

JAMES ROBERT DURANT

ARTIST STATEMENT / BIO

For over a decade James Robert Durant has explored the perception of the purchase-able paradise. His stressed photographs of tropical destinations challenge the overflow of what pervasive propaganda advertising campaigns commonly sell as the proverbial paradise. The works confront the 'language of consumerism' and offer a new dialect of tropical dreamscapes impervious to the protocols of advertising. The imagery invokes a query as to the over-influence commercial advertising and digitally enhanced propaganda has on the influence of perception. Durant touches on the ethics of photography, and the powerful ability it possesses to manipulate the boundaries of reality, perception, and desire.

Using stressed photography and composite techniques with acrylic, Durant assembles photographic scenes and landscapes that blur the line between reality and fantasy and the passing of time. His timeless images refreshingly remind us that paradise is not a consumable, despite as advertised, but rather, an energy shaped by our experiences and choices. A single tropical scene may be assembled from photographs taken in several different exotic countries and locations. Using multiple image references Durant creates dream-like landscapes and tropical scenes of idyllic fantasy. The contrast of stressed vintage colours and brilliant exotic locations form a series of illusions dancing playfully on the conventional description of photographs as "dreams only money can buy".

"Human behaviour is shackled to the sun. At the equator, the sun is closest to the earth's surface, beckoning visitors to its warmer tropical climate. Stripped of heavy baggage, both emotional and material, tourists travel light. Tickets are booked, hotels are erected, pools are filled, and drinks are served. It has become my vice to understand this movement of behaviour beyond simple geography. The sun's close proximity at the equator also spawns daylight that is more yellow than anywhere else in the world. I always try to use photography beyond its traditional definition of recording light reflecting off objects. Coupled with reflected light, I capture the image through the daylight that is yellow-bent. As a result, no "true blacks" are generated in the images and a nostalgic look reveals itself. A 'travel light' is born."

Durant studied Applied Photography at Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario. He graduated as Top Scholar in photography in 2003. Later that year, he boarded the Dawn Princess as a cruise line photographer for Princess Cruises. He returned to Toronto in 2004 with an extended portfolio and inspiration from the fascinating fantasy of vacationers, resorts and cruise life. This inspiration led to new bodies of work dealing with his interpretation of the concept of "all-inclusive".

SELECTED EXHIBITION HISTORY

SOLO / GROUP SHOWS

- 2015 - 2024 Group show, Muse Gallery, Toronto
Canadian Whisky Painters, Coast Collective Art Centre, Collwood BC
- 2018 Interior Design Show, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto
- 2017 TRIO ARTIST FEATURE, TA2 Sound + Music Recording Studio, Toronto
Art Gems, Waddington's Auction House & Berkeley Church, Toronto
- 2016 Travel Light, Muse Gallery, Toronto
SNAP!, The Toronto Reference Library, Toronto
Art Gems, Waddington's Auction House, Toronto
- 2015 Contemporary Art at Large, First Canadian Place Gallery, Toronto
Love Art Fair, Muse Gallery, Toronto
Interior Design Show, Metro Convention Centre, Toronto
COLOUR BREAK, Oeno Gallery, Prince Edward County
SNAP!, The Toronto Reference Library, Toronto
- 2014 TROPICAL PARADISE, Featured Artist, Muse Gallery, Toronto,
WONDEREUR No. 66, Metro Convention Centre, Toronto
SNAP!, Andrew Richard Design Building, Toronto
- 2013 Grand Opening Exhibition, AGO Art Rentals & Sales Gallery, Toronto
SNAP!, Andrew Richard Designs Building, Toronto
Interior Design Show, Metro Convention Centre, Toronto
Art Wynwood, Art Miami Pavillion, Miami, Florida, USA.
- 2012 Art Miami, Art Miami Pavillion, Miami, Florida, USA.
Art Toronto, Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto
Texas Contemporary Art Fair, G.R. Brown Convention Centre, Houston, USA.
The Art of Collecting for Designers , AGO, Toronto,
CONTEMPORARY METHODS - Oeno Gallery, Prince Edward County.
SUMMER GROUP EXHIBITION, Lausberg Contemporary, Toronto,
SNAP!, National Ballet School of Canada, Toronto,
Art Wynwood, Art Miami Pavillion, Miami, Florida, USA.
- 2011 Art Miami, Art Miami Pavillion, Miami, Florida, USA.
ART FAIR 21 COLOGNE, Staatenhaus am Rheinpark, Cologne, GER.
Art Toronto, Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto
UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS, Lausberg Contemporary, Toronto
THE SPOKE CLUB, Lausberg Contemporary/MAG consulting, Toronto
CLICK CLIQUE, CONTACT 2011 - Lausberg Contemporary, Toronto
FAT VILLAGE ART WALK, Lausberg Contemporary, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA.
SNAP!, National Ballet School of Canada, Toronto
WINTER THAW EXHIBITION, Lausberg Contemporary, Toronto
- 2010 ART Miami, Art Miami Pavillion, Miami, Florida, USA.
Art Toronto, Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, CAN.
Los Angeles Art Show - Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles, USA

