

TEMPLON



ROBIN KID

FUCKING YOUNG!, July 2024

Fucking Young! 24. Interview by Adriano Batista. 158

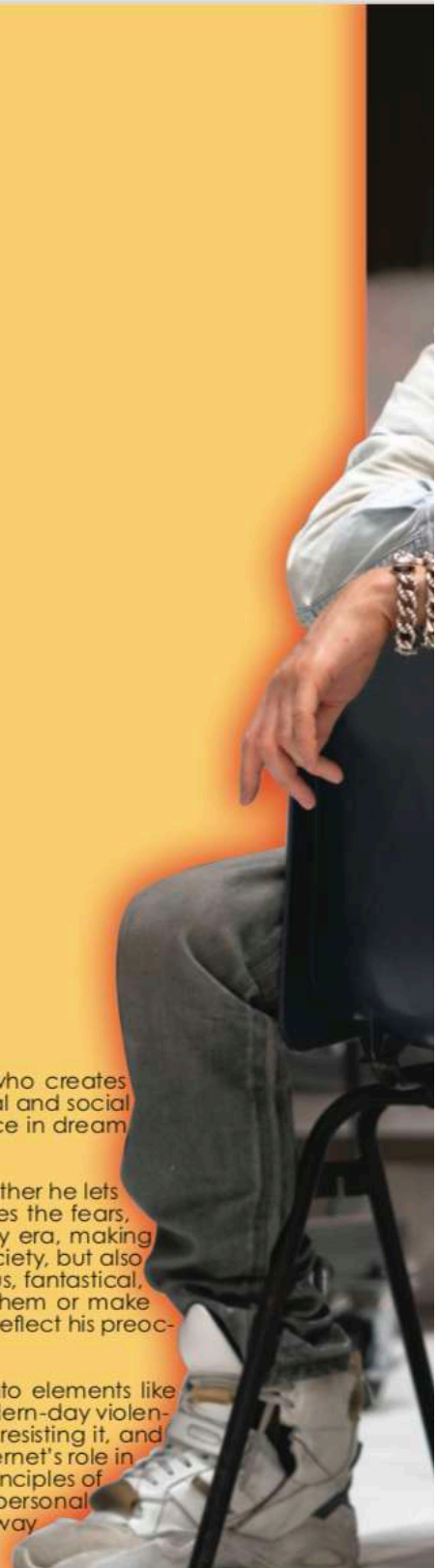
Robin KID

The Unfiltered Voice of
a Self-Taught Artist

Robin Kid aka THE KID is an autodidactic artist from Holland who creates works that reflect his unfiltered artistic expression and his personal and social concerns. Growing up in a small mining town, Robin found solace in dream worlds, a means to escape the uniformity of his surroundings.

He doesn't have a fixed agenda or a predetermined style, but rather he lets the world around him inspire and influence his work. He captures the fears, worries, and the constant overload of trash in the contemporary era, making people aware of the problems and contradictions of modern society, but also of the beauty and hope that still exist. He mixes rebellious, religious, fantastical, and "offensive" elements in his art, without trying to balance them or make them harmonious. He just incorporates them instinctively, as they reflect his preoccupations and emotions.

Robin explores themes such as the fear of losing or holding onto elements like childhood innocence amidst the immediacy and intensity of modern-day violence, the thin line between accepting a predetermined fate and resisting it, and the dark side behind the shiny facade. He acknowledges the internet's role in self-teaching but criticizes social media for perverting the core principles of democracy, turning people into narrow-minded soldiers. Robin's personal experiences, both deliberate and unconscious, often find their way into his works.





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HOW DID YOU DISCOVER YOUR PASSION FOR ART AND WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO PURSUE IT AS A CAREER?

ROBIN KID I think I discovered my need to "create" when I was little because I didn't fit in. And if you don't fit in, like was the case for me, then dream worlds are important to escape into.



