

Steven K. James

Digital Artist Writer Photographer



Cross and Colosseum, skjames, 2011

S.K. James

S.K. James is the founder of Digital Mixed Media Studios and Gallery in Reno, Nevada, and he helped to originate the term "digital mixed media" – a combination of digital media with any other media, electronic or organic, in any form.

James became passionate about producing visual art in 2003 when he created and published his first book of poetry, entitled *Ride*, and utilized iStockphoto and other stock image sites to license images from a variety of well-known visual artists and designers (including David Byrne, Chas Ray Krider and David Carson) to use alongside his poetry. At the time, James also began corresponding with Bruce Livingstone, the founder, President and CEO of iStock and James used Livingstone's own imagery in his book. Livingstone, who later sold iStockphoto to Getty Images, referred to *Ride* as a beautiful early example of how digital images from artists throughout the world could be used in collaborative media. James fell in love with the idea of producing his own imagery and has devoted his time since then to studying photography and the quickly evolving tools of digital post production. He now works in the extensive palette of Adobe Master Collection CS5 as well as Painter 11 and many other programs.

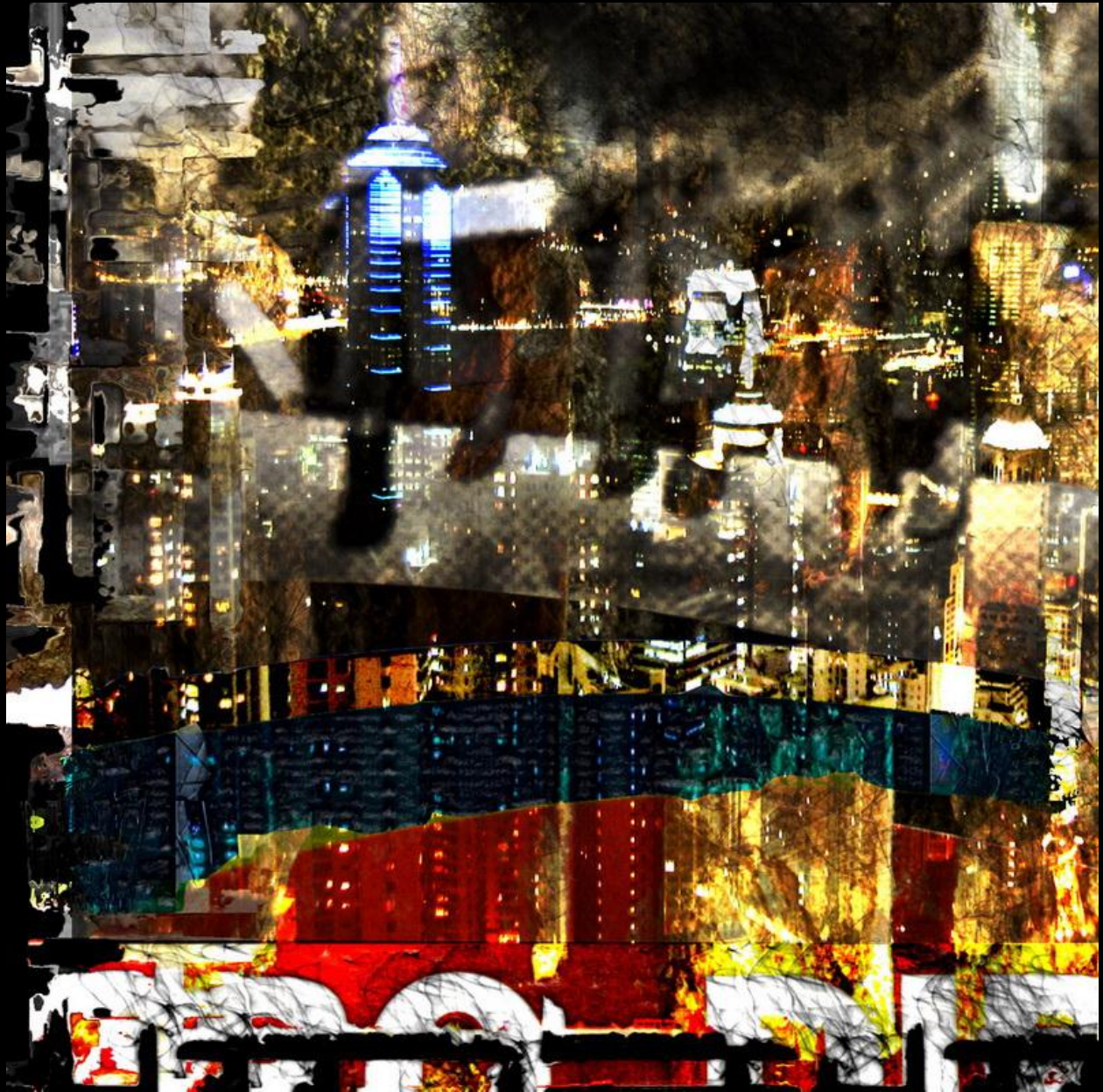
James' own visual work is generally based in digital photorealistic montage, often utilizing layered elements of original photographs combined with paint and other materials. James also works in 3-D as well as video editing and production. He maintains a studio in Reno, Nevada and creates archival quality images on canvas and a variety of art papers on an Epson large format giclee-quality printer.

