

ARROW

Issue three \$7.00 US | \$9.00 CAN

committed to good art

ANDREW SCHULTZ
CHARLES GLAUBITZ
MELINDA BECK
JEREMIAH KETNER
CHRIS DUNCAN



03>



0 74470 99217 2





**AND-
AREW
SCHO-
WILTE**





Q&A by Lenny Micarelli. Images courtesy of the artist.

ARROW—Andrew, your work is filled with symbolism. There are direct connotations to the consumerism of today's society and its disposable culture. What is the message behind your work? What would you like your viewer to get from your paintings?

ANDREW SCHOULTZ—My work is filled with symbolism and yes, there are different connotations to consumerism and its disposable culture present in it. However, I don't think it would be impossible for a viewer to draw other conclusions. I am affected by and tend to paint what I see every day to a degree, and unfortunately in today's world there are unlimited signs of the aftermath of consumerism everywhere. You would have to be blind not to see it. Although I am critical of consumerism, I am a lot more critical of "blind" consumerism. This "feeding frenzy of convenience" mentality that is so prevalent in today's society is neither responsible, nor is it sustainable. I am not going to sit here on a pedestal, and act like I am not participating and benefiting from it, to a degree. If you live in America, whether you like it or not, you are part of it. My depictions of such things to an extent, are an effort to establish a period of time in my work, which is the present, or now. That is not to say that there are not critical motivations behind these depictions. It is very important for people to be informed and conscious in their decision-making in regard to all of this. This is all I feel like I can really hope for. Our fast paced society doesn't make it very easy to do so though. With informed decision-making there is at least some sense of responsibility added to the equation, even if it is ignored. For example, if you want to shop at Wal-Mart, go for it. But at least have the consciousness to know that by shopping there, you are supporting the greedy, rich, exploitative, soulless, corporation that they are. It is not so easy to ignore when it is put in such honest terms. The problem is that most people are not making informed decisions. I

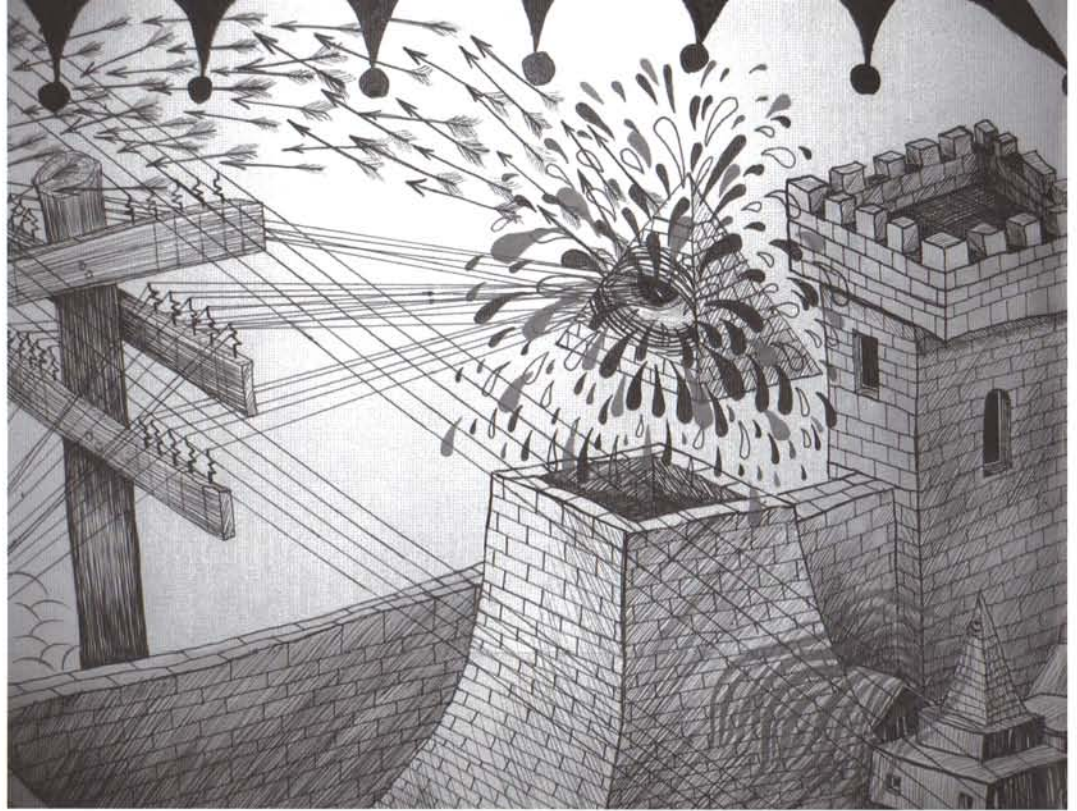
guess it is convenient, easier, and cheaper in the short term, to ignore things like this. I must also acknowledge that some people do not live in a financial situation that allows them the privilege to even make such decisions, and what makes it even worse is that this is all part of the master plan of Corporate America. It is sad.

