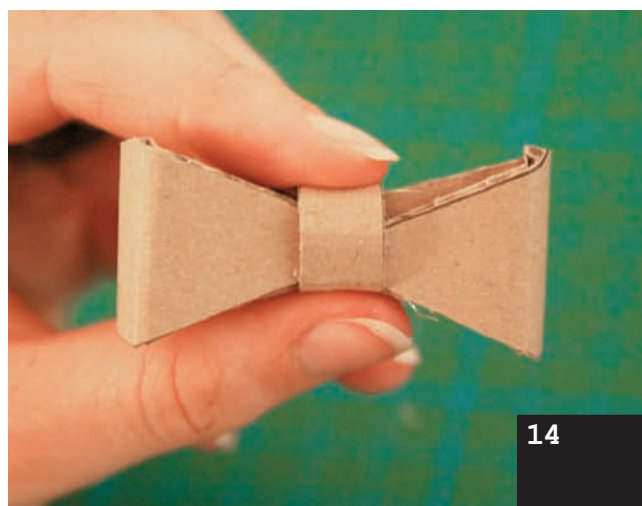
- 12** Lay out precut bow pieces. Curve the arms of the bow body with the end of the marker to make the bow body shape. Repeat on each side.
- 13** Put a bead of glue in the center of the bow body and then meet each point toward the center.
- 14** Curve the middle bow piece with the end of the marker and then glue from the front to the back of the bow body.
- 15** Apply glue to the back of the bow body and attach each bow tail so the longest point is pointing outwards.
- 16** Apply a large bead of glue to the middle of the back of the bow body and attach it to the point where the balloon meets the wooden dowel.



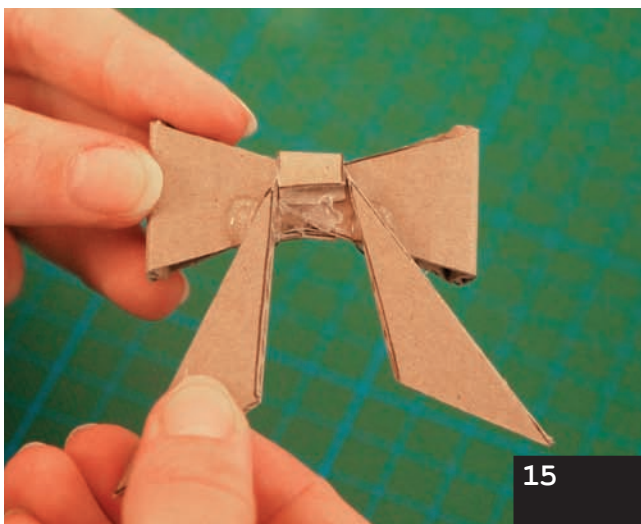
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13



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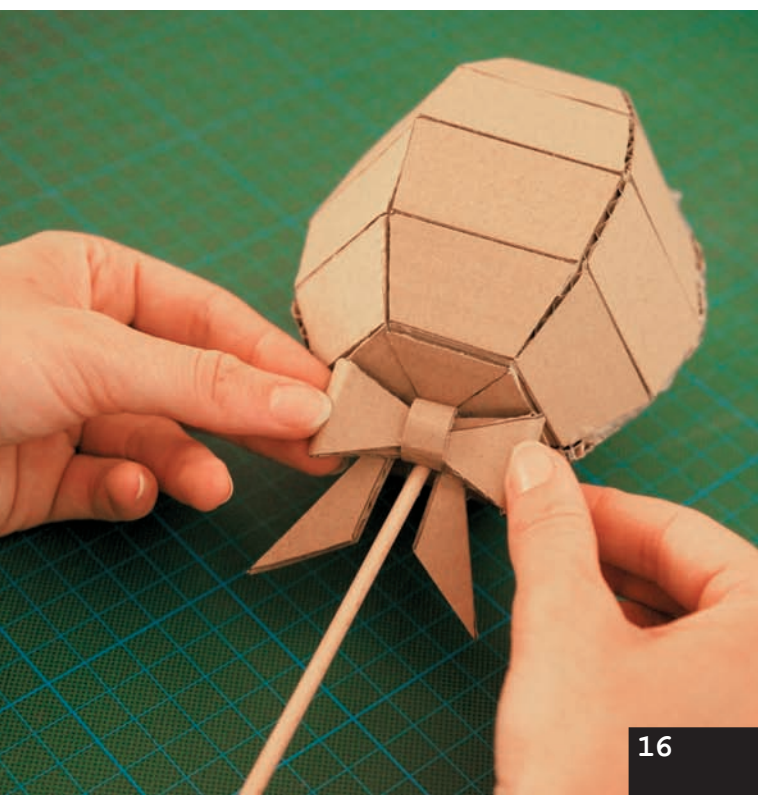


15

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Lacy Barry is a Canadian-born, Berlin-based artist and set designer working in both fine art and fashion. Barry works expertly in both papercraft and cardboard, using her aesthetic in a variety of projects from store windows to finely folded flowers.

www.lacybarry.com



16

BONUS STEP

Garnish your balloon with colored paint, sparkles, or whatever suits your fancy!





MATERIALS

Thin cardboard (reclaimed from the back of a sketch pad works well)

X-Acto knife

Straight edge

Roll of paper

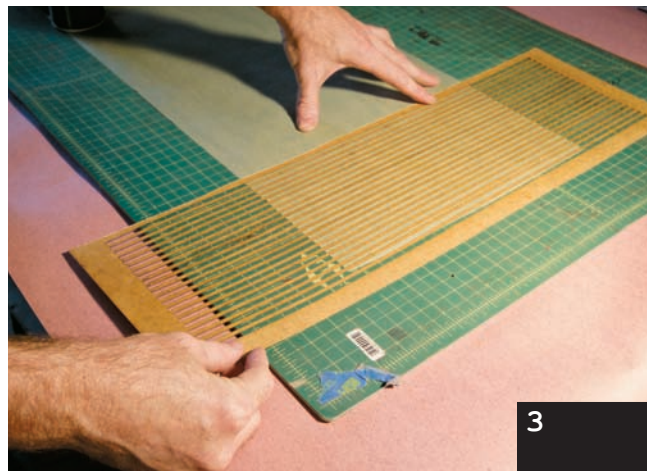
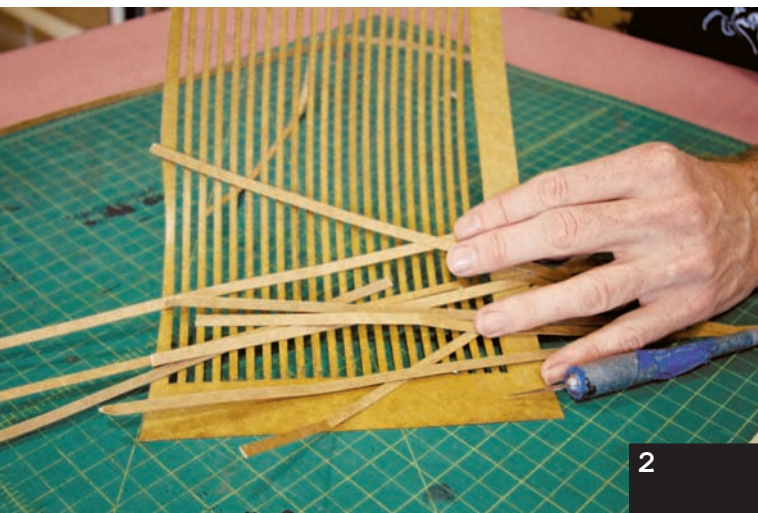
Spray paint

Logan Hicks

STENCILLED WRAPPING PAPER

Making personalized wrapping paper is an easy way to experiment with multiple layers of stencils. The stencils can be reused again and again with different colors and placement to create as many designs as your heart desires.

- 1** Using your straight edge, draw parallel lines across your cardboard.
- 2** Cut out every other line, removing fat stripes of cardboard.
- 3** When your stencil is all cut out, unroll the paper and decide how you want the stripes to be placed on the page.
- 4** Pick your favorite spray paint color and begin to spray out the stencil, moving it down the roll of paper as you go.





- 5** Now, create a second stencil in a graphic shape contrasting with the stripes.
- 6** Cut the outline of your shape and remove the excess cardboard.
- 7** Spray the new shape in a different color, repeating the stencil around the already striped paper.
- 8** Wait a few minutes for your wrapping paper to dry and then wrap your gift!