I grew up in a small mining town in Holland, very working class, my street was like straight out of Billy Elliot, everybody had the same little houses with the same little lawns, the same orange awnings, etc. And the boxes we lived in were distinguished only by the names on the mailboxes, so nothing around me was from that "art" universe at all. My escape was into the TV, into the world of Disney and Jim Henson, and later of Gregg Araki or Harmony Korine. Because they would present me with a world that was remoulded to their own desires, they showed me how one can be empowered by fantasy, and how one can learn to live within his own dreams and eventually transform the world around them and construct their own reality. This was absolutely fascinating to me!

HOW DO YOU CHOOSE THE SUBJECTS AND THEMES FOR YOUR WORKS, AND WHAT MESSAGE DO YOU WANT TO CONVEY TO THE VIEWERS?

ROBIN KID I don't really choose the subjects. My subjects are kind of imposed onto me by

social media, the Internet, or TV. I think my work reflects the overflow of information that we are exposed to on a daily basis. Everything goes so fast and everything demands an equal amount of time and attention and at the end of the day, you don't know what's important or what's banal anymore. Everything becomes mixed up and blurred! I think we live in fucked up times, the world in general just feels very confused and I find it very difficult to escape this feeling of doom and angst. So maybe my works are like time capsules of this moment. All those fears and worries of the day, mixed in with a constant overload of trash, are recorded in my work...

DO YOU MANAGE TO BALANCE THE REBELLIOUS, RELIGIOUS, FANTASTICAL, AND "OFFENSIVE" ASPECTS OF YOUR WORKS? HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THE REACTIONS AND CRITICISMS THEY MAY PROVOKE?

ROBIN KID I don't think I balance anything. I just dump whatever I'm preoccupied with that day into my work. I work very instinctively, there is not much thinking going on when I start a work. I guess a lot of my work is also about being afraid of losing something or holding on to something, for example, the innocence of childhood, like the happiness you felt when watching morning cartoons. At the same time I'm dealing with the immediacy and intensity of the violence of today, that's why I often use contrasting images, maybe to function as bridges between the past and the present, to retain some kind of the 'magic' of childhood, to never lose it and at the same time illustrate the impossibility of retaining it.

HOW DO YOU RELATE YOUR PERSONAL HISTORY AND CULTURE TO YOUR ARTISTIC VISION, AND HOW DO THEY AFFECT YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD AND SOCIETY?

ROBIN KID I think that having been brought up "outside" of my generation has influenced my work a big deal. I was mostly

raised by my grandparents and most of the neighbors surrounding me were the age of my grandparents, so for example the subject of World War II was something that would come up daily. When my grandmother was a child, she and her family had American soldiers stationed in her house. I used to go through these little 'poezie boekjes' - small notebooks filled with short poems written by the soldiers to my grandmother - they even still had the empty candy wrappers stuck between the pages of the chocolate bars the soldiers had brought over. On the other hand, my grandfather comes from the north of Holland, and when the Nazis came and occupied his town, they forced my grandfather's father to go to Germany and work there in



one of the steel mills, so my grandfather was the only Dutch child in a German school, can you imagine? He would tell me stories of how they had to hide in the basement whenever the sirens would go off, how at the third siren the bombs would be dropped, and how his father, my great-grandfather, had a special pass to be out at night, and so, even though he was at risk of being caught himself, he would help Jewish people escape through the fields and cross the border. So I guess having these stories imprinted on me as a child makes me even more sensitive and aware of what's happening in the world today.

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IT IS ALL YOUR FAULT V (2020-21)
OIL ON CANVAS, ALUMINUM, 267X607X4CM

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HAVE YOU EVER BROKEN SOMEONE'S HEART? HOW DO YOU COPE WITH THE GUILT AND REGRET OF THAT, AND WHAT ARE THE ETHICAL AND MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF DOING SO?

ROBIN KID Not really, I don't think I've really ever broken someone's heart. I'm a Taurus we're very loyal. Although when you fuck with me, I'll be done with you forever.

