

Team (gallery, inc.) is pleased to announce *Sirens*, a show of new work by British painter Dawn Mellor.

Dawn Mellor – in her first show since re-uniting with Team Gallery after a six-year hiatus – presents a new body of paintings, each depicting a British actress portraying a police officer. The title, *Sirens*, is a triple-entendre, evoking the sounds emitted by cop cars, as well as the vernacular term for a sexually provocative actress and the deadly seductresses of Greek mythology. These paintings are not tributes to the mystical star-power of their celebrity subjects: instead, they highlight the dangers of our lustful projections onto the famous, sounding a loud, dissonant and potentially violent alarm against the passively cannibalistic consumption of mass media.

Mellor works from pre-existing images – in this case, film and TV stills – but always corrupts or mutilates her referents. Here, her subjects appear submerged in water up to their shoulders, their faces partly shrouded by the likes of colorful netting, floral patterning, and eczema. While perhaps not as outright gruesome as some of the artist's other work, these pictures nonetheless are powerfully, unsettlingly lurid: they practically seethe with sadistic humor, erotic enticement and malevolence.

Mellor's project enacts a rebellion against the culture industry's colonization of our consciousness, as described in Guy Debord's 1967 text *Society of the Spectacle*. In appropriating and debasing photos of celebrities, turning them fiendish and tawdry, the artist negates the passivity attributed to image-consumption – by taking ownership over the pictures, as well as performing a scarring defacement on their subjects. Her oeuvre, in the Situationist and punk traditions, comprises a particularly aggressive *détournement*, turning capitalist media against itself.

These paintings also explore the artist's own queer desire, illustrating the possibility that, per our society, her attraction to these subjects might be transgressive – even tainting: Mellor's scopophilia manifests as a disfiguration of her amorous objects. The lesbian restatement of voyeuristic lust undercuts the all-pervading, all-powerful male gaze, violating the heteronormative moralism of our status quo. With this body of work, the artist also investigates her own complicity in a culture of consumption – the conflict between radical, anti-authoritarian politics – i.e., a hatred of cops – and participation in the arch-capitalism of the art market.

The choice of medium is significant: painting, with all its stately, Art Historical baggage, provides Mellor a perfectly elegant, antiquated and bourgeois platform for her rabidly funny, expressly immature and politically subversive positions.

Dawn Mellor has had numerous solo exhibitions in London, New York, Venice, and Brussels. She was the subject of one-womans show at The Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst in Zürich in 2008 and at Studio Voltiare in London in 2010. Her work has been shown at the Kunstverein Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany; The Contemporary Art Centre Vilnius, Vilnius, Lithuania; Limerick City Art Gallery, Limerick, Ireland; Museum Arnhem, Arnhem, Netherlands; Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, Netherlands; MoMA P.S.1, Long Island City, New York; and Tate Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom. This is her fourth solo show with Team.

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*