MARK MILROY
STORY PAINTINGS
JANUARY 11 – FEBRUARY 25, 2022
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In Story Paintings, Mark Milroy moves fluidly between portraits, still-lifes, and landscapes, often combining elements from each into a single composition. Guided by his own personal experiences and physical surroundings, Milroy’s subjects range from the everyday to the invented, from corners of his studio to conjured worlds, and from daily acquaintances to fictional cowboys. The artist states: “My goal is to convey some of the very honest moments of humor, oddness, frustration, joy, wonder, and pain that I have felt.”

Even when painting from life, Milroy allows his imagination free rein, blurring the lines between truth and fiction, and between immediate experience and distant memory. This balancing act shows itself in the artist’s style, a fusion of naturalism and abstraction. Some elements of his paintings are rendered in crisp detail with subtle mark-making, while others use broad swathes of color to capture the essence of a subject or scene, like a memory that has lost specificity with time.

We can see examples of this in the artist’s depictions of people. His portrait of Faran is formal in its construction, portraying the sitter posed in a chair to be painted and gazing fixedly at the viewer. The rings on her fingers and the intensity of her eyes invite us to believe in her reality. By contrast, the young boys in Pinafore III appear not only unrehearsed, but as though plucked directly from the artist’s imagination, their facial features smudged as they float in a canoe down a green river below a blazing pink sky. Regardless of what he is painting, Milroy’s surfaces are rich and densely layered, and enchant viewers through their vivid palette.

Milroy’s stories are not complete narratives; they are entryways. A rhythm forms when moving through his paintings that evokes a feeling of familiarity. We begin to notice patterns and recognizable features, pulling us deeper into the work. Often, a subject will enter from the edge of the canvas, or a distant landscape will repeat itself in more than one painting, forming a connection between his works in the viewer’s memory. To experience Milroy’s paintings is to partake in a process of looking, remembering, and imagining. A creator of historical fiction, Milroy carves narrative from fact, and sets the foundation for onlookers to continue his stories.

— NANCY MARGOLIS GALLERY
COWBOY UP II

2020
Oil on canvas
62 x 46 inches
MODIGLIANI

2021
Oil on canvas
16 x 12 inches
SMALL AUTUMN LANDSCAPE

2021
Oil on canvas
12 x 12 inches
FARAN

2020
Oil on canvas
42 x 33 inches
FALL

2021
Oil on canvas
48 x 36 inches
BLACK BIRD

2021
Oil on canvas
16 x 16 inches
HOUSE PLANTS

2021
Oil on canvas
16 x 16 inches
CANADA GOOSE

2021
Oil on canvas
12 x 12 inches
PINAFORE III

2020
Oil on canvas
72 x 66 inches
ALLIUM

2021
Oil on linen
12 x 12 inches
People, books, picture postcards, plants and everyday objects like an old pocket knife become props and subject matter in my paintings. I draw upon personal experiences and poignant moments from my life for imagery. My goal is to convey some of the very honest moments of humor, oddness, frustration, joy, wonder, and pain that I have felt. I paint people and places as well as personal experiences and narratives. Everything I choose has meaning to me and to the world that surrounds me. I attempt to make paintings that are poetic and filled with metaphor and meaning.

Sometimes I will make drawings, prints, and multiples of an idea in a variety of materials before I begin a painting. I work in oil on canvas and mostly in direct observation of the subject unless I am working from my imagination or memory. There are other times where I will work my idea out directly on the canvas, and through this process I attempt to find the image, acting as both image maker and image seeker.

— Mark Milroy
EDUCATION

2018        M.F.A. Painting, New York Studio School, New York, NY
1994        B.F.A. Painting, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
1993        University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2022        Story Paintings, Nancy Margolis Gallery, Online Viewing Room
2020        Positions Berlin Art Fair, September 10–13
2019        Mark Milroy: People & Plants, The Mandrake Fine Art & Botanica, Las Cruces, NM
             Art Salon: Present by Nicho Lowery, 15 Gramarcy Park, New York, NY
             I Do Not Understand, The Shop at Duckie Brown, New York, NY
             Trees, Hills, Sky, City Roots Realty, Brooklyn, NY
2018        Non-Fiction Paintings, New York Studio School, New York, NY
2015        Works From Moody Road, Kerri Gallery, Willimantic, CT
2014        Kiesendahl + Calhoun Contemporary Art, The Lodge at Woodloch, Hawley, PA
2013        Mark Milroy: Subjects, Wilbur & Moeller Project Space, New York, NY
2012        Portraits, GGA, Maude Alley, Honesdale, PA
2011        A Decade of Drawing, The National Arts Club, New York, NY
2010        Landscapes, Portraits, Kirkland Gallery, New York, NY
2009        Hampton Beaches, The Gallery Sag Harbor, Sag Harbor, NY
             Landscapes Lost and Found, St. Thomas Public Art Centre, St. Thomas, Ontario
2004        Gatineau Landscape, The Green Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
2003        The City Landscape, The Green Gallery NYC, New York, NY
2002        New Work, Ferrell Pollack Fine Art, Brooklyn, NY
             Feet, Phones & Figures, Wooster Projects, New York, NY
2001        Paintings & Drawings, National Arts Club, Marquis & Gregg Galleries, New York, NY
1997        San Lorenzo Fine Art, New York, NY