HOW DO YOU USE YOUR ART AS A WAY OF DEALING WITH HEARTBREAK, AND WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF DOING SO?

ROBIN KID I'm not really sure. I think my work addresses questions like: How do we deal with growing up? What does it mean when we leave childhood behind? How do we deal with this loss as an adult?... I think these are questions all human beings deal with, no matter what period of time, no matter what culture, and they are in a way little heartbreaks. Growing up is full of heartbreaks, it's a succession of last times and endings!

HOW HAS HEARTBREAK CHANGED YOUR PERSPECTIVE AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS LOVE, RELATIONSHIPS, AND YOURSELF, AND WHAT ARE THE LESSONS AND INSIGHTS YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM IT?

ROBIN KID I don't like to talk about that. But what I can say is that when you lose somebody close to you who granted you unconditional love and confidence, in whatever you would want to undertake -even the craziest dreams and fantasies, it fucks with your mind and heart at first. But eventually, this loss teaches you that you never really lose someone, as this human being has shaped you and will forever live through you, and become a part of you.

DO YOU THINK THE YOUTH OF OUR GENERATION IS CHRONICALLY HEARTBROKEN, AND WHAT ARE THE FACTORS AND CAUSES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THIS CONDITION?

ROBIN KID I'm not sure if "heartbroken" is the right term, disillusioned maybe, or fed up. But mostly I think young people are hungry, hungry for the

truth, cuz as you grow up you are struggling through a fog of dis-illusions that you collect as you leave childhood and enter adulthood.

And especially today, in our messed up times in which the world is greatly confused about what its values are, I think young people are full of intense feelings.

HOW DO YOU EXPLORE THE NOTIONS OF SOCIAL DETERMINISM AND THE THIN FRONTIER BETWEEN INNOCENCE AND CORRUPTION IN YOUR WORKS, AND WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES AND RISKS INVOLVED IN DOING SO?

ROBIN KID For example, in one of my first sculptures, As a Flower Chooses Its Color. A baby is being born, his face is already marked by the same gang tattoos as the ones of his mother. And the newborn baby seemingly is giving the middle finger to the viewer. Does it mean, he knows he is already fucked and says "fuck you" to life and the world? Or on the contrary, does he say fuck you to his circumstances



and will he reject a destiny imposed on him?

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OSCAR WILDE QUOTE "BEHIND EVERY EXQUISITE THING, THERE IS SOMETHING TRAGIC" FOR YOUR ARTISTIC PHILOSOPHY, AND HOW DO YOU APPLY IT TO YOUR WORKS?

ROBIN KID The quote is quite self-explanatory, it speaks about the dark side behind the shiny facade. Even though my work can look pop, colourful, and even childish at first glance, upon second look you will discover hidden layers and meanings. Questioning what I think is fucked up in our society.

HOW DO YOU COPE WITH THE PRESSURE AND EXPECTATIONS OF BEING A YOUNG AND SUCCESSFUL ARTIST IN THE 21ST CENTURY, AND WHAT ARE YOUR STRATEGIES FOR MAINTAINING YOUR CREATIVITY AND ORIGINALITY?

ROBIN KID It's all bullshit and what I learned very quickly is that this entire art world is only smoke and mirrors. I think it's very important to keep a

