

# No Assembly Required

Out of the Box with Pat Sparkuhl and Dennis Hare



TOP Dennis Hare, *Sunday Afternoon*, oil and mixed media on canvas; BOTTOM Pat Sparkuhl, *Let Us Prey*, mixed media

**C**ourage of convictions, enormous originality and talent. The aesthetically honest assemblages of Dennis Hare and Pat Sparkuhl offer viewers much to contemplate and visually enjoy.

Hare creates with all sorts of paraphernalia. His superb eye deconstructs lifeless materials and then constructs them into works of art. From an enormous stockpile of varied, colorful and textured discarded relics, Hare meticulously builds his abstract or realistic art. Applying bits of grainy material – a roofing shingle, for example – with paint and adhesives, he forms a three-dimensional shape on a flat surface. The original discard becomes submerged into a larger composition, as a bit of color, shadow, texture, line, or shape. In his lively beach scene, clumps are amazingly sculpted into a vivid boardwalk of people, shadows, sand, foliage, ocean, and brilliant sky.

For Hare, what may be considered ugly and useless inherently has potential to become beautiful and artful. He is inspired by the soul of objects rather than their new and fresh glitter. For him, through purposeful usage, a rusty, bent or

disheveled object acquires character; similar to a human being whose life experiences translate into white hair and a wise expression. Hare's tour de force is that he magically resurrects the worn out; his profound art, therefore, is a reminder of the continuous, albeit constantly evolving, nature of all life.

Sparkuhl's art is political. He assembles complete objects, selected because they best convey a particular theme, usually one that promotes curiosity and a philosophical discussion – the effects of war, inhumanity, limitations of the evolution theory, abuse of children by priests, and the impact of societal changes. No topic is off limits; no topic is too sacred; everything is fair game. *Bearing Witness* is a chilling statement about the Holocaust and how the Nazis had musicians play classical pieces to accompany lines of shaven-headed people to the gas chamber. To show this heinous crime, Sparkuhl collected hair from 55 people, and built a violin which he covered with hair. The strings are barbed wire and the tuning pegs are cast in skulls. One of Sparkuhl's more tame works of art is *Telephone Pole*, a biting look at the state of traditional and cellular phones. Cell phones, as we all know, are now global and have radically changed communication methods and etiquette. Sparkuhl uses a large tree branch to represent a totem telephone pole on which he assembles assorted outdated phones that dangle one with the other, a tangled mass of colors, wires and textures. No longer, says Sparkuhl, are we connected to the umbilical cord of the mother telephone pole. No longer do we share a line with others, nor have a place to post communal notices. The traditional phone and its privacy have been replaced. For convenience, everyone can now hear our most intimate conversations.

Hare and Sparkuhl “think outside of the box.” Both use found objects in original ways. Each assembles “things” to portray jarringly deep issues. Their art says it all – no assembly is required on our part.☺

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**What** Dennis Hare and Pat Sparkuhl: No Assembly Required

**When** Now through June; artist reception 6 to 9 p.m., June 7

**Where** SpaceOnSpurgeon, 210 N. Spurgeon St., Santa Ana, (949) 464-0105; [www.spaceonspurgeon.com](http://www.spaceonspurgeon.com)