

# ART & MUSEUM

Summer Issue 2017



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Cosmic Firebird Dance Concert

## JACK ARMSTRONG THE LAST WIZARD

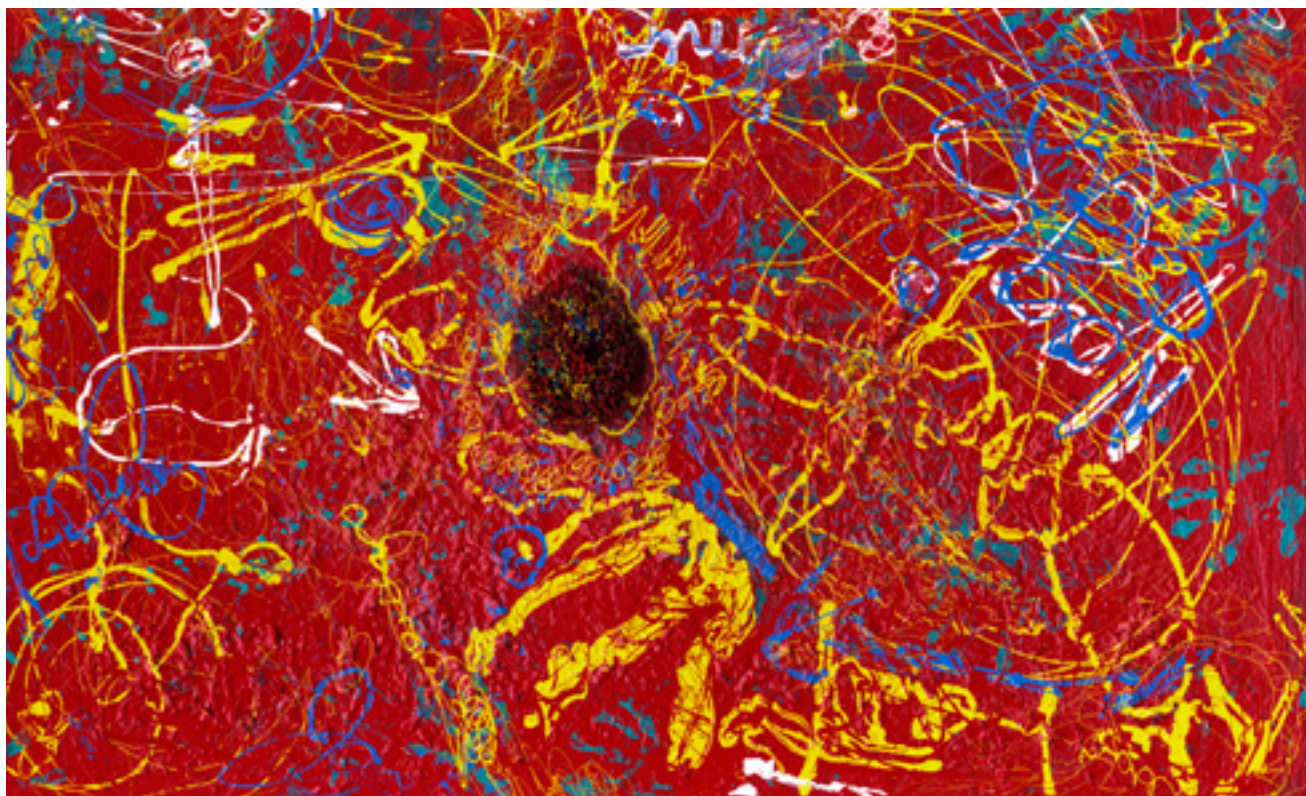
by Derek Culley

Jack Armstrong has been painting since he was five years old. After arriving in NYC in 1979, he became friends with Andy Warhol, Jean-Michel Basquiat & Keith Haring. In 1984, after turning down a solo exhibition with Castelli Gallery in NYC, Armstrong has maintained his revolutionary anti-dealer stance and has never been represented by a dealer. Between 1994 & 1997; Armstrong repurchased his early work and destroyed all paintings, vowing to create a new style for Modern / Contemporary Art. The years

1999 & 2000 witnessed Armstrong founding "Cosmic Extensionalism" revolutionising Modern / Contemporary Art. Armstrong's use of extreme colour, texture and light with words magically appearing at different angles in paint, allow viewers to experience the universal cosmic energy, coexisting with Armstrong's belief in inter-planetary and multi-dimensional Extensionalism. This is the foundation of Armstrong's revolutionary work. Armstrong's total output to date feature 100 Cosmic



Photo of Jack Armstrong



Extensionalism Paintings coupled with the most valuable motorcycle and art bicycle in the world. Plans for 2019 include the introduction of the most expensive art automobile in the world. Other projects include the staging of the "Cosmic Firebird Ballet" Dance Concert choreographed by Valerie Mahabir plus 3 Limited Edition coffee table art books published by Armstrong.