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Logan Hicks is a Brooklyn-based artist who has developed a photorealistic style using layer upon layer of stencils. Inspired by the urban environment, Hicks's pieces often portray the dirty and gritty nature of urban life. Hicks is also an accomplished exploratory photographer, traveling the globe to snap pictures from the tops of buildings or in abandoned subways.

www.loganhicks.com





James Cerasani

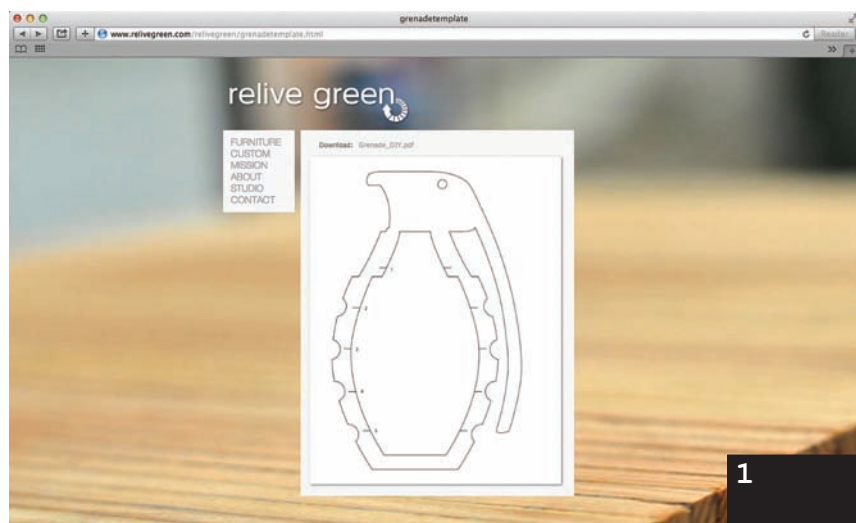
PINEAPPLE GRENADE

MATERIALS

Sharp scissors
X-Acto knife

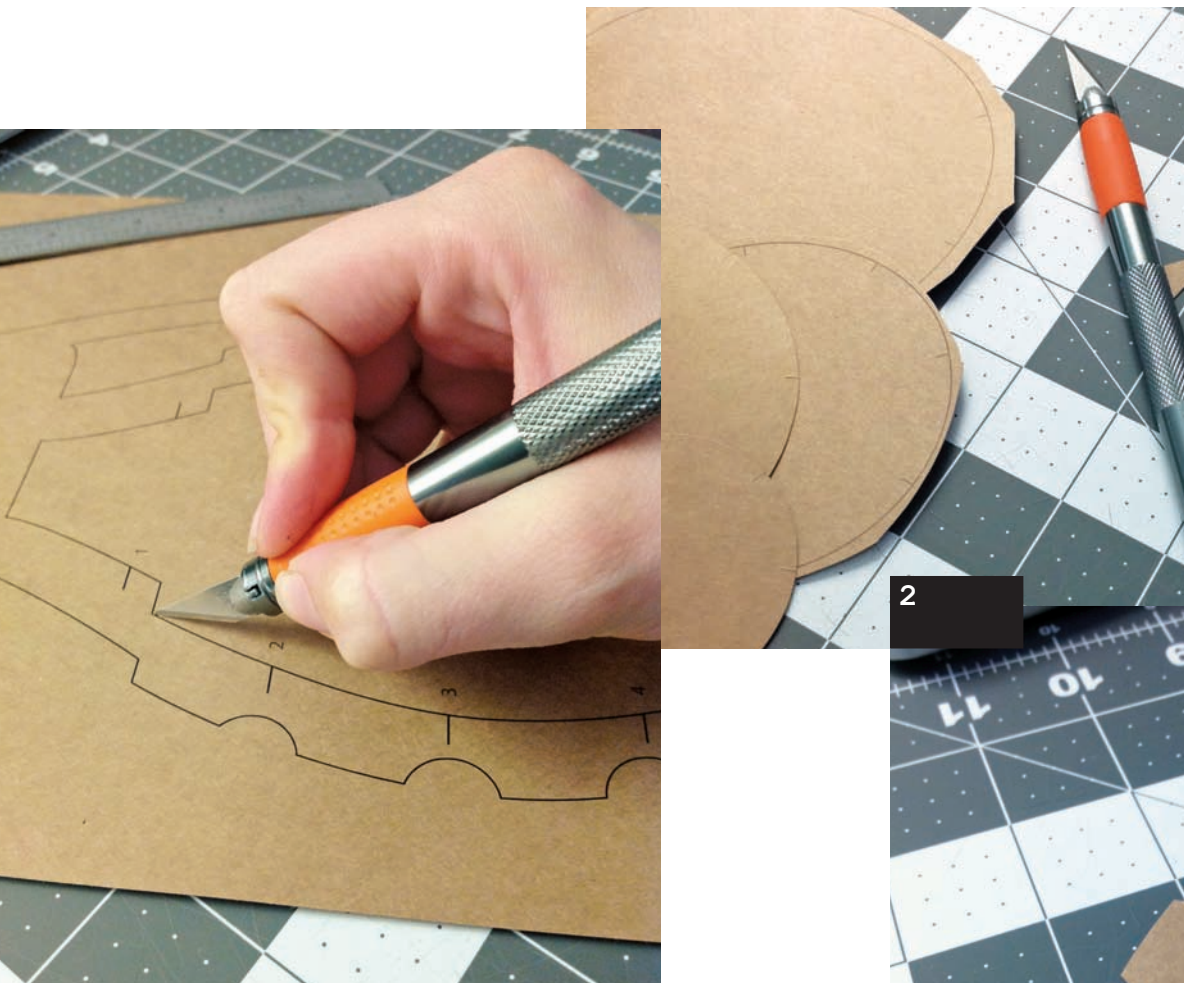
Design objects constructed with cardboard and paper materials are fun, affordable, and can add visual interest to almost any space. While many of these objects are available for purchase precut and preassembled, they are often expensive, and let's face it—not that exciting. To make things easier, and more fun, designer James Cerasani, from reLIVE Green, has created this super interesting DIY project where you can build

your very own pineapple grenade: with an easy to follow predesigned stencil. This cool cardboard creation can be used as is to add a blast of fun to your favorite bookshelf or outfitted with a low voltage bulb to create an explosive lighting solution perfect for any modern space.



- 1 Go online and visit www.relivegreen.com/relivegreen/grenadetemplate.html and download the file to your desktop. Open the file and print the template onto thin cardboard or cardstock. If you would like to use a thicker cardboard, you can print the template onto a piece of paper and transfer the stencil using graphite paper. The numbers included on the template indicate where the pieces will fit together.

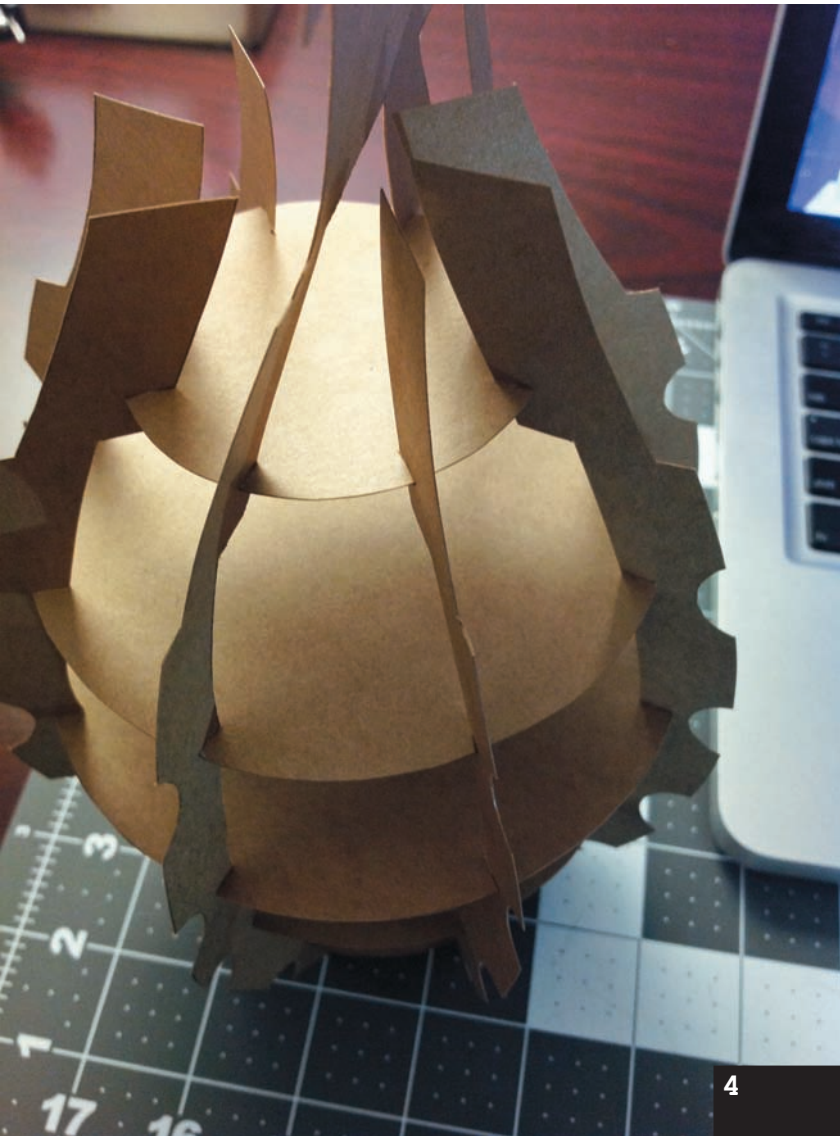
- 2** After you have traced or printed the stencils onto the correct material, use an X-Acto knife to cut out each piece. As you are cutting, make sure you keep track of the labels on the stencil.
- 3** Start with the largest piece of the pineapple grenade that includes the arm. Begin to insert the circles from the top, which is labeled with number 1.
- 4** Insert the circular disc labeled number 5 at the bottom and then continue with the discs labeled 2, 3, and 4.
- 5** Then insert the vertical arms, alternating from the front and back until all of the pieces are assembled.



