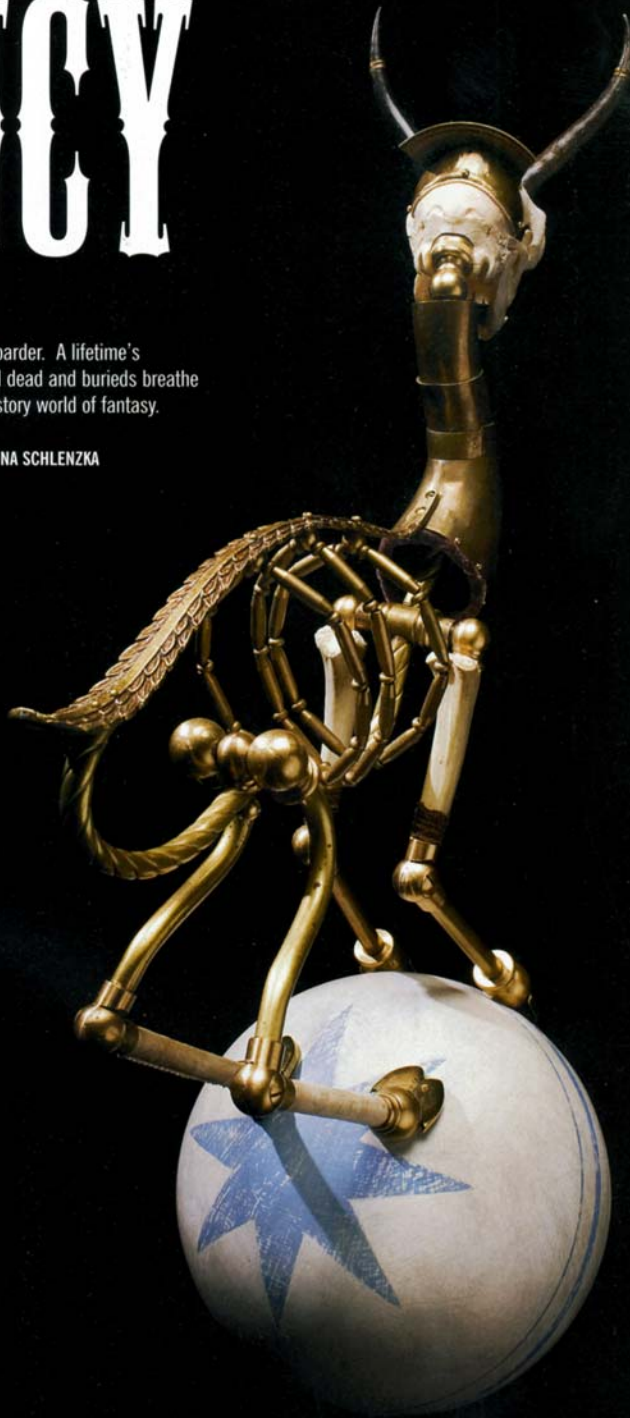


FANCY

American artist Jessica Joslin is a hoarder. A lifetime's accumulation of lost and founds and dead and buried breathe new life into an elaborate natural history world of fantasy.

PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS STRONG TEXT JOANNA SCHLENZKA



All sculptures from The Brass Menagerie, 2006. Right: Marcel. Left: Ludwig





Above: Marco. Top right: Flora. Below right: Lambert & Salvia



Since her childhood days studying flies under the microscope in Boston, Massachusetts, Joslin has built up a magpie collection of animal artefacts, bones, antique mechanics, glass eyes, beads and lamp fittings. Since 1992, she has transformed these elements into an intricate menagerie of mythical beasts, and bone and brass creatures that range from one inch to six feet tall. Inspired in equal measure by circus showman and museum curator PT Barnum, Cabinet of Curiosity natural history collector Albertus Seba, contemporary American artist Matthew Barney, Dutch anatomist Frederik Ruysch and posthumously discovered cosmic crammer and artist Eugene von Bruenchenhein, Joslin has created her very own carnivalesque cabinet of curiosities in a mad workshop in Chicago with husband and fellow artist, Jared Joslin.

"I find things anywhere... in obscure junk shops, flea markets, attics, taxidermy supply houses, speciality hardware distributors or walking through the woods." Drawing on artisan techniques, Joslin's sculptures hark back to an era when crafts were evolved and skills were inherited through apprenticeships. "The many components of the creatures are assembled using as many techniques as there are parts. Fastening a crest of feathers must be approached in an entirely differently way than a headpiece of brass on bone. Miniature machine bolts, springs and couplings comprise anatomical structures. Many of the beasts have hidden movements – a spring-loaded beak, jointed legs and moveable tails." Joslin also works as a toy model maker, carpenter, machinist and mould maker.

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