



THIS MAN WANTS
TO SELL ART WITH
YOU, TO YOU AND
FOR YOU-

JASON KEUSCH



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Jason Keusch, a self-taught abstractor, develops his artwork in Mid-Michigan operating under the studio-brand: Varhaus. Following a twenty-year culinary and restaurant operation career, Jason began painting full time in 2016. Initially staying regional to build his brand and style, his five year plan to grow nationally was interrupted by the pandemic at a most crucial time, but the time at home allowed him to hone in on his style and goals. Recent financially successful exhibitions in Southampton, NY have solidified his confidence that his work is worthwhile to a larger more diverse audience.

EXHIBITIONS

IN GOD WE RUST, +GALLERY, EAST LANSING MI, 2016, SOLO
GROUP SHOW, KATALYST GALLERY, LANSING MI, 2017, GROUP
INTRO TO VARHAUS, META COLLECTIVE, LANSING MI, 2018, SOLO
DEUCE, +GALLERY, EAST LANSING MI, 2018, SOLO
LOVE'S POP-UP GALLERY, SOUTHAMPTON NY, 2021, POP
HAMPTONS FINE ART FAIR, SOUTHAMPTON NY, 2021, GROUP

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

EAST LANSING ART FESTIVAL, 2017, 2018, 2019
PLYMOUTH ART IN THE PARK 2018, 2019
MILFORD MEMORIES ART FESTIVAL 2018, 2019, 2021
NOVI ART FESTIVAL 2019
TRAVERSE CITY CHERRY FESTIVAL 2019
FUNKY FERNDALE ART FESTIVAL 2019
HAMPTONS FINE ART FAIR, SOUTHAMPTON NY, 2021, GROUP

MEDIUM

Building layers by moving wet mediums like patching concrete, silicone caulk, epoxy mixed with acrylic, oil, commercial paint and traditional art mediums; the artist builds a product that is simple and complex, broken and perfect, soft and hard. They, to his mind, are paradoxical, human monuments of time: the aged, damaged corporeal world and the souls that make it all beautiful.

A NOTE FROM JASON KEUSCH

I hope this note finds you healthy and your business profitable. It is my intent, via this packet, to secure a greater audience for my work. My recent successes oblige me to reach from my regional comfort zone to sell more work, and concurrently, grow the value of work already sold. I am confident that I can guarantee that these ends will be reached satisfactorily.

A small-town Catholic Man is an unpopular widget in our current marketplace. Equally unpopular is an artist using a bible verse as an operating statement: Romans 12:2. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." I am that man and I do use that verse, passionately.

This may eliminate some of the representatives that may be interested in my work, but I feel it necessary bleed it out in an attempt to find suitable partners to work with. I'm not looking for gallery or an agent for representation alone, but a cooperative working agreement that benefits both parties and therefore overdelivers for the collector.

I am the best kind of artist you can represent. I'm timely. I'm communicative. I will hand deliver across the country. I will be absent when you're trying to sell. I'll be around when you need me to sell. I know when to shut my mouth. I understand business. I love criticism. I'm loyal. AND I have a great story...

A STORY OF WHY

In two thousand fourteen I turned forty years old. The life I had led previous to this timestamp began to lose its luster. I was a self-taught chef that turned his career into the management and development of six properties. I made a lot of money. I took cool vacations. I could do whatever I wanted, but I was unsatisfied. It seemed that business has become complicated for no reason. It seemed that nobody cared as much as I cared. I felt as if I was using old creativity to solve problems, old and new. I couldn't justify why I did what I did anymore.

So, I set off to make a new why. I took six months off and roamed the country, unpacking the past twenty years and attempting to find new motivations. This all sounds sort of "mid-lifey", but really it was a spiritual endeavor.

The most pertinent trip I made was to Our Lady of Gethsemane Catholic Monastery for a one-week silent retreat. I found out when you shut off the distractions of the world, your heart talks. It leads you down paths you did not expect. I found Thomas Merton and GK Chesterton telling where to look: Paul's Letter to the Romans. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

In addition to reading, that summer I began painting and writing. I had never had an art class that didn't result in hand turkeys for Thanksgiving. I kept painting and showing my friends what I was working on and began to think I had a chance to make a living in the manner that I wished.

