Lisson Gallery announces representation of US painter Van Hanos with Hamptons show

As Manhattan’s wealthy prolong their stays on Long Island, executive director Alex Logsdail says he is likely to extend his lease until September 2021

anny shaw
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It has been almost a month since Lisson Gallery opened a space in the upmarket enclave of the Hamptons, joining the likes of Pace, Hauser & Wirth, Skarstedt and, most recently, Phillips auction house.

Since then, the London firm has shown one work a week on Long Island, starting with a large 1996 painting by Stanley Whitney, which sold for $850,000—a record price for the US artist, according to Lisson’s executive director Alex Logsdail.

From 20 August, the gallery will show a bustling, vibrant canvas by the Marfa-based painter Van Hanos. Lisson is using it as an opportunity to announce its representation of Hanos, who also shows with the Los Angeles gallery Château Shatto, while also serving as a taster for the artist’s solo exhibition in Lisson’s new space in New York City, at 508 West 24th Street, next spring.

Logsdail, who describes Hanos as a “virtuosic painter who can paint perfectly in any style, like Polke”, says the idea was to do something “engaging and exciting” in the Hamptons, but also something that was not going to be “an unreasonable demand on the artists”. Many other galleries who have recently set up shop in the area are showing secondary market works.

_Harder Party_ (2020)—apparently not a reference to the Hamptons lifestyle—will feature alongside a group of other recent paintings by Hanos in a digital publication the artist has collaborated on with his friend and author, Stephen Intelkofer.

Of his newfound representation by Lisson, Hanos says: “It feels timely as my practice evolves and approaches new phases, so this extended support and expanded context is incredibly welcome. It’s astounding to be joining a programme that is so historically impactful but that remains invested in bringing new positions in.”

With Hanos’s prices starting at just $5,000 (rising to $40,000), Logsdail says the gallery is being “very cautious” about who buys his work: “We are only selling to people that we really, really trust and have long term relationships with.” Few, if any, paintings come to secondary market. His auction debut comes at Phillips in New York on 30 September, with the work, _Wishful Thinking_ (2016; est $4,000-$6,000), which is being previewed at the auction house’s Hamptons outpost.
Logsdail himself has been living in the Hamptons since March and he believes many of the trusted local collectors—most from Manhattan—are planning to settle more permanently in the Hamptons or other nearby states including New Jersey and Massachusetts. As a result, he will most likely extend the lease on his outpost “through next summer”.

The exodus, Logsdail says, could potentially regenerate the New York art scene, which has become “sanitised” since Donald Trump was elected president. “A lot of these big companies that have office towers in New York City housing 5,000 staff are going be empty,” Logsdail says. “That will force rent down massively and should, in theory, allow artists to move back into Manhattan.”

His theory has legs. With high speed Covid-19 tests and plans for helicopter services to provide daily commuter passes to those working in New York City from September, it seems Manhattan’s elite have no intention of returning to the city any time soon.
In Van Hanos’ work, one encounters both the cognitive principles of conceptual art and the sensorial pleasures that painting extends. Through varied subjects, Hanos inhabits painting as a passage between subjective formulations and observed denotations, making use of the malleable structure of paint to stretch between these spaces.

For his second solo exhibition at Château Shatto, Interiors, Hanos approaches each work as a unit of discovery. These paintings are vehicles that are both being driven and driving themselves. The title Interiors might first evoke a tradition of painting interior spaces, but contact with this body of work reveals that the titular “interior” space is the mental event which forms each painting; the site of interiority that muddles what is perceived and what the mind’s eye produces.

Hanos’ initial prompt for this exhibition was a text prepared by his friend and author Stephen Intlekofer, titled Deepest Dreamer. The language in the yet-to-be-published book is unembellished and this simplicity lends itself to readers of any age. The narrative captures encounters that are inquisitive and present ontological, epistemological and phantasmagorical wonderment. While the
paintings don't seek to animate or illustrate the text, Hanos embarked on this body of work in a similarly peregrinating mood and searching disposition.

