

## Jon Kessler

### *Biography*

Jon Kessler is a mixed media artist known for kinetic sculptures that expose their mechanics to the viewer. These sculptures are often amalgams of analogical and digital technology that have political implications. He received a B.F.A. from the State University of New York at Purchase in 1980 and completed The Independent Study Studio Program at The Whitney Museum of American Art in the same year. Kessler has been a professor at the Columbia University School of the Arts since 1994. More recently, he has focused on developing immersive installation pieces. Jon Kessler began exhibiting works in the early 1980s in the form of shadow boxes attached to the wall. Objects found and manufactured, illuminated and mechanized, creating scenarios, both abstract and figurative. The artist deliberately left the sides open to expose the mechanisms: a simple shift in the position of the viewer revealed the inner workings "behind the scenes". The sculptures of the 1990s have become larger with higher production values. After September 11, the artist claims to be obsessed

from the image of what terrorists saw from the cockpit before the impact, so he decided to recreate it using a surveillance camera. Since then, his work has become more political. However, the rawness and immediacy of the current work incorporates a playfulness reminiscent of the sculptures made in the 1980s. The mechanisms are visible with little or no attempt to "finish" the pieces: once the sculptures work, they leave them in the form of a prototype with the clamps and tape needed to keep them assembled.

Since 2004, she has created life-size video installations that occupy space. These installations involve the viewers, transforming them into reconnaissance objects and guarded objects: this creates a symbiotic relationship between the camera and the viewer, who continues within it as a viewer and performer, voyeur and exhibitionist.

His interest in what happens between the viewer and the artistic object has remained consistent. Kessler's work continues to play consciously in that arena, controlling the experience of the viewer of the piece, while also offering a glimpse of the mechanism of that manipulation.

Recent solo exhibited included: Century Pictures, New York (2017); Jon Kessler's Gifts, Salon 94, Freemans Alley, New York (2015); The Web, Swiss Institute, New York (2013); Ethan Cohen Fine Arts, Beacon, New York (2012). Kessler has participated in a group shows at ICA Boston (2018); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2018); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2017); Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (2017); Wellin Museum of Art, Hamilton (2016); Gerald Peters Gallery, New York (2016); MOSTYN, Wales (2015); Red Bull Studios, New York (2014); Museum Tinguely, Basel, Switzerland (2013); MACRO, Rome (2011); Park Avenue Armory, New York (2008); Whitney Museum of Art, New York (2005); Ethan Cohen Fine Arts, New York (2004); Bronx Museum, New York (2003); CRP Gallery, Brooklyn (2000); Galleri K, Oslo (1999). Kessler's work is now in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art, Walker Art Center, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles.

### JON KESSLER

Born in 1957 Yonkers  
Lives and works in New York City

### EDUCATION

1980 S.U.N.Y. at Purchase, New York, B.F.A.  
1980 Whitney Museum Independent Study Studio Program, New York

### TEACHING

2007-2013 Director of Graduate Studies

2000-2005 Division Chair

1996 Director of Sculpture

1994 Professor, School of the Arts, Division of Visual Arts, Columbia University, New York

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SOLO EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

2017

Century Pictures, New York

2015

Jon Kessler's Gifts, Salon 94, Freemans Alley, New York

2013

The Web, Swiss Institute, New York

2012

Ethan Cohen Fine Arts, Beacon, New York

2010

Festival of Ideas, Salon 94, New York

Sculptures from the 80's and 90's, Fisher Landau Center for Art, Long Island City

Pace Prints, New York

2009

Kessler's Circus, Deitch Projects, New York

2008

Reg Vardy Gallery, University of Sunderland

Jon Kessler, The Palace at 4 A.M., Louisiana Museum of Moderne Kunst, Copenhagen

2007

The Drawing Center, New York

Galerie Hans Mayer, Dusseldorf

The Blue Period, Arndt and Partner, Berlin

2006

The Palace at 4 AM, Phoenix Kulturstiftung/Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg

2005

P.S. 1, New York

2004

Deitch Projects, New York

1999

Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York

1997

Jon Kessler, The University of the Arts, Philadelphia

1996

Jon Kessler, The Augustus Saint Gardens Memorial, Cornish

1994

Jon Kessler's Asia, Kestner-Gesellschaft, Hannover, Germany; Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz

Jon Kessler, Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg

Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York

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1993

Jon Kessler, Kunstverein, Hamburg

1992

Galerie Max Hetzler, Cologne

Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York

1991

Jon Kessler, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

2018

Art in the Age of the Internet, 1989 to Today, ICA Boston, Boston

L'Ennemi de mon Ennemi, Palais de Tokyo, Paris

4x4, Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover

2017

Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Midtown, Lever House, New York

