

# Don't Shoot the Messenger



## Catalogue

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12 March 2021

—  
11 April 2021

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aMBUSH Gallery Canberra

[kambri.com.au](http://kambri.com.au)

[ambushgallery.com](http://ambushgallery.com)

Kambri at ANU  
**aMBUSH**

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*Don't Shoot the Messenger* is a riveting and intentionally confrontational exhibition from renowned street artist and Archibald Prize finalist, Luke Cornish (aka E.L.K.).

This extraordinary body of 54 meticulously hand-cut stencil works were created over the course of 2020, after Cornish's plans for overseas travel were stymied by the pandemic.

Through his use of unorthodox artistic provisions – including riot shields, hunting knives, swords, paper currency, and 3D-printed 'grenades' – Cornish has created a memorable and potent means to communicate the exhibition's themes of global injustice and protest.

By holding a mirror up to society through his art, Cornish wants to inspire people to think critically – about how governments amass power, spin issues to suit their agendas, and the pervasive problem of extremism, whether it's religious, political or financial.

*Don't Shoot the Messenger* is a compelling display for those interested in dialogue about the rise of authoritarianism, the fall of liberties, the power of the people, and art's role in inciting change.

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aMBUSH Gallery, Kambri at ANU - Level 2, Cultural Centre (ANU Building 153)  
Australian National University, Acton, ACT

**aMBUSH**





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**ELK**

*Taste the Rainbow (2021)*

**\$25,000**

1.6x2.8M

Aerosol/Acrylic on Canvas

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*A comment on the absurdity of police brutality. This painting is a reference of an image taken at the IMARC conference in Melbourne by Nathan Coote in 2020. The work seeks to highlight the excessive force by officers against the general public. The title 'Taste the rainbow' implies that although humans come in all different colours, be it Black, White or blue, we are all the same shade of shit to the people that enjoy our protection, while slowly killing the planet we share.*



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**ELK**

*We stand with you (2020)*

~~\$8,000~~ — **SOLD**

970x470mm

Aerosol/Clearcoat on Riot Shield

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*"I just think to myself, how wonderful a country is Australia?"*

Scott Morrison



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**ELK**

Add Oil (2020)

970x470mm

~~\$8,000~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol/Clearcoat on Riot Shield

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*Hong Kongers, add oil*

*“Add oil” is such a widely used phrase even among non-Cantonese speakers that it was added to the Oxford English Dictionary last year. It roughly translates as “keep it up” or “keep going,” and is used to express support and encouragement in all sorts of scenarios. Though not overtly political, it has nevertheless become one of the most popular slogans of the protest movement, and a crowd-wide call-and-answer invariably kicks off whenever someone shouts “Hong Konger.”*



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**ELK**

Venezuela (2020)

970x470mm

~~\$8,000~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol/Clearcoat on Riot Shield

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*Venezuela, the country with the highest oil reserves in the world, also with the lowest standard of living for it's people. Coincidence ? I don't think so.*



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**ELK**

*Iso (2021)*

*280x930mm (Framed Size)*

**\$5,000**

*Aerosol on Axe*

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*In this work the artist seeks to pay homage to the residents of Melbourne for enduring a 112 day COVID lockdown.*





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**ELK**

*Deuce (2021)*

630x435mm (Framed Size)

**\$4,000**

*Aerosol on Kukri Machetes*

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*The title of this piece works on a few levels, the word "Deuce" commonly refers to "two" which represents the two machetes, but also refers to the two meanings of the title. The first meaning "Deuce" is a tennis term meaning a deadlock in which one player will need to win at least two points in a row to win the game. This highlights the imminent threat Pentecostal Christians pose to this country. One example being Margaret Court being awarded Australia's highest honour, regardless of continued hate speech toward repressed minorities. The second meaning is "shit"*



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**ELK**

*Al Boogaloo (2021)*

630x435mm (Framed Size)

**\$4,000**

*Aerosol on Kukri Machetes*

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*Extremism comes in All shapes and colours. In this work the artist combines imagery of the typical Hawaiian shirt popularised by the Boogaloo boy movement in the U.S (The Boogaloo boy is a Far right, anti government and extremist political movement) with an image of the deceased ISIS executioner "Jihadi John"*



