

paintings

// toy story series

In a reality in which everyone is busy meeting their daily needs, toys provide a window to the past, a mixture of reality and imagination. Adam Sher uses images of dolls taken from popular culture as symbols of a capitalistic consumer society and manifestations of a powerful marketing system. In doing so, he affirms the important role that advertisement plays socially, culturally and financially. Focusing on the image of the doll continues the tradition of post-modern photography exemplified by the work of David Levinthal. Like Levinthal in his work "Hitler Moves East: A Graphic Chronicle, 1941-43" (1975-1977), Sher uses the image of the doll to create a sense of power.

Sher's toy paintings also address the complex relationship between an industrial product, represented by the serial unity of a production-line doll, and an artistic action, which is unique in its manner and representation. Sher examines the undefined boundaries between a sculpture and a toy, creating images of dolls that have both handcrafted and mass-produced qualities. Painted on a flat background, Sher's lively, realistic dolls are colorful and optimistic, conveying a sense of familiar, lovable kitsch. By zooming in on dolls that are only a few inches high, Sher creates a hypnotic effect in which the micro becomes the macro.

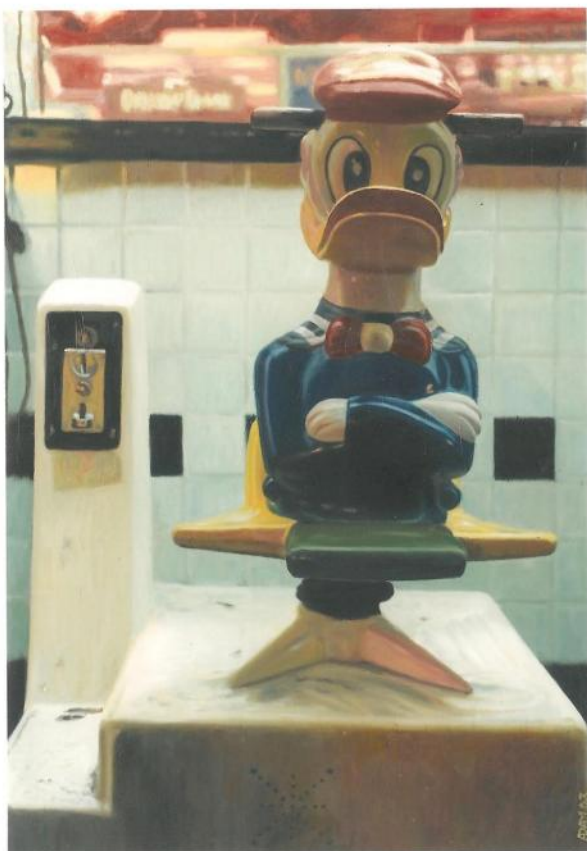
The importance of dolls is not just in their aesthetic value or their use in play; rather, their significance comes from their use as means of developing social behavior. Sher's interpretation is similar one from the 1960's, in which dolls symbolize a return to the purity and innocence of childhood. Sher sees dolls as a first tool for creating a connection between a child and his surroundings. The doll is a three-dimensional representation of a living creature, an imitation of physical reality. The child is attracted to the doll because he perceives it as a living being, as does Sher. Playing with dolls allows the child to create an alternative world in which it is safe to process real-life experiences and the emotions that those experiences evoke. Dolls hold a different meaning in the adult eye, however. The adult projects a lifetime of feelings and perceptions on the doll, examining it in a new way. The doll becomes less naïve and trivial than it was for the child; seeing its flaws, the adult now understands that the doll is not - and never was - perfect.

// galit semel, curator

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adam sher | painter

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adam sher | donald duck (brighton beach) | 2003 | oil on canvas | 160x120 cm



adam sher | daisy | 2004 | oil on canvas | 40x40cm



adam sher | "we are all jesus' toys..." | 2004 | 60x200 cm | oil on canvas