George Ziegler: Bio and Artist's Statement

Bio:

George Ziegler is a 37-year-old human man. When concerning his art George has adopted the persona of MO MONEY. MO MONEY struggles to grapple with the arbitrary demands of the current art climate. MO MONEY creates art and it is created. The art is without intentions, but imbued with speculation. MO MONEY is patient.

Artist's Statement:

Pt. I:
We all want something. It is simply implied. But why do we want? Everything we want takes us further away from who we actually are. What we want reflects everything around us, and so it is not us. Certainly we need things. And certainly we want things we do not have, and we have things we do not need. But the more we want things we do not have, the more we lose grip on the things we need but do not want. We need to refrain from wanting in order to break free from habitual routines. What we think we want is actually what we are supposed to want. And it is so predetermined that we are to want, that the premise itself is never even considered. People need to achieve, they need to create in order to move forward. But moving forward is a perilous struggle and, at some point, people no longer feel the need to continue. Instead they want something else. Anything else. They want it to be easier. They want gratification for their achievement. They want any sort of acknowledgment so that they can know that this journey is not hopeless. We want because we know nothing else. We want to think that we strive for greatness. But we contextualize greatness in the perspective of others. Our legacy, however, is inevitable regardless of what we want.

Hard work is rewarding, and we work hard for the reward. But is it truly any more rewarding to work hard because of the reward, than to reward yourself by not working? It really does not matter what we do, so much as it does why we do what we do. Whether we are working extremely hard or not, it is more important that we are working for something internally, and not an external reward. It is lazy to call someone lazy and not explore their true motivation. It is foolish to call someone ambitious when they are actually just an insecure narcissist. And it is naïve not to heed to the future cries of our children as they wallow in the shadows cast by their metallic robot overlords.

To be successful we must be ambitious, and to be ambitious we must aim for success. But what if the 'success' we strive for ultimately leaves us unsatisfied and empty. And what if the 'ambition' we pervade is only a specific interpretation of ambition fabricated by a capitalist society. To be ambitious we must set goals; we must know what we want in order to achieve it. Once we achieve the goals we set we feel a sense of satisfaction and self-worth. But this satisfaction lasts about as long as the feelings of not wanting sex right after you have it. We must set bigger goals and so on, and so forth. We think we are succeeding and climbing the ladder, but the ladder leads to nowhere. Once our base needs as humans are met, nothing is truly satisfying. We force ourselves to look towards the future because we are uneasy in our present situation. We must be aware of the future implications of our actions, but we must not act solely on our own

implications of the future. We do not need to know what we want in order to become ambitious; we only need to know that what we do is purposeful. We can work hard without working towards something specific, and we can have a desire to achieve something without knowing what it is that we are achieving.

We live in an inefficient society. Instead of working towards something collectively, we are, as individuals, working towards nothing. We want everyone to have a job, but we do not really care what people do. We want to keep our economy running, but we do not think to ask why, or to what end? We are running in circles.. Most of us work unnecessary jobs that provide fabricated goods and services. While working these jobs keeps our society functioning, it does not actually benefit humanity. We are not considering the best ways to coexist with the planet, but rather how the planet can better serve our individual desires. Once our unsustainable lifestyles become too problematic to continue to ignore we will have a society filled with effectively useless people trained to do things that serve little tangible function towards the survival of humanity and free will.

Pt. II:
Almost all art has no actual value. Instead it is dependent on perceived value. Money has always ruled, but now it is worshiped as an infallible deity. In the past, money was preceded by religion, but now capitalism is our doctrine (religion has merely been enveloped as a tentacle of capitalism). Because money indicates the success of an artist, the ‘successful’ artist must concern themself with promotion ahead of production, and the desires of the masses ahead of their own. The context of an artwork has become more important than the skill and creativity taken to make it.

Regardless of how art trends are created, they are often filtered through the narrow lens of an ‘art museum’. Art museums play a prominent role in our perceptions of art and appear to benefit both society and the artist. Seems simple enough we walk around, appreciate a bunch of art; great for us, great for the art. But in actuality the act is empty and meaningless. We really only go to these places because they exist; we are taught that they are important so we assume that they are and we accept what we are shown as the general standards of 'good' artwork. With each step we take in order to 'present' art, we move the art further away from its organic environment. Artwork in ornate frames at museums is like animals in cages at the zoo. The difference or course is that artwork is composed of inanimate objects while animals are living creatures that elicit empathy. So while visitors can empathize with caged zoo animals they have little impetus to consider the circumstances around the artworks they are viewing and instead accept their context as an implied paradigm.

Art may not always have a place on earth, but in the sphere of modern developments, the role of art is decidedly secure, if not a bit uncomfortable. Art fits in like the wrong puzzle piece jammed in so tight that it is essentially stuck in place. Certainly art adapts to the progression of society, but just as often society has to adapt to antiquated culture surrounding art. Art, on the surface, progresses at a rate faster than society itself. But it is all a facade. Art has always moved forward, but at some point it stopped evolving. Art stopped adapting because society has coddled it with blind encouragement. Art once commented on society, but now art functions more as a comment

that society is making. Art has become more of a useful gimmick for the super wealthy than any sort of act of expression.

We want art to be needed as a functional part of our society because we do not want to come to terms with the fact that we have essentially outsourced it with technology. Just because art lacks an obvious function, does not therefore imply that art lacks a pivotal role in our culture. And just because the function of Art was once more transparent, it was not necessarily the most beneficial application of its uses. Art is an outlet for expression. Art can be therapeutic and/or conceptual, but it does not have to be anything specifically. Art is something that, as humans, must be made. But Art has become so determined on being thought provoking, community oriented, and functionally relevant, that the technical skills and actual innovation tend to get overlooked. Not to mention the fact that self expression has been almost completely compromised by capitalist influences which have forcefully warped our approach to individuality. Perhaps the most obvious function of contemporary art is the metaphor that it represents for the glaring inefficiencies that exist throughout our absurd modern society.

Contemporary art has become something like the opposite of the Titanic; a poorly made antiquated vessel that somehow continues to avoid sinking even amidst a steady field of apparent icebergs. For some time art has had to adapt to the lessening needs of its most practical applications. The role of art in society was once narrowly defined and unquestioned in its significance. Societal aggrandizing of art began as a contextual necessity and was strengthened by artists that also acted as relevant philosophers, inventors, architects, political activists and mathematicians. But as higher education evolved, the development of artists became more specialized and intrinsically connected to the powers that ruled over them. As a result, the perception of art and artists to the common folk has become increasingly confusing and unrelatable. The rise of technology, self-expression, and individualism has muddled art's standing in a modern context. Contemporary art yearns for a purpose and the public frequently concedes it. But what is this purpose? Because nobody actually knows the answer, art's purpose is malleable to its users and frequently used as a tool of deception and profiteering.
Art is certainly part of the pervasive capitalism that predestines the demise of humanity, but could it instead be an avenue to change course and direct us towards a more peaceful future? Probably not. Art is not as important as once was, and really, it should not ever be. Art is not most effective as a tool of society, but as a tool of the individual. Art is a joke, but while we are laughing at it, it is laughing with us.

Pt. III:
Some of us act like children, many of us eventually become adults, but few of us are actually ourselves. It is important to live knowing the significance of life now, but it is doubly important to be patient for what life can become. Life asks many questions, and those few answers it provides often only suggest further questions and refute past answers. Too often we yearn for the answer instead of exploring the question. Like, how are we going to defeat the robots?