

Dan McCleary

McCleary's paintings capture everyday objects and people that are often overlooked. He is also the founder of ArtDivision: a nonprofit organization offering professional arts training and academic and career support to young adults in the underserved MacArthur Park community in Los Angeles. The subject of McCleary's paintings, drawings and prints is individuals, often alone and rendered life-size, engaged in daily activities at home, the office, a hair salon or restaurant. Los Angeles Times art critic Christopher Knight has called McCleary "among the finest figurative painters working today."

"I will have the model come and pose for drawings and sometimes a photograph. The models return many times and pose in sets I build in the studio... It can take up to nine months to finish a painting. I want to keep a prudent distance from the model. The people I paint are always people I have respect for. I have to have some sort of connection to them... I wanted to include the viewer as an element of the painting. You have the choice of talking to either the man or woman in the painting. To talk to the man you would have to interrupt him. The woman is ready to connect with you. You also have the choice to sign the petition or not. Once I figured out the subject, you view the painting as a complex puzzle of colors, shapes and how to lead the viewer through the painting."

In 2002, he founded Art Division, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing youth aged 18–25 with accessible, affordable arts training and academic support from working artists, filmmakers, writers, educators, and other professionals. Located in the low-income, predominantly Hispanic community around historic MacArthur Park, Art Division is also committed to community engagement and building a thriving arts community within the community, presenting exhibitions, public lectures, film screenings, and special events throughout Los Angeles. In 2014, the 5000-volume Art Division Library opened for students, artists, and the community at large.

Collections

California Redevelopment Agency, Los Angeles, CA
Harvard Art Museum, Cambridge, MA
The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA
Laguna Museum of Art, Laguna Beach, CA
Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA
Ohio State University Collection, OH
San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA
Spencer Collection, New York Public Library, NY

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