

Uri ARAN

Photography ROBBIE FIMMANO

THE NEW YORK-BASED ARTIST'S SHOCKING READY-MADE COMPOSITIONS MAY LOOK LIKE TOTAL CHAOS, BUT THERE IS A METHOD TO HIS MAYHEM

In his videos, sculptures, and large-scale installations, 34-year-old artist Uri Aran takes the viewer on a journey through the many convolutions of his mind—and frankly there are some very strange things going on in there. Take, for instance, the recent work *All This Is Yours*, in which Aran arranged a disparate assortment of found objects, such as a toy mouse, wood shavings, cookies, and a television showing a loop of the end credits of *The Black Stallion* (1979). In similar mixed-media works, eggs, shredded-wheat squares, fish food, and pliers make an equally ominous appearance. Aran frequently uses the flat surface of a table as his own blank canvas open for experimentation. In this way, he passes through the history of Flemish still life, past the modernist ready-made, and winds up with jarring compilations of the perverse and provocative.

Born in Israel, Aran studied graphic design at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, where he graduated in 2004, and his ongoing fascination with language and typographic properties stems from these years of study in his homeland. In fact, verbal expression functions as a perfect metaphor for Aran's approach to materials and space. It isn't a stretch to think of these seemingly random objects as units he's trying to arrange in his own clandestine linguistic system. In the past decade, Aran has also worked consistently in video, his projects tending to play as emotional portraits exploring life through humor, sadness, and anxiety. In 2006's *Untitled*, he hugs a dog in his arms while crying profusely. In 2008's *Untitled*, a man in a recording studio tediously repeats variations on the sentences *Baryshnikov is the best dancer in the world* and *Baryshnikov is the best dancer I have ever seen*.

In 2008, Aran had his first solo show at the now-defunct Rivington Arms gallery on Manhattan's Lower East Side, for which he transformed the space into tropical madness: coconuts, a revolving faux-aquarium sculpture, and dolphin mirrors all conspired to create an explosion of controlled chaos. This January, Aran gets his second solo show in New York, and this time he is ambitiously filling the much larger space at Gavin Brown's enterprise with various media that complement and elucidate one another. These include a video of a man rhythmically dipping a tea bag into water, slide projections of drawings that Aran made with photographs and black marker on yellow paper, and assemblages, including a mound of dirty baseballs nesting on a North Face advertisement. Aran describes the show in his typically convoluted reasoning: "There will be a 'he,' a 'she,' and an 'it' protagonist defining spaces and dealing with definitions, making mazes to get back to the simplest explanations and instinctual structures," he says. It seems Aran is creating messy maps in which it is up to the viewer to discover the secret logic in every composition. —CECILIA ALEMANI

TOP: URI ARAN IN NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 2011. SWEATSHIRT AND T-SHIRT: T BY ALEXANDER WANG. STYLING: VANESSA CHOW/CREATIVE EXCHANGE AGENCY. GROOMING: WESLEY O'MEARA/THE WALL GROUP. ART: TOP: PROJECTION OF HARRY, 2007. BOTTOM: DETAILS FROM UNTITLED 35mm COLOR SLIDE PROJECTION, 2011. FASHION DETAILS PAGE 143.

>See more of URI ARAN on interiemagazine.com