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**ELK**

*BLM LDN (2020)*

*280x930mm (Framed Size)*

**\$7,000**

*Aerosol on Samurai Sword*

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*This piece shows a viral image capture from the London BLM protests of a Black protestor saving a White anti BLM demonstrator from being attacked.*



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**ELK**

*Five Demands (2020)*

280x1050mm (Framed Size)

~~\$7,000~~ **SOLD**

*Aerosol on Han Dynasty War Sword*

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*The 5 demands of Hong Kong protestors 1. Full Withdrawal of the extradition bill. 2. A commission enquiry of police brutality 3. Retracting the classification of protestors as "rioters" 4. Ammensty for arrested protestors 5. Dual universal suffrage, meaning for both the Legislative council and the Chief Executive. This image lifted from the internet, seeks to portray the seriousness of these demands and lengths people will go to when fighting for freedom*



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**ELK**

*Under his Eye (2020)*

510x285mm (Framed Size)

~~\$3,000~~ **SOLD**

*Aerosol on Pig Sticker Knife*

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*Inspired by the Margaret Atwood novel and subsequent TV series "The Handmaid's Tale", This piece, made at the height of the Trump regime, symbolises the oppression of women and the systematic regression of womens rights under religious belief structures.*



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**ELK**

*Uyghur (2021)*

330x435mm (Framed Size)

**\$3,000**

*Aerosol on Meat Cleaver*

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*Uyghurs are a minority Muslim group of the Xianjiang region, who have endured decades of colonisation by Han Chinese and more recently Uyghur have been named by the CCP as a “terrorist collective” and arrested and placed in “Vocational Training Camps” which have been condemned worldwide for human rights violations.*



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**ELK**

*In case of insurgency (2021)*

*330x435mm (Framed Size)*

**\$3,000**

*Aerosol on Meat Cleaver*

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*"We love you, you're very special"- Donald Trump*



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**ELK**

*David and Venus (2020)*  
690x380mm (Framed Size)

**\$5,000**

*Aerosol on Machetes*

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*"Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation, and it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace" Kofi Annan*





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**ELK**

*Pieta (2020)*

320x230mm (Framed Size)

~~\$3,000~~ **SOLD**

*Aerosol on Meat Cleaver*

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*This was the first piece the artist made in this body of work. It was created in the first days the COVID -19 pandemic, when it really did feel like the end of the world or at least some sort of really boring apocalypse. This meaning of this piece is the crux of the whole body of work, it questions at what point of societal collapse does the weapon become more valuable than the artwork on it?*



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**ELK**

*That'll do Pig, that'll do (2020)*

320x230mm (Framed Size)

**\$3,000**

*Aerosol on Throwing Knives*



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**ELK**

*Apprehension (2020)*

*320x230mm (Framed Size)*

**\$3,000**

*Aerosol on Throwing Knives*



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**ELK**

Revolt (2020)

270x270mm (Framed Size)

~~\$2,000~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on Tear Gas Canister



In the words of the artist "This tear gas canister is a souvenir from Hong Kong 2019. I went to Hong Kong to experience firsthand the popular uprising against Chinese domination. Amidst the sea of people flowing through the city, I spotted a young protestor spraying stencils on the road. As much as wanted to give him advice on avoiding overspray, I thought it better to keep my mouth shut, watch and learn from him. I replicated his stencil onto the canister.



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**ELK**

*Uncle Rupert (2020)*  
285x500mm (Framed Size)

**\$3,000**

*Aerosol on Bowie Knife*

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*By no means is the artist encouraging anybody to stab Rupert Murdoch in the head, merely posing the question "if that was to happen" would the world be a better place?*



