

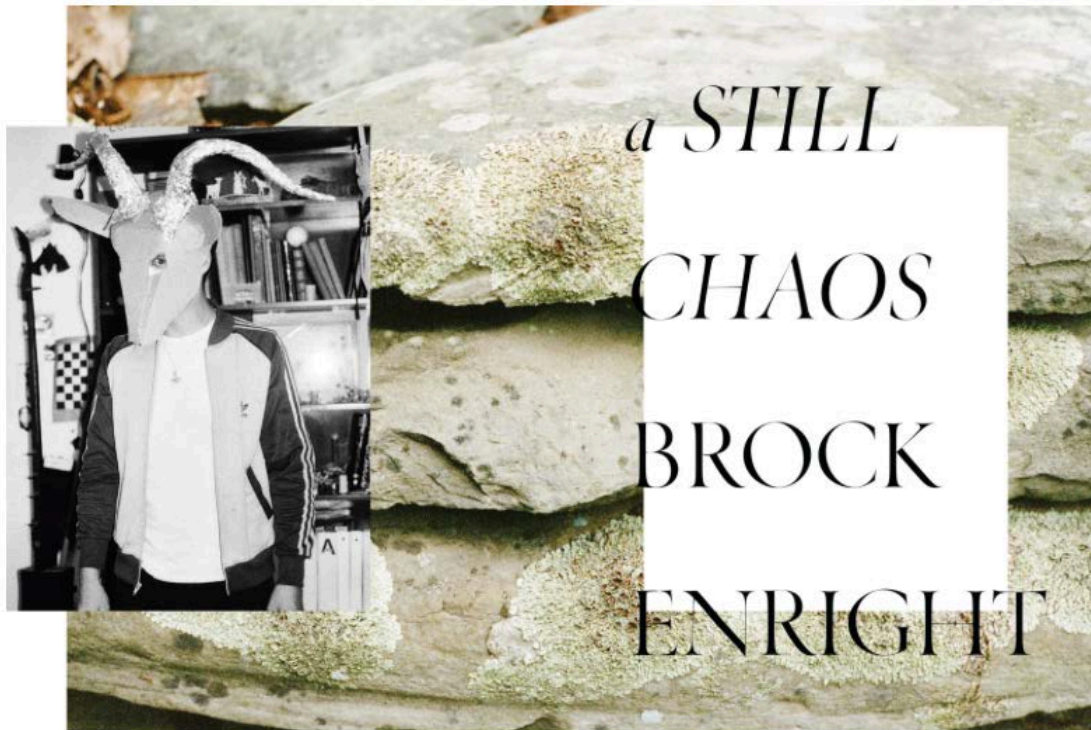
KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

LIAR

A Still Chaos
Interview with Brock Enright by Christine Be
Photography by Jimmy Kim
October 2015

Brock is balancing an umbrella on the tip of his finger. He's been at it for quite a while now. At last count it's been about 5 minutes. He says it's not his record yet. After 15 minutes or so, he finally let's go. It wasn't because he needed to, it was because he wanted to. I try my hand at the umbrella balancing act. 2 seconds. Fail.



It's late. Brock's young son, Torben, has long been tucked into bed. We are hanging out in the studio with a group of his artist friends, listening to music, talking philosophical shit. The grown-ups are playing dress up and make believe. Rain is softly falling on the flora outside. Magic is happening.

Earlier today, jimmy (my photographer) and I are driving over to Brock's new home near beacon, New York. The buildings give way to trees, the trees give way to Brock's home. It is a treasure trove of artworks and oddities. You can feel the chaos radiating from the piles of boxes, some with unique identifies such as "lemons and razors," "broken glass," or "cat skeleton." There is a lot of stuff.

BROCK ENRIGHT: Well, I do have a lot of stuff.

LIAR: Indeed. I have seen your studio and workspace. So I can totally vouch for that. Is that one of the reasons you are moving your stuff up to Beacon?

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BE: Yes it is. I've realized throughout the 15 years working as an artist in the city, I've moved my studio, my projects, and my storage units many times from one location to another. Up and down flights of stairs, across rivers, and over mountains. And every time I do this I've said to myself, "I must find a home, a place to set up and spend time archiving and working towards my larger concepts." It always felt like I was archiving and working on the road.

LIAR: That is very challenging and exciting, to have that constant feeling of movement but at the same time, to have a desire for stability and a place to call "home." How did you find yourself deciding that this was going to be "home?"

BE: I had a feeling that I've never felt before looking at the home, so I considered it to mean something and it has. I love the name of my street.

LIAR: "Orbit Lane"—what does it mean to you?

BE: I'm on another planet and from time to time I visit "earth."

LIAR: The house struck me as very "normal" in the sense that you could imagine any family living there, except for the fact that the garage and basement area is full of art materials and tools. Are there any definite plans for additions or changes? Or do you think this space will just evolve organically?

BE: We have plans for additions on two parts of the house and two new structures on the property that will be used as studio space.



