

Artist Johan Deckmann Paints Witty One-Liners On Books And The Instagram Generation Love It

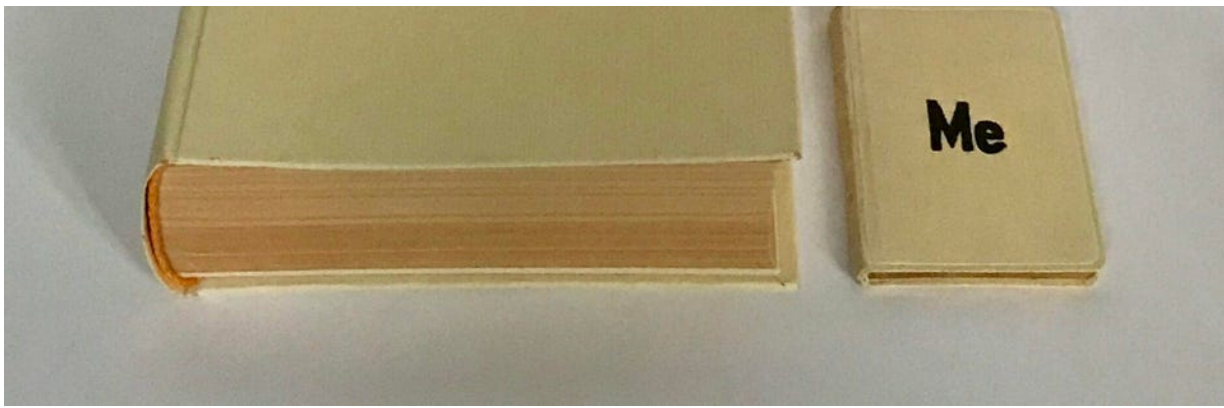
Felicity Carter Contributor ⓘ

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[Johan Deckmann](#) is the artist that you've seen all over the internet and namely, on Instagram. It's safe to say that his mixed-media artwork a.k.a. his witty slogans on books (plus records, suitcases and boxes) have gone viral.

And this is because his artwork perfectly captures our thoughts, feeling and bigger picture contemporary culture. One part humorous, two parts sartorial and a million parts truthful, expect a reflection of today's society.





Me by Johan Deckmann JOHAN DECKMANN

Where does this stem from? Well, the Copenhagen-based artist is also a practicing psychotherapist and author, so now it's all slotting into place. In his own words, his art enables him to “examine the complications of life through witty one-liners painted on the covers of fictional “self-help” books.”

Pieces are not only thought provoking, they poke fun at people and our times with art such as *Me on Social Media* and *Me, Expectations and Reality*, and *Perfect Fantasies* and *Perfect Realities*.

Felicity Carter: What was your first memory of art?

Johan Deckmann: It was as a boy at the local library. I stumbled upon Sam Haskin's photographic work "Cowboy Kate and Other Stories". I was completely dazzled, and I returned to the library several times every week. I finally stole the book and I still have it.

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FC: How, when, why did you get into the industry?

