

Mark Wagner Artist's Statement

Mark Wagner is best known for his intricate collages made entirely from deconstructed US dollars. Wagner destroys thousands of bills yearly to create works which pointedly and playfully explore the intersection of wealth, power, value, and American identity. Wagner's audacious destruction of this revered icon of American commerce is checked only by his virtuoso material manipulation, which renders what you will. — portraits, plant life, fantastical beasts, or allegorical scenes recasting George Washington in every role.

Wagner's artwork is an entry point to a conversation extending far beyond the art world. Decades dedicated to destroying banknotes has provided Wagner with a unique perspective on the nature of money. Modern man's obsession with finance and our wistful attempts to tame it through economics belies money's emotional, mercurial, even fictional nature. Wagner addresses these issues in writing, lecture, and interview as eloquently as he does through his artwork.

Wagner's work is collected by dozens of institutions including the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, and Museum of Modern Art. It has shown extensively including at The Metropolitan Museum, The Getty Research Institute, and National Portrait Gallery. It's been seen in Time, Newsweek, Harpers, and Art in America as well as on CBS, PBS, and the silver screen.

Mark Wagner Resume

EDUCATION

University of Wisconsin, Madison, BFA 1995

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023

The Matter of Money, Susquehanna Art Museum, Harrisburg, PA

2022

Art Made From Money Made From Art, Lancaster Museum of Art, PA

2019

Bounty (with Kris Kuksi) Joshua Liner Gallery, NYC

2017

Face Off (with Stacey Lee Webber) Bertrand Productions, Philadelphia, PA

2016

I'm Mark Wagner & I Approve this Message, Pavel Zoubok Gallery, NYC

2013

Money, Power, Sex, & Mark Wagner, Pavel Zoubok Gallery, NYC

2012

Voting with Your Pocketbook, Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL

2011

Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death, Pavel Zoubok Gallery, NYC

2010

Face Value, Faulconer Gallery, Grinnell College, IA

2008

My Portfolio, Pavel Zoubok Gallery, NYC

Creative Accounting, Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL

2006

Alternating Currency (with CK Wilde) Pavel Zoubok Gallery, NYC

Tags and Bills, Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL

2003

Library in a Book in a Library, Parson's School of Design, NYC

1997

Would I, Wood Eye, Gallery 214, Madison, WI

1996

New and Used Art, Memorial Union Gallery, Madison, WI

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2023

Cultural Currency, Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI

Cultural Currency, Bedford Gallery, Walnut Creek, CA

Puff Puff Pass, Bertrand Productions, Philadelphia, PA

2022

Among Friends, curated by Even Gibbs etc, Flag Art Foundation, NYC

Defaced, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England

2021

The Money Show, Saint Kate/ Arts Hotel, Milwaukee, WI

Tripping Wilderness, Todd Pavlisko curator, Jacaruso Gallery, Rhinebeck, NY

2019

Mediums of Exchange, Lehman College, Fiterman Art Center, NYC
Cut Up Cut Out, Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI
Cut Up Cut Out, Amarillo Museum of Art, Amarillo, TX
Your Favorite Artist's Favorite Artist, Joshua Liner Gallery, NYC
Summer Mixer, Joshua Liner Gallery, NYC
Cash Is King / Money Talks, Satchi Gallery, London, England
2018
Cut Up Cut Out, Huntsville Museum of Art, Huntsville, AL
Under Construction, Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, NC
Engaged Editions: Advocacy in Print, Brooklyn Artists Alliance, Brooklyn, NY
Art and Currency, LCD Gallery, Houston, TX
2017
Deep Cuts: Contemporary Paper Cutting, Currier Museum, Manchester, NH
Cut Up Cut Out, Bedford Gallery, Walnut Creek, CA
Cut Up Cut Out, Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue, WA
State of the Art, Frist Center for Visual Arts, Nashville, TN
2016
Platforms, Lawrence Art Center, Lawrence, KA
2014
State of the Art, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AK
In __ We Trust, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH
Currency, Proteus Gowanus Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Behind the Personal Library, Center for Book Arts, NYC
2013
Sex, Money and Power, Maison Particuliere, Brussels, Belgium
Love Me Tender, Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue, WA
2012
Diamond Leaves, Central Academy of Fine Arts Museum, Beijing, China
Rorschach, Phillips De Pury, NYC
Thenceforward and Forever Free, Haggerty Museum, Milwaukee, WI
Party Headquarters: Art and Political Absurdity, Pratt Manhattan Gallery, NYC
We Have Relocated to our New Location, Picture Farm Gallery, NYC
Remix: Selections from ICC, Daum Museum of Contemporary Art, Sedalia, MO
2011
Americans Now, The National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, DC
People Don't Like to Read Art, Western Exhibition, Chicago, IL
Sweet and Savory, Pavel Zoubok Gallery, NYC
The Bank and Trust Show, The Arts Exchange, White Plains, NY
Borders and Frontiers, Oakland University Art Gallery, MI
Extreme Materials 2, Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, NY
Paper Cuts, Fullerton College Art Gallery, CA
Remix: Selections from the ICC, Samek Art Gallery, Lewisberg, PA
2010
Resurrectine, Ronald Feldman Fine Art, NYC
Size Does Matter, Flag Art Foundation, NYC
Pop Goes the World, Pavel Zoubok Gallery, NYC
A Reader's Art, Susan Hensel Gallery, Minneapolis, MN
Nothing To Say, Guerrero Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Under the influence of Fashion and Finance, Weisman Museum of Art, Malibu, CA
2009
Text / Message: Books by Artists, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN

