

Junior Fritz Jacquet: On a Roll

It was at the tender age of 14 years old that Junior Jacquet, French native, first learned of his enduring love for origami art and its principles. It was an average day at school when his teacher instructed the students to build their own origami model. Junior connected immediately with the art form and understood its applications, and that they could be utilized far from a single piece of paper. Since that time, he has perfected his skills and techniques in a never-ending exploration of folding and crumpling paper to his will and design.

His methods produce objects of beauty in delicate paper, such as his flower lamps that appear so delicate as to be like snow, but he is best known for his innovative and expressions mastery over the common toilet paper roll. To begin, he focuses on the construction of the eyes, next the nose, then the mouth, and finally the end expression. His goal is to create jovial or funny expressions, though some seem to express defiance, sorrow, and even constipation. Believing there is no limit to his ability to experiment, he continues to hone his skills and improve his technique.

Junior feels that every type of paper –and he’s used them all- has a different personality, which lends itself to the final product and the emotion it expresses. It seems to have a life of its own and Junior simply helps bring that to the surface, as every mask is unique. He mounts these masks, either 30 cm or 40 cm in size, to a metal rod on a foot, before selling them in quantities of five. Junior also has a little cardstock figurine called Bonhomme Cannelle, a whimsical little personality of a man rendered in paper, Cannelle easily expresses spontaneity, humor, delight, and creativity. There are six little sculptures of him, each as charming as the next, and highly kinetic. He seems frozen in each action and ready to stretch some more.

Monsieur Jacquet enjoys the paper medium a great deal, with its tactile responsiveness, and startling fragility. He finds, however, that elasticity, absorption of light, and texture all play into the outcome of the sculpted piece. Paper, he believes, has a memory to hold onto shaping or forget it of with gentle pressure. For Junior, paper is an immediate material, and does not require time to dry, or the need to be treated specially.

An upcycle artist, Junior is a staunch defender of the three Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle, or, in this case, upcycling, which is where old items are given greater value, not less, in a process that converts waste materials into new materials of better quality or higher value, such as art and sculpture. Junior’s own models are swayed by the bronze forms of Swiss surrealist sculptor Alberto Giacometti, and influenced by the figures of Senegalese artist Ousmane Sow, who works in clay.

Monsieur Jacquet finishes his clever masks with a veneer and some added color to enhance wrinkles and bring out individuality, leaving a finished sculpt that is both

inspiring and smile-inducing, just as such whimsical little heads made out of toilet rolls should be.