

ARTIST STATEMENT
Ruth T. Segaloff

“Conceptual art is not about forms or materials, but about ideas and meanings.”
Tony Godfrey in Conceptual Art

“The Baggage We Carry & the Legacies We Leave” is a continuation of Segaloff’s works that incorporate found objects, ephemera and words as narrative tools to re-visit historic events, family stories, our cultural heritage and social justice. The “baggage” in the title is meant both literally and figuratively.

Our emotional baggage defines who we are: 1. Where we came from; 2. What we believe; 3. Why we are here; and 4. How we’ll be remembered.

A conceptual artist, Segaloff’s intent above all, is to challenge observers to project on to her works, their own meanings and stories. Thus every piece begins a dialogue between the work and the viewer, and may serve as the start of an important conversation.

Four of these works are especially evocative of human rights and social justice: “Tikkun Olam: Repairing the World;” “In Search of the Better Angels of Our Nature;” “War Is Not The Answer;” and “Ebony and Ivory: Can’t We All Just Get Along?”

Four derive from family stories: “The Baggage We Carry” (plastic cases holding family memorabilia & found objects); “The Mikado...” (about an embarrassing chorus performance); “Caution: Railroad Crossing” (when 3 year old David Segaloff ran away from home & crossed a series of the railroad tracks); and “Keeping Connections Across Generations” (when telephones were life lines for our family spread across the country).

The theme of legacies is also reflected in the artists with whom Segaloff claims a kinship: Marcel Duchamp; Robert Rauschenberg; Joseph Cornell and Betye Saar. “We all stand on the shoulders of giants,” she notes. “Artists throughout history have used art to speak out against tyranny and to help make the world a better place. I’m proud to be a part of that tradition.”

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