

# JESSICA JOSLIN

URL: JESSICAJOSLIN.COM  
GALLERY: LISA SETTE GALLERY, SCOTTSDALE, AZ

**Jessica Joslin** creates strangely beautiful sculptures that combine ANIMAL skeletons with baroque elegance. Instead of an easel, she uses a dissecting table. Her work is dynamic, and her creatures “follow their own circuitous path. I don’t always start with the head, for instance. I do often begin with a specific part (or parts) that I’d like to use—a beautiful bone, or a piece of brass with a great shape and an especially lush patina.” Her creatures are made up of bone, brass, and mechanical fastenings (whenever possible). All of her work is solid and certain joints or moveable parts are often reinforced with brass plates.

What is your favorite wild ANIMAL and why?  
I’m far too fickle to choose only one. I especially love shore birds and monkeys, but I’m always most besotted by whatever creature is on my workbench at the moment.

How do you spot good art vs. bad art? I consider it “bad art” if I have no desire to slow my pace as I walk past it.

Do you have a mantra or motto or word to the wise? Whatever you are, be a good one. (Abraham Lincoln)

Why should people care about your art?

I think people know right away if they’re interested or not. If they’re not, I’m hardly going to try to convince them otherwise.

If a witch doctor agreed to make you a voodoo doll, of whom would it be?  
I’ll take the impeachment-model doll of ol’ G.W. (with the optional sissy-pants and an extra box of public humiliation pins).

Have you ever been bitten by a wild ANIMAL?  
Only dead ones. I got a pretty nasty puncture to the palm from a coyote (Radian). When I was mounting the bottom jaw, my drill bit broke and my hand came down hard on the front canines. I’ve actually been “bitten” by quite a few of them, but usually only a little nip.

Do you have a studio to work out of or do you actually work out of a studio apartment?  
I share a studio with my husband, in our apartment. It’s quite close quarters. My workbench is only 3’ x 4’ (although if I’m making something larger, like an ostrich, I get folding-table privileges). As you might expect, I also I have quite a few animal bones and skulls, as well as many boxes of things, like antique car horns, musical instruments, opera gloves, Odd Fellows sashes, etc. There’s a wall lined with hundreds of tiny drawers, labeled with obscure things, like pewter bird feet, fish scales, chrome spikes, fins, ear-liners, insect parts, and umbrella tips. Then there are many, many, types of brass hardware, fittings, and findings.

Art: For the love or for the money?  
What kind of schmuck thinks that making art is the easiest avenue to the big bucks?

Does Tillamook Cheddar really make art or it just a marketing stunt?  
Marketing stunts seem to be readily accepted as legitimate contemporary art so, by current standards, it most certainly is art. By my own selfish standards, one-liners aren’t juicy enough fare. Too much of what I see in contemporary art today is terribly anemic.



*“Radian” Antique hardware, brass, bone, vestment trim, IOOF pendants, glove leather, sculpted/painted leather ears and glass eyes, 8”X4”X6”*

What is the worst thing about the art industry?  
That schmoozing is such an effective road to recognition.

If you could show your work in any museum, which one would you choose?  
The Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, although, for that to happen, I’d have to con some of Great Britain’s preeminent scholars into believing that my work was *at least* a couple of hundred years older than it is.

What museum would you like to see reduced to ashes? There aren’t any museums that I would like to see burn. Some of our fine institutions of contemporary art piss me off royally, but not quite that much. Burning what you don’t like reeks of fascism.

What else do you want people to know about your art?  
There’s always much more going on than you can see at first viewing. It gets more interesting the more you learn about it, the closer you look. I’ll make it worth your while.

What does wildlife mean to you?  
It’s a litmus test for how self-absorbed we are as a species. Creatures are disappearing every moment, and with each one, we lose a huge potential for knowledge, amongst other things...

Artist you would like to meet, living or dead:  
Frederik Ruysch (1638-1731), a Dutch anatomist and a pioneer in organ and tissue preservation techniques. In addition to his scientific contributions, he often made artistic arrangements of his material. via: [zymoglyphic.org](http://zymoglyphic.org)

Does it really make sense for the U.S. to build a 700-mile-long, 30-foot-high wall with sensors and cameras along the Mexican border, to keep out illegal immigrants?  
No, of course not. But it seems that our current administration can be counted on to make absurd choices in how they distribute the funding that they have to spend.

What question didn’t we ask that you think is important? Do you ever do commissioned work?



*"Lupe" Antique hardware, brass, bone, painted wood ball, glove leather, sculpted & painted leather ears and glass eyes, 11" X 6" X 16"*



*"Cosimo" Antique hardware, brass, bone, standoffs, glove leather, sculpted & painted leather ears and glass eyes 14"X1"X20"*



*"Odette" (detail)*



*"Odette" Antique hardware, brass, bone, vestment trim, standoffs, fluid couplings, glove leather, and glass eyes., 11"X14"X18"*



*"Nico" (detail)*



*"Nico" Antique hardware, brass, bone, umbrella tips, jacket spikes, glove leather, sculpted & painted leather ears and glass eyes, 19"X5"X12"*

*"Candido & Caprice" (detail)*



“There’s always much more going on than you can see at first viewing. It gets more interesting the more you learn about it, the closer you look. I’ll make it worth your while.”



*“Candido & Caprice”* Antique hardware, snakeskin, vestment trim, brass, velvet, glove leather, turtle shell, cast & painted plastic and glass eyes, 40”X16” X 20