

Feature in J T Kirkland's website "Thinking about art", June 2005, USA:

Artists Interview Artists: Juno Doran

Juno Doran, an artist from London (yeah, the one in the UK), participates in the Artist Interview Artists Project. Below Doran responds to another artist's five questions.



Happy Birthday Tate Gallery
Digital Photograph

An Interview with Juno Doran

The post 9/11 American cultural matrix has de-generated and re-produced one of the most amazing real-time performance art projects "The War on Terror". In "The War on Terror" every citizen becomes a potential artist/performer participant whose role (either pro-war or anti-war) advances the theme, content, plot and purpose of the project. Visual artists are essential to the critical success of "The War on Terror" - without their aesthetic assent/dissent this cultural project would remain an unrealized script. Of course, the performance of "The War on Terror" does not pretend to resolve the real world political dilemma of re-defining and de-classifying those artists who are terrorists and those artists who are freedom fighters. That question must be settled in the mind of every artist/actor prior exiting the stage. The performance of "The War on Terror" does not ask an artist to agree or disagree with their role it merely expects the artist to take one side or the other while off stage. Of course, which ever side the artist takes while not performing their role simply guarantees that their on stage performance of "The War on Terror" will continue to provide boundless entertainment for its non-performing non-choosing non-artistically inclined passive/aggressive audience.

- 1. WHO do you believe represents the greatest potential terrorist threat to your art?**

Well, let's see... In the morning I wake up really, really early because my husband starts work at 8. I make us both coffee, I prepare his work clothes and I roll him cigarettes for the day. I'm not a housewife type but he hardly has time to sleep so anything I may do for him really helps. I wish we were together more often. When we were, we used to talk a lot, go out to exhibition openings, for dinner, things like that. Now it feels a bit lonely. At night when he comes home I serve him dinner. He comes home really late, sometimes after 1 am, so I have

to have food prepared for him to eat as quickly as possible and go to sleep. He comes home so tired we hardly talk these days. He just tells me about his day. I like to know because I like to be part of his life, even when he is away. At night in bed, before we go to sleep, I look at him for a while, don't know why but I suppose it's because I miss him. Every day I hope for a better future, to live somewhere better and for him to realise his dreams and be happier. Now we are living the hard times. And my work is now just my own, he almost has no time to look at it, let alone discuss it with me. It's something I have to get used to.

2. **WHAT acts of illegal artistic terrorism are you willing to engage in to realize the idealism of your art?**

I have always been artist, even when I wasn't. But sometimes I wish I was a writer. I think it is because I am so introspective, I feel everything so much and I am so full of descriptive adjectives. I also enjoy the idea of moving somewhere beautiful and live from writing. Art is a great thing but books populate people's minds. Each book is different, depending on who reads it. That's why it is always a shock to see a film based on a book. It's just that by then we have already seen it in our minds. We have given faces to the characters and we have invented the landscapes. Then again there's something so absolutely romantic and decadent about being a writer. I know it's just an image but the thing is I do live my own images. One summer I had a job as a shepherdess and I wore my grandmother's cotton petticoat and a straw hat. I ate apples under an olive tree whilst the sheep roamed around and I read books. I was an image but I was a living one. Sometimes I don't like being an artist. There could never be enough of me in the work I do and a million things are left out. In being a writer you can do that, you can include so much. Also being an artist these days is so difficult. To start with you have to find your place, your audience, your core idea. How can anyone be just one person these days? In writing we can have multiplicity. Yes. I think so.

3. **WHEN will you commit risking your freedom and life to share your artistic terrorist expressions of blissful revolt against dominate political and cultural power structures in the United States of America?**

I think death is unfair. I think about it a lot. It increases my nihilism to an unbearable level. I think to myself why bother if I'll be dead some day? What do you do if you know the party will end? You party hard, get drunk quick! So I think sometimes it's best to forget about anything that's far too serious. Except for the wellbeing of others, now I know that's important. Apart from that we should put a lot more effort into making life beautiful. That's why I will never have a good car (or probably any car for that matter), or a good house (or any house for that matter) or anything too ambitious, because I - just - can't - be bothered. But knowing all this, what do you do when you feel a higher calling, something called a destiny, something important you have to do, something for which you were born and for which you must sacrifice your life? How do you juggle the simplicity of the ephemeral with a sense of the eternal? Well, I can only think of an answer to that one. If the party will end and it is an important party, then I must pick the best dancer and drink the best wine! And enjoy every second of it, even the part where I end up making a terrible fool of myself.

4. **WHERE do you stand morally with the right of an artist to preemptively kill the art of governmental, political, cultural, religious, aesthetic, academic, etc., terrorist leaders who are conspiring across the country and around the world to kill innocent artists?**

If I won the lottery I would buy my mother a happy life, give some money to Medecins sans Frontiers and move to the south of Spain, somewhere under the shadow of the moorish heritage and the mountains. I would lead a simple life. In the morning I would take care of my vegetable patch and my chickens, in the afternoon I would nap, in the evening I would work and at night I would eat and drink al fresco with the locals. Sometimes I would go to London, Vienna, New York, to see exhibitions, drink the city life and take pity on the concrete. There's not much I would do, except live life the way it ought to be.

5. **WHY have you not unhesitatingly embraced the freedom of artistic expression to be a mass-murdering art terrorist devoted to killing state sponsored art in the radical project to expose and oppose the evil anti-artist forces that exist in order to change the world for the better and make it safer place for other artists to live free and create according to their conscience?**

I have no view outside my windows. They are opaque to obscure the view from outside as well. This is because I live in a bad area and everything must be secure. The windows have bars and part of the ceiling is glass too, with bars. Sometimes on the phone people comment on how beautiful the day is, but I have no idea. In here, I have degrees of brightness but I cannot see the sky or the street. I make up what's going on by the sounds I hear. Sometimes squirrels run over my ceiling, sometimes pigeons, sometimes I just lie in bed and look up at the rain. There is one good thing about not having a view because I imagine I could be anywhere. Sometimes, I'm in Paris.



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