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2021        Mercedes Matter Award Exhibition, 122 Grand Street, New York, NY

2020        Alone in This Together, Mary De Vincenzi & Guest Artist, M. David & Co., Brooklyn, NY
             Defed Logic, Ivy Brown Gallery, Curated by Nina M. Divani, New York, NY
2019        12th National Juried Exhibition, Prince Street Gallery, Juror: Susan Lichtman (online)
             Spring to Action, Benefit exhibition to support Feed the Front Lines, Covid 19, Manika King Contemporary
             Contemporary Portraiture, Redefining the Figure, Visionary Art Collective (online), curated by Erika Hess
             Solace House Holiday Exhibition, M. David & Co., Brooklyn, NY
             Up With People, Joyce Goldstein Gallery, Curated by Patrick Neal, Chatham, NY
             Couplings, Salt Fine Art, Laguna Beach, CA
             Blue Mountain Gallery Winter Juried Exhibition, Curated by Elisa Jenson, New York, NY
             11th National Juried Exhibition, Prince Street Gallery, Juror: Lori Bookstein, New York, NY
             New Narrative Now, M. David & Co., Brooklyn, NY
2017        Fram Summer, New York Studio School, New York, NY
2016        Material Matters, presented by JMM Arts, Peninsula Art Space, Red Hook, Brooklyn, NY
             Sideshow Nation IV Thru the Rabbit Hole, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
             Small Works Baruch Collage, Mishkin Gallery, New York, NY
2015        Lost Cat: Art in the Age of Social Media, Cape Cod Museum of Art, Cape Cod, MA
             Secand Annual Summer Invitational, Life On Mars Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
             Sideshow Nation III Circle the Wagons, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
2014        Crowd, Green Door, Curated by Andrea Brown & Elizabeth Enns, Liberty, NY
             Sideshow Nation II at the Alamo, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
2013        EAM Exhibition, The National Arts Club, Hope & Grace Award for Portraiture, New York, NY
2007        Block Party II, Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2006        Block Party, 14Townhouses Project, Curated by Elisabeth Ackerman, Brooklyn, NY
2004        Paint, Signal 66, Washington, DC
             Merry-Peace, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
             Poignant, A Space Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
2003  Green Gallery, New York, NY
2001  NURTUREart Reaches the Heights, NY Presbyterian Baldwin Gallery, New York, NY
1999  Brickhaus Art Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
         Drawings, N3 Project Space, Brooklyn, NY
1998  Simon/Schade Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
         N3 Project Space, Brooklyn, NY
         Right Bank Gallery, by NURTUREart, Brooklyn, NY
1997  La MaMa La Galleria, New York, NY
         Vision 21, Curated by Leeea Ahmedy, Brooklyn, NY
1995  Green Room, MTV National Studios, New York, NY
1994  New Talent I, Contemporary Art Workshop, Chicago, IL
         B.F.A. Graduating Exhibition, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
         The Figure, Gallery X, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
         16 Artist Big Picture, Richmond Row, London, Ontario
         The Environment, Hilary Gallery, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario

GRANTS, AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

2018  The Royal Drawing School, Dumfries House, Ayer, Scotland
2016  Peter S. Reed Foundation
2013  Hope & Grace Award for Portraiture, The National Arts Club

PUBLICATIONS

2021  Deborah Frissell, White Hot Magazine, "Defied Logic at Ivy Brown Gallery"
         Warm Milk Creative Vol. 1 Art and Poetry
Mark Milroy, I Do Not Understand, chapbook, Ink, inc.
         Erika Hess, I like your work (podcast), "Painter Mark Milroy: Stories of Discovery, Overcoming Failure & the Psychology of Portrait Painting," interview
2015  Douglas Crase, Tech, "Mark Milroy Paints my Portrait"
2012  Domino, Fall/Winter Special Edition, "Best Rooms: Nicky Kehoe"
         Vogue Living, "The Bourne Identity," September–October
         Architectural Digest Spain, "Las Casas Mas Bellas Del Mundo," N 50, September
         Pat Rogers, The East Hampton Press & The Southampton Press, "Painter Mark Milroy seeks to channel the strength of the Ocean," June 2
         Amanda Talbot & James Marrell, Elle Decoration UK, "Frash & Wild," artwork, May
         Carol Kino, Domino, "Modern Portraiture," November
         Jesse Peterson, Greenpoint-Williamsburg Gazette, "Mark Milroy: Expressive Realist," February 17
         Columbia: A Journal of Literature & Art, artwork
         Italian Marie Claire, "Studio," February
2002  The New Yorker, "Daling With Paintbrush," June 24
         New York Metropolis, "Brooklyn Sunset #1," cover artwork, October 18
         Jason Shaftell, New York Metropolis, "Regular Joe Painter," October 11