



Talking With: The Kaplan Twins Discuss Instagram, Millennials and their New Hamptons Series

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by Pat Rogers

Here's a string of words that spring to mind when considering the artist duo The Kaplan Twins: Unexpected. Controversial. Sexy. Instagram celebrities. Artist Performers. Pop Culture Connected. Fun. While born and raised in New Jersey, the identical twins headed to L.A. after both graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Art from New York University to step into the world as artists.

Embracing the celebrity culture of L.A., they tapped into the new norm of Social Media self-styling, reality show celebrities, and the tell-all / show-all culture. Inspired by Andy Warhol's performative penchant and his pop culture subject matter, The Kaplan Twins found a sweet spot. They transformed themselves from collaborative artists Lexi and Allie Kaplan into [The Kaplan Twins](#), where showmanship, theatrics and persona are just as important as the physical art they create.

The Kaplan Twins were catapulted into public sphere when they started [sitting on celebrities faces](#) (Donald Trump, Basquiat, etc.) by applying paint to their asses and transforming prints into mixed media paintings. The world "discovered" The Kaplan Twins and made them Instagram stars. With a [current count of 160.4 million Instagram followers](#), the pair continues to engage the public through performance, appearances, art and Instagrams that all serve as commentary on pop culture's obsession with celebrity, fantasies and putting the best spin on your life in Social Media, no matter if you have 10 followers or millions.



The Kaplan Twins. Courtesy of Damien Roman Fine Art and the artists.

Connecting with [Roman Fine Art](#) of East Hampton, NY, The Kaplan Twins wing their way to The Hamptons this July 4th weekend for two art appearances / performances at the [Montauk Beach Club](#), where a solo show of their art is presented by Roman Fine Art. The show remains on view through July 30, 2018. [Click here for details](#).

In addition, selections from their new "Hamptons" Series and their recent "[Shit I Just Spilled Kombucha on my Yeezys](#)" series are on view at [Market Art + Design](#) from July 5 to 8, 2018 in

Bridgehampton, NY. Their art is also part of Roman Fine Art's survey of cutting edge contemporary art "Art Market Summer Group" on view at the gallery from July 2 to 30, 2018. An Opening Reception takes place on Friday, July 13, 2018 from 5 to 8 p.m.

Pat Rogers of Hamptons Art Hub reached out via email to The Kaplan Twins for the inside story on the new "Hamptons" Series and what it's like to be artist celebrities who comment on celebrity obsession and channel millennials.

Pat Rogers: What type of comment are you making on contemporary culture with your series "Shit I Just Spilled Kombucha on my Yeezys"?

The Kaplan Twins: We're commenting on the nature of social media. Instagram has become a platform for branding and modern day advertising. Everything we see on there is a brand or campaign, so much so we don't realize it anymore. It doesn't matter where you are, who you are, where you live, what you do, everyone can access the same information and is looking at the same thing all day long. From Kylie Jenner to the pizza delivery guy, but we all see and access the same content. And it's free. It's kind of our spin on the "American Super Market." Everything has a caption. Our art captures that instagrammable, millennial feeling, while still being very tongue in cheek.



"Shit! I Just Spilled Kombucha on my Yeezys" by the Kaplan Twins. Courtesy of Damien Roman Fine Art and the artists.

PR: How does this connect with the new Hamptons Series?

TKT: Our new series pokes fun at millennials, instagram, and LA culture. For this show we specifically created pieces with the Hamptons in mind. Our goal was to take what we are doing in LA and bring it to the Hamptons crowd. "I Only Summer In The Hamptons" feels to us exactly what a millennial would say when asked about their summer plans and captures that "perfect Instagram aesthetic" of what someone might post. It's the perfect photo and the perfect caption, in a sense.



"I Only Summer in the Hamptons" by The Kaplan Twins. Oil on canvas. Courtesy Damien Roman Fine Art and the artists.

PR: How does the performative aspect of art making in front of a crowd reflect on your art?

