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LAUREL
ROTH
ARTIST

Incorporating traditional techniques such as carving, embroidery, crochet and collage into her work, artist Laurel Roth has become famous for her signature transformation of natural materials into fantastical creatures and often surprising collections. Influenced by her previous work as a park ranger and in natural resource conservation, Roth's art often examines the choices humans make between their individual desires and the welfare of the Earth at large. The themes of her work range from biodiversity and industrial agriculture to the pharmaceutical industry, fertility, culture and domestic animal breeding. Roth's creations have shown both in the United States and abroad, with shows at the Museum of Art and Design in New York and the International Museum of Surgical Science in Chicago, as well as in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian, the 21C Museum Hotels, the Zabłudowics Collection, the Progressive Collection, the Ripley's Believer it or Not Museum in Hollywood and the Museum of Art and Design in New York. Currently, Roth has a collaborative show with Andy Diaz Hope at the de Young Museum as de Young Artist Fellows and an exhibit at the Museum of Art and Design in New York titled *Against the Grain: Wood in Contemporary Art, Craft and Design*, which runs through September 15.



Photograph by Andy Diaz Hope

DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN CLINICAL TERMS. Six feet tall, 140-145 pounds, ectomorph, brown hair, hazel eyes, voracious reader, can't swim or whistle. **WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU FELT TRULY EMBARRASSED?** When I thought about answering this question, I felt a bit embarrassed. I'm a pretty private person, and this does seem to be a public forum. **WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT?** Every year that I continue as a professional artist feels like a pretty awesome and hard-won accomplishment, but I've also been lucky to show with some amazing institutions such as the Smithsonian, the de Young Museum in San Francisco, and the Museum of Art and Design in New York. Walking up the steps of the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian to take part in a show there felt pretty great. **PICK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING: STEINBECK OR BUKOWSKI?** Steinbeck in early teens, Bukowski in late. **KUBRICK OR HITCHCOCK?** *The Birds* terrified me as a little kid, and *A Clockwork Orange* terrified me as a teenager — childhood fear of the natural/supernatural and adult fear of the ills of society/mankind but both worlds gone terrifyingly wrong. Can't choose. **CRY OR FIGHT?** Definitely both. Preferably not at the same time. **HOT SAUCE OR KETCHUP?** Hot sauce. Tapatio's or Sriracha. **SHORT SKIRTS OR TIGHT PANTS?** Both. Not at the same time. With boots. **WESTERN OR EASTERN?** Northern Californian. **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ALBUM OF ALL TIME?** It's hard to pinpoint exactly but probably something by Pink Floyd. *Wish You Were Here?* They definitely provided the soundtrack to my formation into adulthood and are permanently etched into my mind. **WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON**

GUN CONTROL? Middle ground, which seems to be a lonely place these days. I understand the desire to have a gun and the resistance to giving them up, but I do support tighter control, education and background checks. Mostly I'd like to see access to quality education, health care (including mental health care), decent employment and the pursuit of happiness help make a world where it's not so much of an issue. **WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE WITH DRUGS?** I like the moment when my migraine medicine kicks in and the end to a really bad headache begins to emerge. **WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN THE OPPOSITE SEX?** I like people who are honest with themselves and others, and who are genuinely interested in the world and how it works, kindness, the ability to build and fix things, and an appreciation for cats, dogs, bicycles, motorcycles and books is nice, too. That goes for friends of either gender. **WHO OR WHAT INSPIRES YOU (AND WHY)?** Ira Glass, for the insatiable curiosity he represents and shares; Douglas Adams, for writing *Last Chance to See* and managing to make me laugh while breaking my heart; Jane Goodall, for her dedication to research, respect for nonhuman life and overall grace; my partner Andy Hope, for his optimism, intellect, strength and support. **HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED?** Hopefully that my intentions were generally good.