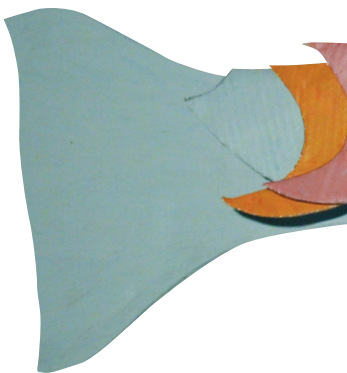
ABOUT THE ARTIST

James Cerasani is a furniture and product designer living in Los Angeles. Cerasani's commitment to design has created an innovative line of chandeliers, showerheads, staircases, and furniture pieces. In 2010, Cerasani started reLIVE Green, a furniture company that meshes his designs with sustainability, using only recycled or reclaimed materials.

www.relivegreen.com



Sea creatures come in all shapes and sizes, and with this DIY from artists Jeronimo Zancaner and Rebecca Paul, you are well on your way to creating your very own underwater adventure. Whether you are making a fish, shrimp, or octopus, this project's clever use of cardboard and wire results in agile sculptures that move and bend just like fish in the water.



Rebecca Paul and Jeronimo Zancaner

CARDBOARD FISH

MATERIALS

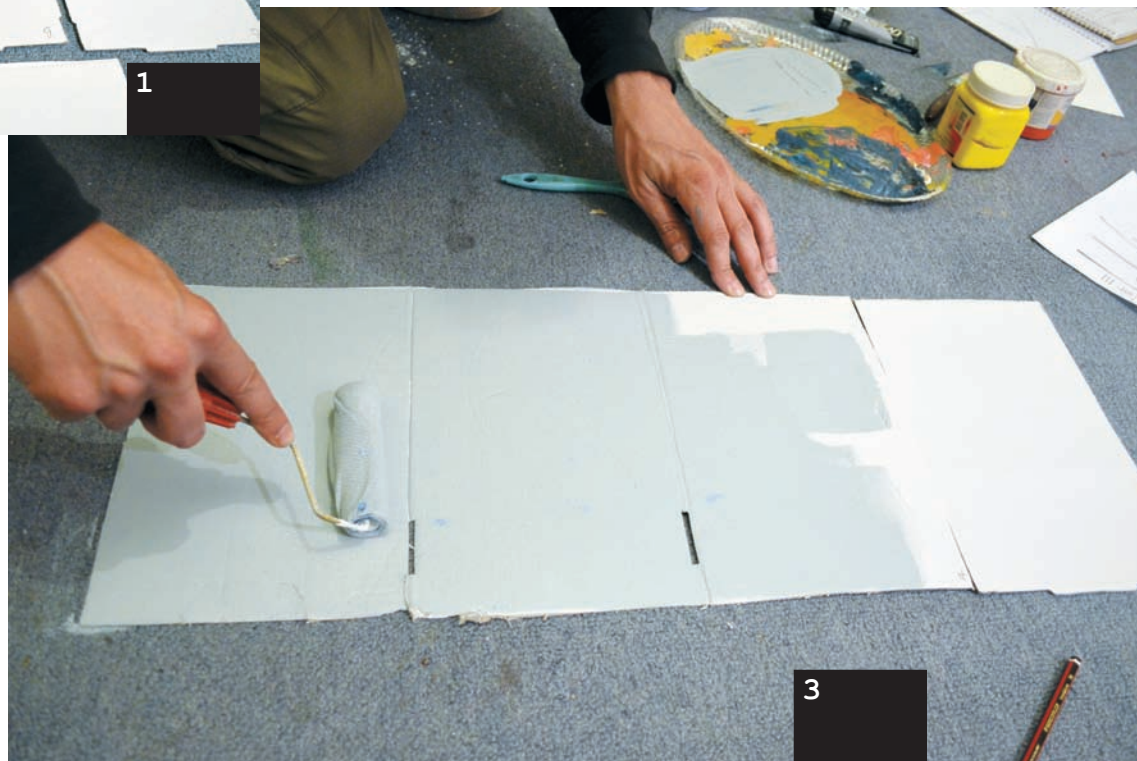
- Cardboard
- Thin metal wire
- Good scissors
- Pencil
- Acrylic paint (various colors)
- Wire cutters and pliers
- Paint brushes

