

Described by some as a “material alchemist,” Monica Wyatt transforms seemingly random objects into stunning works of art.

WRITTEN BY HADLEY HALL MEARES  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY MONICA OROZCO

# full circle





**ARTIST IN RESIDENCE**  
Monica at home in Studio City



ARTWORK PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARK HOROWITZ

Monica Wyatt came by her chaotic creator role honestly. “I grew up in this Dr. Demento kind of aesthetic of materials,” she says. “My dad is a physicist-inventor, and as the weekend janitor and chief bottle washer for many years, I was surrounded by test tubes, lasers, petri dishes and other laboratory wonders. I would collect all types of found and broken knickknacks and fashion them into odd keepsakes, sometimes within glass petri dishes or test tubes from my dad’s lab.”

Today, Monica’s laboratory is her lovely home in the hills of Studio City, which she shares with her husband, the TV producer Mark Horowitz, and their two teenage children.

A former TV director and producer, Monica found herself adrift when she became a stay-at-home mom. “I went from this high-powered, full-speed-ahead, all-consuming job to being here full time,” she recalls. “I was used to all-nighters and these crazy hours. But it was motherhood that brought me to my knees.”

Motherhood would also change the course of her professional life. As an artist, she started out by creating highly personal assemblages as presents for her husband. She then branched out into mobiles and fluid, experimental sculptures cast in bronze—much of her work incorporating the theme of motherhood. One sculpture, called “I’m Listening,” features two abstract figures lovingly bending over a small child. “When I named it and I told it to my son,” she remembers, “I said, ‘I just finished this. I’m going to title it, ‘I’m Listening.’ And he said, ‘No, no, no—it should really be ‘You Did What?!’”

For Monica, the process of creation starts in the world, not the studio. “I find materials everywhere,” she says. “I find them on the sides of roads. I find them at swap meets. I find them at recycling places.”

“I might work weeks or months doing repetitive, obsessive constructing such as with my electrical capacitor works. I twist together these tiny inorganic materials and transform them into sculptures that represent shapes found in nature such as masses of moss and deep-sea life,” she explains. “I fully delight in my wacky world of mad scientist experimentation, wonder and invention.”

Over the past decade, her one-time hobby has become a bona fide profession. For *Continuum*, her 2018 solo show at the Lancaster Museum of Art and History, she completed a huge installation featuring thousands of different-size acrylic globes and netting. Noteworthy collectors, including director Joe Russo, have purchased her work. In June, she will have a show at The Loft at Liz’s in Los Angeles.

“Like my artwork that is so much about the cyclic nature of things, I feel that my life has come full circle. I never could have imagined that as an adult I would get to throw myself wholeheartedly into my childhood obsession of collecting and making something from nothing,” she says. “It’s never easy. There’s an enormous amount of energy and concentration that goes into it. But it’s so joyful for me. I mean, it’s truly my happy place.” ■

Learn more about Monica on [monicawyatt.com](http://monicawyatt.com) or on Instagram @[monica\\_wyatt\\_artist](https://www.instagram.com/monica_wyatt_artist).