- 2010 Summer group exhibition, Lausberg Contemporary, Toronto
 BACK TO THE FUTURE, Hollander York Gallery, Toronto
 TROPICAL PUNCH, Lausberg Contemporary, Toronto
 Art Chicago, The Merchandise Mart, Chicago, Illinois, USA.
 SNAP!, National Ballet School of Canada, Toronto
 NOW AND THEN, Muse Gallery, Toronto
 Toronto International Art Fair- Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto
- 2009 Art Miami - Art Miami Pavillion, Miami, Florida, USA.
 BEST OF LAUSBERG, Galerie Lausberg, Toronto
 Art Toronto, Galerie Lausberg - Convention Centre, Toronto
 Art Toronto, AGA-T Gallery, Convention Centre, Toronto
 Toronto Outdoor Exhibition, Toronto
 13th Anniversary Show - AGA-T Gallery, Nagoya, Japan.
 SNAP! 2009 - National Ballet School of Canada, Toronto
- 2008 LITTLE ART SHOW – Mercedes Showroom, Toronto
 WHODUNIT?OCAD MYSTERY ART SALE, OCAD
 NOW AND THEN, Muse Gallery, Toronto
 Toronto International Art Fair – Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto
 QUEEN WEST ART CRAWL, Trinity Bellwoods Park, Toronto
 Toronto Outdoor Exhibition - Nathan Phillips, Toronto
 RIVERDALE ART WALK, Jimmie Simpson Park, Toronto
 WE ALL SHINE ON, Goldie Gallery, Montreal
 Current Artists, Engine Gallery, Toronto

NOTEWORTHY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

EDUCATION

Graduated Top Scholar - Photography, Sheridan College

PUBLICATIONS

- 2019 House Beautiful Magazine - September 2019
 2018 Property Brothers [HGTV], Season 13 episode 4 - November 12
 2017 IQ Food company blog - Artist Feature & Interview
 2016 House & Home Magazine - March Issue
 Globe and Mail newspaper - April and march issues
 2015 Metro News newspaper - April 16 Issue
 2014 BlogTO - October

2013 Wondereur Digital Mag - Solo Exhibition & Artist Feature Story
Lifetime Clothing Catalogue - Artist Feature & Collaboration - Spring/Summer
Harbinger art collection guide

2012 What's on magazine - Art Gallery of Ontario

2010 D'Art International magazine - Fall Issue
Design Lines magazine - Fall Issue
Mag art guide - Spring Issue
Slate art magazine - Spring Issue
Bits magazine- May Issue

2009 Spectacular homes Toronto Coffee Table Book, March

2008 Canadian art magazine - Fall Issue
Mag art guide - Fall Issue
Slate art magazine - Fall Issue
Flare magazine - July Issue
Akil the mc Collection of Ezpressions - Album EP Artwork, Tone Adjusters