

## Overseas Change

Abigail Stone | Photo: Robert Benson | December 2, 2013

**Sculptor Joel Morrison works hard to keep his feet on the ground, even as his pieces take flight abroad.**



Sculptor Joel Morrison poses with “Disco Ball Caught in a Bear Trap,” one of his 2013 works.

“It’s been a crazy year,” says sculptor Joel Morrison of the whirlwind 12 months that have been 2013. Though his successes—including shows at Gagosian Gallery in Hong Kong, New York and Los Angeles—may have gone to the head of most people, Morrison is determined to «keep it real.» The L.A.-based artist, who starts work by 5:30 every morning, still drives the same car and works out of the same space he has for years. “People expect me to get a big studio with a big team of people and move,” he explains. Instead, he continues to work alone, out of the storefront in the West Adams section of L.A. that he’s rented for over a decade. Here, Morrison creates his signature composite object pieces, which are cast in stainless steel and highly polished, with only minimal input from the industrial craftsmen who help with the production process. “A lot of my ideas, and even some of the techniques I use, are from the neighborhood,” he says. Though Morrison could be crisscrossing the globe to attend his own art openings, the Seattle native prefers to spend his time in L.A. “I have a steady influx of information and problems here, and you need both of those things to make art,” he explains. Despite the artist’s determination to keep himself and his work local, his pieces have resonated with collectors overseas. “The art world went global just around the time I was coming up. It was a bit of a gamble, but it’s worked out incredibly well.” Seeing his work outside of its birthplace is both exciting and challenging. He explains, “You have to make your art not only as a group of works, but to translate individually.” With a solo show at the Almine Rech Gallery in Paris (run by Almine Ruiz-Picasso—yes, Picasso) opening in January, next year promises to be even more action-packed. Says Morrison, “I’m superlucky, and I don’t want that to change.”

### Morrison’s Hots

Baekjeong Korean barbecue, Terry Richardson directing Miley Cyrus, CP3 and Doc Rivers, sandwiches at Băco Mercat, drinks at Dan Sung Sa, Beach House on vinyl

### Morrison’s Nots

James Franco for Gucci, Black Mamba and Mike D’Antoni, cocktails at The Standard in Hollywood, Jay-Z on Picasso