

Sculptor plugs Greek classics into iPod Age

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The new iPod Nano is displayed during an Apple special event in 2008 in San Francisco, California. California-based sculptor Adam Reeder, who seeks to merge classical Greek iconography with 21st century gadgets, like the iPhone and iPod.

With an iPhone, Zeus could have saved time to call on lightning from the heavens -- so says California-based sculptor Adam Reeder, who seeks to merge classical Greek iconography with 21st century gadgets.

"Art is what we use to talk about our time," said the 33-year-old artist, whose unabashed aim is to fuse western civilization's antiquity with its newfound technologies.

The sculptor did so with the mythological Greek nymph Pan, replacing a trademark flute with Apple Inc's iconic music player and headphones.

"He's still a musician, he's still dancing, but now he's listening to his iPod," Reeder said.

Another of his works had Atlas shrug off the world to replace it with a colossal iPod.

And the Drunken Satyr, originally produced over 2,000 years ago depicting a follower of the Greek god of wine, was transformed into the Sleeping Gamer, placing a video game controller in the snoozing figure's hand.

"It's like he passed out from a millennium of gaming," said videogame designer Cliff Bleszinski, who bought a copy of the Sleeping Gamer because he enjoyed the fun twist on an old classic.

"His work seems right up there with some of the old masters, dare I say, and it has a little wink."

Bleszinski is known for his role in making the blockbuster "Gears of War" videogame franchise.

Reeder maintains that Internet Age innovations not only infuse his art, they are underpinnings of his success, helping him craft a new business model for an industry as old as civilization itself.

Unlike more conservative colleagues, Reeder said he tenaciously uses online tools such as social networking services, blogs and YouTube videos to attract attention and, ultimately, buyers.

Yet, while many industries have embraced the digital revolution, Micaela Van Zwoll said that many artists are still mystified when it comes to leveraging social networks to promote their work.

She found Reeder through the Internet and plans to display his work in her downtown San Francisco gallery sometime soon.

"We all hear about artists who want to live in an ivory tower and let the world come and discover them, but that's pretty arrogant," Van Zwoll said.

"This is the 21st century and it's a very busy world."

Art is an industry not unlike many others with fierce competition, and the ability to promote oneself on the Internet is vital, according to Reeder.

"Andy Warhol wanted to say that we're essentially like Bloomingdales, and he couldn't be more right," said Erik Blome, a faculty member at the Academy of Art in San Francisco, where an exhibit of Reeder's work ends Monday.

"Adam doesn't quite realize how much he owes to Warhol; mass production, technology, those were all his messages."

Blome noted that he is behind the times when it comes to sharing his sculptures online even though people routinely ask if he is on the hot social-networking website, Facebook.

"I'm too busy making artwork," the 42-year-old said.

Blome added that he is not opposed to [social networking](#) sites, but sees it challenging for artists to distinguish themselves in a sea of Facebook users.

"Anyone who's 50 and over will vehemently oppose the idea that blogs or email will do any good for an artist; you're supposed to get in line and wait your turn to be discovered," he said.

Not only has Reeder been bypassing galleries by promoting and selling

his work online through websites like Facebook, but most of his shows this year sprang from Internet connections.

"The young are the future buyers," said Blome.

"If you want to see who is going to buy your artwork in 20 years, look at who is 20 years old now -- if you want to stay up to date, and continue to sell your work in the future, you better be on Facebook."

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