In these new works, one observes Hanos' abandonment of linear progression or a serial method. And though the variation in Interiors is explorative and surprising, it remains held together by a forceful center. As a body of work, these paintings resemble the process of active, elastic thought passing through a singular mind. In these tableaus, Hanos stretches, reaches towards, reacts against, inflates and conflates the material that is drawn into the paintings. The results capsize categories of painting that hold figuration apart from abstraction. The paintings in Interiors are at times fractal; they hold the echo of another work inside of them; works that appear with a representational motive fall off into abstraction; discernible figures appear to be pinched out of a wet mess of paint.
Intimacy and Urgency: Exhibitions to See in Los Angeles

From Ricky Swallow’s *Borrowed Sculptures* to Van Hanos’s *Interiors*, navigating LA galleries amid protests, lockdowns and curfews

A sensorial vertigo afflicts many East Coast transplants, enhanced by blinding sunlight and the ambient hum of air conditioners and helicopters. Early this spring, however, access to outside stimuli was cut. Meanwhile water was still scarce, and the air felt suddenly precious – newly coveted and feared.

In March, soon after quarantine, I began taking drives to the only acquaintances it was safe to visit in close range. I counted myself lucky to have a means of escape from my apartment that most of my New York-based friends, and the less fortunate citizens of this city, did not. I drove a rinky-dink 2007 Prius Hybrid
with reasonable fuel efficiency and thus allowed myself this luxury. The inviolability one feels in a car has long been passed off as an excuse for selfish behaviour behind the wheel; it took on an additional false sense of hermetically sealed security, as from behind closed windows I spent mornings observing and photographing notable trees of Los Angeles’s East Side. With galleries, libraries and other nonessential businesses and centres closed, these trees provided a respite from the visual monotony of unmarked days, just as driving provided a bodily reprieve from the confines of my apartment.

I made regular pilgrimages to a Moreton Bay fig in Pasadena. Brought to California from Australia during the 1870s as specimen trees to beautify and enhance rapidly developing urban landscapes, Moreton Bay figs revealed over time their ability to grow to more than 60 metres in height, their exposed ‘buttressed’ roots now sprawling across sidewalks. Pasadena, with its palatial estates, is now one of the only residential neighbourhoods where this solemn, patiently elephantine tree is not in danger of being cut down. In the car I listened to Roberta Flack’s Hey, That’s No Way to Say Goodbye (1969) on repeat. Many loved before us. I know we are not new. In city and in forest they loved like me and you.
In May, LA galleries began to cautiously reopen, adding appointment registries to their websites and implementing visitor caps and mandatory masks for entry. Then one more Black citizen was brutally murdered by a white law officer, and the scales tipped. I am not the right person to speak to this, and the piece I set out to write is about galleries and trees. I am trying instead to listen to others, better versed and equipped.

The next month, amid protests, lockdowns and curfews, I registered to see Ricky Swallow’s *Borrowed Sculptures* at David Kordansky Gallery in Mid-City. The Australian-born Angeleno’s latest sculptures continue his work recreating domestic materials in cast and painted bronze, their impressive trompe l’oeil effect overshadowed by the delicacy of their readymade referents. One lone form, *Stringer* (2020), whose motif suggested a stair rendered from coils of rope, graced the gallery’s southern wall like a Celtic knot. A bronze rocking chair, *Rocking Chair with Rope (meditation chair # 1)* (2020), cast from a model in the artist’s studio, appeared to hang, as though suspended from bronze ropes strung to a nonexistent ceiling-mounted hook, with the tensile restraint of a Fred Sandback installation. I shared the gallery with only one other visitor. Another stood patiently at the door, waiting for one of us leave.

I made an appointment at Château Shatto downtown to see Van Hanos’s *Interiors*. Characteristically virtuosic (the New York-based artist, who recently relocated to Marfa, is among the most facile painters currently working) and teasingly referential, this new set of works demonstrated stirrings in the evolution of Hanos’s conflicted attitude towards the heroic oil painting. Among the exhibition’s largest canvases, *Interior* (2020) ensconced a deadpan ‘pictorial’ painterly view out from a paneled window within a palette-knife-scraped frame that made explicit allusions to Gerhard Richter. The adjacent, modestly scaled *Eagle, Crow, Snake, Fish Face* (2020) took this reference to its art-historical endpoint: here the artist had used this chromatically striated scraped canvas as an underpainting, burying it beneath a coat of Ad Reinhardt-esque black before scraping a portrait onto its surface to reveal its base as if it were a Rainbow Scratch craft paper.

