

Tendered Currency (ongoing)

Manufactured diamonds, certificates of authenticity, ephemera, video, dimensions variable

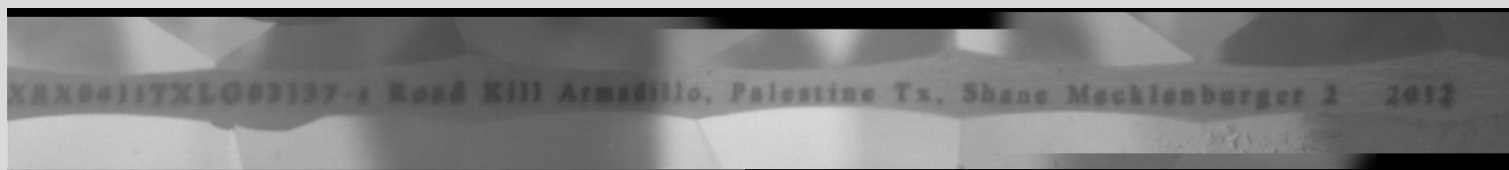


Installation view at the Queens Museum, NYC

Tendered Currency is an ongoing series exploring perceived value, U.S. culture, alchemy, and authenticity. The installation features a series of lab-created diamonds made from unusual carbon sources such as gunpowder and armadillo roadkill.

Both diamonds and art are symbols of scarcity, emotion, investment, luxury, taste and exertion; the diamond and art economies rely on cheap labor, careful manipulation of supply, and manufactured demand within insulated markets. As capital moves with increasing velocity, value itself has become an increasingly variable and subjective denominator in society, influencing the definition of art, and what it might obtain in both cultural and economic terms. *Tendered Currency* collaborates with these systems to investigate what we value and how we value.

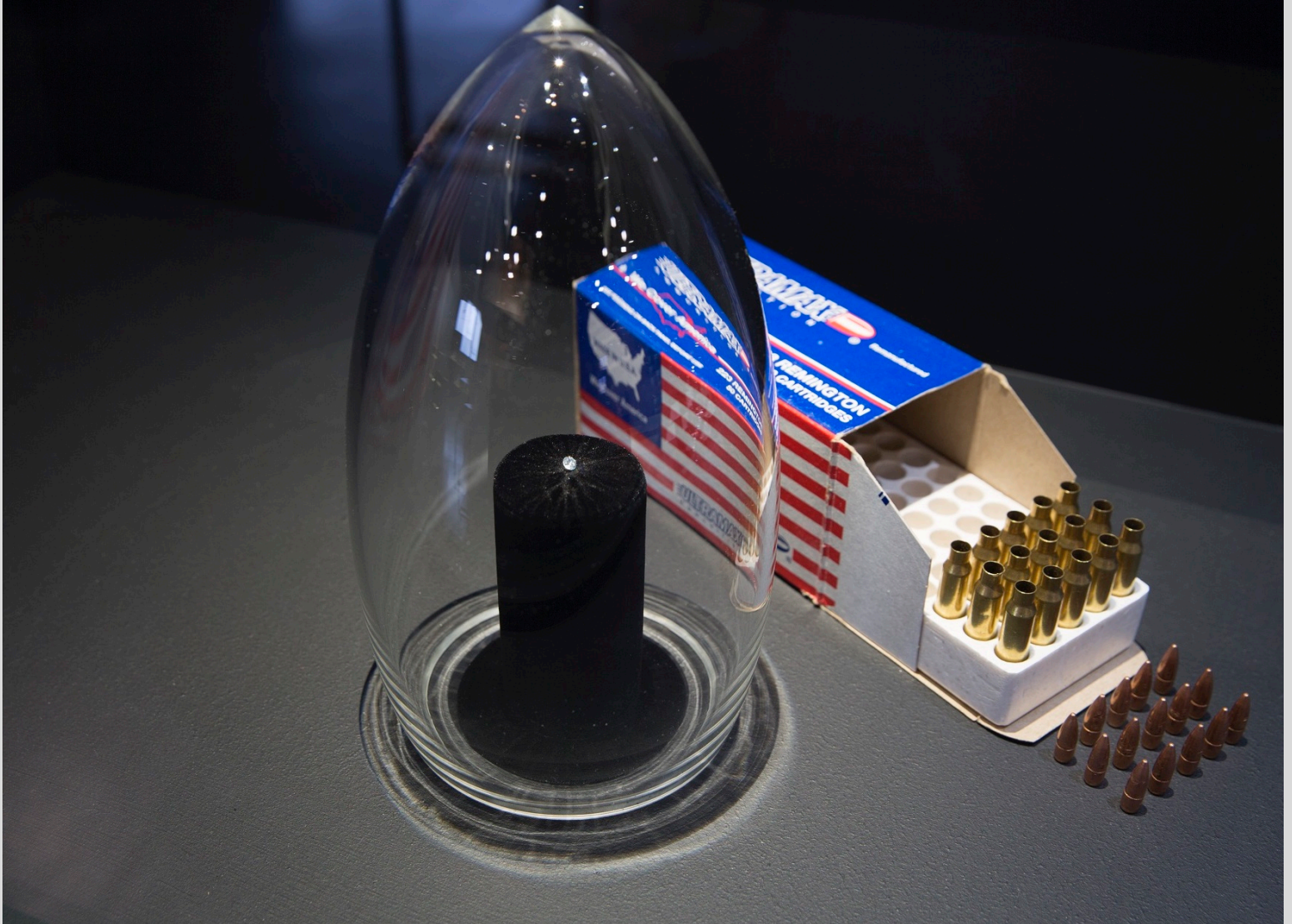
Accompanying each diamond is a certificate of appraisal and authenticity, ephemera from its carbon source, and a video documenting its creation. Each gem also contains a microscopic laser inscription along its girdle with the work's title, carbon source, artist's signature, and date of creation.



