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Winston Torr

## WINSTON TORR

From Berlin, Germany

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Winston Torr has been living in Berlin for some time, as he says, an incredibly gray city that spills with life. His collages consist among other things of torn magazines and newspapers. It destroys "the wrong conceptions of human beings" and puts them into new contexts.

**"As a child, I wanted to become a pirate and archaeologist. Or Chocolatier."**

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## IMPRESSIONS

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All photos of Denise van Deesen, www.denisevandeesen.com

## INTERVIEW

*You use newspapers and magazines to make art out of it. What is special about this material?*

I use newspapers and magazines to comment on what is read daily in our society. Most people believe what they read as long as it is published. Most people also believe that the images in beauty and fashion magazines are genuine. Every day readers fall back on digital retouching. I take these perfected body parts and make masks from my paintings. What I find very interesting about my collages: I discover something new in them every day.

*What exactly happens to a newspaper or magazine when you make art out of it?*

I like to tear these papers and magazines into pieces and thereby destroy the wrong view that people have. They thereby become part of my own world, which can be quite violent.

*How long do you normally work on a work?*

I would say one or two weeks, depends on the size. Sometimes months and years with larger works.

*What would you like to become a child?*

As a child, I wanted to become a pirate and archaeologist, discover the world and find traces of our history. I also wanted to become a confectioner and chocolate maker. As long as I can remember, I always painted and drawn. So even if I were a pirate, I would somehow paint on board. Or if I were an archaeologist, I would make sculptures from the historical remains. As a confectioner or chocolatier I would make every dessert look unique.

### What was your first conscious encounter with art?

This was in the kindergarten, where the children were to form letters, shapes, and pictures of broken minisalt sprouts. I used many kilos of pretzels to build a mini-ship that I wanted to own as a pirate.

*How did you develop as an artist?*

In my early years, I spent a lot of time alone with drawing, painting and writing. That was all I wanted to do. I did not get much guidance on the way to the artist. I was just left alone to do what I wanted. It was never planned. It just happened.

*You're born Toronto, Canada and grew up in Los Angeles, USA. What drove you to Berlin?*

I was on backpacking through Europe and found that Berlin was pretty much the city where you could relax and expand your horizons. I had never seen such a gray city around the world, practically all year round! But still: Berlin is growing and thriving with such an energy. A city that never sleeps! This electricity attracted me immediately.

*Please describe the role that Berlin plays for your art and creativity.*

I get a lot of inspiration from friends who are also artists from all parts of the world. Berlin has so many galleries, and as much as I like to support art and artists in Berlin, so much I like to read about artistic processes. Berlin is a great city for learning, experimenting and taking the time to grow as an artist. The city has really balanced me as an artist and has made me work harder for my goals.

*Is an artist different in Germany than in the USA?*

I do not think so. The only thing that comes to mind is that the environment is changing. And this can influence the way an artist works.

### Who and what inspires you?

When I walk around in Berlin, there is so much dirt on the streets. This makes the city quite raw and real for me and I start to see art created by Mother Nature and the human being in an unconscious way. For example, a thick, sturdy and weathered stack, which sometimes stands 50 cm from the wall, is created by posters that have been stuck together over a period of years. Over the years wind, sun, rain and moisture change the texture of these posters. A stack of glued posters become wrinkled, dissolves at the corners, and becomes weak, but still manages to stay together. I find the charming. It inspires me to create my collages.

*What kind of ingredients do you need to be productive as an artist?*

Calm, music, natural light, space, fragrance, forms, and a huge success, these are my necessary ingredients to be productive as an artist.

*How are your works of art created? Please describe the process.*

There are different ways in which my works of art are created. One thing I never do is plan. Sometimes I ask friends to be a model for me. Other times I simply create something from the picture with acrylic paint and real for my head. For example, when I create a mask collage, I first paint the shape of the face with acrylic paint and let it dry. Then I tear through magazine pages, find small articles, colors, objects and environments that I feel as appropriate. I then stick them directly impulsively on the canvas or the wooden board. I leave the work dry and continue to study later. The whole process can take days to weeks and sometimes months, depending on the size. I often work on different works at once and sometimes I decide to paint on the collages to expand the dimension.

*Do the faces and bodies you create have real counterparts?*

Sometimes I ask friends to be a model for me or I get inspired by other things I see in life.

*How do you transform them into art? Please describe the metamorphosis.*

I see a face in layers, as a whole and also as its parts: cell by cell, pore for pore, every fold, the height of the forehead, the cut of the jaw line, cheekbones, neckline, shape of the eyes, ears, lips and nose. From this I go out and break down what I see down to color combinations, shapes, angles, lines, light, and shadows. I collect all this information in a few minutes and start the artistic process.

### How much time do you spend with your art?

I would say I spend an average of 40 to 60 hours a week with my art.

Yes.