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**ELK**

*Ultraviolence (2020)*

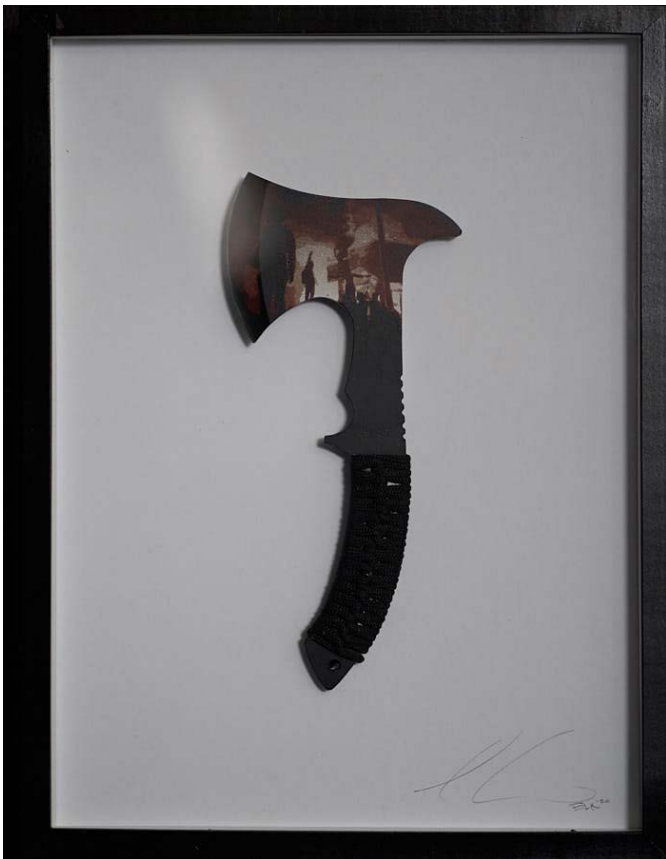
250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$2,000~~ **SOLD**

*Aerosol on Straight Razor*

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*This work represents the violence people are exposed to, through all forms of media, whether it be mainstream, social or fake.*



There are three types of people in the streets. There are the protesters, there are the rioters, and there are the looters. The protesters are there because they actually care about what is happening in the community. They want to raise their voices, and they are there strictly to protest. You have the rioters who are angry, who are anarchists, who really just want to fuck shit up, and that's what they're going to do regardless. And then you have the looters. And the looters almost exclusively are just there to do that, to loot. Now, people are like, "Well, what did you gain? Well, what did you get from looting?" I think that as long as we're focusing on the what, we're not focusing on the why. And that's my issue with that. As long as we're focusing on what they're doing, we're not focusing on why they're doing. Some people are like, "Well, those aren't people who are legitimately angry about what's happening. Those are people who just want to get stuff." Okay. Well then, let's go with that. Let's say that's what it is. Let's ask ourselves why, in this country in 2020, the financial gap between poor blacks and the rest of the world is at such a distance that people feel like their only hope and only opportunity to get some of the things that we flaunt and flash in front of them all the time is to walk through a broken glass window and get it, that they are so hopeless that getting that necklace, getting that TV, getting that change, getting that bed, getting that phone, whatever it is that they're going to get, is that in that moment, when the riots

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**ELK**

Untitled riot (2020)

415x320mm (Framed Size)

