

ART IN SOCIETY

A FOCUSED PERSPECTIVE



THE CREATIVE WORKS OF MICHAEL POAST



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“Relentless Saga”

Welded Steel Sculpture, (1995-96)



By Michael Poast, (Detritus Art)

Photo by Dzhantam Warren

In examining the many different roles that art plays in our society, we come to realize that art itself is molded and transformed by the role that it is made to fulfill whether social, religious, or psychological. Art itself is like water taking the form of whatever shape that we release it into. As the role of art changes so too does its look, feel, message, and sometimes medium. Through this forging new forms of art are born. Two such types of art are called Detritus Art and Color Music. Put simply Detritus Art, or recycling art, is the creation of art using loose fragments of discarded everyday items in our society. These fragments can include, but are not limited to; broken metal refuse, damaged wood works, or garbage. This form of art is part of a movement to save the planet by clearly showing alternate uses for everyday trash. “Art From Detritus” is an art exhibition which takes place every year and showcases recycling with imagination. Color Music is art created using the visual qualities of color and shape as a form of musical notation. This is usually achieved through vibrant sculpture or painting on music manuscript paper.

One such artist who creates these types of art is Michael Poast, a visual & musical artist and welded metal sculptor. His works including metal sculpture, wood works, paintings, and color music scores. In LaGuardia Community college there are two sculptures in particular that merit a focused observation. One piece is called “Relentless Saga.” The other is called “Presence”. It is unknown when these

pieces were admitted into LaGuardia's collection. Both of these welded metal sculptures are forms of Detritus Art in a Baroque style. Each is a menagerie of metal parts welded together. With a closer look you can make out, what looks like, an old railroad spike and a vehicle suspension bar in "Relentless Saga". In "Prescence" the origins of the large metal shavings are not as apparent as in the other sculpture, but it still manages to keep you wondering. In a way these pieces invite you to play a guessing game to find out what they were in their previous existence. The sensation produced by these sculptures is one of awe and amazement, in part because they teach us that there is still beauty in the things we take for granted and so quickly abandon. Maybe in that respect they serve their function to remind us to reuse and recycle what we discard.

The works and experience of Michael Poast extend well beyond the boundaries of just LaGuardia College. He is an instructor at Pratt Institute and has lectured at the, Westside YMCA, Art Student League, Sculpture Center, and Educational Alliance. He has a Master of Fine Arts degree (MFA) from City University of New York, a Bachelor of Arts degree (BA), and a Master of Marine Affairs degree (MMA) from the University of Cincinnati. His work is exhibited extensively in the Metro area, at LaGuardia and Queensborough Community Colleges, and the Mid West. One of Mr. Poast's more celebrated pieces is "Baroque Trajectory" inspired by his idol Baroque Sculptor Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini. This seven foot tall sculpture of painted steel angles once rested a few blocks from ground zero in Lower Manhattan. Due to the tragedy of September 11th, this magnificent sculpture was almost lost. Somehow it managed to survive the destruction even though it sustained minor damage. It was later repaired and relocated to an Ohio sculpture park where it will remain for the next five years.

"Prescence"
Welded Steel Sculpture, (1995)



By Michael Poast, (Detritus Art)
Photo by Dzhanam Warren

“Baroque Trajectory” is part of Michael Poast's Color Music series in which he represents music in physical space. Using the visual qualities of color and shape as a form of musical notation and the sculpture itself as an instrument, this Avant-Garde composer explains that "the system is based on the idea that color sensations can trigger correlations to musical sound in a performer who is sensitive to visual experience. By combining visual and aural stimuli, the system and its use can result in an extremely

“Baroque Trajectory”

Steel sculpture near Ground Zero, (2001-2002)



(below) “Eclipsed Boundaries”

Found wood painted, (1996)



*All pieces
by Michael
Poast,
(Detritus
Art & Color
Music)*



(above) “Color Plate A2”

Page 1 of the score of Color Music, (1995)

powerful form of expression." Utilizing his logo “InterMedia Ensemble”, Mr. Poast worked to show an interconnection between color and music. A few of his other works include “Eclipsed Boundaries” from the “Art From Detritus” exhibit 2003 and “Color Plate A2” a watercolor from the score of Color Music, all depicted above. Painted in a Baroque Keyboard style on music manuscript paper, “Color Plate A2” is a rendition of “Tocatta and Fugue”, a popular piece of music for the organ. In conclusion these new forms of art today continue to convey messages that evoke a different meaning for each and every one of us who view them. And since beauty is in the eye of the beholder, it is inevitably upon all of us to interpret the meanings behind art for our own enlightenment.

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