In terms of messages in my work, there definitely are; however in the recent past I have avoided telling viewers what they are. That would defeat the purpose of painting them to begin with. My intention with my work is not to be definitive. Generally speaking, people are not stupid. They will be able to draw their own conclusions and I want to allow them to do so. Their conclusions may be different from my intent, but that is fine with me. An artists' intent is no more significant or important than what a viewer sees or gets from a work of art. A viewer may get something similar, or they may get something completely different than what I intended, and that should be welcomed in all art. Sometimes people see things in my work that I never thought of. It's always interesting what different viewers decide to put emphasis on in a piece. It is all nonverbal communication, and it is that for a reason. If it was easier to put things into words or another medium, I would not be spending so much time painting and drawing, nor do I think they would accurately translate into any other form. It doesn't feel that necessary to try to explain my work in any other terms. This is not to say that "meaning" in art is not both important and necessary.

ARROW—I read somewhere that you like to engage people with your art, thus your favorite place to work is outdoors, particularly doing murals. What is the meaning with this approach to your work?

ANDREW—I do like to engage people with my work; however, I would not say that the outdoors is my favorite place to work anymore. It is very unpredictable. The weather, lighting, storage of supplies and ladders, and access to bathrooms and water, among other things make it very frustrating. There are always distractions, and inconveniences with it. I have been jumped while painting, bricks have been thrown at me, I have fallen off ladders because of people fighting below, and my bags and supplies have been stolen, just to name a few. Engaging with the public is great, but sometimes I just feel like a sitting duck. That is not to complain at all. This is what you are dealing with when you are putting up work in the streets, whether legally or illegally. I wouldn't want it any other way. I don't enter lightly into doing public murals anymore. They are a ton of work and an even greater commitment, and for the most part there is no pay. Not that money has ever been a reason for doing or not doing a mural. One of the reasons I love doing murals in public is the sheer size and scale of it. The potential for both of these is exciting and incomparable to what is possible in your studio, or almost any museum in the world. What museum can house a four block long mural?

But, in all honesty, my favorite part is definitely the audience. It is perhaps the most unpredictable and diverse audience that you can possibly address with art, and often this audience ignores art. It is far more diverse than the audience that walks in a gallery or a museum. There is a lot more responsibility with public art than most people, including artists, would ever think. A good mural or piece of public art should work with the environment and community it exists in, not against it. It should be relevant, and seek to connect with those who must live with it. The weight of this responsibility has gotten considerably heavier for me in the recent past. This consideration is important because it is what separates public art from all the crummy billboards and advertisements that bombard us every day. A billboard doesn't qualify as working with the environment that it is in and is a very questionable use of public space. Instead, its purpose is simply to sell you something. This is a very important distinction for me to make. I am not trying to sell anyone anything with my public work. It sure feels like Corporate America owns our public space these days, and no doubt this is a worthy issue to address with art. In many ways, this fact has legitimized the argument against all of these tough graffiti laws that most cities have passed these days. It really has become the company line and moral high-ground for many "street artists," but it is really not the battle I want to participate in when I do public art. Everyone knows if you have money and are rich, you can say whatever you want to the public. If you are poor, you get arrested and thrown in jail for it. People drive by five-story tall billboards of a half-naked Britney Spears and don't see anything wrong with it, but God forbid if some kid spray paints his name on a wall. That kid should be thrown in jail. This is so crazy to me.



ARROW—Would it be an appropriate statement if people describe Andrew Schoultz, as an artist whose political views are reflected in his artwork?

