

SEANKELLY

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Hugo McCloud: Artist by Design



AGE 34

HOMETOWN Redwood City, Calif.

NOW LIVES Bushwick, Brooklyn, in a transformed warehouse loft next door to AP Café, a minimalist coffee shop that he designed and co-owns.

CLAIM TO FAME Trained as an industrial designer, Mr. McCloud uses blowtorches, metal sheets, tar and other nontraditional materials to create experimental works that have caught the eye of the art establishment.

BIG BREAK In 2012, Mr. McCloud was part of the "Young Curators, New Ideas IV" group show at the now-defunct Meulenstein Gallery in Chelsea, and he showed works that year at Art Basel Miami Beach and last year at the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts in Brooklyn. This year, he held his first major solo exhibition at the Luce Gallery in Turin, Italy, and was featured in the gallery's booth at the New Art Dealers Alliance fair in New York.

Hugo McCloud at the installation of his first solo show in New York. Credit Casey Kelbaugh for The New York Times

LATEST PROJECT He has his first solo show in New York, "Put in Place," at the Vladimir Restoin Roitfeld gallery on the Upper East Side. In the series, he manipulates tar paper by covering it with liquid tar, adding aluminum foil and aluminum butane paint and pressing woodblock patterns into the surface. The process was influenced by the artist's recent trip to India, where he studied traditional block-printing techniques. "I was really interested in the perfection in the imperfection, because it's a hand-done process," he said.

NEXT THING The prestigious Sean Kelly Gallery in New York will include his works in a group show in June. An avid traveler, Mr. McCloud will also spend July and August in Tulum, Mexico, studying regional carving. "I want to be in environments that are different and new so that I'm learning, and then what I learn is translated into my pieces," he said.

ODD SOUVENIRS In India, Mr. McCloud became enamored with the brightly hued, plastic woven bags that construction workers use to transport concrete. He bought 200 of them. "The people from Customs probably thought I was crazy," he said with a laugh, adding that his unusual travel souvenirs often provoke such responses from airport security. "It's usually something that's garbage in their eyes."