



Meet the Artist –

STEVEN SPAZUK

Steven Spazuk is an artist who has explored the full range of the graphic arts: painting, advertising, graphic design, and set design.

In 1987, he began the first of his ventures with Tam-Tam, an advertising agency he founded with three associates. The agency's mandate was simple: shake up the advertising world. By 1992, still brimming with ideas but unsatisfied with their limited applications, he took a step closer to his goal of painting. Spazuk created Tarzan Communication Graphique, where he worked exclusively in graphic design. Among other projects, Spazuk created the personalized greeting stamp for Canada Post.

Since 1994, Spazuk has retreated to his attic studio, although retreated is perhaps too definitive a term. With such a limitless imagination, it was only a matter of time before his creations escaped the boundaries of the studio. As a matter of fact, they were (and are still) frequently found parading down the streets of Montreal in Christmas and Halloween festivals, which Spazuk organizes and creates. He has also lent his creativity to the experimental stage productions of Victor Pilon and Michel Lemieux.

Recently Spazuk has produced a new kind of alchemy. The flame burning inside in him has finally got loose, and has left a trail of smoke and soot in its path. Today Spazuk creates exclusively with the residue of smoke and fire, a technique so unique the last practitioners of the art were cave-dwellers. Using accident and intent, Spazuk paints portraits in soot. There are body parts visible, sometimes just a suggestion, sometime a literal impression of a face or hand leaving a dismembered impression. Other times Spazuk has left the remains to the subtleties of nature, of errant bugs and rain, or etched upon them with miniscule brushes.

The final effect is elusive, haunting and graceful: like looking at the world through a glass, darkly.