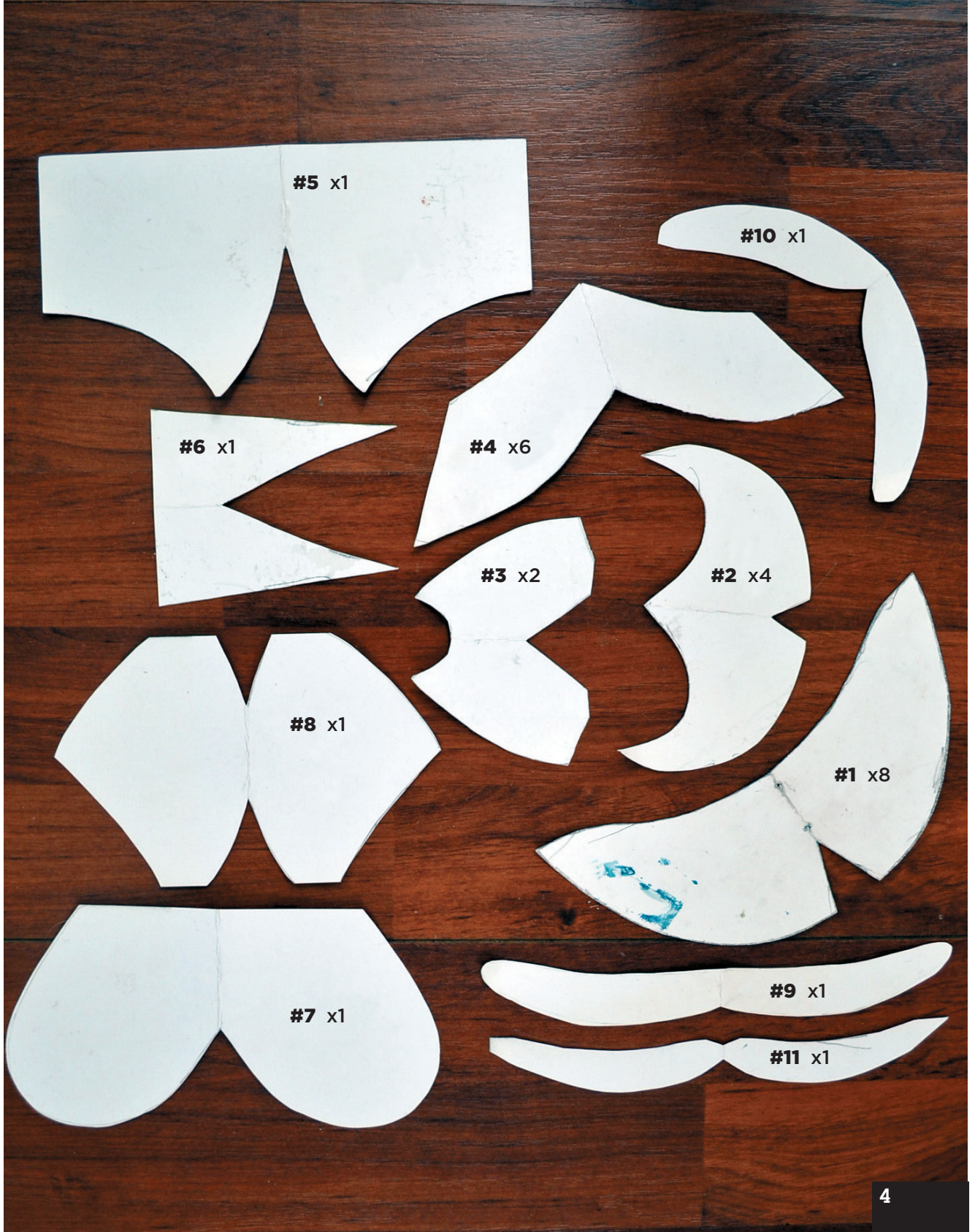


1 Label four large pieces of cardboard A, B, C, and D.

2 Select a color scheme that includes four different colors or shades. You will be using the letters A, B, C, and D to identify the various parts of your fish, so on a piece of paper, write down the colors and corresponding letters that you are planning to use.

3 Mix your colors and paint the cardboard according to your labels.





- 4** On a separate piece of cardboard, draw out your stencils based on the shapes shown in this drawing. Cut out one of each shape and label them with the correct number.
- 5** After the paint has dried, trace the six different shapes onto the correct piece of cardboard. Use the following chart to map your stencils.

#1 x 8 pieces

#2 x 4 pieces

#3 x 2 pieces

#4 x 6 pieces

#5 x 1 piece

#6 x 1 piece

#7 x 1 piece

#8 x 1 piece

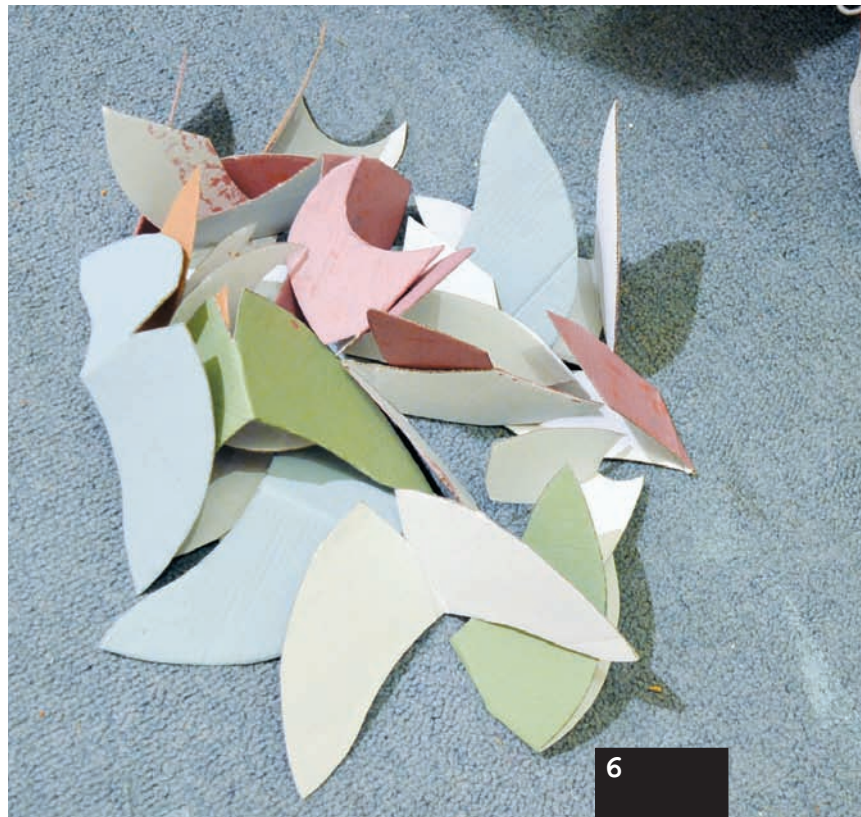
#9 x 1 piece

#10 x 1 piece

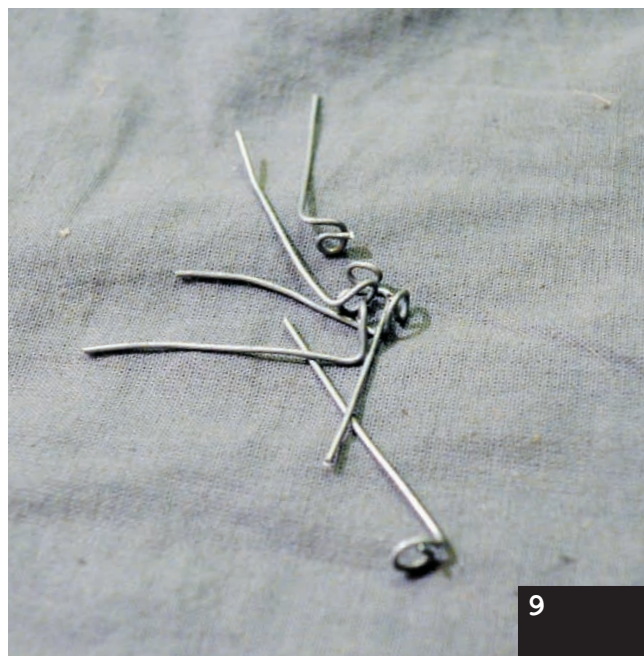
#11 x 1 piece

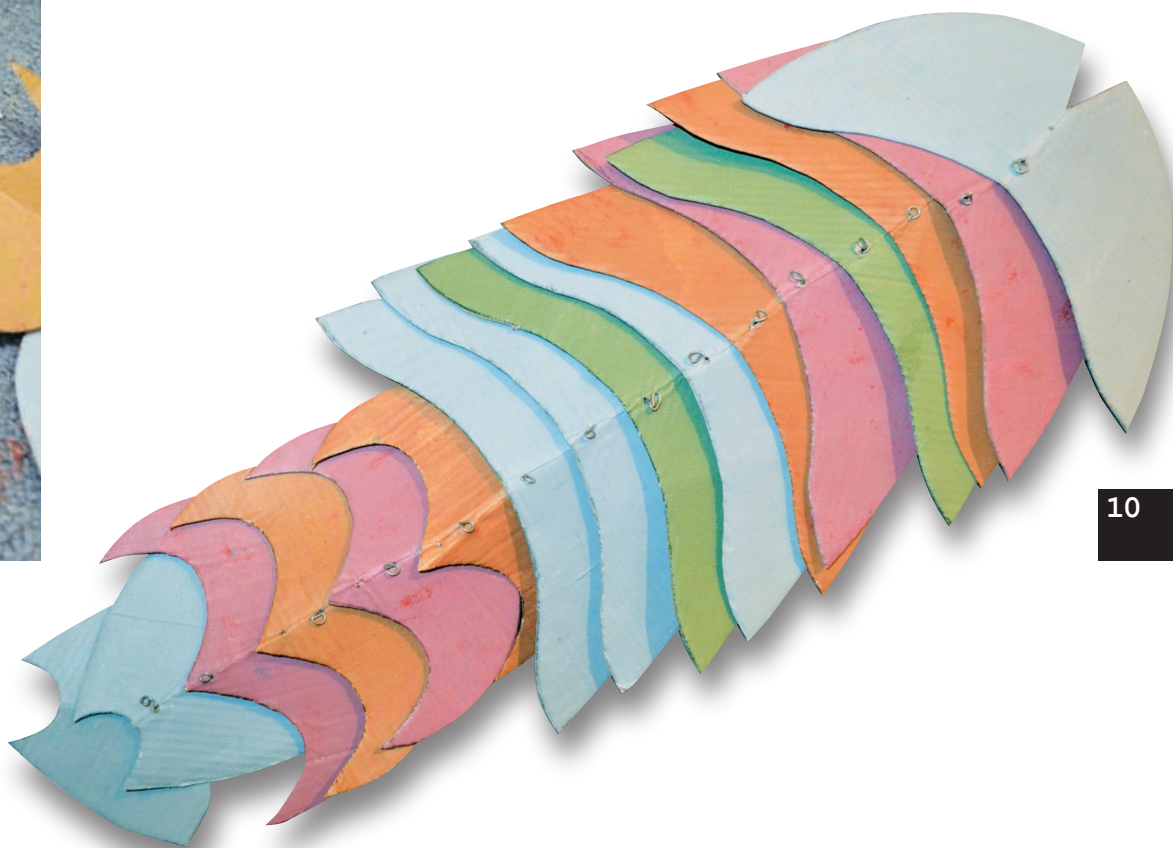
Pieces numbered 1 to 3 will be used for the top of your fish, and pieces 4 to 6 will be used for the bottom. The remaining pieces will be used to construct the tail and mouth of your fish and will vary in shape and size depending on your preferences.