The Coverly Set, Sargent's Daughters, New York

20/20, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh

Commissions from Performa's Archives, Whitechapel Gallery, London

2016

Pure Pulp, Contemporary Artists Working in Paper, Dieu Donne, Wellin Museum of Art, Hamilton

Visibility, Curated by John Miller, Campoli Presti, London

Manifesta 11, Zurich

Seven, Palais de Tokyo, Paris

Representing Rainbows, Gerald Peters Gallery, New York

2015

War II, MOSTYN, Wales

2014

Spaced Out: Migration to the Interior, Red Bull Studios, New York

On the Blue Shore of Silence, Tracy Williams, Ltd., New York

2013

Garage Show, Rachel Ufner Gallery, New York

Screens, Murray Guy, New York,

Metamatic Reloaded, Museum Tinguely, Basel, Switzerland

2011-2012

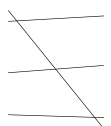
Number Five: Cities of Gold and Mirrors, Julia Stoschek Collection, Dusseldorf

2011

Plus Ultra: a selection of major works from the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Collection, curated by Francesco Bonami, MACRO Testaccio, Rome

2011-2010

Niet Normaal - Difference on Display, curated by Ine Givers, De Beurs van Berlage, Amsterdam



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2008

Democracy in America: The National Campaign, Park Avenue Armory, New York

2006

He Expanded Eye, Kunsthaus, Zurich

2005

Overhead/Underfoot: The Topographical Perspective in Photography, Whitney Museum of Art, New York

2004

Future Noir, Gorney, Bravin Lee Gallery, New York, NY Sexy Beasts, Ethan Cohen Fine Arts, New York  
Yesterday Begins Tomorrow, Deste Foundation Centre for Contemporary Art, Athens, Greece ambush, Van Brunt  
Gallery, New York  
Floorplay, The Brooklyn College Art Gallery, Brooklyn  
Emoticons, Guild and Greyshkul, New York

2003

The Commodification of Buddha, Bronx Museum, New York

2001

Do You Have Time, LiebmanMagnin Gallery, New York

2000

Superpredators, CRP Gallery, Brooklyn  
American Bricolage, Sperone Westwater Gallery, New York

1999

Group Show, Galleri K, Oslo

1998

Kunst . . Arbeit, Sudwestdeutsche Landesbank, Stuttgart, Germany Group Show, Galerie Georg Kargl, Vienna

1997

Family Values, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg

1996

Everything That's Interesting Is New, Athens School of Fine Arts, Athens,  
Exposure, Luhring Augustine, New York  
Sites of Chinatown, Museum of Chinese in the Americas, New York  
The Luminous Image, The Alternative Museum, New York,  
In Vivo, University Gallery, Fine Arts Center, University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
Art At Home, Ideal Standard Life," Spiral Garden, Tokyo

1995

Micromegas, The American Center, Paris; Israel Museum, Jerusalem  
Altered States: American Art in the 90s," Forum for Contemporary Art, Saint Louis

1994

Don't Look Now, Thread Waxing Space, New York  
Zuge Zuge - The Railway in Contemporary Art, Stadtische Galerie, Goppingen  
Synesthesia: Sound and Vision in Contemporary Art," San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio

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1993

Live in Your Head, Heligenkreuzerhof, Vienna  
Prospect 93, Kunstverein Frankfurt and Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt  
The Young Americans, Galerie Sophia Ungers, Cologne  
The Nature of the Machine, Chicago Cultural Center  
The 21st Century, Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland  
SCAI The Bathhouse Opening Exhibition, SCAI The Bathhouse, Tokyo

1992

Doubletake: Collective Memory & Current Art, Hayward Gallery, London, UK; Kunsthalle Vienna

1991

Metropolis, Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin, Germany  
Gulliver's Travels, Galerie Sophia Ungers, Cologne  
Rope, Fernando Alcolea, Barcelona  
Devices, Josh Baer Gallery, New York

1990

Reorienting: Looking East, Third Eye Centre, Glasgow, Scotland; Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London  
Le Desenchantement du Monde, Villa Arson, Nice  
Improbable Machines, Santa Barbara Museum of Art  
Trains, Michael Klein Inc., New York

## AWARDS AND GRANTS

2015

Creative Capital Artist Grant

2011

President's Award for Distinguished Alumni, Purchase College

2001

Foundation for the Performing Arts

1996

Guggenheim Fellowship

1995

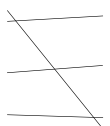
St. Gaudens Memorial

1985

National Endowment for the Arts

1983

National Endowment for the Arts



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