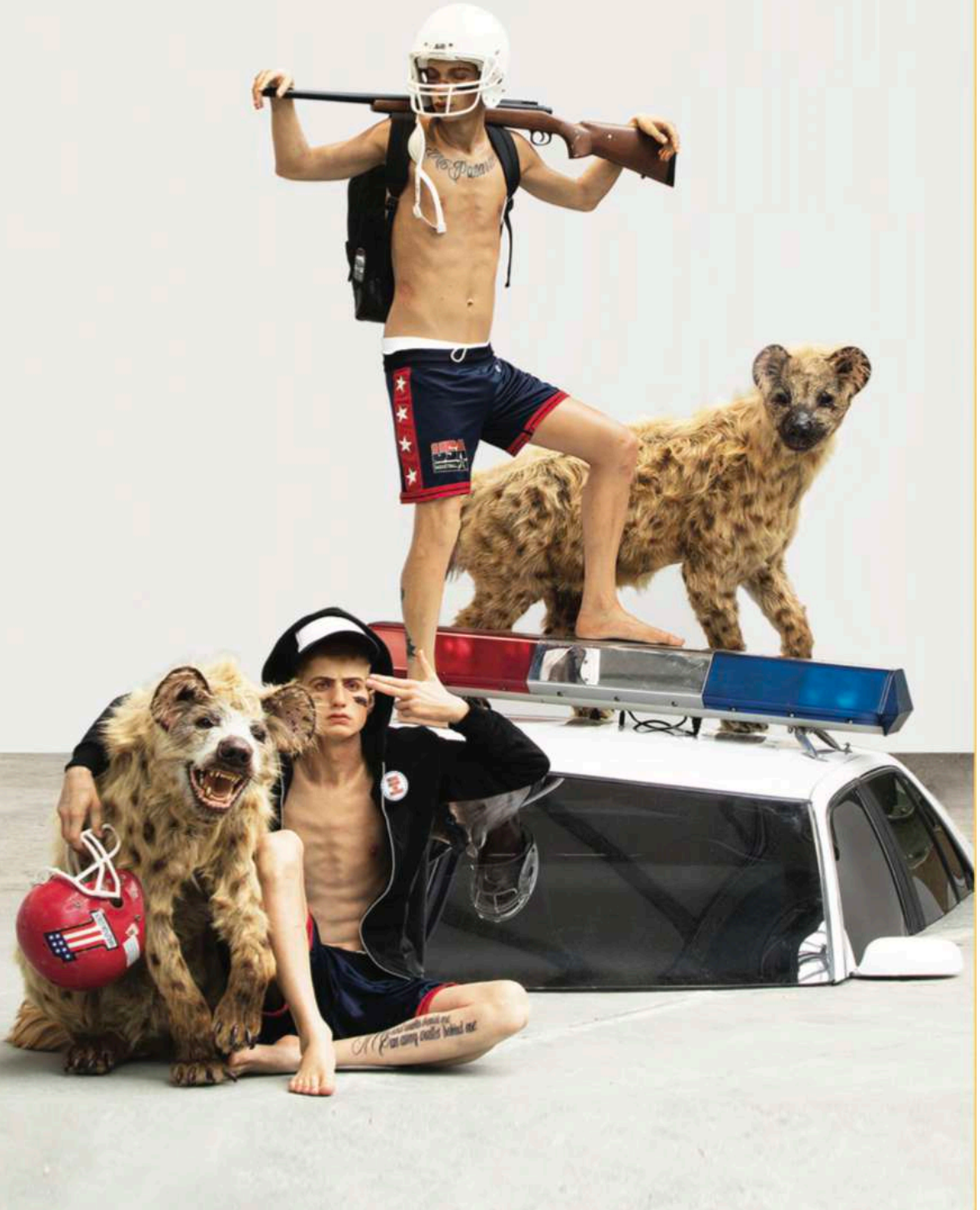
distance from it all. And this overflow of "art" really fucks with your mind. So I'm mostly isolated in my studio, in "my own dream world", keeping my head down and working 24/7 on my projects, trying to be as far away from the " Art world " as possible.

HOW DO YOU USE THE INTERNET, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY AS TOOLS AND PLATFORMS FOR YOUR ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND PROMOTION, AND WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DOING SO?