ANDREW—Compared to most artists these days, I would say I am very political. Compared to most political activists these days, I would say I am not political at all. It is actually funny how that works. I try my best to be conscious of sociopolitical issues globally, as well as locally, and to make an effort to address them in my work. There is definitely a political undertone to all my work. I have been involved with political activism in the past, and undoubtedly will be again in the future. However, there are some people who put their whole lives into political activism and in their shadow I would feel very phony claiming to be a political person.

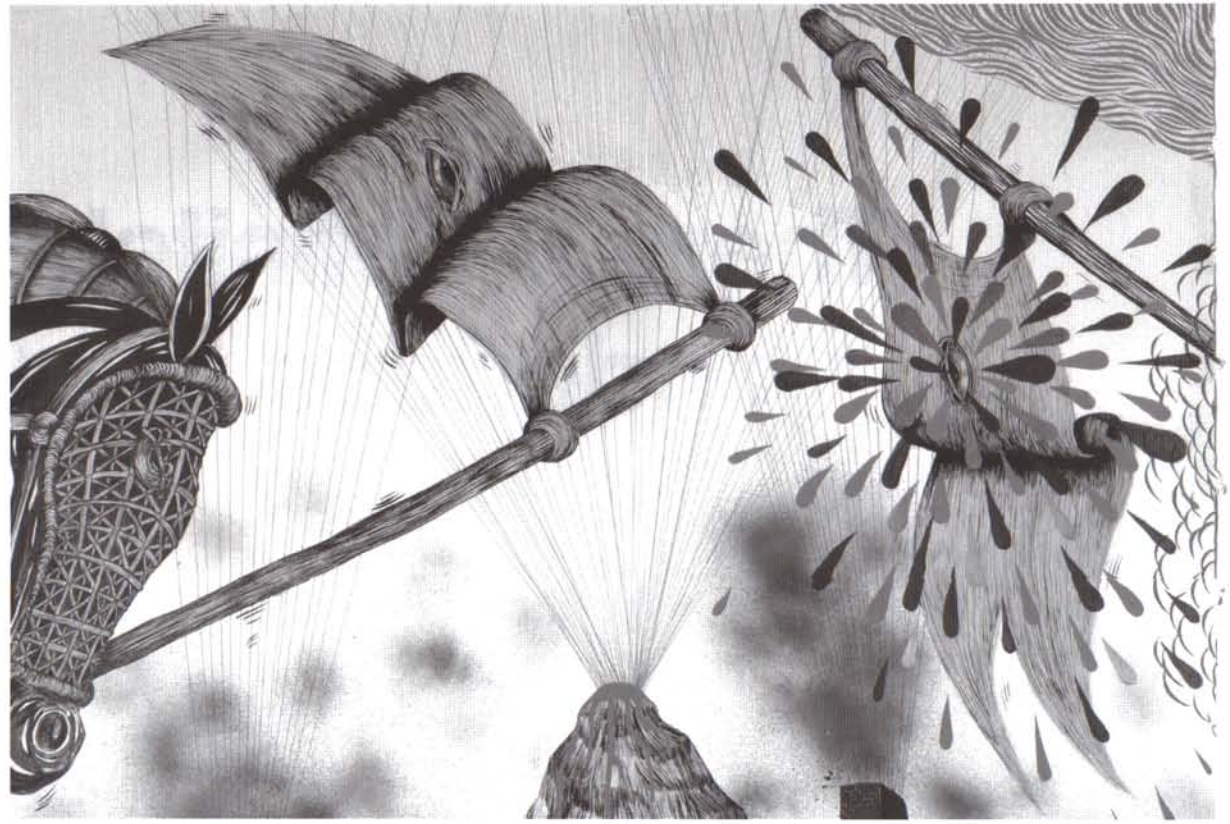
ARROW—Your style has been compared to M.C. Escher and contemporaries like Barry McGee. I'd like to know if you agree with such comparisons. Also, where did you draw your main influences when you began your artistic career years ago?