The appointment system was itself new and strange. I’d previously tried to see shows with as few preconceptions as possible. (Although with galleries strewn across miles and potentially hours of traffic, this had already proved somewhat impractical.) On the other hand, these restrictions were conversely appealing when you remembered summer openings of prior years – edging past clots of sweaty revellers to see the work they were standing in front of. An appointment made a visit intentional; the visitor cap created a dual sense of intimacy and urgency. Masks, on the other hand, are simply a present necessity as well as a gesture of respect and appreciation for the many people who make these visits possible.
I discovered a trio of shrubs pruned in the shape of giraffes in a garden I can only appreciatively describe as extremely whimsical, and was tipped off to the location of a yucca whose trunk resembled musculature riddled with bulging cysts. The days grew hotter earlier. On cool mornings, however, it finally seemed safe again to climb the 383 stairs off La Loma – huffing through a mask, passing a young oak whose bow had extended into the pathway and been tagged with a red ribbon so that walkers wouldn’t hit their heads. Like the Moreton Bay fig, the oak can grow to massive proportions. Unlike the imported tree, it is native to California, and its nutritionally dense acorns historically provided sustenance for indigenous peoples.
Among the venues that most nimbly adapted to the city- and state-wide ordinances was Parker Gallery, in Los Feliz. The residence-based gallery hosted a series of two-week-long outdoor exhibitions entitled *Sculpture from a Distance* (parts I, II and III), featuring celebrated LA artists Melvino Garretti and Peter Shire and emerging artists including Alake Shilling and Anne Libby. Circumventing the need for reservations (although not masks), the shows were designed with comfort and safety in mind; one could wander freely through works installed on the grass and mounted to the sides of the building. As of August, the trees continue their efforts to purify our air while cars (mine included) poison it. Leonard Cohen’s original lyrics to Flack’s cover were, “Many loved before us. I know that we are not new. In city and in forest they smiled like me and you.” Flack’s rendition is better, but the poet knew what he was doing. ‘Smiled’ is both less expected and infinitely sadder than ‘loved’ while signalling essentially the same thing – even from behind a mask.
Van Hanos’ paintings parodizing partisan preposterousness would be utterly comical if they didn’t so mordantly reflect our circusy cultural reality. Cynically dubbed “Late American Paintings,” his current show at Chateau Shatto concentrates social discord, political vagary and digital phoniness as a magnifying glass focuses sunlight. Enhancing his works’ startling effect, Hanos applies old-fashioned oil painting finesse to such newfangled pictorial idioms as GIF’s, memes and decals. No public figure, whether actual politician or fictional cartoon, is immune to flogging by his sardonic brush. A Recent History of the United States of America (all works 2017) portrays Obama, the Holy Family, The Lizardman bursting from a Hillary Clinton costume, a Trump-masked Godzilla and a skinned corpse all gambling together round a poker table doubling as ash tray. In Trumpy Dumpty (pictured above), wrathful My Little Ponies battle Frankensteinian baby-men wearing distended presidential mien. Amid the fray, cartoon light bulbs indicate infantile strokes of inspiration. The age-old semblance of academic realism sets off these provocative collage-like compositions in the same way that eminence belies outlandish proclamation. Snakes and Ladders depicts tentacles headed by Satan and Uncle Sam writhing like cyclonic vortices. Ophidian and cephalopod domination contravenes the traditional game of which Salman Rushdie’s Midnight’s Children protagonist declared, “The solid rationality of ladders balances the occult sinuosities of the serpent.” Hanos’ apocalyptic caricatures breathe droll new life into the antiquated genre of history painting.
Van Hanos’s exhibition came at the midpoint of a three-year series of site-specific shows at Rowhouse Project, a venue in Baltimore’s rapidly gentrifying Remington neighborhood. Prior exhibitions took place concurrently with the extensive process of gutting the house. Subsequent exhibitions will accompany renovations of the property, culminating in its sale, the proceeds from which will (ideally) fund the entire project.