Wall Rockets, FLAG Art Foundation, NYC and Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY
Moving Money, SAC Gallery, NYC

Liberty, special project Pulse Art Fair, Miami, FL

Collage, London / New York, FRED, London, England

Paper Trail v.5, Judi Rotenberg Gallery, Boston, MA

The New Deal, Art and Currency, BRIC Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
2008

1968/2008: The Culture of Collage, Pavel Zoubok Gallery, NYC

Messages & Magic, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI

Attention to Detail, FLAG Art Foundation, NYC

2007

The Colonial Show, Second Street Gallery, Charlottesville, VA

Money, Hewitt Gallery of Art, Marymount College, NYC

Making the Most of It, Islip Art Museum, East Islip, NY

Bits and Pieces: The Collage Impulse, Lehman College Art Gallery, Bronx, NY

2006

The New Collage, Pavel Zoubok Gallery, NYC

Money Changes Everything, Schroeder Romero, NYC

2005

The Artist Turns to the Book, Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities, Los Angeles, CA

2004

Jonathan Mason, Christian Uhl, and Mark Wagner, 7/3 Split, Chicago, IL

A Perfect Union...More or Less, Renaissance Society / University of Chicago, IL

What the Book?, Flux Factory, Queens, NY

Another Voice, Decker Gallery, Maryland Institute of Art, Baltimore, MD

Artists Interrogate Politics and War, Milwaukee Art Museum, WI

Selfish: Self portraits by 128 artists, Gallery 128, NYC

This Thing We Do, Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL

Making Meaning: The Artist Book, Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, MO

So Far..., Occasional Art, St. Paul, MN

2003

Rutgers Books Arts Symposium Exhibition, Rutgers University, Newark, NJ

Overlooked and Looked Over, Occasional Art, St. Paul, MN

Home Office, Ronald Feldman Fine Art, NYC

Five Degrees, White Couch Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

Even the Birds Were on Fire, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

Hamady's Problems, Columbia College, Chicago, IL

2002

Rare Books of the Future, Center for Book Arts, NYC

Parallel Botany, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA

Highlights from the Kohler Art Library, Memorial Library, Madison, WI

Chance Encounters, Yale University, New Haven, CT

2001

Million Dollars, 16 Beaver Group, NYC

Scott's Tissues, 16 Beaver Group, NYC

Growing Books, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA

Lawn D'Art, Pyramid Art Center/Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, NY

2000

Artists Books, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, NY

Recent Acquisitions from the Print Department, Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC

Made in Book Land, Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY

Books by Artists, Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, NYC

1999

Artwork from the 1999 Progressive Calendar, Ground Zero Gallery, Madison, WI
Supermarket II, Slop Art Shop, Kansas City, MS

1997

Document-uh, performance arts festival, Madison, WI

Documents and Documentation, Gallery 214, Madison, WI

Supermarket, Madison, WI

1996

Well-Worn Text, Columbia College, Chicago, IL

That's Incredible (the fantastic, the grotesque, and the banal), Gallery 214, Madison, WI

Elective Surgeries, Commonwealth Gallery, Madison, WI

Pieces and Pieces of Pieces, BFA exhibition, Humanities building, Madison, WI

PUBLICATIONS (by Mark)

2022

"Dollars, Diamonds, and Digital Assets" Luckbox magazine, Sept. cover

"Money Makes The World" Bennington Review, issue eleven cover

2020

"The Money Issue" ArtNEWS, spring, cover and included images

2019

"Cash is King 2, Money Talks" essay and artwork included, Rebel Not Taken
AMERICAN / ART, printed bill edition for Whitney Museum of American Art