A&M:

How did growing up in Midwestern United States form and inform your ambitions and dreams?

Jack Armstrong:

Growing up in Omaha in the 1960's made you dream. You dreamed of California, Paris, Rome, Sydney, New York, London, and all the islands you

saw in travel magazines. Rio to Bali to Asia. The dreams took me to the most beautiful beaches in the world and to the great cities with the finest art museums. I dreamed to paint what my hero Van Gogh did not have time to achieve, in the ten year period in which he worked. Omaha was a cattle stockyard town on the Missouri River with one gem of a Museum named "The Jocelyn" Museum of Art. It was a pink granite palace that shone in the sun, given to the city by one famous local family that changed my life. I saw the old west masterpieces of Charles Russell and Frederic Remington and the Treasures of The Pharaoh "King Tut." But Van Gogh changed my life when I viewed his self-portrait and discovered myself. The Golden Mask of the "boy" King of Egypt seen thru the eyes of a seven-year-old boy was

magical. Inside a Greek Temple, on the Plains of Nebraska, this Museum became my center of magic & wonder, that would inspire my journey to find the "center" of my own magic, & somewhere, somehow, inside of myself, create a revolution of light and color that would shine as brightly in modern art, as Tut's golden & turquoise mask, shone in his time.

A&M:

Andy Warhol, Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat are modern icons and readily recognised major artists. As a contemporary and friend of above artists; you have shunned Galleries and destroyed early works, focusing on producing the "100 Paintings". Please discuss.

Jack Armstrong:

Having finished the 100 paintings in 2010 that I promised myself would be my total output as an artist after I repurchased my early work in the 1990's and burned all of the paintings, I was re-imagining my early dream of painting a Harley Davidson. My early works were no different than what had been achieved by thousands of artists, even though I was the only artist ever in NYC, that explained to the most important Modern Art Dealer on the planet : Leo Castelli, that I was "not" ready for the solo show he offered me, in his Castelli Gallery in New York (1984). "My friend Andy Warhol did not speak to me for months. Only Larry Rivers & Keith Haring understood. Roy Lichtenstein and Jean-Michel Basquiat were in their own world, and I went deeper into my own non-dealer, non-gallery experience."

A&M:

Did this route to independence affect your ability for artistic recognition and successful sales?

Jack Armstrong:

It depends on which yard sticks one uses to measure success. Nicknamed "The Last Wizard" by Andy Warhol; who saw my work as more alchemy than art; I have followed "a true" path in the execution of my dreams and works. Amongst my peers and critics, I am respected. Collectors have acknowledged my work. For example, Walmart's Alice Walton, Narendra Patel and Michel Polnareff, are internationally known collectors of my art works. My work is among the highest and fastest appreciating artwork in the world.

My paintings have been sold for 700 thousand dollars to Six million dollars. As I point out above, my no-dealer and independent approach to collectors and critics have increased the value and uniqueness' of my "100 Paintings". Cosmic Extensionalism is my religion.

A&M:

I am intrigued as to what inspires you and what "Cosmic Extensionalism" is about.

Jack Armstrong:

My goal and my muse, which is really the child still lost in wonder among paintings: in the "Muse"- ums of my youth, was to create something that people had never experienced before. "Cosmic Extensionalism" (founded 1999 – 2000) which I named the style I paint in, is more than a new school of art. It is everything I dreamed possible long ago. Art dealers, gallery personnel, curators and art history experts today speak in gibberish. This is what they have been taught. Vincent Van Gogh taught us thru his life and work that the "Essence of life itself" only becomes visible when we believe in the power of our "own" creation.

So all the theories of people who do not create "anything" except meaningless words to try and explain the "meaning" in many paintings that have no meaning & are hung on walls in the great dealer galleries and museums of the world, supported by "words" to somehow validate their "worth" in terms of price and significance seems absurd when considering Van Gogh. For me "Cosmic Extensionalism" is universal magic, a cosmic connection to the energy of trillions of galaxy's and Channelling that power to everything we do or create. It is a universal essence of life, colour, magic and light.

A&M:

Why did you choose to immortalise the Harley Davidson to feature among your art signatures of a life time's work?

Jack Armstrong:

Seeing my first Corvette's in 1963-1966 was the same for a young boy, as looking at masterpieces in art museums. American dreams, on wheels. Exotic bright coloured paint, the fastest, most beautiful cars I thought, in the world. Listening to "Engines" that sounded like thunder-gods became our religion. Harley Davidson's from that period were radical icons of lust. The ultimate, piece of motor art. In the annual custom auto and motorcycle shows in the Omaha Coliseum, the velvet ropes surrounding these wondrous machines became my friends, as I clung to the soft ropes with small hands and large dreams, I whispered to myself, "someday I will paint the finest art motorcycle and Sports car, in the world."

