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Gary Taxali, Favourite Artist of J. Timberlake, Shows in Toronto

January 29th, 2010



Gary Taxali waits for the opening of his mid-career retrospective at a Toronto art gallery. He walks around and reminisces about what music he was listening to when he was creating a variety of the 343 pieces taped on the wall. He points to a brand new picture of a measuring tape with human features set against a bright purple background. "I was listening to The Jesus Lizard doing this one," he says. He continues through the gallery listing off his musical inspirations like Blind Willie McTell and the MC 5.

The connection between his visual artwork and music is a natural one with fans like Justin Timberlake and Steve Nash of the NBA's Phoenix Suns. "I'm obsessed with music. I cannot draw without it. It makes a mark on the part of the brain that is so receptive to art," Taxali says. "If I show you a piece of my work, I can't tell you what I did that week but I can tell you which song I was listening to."

His illustrations are whimsical and nostalgic with charming characters printed in bold colors. His work winks at Apple, Facebook and his home country Canada. One memorable print is a portrait of Adam Sandler set behind cartoon animals he did for Rolling Stone. All of his work is printed on found objects like old paper, book covers and weathered envelopes. His extensive publishing clients include Entertainment Weekly, The New York Times and MTV.

Taxali collaborated with musician Aimee Mann on the album art and inside illustrations for her record @#%*! Smilers. "She sent me all the songs that were not mixed yet and for 18 months I had these little treasures that no one else had heard yet," he says. He says the creation of the artwork was the epitome of a collaboration and he even incorporated some of Mann's personal doodles into the album sleeve art. The special edition of the album, constructed with steel bolts, was nominated for the Best Boxed or Special Limited Edition Package Grammy in 2009 but lost to Radiohead's In Rainbows. "I never imagined I would be nominated for a Grammy... People seemed fascinated by the idea of an art award," he says. He admits he doesn't often watch the Grammys and probably won't tune in this Sunday, not out of resentment but because of his lack of a TV. "If I can find a television to watch it on I'll check it out."

The Taxali 300 runs from Jan 28 to Feb 28, 2010 at Narwhal Art Projects in Toronto.

Tags: Adam Sandler, Aimee Mann, Gary Taxali, justin timberlake, Steve Nash

Posted on Friday, January 29th, 2010 at 3:58 pm by Jessica F and is filed under News.



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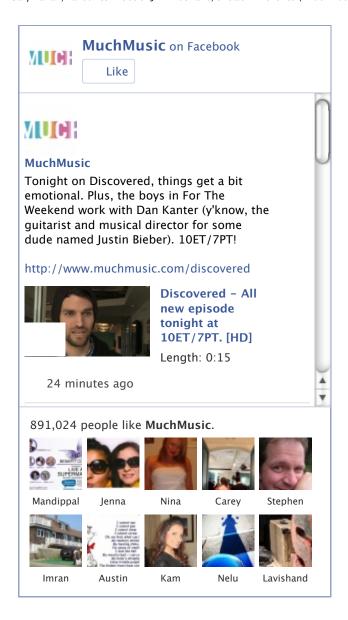


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