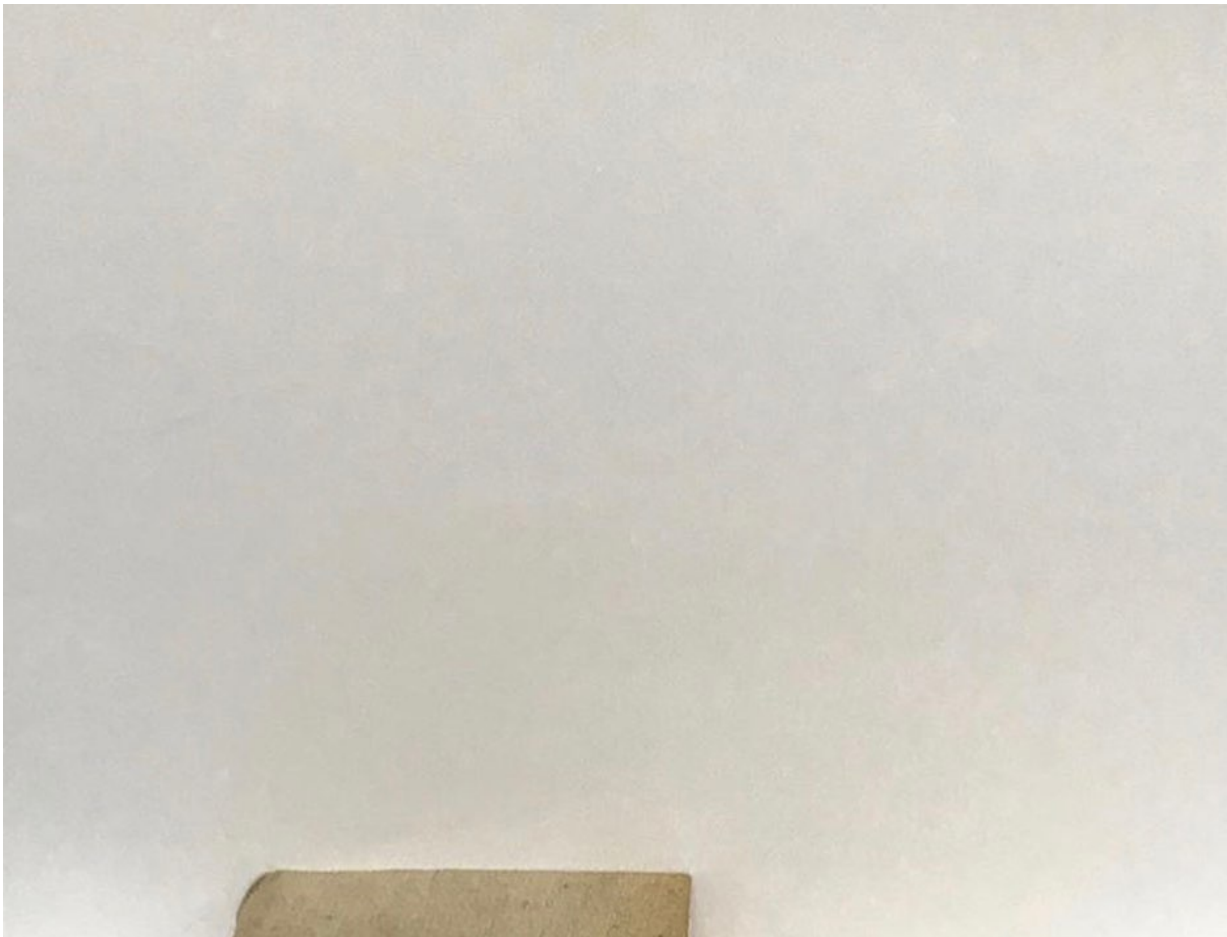
JD: I've been painting for a long time, but it was when I started posting my works, especially my book series, on Instagram in 2015 that followers including galleries and collectors discovered my works. I was

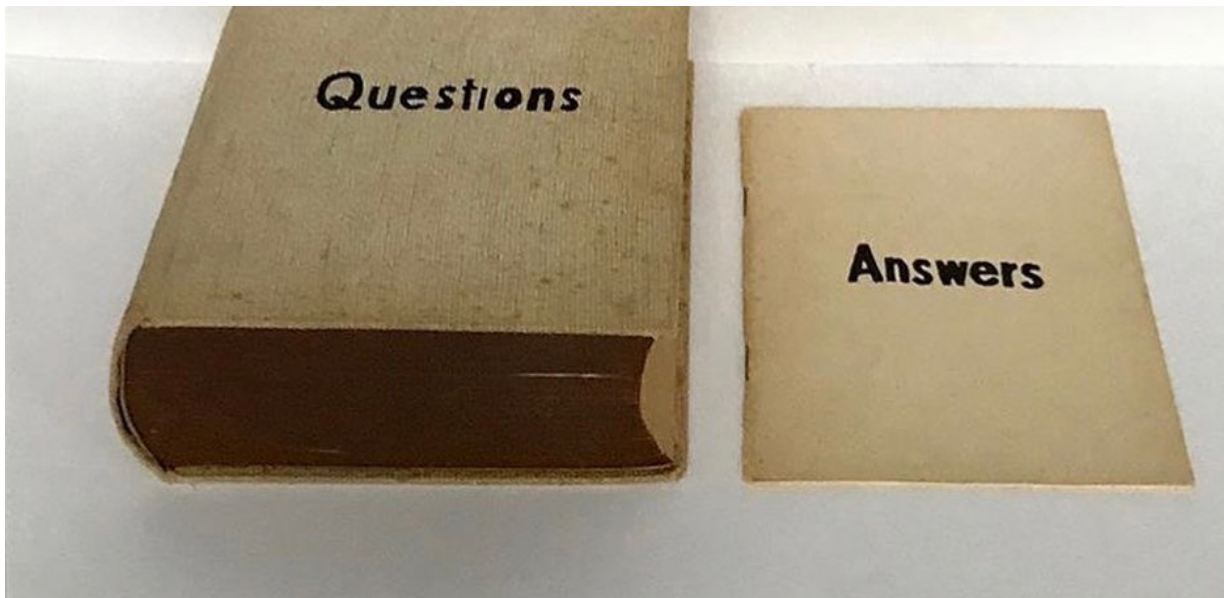
inspired by my work as a psychotherapist and I found this way to share this awareness with a larger audience.