**\$4,000**

Aerosol on Throwing Axe

happen and if they present an opportunity of looting, that's their only opportunity to get it. We need to be questioning that why. Why are people that poor? Why are people that broke? Why are people that food insecure, that clothing insecure, that they feel like their only shot, that they are shooting their shot by walking through a broken glass window to get what they need? And then people want to talk about, "Well, it's plenty of people who pulled themselves up by their bootstraps and got it on their own. Why can't they do that?" Let me explain to you something about economics in America. And I'm so glad that as a child I got an opportunity to spend time at PUSH, where they taught me this, is that we must never forget that economics was the reason that black people were brought to this country. We came to do the agricultural work in the South and the textile work in the North. Do you understand that? That's what we came to do. We came to do the agricultural work in the South and the textile work in the North. If I right now decided that I wanted to play Monopoly with you, and for 400 rounds of playing Monopoly, I didn't allow you to have any money, I didn't allow you to have anything on the board, I didn't allow for you to have anything, and then we played another 50 rounds of Monopoly and everything that you gained and you earned while you were playing that round of Monopoly was taken from you, that was Tulsa. That was Rosewood. Those are places where we built black economic wealth, where we were self-sufficient, where we owned our stores, where we owned our property, and they burned them to the ground. So that's 450 years. So for 400 rounds of Monopoly, you don't get to play at all. Not only do you not get to play, you have to play on the behalf of the person that you're playing against. You have to play and make money and earn wealth for them, and then you have to turn it over to them. So then for 50 years you finally get a little bit and you're allowed to play. And every time that they don't like the way that you're playing, or that you're catching up, or that you're doing something to be self-sufficient, they burn your game. They burn your cards. They burn your Monopoly money. And then finally at the release and the onset of that, they allow you to play, and they say, "Okay, now you catch up." Now, at this point, the only way you're going to catch up in the game is if the person shares the wealth, correct? But what if every time you shared the wealth, then there's psychological warfare against you to say, "Oh, you're an equal opportunity hire." So if I played 400 rounds of monopoly with you and I had to play and give you every dime that I made, and then for 50 years, every time that I played, if you didn't like what I did, you got to burn it like they did in Tulsa and like they did in Rosewood, how can you win? How can you win? You can't win. The game is fixed. So when they say, "Why do you burn down the community? Why do you burn down your own neighborhood?" It's not ours. We don't own anything. We don't own anything. Trevor Noah said it so beautifully last night. There's a social contract that we all have, that if you steal, or if I steal, then the person who is the authority comes in and they fix the situation. But the person who fixes the situation is killing us. So the social contract is broken. And if the social contract is broken, why the fuck do I give a shit about burning the fucking Football Hall of Fame, about burning a fucking Target? You broke the contract when you killed us in the streets and didn't give a fuck. You broke the contract when for 400 years, we played your game and built your wealth. You broke the contract when we built our wealth again on our own by our bootstraps in Tulsa and you dropped bombs on us, when we built it in Rosewood and you came in and you slaughtered us. You broke the contract. So fuck your Target. Fuck your Hall of Fame. Far as I'm concerned, they could burn this bitch to the ground, and it still wouldn't be enough. And they are lucky that what black people are looking for is equality and not revenge.



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**ELK**

*Spin (pink-edition of 50) (2020)*

165x80mm

**\$600 — 2 of 50 SOLD**

*Resin and Steel*

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*Female empowerment - The two pieces represent how situations can be Spun to fit an agenda and viewpoint*





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**ELK**

*Spin (aluminium - edition of 50) (2020)*  
165x80mm

**\$600 — 1 of 50 SOLD**

*Resin and Steel*

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*Female oppression*



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**ELK**

*Statement of Beliefs (2020)*

1000x700mm

**\$8,000**

*Aerosol on Canvas*

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*A comment on the religious freedoms bill.*



