

ART AS A CONSEQUENCE

ALEC MONOPOLY / EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

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Alec Monopoly. Courtesy of Vertes Modern Gallery Zurich

Dimitria Markou: Through previous interviews, I know that you got introduced to art by your mother, who also is a painter. Could you tell us what was the best advise she gave you, when you started painting as a child and whether this advise has changed, now that you are an established artists.

Alec Monopoly: At an early age my mother taught me the fundamentals of art: drawing, painting, even screening designs on clothes. The best advice my mom gave me was to just keep painting and follow my passion. Art can be every where.. Even when things we're going my way, she always was supportive and pushed me to follow my dreams of being an Artist. Later in high school an art teacher advised me *"to make it as an artist you must never give up and just keep working"* so I did. I continue to work every day, whether it be sketching, painting on canvas or doing a massive public installation.

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DM: Who is your hero?

A.M. The monopoly man is my hero! I'd say KAWS would be up there, since he's one of the few Street Artists who has been able to cross over into Contemporary Art.

DM: Who is your favorite artist? Which artists inspire you?

AM: My favorite artists are Andy Warhol, Basquiat, and Keith Haring. I draw inspiration from other street artists as well and respect Banksy's work.

DM: There are many similarities between you and Banksy, who also started as a graffiti artist, now a very successful street artist, also commenting on political and cultural issues. What do you think of the comparisons between you two?

AM: Banksy has paved the way in making Street Art more Mainstream and accepted by the traditional Art World, his work is much more politically charged than mine but I would love to one day collaborate with him if the opportunity presented itself.

DM: "Alec Monopoly", the nickname has been given to you by the graffiti world, but was the significant monopoly hat that you wear during appearances, whose initiative was it?

AM: I grew to genuinely like him. My identity as Alec Monopoly came when I discovered top hats in the attic of our family home, worn by my great great grandfather and great grandfather. It was meant to be!

DM: You have received various commissions, from painting Sant Ambroeus in Soho, to painting Khloe Kardashian's Birkin bag. What was the craziest commission you received and which was the most fun to do.

AM: I receive many crazy commission requests, but am very selective about which ones to execute. I turned down the craziest commission request so far; it was from a Texan collector asking that I paint on a real stuffed Lion he had shot in Africa. I love animals and will never work with dead ones in my art! I'd say one of my most fun commissions I've had recently was painting an original 1960's VW Mini Van for a client, he was giving it to his daughter to leave her wedding in!

DM: You started by painting on the streets of New York, which location was your favorite, or where would you like to paint?

AM: I always scouted areas that didn't have a lot of light or heavy traffic, so I could take more time doing graffiti. NYC still has very strict Graffiti Laws so I was always looking over my shoulder! My favorite place to paint is in Los Angeles. The city is widely spread out and there are tons of walls to work on.

DM: Do you prefer to work on canvas, or a wall? Why?

AM: *I always prefer working in the streets. There is just something about working outside with everyday people that makes me happy. But have grown to love the experimentation and diversity that can be applied to canvas works.*

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DM: Could you tell us a little bit about a project that you are working at the moment, or a future activity?

AM: I recently released my first clothing collection #FE21xALEC with Forever 21 which was a lot of fun, and unveiled my debut Solo Museum Exhibition at MOCA BANGKOK. I've got my second Solo Museum Exhibition at Museum of Art and Design Singapore in Spring 2016! The next stateside projects will be for Miami Art Basel, where I will be doing large installations and events.



Alec Monopoly. Courtesy of Vertes Modern Gallery Zurich

You can find some of ALEC MONOPOLY's work in:

Asia: MAD (Museum of Art and Design), Singapore

Europe: Vertes Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland

USA: Art Basel Miami / Guy Hepner, NYC / LAB, L.A., Dallas

[More information on alecmonopoly.com](http://alecmonopoly.com)