“IMAGINE A STILL CHAOS. THE EYE OF THE STORM.
THE INTUITIVE CENTER OF WORKING, OF SEEING.”

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LIAR: How do you think the process of “settling down” will affect your current work?

BE: It will allow me to focus on finishing long-term projects that have been in the works for years. I can finally create my library of materials and archive properly.

LIAR: I can totally relate. A place for everything and everything in its place, right? Do you find the process of organizing and categorizing items to be cathartic?

BE: Yes, very much. Order to me is a perception game. To move an object an inch to the left versus the right—if I stand to the side and keep my head forward it was moved an inch up and down—because this can happen, it frees me up to make up my own rules of order. Also the use of an object changes how I place it in its order—after I have placed an object in a position, I leave it alone for a day or so before I work on it again.

LIAR: You have your own internal drive to categorize and control the objects in your environment, are you trying to create order out of chaos?

BE: A storm from a distance can look amazing—the lightning, the thunder, the colors. I try to apply the behavior of weather systems in the process of making things. After a storm I comb through and find things that may be of use. I understand I need the chaos before the calm sound but I can also see the calm sound as a chaos of its own. Imagine a still chaos. The eye of the storm. The intuitive center of working, of seeing.

LIAR: Yes, even amidst chaos there is order. When I look at your artworks for afar it feels very chaotic. But the closer I get, the more logical and ordered it becomes. Do you feel there is a secret hierarchy to all things?

BE: I think there might be a secret momentary value to all things.

LIAR: I love that concept! And it is very true on many levels.

BE: I try to address that in my work.



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LIAR: How do you feel about the art you are developing now for your upcoming exhibition compared to past artworks?

BE: I breathe before I make a move. I'm composing more this time. I'm taking my time. I'm listening to the birds in the trees and practicing my movements on top of my moss. LIAR: You've developed patches of moss around the surrounding rocks of your new house, how did that come about?

BE: The climate here has the perfect conditions for moss to grow naturally. So I've been encouraging it to expand by using buttermilk and yogurt. I spray the buttermilk and paint the yogurt blended with pre-existing moss on the rocks and objects.

LIAR: Do you have any patterns in mind or do you spray indiscriminately?

BE: I follow the rock lines hoping to have a cluster of objects scatter along the rocks with copper leafed objects, copper statues and stones, and perhaps a fluorescent stone winking at me.

LIAR: Patterns on top of patterns? Patterns hidden by patterns?

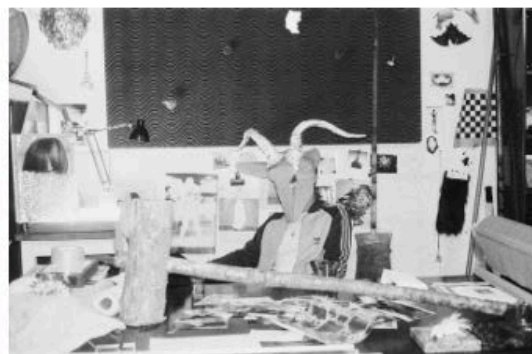
BE: Both. Meandering like a dragon.

LIAR: Do you feel you meander as a person? As an artist?

BE: Meandering for me is the best way to discover things. Once I've found something that I value, I work with it in a focused manner. Once it's found a home or feels complete for the moment I set out to meander again. I may not know where I'm headed but I'm never lost.



"I RECORD THE AUDIO OF MY WORKS.
THE SOUND OF THEIR STILLNESS.
YOU CAN HEAR WHAT'S AROUND THE OBJECT."



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LIAR: You know, I "interviewed" your son a few days ago while we built a fort in his room. Torben is very insightful. He was telling me that we are all energy and when we die we can't control it and just become something else. Do you feel like you have new insights into the world since raising Torben?

BE: Torben has saved my life in many ways. Before him I was spending too much time in the storms I created. I had to find shelter for him. In doing that I found that there is so much more to life.

LIAR: He answers my questions with a thoughtfulness and clarity that only a child can imagine. You are his world. You are creating an adventure for him that is real and will unfold throughout his lifetime.

BE: I'm working very hard at enriching his and our lives and showing him how to navigate his way and what to bring with him for his journey. Through thick and thin. Keep going.

LIAR: You had a very different experience growing up as a child, can you share some of your thoughts on how you were raised?

BE: Up to age six I was raised by my mother. I remember intense moments. String-less guitars and cookie crisp cereal for breakfast lunch and dinner. I remember nudity. Mosquito trucks and a lot of the time waiting at night under parking lot street lights by pay phones. Then one day I remember being in a large open space with shiny floors, and running, and sliding. It was there that my mother introduced me to my grandfather. She said, "Brock, meet your new dad." And then from then to now I've called my grandfather, dad. He is my father and I love him like crazy. Later on in life I found my biological father and we became really great friends. But that only lasted 4 years due to his death.

LIAR: And what was it like growing up with your grandfather?