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**ELK**

*For Lease NYC (2020)*

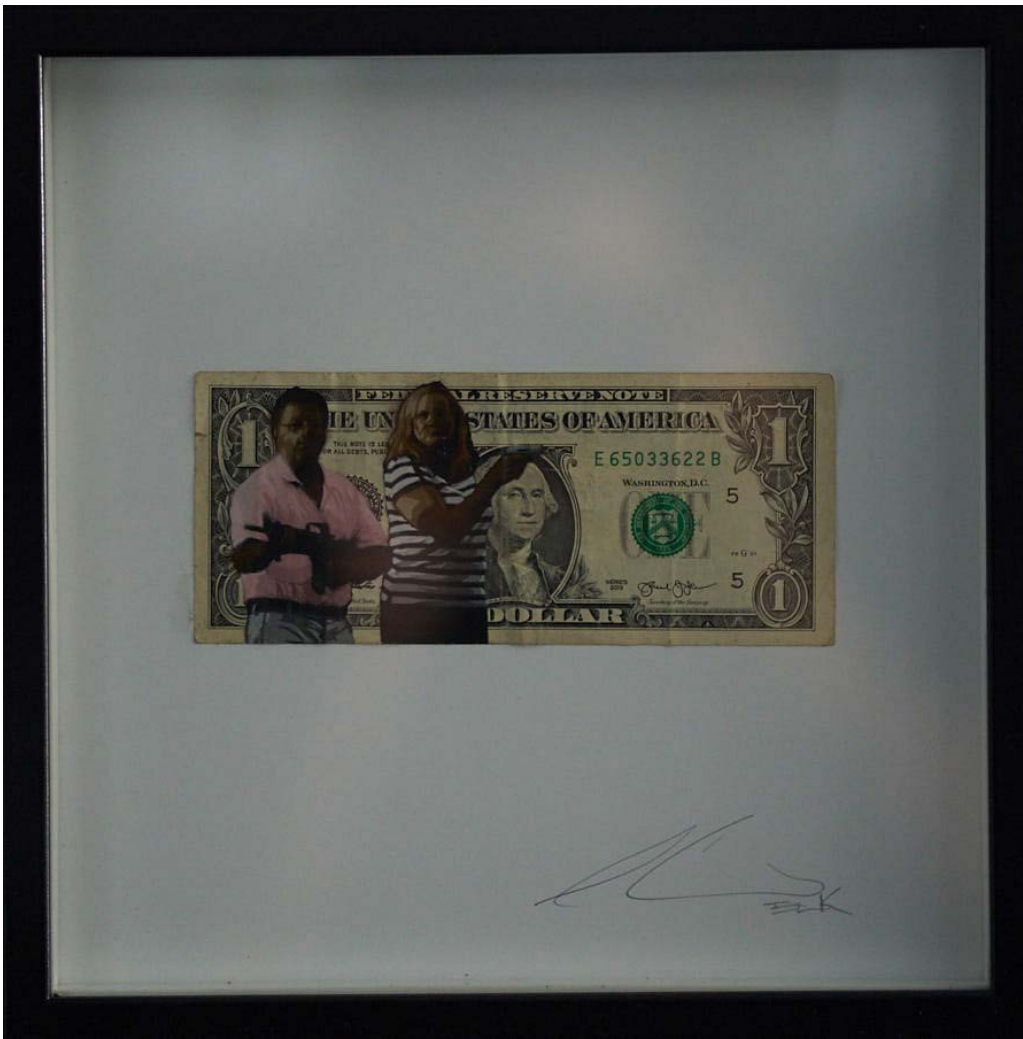
820x1100mm

**\$8,000**

*Aerosol on Aluminium*

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*Reworking of an earlier piece, updated to portray the current climate of the "greatest" city in the world.*



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**ELK**

USD #1 (2021)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on US Banknote

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*Those that spray together, stay together.*



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**ELK**

USD #2 (2020)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on US Banknote

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*The crazy shaman taking the place of Ulysses S grant on the bill is symbolic of the aims of the protesters who stormed the capital building. The US fifty dollar bill is historically regarded to be unlucky, I chose this denomination to represent the unlucky position the United States finds itself in at present.*



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**ELK**

SAR (Saudi Riyal) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on Saudi Banknote

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*The war in Yemen has cost Riyadh an estimated \$100 billion USD so far, while innocent children die from starvation and the world watches and remains silent*



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**ELK**

ILS #1 (Israel) (2020)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on Israeli Banknote

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23% and 52% of deaths of Palestinian children (Aged 0-4) and (5-19) is from Firearms/Missile injuries.



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**ELK**

*ILS #2 (Israel) (2020)*

*250x250mm (Framed Size)*

**\$800**

*Aerosol on Israeli Banknote*

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*"It would be my greatest sadness to see Zionists do to Palestinian Arabs much of what Nazis did to Jews" Albert Einstein*





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**ELK**

CNY #3 (China) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on Chinese Banknote

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*In accordance with the Chinese government's 2015 Plan for Implementation, the Social Credit System was implemented in 2020. This system manages the rewards and punishments, of citizens on the basis of their economic and personal behavior.*



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**ELK**

CNY #1 (China) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on Chinese Banknote

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*A shout out to the man that ate the bat in a Wuhan wet market that stopped the fucking world (which probably didn't happen)*



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**ELK**

CNY #3 (China) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on Chinese Banknote

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*Chinese President Xi Jinping banned Winnie the Pooh from the country to prevent people from comparing him to Winnie the Pooh, this work comments on China's treatment of Uyghur Muslims.*



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**ELK**

SYP #1 (Syria) (2020)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on Syrian Banknote

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*As of December 2020 between 387,100 - 593,000 people have died in the Syrian conflict*



