

MASSIMODECARLO

SOME ART THAT GOT ME THROUGH 2020

CURATED BY ROB PRUITT

WITH ARTWORKS BY RICKY CLIFTON, SCOTT COVERT, KEVIN STAHL, TABBOO!

Like everybody else, I spent most of 2020 in lockdown – in my case, confined to an apartment in New York City. It wasn't so bad really because I'm a homebody, and I can see the Empire State Building from my living room window. I put this online show together with that view as a starting point, as represented in Tabboo!'s cityscape paintings. I came to New York in the early 1980's to attend Parsons. The East Village seemed like the center of the world, and Tabboo! gave that world a visual and graphic identity, from his Pyramid Club flyers on lamp posts to backdrops for the Wigstock stage. His cityscape paintings have an emotional grit that reflect New York in good times and bad times – and let's face it – 2020 was the worst of times.

Another thing I did last year besides looking out the window was fiddle around and putter and rearrange my stuff. Ricky Clifton was out there in his apartment in another part of the city doing the same thing but in a more poetic way and photographing it and posting it on Instagram. His nature mortes, composed mostly of the things that he used to sustain himself – there are sardine cans, fruit, gin bottles – depict for me the isolation of the pandemic and how that isolation can turn to introspection which can turn to creation.

2020 has been all about death – 108 million worldwide COVID-19 deaths since January 2020. In Scott Covert's paintings made from direct rubbings of tombstones, we see a name – names of famous people we know and esteem – a birth date, and a death date. Those three things conjure not only the highlights of these luminaries' lives, achievements that we might be familiar with, but also all of the other smaller moments, the kind of things we all share in common – plain old life.

Kevin Stahl's lead coated sculptures of flower arrangements make me think about the convention of sending flowers when words might be difficult. There are please forgive me flowers, get well soon flowers, I love you flowers, congratulations on the birth of your baby flowers – and in the case of Stahl's sculptures, condolences for the death of a friend or loved one flowers. In this year of COVID-19, when words are failing all around, Stahl's frozen flowers memorialize our collective loss.

RICKY CLIFTON

Ricky Clifton (b. Fort Worth, TX) is one of the New York art scene's true cult figures - an interior designer, artist, decorator, florist, ceramicist, inventor, antique dealer and former taxi driver. He moved to New York in the seventies, after meeting his idol and soon to be friend Andy Warhol. He later studied design in Kyoto, Japan, focusing on noh, kendo, and calligraphy, traits that permeate his work. Integral to his vision are the works of American decorator Billy Baldwin, Italian interior architect Renzo Mongiardino, Italian designer Piero Fornasetti, and American artist Cy Twombly.

{ MDC }

WWW.MASSIMODECARLO.COM

MASSIMODECARLO

SCOTT COVERT

Scott Covert (b. 1954, Edison, NJ) is an artist based in New York but found more often on the road. A collaborator with Off-Broadway theatre companies in the late Seventies, he was a founding member of Playhouse 57 at Club 57 in the East Village, alongside Scott Wittman, Marc Shaiman and Andy Rees. Since the mid-1980s, his work has revolved around the Monument Paintings, based on intensely coloured memento mori rubbings of gravestones. Incorporating the everyday method of “rubbings” to transcribe epitaphs from graveyards and mausoleums, Scott Covert creates text-driven drawings and paintings that engage collective consciousness and reference a wide range of human experience.

KEVIN STAHL

Kevin Stahl (American, b. 1983) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Stahl who uses mixed media to explore ideas around mortality and death through the lens of pop culture. He received his MFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York, NY and his BFA from The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI. Stahl was included in The Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Art in 2011. He has been included in group exhibitions at Karma, The Willows, Coustof Waxman, and more.

TABBOO!

Tabboo! (Stephen Tashjian, b. 1959, Leicester, MA) lives and works in New York. Multidisciplinary performer, designer, and artist, his work explores celebrity, cityscapes, and the aesthetics of the everyday. Became known in the 1980s within the New York's drag scene, Tabboo!'s work holds a diaristic nature that has ranged from the visuals of nightlife to idyllic views of the everyday. Portraits of friends, still lifes, and work related to current political activism populates his practice, rendered sparkling and bittersweet with astonishing honesty. Tabboo! created murals for public projects, designed flyers, album covers, and collaborated with fashion designers. His work is held in permanent collections at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Hard Facts:

Massimo De Carlo VSpace
massimodecarlo.com

From January 12 until February 2 2021

Opening Tuesday, January 12 5pm CET (Milan) /
4pm GMT (London) / 11pm HKT (Hong Kong) /
8am PST (Los Angeles) / 11am EST (New York)

The VSpace is powered by Wide VR

Information:

Press Office, Massimo De Carlo

T. +39 02 70003987 - T. +44 (0) 20 7287 2005

press@massimodecarlo.com

www.massimodecarlo.com

Instagram: massimodecarlogallery

#massimodecarlogallery

{ MDC }

WWW.MASSIMODECARLO.COM