johandeckmann

210K followers



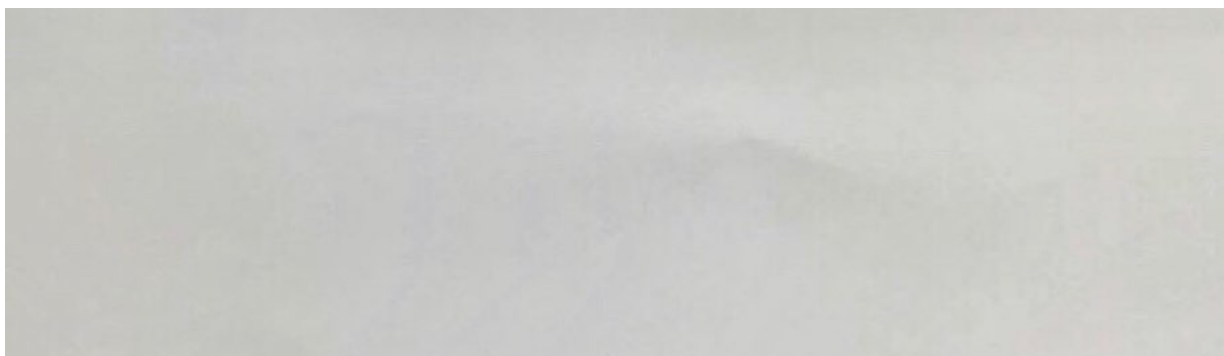


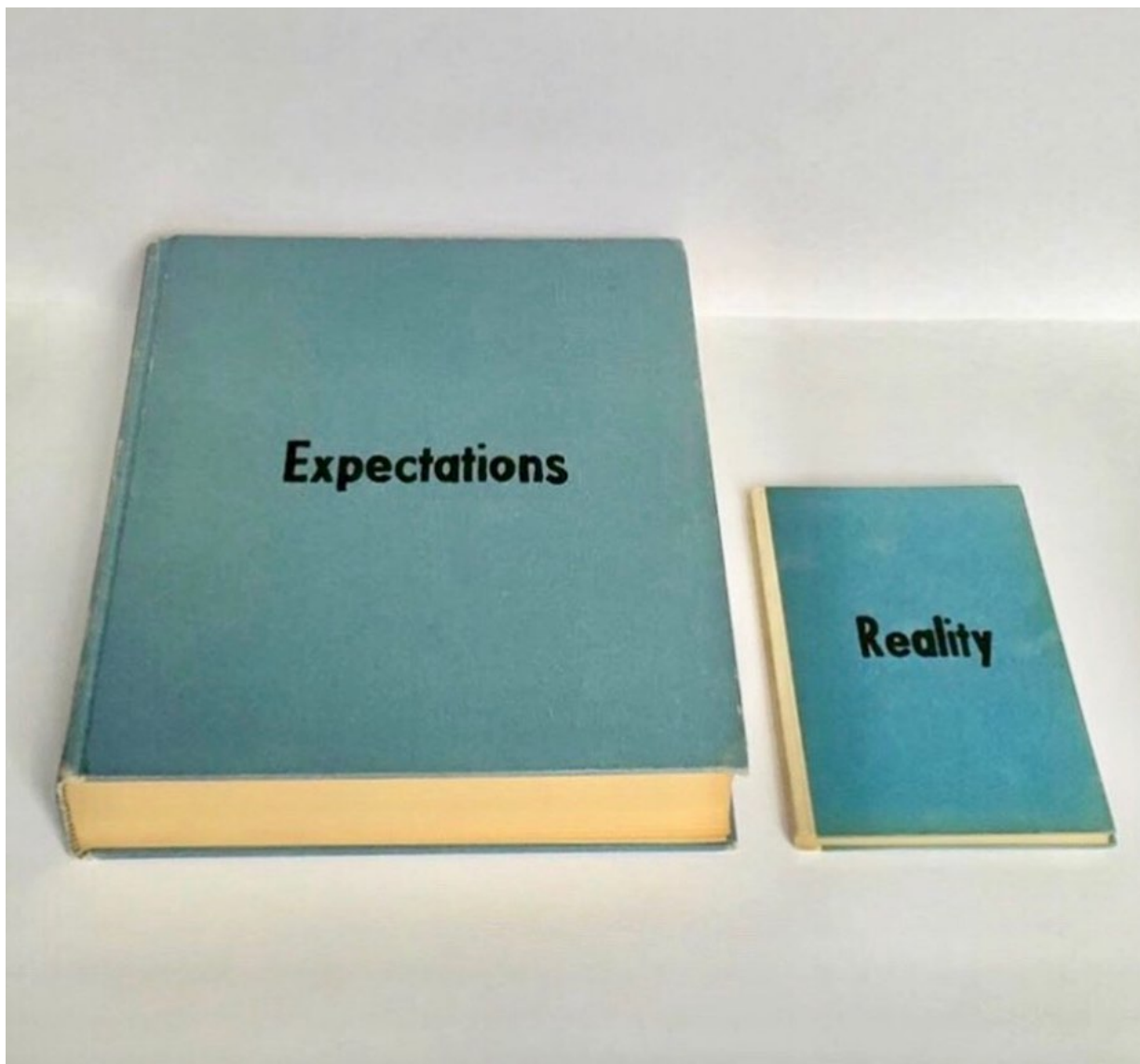
FC: How would you sum up the aesthetic?

