

Saul Chernick

Artist Statement: Timestamp (2009)

We can never really revisit the past because the mind invents too much as we attempt to stitch fact and memory together. My images evoke the sensation of looking at something from an earlier time but there's no attempt at historical accuracy. These are pictures made with the sensibility of an invented past as could only be imagined in the present. Just as the color and texture of a period film can date it more closely to the decade of it's making rather than the era it portrays, my images bare a timestamp that will inevitably grow more apparent with age. Through projecting contemporary ideas, aesthetics, and experiences through the lens of traditional methods and motifs I aim to link past and present by revealing enduring commonalities.

Artist Statement: Ghost in the Machine (2009)

I prepared the statement below for an exhibition by teaching artists for an audience of young learners. The works it discusses are in the same vein as those featured in my "Animated Gifs" gallery on this site. The challenge of writing about my work in child-friendly language proved to be extremely rewarding. The process yielded a statement that's more candid, personal, and direct. I recommend that all artists give it a try:

I'm the type of person that can't help thinking about scary things. As a child I had a hard time falling asleep because of all the frightening pictures I'd imagine. Since then I've learned to look for the funny side of scary stuff. The artworks seen here were inspired by an old book called the Heideberger Totentanz (1488). I was attracted to it because the skeletons seemed more humorous than threatening. Even though they're more than 500 years old they reminded me of cartoons today. I wondered about the kinds of new adventures they might have. Since I found them on the computer I wondered what it be like if they could continue living in computers. Rather than re-drawing them by hand I used my computer to change them. I posed them in different positions and put them in new situations. It's my way of celebrating the art of the past using the technology of today!

Artist Statement: Protosapia (2007)

One of the unique purposes of art has been to pictorialize the metaphysical. With great ingenuity and inventiveness artists have sought to render all manner of otherworldly beings, alternate realities, and supernatural phenomena. I am interested in the visual interpretations of such things because they uncover the beliefs and mindset of those who devised them. Many of my ideas originate from depictions of miraculous events and figures, as they appear in Judeo/Christian mythology, I use drawing to revisit, reinterpret, and reconfigure them. The mark language in these works allows me to conjure the same sense of weight and authority that classical religious imagery tend to possess. Although my images are informed by a contemporary and admittedly more secular viewpoint the basic themes, fears, and desires remain constant. I imagine the narratives in my drawings as part of a larger mythology set in *Protosapia*, an Eden-like environment that serves as both laboratory and breeding ground for an alternate or “would-be” human species. It is a place where ideas about creation, sexual politics, and iconography coalesce to create new possibilities embodied by its inhabitants, the *Protosapiens*.