

LOCAL STORIES

## Meet Erin Morrison | Artist

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We had the good fortune of connecting with Erin Morrison and we've shared our conversation below.

**Hi Erin, we'd love to hear about how you approach risk and risk-taking**

I think risks are just a part of decision making. There are certainly times in my life that I've had to make difficult choices. Moving to Hong Kong last year was a big one for me, but I knew it would also be an exciting challenge. An opportunity came up for my partner that we couldn't pass on, and while the last thing we could have anticipated was being there during one of the most intense social revolutions in Hong Kong's history, as an artist making work more focused on sociopolitical issues I find myself incredibly inspired by the pro-Democracy protests. I think the umbrella movement has made a global impression, and the movements we are seeing that focus on human rights has propelled a much needed dialogue into the forefront. It's an exciting time to be taking risks.

**Let's talk shop? Tell us more about your career, what can you share with our community?**

At the moment I'm kind of obsessed with currency. My last show with Ochi Projects focused on coins produced and circulated before and after the Revolutionary war, and I am looking at the coins in circulation around Hong Kong shortly after the Treaty of Nanking. I am very interested in Imperialism and it's role in both the stimulation of global economic growth and the effects on the communities subjugated to expansion. To me these are not old world issues, and much of the corrective changes that need to be made are consequentially related to this period of time. I just finished 5 relief sculptures that replicate two coins, one the Victorian Cent from 1862, the other the first Lincoln Cent from 1909. Our design borrowed from both European and Asian coinage using a wreath pattern that was symbolic of prosperity. Getting to this point has not been easy for me, but I think when a person chooses this career path ambiguity is part of the intrigue. There have been several personal and professional hurdles that at times I more or less stumbled over, but I am lucky to have many friends and a great support system to help me through the rough patches. I think at the moment with all of it's uncertainty it is pretty easy to get sucked into a pit of despair and self-pity, and one of the ways I pull out of that it is by getting to work. I wouldn't say I necessarily have a "brand", and really resist being pigeonholed into a singular identity because it can be too restrictive. I hope if anything my fluidity becomes more instrumental to how others relate to my work.

**Any places to eat or things to do that you can share with our readers? If they have a friend visiting town, what are some spots they could take them to?**

I absolutely love trail running in Los Angeles. When the lockdown happened I hit a few trails that were still open by our house in the Tujunga/La Crecenta area and my favorite was called the "Gateway to the Rim of the Pacific", which was perfect because you could see for miles when there was no air pollution. It's a really great hike with views of the Verdugos and you pass Elliot's house from E.T. on it. Another great trailhead starts at the Verdugo Mountain Open Space Preserve at the 2 and 210 junction. One of my favorite restaurants on the eastside is Blaire's, a small Italian spot on Rowena in north Silverlake. I have some friends that have been commissioned to build out the interior of El Prado on Sunset Junction. It's owner Nick Fisher is a wine and beer wizard and the atmosphere is really cozy.

**Who else deserves some credit and recognition?**

I am part of a collective called the Binder of Women, which is a body of rotating artists that produce small print editions as well as thematically curated exhibitions. Recently one of our new members, Janna Ireland curated an online show of the collective's work, and I'm very excited about the projects we are lining up that will generate conversations around intersectionality both within the LA art community and beyond. I could mention every member but I'm really excited about what Janna is doing within her own practice and I would single her out first.

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Image Credits

Black and White photo of me working with a mask on is courtesy of Molly Tierney

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