



MANIC MONTAGE

BY JOEY DAMMIT!



their identity. *Woman of Ill Repute* is a favourite, inspired by early 20th century pornography, with a woman posed as Cleopatra. I've used her in several paintings but never a full work, and figured this was the right time. It must have worked well because it sold within five minutes of opening the gallery doors for the showing. I call the woman 'Cleo'.

How long have you been in the artwork game?

From the age of 4, when I drew Samson knocking down the pillars, during Sunday school. I was inspired by the movie version. I went to Humber College for graphic design and advertising, although that has little to do with my work now, I found it very boring. I got a studio job and quit within three months. Nick Bantock was a big inspiration - he did the *Griffin & Sabine Trilogy*, where his own illustrations were combined with pictures of magazines and photocopies. I've been doing my own version, and call it the Manic Montage. The name suited me because I suffer from bipolar disorder. The first exhibit I did was at the Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition in 1994, where I won the Best Mixed Media award on my first shot. So, I figured I fooled them, and could do this professionally. Getting bigger and better ever since.

How many units have you sold and what was the highest selling price?

I've sold about 80 pieces since 1994. Prices start at \$800 but the highest ever was \$2500 for the piece *Big* in Japan.

What's your favourite of the pieces featured on these pages?

I've always enjoyed artists like Jasper Johns, who use the same icon over and over again, where it becomes part of

Where are you trying to take this whole thing?

I would like to mount a show in Paris, France within the next couple years. I was there in 2001 and two galleries showed some interest. I was kind of insecure, thinking I didn't deserve the break, but now I do. New York City has gone back to showing abstract and landscapes - by comparison, Los Angeles is a better scene for me now. That area, including San Francisco, would be a good place to show. But the dream I have points to Paris. I'd also like to have a shop: Planet DAMMIT! Inspired by Keith Haring's pop art store in NYC in the 1980s. But my version would be in Toronto: everything from t-shirts to greeting cards to coffee mugs with my artwork in it, along with a gallery. Some people would say that's selling out, but I say that whatever comes my way tends to work well for me.

joeydammit.com