*Is it difficult for you to separate yourself from a finished work of art?*

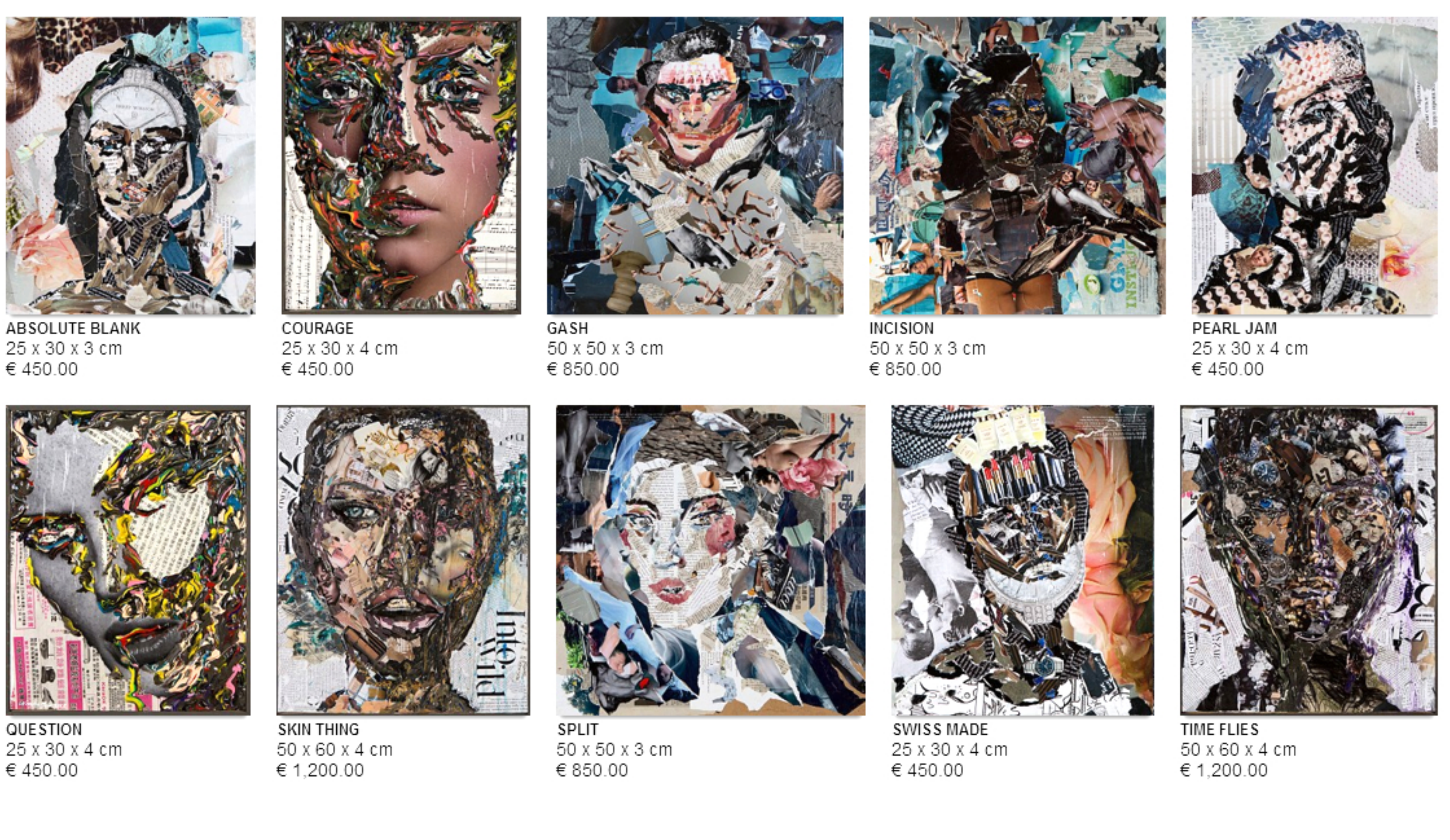
*How much do you like talking about art?*

I love talking about art.

*How would life be without art?*

A life without art would be like a smoker without cigarettes.

## WORKS OF ART



**ABSOLUTE BLANK**  
25 x 30 x 3 cm  
€ 450.00

**COURAGE**  
25 x 30 x 4 cm  
€ 450.00

**GASH**  
50 x 50 x 3 cm  
€ 850.00

**INCISION**  
50 x 50 x 3 cm  
€ 850.00

**PEARL JAM**  
25 x 30 x 4 cm  
€ 450.00

**QUESTION**  
25 x 30 x 4 cm  
€ 450.00

**SKIN THING**  
50 x 60 x 4 cm  
€ 1.200.00

**SPLIT**  
50 x 50 x 3 cm  
€ 850.00

**SWISS MADE**  
25 x 30 x 4 cm  
€ 450.00

**TIME FLIES**  
25 x 30 x 4 cm  
€ 1.200.00