- 6** Using your scissors, cut out each shape carefully. Fold each of the pieces in half along the center line.



- 7** After the pieces have been folded, mark numbers 1 through 9 with a pencil 0.4 inches (1 cm) from the top and 0.3 inches (7.6 mm) from the bottom. This distance may vary depending on the size of your cutout; however, they can easily be adjusted when assembling.
- 8** Use a piece of wire or pointed object to make holes in your cardboard for each pencil mark.
- 9** Using a wire cutter and pliers, cut small pieces of wire and bend one side of the wire into a small coil bigger than the holes in your cardboard.
- 10** Overlapping each piece, feed from the inside-fold the pointed part of the wire through two pieces at the same time. Use your pliers to coil the straight part of the wire to the base of your fish to secure the pieces of cardboard together. Do this separately for the top and bottom of your fish.
- 11** After assembling the top and bottom of your fish, hold the two parts together and position the pieces in a curve to resemble the shape of a fish.
- 12** Find a point in the middle of the fish that will act as an anchor to hold the pieces together. Poke a hole through the pieces of cardboard and thread a piece of wire through the hole. The wire should be tight enough to create tension between each piece, allowing them to stay in one place without being held together by hand.





10



11



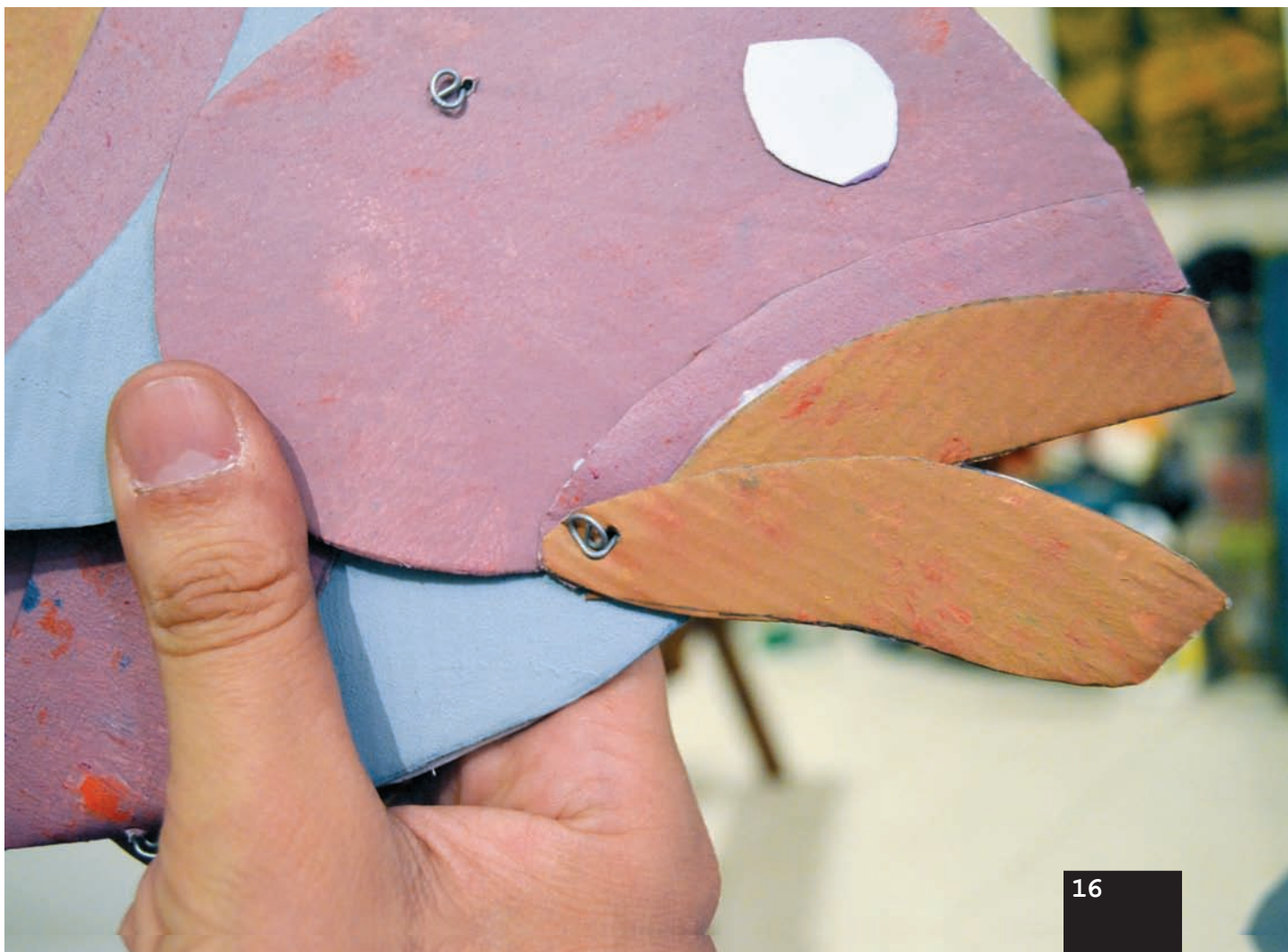
13

13 Glue pieces 9 and 10 to your fish to form the upper part of the fish's mouth. Attach piece number 11 to the base of the jaw using wire to create a hinge, allowing the fish's mouth to open and close.

14 Use the leftover cardboard to cut out a piece for the fish's tale. Look at the existing structure to determine how big the piece needs to be—the tail should be big enough to go through the center of your fish.

15 Glue all sides of the fish to your tail-piece.

16 Cut out any additional shapes you would like to include on your fish such as eyes, fins, or gills.



16



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Jeronimo Zancaner is a self-taught artist currently working and living in Buenos Aires. Zancaner has been painting and drawing all of his life, but he started his career working as a colorist in his family's nail polish factory. In 2000, the artist moved to Switzerland, where he lived and worked as a painter until 2006 when he returned to Buenos Aires. Zancaner is known for painting abstract landscapes and traditional portraiture in a style he calls "fragmented realism defined through abstraction."

Rebecca Paul is a designer, painter, and writer. After receiving her B.F.A. from the Savannah College of Art and Design in 2005, she moved to Los Angeles to pursue her career as a painter. Most of her work incorporates elements of photorealism and portraiture. In 2007, Paul relocated to Brooklyn, New York, and shifted her focus from painting to product design, architecture, and business strategy. In 2013, Paul received her master's degree in design management from the Pratt Institute, and in the fall of 2014, she moved to Buenos Aires to explore new opportunities and perspectives in fine art and design.

Shortly after arriving in Argentina, Paul and Zancaner met and are currently sharing a studio space in the city. This project is their first collaboration, and they hope to extend this experience to larger projects in the future.

The integrity of any geodesic dome is something to be celebrated and for that reason has held an important place in the history of design and architecture. The term geodesic was coined by the famous Buckminster Fuller and refers to a spherical or partial-spherical shell structure formed by the intersection of triangular elements. This DIY project from Artist Robin Redd uses found materials to create multi-use geodesic domes. From doghouses to homeless shelters, the possibilities are endless, and with durable cardboard, the dome can be used again and again.