Gazing at those incredible machines, it seemed to me then, and still today, which everyone who ever painted no matter how high the level of perfection that they always went deep, in the sense of thickness of paint. No matter



Cosmic Starship Harley Davidson

how many layers of paint & lacquer that were applied, in the end, no matter what style and colour or pattern, all the same technique. Flat surface, without any texture, surface height or "explosion" of madness. Beauty without magic. I saw the possibility then, (in 1963) which was still true in 2010 when I finally achieved my childhood dream of painting what I believe to be, the most revolutionary art motorcycle in history. In 2009 I painted one shining new, Harley V-Rod that would become my art signature, of a lifetime's work, & planning that could take me into Vincent's cosmic world and beyond. Van Gogh was the first artist in history to create Revolutionary art.

A&M:

The Cosmic Starship Harley Davidson sold for \$3million (2012) and was followed by the \$3 million CosmicStar Cruiser ARTBike. What are your plans for the future?

Jack Armstrong:

I am in the planning stage to create the most expensive car in history, A "COSMIC ROLLS ROYCE" To be released for 2019, model to be announced, but it will be "a cosmic star-

cloud-convertible, price \$100M. U.S. Dollars, with its own "English made" - 2019 "Cosmic Triumph" Motorcycle, (model also to be announced.) Additionally, this \$6 Million Dollar Art Motorcycle will be mounted on its own custom clear plastic trailer and attached to the car. I choose to open this final exhibition of my career, combining the Classic British Marks of Rolls & Triumph, which will be an "Artistic Triumph" for the public and for art. Creating magic things change when positive things are done. Art is the most powerful force of change in the world as is love.

Triumph and Rolls are pieces of art, and after they are magically transformed into rolling art objects through the vision of "Cosmic Extensionalism", perhaps I can then change the life of other's who need assistance. I would also mention that 1/2 of the sale price of the Rolls and the Triumph will be donated to children's charity of our choice to be announced. Because children; are truly the world's future.

Source of Biographical Data & answers:  
 "Cosmic Dream Machine"  
[www.jackarmstrongartist.com](http://www.jackarmstrongartist.com)

# Collecting art is more than a good investment



## *The Personal Touch*

by Andrea Seehusen

The art world can be very intimidating for newcomers as well as for veterans at times: A white cube space with a desk like a barrier at the entrance, a room full of people standing in circles at a vernissage, a stage, an auctioneer or the overwhelming atmosphere of an art fair on opening day. In this environment, it is good to have a navigator to help collectors discover art that will enrich their lives and, as an extra touch, add value to the portfolio in the future.

### Private Collectors

Being an art enthusiast and curious about the idea or concept behind a work, I like to introduce my clients to art fairs, galleries, biennales and ultimately to meet artists and look at the world of ideas behind an

artwork. But for many collectors, it is even more important to know the artist. In our fast-moving, digital world, a more personal approach is often welcome. In this manner, a collector gets a more personal access to the artworks, and in some cases, lasting friendships are fostered.

Each client has individual needs and approaches art in a very personal way. In the end, it is not only my job to offer art, but to bring the right people together to create experiences around buying and commissioning art works. It is all about communication, and then a world which seems opaque suddenly becomes a lively place of interaction and exchanging ideas. And the piece of art which is purchased or commissioned, tells a longer story and has, even more, meaning to the collector.



### Corporate Art Engagements

Working with artists is a special experience. Their ideas and foods for thought broaden the horizon and add neglected aspects to a discussion. The creative spirit is often welcomed by collectors and executives, as it is a valuable perspective from outside. Commissioning works this way is perfect to support artists to realise special concepts. Especially in real estate projects, the artist can make bespoke adaptations to the environment, where the artwork is installed and displayed. Many real estate developers are enthusiastic about adding bespoke art to their projects because it adds a special touch to the building and underlines individuality.

For companies, the direct cooperation with artists is also a source of new spirit and inspiration. When asked why they started an art program for their company, many executives intuitively mentioned that creativity is part of their corporate DNA. By establishing artist commissions, sponsoring art prizes or fostering young talents, many companies are both strengthening their heritage as well as staying in contact with new artists and art world trends. Although it is hard to see concrete results or return on investments, companies profit in many aspects from art programs. Corporate

Social Responsibility and positioning the brand in the creative environment are two of the general outcomes that are created by artists cooperations.

### My personal approach

I am constantly on the lookout for new ideas and artists worldwide. Sharing my experience and passion for art is the most rewarding part of my work, and for me, it is the most important to take an individual approach to each client and project. Part of my research has always been the connection between companies and artists and the ways they can complement each other. On my website [www.iam-munich.com](http://www.iam-munich.com) I am constantly publishing interviews in the section "Why Art" that investigate companies art engagements. Currently, illycaffè, BMW and Davidoff are some of the highlights to explore.

Dr. Ellen-Andrea Seehusen formerly managed international events, sponsoring and brand centres from BMW & Lufthansa. In 2007 she founded IAM International Arts Management GmbH to deliver bespoke art concepts to global companies and private collectors.

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