

**Paul Gellman: *Paul Gellman Filling in For Tall Paul*  
November 5 - December 23, 2016**

By the turn of the 16th century, European Academies had declared painting's supremacy as an art form.

During the next half century, the French Royal Academy further refined a hierarchy of genres based on the acceptance of the seemingly *a priori* neoclassical ideal that "man is the measure of all things." As one would imagine, under this codified system, historical portraits were given higher 'value' than works devoid of human representations or likenesses—landscapes or still-lives.

Meanwhile, a more broad and conceptual distinction was growing between art produced through intellectual effort and those works tied to mere mechanical portrayal. As this had not been the case in Medieval art, patrons and those commissioning artworks took considerable time to fully accept this notion. Throughout the 17th century, tapestries retained a higher inherent value, and it wasn't until the 20th century that painting fully pushed other objets d'art (with their precious materiality of gold, diamonds and rubies) aside...

Enter Paul Gellman:

Paul Gellman has worked as an artist and performer in Los Angeles for the past two decades, creating a practice that reflects, mimics, and subverts intellectual hierarchies (both historical and current).

Collage is central to Gellman's practice, as are the found objects and bric-à-brac he uses as his media. Often working in composites—using varied objects to create singular and new "whole" works (as in the wall work *Robbie*, 2016), this technique is also utilized in Gellman's figurative sculpture, wherein he blends disparate objects into one form. Within other pieces, his compiled materials are used as their own abstracts in order to create kitschy tableaus. These works hinge on the fetishisation of objects without regard or preconceptions to their external values.

Gellman's scrap cloth pillows are another form of hierarchical disruption, using cloth to create portraits and still-lives to be completed with stuffing rather than stretcher bars. The social life of these objects further unsettles their position in the world. As useful objects, they will be sat and spilled on, attacked by the family dog, exchanged when they no longer go with the decor. Gellman's pillows literally sit within the genre with which they are depicted. His flowers sit within the still life of the living room, becoming part of the scene in which they are placed. His portrait pillows become people sitting on the couch, producing a scene in real life which is recreated on canvas. The pillows create a *mise en abyme*, a scene within the scene, a genre painting within everyday life. The portraits represent people who are/have been important to Gellman, allowing him to create his own exalted (historical) collection.

On Sunday **November 27th**, Redling Fine Art will present Paul Gellman's original theatrical play ***The Real Art Hangers of Cheviot Hills*** at the gallery. The play will be accompanied by a special edition publication featuring text by Hedi El Kholi and published by Rakish Light Press.

**Paul Gellman** (b. in MO) lives and works in Los Angeles, California. He received his MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1995, and his BFA from The Cooper Union in 1990. His work has been exhibited at Commonwealth and Council and the Whitney Museum of American Art. He also staged performances and reading of his work at the Los Angeles Museum of Art, the Armory Center, LAXART, Dan Hug Gallery, the Hammer Museum and the Orange County Museum of Art. His work has been featured in *Artforum*, *X-tra*, *Semiotext(e)*, and he's contributed writings to *Animal Shelter* and *Tiny Creatures Zine*.