Robin Redd

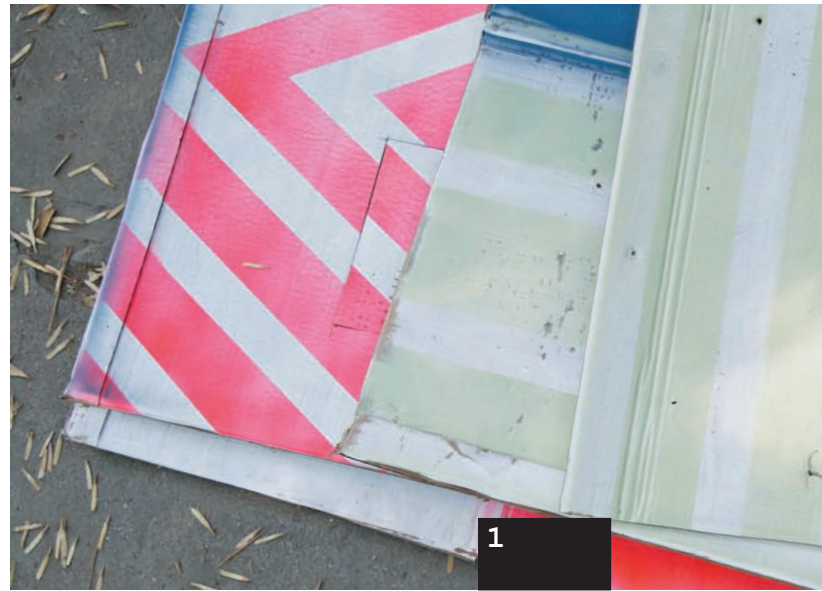
MULTI-USE GEODESIC DOME

150



MATERIALS

Cardboard
Aerosol paint
Latex paint
Copper and brass bells
Horsehair
Assorted twine and beads
Wood block, 4" x 4" (10.2 x 10.2 cm)
Galvanized steel pole
Screws, bolts, nuts, and washers



1 Source cardboard from your local neighborhood. This cardboard will eventually be painted, so it is okay to use pieces with images or logos printed on them. Prime half of the cardboard with white latex house paint and let it dry.

After the white paint is completely dry, apply additional coats using various colors and patterns. Limit your color palette for each piece to either cool or warm colors only.

Paint the other half of the cardboard with black paint.



2



3



2 Cut all of the cardboard into equilateral triangles. You will need three triangles for each side of your form. One half of them will be black, and the other half will be colored.

3 Stack the triangles into layers of three and drill holes into each corner. Secure the triangles together by screwing a nut, bolt, and washer into each corner.

4 Mount a 4 x 4 inch (10.2 x 10.2 cm) piece of wood onto a small concrete block. After securing the 4 x 4 onto the concrete, mount a flange on the wood. Screw a galvanized steel pole into the wooden block.

5 Use small pieces of cardboard as L-brackets to attach the sides of your dome together. Screw one side of the cardboard L-brackets into the interior walls of your dome, leaving the other side of the L-bracket loose. Use the loose side of the L-bracket to attach the walls of the triangles together to form a pyramid shape.

6 Create two of these pyramid shapes, using black triangles for the bottom form and the colored triangles for the top. Use the same L-brackets to attach the two pyramids together at the base to form your dome.

7 Place the dome onto the pole through the center point of your structure. Gently bend the cardboard at the center tip of each end of your dome to accommodate enough space for the pole. Add any additional finishing touches to your sculpture.



4



5



6



7

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Robin Redd is a designer/artist of Canadian origin currently living in Los Angeles, California. She studied interior design, textile design (furniture minor), and graphic design at UCLA, graduating in 2015. Robin works with bold graphics and materials inspired by ethnographic craft and primitive culture that suggest shamanistic traditions of making. She explores their integration with materials and elements of contemporary Western society. Her work calls to spiritual and magical realms and plays with how we communicate with them.

She has exhibited in Canada, Europe, and the United States.

INDEX

- Aerial City* (Kiel Johnson), 42
After Basquiat (Dosshaus), 85
 Agdag, Daniel
 biography, 96–99
 Exodus, The (2013), 99
 4th Fatality, The (2013), 98
 Relic, The (2014), 98
 Second Decline, The (2013), 8
 2nd Wait, The (2012), 97
 website, 96
 Windup, The (2012), 99
Almost 16 and 15 1/2 (Ann Weber), 49
Amongst the Shades (Evol), 39
 A&O (Evol), 39
Ape Mask (Laurence Vallières), 68
Arab Spring Mandala (Andy Barrett), 16
Aromaromaroma (Andy Barrett), 14
Arte Povera movement, 47, 49
Aston Martin (Chris Gilmour), 29
- Backstroke Illusion* (Józef Sumichrast), 56
 Barrett, Andy
 Arab Spring Mandala (2011), 16
 Aromaromaroma (2010), 14
 biography, 14–17
 Bonfire (2012), 11
 Brawny Man (2009), 15
 Ethiopian Life (2008), 17
 Nuke Mandala (2010), 15
 Tough Life (2013), 17
 website, 14
 Barry, Lacy
 biography, 58–61, 133
 Cardboard Balloon with Bow project, 128–133
 Gold Fire Floral (2014), 60
 Little Wings series, 60
 Purple Fire Floral (2014), 60, 61
 Unicorn Wing (2014), 59
 website, 58, 133
- Winged Self Portrait* (2013), 59
Woodland Creature Floral (2014), 60
Yellow Canary Headdress/Face Protector (2014), 58
 Basquiat, Jean-Michel, 84, 85
Bas-Releaf (Mark Langan), 107
Beauty Is Embarrassing (documentary), 90
 Bergeron, Jud
 biography, 127
 Polygon Sculpture project, 124–127
 website, 127
 Bernini, Gian Lorenzo, 22
Big Strange (Ann Weber), 46
Big Time video (Peter Gabriel), 90
Bikes (Chris Gilmour), 30
 biographies
 Andy Barrett, 14–17
 Ann Weber, 46–49
 Beau Stanton, 115
 Cardboard Box Office, 18–21
 Chris Gilmour, 28–31
 Daniel Agdag, 96–99
 Dosshaus, 82–85
 Evol, 36–39
 Ian Kual'i'i, 119
 James Cerasani, 141
 James Grashow, 22–25
 James Heffron, 123
 Jeronimo Zancaner, 149
 Jillian Salik, 50–53
 Joseph DeLappe, 64–67
 Józef Sumichrast, 54–57
 Jud Bergeron, 127
 Kiel Johnson, 40–43
 Lacy Barry, 58–61, 133
 Laurence Vallières, 68–71
 Logan Hicks, 137
 Luis Valdes, 32–35
 Maika'i Tubbs, 100–103
 Mark Langan, 104–107
 Muffinhead, 86–89
- Mykl Wells, 72–75
 Rebecca Paul, 149
 Taro Hattori, 76–79
 Wayne White, 90–93
Bonfire (Andy Barrett), 11
 Bourgeois, Louise, 47
Bowl (Maika'i Tubbs), 103
Bowl Remains (Maika'i Tubbs), 103
Box (Maika'i Tubbs), 100
 Brancusi, Constantin, 47
Brawny Man (Andy Barrett), 15
 Buckmaster, Adrian, 86, 88, 89
Business boonz (Laurence Vallières), 69
Bust (Mykl Wells), 73
- Camera, The* (Dosshaus), 82
Camera with Green Strap (Kiel Johnson), 41
Cardbirds (James Grashow), 25
 Cardboard Balloon with Bow project
 balloon construction, 129–131
 bow construction, 132
 materials, 129
 stencils, 129
Cardboard Bernini, The (documentary), 22
 Cardboard Box Office
 biography, 18–21
 E.TED (2014), 21
 “Houston, We Have a Poopy...” (2013), 20
 Life Domestic, The (2013), 18, 19
 Parents of the Caribbean (2014), 20
 Playtrix, The (2014), 19, 20
 Wah Wars (2013), 19, 20
 website, 18
 Whining, The (2014), 19–20
 Cardboard Fish project
 construction, 145–148
 materials, 142
 painting, 143