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**ELK**

SYP #2 (Syria) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on SyrianBanknote

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*One of the many barbaric methods of execution used by ISIS in the Syrian conflict was to roast prisoners alive.*



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**ELK**

*Biafra (Biafran Pound) (2020)*  
*250x250mm (Framed Size)*

**\$800**

*Aerosol on Biafran Banknote*

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*"If voting could change anything, it would be illegal" Jello Biafra*



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**ELK**

PHP(Philippines) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on Filipino Banknote

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*"Hitler massacred 3 million Jews... there is 3 million drug addicts. There are. I'd be happy to slaughter them."* Philipines President Rodrigo Duterte



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**ELK**

LYD (Libya) (2020)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on Libyan Banknote

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*"We came, we saw, he died" Hillary Clinton ( since NATO backed forces overthrew long serving ruler Col.Moammar Gadhafi 2011, Black Africans are being sold in open air slave markets in Libya)*





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**ELK**

SDG (Sudan) (2020)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on Sudanese Banknote

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*"For many child soldiers, war and violence are all they have ever known. If we don't take it upon ourselves to show them an alternative, then they're going to be soldiers forever, and they'll continue to be recruited and to participate in violence if another conflict starts five or 10 years down the road" Forest Whittaker*



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**ELK**

ZWB (Zimbabwe) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on Zimbabwean Banknote

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*"There are a lot of musicians who are still desperately trying to pretend that it's 1998 and by having a huge marketing campaign, they somehow believe that they can sell 10 million records. That's delusional. No one sells 10 million records. The days of musicians getting rich off of selling records are done" Moby*



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**ELK**

NZD (New Zealand) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on New Zealand Banknote

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*"If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion" Dalai Lama*



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**ELK**

AFN (Afghan) (2020)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on Afghani Banknote

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*"If you look at any Muslim society and you make a scale of how developed they are, and how successful the economy is, it's a straight line. It depends on how much they emancipate their women"*  
Christopher hitchens



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**ELK**

*IQD (Iraq) (2020)*

*250x250mm (Framed Size)*

**\$800**

*Aerosol on Iraqi Banknote*

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*"The Iraq War was the biggest issue for people of my generation in the West. It was also the clearest case, in my living memory, of media manipulation and the creation of a war through ignorance" Julian Assange*



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**ELK**

*YER (Yemen) (2020)*

*250x250mm (Framed Size)*

**\$800**

*Aerosol on Yemeni Banknote*

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*"The international community should pressure Iran to get the Houthis to agree to some peaceful understanding in Yemen. But at the same time, Saudi Arabia also needs to believe truly in democracy for Yemen" Jamal Khashoggi*



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**ELK**

*YUM (Yugoslavian Dinar) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)*

**\$800**

*Aerosol on Yugoslav Banknote*



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**ELK**

HKD (Hong Kong) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on Hong Kong Banknote

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*Hong Kongs today, worlds tomorrow (graffiti seen in Kowloon)*





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**ELK**

*PRB (Transnistrian Ruble) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)*

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

*Aerosol on Transnistrian Banknote*

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*Google it.*



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**ELK**

IRR # 1 (Iran) (2020)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

Aerosol on Iranian Banknote

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*"Living in the Islamic Republic is like having sex with someone you loathe." Azar Nafisi*



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**ELK**

IRR # 2 (Iran) (2020)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on Iranian Banknote

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*"In Iran, we don't have homosexuals. In Iran we don't have this phenomenon. I don't know who has told you we have it." President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad*



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**ELK**

IRR # 3 (Iran) (2020)

250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on Iranian Banknote

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*"In Iran, we don't have homosexuals. In Iran we don't have this phenomenon. I don't know who has told you we have it." President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad*