Microscopic laser inscription on Roadkill Diamond

Gunpowder Diamond (2014)

Diamond made entirely from gunpowder (.32 carat), certificate of authenticity, ephemera, video
[View project details](#) (Tendered Currency)



Detail of installation view at *What is Luxury?* Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Gunpowder Diamond is made entirely from carbon found in gunpowder removed from .223 Caliber Remington assault rifle ammunition purchased over the counter in Fort Worth, Texas. To prevent explosion during manufacture, gunpowder was neutralized in the chemistry laboratory of Dr. Justin Youngblood at the University of North Texas. The act of chemically neutralizing gunpowder across several months became the project's heart, and the diamond a byproduct of this process, as documented in the video *We Cover America*. [View video and project details](#)

Roadkill Diamond (2014)

Diamond made entirely from an armadillo slain by auto (.32 carat), certificate of authenticity, ephemera, video

[View project details](#) (Tendered Currency)



Installation view at Columbus Museum of Art. Featured in *Nature Morte: Contemporary Artists Reinvigorate the Still Life Tradition* (Thames & Hudson)

Roadkill Diamond is made entirely from the cremated remains of an armadillo found slain by auto in Palestine, Texas. Native to Mexico, armadillos are relatively recent "undocumented immigrants" to the US, having first crossed the Rio Grande only 150 years ago. With no natural predator north of the Rio Grande, many Texans consider them vermin, often shooting them on sight. Armadillos are also the Texas State Animal.

The armadillo's remains were handled as one would treat a beloved pet. A pet cremation service wrapped the remains in a "tender loving care" blanket prior to cremation, as seen in *Perpetual Care*, a video documenting the process of the diamond's creation. [View video and project details](#)

Superman Diamond (2014)

Diamond made entirely from the script of *Superman III* (1983) (.32 carat), certificate of authenticity, ephemera, video
[View project details](#) (*Tendered Currency*)



