

The Magazine

On The Line With... Ju Working On Projects

We chat with Chicago native Ju Working on Projects to learn how the artists is staying connected with art during self-isolation.

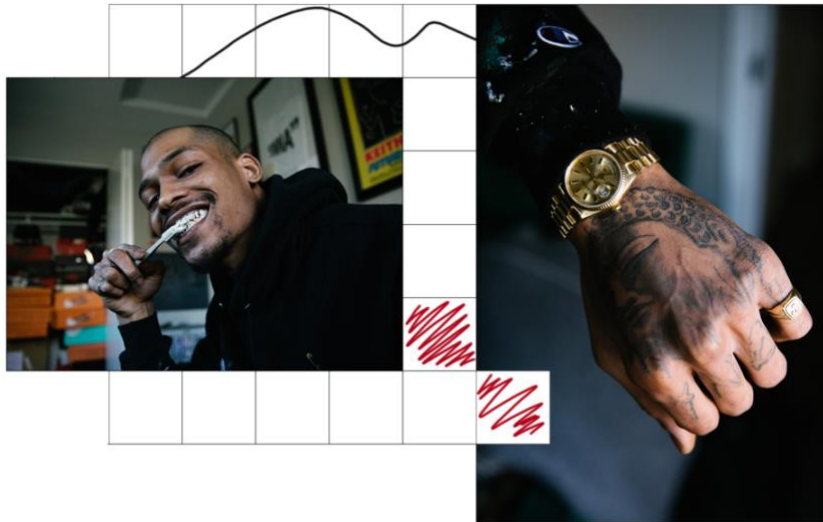
On The Line With



Julian Gaines, AKA Ju Working On Projects, isn't your ordinary artist. The Chicago-born and bred artist has a huge affinity for sports, literature, and education, and that shows through his artwork and projects with Nike. From his Game Worn collection with the Swoosh back in 2018 and his frequent Air Force 1 customizations, he has been able to make more of a name for himself, blending art and fashion together. With everyone under strict isolation orders, some would say its hard to get your creative juices flowing, but Juwop seems to be making it work for himself! We caught up with Ju to learn his routine during self-isolation in this latest addition to On The Line With...

Describe what you do for a living and how you're adjusting to social distancing.

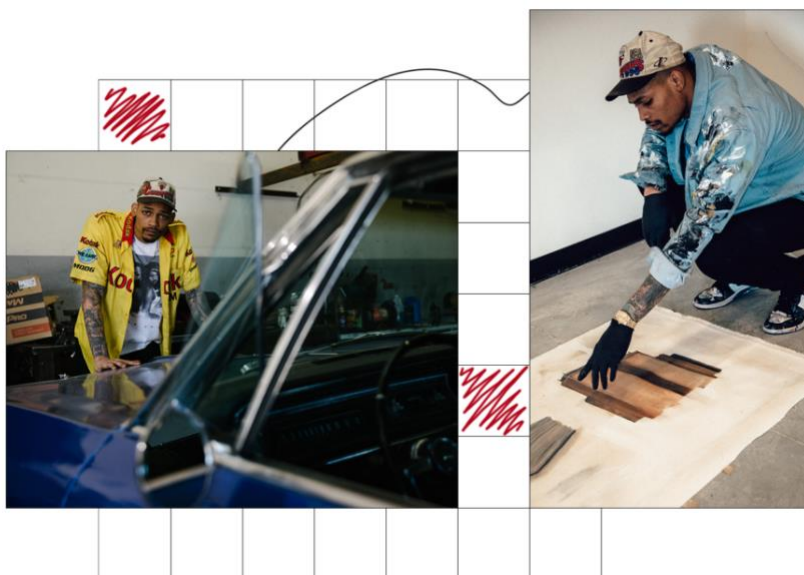
I am a professional contemporary fine-artist and freelance creative consultant. Generally, I work and paint alone or around a select amount of people, so in many ways, this feels like scheduled programming.



During this time of social distancing, people are leaning on things such as streaming services, puzzles, at-home workout classes, to name a few, what activities are you using to take your mind off of things?

I've been painting new pieces and restoring my 1965 Impala. Focusing on creating artwork that doesn't simply garner likes but evokes thought and empathy as well.

The "Last Dance" Documentary has also been a tremendous boost of inspiration as well! Growing up in Chicago, my goal has always been to be 'Like Mike' with a paintbrush; it goes without saying that I am a huge Bulls fan. I look at going to my studio no differently than MJ going to the gym shooting shots. Not to mention, my girlfriend is from Queens, NY, so I regularly send her pictures of MJ dunking on Patrick Ewing – for laughs.



What is keeping you grounded/balanced at the moment?

My faith and being able to drive my cars to my studio and paint.

How have you stayed connected to friends and family during this time?

Countless Zoom birthday parties, I watch Jet-Lounge via IG Live and numerous FaceTime calls throughout the day: Last week I did a virtual studio visit with an 8th grade English class in California via Zoom- it was a lot of fun! I'm in a virtual book club with some friends too that has me very inspired.



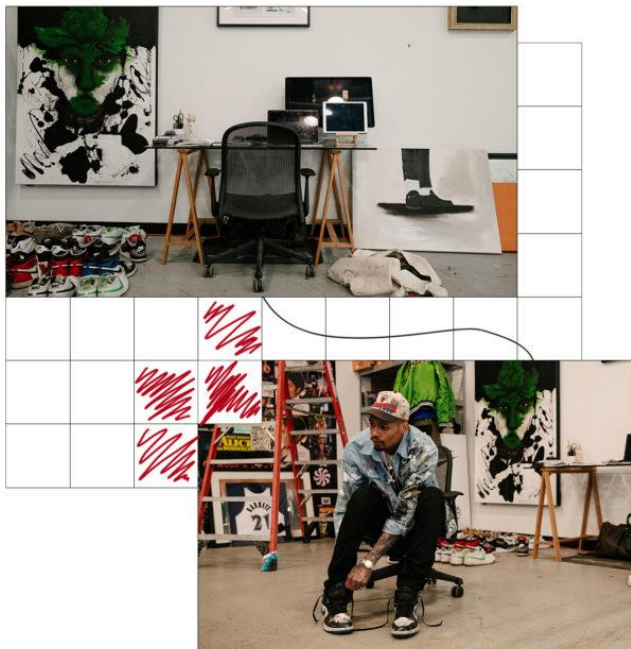
How do you typically start your day? What daily rituals are you practicing?

My days begin around 6:30 am with devotion and reading. After which I trade some stocks and water my plants. Once dressed, I make a few calls and let the dogs out. I always wash my car before I leave the house. Finally, after I stop for a triple-shot espresso on the way to the studio- it's game time.

Look good feel good; feel good paint good.

How are you staying productive while at home? Any useful tips?

When I am not studying Bob Ross videos, I'm reading, working on the Impala, or helping my girlfriend around the home with her interior design projects.



What advice would you give to someone who's struggling in isolation right now?

Find your passion. I think one's passion is whatever you love to do so much that you would do it for free. Figure out a way to create a good product handshake and monetize off your passion.

Be the artist/creative that you would want to look up to – good, bad or indifferent.



What accomplishment are you most proud of while social distancing?

Last week, I sent Rozay [Rick Ross] a pair of my Sky Forces from my “Game Worn” collection and ordered some new parts for the '65 Impala. I enjoy staying out the way and showing love when I can. Times are hard for everyone, myself included, but it makes me happy when I can get my cars worked on, support my favorite auto shops and artists.

What are you most looking forward to once this is over?

Going to art museums with my girl and visiting my Jet-Life family in New Orleans.

