

1. You were recently in Amsterdam for the opening of the Rize Gallery exhibit of In the Dollhouse. Do you always try to get to openings? What others have you attended in the last year or so?

Yes I try to get to all of my openings. Traveling and experiencing other cultures is the perk of being an artist. I enjoy being at the exhibition in person and seeing the reactions to my work. The galleries also like it when the artist is there to offer more perspective.

2. Exposing my complete ignorance of the art world, I see that three of your collections – Gods of Suburbia, In the Dollhouse and Fallen Princesses – have been, or are being, exhibited in various places. I assume galleries pay you to display your work? When you're creating, is that the goal – exhibits? – or for your work to end up in someone's personal collection, both? [Another way of asking this could be: How do you balance wanting to be creative with the need to feed and clothe your kids?]

Artists don't usually get paid to exhibit their work in commercial galleries. The agreements vary from gallery to gallery, sales from the show are split between the gallery and the artist. There are some festivals that cover travel and accommodation in order for the artist to attend.

I currently produce my own large scale projects with the help of print sales and Grant awards. These are print sales of my limited edition pieces from Fallen Princesses, In The Dollhouse and the Gods Of Suburbia series (displayed on LED light panels) .

There are also art competitions that award cash prizes. This was the case for me when i won the Prix Virginia in 2014 and was gifted 10000 Euros.

3. In your 20-year retrospective, you answer this question, but in longer form. I'm hoping you can briefly describe some of your previous work, which can be found on your website: David and Trackrecord, the five Archive collections?

I've been a photographer for 25 years now. I started out quite young and worked very hard in my 20's and 30's to create a career for myself. I was a photojournalist and traveled to war torn regions. I freelanced, shooting covers and feature stories for magazines (I was a staff photographer at the Jewish Western Bulletin). I also photographed some cheeky ads with some brilliant art directors. People within the Vancouver Jewish community will remember me photographing weddings and bar mitzvahs, alongside I created my own projects

usually concentrated on the study of sub cultures within society, I termed the work Photoanthropology. These images were documentary, photojournalistic. In 2009 I released my tableau series Fallen Princesses, which was an internet success and brought recognition to my personal work. I went on to realize more ambitious projects like In The Dollhouse in 2012, and Gods Of Suburbia in 2014. I am now fully concentrated on producing my own large scale conceptual series and have become a full time artist.

Storytelling has always been central in all of my work past and present. Documentary photography allowed me to create and share the stories of Palestinians in Gaza, gamblers at the racetrack, East Indian blueberry farmers in B.C, Dog Show dogs, Bodybuilding State championships and teenagers dirty dancing at a Bar Mitzvah.

4. It might seem on first view of Gods of Suburbia, In the Dollhouse and Fallen Princesses that you have a cynical view of the world. But Dr. Sarah Partlow Lefevre convincingly argues – in relation to FP, but it applies to GS and ID – that your work, by creating “perspective by incongruity” opens the door to social change, which, to me, implies that you possess an optimism that people are willing and able to change. (And Barry Dumka comments hopefully that perhaps the last panel in ID “is transitional, not final. Dolls ... can take a beating and then snap their heads back on and begin the game again.) How would you describe your worldview?

Much of my work investigates the myth of perfection and the collective perception influenced by pop culture. Western society today is influenced by Pop Culture, which informs us how to look ,what to like, what to buy. Most people don't even realize the effects of the unconscious collective that drives us to behave in certain ways. Perfection is not stable or sustainable in nature and in life. Also there is an individual perspective about what is 'good' or 'perfect'. This is mainly the reason that I work with Archetypes and Stereotypes to relay my messages and offer some social critique.

By twisting the storylines of beloved characters I am able to provide some insight into the human condition, and expose the many flaws in the nature of humankind.