I arrived at three distinct goals:

- 1 Go to Heaven
- 2 Practice simple capitalism by making art for people
- 3 Show people that they are not trapped by society

I went back to work for a year to tidy up my restaurant responsibilities, build an art studio and learn to make art. In two thousand sixteen, I opened Varhaus officially.

Until two thousand nineteen I maintained a slow growth business model as I grew my acumen and decided what kind of painting I liked to do. I was pretty successful making a living and learning concurrently. I sold 25K-50K worth of art in those years using only my own network. I had set up to make two thousand twenty my introduction to a larger marketplace and, well...you know what happened.

In that year and a half of Pandemic, I grew artistically in ways I did not know were needed. Culminating in an invitation to exhibit at Love's Pop-up Gallery in the Hamptons. I'm killing it out there as I write this summary for you.

Much of Romans is based on making your life a sacrifice to God "according to your measure". Since I have been skeptical of authority and society my entire life, I found this "measure" reassuring. If I can

apply my special talents as joyful work to make a living by bringing that joy to other people, well, eureka! If by doing so I exhibit to other people that the society and systems that we adhere to, are at best, the imperfect creations of imperfect men and women and are therefore corruptible and fallible, I may be able to give them hope or better, some peace. Because by understanding that the world that our cultures create crumbles from entropy, we must seek our answers in the invisible, the spiritual and in God.

A WORD OR SEVERAL ABOUT PROCESS AND INTERPRETATION...

I never do this. I go out of my way to avoid discussing artistic process. I don't usually discuss tools or vision or anything vaguely intellectual about the glorious avocation of creating art. My reasoning is three-fold. In my opinion, my reasoning is solid. I'm going to tell you why I keep from blathering about myself and my art, and then, I'm going to blather...

I am turned off listening to people over-intellectualize artwork. To me, it sounds like a word-soup full of buzzwords and art terms that never line up with the picture I am looking at. To my ear, this talk sounds like a lawyer writing a contract about art by using a thesaurus and an abacus after drinking too much white wine and discussing his feelings. Most times, these words dilute the work as they try to make it more shiny.

The second reason I don't intellectualize is that I'm trying to reach you in a place where your brain is of no assistance; and nor is mine able to help. I'm trying to tell you something that I cannot vocalize, let alone actively identify in myself as a known quantity. I'm trying to shake hands with that part of you that is undefineable, unconcious and immaterial. Hell, I'll just say it: I'm trying to love you with the desperate hope that it is the right thing to do AND that you will somehow recognize yourself in my love and, fingers crossed, love me back.

Finally, I don't intellectualize because the endeavor is better suited to an objective party. I create artwork and make a decision: Put it on a wall or throw it in the garbage. That's it! My job is done. If my work has some intellectual value or some unique viewpoint that touches people in a way different from the above stated, I believe it others' prerogative to identify such a trait. And, if they do find some further meaning and can explain it to others, I am usually pleased. To add this flavor to my artwork, myself, is an unattainable pursuit because we rarely have a honest perspective about our lives. Our actions and thoughts are painted with bias, self-importance and self-flagellation, concurrently. Basically, anything I could say would be less than true, or worse, exaggerated. It would be foolhardy to think

that I could accurately do so, and presumptuous to think I should try. So I don't try. I only do.

What am I thinking when I work? "Why" I do anything is more important than what I actually produce. This is the fulcrum of every passion. I make art to love people in a manner that evades human hypocrisy and common cultural caricature. This my message: I love you. I made this art for you. I was once trapped in the rules that society lays out, but I am no longer trapped. I am free. I am often happy. I am sometimes fulfilled. I am looking for truth and the artwork you are observing because it is the truest part of my soul that I can express to you. I hope you like it, but if you don't, I hope you love me for trying.

And to make these paintings for you, I'll use just about anything. Quick-patch Concrete, Epoxy, housepaint, acrylic paints, baby oil, WD-40, cardboard, old newspapers, canvas, mdf, etc. I will avoid the directions on the packaging, I'll turn my music up as loud as my neighborhood will allow, and I will work until something screams: "I love you". If it hollers...it will go on a wall and I will begin anew.