

Michael Hilsman

Biography



#MichaelHilsman

Born in 1984 in Los Angeles, California.
Lives and works in Pasadena, CA, USA.

Michael Hilsman makes non-literal paintings of objects and figures that explore the absurdity, magic, and latent spirituality of the physical world.

Utilizing formats associated with classical painting such as portraiture and still life, and employing a wide visual vocabulary ranging from naturalism to expressionism, Hilsman builds monumental paintings whose objects and figures are in a state of dissolution and fragmentation, often seeming to disattach from themselves and form anew, appearing both familiar and foreign.

Whether it is the bulky male figures or the depictions of various flora and fauna, the figures and objects in Hilsman's work have a frayed, tenuous connection to their own materiality. They are awkward, vulnerable, impermanent, and worn from the constant weight of reality. Fruits and vegetables appear bruised and the human body's many absurdities and quirks are accentuated. Many times in Hilsman's work solid images disappear and ethereal ones become concrete, locked in a state of reconciliation between physical and intangible experience.

Various objects and subjects reoccur in Hilsman's work, such as teeth, walls, roots, shoes, hands or a figure drawn from the artist's body. They have a specific nature in that they are vessels that hold their own essence prisoner, or the memory that we have of them. By referring in this way to the Proustian vision, Hilsman's objects do not really have value in themselves, but serve as triggers of a memory or a deeper knowledge, a human experience both collective and personal. The narrative elements are fragmented, appearing as incomplete and mysterious details on the sidelines of an invisible main scene.

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Education

2012	MFA, Hunter College, New York, NY
2008	Visiting Artist, Beaconhouse National University, Lahore, PK
2006	B.A. Social Change and the Arts, UC Santa Cruz, CA
2004	Delhi University, Delhi, IN

Solo and Two Artists Exhibitions

2022	<i>Man On Bed</i> , Almine Rech Gallery, Paris, FR
2020	<i>Dangling Man</i> , Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Geneva, CH <i>Introductions: Michael Hilsman</i> , White Cube Gallery, London, UK
2019	<i>Pictures of 'M.' and Other Pictures</i> , Almine Rech Gallery, New York, NY Artissima, Dialogue section, Two artist exhibition with Yarisal & Kublitz, Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Turin, IT
2018	Independent Art Fair, Two artists exhibition with Yarisal & Kublitz, Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Brussels, BE <i>New Pictures</i> , Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Geneva, CH
2016	<i>The Softest Bullet</i> , Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Geneva, CH
2014	<i>Emotions</i> , Two artists exhibition with Jesse Wine, MOIETY, New York, NY
2013	<i>Boneflower</i> , Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Geneva, CH

Group Exhibitions

2023	<i>Frieze Los Angeles OVR 2023</i> , VSF, Los Angeles, US
2022	<i>Portraiture: An Ongoing Story</i> , Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Geneva, CH
2020	<i>Painting Someone</i> , Almine Rech Gallery, Shanghai, CN <i>Animal Kingdom</i> , Alexander Berggruen, New York, NY <i>Portraits & Some Standing Figures</i> , Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Geneva, CH <i>Fragmented Bodies</i> , Albertz Benda, New York, NY
2019	<i>Still Life: An Ongoing Story</i> , Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Geneva, CH
2016	<i>Snow Show</i> (curated by Carey Denniston and Kyle Dancewicz), Rzeplinski, New York, NY <i>Summer Show</i> , Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, Geneva, CH
2014	<i>Group Show</i> , with Richard Kern and Yarisal & Kublitz, Galerie Sébastien Bertrand,

- Geneva, CH
- 2013 *Yes! But Less* (curated by Daria Irincheeva), Apt 16, Newark, NJ
CISCO SYSCO SISQO, La Fonda, Rockaway Beach, New York, NY
Moon Over Mountain Pass, Trailer Park Projects, San Juan, Puerto Rico
- 2012 *Un Lugar en la Horoptera*, Asociacion Cultural Mediodia Chica, Madrid, ES

Bibliography

- Dangling Man*, Monograph published by Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, 2020.
Man Fall Down, Monograph published by Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, 2015.
 Petry, Michael. *Nature Morte: Contemporary Artists Reinvigorate the Still Life Tradition*, Thames and Hudson, 2013, pp. 2, 109 [ill.].
 “12 Must See Painting Shows,” *The Huffington Post*, November 2012.
 Indrisek, Scott. “Two For the Weekend,” *Modern Painters*, November 2012.
 “100 Artists to Watch,” *Modern Painters*, p. 65-66, Dec/Jan 2012.
 Lauret, Virginie. “Interview: Michael Hilsman,” *Le Point (France)*, p. 90-91, January 2012.
 McQuaid, Cate. “Monstrously Provocative Portraits,” *Boston Globe*, February 9th, 2011.
 Garza, Evan J. “11 Painters to Watch in 2011,” *New American Paintings Blog*, January 10th, 2011.
 “New Art Talent,” *Modern Edition Blog*, December 2011.
 Zevitas, Steven. “Tomorrow’s Art Stars Today,” *The Huffington Post*, April 18th, 2011.
Paperbag Journal, Issue No. 2, January 2011.

Published Art Criticism

- “Dan Herschlein’s Safe as Houses,” riotmaterial.com, March 2016.
 Rana, Rashid (monograph contribution), *A Moment in Time: Fragmentation and Reformulation*, Mumbai, 2011.
The Power of the Ornament (Die Macht des Ornaments), Exhibition catalogue, Belvedere Museum, Vienna, Austria, 2009.
Hanging Fire: Contemporary Art from Pakistan, Exhibition text excerpt, Asia Society Museum, New York, 2009.

Awards and Honors

- Dedalus Foundation MFA Grant Nominee, 2011
 Artist-in-Residence, Hungarian Multicultural Center, Budapest, Hungary, June-July 2009
 Visiting Faculty, Beaconhouse National University, Lahore, Pakistan, July-August 2008
 Alumni Lecture Honorarium for Introduction Talk to Hank Willis Thomas: Signifying Blackness at Sesnon Gallery, UC Santa Cruz
 Katherine E. Metz Painting and Drawing Award, Spring 2006
 Chancellor’s Undergraduate Internship Award Program Participant at Sesnon Gallery, 2005
 Irwin Project Grant Recipient, 2004, 2005, 2006
 College Honors for individual major, Social Change and the Arts, 2006

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