



D. Dominick Lombardi, Sinners #5 (Bob Wills-T-Bone), 2016, acrylic on album cover, 12.5" X 12.5". For Saints, Sinners and the Collective Unconscious at Hampden Gallery, UMASS Amherst



D. Dominick Lombardi, Borg, 1989, acrylic on carved found wood with objects, 30" X 14" x 12". For SPORTSVERGNÜGEN at Lichtundfire

At the Intersection of Making of Art and the Curatorial Practice

Steve Rockwell Speaks with dArt International's U.S. Editor, D. Dominick Lombardi

SR: If we could Dominick, I would like to hear a bit more about the exhibitions you curate as you navigate through the art world.

DDL: It's been a long road Steve, as I started putting exhibitions together in 1978. In those early days I was working mostly with a small gallery that I owned and operated in Westchester County where I worked hard to blend New York City artists with local talent. I did this because there was, and probably still is a stigma attached to suburban art and artists that I feel is very unfair.

Soon after, I was working with area museums and largely non-profit university galleries such as The Castle Gallery at the College of New Rochelle

in New York where I eventually became Board Chair and soon conceived of and developed the Westchester Biennial. Then there's the Choate Gallery at Pace University in Pleasantville, NY. Many of those early regional shows: *Obsession (Food)*, *The Champions of Modernism: Non-Objective Art of the 1930's & 40's and It's Legacy*, *The Tradition of Icons*, *The Waking Dream* all got a considerable number of very positive reviews from magazines and newspapers including *The New York Times*.

Before long I was curating much bigger and more comprehensive shows like *Over the Top – Under the Rug* that featured the work of 75

regional artists for The Shore Institute of Contemporary Art (SICA) in New Jersey. Two landmark shows in my curatorial career also were held at SICA: *Critics Select I* and *Critics Select II*. For these two shows I asked art writers Edward Gomez of *The New York Times*; Carol Kino of *The New York Times* and *Art+ Auction*; Barbara MacAdam of *ArtNews*; Robert C. Morgan of *Sculpture* magazine; L. Robin Rice of the *Philadelphia City Paper*; Gae Savannah of *Art Forum* and *Flash Art*; and Judith Stein a Philadelphia critic for the first exhibition; and Dan Bischoff of the *Star Ledger*; Anjali Gupta of *Artlies*; Kate Hackman of *Review*; Claire Lieberman of *Sculpture* magazine; Valery Oisteanu of the *Brooklyn Rail*; Raul Zamudio of *Flash Art* and you Steve of *dArt International* to select two artists that were creating great work and deserving of more attention.

SR: Before we get too far along, I am curious to hear at what point did you start incorporating your own work in the shows you curate?

DDL: That's a good question Steve. I started seriously thinking about it when I reviewed a show curated by Renée Cox that was held at the Aldrich Museum in Ridgefield, Connecticut in 1996. It was then that I saw how well a curator could put together a group show, include their own work and not be considered too "In House" or conflicted. It was also at that time that things were really starting to change in the art world, the old "you can't do that" naysayers were starting to ease up or forget why they cared and things really started to loosen up.

I especially like including my own work when I can include an older piece – like I did for Lichtundfire gallery in New York City for a show called *SPORTSVERGNÜGEN*. I included my sculpture *Borg* that I completed in 1989 as a reference to an experience I had with soccer fanatics. There were also several other 'older' pieces included which made for a very successful show.

I wonder too, if it is acceptable to write, star in and direct a movie, make tons of money and win awards doing it; if you can write an autobiography and receive great acclaim throughout academia; sing and produce your own music and become an international success why you cannot be a part of your own exhibitions that you conceive of, curate and install. It doesn't happen every time, however, if the shoe fits...

SR: What about shows you don't curate. I know you show a lot more than in the shows you curate.

DDL: I do. I had a very important one person show in Copenhagen, Denmark with Prince Gallery where I featured work from my *Post Apocalyptic Tattoo Series* you see discussed in the previous review. I also had two of my wall mounted, mixed media *Urchin Series* sculptures at Kim Foster Gallery in New York City in an exhibition titled *Relief* and two very important *Reverse Collage Series* works in the exhibition *Emotional Disorder or Cultural Discontent* at Lichtundfire.

At the time of this conversation I have *Reverse Collage #30 (George Washington Slave Owner)* from 1998 at the Goethe Institute in Thessaloniki, Greece. The exhibition is titled the *Right to Be Human* and my piece reflects an attitude of a very dark time in my nation's history.

SR: Anything you want our readers to know about that is coming up in 2017 or '18?

DDL: Absolutely. There are a number of shows that I am very excited about. The first is coming up this March when Eric Prince of Prince Gallery in Copenhagen is co-curating a show with me for Galerie Protégé in New York. The show is titled *New CopenYork* and it will feature four artists from Denmark and four from New York.

Then there's my one-person show *Saints, Sinners and the Collective Unconscious* at UMASS Amherst's Hampden Gallery. That opens in September with another show called *Self Indulgence* that I am co-curating with Sally Curcio and Anne Laprade Seuthe. Later this year I'm working on a big contemporary seascapes show with Amanda Cooper for the Morean Arts Center in St Petersburg, Florida.

Then there are a pair of shows for 2018 that take two very different looks at the state of our natural environment: *Pattern, Power, Chaos and Quiet* for the Housatonic Museum of Art, Bridgeport, CT; and *Natural Impact* which will be held at the Arsenal Gallery that sits on the east edge of Central Park in New York City.



D. Dominick Lombardi, *Reverse Collage #10*, 1995, acrylic and transferred vintage newspaper ink and pages on Plexiglas, 30" X 28". For *Emotional Disorder or Cultural Discontent* at Lichtundfire