James was born in St. Louis, Missouri. He studied as a fellowship student of Mandarin Chinese in Taipei, Taiwan before he received his B.A. in philosophy, *magna cum laude*. He then studied international law in London at the University of Notre Dame's London campus before he received his law degree from Washington University in St. Louis. He also studied as an M.F.A. student of creative writing at the University of Montana in Missoula, Montana (until winter came). He received his mediation certification from Harvard Law School in 2000. James has lived in Northern Nevada in the Reno-Tahoe area for more than 20 years and he is an avid snowboarder and hiker.

James' work has been seen in virtual and actual galleries in the U.S. and abroad. He was one of the original occupants of the groundbreaking Dada Motel exhibit centered at the historic El Cortez Hotel in downtown Reno, Nevada and he has been at the center of the NadaDada art movement, featured in the New York Times in 2009, from its start in 2007 until now. He has exhibited numerous times in both juried and non-juried exhibits at the Los Angeles Center for Digital Art. James was featured with other Nevada artists in a documentary about Reno's NadaDada artists that premiered at the Nevada Museum of Art, and he was recently invited to become a Visiting Professor of Digital Art and Design at Luxun Academy of Fine Art, one of China's best known art universities.



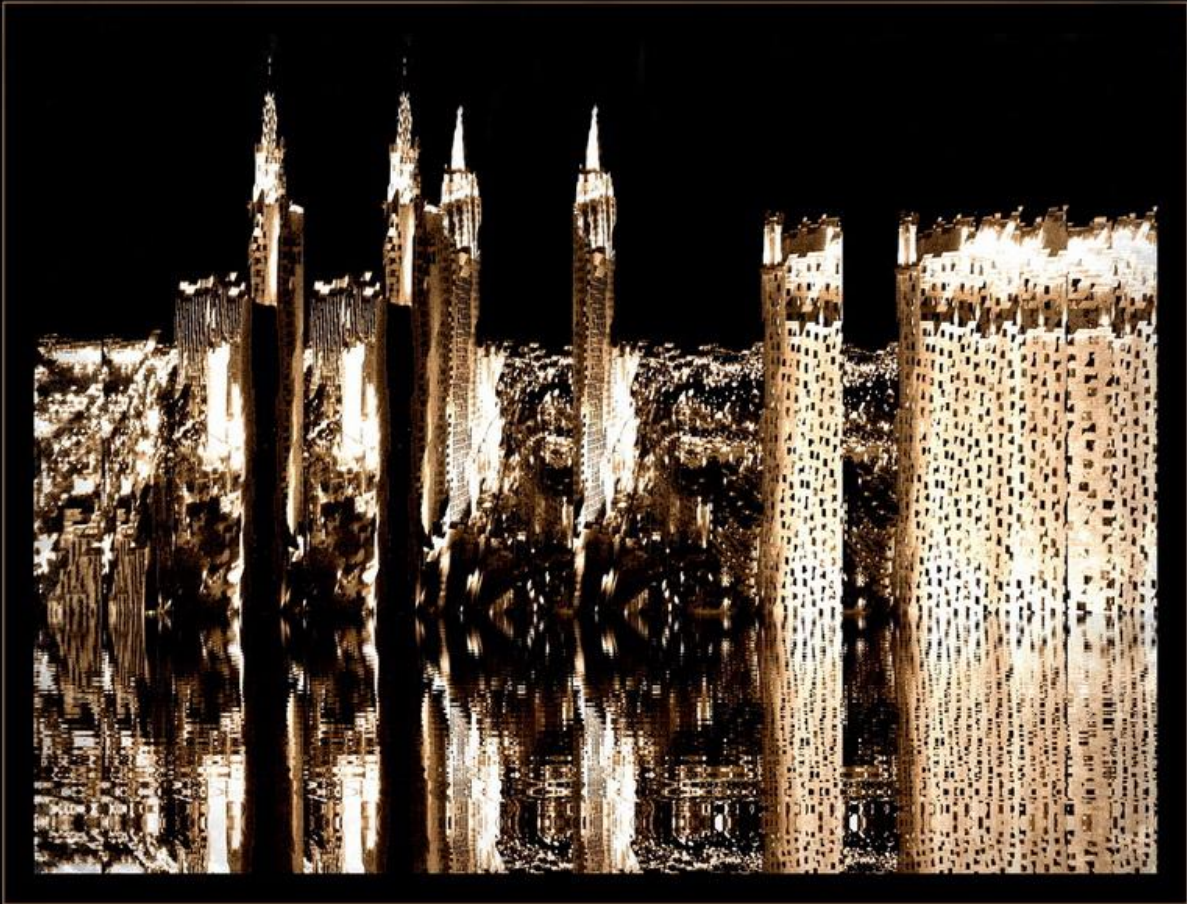
Roman Skeleton, skjames, 2011



Smoke Over Hong Kong, skjames, 2011



Mother and Child and Bottles Against Fence, skjames, 2011



Vegas Castles, skjames, 2011

NadaDada

NadaDada is a group of artists who came to prominence in 2007 with the first Dada Motel Exhibit centered at the historic El Cortez Hotel in Reno, Nevada. Like the Beat Generation, The Bloomsbury Set or the earlier Transcendentalism movement, the artists of NadaDada routinely portray in their work cultural circumstances that they helped to inspire. Common themes in their art include alienation, apocalypse, sexuality, absolute freedom, and revolution against the politics of art. Though NadaDada finds meaning in the anti-bourgeois phenomena of Dadaism, which began in Switzerland during World War I, NadaDada represents an even further negation of the negation of Dada. NadaDada artists adhere to the credo that “the absurd holds no terror.”

NadaDada began in the fall of 2006 when a group of artists from Reno, Nevada started to discuss and organize an art exhibit with as little structure and as few rules as possible. The original intention of the exhibit was for artists to gather together in a series of seedy hotels and motels in Reno’s downtown district and turn each room into its own art exhibit.

