

Satirical painter Sean Mellyn (pronounced mehl-ihn) has lived and worked in New York City for nearly 40 years. He graduated from Pratt Institute in the mid-1980s during the prevailing punk, drag and drug culture, the growing AIDS crisis, and the ascendancy of its fear-filled, reactionary conservatism. The high and low of the moment was not lost on the artist's early development, where the iconic vocabulary he built at that time would continue throughout his career, reformulating with ever-changing times.

The representational imagery in Mellyn's paintings, drawings and prints fall into thematic groups that all symbolize the role of the artist as mirror of the world. Comic or romantic illustrations of everyday objects, portraiture or landscapes bely deeper criticisms of political or social power dynamics. Precisely rendered, the artist's personal lexicon includes lightbulbs, eyes, paper bags, eggs, nests, snowmen, pigs and flowers. Many images are lifted from archetypal American magazines or children's coloring books, fostering the backdrop of overbearing purist ideology or oppressive perfection. Humor and beauty first present, then unfold with closer inspection into radical dreamscapes where three-dimensional cigars protrude from glory holes, Monet dons a pompadour, birch trees see, and children with mixed-up faces tend to animals on a farm.

Sean Mellyn was born in Providence, RI, 1965. Solo exhibitions include Bienvenue Steinberg & Partner (upcoming 2023), Suzanne Egeran Projects, LA (2019), Underline Gallery, NY (curated by Michael Steinberg, 2014), Art Production Fund Lab, NY (2010), Anna Kustera, NY (2007), Kustera Tilton, NY (2005), Marella Arte Contemporanea, Milan, IT (2003), Roberts & Tilton, LA (2002), Univ Art Museum, Albuquerque, NM (2001) and Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC (2000). Group exhibitions include those at The Bunker, FL (2021, 2017), Monira Fdtn, NJ (2021-22), FLAG Art Fdtn, NY (curated by Jon Rider, 2020), MANA, NJ (2019, 2018), Norton Museum of Art, FL (Beth DeWoody Collects, 2015), Denver Art Museum, CO (Logan Collection, 2011), Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art, NY (2010), Krinzinger, Vienna, AT (2010, 2003), Lyman Allyn Art Museum, CT (Cartin Collection, 2006), Univ of Denver School of Art, CO (2005), The Aldrich, CT (2004, 2002, 1998), MoMA, Bromberg, Poland (2003), Hiromi Yoshii, Tokyo, JP (2003) Snug Harbor, NY (2000), UC Santa Barbara, CA (2000), Susquehanna Art Museum, Harrisburg, PA (2000, 1999), Contemporary Arts Center, OH (1999), Weatherspoon Art Museum, NC (curated by Amy Cappellazzo, 1998), Brooklyn Museum of Art, NY (1997), Carnegie Museum, PA (curated by Ingrid Schaffner, 1995, 1994), Kunstverein in Hamburg, DE (1994) and Contemporary Arts Center, North Adams, MA (curated by Elizabeth Sussman, 1993).

Mellyn has exhibited at Artist's Space, White Columns, Exit Art, Pierogi and Four Walls. Two-person exhibitions include those with painter Joyce Pensato and sculptor Mary Carlson. He taught at SVA, NY (2001-10). He was awarded fellowships from the National Fdn for Advancement in the Arts and the Charles Dana Fdn. He completed residencies with APF at Cosmopolitan, Las Vegas, NV and Monet Fdn, Giverny, FR. His work is in the permanent collections of Brooklyn Museum of Art, NY, Mead Art Museum, MA, MFA Houston, TX, MoMA NY, The New School NY, Weatherspoon Art Museum, NC, NY Public Library, SF MoMA, CA, Univ of New Mexico, NM and Whitney Museum, NY.