- stencils, 144, 145
- Cardboard Ghandi* (Joseph DeLappe), 64, 65, 67
- Cardboard Violin, The* (Dosshaus), 83
- Car-Toon Crash* (Luis Valdes), 32, 34
- Casa de Cardboard* (Luis Valdes), 33–34
- Cerasani, James
biography, 141
Pineapple Grenade project, 138–141
website, 141
- Charlottenstrasse* (Evol), 37
- Churches* (Chris Gilmour), 30
- City, A* (James Grashow), 24
- Collectibles, The—Bowl* (Maika'i Tubbs), 103
- Collectibles, The—Bowl Remains* (Maika'i Tubbs), 103
- Collectibles, The—Box* (Maika'i Tubbs), 100
- Collectibles, The—Corner Landscape* (Maika'i Tubbs), 101
- Collectibles, The—Stool* (Maika'i Tubbs), 102
- Collectibles, The—Video Cassette* (Maika'i Tubbs), 101
- Connelly, David. See Dosshaus.
- Corner Landscape* (Maika'i Tubbs), 101
- Corrugated Dance, The* (James Grashow), 23
- Corrugated Fountain* (James Grashow), 9, 22–23, 25
- DeLappe, Joseph
biography, 64–67
Cardboard Ghandi (2009), 64, 65, 67
Paper Soldier (2008), 66–67
Details in Construction (Jillian Salik), 50, 52
- Domino's company, 106
- Don Lucho. See Valdes, Luis.
- Dosshaus
After Basquiat (2014), 85
biography, 82–85
Camera (2014), 82
- Cardboard Violin, The* (2014), 83
- House of Cardboard, Lunch!* (2014), 84
- House of Cardboard, Sunday Lunch* (2014), 83
- House of Cardboard, Zoey and Plane* (2014), 85
- Typewriter, The* (2014), 84
website, 82
- Duel Tint* (Jillian Salik), 53
- El Puesto de Don Lucho* (Luis Valdes), 33, 35
- Equestrian Statue* (Chris Gilmour), 31
- E.TED* (Cardboard Box Office), 21
- Ethiopian Life* (Andy Barrett), 17
- Evol
Amongst the Shades (2013), 39
A&O (2011), 39
biography, 36–39
Charlottenstrasse (2010), 37
Kickern & Saufen (2011), 36
Neighborhood Watch (2011), 38
Rauhe Schale (2009), 39
website, 36
- Exodus, The* (Daniel Agdag), 99
- Fatherree, M. Lee, 47
- FOE* (Wayne White), 90, 91, 92, 93
- 4th Fatality, The* (Daniel Agdag), 98
- Gabriel, Peter, 90
- Gaudi, Antoni, 65
- Gehry, Frank, 47, 71
- Geometric Wall Storage project
construction, 117–119
materials, 116
- Gilmour, Chris
Aston Martin (2006), 29
Bikes (2003), 30
biography, 28–31
Churches (2004), 30
Equestrian Statue (2007), 31
website, 28
Wheelchair (2003), 28, 31
- Gold Fire Floral* (Lacy Barry), 60
- Grashow, James
biography, 22–25
Cardbirds (2009), 25
- City, A* (2010), 24
- Corrugated Dance, The* (2010), 23
- Corrugated Fountain* (2012), 9, 22–23, 25
- Rooster* (2009), 22
- Sea Serpent* (2009), 25
- Stand Up* album (Jethro Tull), 25
website, 22
- Guitar* (Pablo Picasso), 84–85
- Hadid, Zaha, 71
- Hair* (Józef Sumichrast), 55
- Hattori, Taro
biography, 76–79
Obscenity series, 10, 76, 78
Obscenity Version 1 (2010), 10, 76
Oh, the Humanity (2009), 78
Penetration—the first iteration (2012), 79
Penetration—the second iteration (2012), 78
...til that morning (2008), 77, 78
V (2009), 78
website, 76
- Heffron, James
biography, 123
Stacked Table project, 120–123
website, 123
- Heritage Corrugated boards, 51
- Hesse, Eva, 47, 49
- Hicks, Logan
biography, 137
Skull (with Laurence Vallières), 71
Stencilled Wrapping Paper project, 134–137
website, 137
- Homage to Munch's "The Scream"* (Mark Langan), 105, 106
- Homage to Warhol's "Campbell's Tomato Soup"* (Mark Langan), 107
- Hopper, Edward, 99
- House of Cardboard, Lunch!* (Dosshaus), 84
- House of Cardboard, Sunday Lunch* (Dosshaus), 83
- House of Cardboard, Zoey and Plane* (Dosshaus), 85
- "Houston, We Have a Poopy..." (Cardboard Box Office), 20

- IncorporApe* (Laurence Vallières), 11, 70
- Jethro Tull (band), 25
- Johnson, Kiel
Aerial City (2012), 42
 biography, 40–43
Camera with Green Strap (2009), 41
Pile of Instruments (2010), 40
Polaroid Camera (2009), 41
Video Camera (2010), 43
 website, 40
- Kickern & Saufen* (Evol), 36
- Kuali'i, Ian
 biography, 119
 Geometric Wall Storage project, 116–119
 website, 119
- Lam, Richard, 59
- Langan, Mark
Bas-Releaf (2011), 107
 biography, 104–107
Homage to Munch's "The Scream" (2012), 105, 106
Homage to Warhol's "Campbell's Tomato Soup" (2011), 107
Universal Bar Code (2012), 104, 105
 website, 104
- Lantern Project, The* (Mykl Wells), 74, 75
- La Sagrada Família* (Antoni Gaudi), 65
- Life Domestic, The* (Cardboard Box Office), 18, 19
- Little Wings* series (Lacy Barry), 60
- Lunch!* (Dosshaus), 84
- Mackie, Leon. See Cardboard Box Office.
- Mackie, Lilly. See Cardboard Box Office.
- Mackie, Orson. See Cardboard Box Office.
- M Theory* (Józef Sumichrast), 57
- Muffinhead
 biography, 86–89
 website, 86
- Multi-Use Geodesic Dome project
 construction, 151–153
 materials, 151
- Neighborhood Watch* (Evol), 38
- Nevelson, Louise, 47
- Nuke Mandala* (Andy Barrett), 15
- Obscenity* series (Taro Hattori), 78
- Obscenity Version 1* (Taro Hattori), 10, 76
- Oh, the Humanity* (Taro Hattori), 78
- Paper Soldier* (Joseph DeLappe), 66–67
- Parents of the Caribbean* (Cardboard Box Office), 20
- Paul, Rebecca
 biography, 149
 Cardboard Fish project, 142–149
- Pee-wee's Playhouse* television show, 90
- Penetration—the first iteration* (Taro Hattori), 79
- Penetration—the second iteration* (Taro Hattori), 78
- Personages* series (Ann Weber), 49
- Picasso, Pablo, 84–85
- Pile of Instruments* (Kiel Johnson), 40
- Pineapple Grenade project
 construction, 140–141
 materials, 138
 stencils, 139
- Pistoletto, Michelangelo, 49
- Playtrix, The* (Cardboard Box Office), 19, 20
- Polaroid Camera* (Kiel Johnson), 41
- Polygon Sculpture project
 construction, 125–127
 materials, 125
 stencils, 125
- Prince de Sots* (Mykl Wells), 72, 74
- projects
 Cardboard Balloon with Bow, 128–133
 Cardboard Fish, 142–149
 Geometric Wall Storage, 116–119
 Multi-Use Geodesic Dome, 150–153
 Pineapple Grenade, 138–141
- Polygon Sculpture, 124–127
- Sailing Ship, 110–115
- Stacked Table, 120–123
- Stencilled Wrapping Paper, 134–137
- Purple Fire Floral* (Lacy Barry), 60, 61
- Rauhe Schale* (Evol), 39
- Redd, Robin
 biography, 153
 Multi-Use Geodesic Dome project, 150–153
- Reese Monkey* (Laurence Vallières), 69
- Relic, The* (Daniel Agdag), 98
- Rooster* (James Grashow), 22
- Sailing Ship project
 construction, 112–114
 materials, 110
 painting, 114
 stencils, 111
- Salik, Jillian
 biography, 50–53
Details in Construction (2013), 50, 52
Duel Tint (2013), 53
Tiled Nut (2013), 51, 52
 website, 50
Works in Process (2013), 52
- Salvi, Nicola, 22
- Satellite* (Luis Valdez), 34
- Savage, Sibilia, 48
- Sea Serpent* (James Grashow), 25
- Second Decline, The* (Daniel Agdag), 8
- 2nd Wait, The* (Daniel Agdag), 97
- Skull* (Laurence Vallières and Logan Hicks), 71
- Smart, Jeffrey, 99
- Smashing Pumpkins, 90
- Snowdrop* (Mykl Wells), 73
- Stacked Table project
 construction, 121–122
 materials, 120
- Stand Up* (Jethro Tull), 25
- Stanton, Beau
 biography, 115
 Sailing Ship project, 110–115
 website, 115

Stencilled Wrapping Paper project
construction, 134-135
materials, 134

Stool (Maika'i Tubbs), 102

String Theory (Józef Sumichrast),
54

Sumichrast, Józef
Backstroke Illusion (2003), 56
biography, 54-57
Hair (2007), 55
M Theory (2012), 57
String Theory (2008), 54
Susan's Dance (2012), 56
Wall Rabbit (1997), 55
website, 54

Sunday Lunch (Dosshaus), 83

Susan's Dance (Józef Sumichrast),
56

Taylor, Zoey. See Dosshaus.