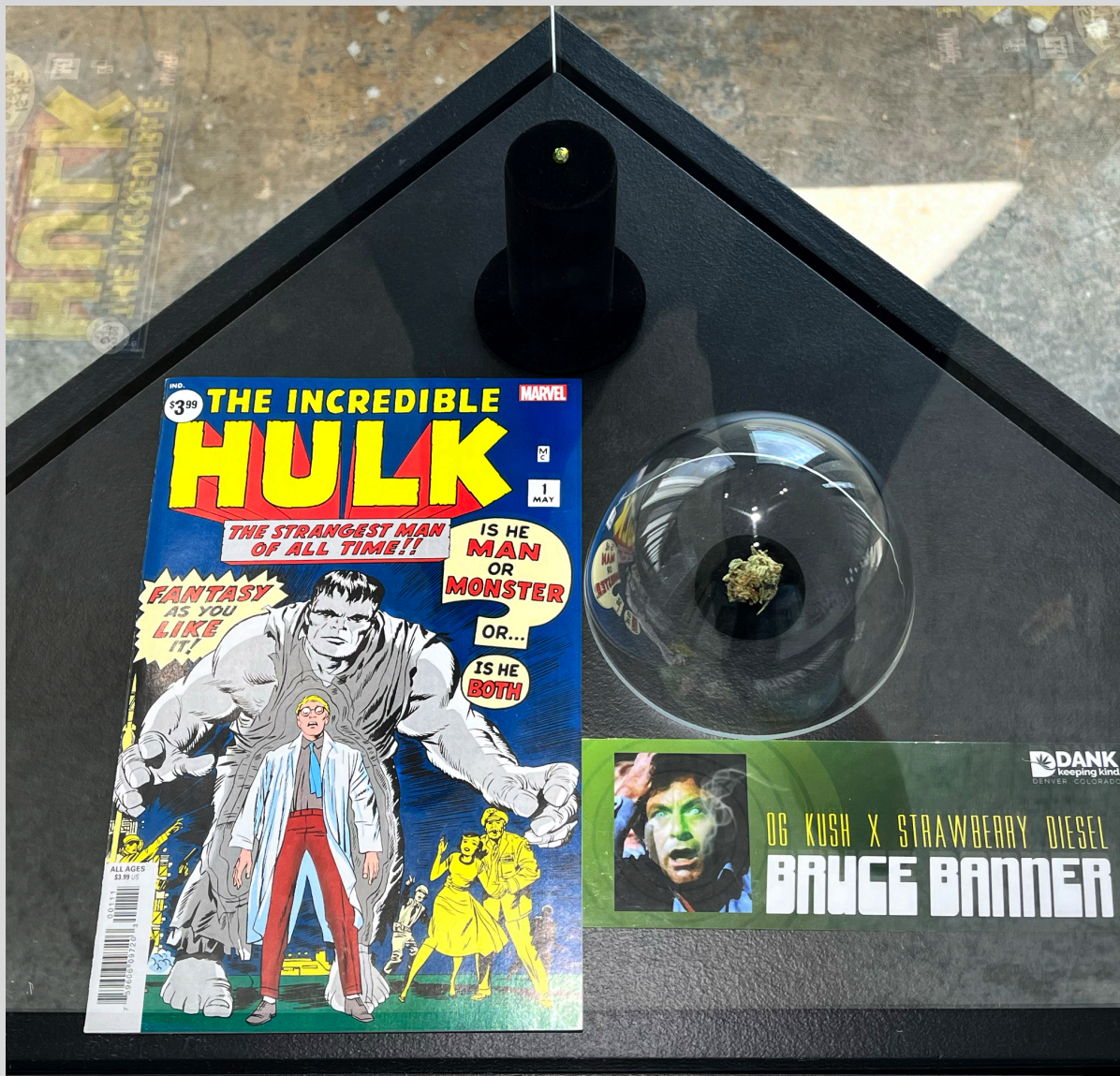
Detail of installation view at *What is Luxury?* Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Superman Diamond is made entirely from the carbon in a 30-page excerpt from the script of *Superman III* (1983). Superman is both an undocumented alien and the U.S.A.'s self-image as a bulletproof protector of truth, justice and freedom. In the 1983 kitsch-cult classic *Superman III*, Superman famously crushes a lump of coal into a diamond with his bare hands. Later he is nearly defeated by the "Ultimate Computer," and, during a mental breakdown, Superman splits from Clark Kent, who must overcome his invincible alter ego. The accompanying video *Critique of Pure Reason* is the "artist's cut" of the film, showing each scene found in the 30-page script excerpt comprising the gem's carbon source. [View video and project details](#)

Cannabis Diamond (2019)

Diamond made entirely from cannabis (.7CT), certificate of authenticity, ephemera

[View project details](#) (Tendered Currency)



Installation view, *NOMAD II*, Torrance, CA. Featured on the cover of *Different Leaf* magazine, Spring 2020

A green diamond manufactured from the carbon found in a hybrid cannabis strain: *Bruce Banner* crossed with *Stardawg*, marketed as *Star Spangled Bruce Banner*. The gem's girdle is microscopically laser-inscribed with title, date, artist's name, original carbon material, and diamond certification code.

Cannabis Diamond reflects on the commodification of altered states, anger, and hypermasculine fantasies. Bruce Banner is the mild-mannered alter-ego of comic book anti-hero The Hulk, who was created in the blast of his own nuclear "gamma bomb" invented by Banner for the U.S. military. As Hulk, his strength increases in proportion to his limitless rage, which has destroyed entire planets. His durability also scales with his anger, allowing him to withstand nuclear weapons or even recover from being blown to powder. [View project details](#)