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**ELK**

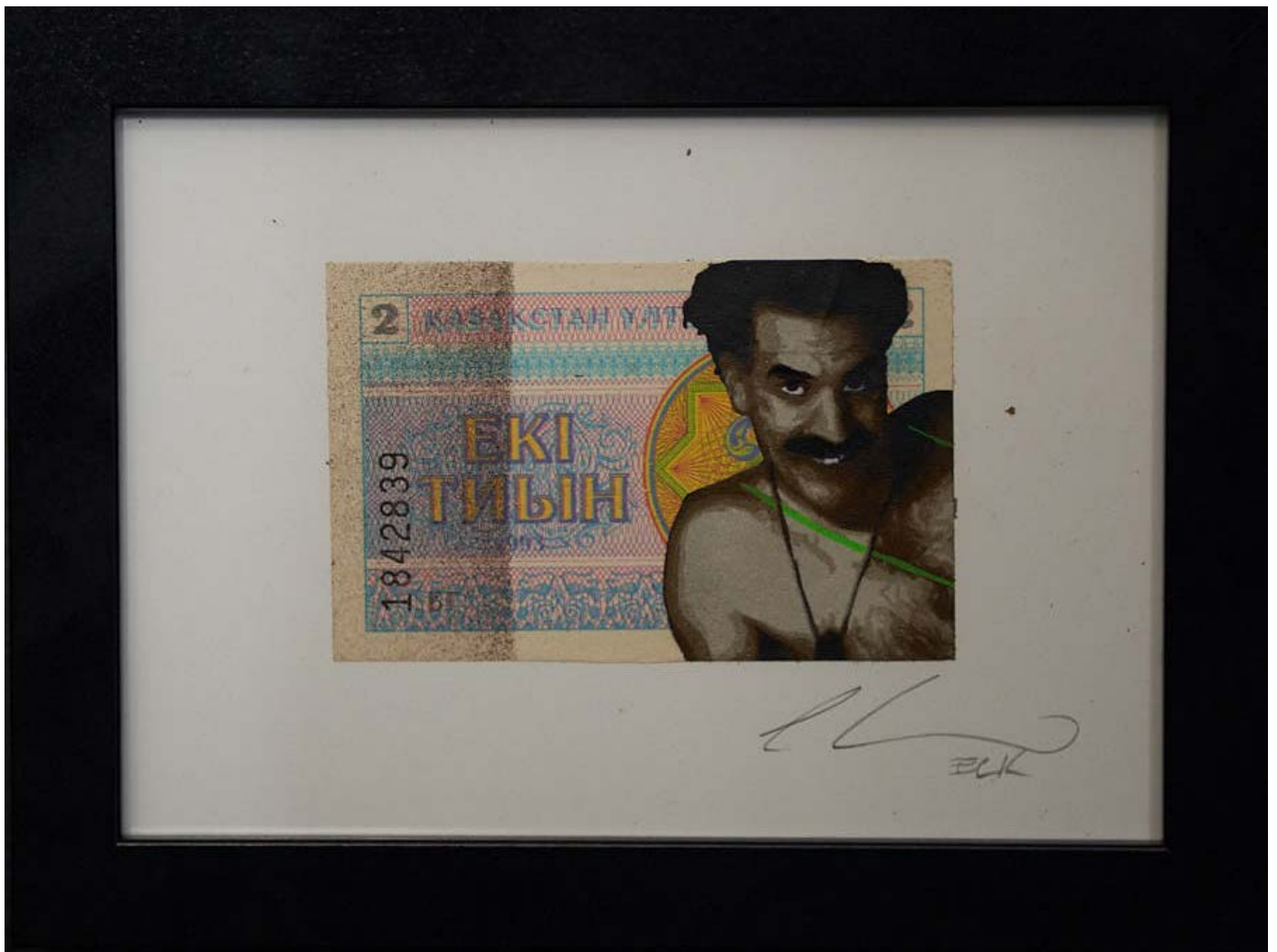
KZT#1 (Kazakhstan) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on Kazakh Banknote

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*"To jail for violence, not truth"*