There Is an Elephant in the Truck
(Laurence Vallières), 71

Tiled Nut (Jillian Salik), 51, 52

...til that morning (Taro Hattori),
77, 78

Tonight, Tonight video (Smashing
Pumpkins), 90

Tough Life (Andy Barrett), 17

Trevi Fountain (Nicola Salvi), 22

Tubbs, Maika'i
biography, 100-103
Collectibles, The—Bowl (2014),
103
Collectibles, The—Bowl Remains
(2014), 103
Collectibles, The—Box (2014), 100
*Collectibles, The—Corner Land-
scape* (2014), 101
Collectibles, The—Stool (2014),
102
Collectibles, The—Video Cassette
(2014), 101

Typewriter, The (Dosshaus), 84

Unicorn Wing (Lacy Barry), 59

Universal Bar Code (Mark Langan),
104, 105

Valdez, Luis
biography, 32-35
Car-Toon Crash (2009), 32, 34

Casa de Cardboard (2010), 33-34

El Puesto de Don Lucho (2011),
33, 35

Satellite (2012), 34

Vallières, Laurence
Ape Mask (2014), 68
biography, 68-71, 68
Business boonz (2013), 69
Incorporate (2012), 11, 70
Reese Monkey (2013), 69
Skull (2014), 71
There Is an Elephant in the Truck
(2013), 71

Video Camera (Kiel Johnson), 43

Video Cassette (Maika'i Tubbs), 101

V (Taro Hattori), 78

Wah Wars (Cardboard Box Office),
19, 20

Wall Rabbit (Józef Sumichrast), 55

Weber, Ann
Almost 16 and 15 1/2 (2006), 49
biography, 46-49
Big Strange (2007), 46
Personages series, 49
website, 46
Wedding Party, The (2009), 47
You My Butterfly (2012), 48

websites
Andy Barrett, 14
Ann Weber, 46
Beau Stanton, 115
Cardboard Box Office, 18
Chris Gilmour, 28
Daniel Agdag, 96
Dosshaus, 82
Evol, 36
Ian Kual'i'i, 119
James Cerasani, 139, 141
James Grashow, 22
James Heffron, 123
Jillian Salik, 50
Józef Sumichrast, 54
Joseph DeLappe, 64
Jud Bergeron, 127
Kiel Johnson, 40
Lacy Barry, 58, 133
Laurence Vallières, 68
Logan Hicks, 137
Mark Langan, 104
Muffinhead, 86

Mykl Wells, 72

Pineapple Grenade stencils, 139

Taro Hattori, 76

Wedding Party, The (Ann Weber),
47

Wells, Mykl
biography, 72-75
Bust (2014), 73
Lantern Project, The (2008), 74,
75
Prince de Sots (2014), 72, 74
Snowdrop (2012), 73
website, 72

Wheelchair (Chris Gilmour), 28, 31

Whining, The (Cardboard Box
Office), 19-20

White, Wayne
biography, 90-93
FOE (2014), 90, 91, 92, 93
Windup, The (Daniel Agdag), 99

Winged Self Portrait (Lacy Barry),
59

Woodland Creature Floral (Lacy
Barry), 60

Works in Process (Jillian Salik), 52

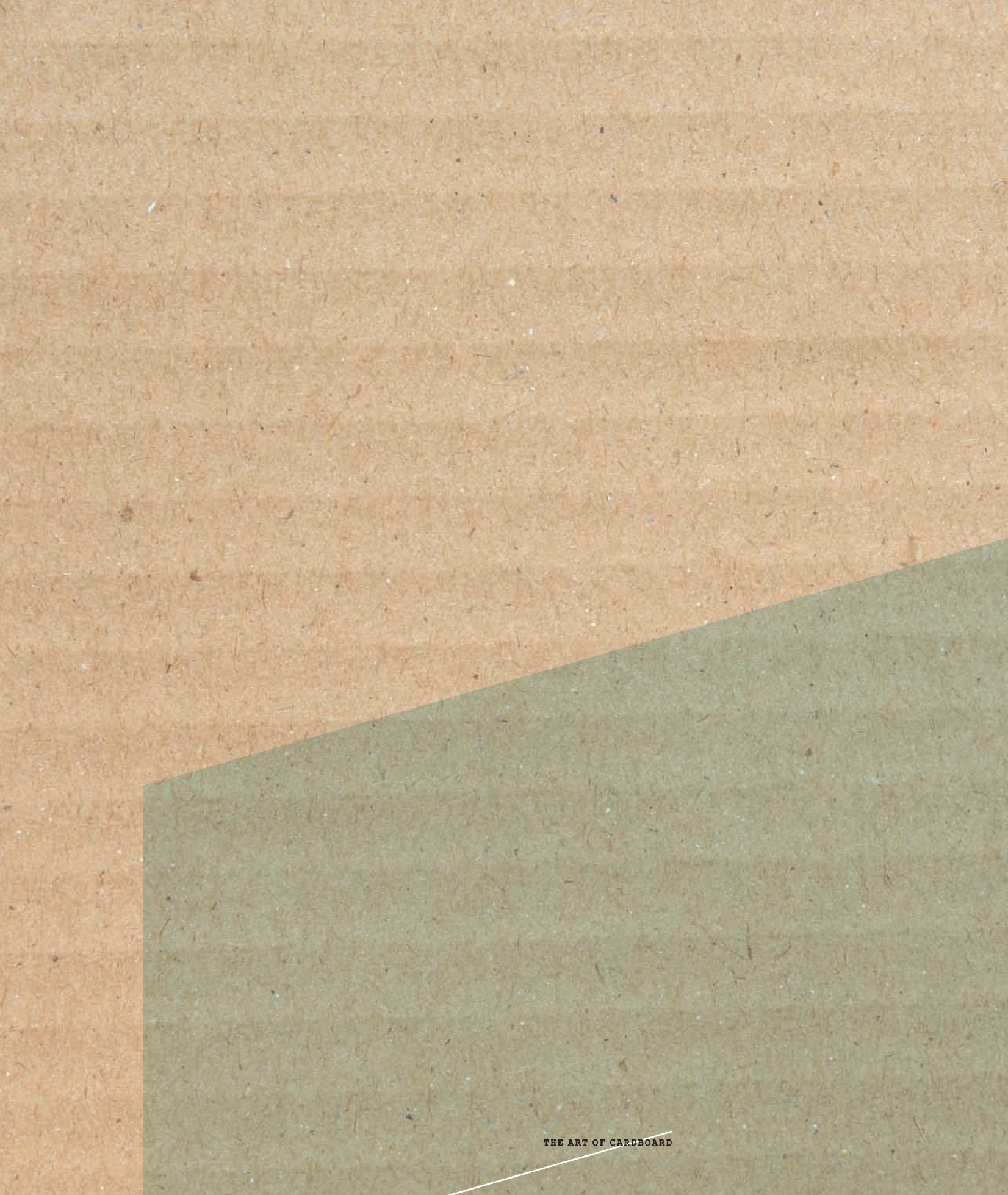
Wright, Frank Lloyd, 49

*Yellow Canary Headdress/Face
Protector* (Lacy Barry), 58

You My Butterfly (Ann Weber), 48

Zancaner, Jeronimo
biography, 149
Cardboard Fish project, 142-149

Zoey and Plane (Dosshaus), 85



THE ART OF CARDBOARD

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lori Zimmer is a New York-based curator, artist rep, and writer. She is best known as the founder of *Art Nerd New York*, an offbeat art history-heavy guide to New York City.

Working independently since 2010, Zimmer has made a career of working ethically within the art world, offering mentorship to emerging and established artists who are navigating through the gallery and commercial art worlds, while also catering to collectors with transparency. Zimmer has also been a regular contributor to both art and sustainable design publications such as *6sqft*, *ArtFetch*, *ArtSlant*, *Creem Magazine*, *Ecouterre*, *Flavorpill*, *Inhabitat*, *MutualArt*, and *Patrick McMullan Magazine*.

Through writing and her curatorial projects, Zimmer is on a mission to show her followers how art can make life infinitely better.



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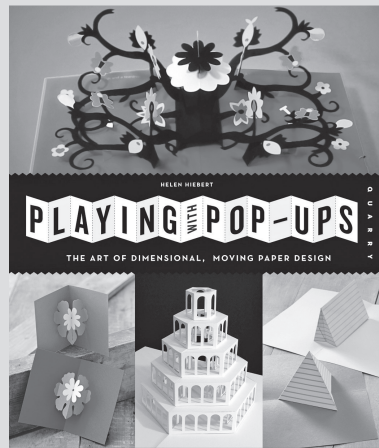
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