

HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE

Dario Escobar Makes Objects Go Pop

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Usually the arts and the world of sports don't share too much in common. The archetype of the jock and the artistic outcast has been perpetuated enough for us all to know the drill, but in the case of [Dario Escobar](#), the two opposing forces never seemed so complimentary. Escobar is known for his immersive installations that insert athletic objects into the gallery with a pop art sensibility. But even beyond the conversation of art-meets-sports, the Guatemala-based Escobar has come to represent one of the key players in the South American modern art scene.



Dario Escobar, 2011, *Urban Landscape* (detail), Cut baseball bats (wood, paint), 64 x 69.5 x 31 inches
Image courtesy of the artist and Josée Bienvenu Gallery

In Latin America, it is hard to avoid the distinction of being controversial or politically-charged as Escobar found out when he embroidered underpants with the national symbol of Guatemala in 24-karat gold, but Escobar aims to circumvent that reputation whenever possible. Escobar [spoke to LatinArt](#) of the notion that Latin American art is inherently political in nature, saying, "Analyzing Latin American art is complex because it's a baptism, with a name that defines it, a space which is assigned to it and a territory in which it should circulate in order to enter spheres of power."

Escobar's desire to move past the political discussion does not signify that his work is without meaning. His installations speak to a larger hybridity, unspecific to any place or people. His series of gnarled skateboards speak to the creative energy of all objects, it just so happens that Escobar is able to convey this power clearly where the rest of us may struggle to see the potential. While many have utilized the skateboard within a gallery setting, the specific angles and joints of Escobar's version add more to his personal language than a grand tradition. Check out a slideshow of his pop athletics below. Dario Escobar is represented by [Josée Bienvenu Gallery](#) in New York