ANDREW—It doesn't bother me to be compared to them. I definitely admire and respect their work and have been influenced by them to an extent. I might also say that in some respects, it is probably related to similar aesthetic interests, and preferred processes that go into making the work. I have had many conversations with people who compare my work to other current and very contemporary artists as well. Many times, I do not know who they are talking about or don't really see the connection. Similarities in art are so much more about content, rather than style. I don't really pay that much attention to what is going on in contemporary pop art, so I am not really up on the "who's who" of it all. I am really into art from hundreds of years ago, and definitely the illustrative work and

**There is definitely a political
undertone to all my work.**



woodblock cuts from the late 1800's, before cameras were the primary medium for illustrating periodicals. It is funny to me when people recognize a style, drawing tendency, or aesthetic quality in a piece of work, and immediately assume credit to whomever happens to be using it prevalently in their current work, instead of recognizing the origin from which it came, or where that contemporary drew their reference from. I have been very influenced by comics, Indian miniatures, early map making attempts, Japanese screen paintings and also Dover clip art books. Some contemporary artists that have had a real impact on me are Alicia McCarthy, Ray Patlan, and Aaron Noble to name a few. Graffiti art has also been a big part of my life and has a tremendous influence on my work and overall mind frame.

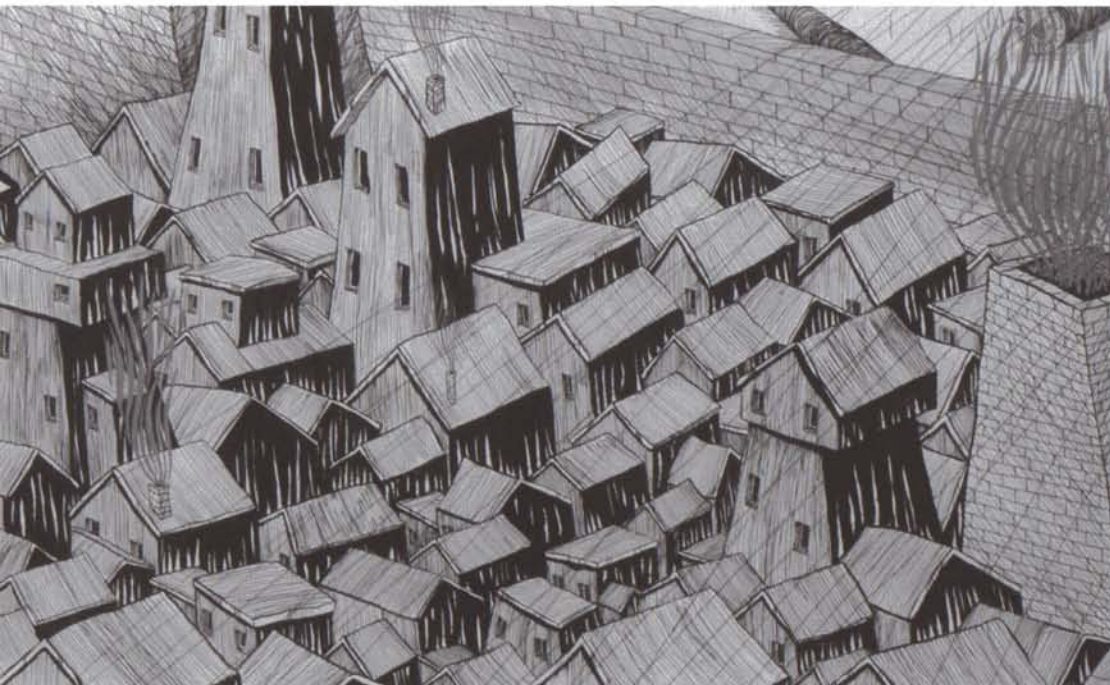


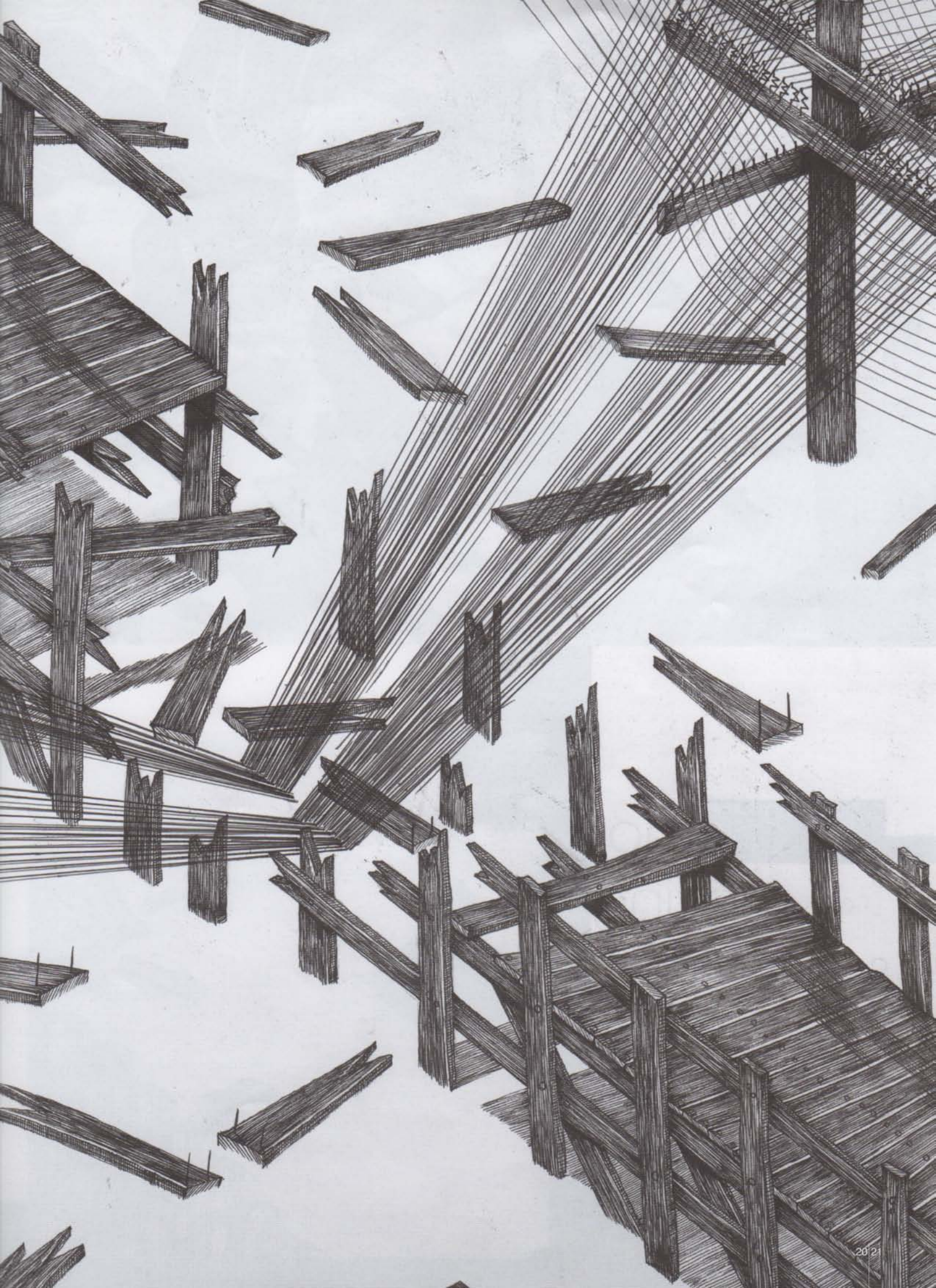
ARROW—In your artists' statement, you say that, "art is an uncontrollable passion and obsession." That is very interesting. Would you care to elaborate on that?

ANDREW—It pretty much means what it says. I am obsessed. If I am not making something, I am thinking of something to make. My entire house is littered with notes, thumbnail sketches, and reminders of ideas. There are piles of junk mail and scrap paper covered in this gibberish all over my house. It drives my girl crazy. Sometimes, I come back to one of them after a while and I am like, "what the hell is this supposed to mean?" No matter when, where, or what situation, if an idea comes to me, I just have to make a note of it, and try to remember it. My mind is constantly flooded with detailed ideas

and variations of each of those. It stresses me out, thinking that I won't remember them, and what is even more perplexing, is trying to pick one or a few to go with. It's kind of like a disorder. However, I suspect that I am not the only artist with these symptoms. It's uncontrollable, meaning I can't stop this process and state of mind, even if I wanted or tried to. It naturally just happens, and has really become a huge part of me. Ever since I was a small child, my mind has worked like this. Now it is focused on art; it used to be on graffiti, and before that it was on skateboarding. I get obsessed with things and they become inseparable. I would not want it any other way. You definitely could say I have a one-track mind. When my work space was in my house, I would start like 20 paintings a day.