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**ELK**

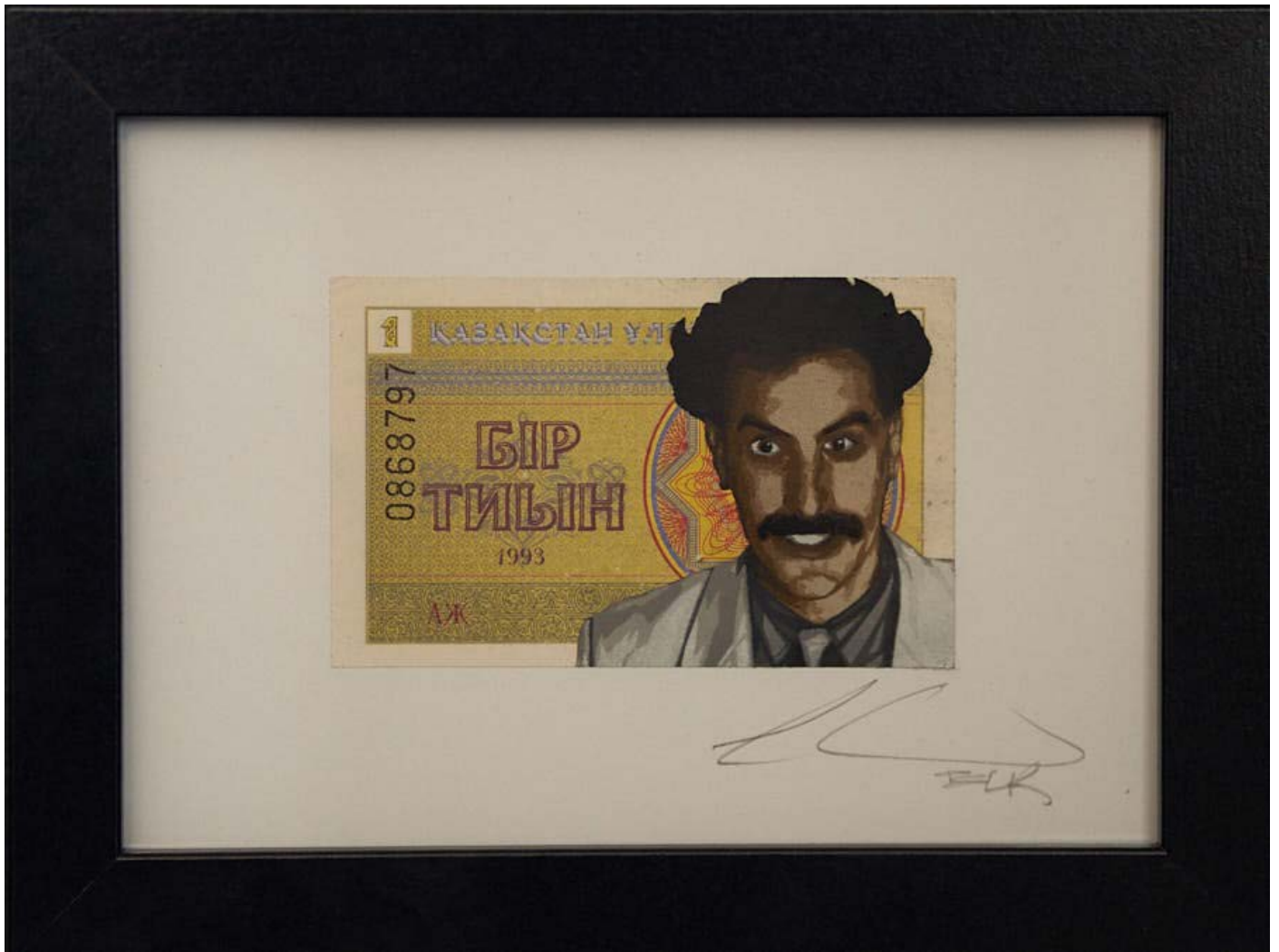
KZT#2 (Kazakhstan) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

Aerosol on Kazakh Banknote

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*"My name Borat, I like you, I like Sex, Is Nice" Borat*



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**ELK**

KZT#3 (Kazakhstan) (2020)  
250x250mm (Framed Size)

**\$800**

*Aerosol on Kazakh Banknote*

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"wa wa wee wa" Borat



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**ELK**

*BTN (Bhutan) (2020)*  
*250x250mm (Framed Size)*

~~\$800~~ **SOLD**

*Aerosol on Bhutanese Banknote*

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*"The first country to adopt happiness as an official goal of public policy is the tiny little country of Bhutan in Asia near China and India."*  
*Derek Bok*







# Contact Details

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