

Tor Larsen

Artist Statement

I have always been interested in the idea of value, why an object has value. Is it intrinsic or based on the perceptions of the maker, observer or buyer or all three? In 'Timeless' and 'Turbostop' I am exploring the way value and materialism interact with objects that challenge those notions with varying degrees of preciousness and utility. In 'Tivoli' I look at the way objects can be so much more than the sum of their parts.

Turbostop takes the idea of mundane utility and makes it valuable. An electronic brick is both pointless and compelling, suggesting the unlikely marketing line 'new and improved'. It is quite literally a glorified doorstep.

Timeless is ostensibly a wall clock but one with six different fixed times, rendering it essentially useless. Each face is a brand from a different period, a historical oddity, a collector's item. Some evoke ideas of new wealth and exclusivity while others are obscure, cheap, old and worn out. In this time of smart phones and Fitbits, wristwatches and clocks in general have a new form of value in addition those as status symbols and jewellery: they are timeless anachronisms.

Tivoli is a moment from my past, my Danish heritage and derives from my fascination with theatre in a technical rather than dramatic sense. It is small box that contains a situation, a moment in time, a world. The materials are simple but what is evoked is visually and mentally complex.

Bio

As an artist Tor gained early exposure to tools and processes in his parent's jewellery workshop. His first jobs were as a model and prop-maker which led to further employment in the film industry building miniature scenes and creating visual effects. In 1998 he completed a diploma in production design at the AFTRS, following which he worked for various companies and productions on the Gold Coast and in Melbourne as an art director and visual effects coordinator, eventually becoming a producer in Sydney.

In 2015 Tor completed a degree in political economy at Sydney University. More recently he has been making jewellery, small sculptures and miniature installations that reflect his political, social and historical/cultural interests as experienced through the cinematic frame. His most recent exhibition was held with his parents and sister, *Two Generations: Larsen & Lewers Pia Larsen, Tor Larsen* at Spot81 gallery, Sydney in 2016.

Tor's artwork is inspired by film making processes in which a scene is defined by a camera frame enclosing environments, objects/props that viewers mentally and occasionally physically interact with. His disturbing and surreal creations are infused with a sense of lost history, changing social/philosophical values as well as darker subconscious themes.

His recent work is based on the enclosed vitrine, reminiscent of a C18 *Kunstkabinett* (Cabinet of Wonder). In these museum style specimen cabinets a combination of organic and human-made materials are combined to evoke a psychological reaction in the viewer.

When we look into the world created in a cabinet we make our own connections and assumptions based on personal histories and knowledge of the world. He speaks about his work as originating from an interest in creating objects, environments and spaces that pose questions that don't always have comfortable answers.