

Andrew Hornberger
Artist's Statement

A monkey and the color orange both play an important role in my work. When I was a child, my "Aunt Tootse" gave me an orange monkey that she had found during her travels around the world. The monkey had a wood head with eyes made of beads, leather ears and a body made of coarse, orange rope wrapped around wire. The image of this strange, exotic object has stayed with me as an artist and has grown in its personal meanings and permutations.

The monkey symbol is a rich resource as subject matter. Monkeys are wild, curious, mischievous, intelligent and funny. They can also be vicious. The monkey could be considered as a surrogate human figure.

The color orange also has a wonderful range of symbols and emotions for me. It is bold and warm, connotes caution or power, is a healing color and stimulates enthusiasm and creativity. Orange can also represent virility and endurance. People who like orange are usually sincere. Orange is not as blatantly dynamic as red, so it allows me to use more nuance in my art.

Overtime, the actual monkey symbol has morphed into an orange head and two eyes -- and eventually just an orange shape with two black eyes. The head also can change shape into a rug, a broom head, a wave or a parachute.

The use of found images, especially vintage postcards and magazine pages, is an integral part of my work. By collaging orange heads on to vintage scenes, I create little mysterious zones where reality bumps up against absurdity. I enjoy this process because of its inherently humorous possibilities and my long-time interest in ephemera and unique, small antique items.

Some of the shapes and objects that I found in the images inspired my series of pastel drawings. I like to work back and forth between the literal found scenes transformed by collage and the more abstract drawings informed by the images.

My current work reflects organic themes with a sense of order. I am currently integrating some of the images from previous works into new scenarios. This creates a range of new places for my characters to visit.

I think that my work is quirky and enigmatic, delicate and poetic and funny in a serious kind of way.