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LOCAL STORIES

Meet Alex Weinstein: artist

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We had the good fortune of connecting with Alex Weinstein and we've shared our conversation below.

Hi Alex, we'd love to hear about how you approach risk and risk-taking

My mother never lets anything stand in the way of something she wants to discuss, understand or explore and will throw her intellectual curiosity at a topic without restraint. By comparison, my father is purposeful, academic and critically rigorous in his interests. As a team, they are so strong because of their complementary strengths. I mention them because I wonder if "risk" isn't more easily observed by the person standing next to you than it is by your own view of things. I was a gregarious kid; physically confident, athletic. I wouldn't think twice before hucking myself off of jungle gyms or sliding down handrails in preschool. Later, skateboarding literally consumed my life and skaters crash, a lot. I guess my sense of risk was very physical as a younger person and now it's more philosophical and by that I mean that while I'm not skating much these days, I do look for projects with challenges and uncertainties that I want to learn from. My mother's intuitive approach to learning was omnivorous, self-managed and motivated. She was pretty anti-user's-manual. I've inherited her curiosity and zeal so I do try and fling myself at projects I am not really "qualified" to undertake. I like to learn on the job and that's a type of risk-taking, I suppose. My thought is: I can do that, if I try.



Let's talk shop? Tell us more about your career, what can you share with our community?

I make paintings and sculpture primarily. That's my main, professional output and I've been at it for quite a while now. I show my work and am grateful to have the support of my dealers (Leslie Sacks Gallery and Heather Gaudio Fine Art). That said, I get bored and restless trying to make a painting every day so, over the many years, I have learned to allow (and trust) my creative interests to wander in a way that is ultimately generative. I designed a stone and steel table with Editions du Cote in Biarritz, France that I am really proud of. I have published a number of articles on contemporary art with The Surfers Journal. I've made furniture out of wood; out of fiberglass and out of concrete; I designed and remodeled a house; fixed up an old Mercedes; I have a band (les enfants – and pre-Covid, we played out regularly in Los Angeles); I've restored vintage guitars and built electric guitar cabinets from scratch – all while I was “supposed” to be painting. The lesson it's taken me so long to learn is that I can't force myself to be inspired to make oil paintings no matter how hard I try. That used to bother me because I have friends who would prefer to be left alone to paint all-day, non-stop and I interpreted that as the essential model for authenticity. I have since learned that my creative well runs very deep but I don't like to work and rework in the same domain for too long.

Let's say your best friend was visiting the area and you wanted to show them the best time ever. Where would you take them? Give us a little itinerary – say it was a week long trip, where would you eat, drink, visit, hang out, etc.

most of my friends are surfers. when they come to town, we organize our time around the tide and swell. I know the sand bars in Manhattan Beach really well so that's likely where we'd wind up. I love the Getty Center and always take visiting friends and family there. The tram-ride up is weirdly stirring and disembarking on the main plaza there, with the sun-drenched-Mount-Olympus-vibe and creepy giant boy sculpture by the brilliant Charles Ray, is straight up sizzling, every time. near my studio, in Gardena, is El Antojito; a fabulous Mexican restaurant on what looks like a (very) used car lot. The food comes from a truck, perma-parked there. The tacos Al Pastor are unforgettable. Also nearby: wonderfully fresh-made ramen at Umemura and upscale soba at Ota Fuku. I am a loyal supporter of LA Louver Gallery in Venice. Their program is rock-solid; the space is perfect and unlike the vast majority of galleries who discharge a frosty, almost hostile atmosphere to visitors; LA Louver Gallery is downright friendly. Go ahead: ask a question, they'll answer it. Go in shorts if you feel like it;

it's the beach. If the timing is right: Frank Gehry's Disney Concert Hall is wonderful for fancy music and there are serious restaurants shouldering it. If you like loud music and cold whiskey, walk down 2nd street to the Redwood Bar and stay all night.