TKT: We like to make art that is relatable, and we like to be relatable ourselves. Part of what we do, and love doing, is not only to make art that people can connect with, but also to let people in and feel like our audience knows us and who we are. When we perform it's another way for people to connect with what we're doing.

PR: How about you as artists? Your public appearances and art making seems to feed the cult of celebrity that you're also a part of. Do you consider this an integral part of who you both are as artists? Or, is it fun and art combined?

TKT: It's definitely a combination of both. Artists are creatives and entertainers. In the same way that any other artist is, but that notion hasn't really resonated with mainstream audiences today, in the same way it has in the past with artists like Andy Warhol, Keith Haring, and Basquiat. So that's something that we want to bring back. We like to show that artists can be celebrities in their own right, and we embrace that.

Art really does live in its own world, especially now, which makes it super unapproachable, so integrating ourselves in the art and through our performances and social media gives us the opportunity to showcase our art and also ourselves as artists, and allows people who can't necessarily spend thousands of dollars on the work to love and appreciate what we're doing. This is what we love, what we're passionate, and what we have fun doing.



"Do It For The Gram" by the Kaplan Twins. Courtesy of Damien Roman Fine Art and the artists.

PR: You've made a new series of art specifically for The Hamptons. Can you describe some of the inspiration for the paintings?

TKT: We're inspired by Instagram, and the photos and the captions that come with it. A lot of the visuals we took directly from Instagram. The captions too. For "Summer Aesthetic" we were scrolling on Instagram, looking at our friends who spend their summers in the Hamptons, and looking at their captions. We took that one saying directly from a friend. We paired it with the pool floaty because that is the quintessential summer accessory. It is reminiscent of millennial Instagram culture and art culture, ie. Jeff Koons. So we're very much mixing art and social media.

For some paintings, we asked our followers what they would caption the image and we got the best responses. Who better to ask for a millennial caption than millennials themselves?



"Summer Aesthetic" by The Kaplan Twins. Oil on canvas. Courtesy Damien

Roman Fine Art and the artists.

PR: What did you consider when making the work?

TKT: We consider everything. What looks the best, aesthetically and compositionally. What might be the funniest. And also what will resonate the most with all of our viewers.



“You Can Pay Me in Bitcoin” by The Kaplan Twins. Courtesy of Damien Roman Fine Art and the artists.

PR: How has Instagram changed art? As artists, is this a good thing?

TKT: Instagram allows artists to showcase their brand, as it does for everyone else. It’s definitely a good thing.

PR: What are you looking forward to the most for your two parties at The Montauk Beach House?

TKT: We love to be a part of the energy and the scene. We’ll be at both events interacting with our fans and just having a great time. We want people to love the work, come talk to us, and just to have fun! We’re really looking forward to people just having a great time and seeing the reactions of the work, and what people will say. That will also influence future work.



“Sushi is Cheaper Than Therapy” by The Kaplan Twins. Oil on canvas. Courtesy Damien Roman Fine Art.

PR: What kind of reaction to you hope to receive from the art collectors who discover your work either in Montauk, Roman Fine Art Gallery in East Hampton or at Art Market Art Fair?

TKT: We are really interested in the conversation and what people will say. We never tell our audiences how they should react or feel about our work, but we love the conversations we get to create. Everyone will have a different reaction but the message and what we’re trying to convey is still there. People get the message and that excites us.



“Is It La Croix or La Croix?” by the Kaplan Twins. Courtesy of Damien Roman Fine Art and the artists.

In The Hamptons, art by The Kaplan Twins is exhibited with Roman Fine Art and presented at the Montauk Beach House Gallery and at Roman Fine Art in East Hampton, NY through July 30, 2018. A solo show of new works by The Kaplan Twins is on view through July 30, 2018 at Montauk Beach House Gallery, located at 55 South Elmwood Avenue, Montauk, NY 11954. The group show “Art Market Summer Group” is exhibited through July 30, 2018 at Roman Fine Art, 66 Park Place East Hampton, NY 11937. www.romanfineart.com.

Follow The Kaplan Twins on [Instagram at @the_kaplan_twins](#). Visit their website at www.thekaplantwins.com.

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