



# The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

*Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper*

Stephan Bircher

X-Country Selection

October 12 - November 14, 2006



Stephan Bircher

X-Country Selection

October 12 - November 9, 2006

Artist Catalog, 'Stephan Bircher - Headbones Gallery, The Drawers '  
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Layout and Design, Richard Fogarty

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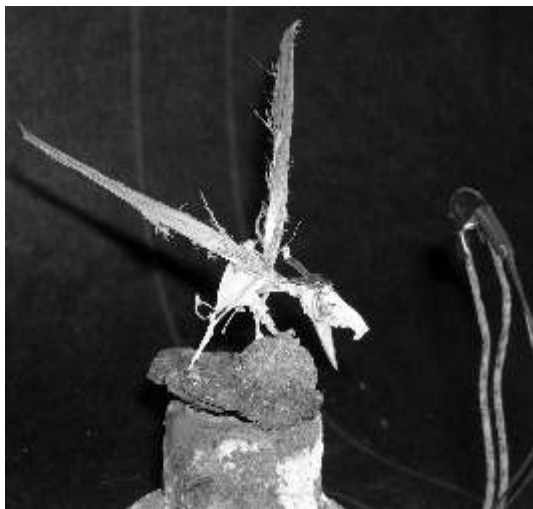
# Stephan Bircher

## X-Country Selection

When the dead are raised, re-arranged, mixed together, slotted into recognizable activities, lit to their greatest advantage and then elevated to the status of Fine Arts by a mad creator; the dance of death begins with an oom-pa-pa that resonates with a sad familiarity. Viewing the antics that the skeletal hybrids are engaged in, *our* little lives become less fragile as we watch *them* - afloat on an ocean in a steel boat, whirling atop a carousel, showing off (revealing the private parts with no shame!) or posing on a precipice, ready to leap or take flight. The mutation from death to a reinvigorated life gives an immediate sense of relief that strikes back the fears of mortality and allows an appreciation of the moment - the exact moment in front of the sculpture - to over-ride the knowledge of our own inevitable end. This is the world of the Theater of the Absurd, black comics and satire where the weight of living with the awareness of death recedes in the immediacy of the wonderful moment.

The assemblages engage time despite the frozen moment on the stage of life, by virtue of the objects wedded to the recycled road-kill or neglected carcasses. Stephan Bircher claims objects from the past, as well as animals, and changes their character from the original form-follows-function to form-making-suggestions. He does this with the new beings that he fashions, their environment and the way we are directed to focus on them using lighting fixtures that have had 'other lives.' This packrat version of claiming his art supplies is superseded by expertise however and thus the assemblages rise into the world of fine art and phenomenal objects. These pieces are labored over with attention paid to details that went unnoticed in their original existence.

The creator has become a divine craftsman, like Giuseppe making his beloved Pinocchio or a watchmaker making it all tick. The dancing-death imagery, lit as if on the stage of life far after it's allotted term, shows the patience and care of a Swiss watchmaker. Originally from Switzerland, Stephen Bircher has worked as a lighting designer for many theatrical productions and now brings his expertise to bear on a world over which he has total control, from the writing of the script, to the set design, costuming, lighting and grand finale of the amazing macabre moment of fame.



Flyer On A Rock  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
6 x 6 x 7 in  
2004





Whore of Babylon  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
16 x 14 x 21 in  
2006

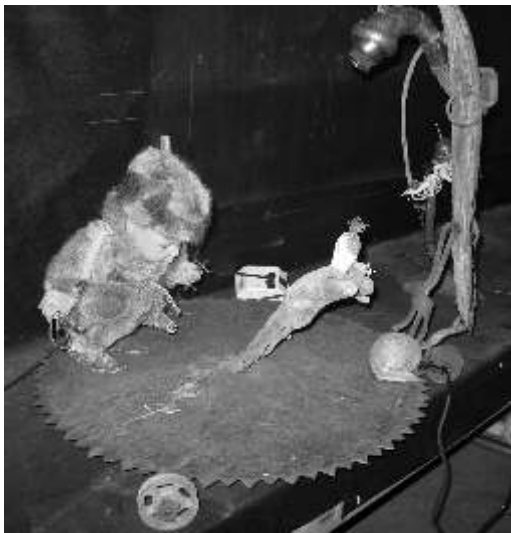






Freak Carousel  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
17 x 18 x 28 in  
2006





Trapper's Loss  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
29 x 29 x 28 in  
2005





Fifi's Canoe Trip  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
12 x 5 x 5 in  
2006





Warrior's Prey  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
6 x 19 x 15 in  
2006







The Courtesan  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
10 x 12 x 17 in  
2006





D-Minor  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
18 x 15 x 15 in  
2004





Odyssey and Siren  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
16 x 17 x 22 in  
2006





Pre-Historic Hairdoo  
*mixed media, found objects, bones*  
22 x 10 x 20 in  
2006





# Stephan Bircher

## Professional Experience

- 2003- Set and Light design for Canadian Theater. Caravan Farm Theater, Leaky Heaven Circus, Runaway Moon and others.
- 1993-2003 Technical director of the "Junges Theater" Basel, Switzerland
- 1991- Design and construction of the "Pandamobile" for the Swiss World Wildlife Fund, a series of kinetic hands-on educational modules illustrating bio-diversity:
- 1991 *Aquamarinus (Undersea life)*
  - 1994 *Sous Le Sol (Life in the Subsurface)*
  - 1997 *Wolf (Re-Integration of Wolves in Switzerland)*
  - 2001 *Regenwald (Rainforest)*
  - 2004 *Arktis (Changes in Climate)*
  - 2006 *Water - A Challenge for Mankind*
- 1990-1993 Set and props designer for theaters in Switzerland.
- 1982-1990 Secondary School Art Teacher, Basel, Switzerland

## Exhibitions & Commisions

- Oct. 2006 Headbones Gallery, Toronto, ON, Canada
- Jan. 2006 Fugitive Gallery, Vernon, BC, Canada
- April 2005 Fran Willis Gallery, Victoria, BC, Canada
- 1986-88 Commission, Basel Canvas Street lamps Paintings, Basel, Switzerland
- 1985 2nd Prize, Swiss Cartoon Competition, Basel, Switzerland

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Micro Publishing  
Toronto Canada