

artist management & pr



Heidi Johnson | 323.204.7246 | heidi@thinkhijinx.com

## MEDIA ADVISORY

# ROBBIE CONAL “STREET WISE”

November 1, 2014 – April 30, 2015  
Los Angeles International Airport

## ARTIST ROBBIE CONAL ARRIVES AT LAX WITH AN “OWL’S EYE” VIEW OF LOS ANGELES

*The Iconic Street Artist Uniquely Captures L.A. By Combining Drone Photography And Paintings For Mix-Media Installation “Street Wise” At LAX’s Terminal 6*



**Los Angeles, CA** – Normally late nights for Robbie Conal mean mobilizing a crew of wheat-pasters to fill the streets with his legendary political posters. But this time, in the nights before Halloween, Robbie Conal will take over Terminal 6 at LAX to install his newest works, **STREET WISE**, a collaboration with his partner, producer Deborah Ross. The new works combine large-scale paintings of owls (seemingly

Robbie's alter-egos) and the couple's recent fascination with drone photography, creating stunning aerial shots of some of Robbie's favorite parts of LA as the backdrop for his paintings. The pieces give the viewer a look at the City of Angels not many get to see.

Part of the groundbreaking LAX arts program known as **INFLUX**, created in partnership by the **L.A. Department of Cultural Affairs** and **Los Angeles World Airports**, these works are designed to infuse the airport's bustling terminals with cutting-edge and inspiring pop art. "Robbie Conal's point of view is a Los Angeles staple," says curator **Elizabeta Betinski**, "and the hope is that seeing our home and all its glory from such heights might just inspire us to take better care of it. And if that's not enough (unlike owls, humans seem to need a little extra push to get wiser), the owls are there to remind us that we have a beautiful thing going on, here on Planet L.A. and that if we want to keep it, for ourselves and all the creatures we share it with, we've got to wise up."

The groundwork for **Street Wise** was laid fifteen years ago. Robbie's wife, Deborah Ross, has always loved owls. Of course, Robbie promised to paint one for her. He finally got around to it, but found he couldn't paint just one. Partly because owls are "too cool to sit for just one portrait," partly because once Robbie saw over 200 photos that Deborah took of ecstatic sunsets lighting up LA, he began to see owls in every one of them. Every place where Deborah stopped to take in the beauty of LA's sunsets, Robbie saw an owl guarding the moment. Robbie and Deborah then took this spontaneous collaboration a step further and invite their friend Todd Caranto to join in, take his GoPro drone for a spin above Los Angeles and film our urban sprawl from an owl's point of view – which, as it turns out, is nothing short of spectacular.

A pioneer in the world of guerrilla street art, and most known for his iconic, satirical, political portraits, Robbie's certainly earned his reputation as one of the "bad boys" of the art world. These environmentally-conscious (perhaps downright concerned) works are a new and recent focus. He explains, "What these owls kept saying to me as I painted them was, 'Hey, Art Boy! Ever think about Planet Earth? Y'know everyone you love is here - Yes, everyone. We got a beautiful thing going on. So, don't screw it up!'"

More details on **Street Wise** will be revealed as the exhibit opening nears. To learn more about arts at LAX, visit <http://bit.do/LAWAarts>.

Hashtags: #streetwiselax

## ABOUT ROBBIE CONAL

**Robbie Conal** grew up on the upper west side of Manhattan. Raised by union organizers who considered the major art museums to be daycare centers for him, he spent his childhood immersed in art history at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art and the other great local art institutions of New York City. He attended the High School of Music and Art, and later received his BFA at San Francisco State University (1969), and his Masters of Fine Arts from Stanford University (1978). In the early 1980's, angered by the Reagan Administration's rabid abuse of political power in the name of representative democracy, he began making satirical oil portraits of politicians and bureaucrats and turning them into street posters. He gradually developed an irregular guerrilla army of volunteers, who helped him poster the streets of major cities around the country. Since 1986 (his first poster was "Men With No Lips"), Robbie has made more than 90 street posters satirizing politicians from both political parties, televangelists and global capitalists. He has also taken on subjects like censorship, war, social injustice, and environmental issues. Robbie's work has been featured on "CBS This Morning", "Charlie Rose" and in *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *The LA Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Vanity Fair* and *People*. He has had 3 books published: "ART ATTACK: The Midnight Politics of A Guerrilla Artist," 1992, "ARTBURN," 2004, and "Not Your Typical Political Animal," 2009, with his wife, Deborah Ross. Visit [www.RobbieConal.com](http://www.RobbieConal.com) to learn more.

## ABOUT DEBORAH ROSS

**Deborah Ross** received her Diploma of Art and Design from Ealing Technical College, in London (aka Thames Valley University). Upon returning to Los Angeles she began a two-year stint as assistant film title designer at Lionsgate Films. Deborah established her own motion graphics and logo design company, **Deborah Ross Film Design** in 1984. Over the years, regular clients have included Warner Bros Pictures, Walt Disney Pictures, Universal Studios, Paramount Pictures, Twentieth Century Fox, Fox Searchlight, Sony Pictures, Miramax, Lionsgate, HBO, Showtime, PBS, ABC, CBS, NBC, and UPN, among others. Deborah is an active member of the Academy of Motion Picture Art and Sciences. Her title design sequences have been featured in such Academy Award winning films as "The English Patient," "The Talented Mr. Ripley," "Twin Towers," "Michael Clayton," and "Nanking." She has taught "Narrative Sequence Design" at Otis College of Art and Design, and continues to mentor new talent through internships and lectures. She currently resides in Los Angeles with her husband, artist Robbie Conal, with whom she has collaborated on numerous projects including books, posters, and film. Visit [www.DRFilmDesign.com](http://www.DRFilmDesign.com) to learn more.

## ABOUT ELIZABETA BETINKSI

**Elizabeta Betinski** is a writer and curator, with roots transplanted to Los Angeles from Belgrade, former Yugoslavia. She was a Founder and Director of Overtones Gallery, a contemporary art gallery in Los Angeles that showcased 70+ national and international artists in over forty exhibitions from 2003 through 2009. In 2012, Elizabeta graduated with a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Goddard College and is currently preparing her first memoir, *Tattoo*, for publication. On Summer Solstice 2014, Elizabeta founded *bardo.L.A.*, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit arts organization dedicated to fostering international exchange of arts and culture via traveling exhibitions and events. bardoLA will premier its first international exhibition, *We Must Risk Delight*, at the Venice Biennale in Venice, Italy, in May 2015. If you are curious to know more, or just want to say hello, visit [www.bardoLA.org](http://www.bardoLA.org).