While other artists installed their shows in the house and left, Hanos chose to make his an ad hoc residency, imbuing his project with the raw possibility and openness of intention that a shell of a house deserves. He set up a studio where the kitchen used to be, creating new paintings on-site and distributing the fresh canvases throughout the space in response to each room’s particularities. The oils Hanos has made for the last two years present dense, hermetic environments, displaying—and playing with—the technical mastery of 18th-century academicism and postwar hyperrealism. For Rowhouse, however, he left several of his compositions incomplete, to mirror the transitional character of the site.
Hanos’s project had just opened to the public when I visited, and it was dominated by large works in nascent stages. He continued to work on the pieces throughout the course of the show, while also rearranging them in the space and changing their titles. When I visited, I was greeted on the first floor by Hanos’s version of Morot’s *Good Samaritan* (1880), in which a man hefting a body is aided by an overloaded donkey plucking its way through a rocky landscape. In Hanos’s painting, the donkey seems ready to step through the layers of sand, plaster and exposed brick on the wall around the work. The limp body at the center of the image seems barely more than a sketch, yet the effort required to carry it is still visible in the fully rendered features of the man bearing its weight. He appears to regard the viewer both as a source of relief to be found in the distance and as another burden on his journey. On the second floor, portions of a large abstraction, tentatively titled *The Low Temperatures of Sorrow*, echoed the arched lines of a scratch coat of plaster revealed in the latest round of demolitions. Elsewhere, small canvases leaned against the walls in stacks half a dozen deep; other petite paintings hung individually offered nostalgic homilies. A delicate rendering of roses in a vase was installed over a well-worn armchair. When viewed up close, this arrangement delivered a paean to the domestic, yet it seemed forlorn when glimpsed from down the hall through the gaps between century-old rough pine studs.

“Intercalaris,” the exhibition’s title, alludes to Feb. 29, the last day of Hanos’s residency and the extra day inserted in the calendar to keep it on track with the seasons. The project might be seen as an interjection in the artist’s career as well. His physical presence in the exhibition space interrupted the cycle of studio work and gallery exhibition, creating a space of pensive inquiry.
BERLIN

Van Hanos
TANYA LEIGHTON
Kurfürstenstrasse 24/25
September 13–October 11, 2014

In his first exhibition in Germany, Van Hanos poses the question of what can painting be today? His answer is spread across six canvases, each easily shifting between Photorealism, Impressionism, Pre-Raphaelite abundance, or, as in Kids at Play (all works 2014), translucent layering reminiscent of Sigmar Polke. While his control of these techniques is impressive, the stylistic disjunction is indispensable to Hanos’s total concept. By working in various modes of representation and refusing allegiance to any, he negates the medium’s alleged death and shows that painting, like people, can evolve with time and experience.

His painting A fuses art-historical tropes such as that of the reclining nude to a contemporary situation, wherein an African American man seated on a couch raises himself up to look at a photo on the artist Jamian Juliano-Villani’s phone. With camera cables bundled on the floor of the surrounding room, the painting seems to recreate the tableau of a photo shoot. Curiously, sofa cushions printed with the man’s recumbent, naked body, including his sock-covered feet, are set behind him. Dualities and mirroring effects abound here, doubling a houseplant to the left of the couch and a fixture on the floor, creating a series of A-shaped motifs throughout. Another painting titled The Mothership is a synthesis of Photorealism and flat, cartoonish figuration. Minutely rendered root vegetables and a metallic salad bowl float in the center of the composition, while naively drawn figures toil in a field under the bowl or chop off a branch in a tree above. In the background, a sun graphic juxtaposed with crosses, circles, and tubes evokes old etchings of alchemical emblems as if alluding to the near-mythical hand of the artist, most potent when it resists definition.

—Hili Perlson
NEW YORK

Van Hanos

WEST STREET GALLERY
395 West Street Suite 2
May 7–June 11, 2011

There is an easiness to Van Hanos’s latest exhibition, which comprises eleven twenty-by-twenty-four inch paintings; the pacing of the show, dimensions of the work, and domestic scale of the gallery relay a deliberately slow rhythm. Each canvas presents a detailed view derived from older, larger paintings by Hanos, and each one is intended as a gift for a person who has played a significant role in his life. The works vary from intimate portraits to abstract compositions, and the stark formal differences between the works contribute to the feeling that this is a miniature retrospective of Hanos’s practice and of his personal relationships. The choice to render everything at exactly the same size is a proposal for a democratic sense of generosity; all the works reveal and provide the same amount of information.