ROBIN KID Oh wow, this is a layered question. It's important to start off by saying that I'm of the unique generation that spent half of their childhood pre-internet and the other half post-internet. I totally think Andy Warhol is the primitive of the kind of art we are making today and that I'm part of a generation of kids that is not literate anymore the way our parents or grandparents were, meaning literate from reading books, but we are literate

from watching television, the internet, and social media, and we have millions and millions of visual images stored in our minds. I'm 100% self-taught and the reason I was able to do this is because of YouTube, so in that sense, the internet is amazing. But then there is social media, which I think is fucking up our society. Social media is supposed to be this extension of our democracy, but instead, it's turning into a perversion of its core principle: the idea of debate, of listening to each other, of agreeing to disagree. Now every "Rando" believes they are in possession of the absolute truth. Social media is radicalizing people, it removes the human element, it makes you hateful to people different than you, and it makes it so much easier to do and say whatever you like without the fear of consequences. It's turning all of us into little soldiers, fighting in a war we did not even realize we were in.

NO PAŞARAN (2017)
INSTALLATION, SILICONE, OIL PAINT, VARIOUS
MATERIALS, NO ANIMAL WAS USED, 240X500X190 CM





IT IS ALL YOUR FAULT XXIII (2020-21)
OIL PAINT ON CANVAS, ALUMINUM, 240X199X4CM

Fucking Young! 24. Interview by Adrian



Fucking Young! 24. Interview. Robin Kid

everything feels like the end of the world, like a pointless endgame, cause you're not able to project yourself beyond that very moment.

HOW DO YOU CHALLENGE THE STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES THAT SOCIETY HAS TOWARDS YOUNG PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE MARGINALIZED OR DISCRIMINATED AGAINST, AND HOW DO YOU SHOW THEIR RESILIENCE AND POTENTIAL?

ROBIN KID I don't know if this is something I actively do, at least I don't think about it as a goal, it kind of just slips into the work. And I don't really like artists that preach a certain viewpoint. I ask questions about issues I struggle with. And I think my work allows people to understand at least on some level what these issues are and maybe question what they mean to them. Even if I don't come out and spell out what my position is exactly. I think it's important to leave room for the "beholders share" as Ernst Gombrich calls it, to give the viewer the freedom to determine what it's about and also to leave space for disagreements.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SONGS THAT YOU LISTEN TO WHEN YOU ARE FEELING HEARTBROKEN, AND HOW DO THEY HELP YOU EXPRESS AND HEAL YOUR EMOTIONS?

ROBIN KID Music plays an important role in my creative process, especially when I'm in the phase of coming up with new works and a lot of my works are born out of me being pissed off in the moment. In those moments I like to listen to "Silent Alarm " by Bloc Party or "Capture / Release" by The Rakes. And when I'm in a more melancholic mood, I will listen to Statues by Moloko, "The Unknown Soldier" by The Doors, "You Want It Darker" by Leonard Cohen, or anything by Julee Cruise.

DO YOU THINK ANYONE CAN EVER FULLY RECOVER FROM A HEARTBREAK, AND WHAT ARE THE FACTORS AND STEPS THAT INFLUENCE THE RECOVERY PROCESS?

ROBIN KID Not sure if you should want to, all these heartbreaks, these signs of wear and tear will build your character ultimately, right? It proves that you are alive and still have a heart after all.

ONGOING

This We Believe
TwentyFirst Century Museum,
Louisville, USA
Jan. 2024 - Jan. 2025

The Future Is Old
MOCO Museum,
Barcelona
Feb. 08 - Nov. 1, 2024

UPCOMING

Robin Kid
Templon,
New York, USA
Sept. 04 - Oct. 26, 2024

RECENT

Kingdom Of Ends
Templon,
Paris
Sept. 02 - Oct. 21, 2023

LIMITED

Robin Kid : It's All Your Fault, 168 pages, Templon & HolyShit, Isbn 9782917515419, templon.com

!24. Interview.



24. Interview.

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IT IS ALL YOUR FAULT III (2020-21)
OIL ON CANVAS, ALUMINUM. 233X347X4CM



this kind



ake ritalin,
prescription drug.

