



VINNIE ANGEL AKA LOOTS WHIP'D®

FLOTATION DEVICES

FRONT OF HOUSE

PREFACE

YIANNI DOULIS, *Architect and JHID Collaborator*

From all of the antic energy and faded primary colors of "Flotation Devices," Loots Whip'd® could be a graphic artist from the golden age of cereal boxes, a master of cardboard cut-out monster masks and self-addressed stamped envelope cons. His cast of mythical and stereotyped characters, shapes and typefaces pulled from somewhere in our dark collective consumer unconscious, feels like a throwback to some carnival past that might never have happened. But...what's this about "Ask me why you never ask me about my yeast infections, dude?" And Better Boys® Behavior Prompts®? This doesn't sound at all nostalgic, or corny; it sounds a little timely.

In a previous persona, Loots Whip'd® was Vinnie Angel, and walked the streets of New York handing out free tampon cases to whoever asked for one, starting conversations that gave boys and men the opportunity to consider the world that girls and women live in, through the euphemism-shrouded topic of menstruation. Hundreds of thousands of tampon cases and thousands of fan letters Vinnie received attest to the value of these conversations. But boys and men who are paying any attention may have realized over the last two years that they have lots of work to do still, and the sharper and darker message of his installation is about that work.

The tricky magic of "Flotation Devices" is in being dead serious about this message while entertaining our eyes and pop-culture memories with so much flim-flam. And unlike the crappy decoder ring we spent Saturday morning putting together a long time ago, the cut-out constructions teeming over the surfaces of the gallery space end up being pretty succinct once we line up slot A and slot B:

IF...YOU...GREW...A...PAIR...WE'D...BE...SAFE...NOW



ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Loots Whip'd® is the artist and product designer Vinnie Angel (a.k.a. Peter Vincent D'Angelo). These works are the most recent incarnations of the artist's longstanding investigation into themes of creative risk vs. reward, giving vs. taking, and the subsequent collateral damage upon others close at hand when one's improperly balanced Ping-Pong table/Limo roof rack/body/mind/stack of Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits tips. These personal dilemmas are often not so opaquely camouflaged within quasi-fictional narratives populated by artists and choreographers he is inspired by, the dealers who represent them, along with a few specific journalists who cover contemporary dance.

Products created and designed by Vinnie that have appeared on store shelves around the world (Urban Outfitters, Barnes & Noble, etc.) include: Women Kicking Would Be Rapists in the Nuts® Fridge magnets, I've Got World Peace in My Pants® Temporary Tattoos (for Blue Q), and Vinnie's Tampon Cases® (as well as Vinnie's Mini Tampon Case® -for non-apps!).



ARTIST STATEMENT

Flotation Devices, Made by Loots Whip'd® is a modest attempt to deflate the accepted (albeit abhorrent) fact that in our society (or any society for that matter) a space continues to be vacuumed, primed and refreshed for boys and men to be allowed to be confused regarding crimes against women and the starring role they command or will inherit. Takes one to know one. Basta.

The concept for Flotation Devices is the development of a series of reproducible, readily relatable, unavoidably eye-popping and individually customizable color-coded objects to be informally inserted within randomly selected high schools around the country—each intended to incite boys towards correct behavior with frank, unflinching printed text prompts that will challenge inherited understandings of power, entitlement, and what in fact constitutes a criminal act (i.e. egg-sucking).

Presented here, along with process notes and points of inspiration, are two behavior prompt prototypes designed to reference celebratory high school tropes (a Prom limousine and a Homecoming float). The incorporated cartooned characterizations (based on the art world personalities Ryan Trecartin and Lizzie Fitch, as well as dance choreographers Sarah Michelson and Parker Lutz—and derived directly from a series of Angel's extemporaneous watercolors) have been scrubbed of the hand of the individual artist and reformulated as facsimiles of familiar and friendly corporate logos and formatted to closely replicate cut-to-shape in-store pop-up product promotionals—to further entice teens to the trap.

The prototype characters have been costumed in the specific blue and gold school colors and cheerleading uniforms of Santa Monica High School in Southern California (randomly selected). Each subsequent construction will be customized to the specific colors and unique cheerleading uniforms of each school. An unsolicited, modified and fully customized version of the prom limo prototype has been sent to Santa Monica High School for their enjoyment.

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Special thanks to the Gallery Greeters: Hazel Raak, Ella Mankowski, Pilar Deniston & Balloon Wrangler: Daisy Beach D'Angelo.

Don't let the global depletion of helium or the image of a sea turtle choking on a Yeast Infection balloon distract from the fact that the day-to-day heavy lifting on this planet (and any chance for human salvation) will continue to be undertaken and achieved by selfless, brilliant & determined women like Sarah Sockit Moseley.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARIO GALLUCCI