While many of the paintings are of contemporary subjects, others offer art-historical or classical tropes. Golden Mean for Eileen (all works 2011) is a lush still life that subtly highlights the titular ratio within nature. It is paired with Painting for Daniel, which appears on first glance to be an abstract image but actually depicts a small golden canvas hung on a white wall; it too uses the golden mean in its minimal arrangement. The two works seem inextricably complementary, despite their different designated recipients. These absent audience members become a continuous reference; how do the subjects named in Candle for Mark and Candle for Ross warrant the slight variations within their compositions? The two works appear in different rooms, causing a sharp moment of immediate recall, like a record skipping. Within Hanos’s work, it seems that even if the record does skip, it never sounds quite the same. It just allows another chance to repeat, review, and represent.

— Lumi Tan
Van Hanos is a New York-based painter and sculptor. A current MFA student at Columbia University, he earned his BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2001. I met Van years ago, at the beginning of my love story with this City, and we have been following each other's work ever since. A relatively outsiderish figure in the NY scene, Van was part of many interesting shows, including the recent "What the Midnight Can Show Us" at Museum 52, "Cube Passerby" 2008 at GBE Passerby Gallery and "The Form Itself" at Priska C. Juschka FIne Arts, New York. His art is nowadays showing signs of great transformation, bringing him into the realm of conceptual painting and reflecting his concern with the idea of artistic process and image making as a broad cultural phenomenon.
MA: I have been following your work for a while now, you were one of the first painters that I contacted upon moving here 5 years ago... your stile has changed immensely in the past two years, sort of splitting your production into a "before" and an "after"... can you talk about that?

VH: Well, Painting is something that I wrestle with. It's something I have abandoned two times... and I'd never thought I would.

MA: When was the last time you did that?

VH: A couple of years ago. The first time that I abandoned it I had a lot of ideas that couldn't be expressed through painting and so I ended up making sculpture. I was frustrated with the idea of representation versus... there's something about sculpture, about the presence of an object... it's something more real, you know... with painting you are always looking through the "window". Something was still missing though, and I ended up only staging conversations, I would sit down, use visual aids.. it was a kind of performance. It was frustrating for a lot of people. The thing that triggered it was seeing lectures, Beuys was an influence, but specifically a Richard Tuttle lecture that I saw... that was a beautiful work of art of art in itself. I was concerned about the purpose of art.. for my final review I used a storm window and sat behind it ... talking about painting. I drew out diagrams, then scraped it down and put the dust in a contact lens jar. The object made sense as a reference.

MA: How did you transition between this kind of approach to the first body of work that I saw when I met you, pieces like Black Portrait these were rather "proper" images and paintings...

VH: I think that there are common elements between the two bodies of work. The current works have evolved during long periods of time like the old ones, the only thing that I have
tried to remove is nostalgia, and I think that that affected the work in a lot of different ways.

MA: Nostalgia weighs on so much of the contemporary work that I see, especially in this city... it's a general trend that's been going on forever.

VH: It's funny, today is September 11. I think that's a post-9/11 thing. After that point you could go in two directions: become political and confront the issues or retreat back to childhood nostalgia. As a young person I was influenced by a lot of that work because that's what I was surrounded by, but if you're going to do anything interesting in life, whichever form it takes you have to shed these initial influences...any influences, at some point, but those were really heavy. I grew up in the bar of my godmother's husband it's called the "Broadway Central Cafe" in South Amboy NJ the logo is modeled after the Cotton Club logo and inside it was all art deco, heavy art deco, brass and checkers. and he made these surrealist paintings and sculptures, there was something that was super nostalgic and romantic about it, and then my memory of it... Going to church was a huge influence too. With the catholic church, you tie yourself to guilt, the thing that's presented over and over is this kind of collapsing moment of sadness and triumph, and the idea of the hero, the modern, that impossible longing.. all that was a huge influence, initially, all those sculptures, those paintings.

MA: The key words of what you said, in my opinion, are "my memory of it"... you have to go back to what those things meant for you, that foggy meaning is way more interesting than the actual forms... you can really build on that... You mentioned that, as a kid, your dream
MA: The key words of what you said, in my opinion, are "my memory of it"... you have to go back to what those things meant for you, that foggy meaning is way more interesting than the actual forms... you can really build on that... You mentioned that, as a kid, your dream jobs were the garbageman (to ride on the truck and to scavenge and "find treasures" in the trash) and the ice truck driver (to make people happy)... how does that relate to your current work?

VH: As for the scavenging, a tremendous amount of research went in the background of the current body of work... it's slow painting, in quotes... it's the idea that you would spend so much time with the painting and as you live with it there's all of these subliminal imagery that will "come out", over time.

