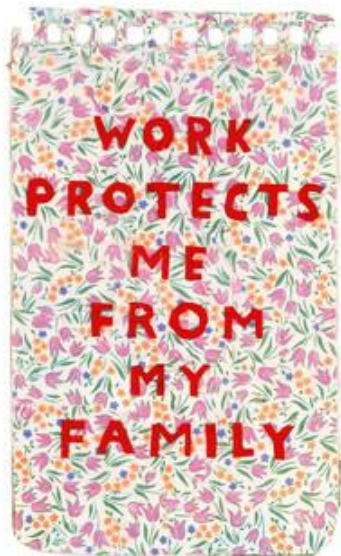


Capturing New York in Scraps of Paper

By Rachel Wolff



"Let's Start keeping this green." "I'm in love with the search." "Apple Bank." "New Yorkers aren't better than anyone else, we just dress it." "Never forget nine eleven."

Hundreds of such phrases are written on Simon Evans's "New York," a 2012 collage resembling a wall of skinny, multicolored bricks. It is one of about 20 works this British-American duo, recently transplanted to the Big Apple, is sending to a Luxembourg museum for a first major European survey.

The artist "Simon Evans" actually consists both of Mr. Evans and his wife Sarah Lannan. They've made their reputation combining text and image to create what could be read as visual short stories. For "New York," they snatched the sayings from billboards, storefronts, T-shirts, tattoos and overheard conversations over several months. Then the artists hand-wrote the sayings on graph, lined and other kinds of paper and categorized them, for example printing "fears" on light

pink graph paper and "racist statements" in orange; "stuff people say to dogs" appears in ecru.

"Simon Evans: How to Be Alone When You Live With Someone," will be on view at the Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean in Luxembourg city June 2 through Sept. 23. The duo's "very personal" work, the exhibition's curator Marie-Noëlle Farcy says, "connects to something more universal—the way in which we all map out our environments."

Mr. Evans was a professional skateboarder until his mid-20s and thought he'd be a short-story writer after that. But, he says, "it got to the point where I became too obsessive with the process. It would take four months to write one page." He met Ms. Lannan, an illustrator, in 2006 and soon moved to Berlin, where the couple spent five years before relocating to New York. It was jarring to be back in a country where everyone spoke their native tongue. "It was like words were everywhere," Mr. Evans says. "It was like we could hear people's thoughts." So they jotted it all down in notebooks.

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Mr. Evans and Ms. Lannan had their first solo exhibition with New York's James Cohan Gallery in 2009, where their work currently sells for between \$10,000 and \$85,000. It's in the permanent collections of the Aspen Art Museum, the Miami Art Museum and Denmark's Louisiana Museum of Modern Art.

Another 2012 work to go on view in Luxembourg, "Self Help," consists of 21 collaged pages from a Mead notebook. One page titled "The Organization of Fantasy in Your Life" pictures an iPod Nano. Another contains tips on "How To Avoid Desires in a City That Feeds You Them."