BE: He put me in martial arts from six on up. He and my grandmother together showed me and taught me the root of kindness and how to love and have integrity with my visions. My grandmother taught me the importance of attitude. My grandfather is an extremely passionate and loving man. He and my grandmother have the best smile. Long story short, I had an intense childhood.



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LIAR: How has martial arts influenced you?

BE: Muscle memory. I've applied muscle memory to my practice and projects. Learning when to give and when to push. Stay light in my mind.

LIAR: Is that how you've learned to balance the umbrella?

BE: You just made me smile. It must be.

LIAR: Has anyone ever broken your record, balancing the umbrella or any object for that matter?

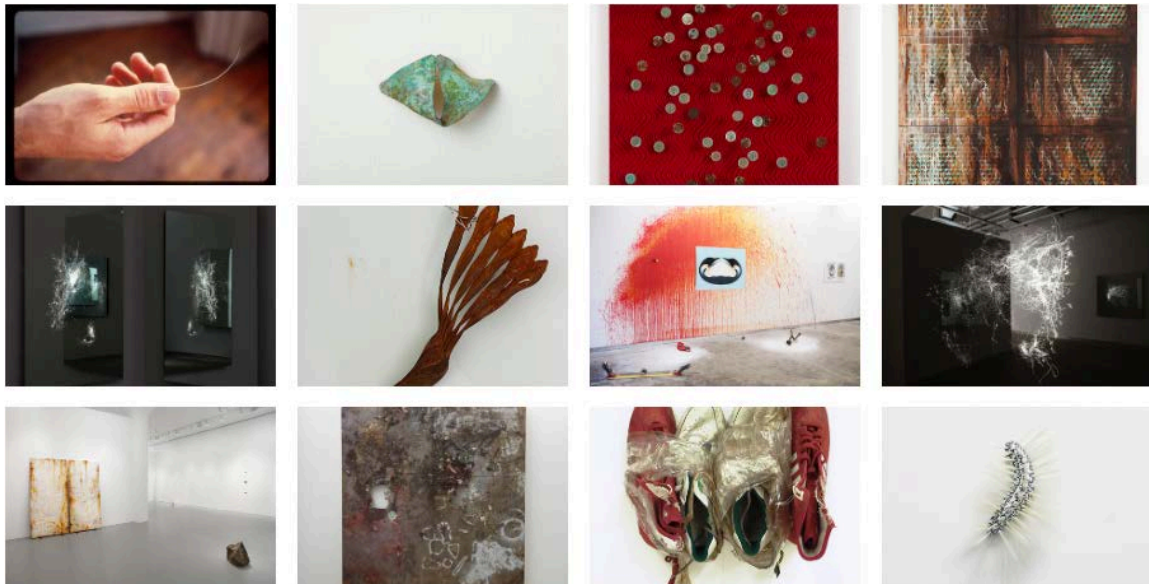
BE: I'm sure there is someone out there. My friend Anders is really great at a lunch tray on his nose. I've yet to learn that one.

LIAR: When did you realize you were an artist? How did you decide on this path?

BE: From the beginning. I've always had the desire to make things from the beginning. It was the only language that seemed to cross through everything. I was behind in reading so I guess I overcompensated with drawing. I noticed that I couldn't read the word the teacher needed me to read. One day she had the class draw self-portraits. The teacher put hers up and I noticed its likeness of her was off farther than mine. That's when I understood learning differences, the wavering lens of context and what's important to some is less important to others. All of this seen from a six-year-old's perspective being said from a 38-year-old's perspective today.

LIAR: It's all about perspective. Did anyone introduce you to art as a career? Did it even occur to six-year-old Brock as a possibility?

BE: I was taught art history a very early age. I probably saw an importance to its position in our world. Van Gogh was the first artist that inspired me to look in this world, to really see, to see the hidden colors in your mind and this world. I never saw it as a career move ever. I felt it was my silent protest, my duty in some way. I felt it was a responsibility. It is another approach to understanding this world.



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LIAR: When did you have your first “silent protest?”

BE: Drawing what I see, whether it is with a pencil, a thought, a sound, or subtraction.

LIAR: Who is your ideal audience?

BE: An open audience.

LIAR: Naturally. Some of your work is performance based, do you lose yourself in the work or do you become the work? Or is the work you?

BE: I see performance as the way someone conducts themselves throughout their day. Saying “hello” or telling a story to a friend, eating socially, playing, or sport.

LIAR: Do you find you absorb other people’s experiences into your “performance?”

BE: If I’m sad for some reason and my son comes up to me and wants to play. I try so very hard to reach deep in my body and pull out whatever little happiness is left and I give it to him. And then when we play, we are both so very present in all of its performative elements and emotions. Everyday I absorb a new way of applying what I experience into my work. But no there isn’t anyone personally that I have based anything off of.

LIAR: It’s true; sometimes just going through the motions changes you regardless of what you felt before. What have been the greatest challenges in your life? In art?

BE: Wow...there have been so many. I think I’m in it now.

LIAR: How so?

BE: Balance. To maintain balance. Much endurance is needed to maintain balance. Sometimes I think everyday is a challenge.