



**Paul Russo**

(American, 1958 - )

NYT Arts & Leisure 05-07-17

Mixed media on hand sculpted Styrene

123 x 210 cm / 48.4 x 82.7 inch

**BIOGRAPHY**

(Paul Russo)



Paul Russo

Paul Russo, a native of Charlotte, North Carolina was born in 1958. He attended the Cleveland Institute of Art in Ohio before being sidelined by a too-close encounter with a power saw. Russo's period of convalescence turned into a months-long stint in New York City, where he found work as a member of an interior design team drawing plans for the home of Robert De Niro. After completing his B.F.A. in 1981 at California College of the Arts in Oakland, California, Russo was hired by Warner Brothers as a scenic painter for films. He went on to serve as an art director and illustrator for Revlon, Clairol, Condé Nast, and Bloomingdale's before becoming a fulltime artist.

Artworks and technique

With influences ranging from Dr. Seuss to Roy Lichtenstein, Russo casts his pop art sensibilities on a 21st century scale. Advances in technology have enabled him to delve into the heat-tempered sculpting of the world's ephemera in surprising ways. Through exaggerations of size, Russo places such familiar items as a crumpled-up ten-dollar bill or a bubble gum wrapper on the same relative plane as the viewer. Intricately detailed renderings at such outsized dimensions as four to five feet in size force the viewer into the role of studied observer. It is in this way that Russo's art speaks to the conversion of physical objects and the effect of that transformation on the viewer. Again, "all this stuff is going away," and Russo wants you to take a good long look.

From his "painting with paper" collages to his latest creations of wildly outsized and convoluted sculptures of money and candy wrappers, Paul Russo has sought to flatten the dimensional and elevate the flattened: "There are many shades from one end of the spectrum to the other, but everything has an opposite. My work is about finding what comes next." For Russo, a good deal of what's next involves a process of crumpling, folding, tearing, gluing, and re-composing – turning the printed pages of a single Vogue magazine into a sculpted wall hanging, for example, or transforming every printed note of every Beatles' song into a massive jumble of texture on canvas.

Message

The ink and paper era is drawing to a close. "All this stuff," as artist Paul Russo puts it, "is going away." That "stuff" is no less than the paper-based underpinnings of modern civilization. Texts, images, sheet music, currency – the paper document is being displaced by its transformation into so many bits of binary code, digitized for the screen and everywhere at once. Yet paper documents are themselves an expression of something else entirely. An artist sketches a two dimensional impression of a flower; a novelist commits an imagined conversation to paper – meaning is imbued within a separate medium, altered yet understood.

Artist's Statement

Welcome to my place in the massive experience of art. I create in the collective mind of art, where the 3-D illusion of space and the 2-D object become one. During my formation as an artist, I conceived the concept "Flat Depth," a realm where the future beckons to surpass the insistence on the universal flattening

of art. I have gone to great lengths to maximize the archival possibilities of ephemera - the printed word and page - a dominion we are about to leave behind forever. I was fortuitously born into the century of Pop Art and respect the form for its trenchant commentary on our human situation, and now shepherd the path to advance the universal artistic conversation by bending dimension. As my work anticipates the ceaseless evolution of art, and embraces the history thereof, from the Bible to a 3-D illusion of space, I savor the possibilities of greater abstraction, where a symphonic concept of three-dimensional paint, of deep depth, and undulation awaits. I express myself across numerous mediums, and joyfully embrace history and fire, technology and color, and our impending ability and outright need to conceive in new dimensions, to bring the future of art to life.

Paul Rousso Charlotte, North Carolina November 28, 2018

#### LITERATURE

##### Selected Publications

2015 - Art Style Magazine, Winter-Spring  
2015 - Southpark Magazine, June  
2013 - Detroit Free Press, September 25  
2013 - The Battle Creek Enquirer, September 26  
2013 - The Charlotte Observer, October 5  
2011 - The Charlotte Observer, April 20  
2011 -

#### EXHIBITIONS

##### Selected Exhibitions:

2018 'East meets West', SmithDavidson Gallery, Okt - Dec, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2018 - Art New York, USA

2018 - Art Palm Beach, USA

2017 - Art Miami, USA

2017 - PAN Amsterdam, the Netherlands

2017 - Modern Masters, SmithDavidson Gallery, Miami, USA

2017 - Times Suspended II, SmithDavidson Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2017 - Art New York, New York City, USA

2017 - Time Suspended, Miami Country Day School, Miami, USA

2016 - Art Miami, USA

2016 - PAN Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2016 - Mix and Match Exhibition, SmithDavidson Gallery Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2016 - Art New York, New York, USA

2016 - Palm Beach Show, West Palm Beach Convention Center, USA

2015 - Art Miami, Miami, USA

2015 - PAN Art Fair, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2015 - Art New York, New York City, USA

2015 - LA Art Show, Los Angeles, USA

2014 - Scope Miami, Miami, USA

2014 - Scope New York, New York City, USA

2014 - LA Art Show, Los Angeles, USA

2013 - Art Miami, Miami, USA

2013 - Scope Basel, Basel, Switzerland

2013 - Scope New York, New York City, USA

2013 - Art Baltimore, Baltimore, USA

2013 - Art Wynwood, Miami, USA

2013 - ArtPrize, Grand Rapids, USA

2012 - 2012 Regional Artist Project Grant (RAPG) recipient

2012 - ArHamptons, Bridgehampton, USA

2012 - Boston International Art Fair, Boston, USA

2012 - LA Art Show, Los Angeles, USA

2011 - The Butterfly Project, Holocaust Memorial. Sculpture for the Foundation of Shalom Park

2011 - Scope Basel, Basel, Switzerland

2011 - Scope New York, New York City, USA

2011 - Scope Miami, Miami, USA

2007 - Public painting for the Foundation of Shalom Park

2005 - Charlotte Bobcats Basketball Arena, A commission of six individual works of art for the new Arena.

1997 - Charlotte International Airport, Charlotte, USA

1997 - NC Spirit Square Arts Center, Charlotte, USA

1994 - Solo Exhibition, Carillon Building, Charlotte, USA

1992 - Spirit Square Arts Center, Charlotte, USA

1991 - Solo, Lincolnton Cultural Center, Lincolnton, USA