

Ryan McGinness

Born 1972

On initial encounter, the imagery in many of Ryan McGinness' paintings has the overall qualities one might associate with the Abstract Expressionist Jackson Pollock or commercially printed fabrics and wallpaper. On closer inspection, however, a host of specific and precise elements are discernible, including stylized human figures, abstract motifs, logos, and symbols. These elements are built up as layers of vividly colored images that create a dynamic sense of deep space. The flat application of paint physically contradicts the works' convincing illusion of depth. This flatness, combined with McGinness' high-key palette, produces cool yet seductive visual effects.

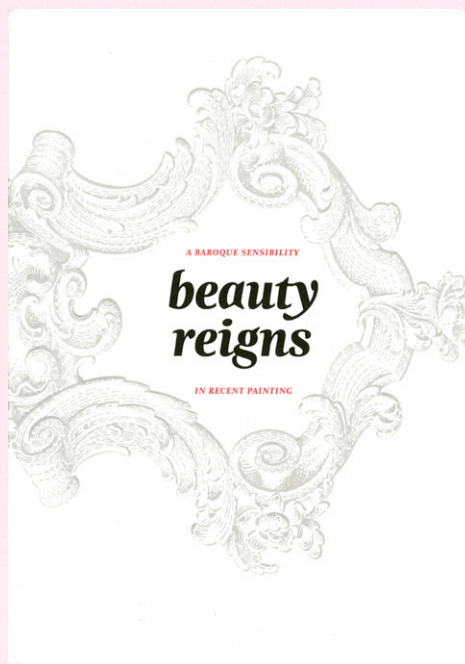
Armed with a design background, McGinness merges the worlds of fine art, graphic design, popular culture, and advertising. His approach moves beyond the traditions of easel painting to encompass sculpture, installation, books, and consumer products. With seemingly little effort, he moves from one form to another, tying together myriad images, materials, and techniques in a Warhol-like way. Not surprisingly, McGinness worked as a curatorial assistant at the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Connections between the two artists are clearly evident.

The dizzying optical effects and complex surface layering that characterize McGinness' work belie the artist's highly structured approach to artmaking. Working in series, he packages his various productions in a consumer-friendly and democratic way—from paintings, prints, and sculptures, to notecards, t-shirts, and skateboards. Lines are blurred between fine art and fine design, and in many cases, such distinctions are erased altogether. In the end, some example of McGinness' wide-ranging output can be acquired by most anyone.

Ryan McGinness is a native of Virginia Beach, Virginia, and is based in New York. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1994. His work has been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions at museums and galleries for the past decade, including at San Antonio's Blue Star Contemporary Art Museum. His works are found in collections including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, California; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Reviews of the artist's exhibitions regularly appear in *Art in America*, *Artforum*, *Artnews*, and the *New York Times*.



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Beauty Reigns: A Baroque Sensibility in Recent Painting,
McNay Art Museum, USA, 2014, p. 76