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Modern Pop Artist Michael Albert Shares Story

YORKTOWN HEIGHTS – Students in Sandra Garofalo’s Advertising, Art, and Digital Design class at P/NW BOCES received a special treat last week. They listened intently as Modern Pop Artist Michael Albert told his story and shared samples of his artwork with the aspiring students.

Mr. Albert, a Long Island native who has been making art since his college days at NYU, spoke to the 20 or so high school students in Ms. Garofalo’s class. He told them that although he never had any formal training in art, he always created works of art for his own enjoyment. His first work, a self-portrait titled “The Victim”, was a collage-style drawing of him surrounded by every product from his cabinets and shelves, detailing how he was a victim of consumer advertising.

He went on to create collages from photos, stickers, and product logos. Eventually, Mr. Albert began cutting up and reassembling the fronts of cereal boxes in an art form he dubbed “Cerealism.” He said this art form is “a cross between Picasso’s cubism and Warhol’s Pop.” Since his first cereal box collage, he’s created more than 600 original collages made from product boxes. “They’re so beautiful, colorful, relevant, and free,” he told the students about the materials used in his collage-styled masterpieces. “I like the idea of doing things that have been done before in my own way.”

Mr. Albert’s primary occupation is owner of a line of juices called Sir Real. After graduating from NYU with a degree in business, he spent several years marketing and distributing specialty food items. Eventually, he began promoting his own line of natural fruit juices. Marketing his own line of products first gave him the opportunity to mix business with pleasure. He created his own series of “Sir Real” characters, which are used to brand his fruit juices. “If you have even one image in the whole world that really resonates with people, that’s a lot,” he said. “In our culture, there are so many characters selling stuff. Sir Real is a character of the future.”

Mr. Albert continues to create his Cerealism works as well as other collages made from product packaging, such as compilations of logos and a series of American flags. “My work lends itself to hang in grocery stores and other places of pop culture,” he said. “It lends itself as a connection between business and art.” In fact, prints of his artwork have been distributed and displayed at stores such as D’Agostino Supermarkets and Krispy Kreme Doughnuts.

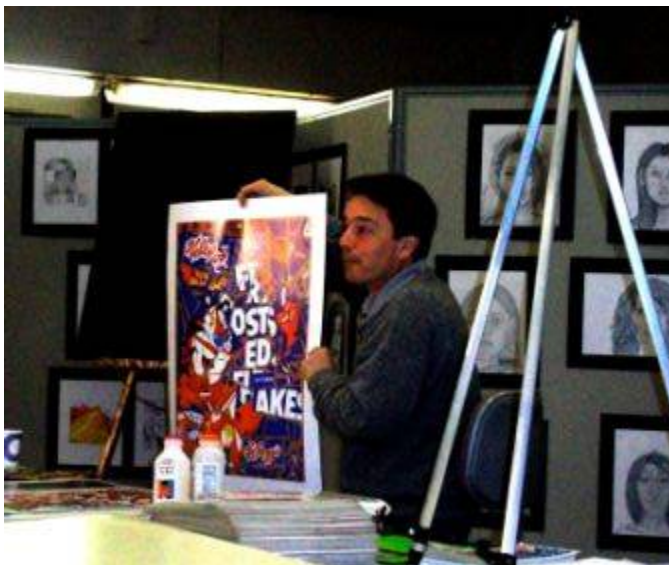
Giving the students some advice from his own experience, Mr. Albert told them to always make time for creating, uninterrupted by the outside world. He said it’s tempting to sit down in front of the television and try to create, but all the sounds and images can fill you up like a sponge so that no creative juices can flow. “You have to make your art important or it doesn’t happen,” he said. “You have to make time for it.”

Service and Innovation Through Partnership

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Modern pop artist Michael Albert shows his first work, "The Victim," to students in a class at P/NW BOCES.



Modern pop artist Michael Albert shows his first Cerealism collage to students in a class at P/NW BOCES.

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