



ARTIST STATEMENT

Southern California artist **c.martino** is a closet conceptualist using the tools and techniques of contemporary narrative painting and sculpture to create provocative works that transform the mundane into the magical. Through art he seeks to engage, elevate and inspire in an increasingly generic, prepackaged world of mini-malls, master planned communities and bad reality tv.

Defined by its conceptual rigor, thematic resonance and a truly unique post-modern aesthetic, his streetwise, Not Quite Pop-inspired work varies along the continuum from near abstraction to stylized illustrative forms depending on the mood, intent and character of the piece or series in question. For Martino, the idea is paramount, directing the particulars of each piece and/or series. Function defines form, substance dictates style.

Wielding a biting, pitch-black (but ultimately sympathetic) wit, Martino's keenly observational work incorporates the telling glimpses, reflective musings and forbidden thoughts that pulse and roil beneath the constructed surface glamour of contemporary life. Materials and messages common to the modern environment – toys, mass market and luxury advertising, consumer goods, assorted pop culture ephemera – inform and inspire his work, building layer upon layer to create complex topographies that examine the emotional, psychological and spiritual tumult defining life in the modern world.

Distilled to its essence, Martino's art is an exploration of the many often contradictory trajectories that intersect and define our hectic day-to-day lives and hint at the hidden, Inner World seething just beneath the gleaming surface of a world on the edge.