



Interview with Scott Patt

For years Pennsylvania born artist Scott Patt has been developing his style and technique through multivalent layers from urban and rural climates of humanity.

Working with brands like Nike and Converse and branching the connection between art and design, he focuses his work on youth and post pop consumerism, with its primary colours and promises of a healthier tomorrow.

Now Patt has taken on an artist endeavor of developing a year-long plan to capture our shared life experiences in a series of sketch-to-paint artworks, as a part of his *BIGGER. SMALLER. FUNNIER.* project. Each of his daily creations are exhibited across social media early in the morning the day after it was created.

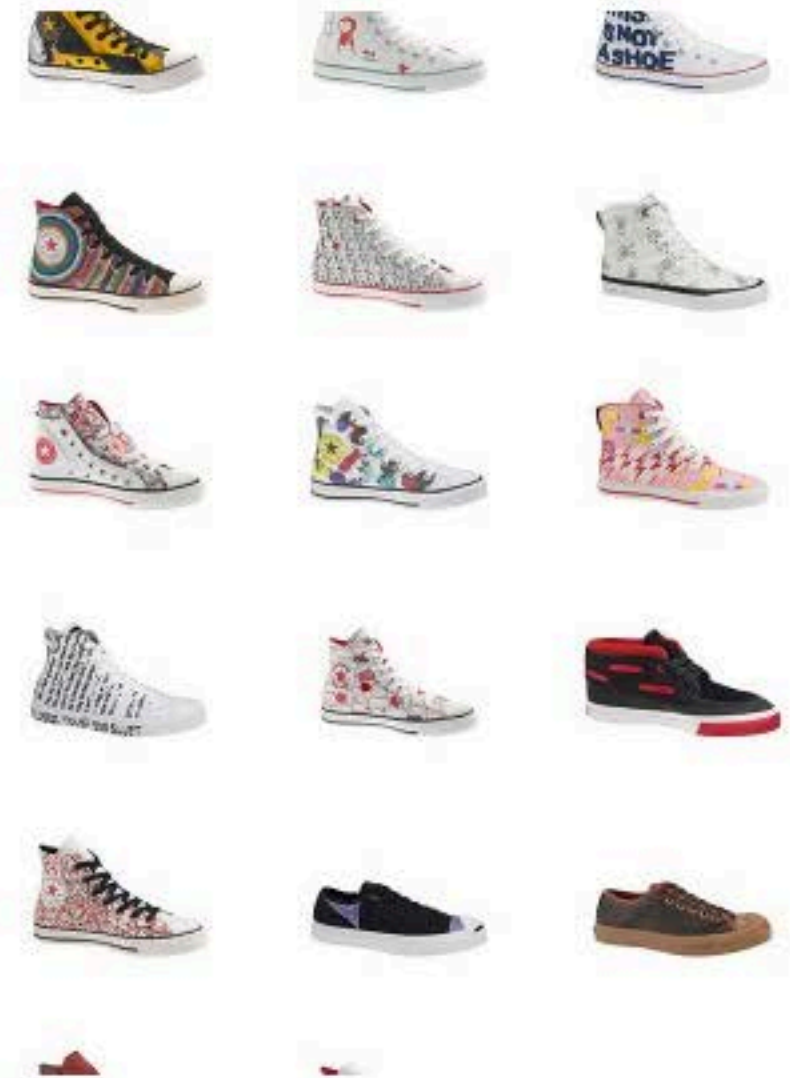
This journey began on January 1, 2014. As he nears the completion of his endeavour, Patt spoke to fluoro about what inspired him and what it all meant to him as an artist.

fluoro. What initially interested you about embarking on a stamina based project?

Scott Patt. The inspiration behind *BIGGER. SMALLER. FUNNIER.* was always about challenging the who, what, where and why of the art that I was creating. My work was feeling a bit stagnant and I wanted something that would push me to ideate more, create work more frequently and act as an inspiration for years to come.

I also wanted to take advantage of social media as a way to engage a broader audience, create an active dialog and exhibit my work in a new way prior to showing it within a traditional gallery setting.

I chose to do the project for a full year because I needed something ridiculous and epic in my life, a quest that would really challenge me and force me to grow. I'd seen some awesomely productive year-long projects from other creatives I admire. I didn't really "get" how hard doing a conceptual painting-a-day for an entire year was going to be at first, but that's the beauty of being human. If we really knew how hard things were going to be, we'd never get out of bed in the morning.



f. What have you learnt on your *BIGGER. SMALLER. FUNNIER.* journey so far?

SP. The most important thing I've learned is how incredibly awesome my wife Lisa Dejohn is. Every day and night she is there helping to review ideas and set me straight when I've got nothing left. She's an artist, so she gets it. But the project has been as much of a journey for me as it has for been for her.

I've also learned the simple yet imperative lesson that *Art is in the living!* All of the things we experience, do, love, hate, regret, celebrate, etc...THIS is the art. Without life there is no art. It sounds so ridiculously cliché but it's so true. I've spent my share of time in the studio waiting for ideas to come (and sometimes they do) but this project has really reinforced the importance of the little moments in life. This is the Art.