MA: one of the pieces that I was more puzzled by (and attracted to) was Portrait of Benjamin Franklin... at the beginning I was almost sure it was a copy, but at the same time it made me think of Jasper Johns, a tweaked symbol, an index of a symbol, if we can describe that image of Franklin as a symbol. I still don't know why I like it.

VH: It still kind of puzzles me, honestly. There's a reason why I started the painting, which is very non-artistic, and it is that I was reading his biography and I found him incredibly interesting, a unique figure that was really misunderstood and misrepresented in American history. It's an exact replica of a painting that exists in the national portrait gallery in DC

MA: is it "exact"?

VH: well, as much as I could get it to. I used a 3rd generation image, from the cover of the book, and what I thought was that I was making a contemporary portrait of him and the likeness of the original portrait was not so important... another image I used was about 1 inch x 1 inch, I also photocopied it... so of course it is abstracted in a certain way...
MA: I googled the image and there are so many portraits of him, they are almost all the same, the expression on the mood are so consistent... even the $100 bill portrait follows in that line...

VH: in his time his was the most painted portrait and the most reproduced image... I was interested in the idea of him as a person but also in the idea of copy. It probably comes from the fact that I am a twin, me and my brother look very different but we are two sides of the same coin. He's now using my name as a performing artist [Vanguard] and I often sign my paintings as "Van Hanos, brother of Patrick Hanos"... but also, the thing that I was initially thinking about was a homage to Franklin, something that I would have done for myself, but then I started thinking of Washington, what he symbolized was "Rip your hearts out your enemies with your bare hands", and I was thinking of the contrast if we had chosen Franklin as our icon, if we had Franklin D.C. ... what happened in the past eight years, that "We're just gonna do this!" crap might not have happened... for a long time I tried to paint Washington in opposition, there are many representations of him painted as an angel, as a demigod. and I thought: how ridiculous and nagan...

MA: on the other hand Franklin always looks like a family guy, overweight, balding... Sometimes it is difficult to connect some of your most recent works. They all seem to be concerned with painting as a practice, creating images and propagating them...

VH: this body of work was absolutely engaged with that. I approached it dealing with the ideas of history, erosion, underlying systems... but I was also exploring painting per se. I put all of the ideas that I had at work through the medium of painting, exploring all the different techniques and how you bring meaning through them.

MA: It's like you forced yourself out of having a certain recognizable style, which you definitely had before. Let's talk about Faux Finish, the piece you recently showed in “The Form Itself”, at Priska C. Juschka Fine Art. I thought it was stunning, it made me feel
uneasy, the imitation marble was kind of cheesy, and the symmetry...

VH: it's not really measured out, I just started painting from the center of the canvas, without measuring it...

MA: The painting manages to convey an idea of exactitude through the technique itself, the marbling and the shape... it's kind of diagrammatic. What did you have in mind?

VH: This was the first body of work where I thought about a series, before I made painting that were self-contained...

MA: you used to have a great stylistical continuity then and almost no conceptual continuity, the two things seem reversed now.

VH: I felt that that particular piece was needed within the body of work. That group of paintings, which is now scattered, had a structure, a skeleton ... removing one would have been like removing the leg of a table. But I still think they are all very different from piece to piece... Faux Finish is an abstract painting described through a tromp l'oeil effect, the painting technique that goes by the same name. You have these techniques to describe form and volume through flatness but then you can also just keep them flat, I was sort of toying with that idea.

MA: What do you think of the self-referentiality of so much contemporary art?

VH: uhm .. that's tough, right? (laughs) I used to think my work had a lot more in common with music than not with art, but at the same time I understand that it references art making...
MA: Who is your public? Who do you work for?

VH: The audience is most definitely the people that I look at as references. That's who I am making art for. When I was a kid I moved around constantly, because I had a twin brother, that was an instant best friend, so I navigated through people and made friends quickly, and these become my peers and my models. I also think back to my heroes, to standards in history. Ben Franklin... I think my ideal audience would include the historical standards that I have, I have always thought about how you can be great in your own context, how that compares to the history that preceded you. I think back to these heroes, like Ben Franklin...

MA: .. he's not going to come and see your shows!

VH: (Laughs) no he's not. ... I do think of real life, too. My friends, my brother... but at the same time I am always thinking of the absolute or the ideal. Perfection.