JD: As a hybrid between painting, poetry and psychology. I want my works to be like mirrors. When you look at them you might not like what you see, but like in a mirror, you now get the awareness and the chance to change something. Like little personal reminders disguised as art. Personally I feel drawn to works of art that challenges my perception of things. I like to get pushed out of my comfort zone for a moment. Though my works often are humorous I'm very serious about the issues I display. My words are dressed as humor but they are meant to transform.



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210K followers





FC: What do you try to communicate with your work?

JD: Personal awareness. I display issues that we usually don't speak about in our everyday life. Like mirrors in which you can see parts of yourself very clearly that leaves you with both questions and options like "Why do I do this?", "Do I want to keep doing this?" and "I have a choice. I can choose to change my behavior for the better". But I hold up these mirrors in an art context and dressed as humor, so they are not that dangerous to engage in. Every happiness, every misery, every good and bad deed on earth is a result of a thought. I can't imagine a work

area more important than this. That's what drives me and I now use art as my platform rather than my psychological practice because I find that people are much more receptive in an art gallery than in a therapist's office.



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FC: Which was the first-ever piece that you made?

JD: A work called "Someone You Are Not". It says, "How to pretend you are someone you are not without ever knowing".

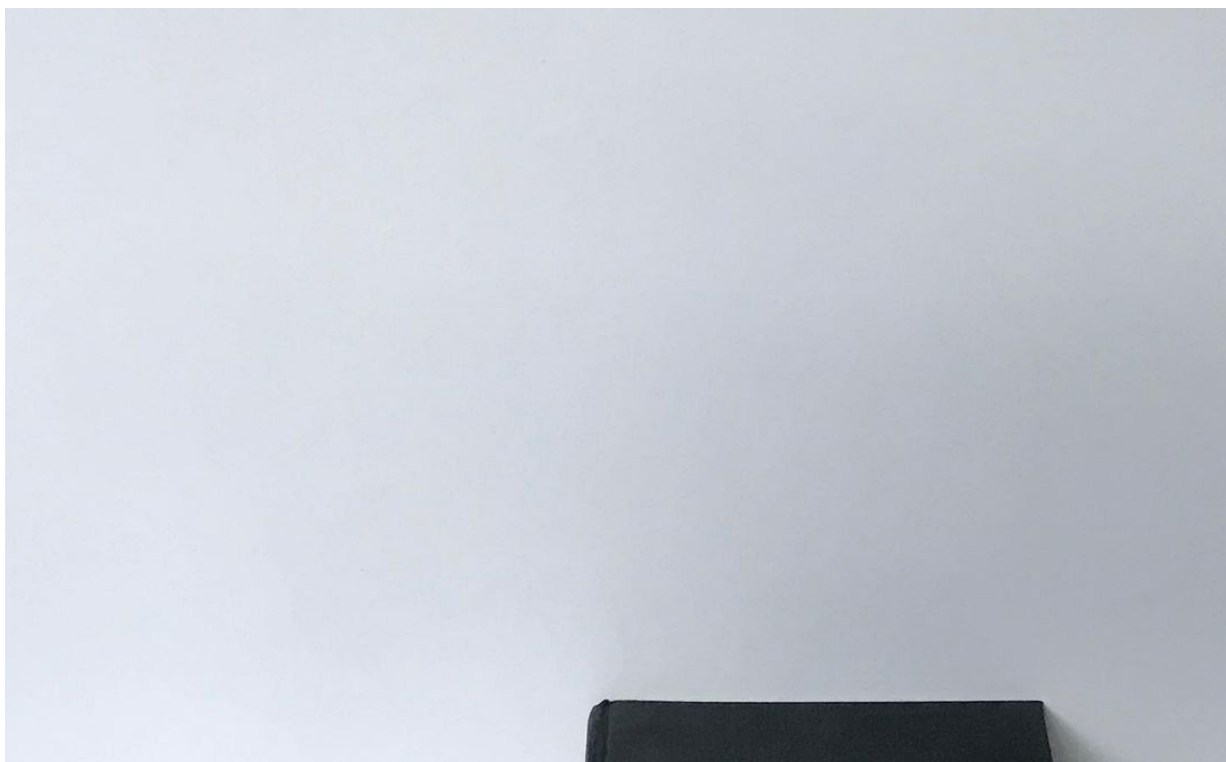
FC: Artists have left their mark on you and why?