There were piles and piles of newly started pieces all over the house, in every room. I was completely engulfed by it. I would paint until 3am every day, wake up the next morning at 11am, and start all over again. I couldn't even watch a movie or eat a meal, without being distracted by it. There was always something staring me in the face to do, or start. I hardly left the house, and was definitely going a bit nuts. I didn't even realize it at the time. Our whole house was like a work in progress, and my girlfriend was not psyched about it. Something had to change. For my sanity and my girl, I had to move my studio out of the house. I still have a work space at home, but for the most part I moved operations elsewhere. It has been good to make that separation for me. Now, I realize the importance of getting some breathing room from my work, and thinking about it when it is not in front of me. ↪

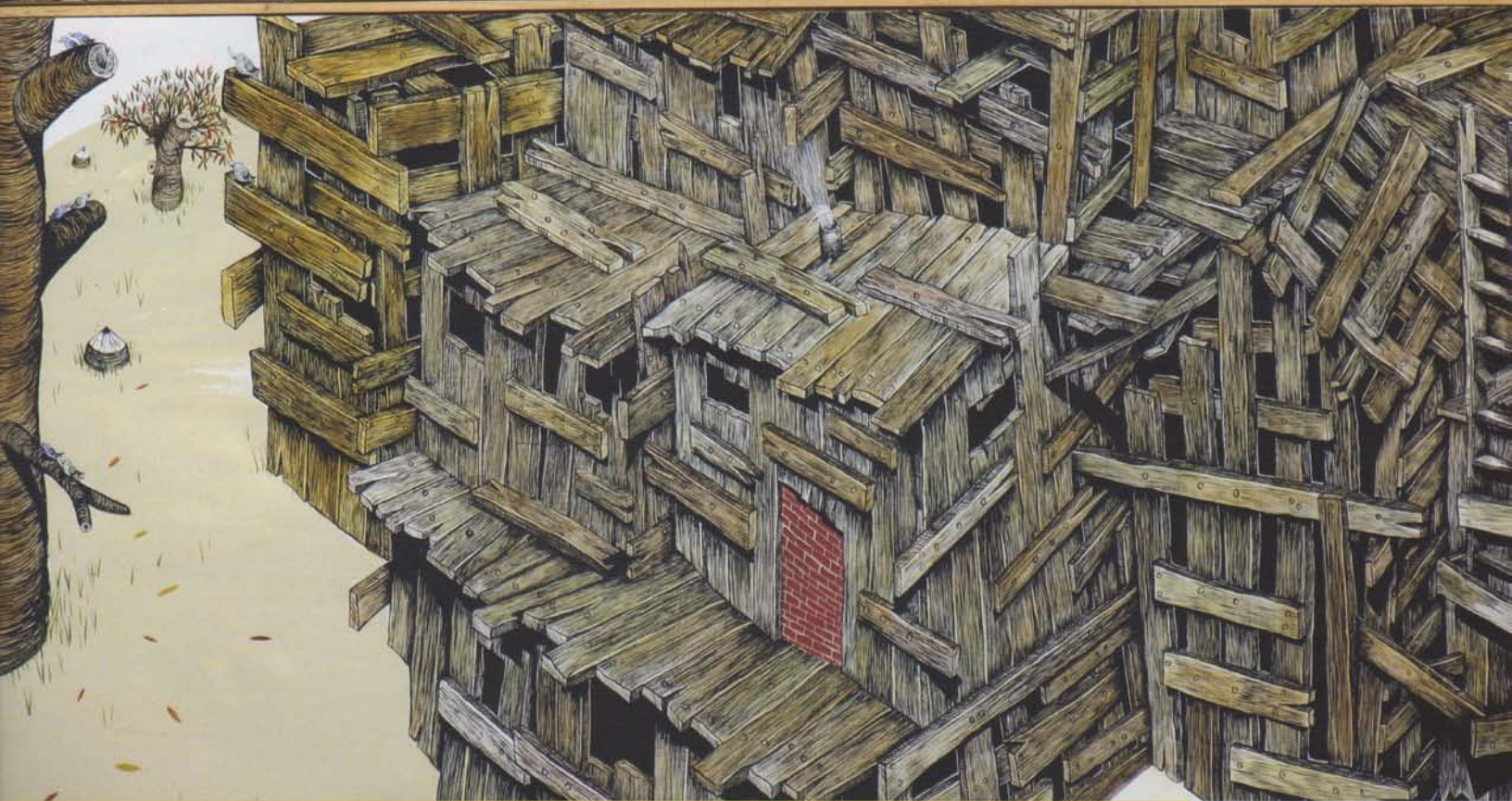






If I am not
making
something,
I am
thinking of
something
to make.





Andrew
Schoultz