5. How would you describe yourself in terms of feminism? I ask in part because, while In the Dollhouse, for example, depicts a reality beyond the commercial ideal of Barbie and her dollhouse, Ken's openness in the relationship about his sexuality seems to result in Barbie's devastation. Why does Barbie stay with Ken to the point of self-destruction? Why doesn't she take her dream car and leave? I also think of this in terms of the Fallen Princess series – acknowledging that the princesses haven't necessarily been taught the life skills needed to deal with illness, raising a family with a loaf-about husband, etc., do they just accept their “unhappily

ever after” or do they rail against it, do you think? Are they victims or survivors, both or neither?

Throughout history the focus in storytelling has been on Men and their outlook of this world. Women’s desires and interests have mostly been marginalized. I feel lucky to live in a free Western society where Women’s roles are now more prominent. As a woman experiencing this transformation I take full advantage by creating art that fully expresses my thoughts and opinions. I create art with fictional characters that has elements of real life. What you see within work is a moment in time (within the fictional life or these fictional characters). As Barry Dumka pointed out in his essay, yes Barbie has lost her head, but she is Barbie and that head can pop right back on. Unfortunately humans don’t have that luxury. In my tableau the Princesses are thrust into everyday life within realistic environments. They too have to figure out how to function and thrive within a complex world.

6. How old are your daughters now? What types of dinner conversations are you having these days? Any leading to a new series?

Jordan is 10 and Zoe is 6yrs. Our dinner conversations are quite ‘normal’. We talk about school, homework, play dates and the weekend.

However I am always interested in how they see the world around them. Today they are absorbing everything and with such intensity. They notice when we (their parents) are worried about the situation in the Middle East. They ask questions and we are open and honest with them. We believe that information is power!

7. What is it about the style of pop surrealism that attracts you, and is it a style that you will continue to explore?

My lean towards Pop Surrealism has altered my visual language, which is defined by intense color, narratives, use of symbolism, dark humor and subversive messaging. My work analyzes the human condition; interpreting new and clichéd notions of beauty, gender, sex and religion through the lens of pop culture.

8. Humor plays a significant role in your work. Why is it good, or important, to maintain a sense of humor?

I try to keep everything in perspective. Lets face it life can get overwhelming and too serious. I use humour to cope with all that the world throws at me. Also to create conversation about modern society and how we perceive it. I utilize Satire which is intelligent ridicule, and Irony because it creates a situation that differs radically from what is actually the case.

9. In the Times of Israel, in response to a question about whether there was one image in Gods of Suburbia that moved you most, you spoke about the Ganesha piece. As an immigrant to Canada from Israel, you said you felt you “never fully belonged to either” group, and “I have placed Ganesha, the Hindu god and the remover of obstacles, on that bench to illustrate my personal experience.” Have you found your place? Are you seeking answers (or a sense of place) through your work as well as proposing questions?

The Ganesha piece was inspired by personal memories. My family moved from Israel to Canada in 1976. At that time Vancouver was a small town and it had not yet experienced the mass Asian population that you see today. My first few years here were very difficult and as a young child it was hard to comprehend. Learning a new language whilst dealing with school yard bullies. Even in high school, and after many years of integration I felt different somehow. Most of my family remained in Israel so we would visit every couple of years for the whole summer, there I got recharged with Chutzpah and the realities of war. So I became an Israeli / Canadian Hybrid. Israeli in many ways and not the typical Canadian. However these days I know that I’m fully Canadianized because I listen to the CBC radio all day!

Ganesha is naturally odd as he has an elephant head and a boys body. He is different because of his appearance (I didn’t have that problem) but also because of his unique culture. He is judged for how he dresses, what he eats and even what he believes in. He faces the same cruelty that I encountered in elementary school.

10. Is the public able to visit Gods of Suburbia at the Diamond Gallery? Will there be another opportunity in the nearish future for Vancouverites to see your work on exhibit?

Yes my the Diamond foundation has generously donated the whole Gods Of Suburbia show to appear at the Capture Festival . The exhibition will take place at a new gallery on East 6th avenue in Vancouver called SOMA.

April 2016 - more info to come

11. If there is anything else you’d like to add, please do.

You may want to mention the In The Dollhouse exhibition in Amsterdam.

Gods Of Suburbia in Montreal February 2016

<http://www.artsouterrain.com/>