JD: Robert Rauschenberg and Louise Bourgeois. Rauschenberg partly because of his use of found objects, like in my own works on antique books, which adds a certain authenticity. It reminds me of my own upgrowing in an antique store surrounded by these beautiful things that tell each their own story. Bourgeois because of her psychological depth and amazing technical skills. Especially the very intimate exhibition "The Cells" which contained objects from her own life. It's an amazing experience where you practically walk through moments of her life, peeking into these cells build from old doors from the garment factory in Brooklyn she turned into her studio.



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FC: Currently which are your favourite pieces?

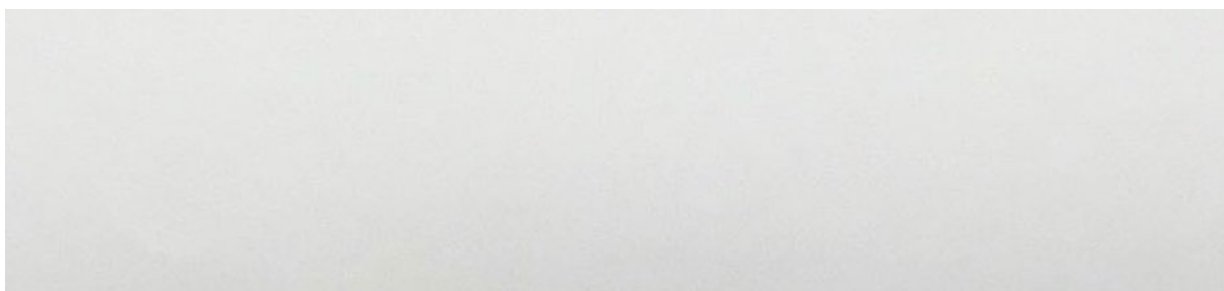
JD: Lucio Fontana's "Waiting", Morris Louis' "Alpha-Phi", Allen Jones' "Life Class" series and of course Sam Haskins' works.

FC: How has social media impacted your brand as an artist?

JD: It plays a magnificent role. It allows me to share, not only artworks, but also my messages with a large and growing audience. I highly value this opportunity to leave my footmark.



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FC: What do you think of the current landscape of art - gallerists, buyers and audience?

JD: Despite that nothing beats experiencing art in a gallery or museum, I think that social media adds a wonderful dimension because it allows people to discover, learn about and engage in art across borders and social status all over the world. Not to mention online viewing rooms during COVID-19. I experience a very engaging and supportive

community online which I only believe will benefit both artists as well as galleries and collectors in real life in the future.



johandeckmann
New York, New York



See more from the artist on his [Instagram page](#).

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Felicity Carter

Based in London, I cover fashion, the arts, culture and travel. I have had the chance of interviewing an array of actors, musicians and artists, along with leading designers, from Valentino... **Read More**