Original founding members included Jeff Johnson, Chad Sorg, Dianna Sion, Ann O’Lear, Esther Dunaway, and Tova Ramos. Inspired in part by the anarchic spectacle of the Burning Man festival that occurs each year in the Blackrock Desert north of Reno, and in part by what was perceived as the confining bureaucracy of Reno’s yearly series of corporate-sponsored cultural events known as Reno Artown, the founders set out to create a collective artistic experience in which artists could participate regardless of discipline or medium and without competition or jurying.

According to the New York Times, the “Nadadada concept – ‘Get a Room, Make a Show’ – came from Jeff Johnson, 48, a custom neon artist who thought the city’s sparsity of art galleries could provide an opportunity for artists to show their work independently.”

The NadaDada concept gained momentum through www.Tribe.net, one of the oldest social networks on the internet. Tova Ramos created a Tribe site for Dada Motel in January of 2007 and by March of the same year several early NadaDada artists, including Chad Sorg, Dianna Sion, S.K. James and John Molezzo had begun to use the site as a visual art gallery and promotional vehicle, often posting images that incorporated elements of each other’s work along with the words, “Dada Motel.” Subsequently, Sorg, Sion, artist Trelaine Lewis and artist and art professor Dean Burton created blog networks on www.NadaDadaDingDong.net and www.Blogger.com to help draw notoriety to the event. Scores of NadaDada videos began to appear on www.Youtube.com as well, including a video series about the artists of NadaDada at www.YouTube.com/NadaDadaMotel. Soon, artists from as far away as Europe began to post similarly interactive art on behalf of NadaDada.

Since its inception in 2007, Dada Motel has evolved in name to “Nada Motel,” “NadaDada Motel” and then, simply, to “NadaDada.” By 2010, NadaDada had grown from a grass roots art movement started by a handful of northern Nevada artists to a collective of more than 350 artists from around the world. Although NadaDada lacks any central administration by design, NadaDada exhibits continue each year in June in Reno, Nevada and artists continue to work work together in a spirit of voluntary association, mutual aid, direct action and autonomy.

The New York Times helped to cement the spread and the fame of NadaDada when it reported, in 2009, that “Venice has its Bienale. Basel, Switzerland, has its Art Basel. And Reno has the NadaDada Motel, a jubilantly unpretentious art event...” Aside from the yearly event, which remains centered in the heart of Reno, NadaDada artists have exhibited in museums and galleries outside of Reno, at the Los Angeles Center for Digital Art, and in virtual exhibits across the internet. NadaDada artists have created hundreds of videos and thousands of visual images in the name of NadaDada, and tens of thousands of people have seen their work.