

Jean Tock

How long have you worked as an artist? I've been pursuing fine art for about 10 years; prior to that I worked as an art director and graphic designer in the publishing industry.

Have you always worked 3-dimensionally? When I decided to spend more time creating original art, I was very drawn to working with found objects. So while I have created some 2D collage works, I much prefer the 3D assemblage.

Where do you get your inspiration? Do you have favorite artists? (I'm guessing Joseph Cornell!) Joseph Cornell is far and away my favorite artist. I had not heard of him until about 10 years ago when I was introduced to his work by an art teacher (and fellow Guild member, Christopher Staples.) After reading his biography several years ago, my connection with him grew even deeper. Our emotional and psychological similarities are downright eerie. I am also a huge fan of Kurt Schwitters, Robert Rauschenberg, and Jasper Johns.

What is your process? Where do you source your materials? I have been known to build a wooden box in order to work with an idea I've sketched out, but most often the found box dictates the work. I am inspired by the workmanship, material, and dimensions of boxes that I buy in thrift stores and yard sales.

Do you have a dedicated studio space? Do you keep daily studio hours? Listen to music when you work--what kind? I am very fortunate to have a small building about 50' from my house which I use as a studio. I do not keep daily studio hours, and I only listen to music when I'm doing something that doesn't require much thought, like sanding or painting. When I'm working on new ideas, I spend a lot of time just sitting and thinking things through in silence. Going through boxes and boxes of found objects is how I "get my hands in the medium" -- it's very cerebral because the objects have to "speak" to each other in some way for the piece to have any poeticism or wit, but it's also just a matter of digging in and seeing what I've accumulated that I might want to work with that day.

Something else we should know about you and your work? I like my work to have meaning without being too literal. I am constantly working toward a more minimalist execution of my ideas. I'm working on two new pieces right now that started out as boxes containing 5 or 6 elements and I'm down to 1 or 2 in each box. The pieces are so much stronger when I'm able to exercise this restraint.

I am looking forward to being a part of "The Women", curated by Nancy Moore this May/June at the Guild.

How long have you been a member of the Guild? How did you hear about us? I joined RGoA about 4 years ago. I learned about the Guild from an artist friend who was already a member!

