


Art Agency, Partners

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Don't Stop Believing, with Artist Glenn Kaino



By  Charlotte Burns

executive editor of In Other Words

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“When people ask me how to describe the work or describe myself, I always just start by saying artist,” says Glenn Kaino. “Everything stems from the art practice.”

The visionary American conceptual artist's work has led him to become an off-Broadway producer, a performer, a magician, a social activist and the technological innovator who helped legalize the music download platform Napster.

A “horrible” trip to an art fair in 2008 caused Kaino to close his studio for a year, unhappy with “how much influence an overall, overriding economic system” was having on art making. He decided instead to “go hang out with a bunch of magicians and see what happens—because they know something about believing”.

Magic is “why we do what we do, as artists”, says Kaino, who went on to co-produce the off-Broadway magic show “In and Of Itself”—which is smashing box office records. Both magic and art are about belief for Kaino, who says: “Belief has always been at the core of the practice; it's really belief about the power of art.”

One of his long-term collaborations is with the Olympian Tommie Smith, who famously accepted the gold medal for the 200m race in 1968 with his fist held aloft, in solidarity with the fight for human rights. “We, as beneficiaries of his sacrifice, can create systems that pay homage to—and also *pay*—him,” Kaino says. “The art I know actually has tangible change, in that it makes people think in different ways or makes people engage in different ideas.”

During today’s podcast, which was recorded in Los Angeles with Matthew Thompson (vice president of AAP in Los Angeles) and our host Charlotte Burns, Kaino talks about subjects as diverse as Jurassic Park; diversity in tech; partnering with actor and activist Jesse Williams; his interest in “connecting ecosystems that don’t normally have a chance to meet”; upcoming projects—and much more.

Tune in today.

For the full transcript, click [here](#)