Ultimately this relates to why the project is called *BIGGER. SMALLER. FUNNIER.* To inspire others to live more of the good stuff. It's easy to get distracted from the reasons why we do what we do. For me, the project has reinvigorated the purpose and need for connecting my work to the human condition and things that are a part of our lives.

As well, sharing a painting-a-day can challenge one's confidence to the core! The project has been a marathon of massive psychological and emotional proportions. Sharing a reasonably thoughtful piece of art every day is a repeatedly exposing venture accompanied by doubt and fears, which in turn is accompanied by lots of coping mechanisms.

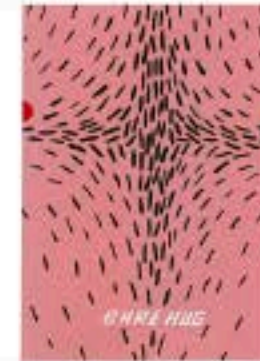
f. Do you draw connections between this project and the notion of a personal diary? How/how not?

SP. *BIGGER. SMALLER. FUNNIER.* is a visual diary. Each piece is a personal story of something that's happened or is going in my life.

Every day when I wake up I write for at least 15 minutes about life's joys, upsets, stresses, whatever's going on. It's a kind of free form meditation that helps me process things. At some point during the day I come back to the writing and highlight notable sentences or happenings. Then I take those and start visually realizing those phrases or ideas in my sketchbook. From the sketchbook I'll pick out the pieces that really resonate with me and imagine it on a wall somewhere. If I can imagine it connecting to somebody else (other than myself) then I'll paint it. Sometimes I'll sketch a piece out and send photos to friends to see if they connect with what I've intended. What's really cool is when they interpret it from a completely different angle and it makes the piece even better (or not). The whole process mimics life in a lot of ways because the content comes from real-time events and stories.

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f. How has your history working with brands such as Converse influenced this project?

SP. What art and design share is the need for connection. *BIGGER. SMALLER. FUNNIER.* is all about connection.

When I was the Global Creative Director of Footwear at Converse my job was not only about ensuring the connectivity and strategy of products within the brand but it was about connectivity to the people outside the brand and around the world. That requires problem solving and making sure the "thing" connects to an audience and solves their need. As it relates to Converse, it was about making shoes that people wanted to wear, connecting to their lives and making life a bit more enjoyable. As it relates to my project it's not so much problem solving as it is about people solving. The pieces I'm making are about everyday emotions, thoughts, feelings and happenings. In the process of making art I'm "solving" and communicating my own problems, which ultimately connects to others and hopefully does much of the same for them.

My time at Converse also really inspired my thinking around democracy and my art. Next to Coca Cola, the *Chuck Taylor All Star Sneaker* is probably one of the most democratically consumed objects on our planet. What's special about the *Chuck* is that the counter-culture rebelliousness that the product stands for is accessible to everyone. Everyone can go out and get a piece of "fuck you" at a reasonable US\$50 and make it what they want it to be. Or if they want something more exclusive for their sensibilities they can go out and get the super limited edition "X". It's high and low business and everyone can play! I love this! Artists have been pioneering this business model for a long time and opportunities are only broadening as digital commercial/art networks appear. I wanted to diversify my art business so more people could access the work that I'm doing.

Launching an edition of 100 Limited Edition prints daily via www.scottpat.com has been a great way to do this. And it's a great compliment to the gallery system by introducing new people to my work through accessible price points while still creating limited larger works and projects for patrons and gallery partners, etc. It's simply about creating a well-rounded business model as an artist.

f. Have you formed any unexpected personal connections throughout the project?

SP. One of the unexpected joys of the project has been the daily resonance of pieces with followers across social media. It was something I was really hopeful for but having it happen has been really rewarding. It means a lot when a thoughtful piece connects to someone or inspires them somehow and they leave a positive comment about it. It's a beautiful feeling to know that somewhere in the world somebody else is feeling the same way. It completes the purpose of making art for me knowing that I've inspired somebody even if that's manifested as a smile.



Also, the project has been a calling card to artists I would have potentially never been exposed to and artists that I've respected for a long time. It seems ridiculous to admit but when an artist you love "likes" your work on Instagram it's a pretty nice feeling.

f. What are your hopes for the second life of *BIGGER. SMALLER. FUNNIER.*?

SP. What's cool is that the original inspiration for doing the project as a way to generate ideas for future work and exhibitions is working! I've already started planning a Summer 2015 exhibition of the original paintings with my partner gallery, Winston Wächter in NYC. I'm also working on a couple sculpture ideas from the series and I'm shopping the project around to create a comprehensive book of the yearlong adventure.

I think what's most exciting about *BIGGER. SMALLER. FUNNIER.* is the ideology. It's so much more than just paintings, sculptures, books or t-shirts. It's more of a philosophy about life. And if the message connected to the things that are created can inspire others to live a better life, I'm in.

Patt is at the tail end of his year-long quest to redefine himself as an artist. With less than three-weeks remaining, you can still see some of his pieces via his [Instagram](#).

www.scottpatt.com

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