2018

"Money and Magic, on Gift, Grift, and Graft" Love Me Tender No. 3

"The Money Issue," cover image, Art + Design Magazine, winter 2018

"Altered Value, the Art of Josh Usmani" 1984 publishing, forward

"Burning Issues" Vol. 1 Super Deluxe, image use throughout

"Greenery" fresh prints edition, Kayrock Silkscreen

"Bank Notes" Penguin Random House & Potter Gifts

"Presidential Puzzelmint" Penguin Random House & Potter Gifts

2017

"Washington at Large," portfolio, Forbes Spain, October

2016

"Look Sharp, the Theory and Practice of Collage" Love Me Tender No. 1

"The Smell of Money" Love Me Tender No. 2, self-published zine

"Die Neue Geld Politik" included art, Manager Magazin, Oktober

2015

"Requiem for the American Dream," film, Noam Chomsky and P. F. Pictures

"See the World. See the Savings." AT&T ad campaign, BBDO

2014

"Pot's Money Problem," Time Magazine, included artwork, January 27

"Top Money Advisers" Washingtonian Magazine, included art, November

"Art and Money" Robb Report Vietnam, cover image, Volume 6

2013

"The King of Cash," cover image, Pacific Standard Magazine, November

"M," Le Monde magazine supplement, included artwork, September 27

2012

Harvard Business Review Russia, cover image and included artwork, United Press

Metaphysiques du Dollar, by Malek Abbou, cover image, Fage Editions

The Baffler, No 19, included artwork, MIT press

Money Multiplier, NY lottery ad campaign, November

2011

Paper Promises, by Philip Coggan, cover image, Penguin UK

2010

Fortune's Daughter, Bird Brain Press

Mr Handshake's Last Gasp (with Jeremy Schmall), X-ing Art

"Piece by Piece" essay for "C. K. Wilde, Tender" catalog, Pavel Zoubok Gallery

2009

Alphabet City, with Scott Teplin, X-ing Art

"The Capitalist Manifesto," cover essay by Fareed Zakaria, Newsweek, June 22

"Infinite Debt," essay by Thomas Geoghegan, Harpers Magazine, April

2007

Scream at the Librarian, with Joel Rane, Raymond Pettibon, and Cristin Sullivan, Booklyn Artists Alliance

The Slapdown, with Damara Kaminecki and Jeremy Schmall, Booklyn Artists Alliance

"Twenty questions poems," The Agriculture Reader Number 2

2005

ABC (Another Booklyn Chapbook), Volume 1, with various artists

Tag, with Kathryn Gritt & Dylan Graham, Bird Brain Scriptorium

2004

Dylan Graham's Library in a Book, Bird Brain Press

The Tragic Tale of Dan Foreman of Construction, with Dylan Graham, Bird Brain Press

"In This Together," essay, Turn a New Page Catalog, Booklyn

2003

A Revisioning of the Preamble, with Jen Benka, Booklyn Artists Alliance

IX XI MMI, with Mac McGill, Booklyn Artists Alliance

Souvenir, with Marshall Weber & Amy Mees, Booklyn Artists Alliance

2002

"If Libraries were Cafeterias", short story, Link Magazine

Library in a Book (Seven Books in One), BirdBrain Press

2001

12/11, with Marshall Weber, Booklyn Artists Alliance

Japanese Vending Machines, with Kathryn Gritt, BirdBrain Press

Tag, BirdBrain Press

Professor Plumb and the Kissing Report, BirdBrain Press

The Fastener Incident, BirdBrain Press

The Man Who Married the Sky, BirdBrain Press

The Honey Broker, BirdBrain Press

Incident at the Butcher's, BirdBrain Press

Printing Wheel, BirdBrain Press

2000

Fortune, with Scott Teplin, BirdBrain Press

Lvs., with Patrick Flynn, Ding Dang Press, Madison, WI

1999

"The Princess and the Pee", review of the Madison Museum of Bathroom Tissue, Artzine Magazine, October

Cover Illustration, Progressive Magazine, February

1998

Smoke in My Dreams, BirdBrain Press, Madison, WI

"Stain", a real review of an imagined show, Artzine Magazine, November

Cityscape, print, Published by Artzine Magazine, Madison, WI

1997

"What's in a (Written) Name", essay, Artzine Magazine, September

1996

Cover Illustration, Progressive Magazine, December
1994

Travel By Dancing, self-published, Madison, WI

COLLECTIONS

Bibliothèque National de France, Paris
Boston Public Library, Boston, MA
Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, NY
California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland, CA
Corcoran Museum, Washington, DC
Clark Library, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
Dennison Library, Mills College, Claremont, CA
Elmer L. Anderson Library, Minneapolis, MN
Federal Reserve Board, Washington, DC
Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities, Los Angeles, CA
Golda Meir Library, Milwaukee, WI
Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbuttel, Germany
Houghton Art Library, Cambridge, MA
Klingspoo Museum of Art, Offenbach am Main, Germany
Kohler Art Library, Madison, WI
Library of Congress, Washington, DC
Long Island University Library, Brooklyn, NY
Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA
Mata and Arthur Jaffe Collection, Boca Raton, FL
Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC
Milwaukee Art Museum, WI
Milwaukee Public Library, WI
Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis, MN
Multnomah Public Library, Portland, OR
Museum of Modern Art, Library Collection, NYC
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC
New York Public Library, NYC
Newark Public Library, Newark, NJ
Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA
Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, OR
Reed College, Portland, OR
Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC
Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA
Sterling Memorial Library, New Haven, CT
Superfrico Restaurant/ Spiegelworld's Opium, Las Vegas, NV
Swarthmore College Library, Swarthmore, PA
University of California, Irvine, CA
UCSB, Santa Barbara, CA
University of Washington, Seattle, WA
UVM, Burlington, VT
Walker Art Museum, Minneapolis, MN
Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA
Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT

Weisman Museum of Art, Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA

AFFILIATIONS AND EMPLOYMENTS

X-ing Books / X-ing Art: partner (2008-present/mothballed)
Booklyn Artists Alliance: founder, president emeritus, publisher (1998-2018)
Ugly Duckling Press(e): board member (2011-2013)
BirdBrain Press: proprietor (1997-present/mothballed)
Ruth Lingen: print and binding assistant (2000-2004)
Art Industry: exhibition designer (1998-2000)
State Historical Society of Wisconsin: paper conservator (1994-1996)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2023
Collage Meets Design, by Jorge Chamorro, Hoaki Books

2022
Art Made From Money Made From Art, exhibition Catalog & FAQ zine
"Spending Cuts" Mike Andrelczyk, LNP/ Lancaster Online

2016
I'm Mark Wagner & I Approve this Message, Exhibition Catalog
"The Decapitation of George Washington" John Lundberg, Burning Issues, Oct
"Another Day, Another Dollar" Fine Living Lancaster, Issue 40
"Subverting Currency: Money, Art, and Message" Andrew Reinhard, ANS Magazine, inclusion and cover image, 2016
Issue 2

2015
"Keep the Change," Harley Spiller, Princeton Arch. Press, frontispiece plus
State of the Art, exhibition catalog

2014
"Art That's Made of Money" CBS News Sunday Morning, March 23

2013
"Mark Wagner, Money Is Material" mini doc, P. F. Pictures / Avant Garde Diaries
"A Yen for Art", WSJ.Money Magazine, March 9
Money, Power, Sex, and Mark Wagner, exhibition catalog

2012
Remix: Selections from ICC, Exhibition Catalog

2011
"Mark Wagner: Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" Lance Esplund, Wall Street Journal Metro NY, August 6th
"The Phantoms of Liberty" Howard Hurst, Hyperallergic, July 13
"The New Moneyed Art" Adrian Brune, Huffington Post, August 4
The Art Economist, feature and back cover, December 2011
Borders and Frontiers, exhibition catalog
Papercraft 2, Gestalten, Berlin

2010
Size Does Matter, exhibition catalog
Face Value, exhibition catalog

2009
"Million Dollar Babies," Nicole Pasulka, The Morning News, April 6, 2009
"Mark Wagner: Fortune's Daughter," Francisco Vaz Fernandes, Parq, March 2009
Wall Rockets, exhibition catalog

2008
My Portfolio, exhibition catalog
"Chuck Close as Curator", Lapiz Magazine, April 2008

"Mark Wagner: My Portfolio," Art in America, December 2008
"Creative Accounting," New City, April 17, 2008
"Cut-and-Paste, Then and Now", The New York Sun, July 3, 2008
"Mark Wagner: My Portfolio", Gallery Listing, The New York Observer, September 9, 2008
Attention to Detail, exhibition catalog
Messages & Magic, exhibition catalog
The Culture of Collage, exhibition catalog
2007
The Colonial Show, exhibition catalog
"Collages Go to College, And Behave Accordingly", The New York Times, December 16, 2007
"Hang, Man," Trader Monthly, September 2007
"Schein-Welten" Hauke Herffs, Maxim Fashion 2007
2006
"Money Changes Everything", The New York Times, July 14, 2006
"Alternating Currency," Museum and Gallery Listing, New York Times, September 29, 2006
Alternating Currency, exhibition catalog
The New Collage, exhibition catalog
2005
"Making Meaning", Review Magazine, February 2005
Overlooked and Looked Over, show catalog
2003
"Booklyn: an artist defined aesthetic...", Artist's Book Yearbook, Impact Press, 2003
Hamady's Problems, show catalog
2000
Made in Book Land, show catalog
Artists Books, show catalog
1999
Supermarket II, show catalog
1997
"Mark Wagner, Would I Wood Eye", Artzine Magazine, July, 1997
"WalmART: Slop Art wallows in consumer culture", Isthmus, February 21, 1997
1996
"Well-Worn Text," Chicago Reader, November 29, 1996
1995
"Scavenger hunters", Isthmus, July 14, 1995