



Artist Profile: Salt Lake City **Paradox of Information**

The downtown scenery of Joey Behrens
by Geoff Wichert | photos by Shalee Cooper

Riding her bike through the streets of downtown Salt Lake, Joey Behrens watches for an interaction of visual elements an accidental confluence connecting commonplace optical events that she finds compelling. Returning later with a camera, she takes a photograph to help her remember what she has seen when she draws and possibly paints it. As she stands with her camera pointed, seemingly at nothing in particular, a passing pedestrian is likely to approach her and, voice rising with curiosity, ask her just what she is taking a picture of. To Behrens, this is confirmation that she is on the right track. She believes these visual cues she seeks reveal clues to truths about the world that surrounds us and how our senses perceive it. That we rarely notice them is not due to their scarcity or any lack of ability on our part. Rather, we don't witness them because out of habit we don't look for anything we don't already expect. Her project, what she means her art to do, is to overcome those prejudices in herself, the blinkers that prevent her from seeing with fresh eyes. And if, as a result of her efforts, some of those who view her art also learn to see anew, so much the better.

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Exhibition Preview: Salt Lake City **Back to the Beginning** Artists of Utah's 35 x 35² at Finch Lane Gallery

"The exhibition began with an empty space -- one of the best in Salt Lake City. Artspace Forum Gallery offered Artists of Utah the opportunity to create a unique exhibition featuring Utah artists 35 or under. . . Despite the fact that the exhibition took place during the busy holiday season, a record number of visitors came to the gallery, oftentimes waiting at the door first thing in the morning.

So read an article written in February of 2003, at a time when Artists of Utah was in its own infancy and took the groundbreaking move to give exposure to artists who were also just starting out. Six years later the organization may have grown into maturity but it is still looking to foster Utah's young generation of artists.

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Exhibition Review: Salt Lake City **Economic Indicators** Foster Art Program, Red Call Box and other exciting news

by Shawn Rossiter

Every day the mass media has a new indicator to tell you in which direction the economy is headed. The only problem is -- that direction seems to change every day, and in some news cycles is going in both directions at once. We don't have any numbers to announce regarding how many pieces of art sold in Utah last month or the state of consumer confidence. But if miniature golf, a British telephone box and foster care can be considered indicators then things in Utah's art community are looking very exciting.

The Foster Art Program -- where patrons are invited to foster a work (or works) of art in their home for a specific period of time, free of charge -- was launched this past month in Salt Lake City. The program is the brainchild of Salt Lake artist John Sproul, who says that experience has taught him "that there can be a lot of interest in contemporary art but that many people often feel intimidated by it, they are not comfortable with it but once they are given an idea of what it is about they become interested and some even excited about it." The program, he hopes, will remove some of the barriers that keep people from engaging with the art. He wants to bring "the experience of contemporary art to the everyday living of those who have not had that experience and to increase the engagement of those who have."

At the inaugural event, hosted by the [Salt Lake Art Center](#), seven participating artists spoke about their work to an audience of about forty, while representative images were displayed on an overhead screen. After the presentation patrons were invited to submit a prioritized list of which artists' work they would like to have in their home. Patron and artist will be put into contact with each other to select specific works to be fostered. These will remain in the foster homes for six to eight weeks. The only thing asked of the patrons is that they share with the artists and program organizers what having the works in an intimate, familiar setting has been like.

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